

Bluff City 24: The Moving Pictures Pt. 2

Transcriber: Terin

Content warnings: Cancer, Medical Malpractice, Blood, Severe Storms/Flooding, Doppelgangers

["Clair de Lune" begins playing]

AUSTIN WALKER (as Alexandra Hughes): I remember one year, a classmate offered me half-sincere comfort, as she left for the exposition in St. Louis. I played at pouting, but my disinterest must have been obvious, even then. How could the self-important exhibits of a World's Fair compare to the sensuous sights and sounds of an entirely new world?

For each promise broken by Atlantic City, Philadelphia, or Baltimore, beautiful Bluff City vowed something grander, greater, even more unpredictable. In reality, the only urges vocalized were to be puritanical urges. A desire to suppress, to moderate, to control. But in Bluff City, a different sort of desire was the heartbeat of a dream, unfolding. The sea played forbidden rhythms on the coastline. The air was cast with the warm smell of sugar, and the hotel facades were made into glamorous living things. The entire world was imagination incarnate, and soon became inspiration for my then-amateur fiction.

I thought what I saw there was simply a projection of my own young romanticism. But when I returned to the people and places of Atlantic City, I could sense a connection, though in which way I could not tell. These people had that vibrance in their hearts, too, only it was covered by something else. Smothered, choked. And it is because I did not see their misery in Bluff City, that I first suspected there could be something else. A third shore. A third city. And young, naive writer that I was, I wondered what inspiration I might find there.

Which is why, in my twentieth year, I took an extended jaunt. Perhaps you've heard the story, "Alexandra P. Hughes, heiress of the Blaufelden Fortune, missing off the coastline." But the overturned boat was no more than a distraction. I was not lost to the waves at all. I was crossing a desert existential. Beset upon by heat and hostility, with my only respite being the long, blough shadow of that most miserable town.

["Clair de Lune" ends]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends to at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I'm your host, Austin Walker, you can find me on Twitter @austin_walker, and you can find the show @friends_table. Joining me today for... I guess, this is probably not gonna exist, now that I

started it? I bet the character creation goes right into this, doesn't it? Just in case, let's do intros.
(laugh)

SYLVIA CLAIRE: (laughs)

AUSTIN: Joining me today, Sylvia Claire.

SYLVIA: Hey, I'm Sylvia, you can find me on Twitter @captaintrash, and you can listen to my other show, Emojidrome, on your podcast app of choice.

AUSTIN: Also joining me, Janine Hawkins.

JANINE HAWKINS: Hey, I'm Janine Hawkins. You can find me @bleatingheart on Twitter.

AUSTIN: And Andrew Lee Swan.

ANDREW: Hey, you can find me on Twitter @swandre3000.

AUSTIN: Awesome. Today we are continuing our game of Catch the Devil by Sage LaTorra. Before we - excuse me - before we start, can we just go over characters one more time for my own memory? Let's go left to right here. So Sylvia, so let's start with you. Let's go over your name, your history and like, I, you know, identity, like, background stuff.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Your pronouns, stats and then any wounded moves you have.

SYLVIA: So my character is Eve Whitaker. Her pronouns are she and her. Stats are -1 Tough, 1 Sharp, 0 Steady and 1 Quick. She is a farmer. Her family owns a farm. I was thinking it would be out of town.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, I'm down with that.

SYLVIA: She has a hat - mm, she has a Rat Terrier named Peaches.

(Austin laughs)

SYLVIA: And when she was eight years old, visiting here, she almost drowned. And that was her traumatic event that led to my wounded "Take a Risk",

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: Which is the only wounded move I have. which gives me +1 Quick, on those rolls.

AUSTIN: Is...

SYLVIA: Aside from that I am, relationships wise, I am, I think I'm cousins to everybody but specifically, I am friends with Caitlin Paul,

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: And cousins with Dr. Bart.

AUSTIN: Awesome. Is Peaches with you? Like, are you, are you carrying Peaches around with you?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I think,

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: that you know,

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, I got you.

SYLVIA: I gotta have a dog if I have a dog right?

AUSTIN: Yes, yes, absolutely. Um, uh, next up Janine, tell me about your character.

JANINE: I'm playing Caitlin Paul. Pronouns are she/her. She has 0 Tough 0 Sharp, 2 Study and -1 Quick. She is an accountant and also an anecdote heavy recipe blogger by night. She drives a 2006 Acura TSX. Her favorite color's black,

(Andrew laughs)

JANINE: She's a Libra. She uses a MasterCard. Her website is imsoyexcited.com.

(Sylvia and Austin laugh)

JANINE: And she was hit by a car while running in high school because she was on the high school track team.

AUSTIN: Great.

JANINE: And that was her life or death situation.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. That is, that's what gave you your "Take a Risk", which is -1 on Quick and -1 on Sharp right? I think I'm, I, I'm gonna make sure that there's not more of that like when we roll if we get around to rolling it on double check to make sure that there isn't like a slight difference in resolution. I only say that because the next characters are, is a little bit more complicated. (laugh) Dre, you're up.

ANDREW: Hey, I'm Bartholomew Asher, better known as Dr. Bart. His pronouns are he/him. He is a physical therapist that has turned into a reoccurring talk show guest, kind of, we compared him to Dr. Oz. He suffered a life threatening injury during his college football career. And I realized now that I did say that he has seen something horrendous, but we never really described what it was.

AUSTIN: We never did. Yeah, what was it?

ANDREW: Um... and so I guess I want to get your input on this because we're saying horrendous, we aren't necessarily meaning supernatural, are we?

AUSTIN: No, we don't, we don't necessarily mean supernatural.

ANDREW: Okay.

AUSTIN: We mean the sort of thing that would shake a person who is, who has previous to seeing it, not had to deal with something pretty heavy.

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It can be supernatural, but it could also just be something really rough. Like I bet any surgeon has had this experie- You know what I mean? Like...

ANDREW: I think what I what I kind of like would like this to be is in maybe this is something that is especially recently happened since we're doing this in terms of I think one of the things we've kind of said for the framing of Dr. Bart was, one of the reasons he's become a more recurrent guest is because of the writer strike that's going on.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ANDREW: So they're kind of just trying to like, fill. So I think in one of the sections, he was talking about some kind of like, product or new medicine or something? That was not properly researched and vetted, and turned out to be very bad.

AUSTIN: And that was something that you saw, like, firsthand. The results of.

ANDREW: Yeah, like, maybe it was... like, I'm thinking like something like homeopathic and it was like, Oh, yeah, you don't need to take a bunch of like, you know, all the medicine they're prescribing you,

(Austin sighs)

ANDREW: You can just take this thing.

JANINE: You know what a really good example of that would be?

ANDREW: Yeah.

JANINE: The, that whole trend with apricot kernels.

ANDREW: I don't know what that is.

JANINE: Where people are like,

AUSTIN: Oh, this is gonna go bad. I know it.

JANINE: (sigh) So there's a whole, it's a whole like real life thing where people take apricot kerne- kernels because have this, people say it's like vitamin... B-something, but it's like a made up vitamin and it's just, uh, I forget if it's arsenic or cyanide, basically but like, it's a thing where on the bag they say like "Don't eat more than five of these a day because you'll give yourself serious poisoning." But, and it's also like restricted how you can sell them and stuff and people, people like eat them because they think it's like a cancer cure.

ANDREW: Hmm.

JANINE: Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Great.

ANDREW: And I imagine-

JANINE: Like a whole real life horrible thing.

AUSTIN: It's terrible.

ANDREW: Yeah, I imagine he probably found out about it by like, going through his fan mail and then getting a letter. It's like, "Hey, you killed my mom. Like what you did has killed my mom. What you endorse killed my mom."

AUSTIN: What you endorsed. That is, that is heavy and make sense as to why it would have changed your "Keep It Together". Can you tell me what those moves, how those moves change, specifically?

ANDREW: So for the life threatening injury that affects my Suffer Harm, so when I Suffer Harm the GM will describe it and tell me a number of damage. I roll +Tough, minus the damage. On a 10+ you take -1 the next time you Suffer Harm, on a 7-9, you choose a move to wound, but as long as that move is wounded, you take +1 to it. On a 6 or less, you're dying and the GM will tell you when you're dead. And then for Keep It Together when you are confronted by the horrendous, supernatural, or mind shattering, roll +Steady. On a 10+, you take -1 the next time you Keep It Together. On a 7-9, you increase your Sharp by one until you leave "here", whatever "here" is. On a 6-, you blackout the GM will describe what unfortunate circumstance you wake up in.

AUSTIN: Cool. Love to have that ability, (laugh) for when you fuck up a roll. Okay, so where were we? I guess, Dr. Bart, you were up in your dressing room getting ready to go on to your segment, in the morning show. "I'M A.M., R U?" when you heard gunshots from outside, and you went to check that out, and you dropped your phone, and the security guards who had where the shots originated, one of them came to kind of confront you. Before that could even

play out. You saw movement in the grass, and you saw a lion jump up and seemingly attack one of one of the security guards. What do you do?

ANDREW: Uh, I, uh, it's probably, I gotta get on set.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Yeah, you pick up your phone?

ANDREW: Yeah. (laughs)

AUSTIN: Let's get a shot of you pick you seeing this be like... what do you what is your reaction? What's the facial reaction that we get from you?

ANDREW: How do you make a human face say "I don't want to fuck with a lion this morning"?

AUSTIN: (laughs) Yeah, okay, um, and that happens, and, yeah you pick up the phone, you head back inside, you go on to the set of "I'M A.M., R U?" and we cut to... we cut to, I think Caitlin and Eve just meeting each other in the lobby? Caitlin, you went back to your desk and you got a call that was like "Hey Eve is here for you." I'm guessing you go out to meet her, to meet your your friend/cousin.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Let's just have that scene.

SYLVIA (as Eve Whitaker): (with nervous enthusiasm) Hey! I, was not expecting the welcome, out front!

JANINE (as Caitlin Paul): Well, yeah, I, you know... it's a little weird right now. We're kind of, we're expecting things to settle do- sorry it took me so long, I was at the, was at the thing,

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh, you're fine.

JANINE (as Caitlin): And then I went back I hadn't there's a message in my- ah, it's fine. Yeah, it's it's a little weird right now. (nervous laugh)

SYLVIA (as Eve): Are you doing okay with that? It seems kind of stressful. How long, like... I remember mom mentioning this happened like a month ago.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah...

SYLVIA (as Eve): I didn't expect it to still be as bad.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Well, you know how negotiations go when no one likes anyone?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Ah. Yeah, that seems like a bit of a problem.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Uh huh. It's a bit of a problem. Do you want like, do you wanna like, get a coffee or something?

(Austin laughs)

JANINE (as Caitlin): I can show you, we can...

SYLVIA (as Eve): That sounds great! Yeah.

AUSTIN: You still have your coffee in your hands?

JANINE: Yes, she is carrying a Flat White.

AUSTIN: Good, great, perfect, ideal. I had one right before we started.

JANINE: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: You, uh, yeah, you head in as you, as you head in, we get like the shot from the outside of this, of the Welcome Center, looking in as the rain begins to pour heavily. The light drizzle picks up to a, to a real, a real storm. And there is the sound of thunder, as you walk through another walkway, like, there's like a covered outside walkway? Like, it's a ground floor a walkway that goes between the different buildings? That has like a, like a roof over it? So you can like, walk through these walkways, and so you can see that it's pouring out here, but you go back, you go back to the cafe. And... I think you see the woman you met earlier. Caitlin, you see Angie, talking to somebody else in a kind of similarly, like inquisitive way? You don't know what that's about. You also see someone moving a... what looks like a painted backdrop that has like a tarp over it? Towards stage two. Which is not normally a thing you see these days. So it's like, protected from the rain, it's being wheeled on like a big pallet, it has like a huge black tarp over it. You don't know what the set, like what the thing is, but you know the size, you understand like, "Oh yeah, this is gonna be like some sort of backdrop or facade." We build them there sometimes but but for whatever reason, this is one being taken from the long term storage place in the south up past through, you know, the rest of the buildings. Eve, I'm curious what you're curious about on the set, or if you have questions, or if you have any, like,

SYLVIA: Oh, yeah, I'm immediately like,

SYLVIA (as Eve): Whoa, what do they do with that?

SYLVIA: Like...

JANINE (as Caitlin): Wait, which thing?

SYLVIA (as Eve): The thing they were wheeling by, right?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, that's I mean, that's, um, that's like a backdrop. It's a little weird that they're moving it? But I guess maybe they like want to like test the lights out on it or something, see...?

– 15:00 –

SYLVIA (as Eve): You think they'd let me take a peek? I mean, like, it's not exactly busy right now, right?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Um, it depends on what they're using it... for. The fact they're using it at all makes me think they may be doing like a weird... maybe they got someone in for like, a for like a test and they want to, I don't know. Sometimes, sometimes they do stuff like that. It might- but usually that's for projects that they haven't announced yet, so I don't know.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh. So I'd have to like sign a bunch of paper and stuff? And did that.

JANINE (as Caitlin): I mean, I don't know.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Okay. I guess like I heard the like, no, no disclosing agreement and stuff like that.

AUSTIN: (laughs) Yeah, the NDA.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah. I'm just like real curious. I want to know how they do it in like, like, I've never been to an actual TV production, like we filmed ads, back in my parents, but that's about it.

JANINE (as Caitlin): I mean, it's, um, maybe we can well...

AUSTIN: Let me give you the opportunity here. They like lean, they, you can kind of see that like the group that did this, one of the workers have kind of called back to like, grab, like, someone else's like, you know,

AUSTIN (as worker): (shouting) Hey Sheila, can you, can you come help me with this?

AUSTIN: And one of the people who is rolling it, like pushes up against a wall, and runs back down towards long term storage. Sheila runs back. And so, it is by itself.

JANINE: (apprehensively) Hmm... but we're in the cafeteria. (laugh)

AUSTIN: Well no no no, you're on your way, you're on your way.

JANINE: (overlapping) I thought we were like- ohh, okay, okay.

AUSTIN: That's why it was covered with a tarp was because it's being protected from rain. You're kind of walking between these different buildings right now. So I'm giving you the opportunity if you want to let your cousin run over and peek under a tarp.

(Sylvia and Janine laugh)

JANINE: I... am...It's so hard to imagine Caitlin is anything but like,

AUSTIN: (overlapping) A goodie, yeah, yeah.

JANINE: Super, super averse to taking any kind of risk, especially since she is like keeping her head down during this very prolonged strike and just kind of trying to maintain the status quo quietly in her corner things.

AUSTIN: Mm hmm.

SYLVIA: I can have Eve make a stronger pitch.

AUSTIN: No, no, we don't have to do it. You can just, that can be,

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Listen, you can just, that can be, no listen, I'm happy to leave the tarp covered for now. I get to show the barrel of a gun, you know? The barrel of a tarp. (laughs) The two of you go back to the cafeteria, to the actual cafe that's in the kind of- I'm imagining the cafeteria as being like a mini food court, you know?

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: That works with a bunch of chains? Certainly not local, businesses, despite what was promised, you know, part of the promise was that local businesses would be involved. It might be the case of they get signage for local businesses? But it's all like provided by Host Marriot services or whatever. The, the cafe line has kind of cleared out even in this little bit of time. As people see the storm is getting worse and are heading out. But the barista is still here. In fact, I think as you're buying, what do you, what is, what is Eve ordered to drink?

SYLVIA: Ah. I think just like, a nice cappuccino or something.

AUSTIN: Okay. The person working the cappuccino, or working the bari- as a barista. They say like:

AUSTIN (as barista): Whew, last, last order for the day. I gotta, we're closing up a little early. I hope that's okay. You want anything else before we- you know what? Here: Let me give you, both of you get a croissant because we're just gonna throw them out anyway, you know

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh!

AUSTIN (as barista): It's a long weekend, so it's not like we can, so like, here, here you go. Just two croissants on, on the house.

JANINE (as Caitlin): (overlapping) Thanks, thank you.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Everyone at this studio has been so nice to me so far.

(Austin laughs)

SYLVIA (as Eve): Thank you.

AUSTIN: Great, great. Y'all just like, sit down, and, and at a table?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I think so I can see them just like catching up over like, like really? Like banal stuff like, like, just like, very like casual small talk about like, "Oh, how's your blog doing? Did you- I brought you, like I brought some strawberries from the farm. I hope you can do something with them." Stuff like that, you know?

(Janine laughs)

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, totally. Uh, you see a familiar face. Probably both of you, because you've, this person has been in the news, as coming out of the Executive Lounge is the the kind of young wunderkind, Julian H. Bluff, also heading towards the cafe. Clearly looking for cup of coffee before anything closes up, and talking to the barista who like, shakes her head, and shakes their head and is like,

AUSTIN (as barista): Oh no, we just... ah...

AUSTIN: Points at you two. (laughs) And the CEO of this company, and the lead director and all these other creative positions that he's in, turns and looks at you two and goes:

AUSTIN (as Julian): Ah... you guys got the last coffees, huh?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Well you know what they say about saving the best, right?

AUSTIN (as Julian): Got me there. Julian. Nice to meet you both. Er, actually... you're um, uh... Miss Paul, right? Accounting?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Julian): You do great work. We really appreciate everything you do here at Bluff City Studios. Let me know if you need anything- is this a new employee that I have the privilege of meeting?

AUSTIN: Looking to you, Eve?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh! Oh gosh, no. Oh my god. I'm just visiting. I'm, I'm Cait's cousin. Eve, nice to meetcha.

AUSTIN (as Julian): Nice to meet you.

SYLVIA: Holds her hand out to shake it.

AUSTIN: Shakes your hand,

AUSTIN (as Julian): I hope you're finding our studio, um, uh, entertaining and hopefully a little bit enlightening. You know, we do our best to tell stories here that mean something to people, so, hopefully you get a little taste of that. I know it's a little rainy today, but um, you know, it's great to have you here... If anyone needs anything, please just just, you know, let someone know. (scoff) Not me.

(Janine laughs)

AUSTIN (as Julian): Because I'm gonna leave, because it's pouring, I'm gonna say. You should probably both head out soon, too, with the weather like this, huh?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah. We got to find Bart though. Before we go. I- I'm sorry, you are- my cousin, Dr. Bartholomew Asher? I don't know if you know, he, I think he's been on TV?

AUSTIN (as Julian): (overlapping) Oh, Dr. Bart? I love-

JANINE: (overlapping) Eve's a bit of a name-dropper, huh?

(Austin laughs)

SYLVIA: See, I was trying to do the other way where she doesn't realize that Bart's on TV, but that works too.

(Janine laughs)

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah.

SYLVIA: Where it's like "I don't know if you know him? He works here?"

AUSTIN: He works here. He's on TV, right- Ah, uh, and I think in that moment, Julian points up at the T- one of the TVs in the room, and was like,

AUSTIN (as Julian): That's your cousin.

AUSTIN: And we see Dr. Bart. How is your segment, by the way, going, Dr. Bart?

ANDREW: Ah- listen.

AUSTIN: Can we get a taste? Let's get a taste.

ANDREW: Dr. Bart is a professional.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Coming off of seeing a lion lunge at a person.

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You're pushed onto a soundstage.

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: What is the set for this- for "I'm A.M., R U?", like?

ANDREW: (laughs) Oh god.

AUSTIN: I think it's like faux- it's like, it's the set is from when they were making a push for millennials.

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: You know what I mean? That's why it's "I'm A.M., R U?"

ANDREW: God.

AUSTIN: And, so it's like fake tech. It's like a, fake social media backdrop. Like, like feed, but it's like, early Web 2.0 Twitter.

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, yes, Sylvia, it is styled all caps. I apostrophe m: I'm, A.M. capital A capital M. Then R: the letter R, then space U, the letter U, then question mark. 100%, that is how it is stylized, yes. So yeah, what is the what is the set like, where you do your stuff?

ANDREW: Oh... they probably just have the one set. It's probably not like a thing where it's like, oh, now we can cut to the kitchen,

AUSTIN: (laughs) No...

ANDREW: Or now we can cut to this other thing. God, it is probably some very-

AUSTIN: Oh, wait wait wait, let pre- let me pitch you something that what if they could and it's literally a non functioning versions of those things pulled in from stage two?

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So it's like, this is the kitchen. We're gonna cut you- cut to the kitchen set which has been wheeled over here a month ago that had previously been in one of our movies where there was a fight in a kitchen, you know what I mean?

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: The kitchen from Kill Bill, you know, like that style thing?

ANDREW: Perfect. Yes.

AUSTIN: So yeah, what do you, how is your, how, I- you know, is a situation where they just throw to you and you do like a monologue or is this a back and forth, where the two hosts like, ask you questions about... whatever you said it was today? Coconut aminos?

ANDREW: Oh yeah, no, it's definitely a back and forth because like it's, and it's probably Kelly playing like the "Oh, that sounds great." Like, "Oh, it's gluten free. That sounds great." And then the, what did you, what was-

AUSTIN: Brad. Brad. Brad Callahan. Brad the Bulldozer.

ANDREW: (simultaneously) Brad the Bulldozer? Being like "Wow, hey, but you know I'm just an all American guy. Is there anything here for me on this one?"

(Austin and Sylvia laugh)

AUSTIN (as Brad the Bulldozer): What's this gonna mean for my for my, what's the sports thing I do? The m- running fast.

(Andrew and Janine laugh)

AUSTIN (as Brad): Doing my, my 1040. That's not it. That's, that's an accounting thing. That's not it at all.

ANDREW: 40 times? Is that you-

AUSTIN: That's what it is, yeah.

AUSTIN (as Brad): What's this gonna do for my 40 time? My 40, trying to do 40 yard dashes.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Well, you know, coconut aminos have so much less sodium, than then like a regular soy sauce. Even a light soy sauce, and too much sodium is, is is a big cause of bloat. You know?

AUSTIN (as Brad): You don't want to be bloated. For y'all at home-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) Yeah lighter you, lighter you, faster 40.

AUSTIN (as Brad): Sodium, is a synonym for salt.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): That's true.

AUSTIN (as Brad): You don't want too much of that.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No.

AUSTIN (as Brad): Dr. Bart knows, you know- Dr. Bart doesn't talk about this too much: Dr. Bart, great athlete in his day.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I, you know, I, you know, I'm, hey I'm nothing compared to you. I just played a little D3 ball.

AUSTIN (as Brad): Yeah you played D3, but I watched, I watch what you did, you did some good stuff out there. I think you could have had a great career in your future if not for the whole thing. Anyway, coconut aminos man. What are you? (scoff) Coconut aminos, am I right?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, naw, check them out. I mean, you know, it's I know, it's it's getting rainy out there. But if you're looking for just a little extra bit of umami and Thanksgiving meal,

AUSTIN (as Brad): Now, that's what I was gonna ask, Dr. Bart. I was curious, how could you work in a coconut... amino? ah-mino?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Amino. Yeah, no, you got it, first time.

AUSTIN (as Brad): A coconut amino into a nice American turkey dinner?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Well, you know, I think it's-

AUSTIN (as Brad): (overlapping) Do you bast it? You do a bast? Or do you do like a nice-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, or I think you could even, you know, a lot of times if you're using traditional soy sauce, you're going to use that as a main part in a lot of glazes.

AUSTIN (as Brad): Of course.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): So you could probably use a, you know, a, coconut aminos as a glaze for your turkey. So, you know, while you're roasting it, maybe glaze it a couple times. Just to give it a little extra, a little extra color and just a little hint of, a little taste there.

AUSTIN: And as you say taste there, there is a thunderclap, and all of the lights in the building go off.

AUSTIN (as producer): Ah, shit. Ah-

AUSTIN: Taber, the producer, comes out. He's like,

AUSTIN (as Taber): Are we, are we still up? Are we, Control?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I hope- I hope you're not because you just, you just said a bad word. That's an FCC fine.

AUSTIN (as Taber): Yeah, I'm not on a microphone. All right, buddy?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): You said it loud.

AUSTIN (as Taber): The techs know how to dial the mics in. We're not up? Fuck this. Wha-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (quietly) That's two...

AUSTIN (as Taber): All right, everybody. Let's strike for the day. We'll... agggghh.

AUSTIN: And, like, walks out. He's like,

AUSTIN (as Taber): I don't have time for this today. (grunt of frustration)

AUSTIN: I think, at this point, I think in the d- you know, the emerg- the red emergency lights turn on, and then in the dark... we get, a... what's his face? What did I just say his name was? Brad. Brad Callahan. Brad the Bulldozer, is like,

AUSTIN (as Brad): Now listen, Bart, I just want to make sure we didn't go across any lines. I know that stuff can get touchy. I just... I'm trying to be ex- more extemporaneous?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, no, hey.

AUSTIN (as Brad): My agent says? I got to try to be more, to connect to the people, make it feel like you're in a living room with them. You know?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Hey, yeah, no, listen, you know, it's sometimes, I'm a little sore, got to do some extra stretches in the morning, but it, you know, it's 20 years ago.

AUSTIN (as Brad): Yeah, I feel you.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I'm good.

AUSTIN (as Brad): All right, bud, well I hope you have a great Thanksgiving,

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, you too.

AUSTIN (as Brad): Yeahyeahyeah, okay. I'll catch you, I'll catch you after.

AUSTIN: And Kelly, just immediately takes off, like, her microphone, pulls up her phone and it's like texting someone. Is like-

AUSTIN (as Kelly): Whoof, actually it's really bad out there. Have a great holiday, Bart.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, you too, Kelly.

ANDREW: I want to text DeSean.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah. What do you send?

ANDREW: It says: "Hey DeSean" and then it says, "Do you know what the", and then in quotation marks "DL", and then in parentheses "(lol)"

(Janine and Austin laugh)

ANDREW: "is with this lion?????"

AUSTIN: (laughs) Ah... um... he says... it takes him a second to reply. And he says, "I know? Without Quandre Diggs, what are they going to do?"

(Andrew and Sylvia laugh)

ANDREW: "lol, but no really,"

(Austin laughs)

ANDREW: "I saw some of the security guards chasing down a lion outside."

AUSTIN: He sends back "BRUH".

ANDREW: (laughs) Appropriate response.

AUSTIN: And then an emoji of a lion. And then "What? Who?"

ANDREW: I forget the names you gave me.

AUSTIN: Gary is the chief. Gary, James, and Michael.

ANDREW: Yeah. I don't know if, I don't know if-

AUSTIN: You would know Gary, at least.

ANDREW: Yeah, I'd say Gary and two other guys.

AUSTIN: He sends back: "Hold on." He goes "Hold on." and then takes a beat, and goes: "Imma look into that for you"

— 30:00 —

AUSTIN: Hey, to Eve and Caitlin, the power goes off, and emergency power turns on. The same type of red light here

JANINE: Oh fuck, I didn't save my work.

AUSTIN: Ohhh.

ANDREW: Aww.

JANINE: It's fine, Office does backups now I think. Probably. Sometimes? Sometimes.

SYLVIA (as Eve): We're like safe right? (nervous laugh)

JANINE (as Caitlin): It's a studio. What would be wrong?

SYLVIA (as Eve): I don't know. I don't know. This just looks of all I know is the lights just went off and then other lights came on that are much creepier.

JANINE (as Caitlin): I work here every day. Do you think I would work somewhere where the only thing keeping me safe was some lights? It's just a studio, you know?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Look, Cait, I'm not gonna judge your life decisions, okay?

AUSTIN: Wow.

JANINE (as Caitlin): You say that now but when I released that, when I released the quinoa/soy/hummus stuffing, you were very judgy.

(Austin laughs)

SYLVIA (as Eve): No, see now that I guess actually would be- that, that one actually seemed more dangerous than this, so, you're right, I should I should have trusted you then, I should trust you now.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: The flash flood warnings hit your phones and it does that - or not yours I guess, Eve, because yours is charging with DeSean... but Caitlin, your phone does like that high pitched like emergency thing for flash flooding. And, at this point it's like one of those moments like you look around and you realize you're the only people in the cafeteria. What do you do?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Ah, maybe we should try and meet up with Dr. Bart and see about maybe heading out?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah. Do you, did you recognize the set he was in on the TV before it went out?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, I mean, that's the, they always- that's the one they always do.

(Austin laughs)

SYLVIA (as Eve): I mean, I don't know, I mean I don't know where it is, is what I'm saying. Can you show me?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah we can, yeah yeah yeah. Let's go, let's go. Take the croissant? Don't forget it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you just gonna leave it there? You just go-

SYLVIA: No, no, I'm taking it.

AUSTIN: Alright, good. On your way across the, like, the campus: in the rain, or like, under these, these kind of like, these covered walkways- as you walk past stage two you see kind of like a heavysset, balding Italian dude with a big cigar in his mouth? Just like, leaning against the one of the doors? Or next to one of the doors, under the covering, who you've never seen here before, Caitlin. Just, you know, dotting your day with strange faces basically. So- and also does not seem perturbed by whatever is happening right now. Back in stage one: at this point, the power kind of comes back on. They're just playing some sort of like, you know? What do you call it... like a rerun? I guess? Of a show, or they're like, they're pumping out some pre-recorded bits. And Dr. Bart, you get text back, and it says "You're not gonna believe this. They said it was like a robot." And then the robot emoji.

(Sylvia and Andrew laugh)

JANINE: And the lion emoji?

AUSTIN: And the li- and the lion emoji. Yeah. He says "Animatronic, like Disney?"

ANDREW: "You're right. I don't believe that, because they were shooting it with guns." Gun emoji.

AUSTIN: (laughs) And, ah, he says "Where you at?"

ANDREW: Um, I think I text back "Stage one, but probably heading your way soon to leave."

AUSTIN: He says back: "What about our talk? It will be quick."

ANDREW: And I think, "Yeah, that's why I'm headed your way before I leave."

AUSTIN: Ok- he says "Okay." And put the like, Blessed Hands- (mic bump) Oop, I hit my microphone because I was doing the, the prayer hands emoji. Sylvia, I'm sorry I had you on the most emoji intensive-

SYLVIA: No, I'm glad I'm here.

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: It's in your element, I'm sure.

SYLVIA: It's really helping me feel comfortable.

AUSTIN: Oh, good.

(Sylvia laughs)

ANDREW: So I think I probably also would like group text, Eve and Caitlin to say like, "Hey, I'm heading to the Welcome Center. You know, are you here yet? Eve?"

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Can you tell, can you tell him I'm here but I don't have my phone on me right now? Just text him, thanks.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeahyeahyeahyeah, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: What do you send back?

JANINE: I think, I think Caitlin sends back "Ya", y-a, and then probably goes into a phone, into her, into the like, thing where it pulls a bunch of random gifs and like, searches for like "on my way" or something and just picks the first gif that comes up when you do that.

AUSTIN: Mmm.

JANINE: I'm now curious what that is, though.

AUSTIN: Yeah, what is it? I want to know what it is.

JANINE: I'm, I'm working on it, I'm working on it. I have to fake text you to find out.

ANDREW: Oh wow, the first one on Discord gif is great.

AUSTIN: What is it? You should send it. Oh, that's dope.

ANDREW: (overlapping) Just, just look at Discord. (laughs)

(Sylvia and Janine laugh)

AUSTIN: I also didn't see this fake social media set. That's very good, Janine.

JANINE: I thought it let me, it won't even let me search. Just pretend it's the one with a car. The car one's good.

AUSTIN: The car one's good. You want to describe what that is? Like Initial D drifting?

JANINE: Yeah it's like real life Initial D.

AUSTIN: Yeah, love it. Tokyo Drift, it's here. Alright, so I'm not gonna like, beat around the bush, I think the three of you are able to meet up in the Welcome Center, and museum where DeSean is settling in for the rest of, the rest of the day. But it's been basically cleared out beyond that. And DeSean sees all of you, and is like

AUSTIN (as DeSean Williams): Yo Eve, phone is charged.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh, thank you, thanks. (sigh)

AUSTIN: And like, tosses that to you. Which, don't do that with phones! Hand phones to people.

SYLVIA: Yeah. I actually-

AUSTIN: But DeSean like, flips it-

SYLVIA (as Eve): Hey, careful with that.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I mean, you caught it. You're good. I'm good.

(Sylvia sighs)

AUSTIN (as DeSean): You know, we talked about ball earlier. Ball is life. So I figured it'd keep you on your toes.

(Andrew cackles)

JANINE (as Caitlin): I have a promo code for good phone cases. If you want one. If you wanna order.

(Austin laughs)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, mine is kind of this kind of falling apart. So,

JANINE (as Caitlin): Like a, they're called Chroma. It's like, the side part's separate, and the back part is like, you can swap it out with different designs.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Ooh.

JANINE (as Caitlin): It's very- I got, I put it on my phone, and now it's really hard to get it off. But I guess that means it's doing its job.

SYLVIA (as Eve): I'm pretty sure that's how they work.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Um, I'm not trying to interrupt the whole family situation. I know it's a holiday, but DB. Can we get, can I get five?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, absolutely.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): All right, so, let me, do you want to get like a coffee? Do you want to just like, hang out in the booth?

JANINE (as Caitlin): (overlapping) There's no coffee.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): There's no coffee...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, it's, it's also, it's getting pretty bad out there. We should probably just, just hang here.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah, that's fine. Can we get some privacy?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, sure. Um, Eve, do you want to come look at the, there's like a puppet over here?

AUSTIN: Yeah, there's a puppet for sure.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Creepy, let's go!

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Alright, DB, so I don't know how much you pay attention to the whole strike thing outside. Everyday we come in, we got to drive past those people.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I know that like... they're right. I mean, I don't know numbers but- I don't know what they're being paid, but I bet it is not as much as you know, Mr. Bluff is making, like, in terms of what he's doing and all that, and I feel bad about it. So I think Imma quit, and just like, go, I dunno, one of the casinos, Caesars or whatever, and see if they have spots. But, you know, I always wanted to be on TV. And I thought this was going to be like, step one. So it feels like I'm giving up my dream. I know you're not gonna be like, just drink your cocono aminos.

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Coco- Coconomos, and...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Oh, you saw that, huh?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeahhhhhh, you like- they put it out here. They show it everywhere.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): That's not- it wasn't my best segment.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): It's fine. You did all right. It wasn't so bad, I wasn't like, "Yeah don't even worry about coming through and talking to me."

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN (as DeSean): That would have been bad. If it was bad, I would have been like, "Have a good holiday". Anyway, what do you think? Do you think... you think I should stick around? Like, I know it's a moral thing, but like, you're still a doctor. So if you have a doctorate that means you know some shit.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, it's your life, man. If... I think if you have a dream, you're gonna make it happen. And if you feel like where you are now, doesn't make you feel good, then, you know, life's too short.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah. You think that's how it works, like you have a dream. You dream it hard enough, it becomes real?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, I'd like to think it does, enough times that it's worth trying, you know? It's, I'm not, I'm not a kid anymore. You know, I'm not gonna tell you that like, "Oh yeah, that's all it takes."

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): "Is just, just a dream and hard work", you know? But...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah. I mean, I guess it worked for Julian right? 25 years ago, he was like- 20 years ago, he was like, some kid on a sitcom. You know, talking about "It wasn't me!" Just, every time, the end of the episode. "It wasn't me!" And he just said that enough times that he bought all this. Plus Shaggy made that song about him saying it wasn't me.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) Yeah. Mmm hmm.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): That was him. That was about him. Anyway-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I saw this video on YouTube where they like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (overlapping) Yeah?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Cut over Julian saying "It wasn't me", like over that part of the song?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah, but over the part of the song. "It wasn't me!". Yeah, I saw that. That was good. (laugh) My boy actually tried to make that first. But we didn't have the software. So we just did our best impression off it. And that didn't- didn't really fly. What... (pause) What do you think is up with these lions?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, I don't know. I mean, you know, like, I guess they're doing some kind of shoot or something that has like animal talent, or something and I guess... one of them got out?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): There's supposed to be special people, there's supposed to be special people if there's animal talent. And I'm supposed get paid more if there's dangerous animals. And no one told me shit about extra pay this week. Also, it's a holiday! Who was doing lion shoots, today?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I don't like it. I'm supposed to be here all night. There's gonna be lions stalking around, what am I- hmm.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Wait, you're here all night?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah yeah yeah. I picked up-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Even with the weather, and the holiday?

AUSTIN (as DeSean) It was Barry's shift, and, I wanted some extra time to think on everything. I thought like, you know what, Imma stay here. Imma think through it. At midnight. I'll go home. I'll trade off, and then... I'll go home and talk to my Ma, and then tomorrow on Thanksgiving, we get everybody together, I'll make the announcement one way or the other, you know?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, are you...like, are you gonna be alright here?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah. What? Pssssh. Come on. It's, what is it, rain? Come on. The lion is the thing now, this is what I'm saying! (laughs)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (laughs) Yeah, that's what I'm saying!

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Is- I made the decision before I knew lions were involved! Anyway, I hope you have a good holiday DB. You're a real one. I'll let you know what I decide. You better stay in touch, though. If I leave, you cannot like, just like, juke on me, I need to, we need to stay in touch.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Like on Facebook. Add me to Facebook.

AUSTIN: He says. Also you're not seeing what I'm doing with my hands. But I'm kind of like, working back and forth in this kind of, really... non-rhythmic motion, it's good. Don't worry about it.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I didn't, I didn't, I didn't think like, I didn't think folks your age were still doing Facebook.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): No, but my family's all on Facebook, and my family's important me. That's why I'm still doing this.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): So... and also I figured you were- I wasn't going to be like, "Yo, follow me on Tik Tok" (laugh) cuz, no offence.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (laughs) Wait, what's, hey what's, what is that?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (overlapping) You know what? You know what? You know what? ACTUALLY...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) Wait, what's Tik Tok?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): You know what? We should shoot a Tik Tok. Alright, (clap) let's go.

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: And we cut from that, to, to the cousins.

JANINE (as Caitlin): So his name's Tippy Toe, right? And he was in this movie. I forget what the movie was. It was like... The... Big... Thing... Uh... (laughs) Happens...

AUSTIN: (laughs) The Big Thing, that's what it was called.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah, that sounds familiar.

AUSTIN: It was the, it was the puppet-based sequel to The Big Short. Adam McKay, really was on one.

(Andrew laughs)

JANINE (as Caitlin): It was like a sidekick character, right? And... he like ran around in the background a lot? Like he kinda- that's why he's got the legs. So like, when he's moving, they kind of bounce? They skitter? That's why they're on the wires like that.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah that's, I was gonna say, the legs are really sort of drive home the whole unsettling vibe of this thing.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, and they like, have it mounted like that because-

JANINE: (breaking into laughter) Sorry, I can't...

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JANINE: I can't talk about puppets when I'm-

AUSTIN: (overlapping) You can do it. You can do it. I believe in you.

JANINE (as Caitlin): They have it mounted like that because the- because like, the back rotted off? Because they weren't really storing it properly. They stored it on the back, and then, the trunk- there was like a, it was like a, they had like an ice machine, and then it leaked, so the the entire back? Like the foam gets all crumbly?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Ohh.

JANINE (as Caitlin): And kind of rots out. And things like, kinda crawling in there? So they had to, just kind of saw that part off, and then put it they like glued it on the Bristol board. So it's why it looks like that.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Show business is so interesting.

JANINE (as Caitlin): It's- there's a lot of science that you don't think about.

— 45:00 —

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah, you know, like it really is adds to the glitz and glamour of it all.

AUSTIN: Um... there's another loud crash of thunder, and your alarms go off one more time, with the note that the bridges to Bluff City are being shut down, In... or have been shut down. Why, why give you the clock, you know?

SYLVIA: The bridges to Buffington Beach?

AUSTIN: To Bluffington Beach, sorry, not Bluff City, to Bluffton Beach. To Atlantic City. Yeah. That are just like, "They're flooding and for your safety, we have shut them down." In fact, I think it's like starts playing through a loudspeaker as like, the local radio gets piped in, and it's like,

AUSTIN (as radio announcer) The storm hasn't moved on. To all residents, we advise you stay indoors until the storm has passed. We're predicting only another hour, or so of this. So everything should be okay. Just stay safe out there, Bluffington Beach. And Atlantic City, too.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Soooo... we're stuck then? Does that, that's, I'm reading this right, right? We're stuck here?

SYLVIA: That's in character.

JANINE: Ah, what time is it?

AUSTIN: It's like, 3:30, 4:00pm.

JANINE: So that's a bit- okay. You think... hmm.

AUSTIN: (laughs) Yeah, Dre says "Damn, storm announcement ruined my Tik Tok debut". DeSean was like, filming you, and then- you nailed the take, you hit- what is, what were you shooting? What was the bit?

ANDREW: I think it starts with with Bart saying

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): What's a Tik Tok?

AUSTIN: Yeah, (laughs) exactly. And then, he's like

AUSTIN (as DeSean): No, do it again! And then do- Okay, you gotta do the Shoot.

AUSTIN: And just trying to teach you how to do the Shoot dance, and...

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: You nail it, but in the middle of recording, the alarm went off, the notification went off, and it ruined- it stopped filming. (laughs) Sylvia says "he hit the 'Whoa' perfectly." Absolutely.

(Andrew laughs)

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: God. Um... yeah. Yeah. So yes, you're stuck here. I think as you're moving through like, the museum, the camera begins to more readily bring certain things into focus, or like, eagle eyed viewers, certainly would notice this when the Blu-ray hits, but like... in fact, I think maybe it signals very clearly. There's a point at which y'all like, leave stage right from the shot? And behind you is a, a... small set that's like, on a pedestal, of like a zoo? Like a lion cage? That, where the bars have been opened, and behind it, it says, "The Vows of the Lions". And it is like, a like a high- like a madcap comedy? That Bluff City Studios produced. And we get our first little taste of what might be happening here. What are the, what are the three of you plus DeSean do?

JANINE: I'm like, looking at my phone to see if like Cheesecake Factory or something is open, because that's like a good place to kill an hour right?

AUSTIN: It is. The thing is, you know that you're kind of in a shitty place? If you scroll down and look at the map here. The bridges that are closed are the ones that would take you... like, you're stuck on this little, mid island in between the mainland and Bluffington Beach.

JANINE: Ohh, right.

ANDREW: Hmm.

JANINE: Yeah...

AUSTIN: You're like on this little tiny island. So like you, you can't even, like, do the unadvisable thing of getting in the car going five minutes to a, you know, a family restaurant, or whatever. A fast casual. Not fast casual- What are those called? What are... it's not fast casual. You know what I mean.

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like a chain restaurant. So yeah, you're kind of stuck here.

JANINE: And we're like pretty much the only people that are still, kicking around, like?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Um... there's still some activity. You've seen- again, like, there have been people- Oh, you know what, I think maybe this is the moment where like, you see, Angie shows up in the same kind of Welcome Center heading towards the parking lot. She has on like, a long, like, trench coat, and, like, is hiding her frizzy hair under a hat. And, like a baseball cap, keeping her head down, like hiding her face. But she sees you and she's like,

AUSTIN (as Angie Florres): Oh, uh, Caitlin, right?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, Angie.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Yeah, um. Rain, huh?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, they closed the bridges.

AUSTIN (as Angie): They what?

JANINE (as Caitlin): They close- Didn't you hear the thing?

AUSTIN (as Angie): No, I had to give my phone...

JANINE (as Caitlin): They had the, they had the, like...

JANINE: Wasn't it an announcement, didn't you say? That was on the speakers and screens?

AUSTIN: It was, yeah. So it's weird that she didn't hear it.

JANINE (as Caitlin): No, it was- you didn't you hear? It was...

JANINE: I would- Is it a recorded announcement? Is- or is it like a person, in an office somewhere?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) It was a person speaking, it was a person speaking, yeah.

JANINE: Does that person have a name that Caitlin would know?

AUSTIN: It was a, it was a radi- it was actually a radio announcement, like, they were pumping local radio in basically, and turned it up.

JANINE: (overlapping) Okay, okay, okay.

JANINE (as Caitlin): It was on the, yeah, they, they like broadcast the thing. They said the bridges are closed.

AUSTIN (as Angie): (whispering) The bridges are closed... (normally) Okay, well... um...

JANINE (as Caitlin): They said, it'll be over in like an hour though, so you just kind of, you know.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Yeah, yeahyeahyeahyeahyeahyeah, I just gotta get something out. Let me, um, uh, security?

AUSTIN: And DeSean turns around and is like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yes, you checked in before. Uh, duhdatatdatdat... Ms. Flores, right? Uh, Press? Okay, here you go.

AUSTIN: And she's like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): (whispering) ...don't say- (sigh)

AUSTIN: And like, takes the phone back. She is not who she said she was. She is very clearly here under false pretenses. And is like, heads off into a corner to sit down with her phone, like, beyond the security booth, like so ba- on the other side of like, the metal detector and stuff. Sits down and starts to type something out pretty rapidly on her phone.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Did she say- can I ask? Did she say who she was like, with?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Oh that's Angie, that's, it's Angie Flores. You know, from the press? Press of Atlantic City? She's like-

JANINE (as Caitlin): I don't read a lot of papers.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): All right, well. She's local-

JANINE (as Caitlin): Do they have like, an online...

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, you can go online. Yeah. She's just like a, local, you know, whatever. She comes in sometimes and tours the museum, I guess. I don't know. I don't really... my job is to take her phone and that is it, you know, and be like, "Hey, you don't have any weapons on you or anything" and she doesn't. And then, from that point if someone comes and gets her, you know, that's, that's that. But I give her... she's here like once a week, basically.

AUSTIN: He might know more than he is saying, for sure. He's definitely like, you've sign- you have seen people si- I guess, Eve, you signed in earlier and you know, someone has to sign you in.

SYLVIA: Right? Yeah. Who, am I, I'm probably listening to this conversation.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah, definitely.

SYLVIA: It's like,

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh, well, like, who... helped her in, then? Because you had to call...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Who... who helped w-who? Who helped who?

SYLVIA (as Eve): The- Angie? Was that her name?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (overlapping) Oh yeah, I guess she knows someone here or what whenever. Um, yeah. That's, you know-

JANINE (as Caitlin): And they just like, let her walk around every week? Just like, being Press? And she just like, walks around?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): No! No, no, no.

AUSTIN: This seems like a Take A Risk: Sharp, from someone. Probably Eve, who pressed the issue first.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Your Take A Risk is wounded, as a, as a reminder. So that's, but also you have, what, you have +1 to-

SYLVIA: Yeah, so I-

AUSTIN: (overlapping) You have +2, to this, actually.

SYLVIA: Do I?

AUSTIN: Because, you have, this is Take A Risk, and you get +1 on- oh no, sorry, this is Sharp, I said? Right?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Not, yeah yeah. Sorry. Sorry sorry. So yeah, +1.

(roll)

SYLVIA: (dejectedly) That's a 5.

AUSTIN: That is a- Ooh, that's bad. (laugh)

SYLVIA: Yeah, it is.

AUSTIN: That ain't, even on the, you have the good Wounded,

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It's still not good. Ah, so yeah, "When you attempt at something risky, roll-"

SYLVIA: Oh, I rolled 1d6 there.

AUSTIN: Oh, you did! Roll another d6. Whew! (roll)

SYLVIA: Hey! That's actually really good.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Ohhh, look at that.

(Janine laughs)

SYLVIA: That's an 11.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) That's actually an 11. Yeah. Whew! All right. So,

(Sylvia laughs)

AUSTIN: "On a 10+, it goes as well as can be hoped." DeSean goes like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (quietly) Ohhhhhh, fuck. I- hmm.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): DeSean, it's cool, man.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): It might- I guess, (laugh/scoff) you know what, I'm gonna quit anyway. Uh, but you have to promise me, not to sue me.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Ju... why would I sue you?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Not you, uh, Caitlin. I guess, Caitlin's not a lawyer, but-

JANINE (as Caitlin): (overlapping) I don't, I don't do the lawyer stuff. I just kinda...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (overlapping) But- ok, well, don't, don't narc on me.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, don't sue my friend.

JANINE: She-

JANINE (as Caitlin): I mean, look, there's-

AUSTIN (as DeSean): That, you know what, DB? Damn, DB a real- mm! That's right, DB! That's right. Fuck yeah. All right. So, okay... (quietly) I told, I told Dr. Bart, I've been feeling, you know, some sort of way about all this, you know, strike stuff. And Angie and me go back. We were in high school together. She is reporting on the situation. And she told me it doesn't make sense, that the studio isn't losing more money. And so she wanted to come see what was up with that. And also there was a slate of new movies coming out that investors got told about, but when were they shooting those new movies? Stage two's been shut down all year. So... yeah, I signed her in. I sign her in once a week.

ANDREW: I think at, I think, uh...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): The end of the week, the last, last few hours of the week. And that is it.

ANDREW: I think Bart says a little too loudly.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Oh, I wonder if the lion's for stage two!

AUSTIN: And Angie, I think, just like stands up, (laugh) at hearing that?

AUSTIN (as Angie): Excuse me, did you say lions?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Did you say lions?!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Ahhhhhh...

ANDREW: (laughs) And I think he looks at DeSean.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah, yeah, that's what I want- Yeah! Yeah, he said lions. (laughs)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Ah, shit. Yeah, I did say lions.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Oh, I'm sorry, was that like, a look of, "Shhh!" Be- like.. What was that? I don't know- (sigh) I guess we're not that tight yet DB, sorry, I didn't mean to blow up your spot.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No you're, no you're good.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah they're... Angie, come meet, this is Dr. Bart. You know, me and, me and DB go back a while- not as far as you and me, Angie, but you know, DB's, DB has my back. And then this is... Caitlin, from Accounting?

AUSTIN: And Angie's like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): We met.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Mmm.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): And, please excuse the Nets jersey, but this Eve, who is like, related to them, or whatever. Seems very nice.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Hi. Uh, Eve. Nice to meet you.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Nice to meet you. Good luck this season.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Thanks!

AUSTIN (as Angie): So what's the deal with the lions?

(pause)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I had, I don't know? I saw one, outside.

AUSTIN (as Angie): You saw a lion outside?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, that's what it looks like? So I-

JANINE (as Caitlin): That's not!.. We don't have any... (sigh)

AUSTIN (as Angie): Where would you keep a lion?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) That's a great question.

JANINE (as Caitlin): We don't have any, you know, they keep, they keep the accounts pretty compartmentalised between us so, we don't really, I can't say for sure that we don't have anyone on the, on the books this month, but like, I usually handle special personnel for things like that. And we don't have any animal trainers booked in, or handlers... we're kinda not, not, cause, they're so staff intensive, handling in scene with animals. That's...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I just, I was, I was getting ready. I was rehearsing my, not great segment, and...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): It was-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I heard what I thought was a gunshot. So I went outside to like, see what was going on, see if anyone was hurt, and there were, three security folks with guns and we don't, we don't, they don't carry guns around here, and then... they yelled at me for having my my phone out, and then I pretty sure I saw a lion almost maul somebody.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Alrigh-

JANINE (as Caitlin): We definitely don't shoot the lions either, that's a big- there's a lot of, there's a lot of animal cruelty, production..

AUSTIN (as Angie): Where did you see them?

JANINE (as Caitlin): That's a big no no.

AUSTIN: (laughs) New no nos.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Where did you- where...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, it was out, it was outs- you're not gonna go...

AUSTIN (as Angie): Yeah, what? Yes!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): You're not gonna go look for a lion in this storm!

AUSTIN (as Angie): It sounds like, okay, well then where's securi- how come, uh, DeSean doesn't know...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): They didn't tell me shit, they told me there were robots! (laughs)

AUSTIN: Angie is like-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Oh, that's- oh, that's what the emoji- Okay, now I get the emojis. Okay. Okay.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah, they're-

JANINE (as Caitlin): I don't... we don't have any robot handlers in the budget right now, either!

(Austin laughs)

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I'm just saying that... I don't trust those dudes. The securit- the like, they are real mean to us front door people. They always like, belittle us. They tell us that we ain't shit. They... I'll be honest, I think Gary's a racist piece of shit. Wouldn't surprise me he shoots at a lion. He probably hates the Lion King.

AUSTIN: Angie's like, all right, DeSean.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I like, I like the Lion King a lot.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah, yeah, me too.

(pause)

JANINE: That was the most, that was the most fucking, like, I have black friends line ever.

SYLVIA: (laughing) Yeah!

ANDREW: Uh huh! Uh huh!

JANINE: It's like, "I really like the Lion King!"

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AUSTIN: Uh huh!

JANINE: I saw it on Broadway.

AUSTIN: (laughing) I voted for the Lion King for president twice! I would have voted for Simba for president a third time if I could!

SYLVIA: I even liked the remake.

AUSTIN: I loved the remake, yeah. Um... (sigh)

JANINE: That Beyonce soundtrack, she is incredible.

AUSTIN: She is a gift. Um, Angie-

JANINE: (deadpan) Yaas, queen, am I right?

AUSTIN: (laugh) That's comes after "I'M A.M., R U?"

(Andrew and Janine laugh)

AUSTIN: Angie is like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): You're gon- (sigh) either, either I need to talk to these security guys, or you need to take me to where this lion situation is. The people need to know, if there are lions, on the loose, in Atlantic City!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): We're, okay...

JANINE (as Caitlin): Well they won't be on the loose, because the bridge is out.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, the bridge is out.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Yeah, but they could- lions can swim!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Can they??

JANINE (as Caitlin): (overlapping) I don't think they like it, though.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Yeah, but if they're hungry-

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Hold on, I'm gonna google if a lion can swim.

JANINE (as Caitlin): The water's very cold here. I don't think they would do well.

AUSTIN: Dre, when you go to google that, you notice...

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: That, you don't have a connection to the internet anymore. The Wifi here is out.

(Andrew groans)

AUSTIN: And so you go into airplane mode- or you turn off Wifi. You turn to go into airplane mode, you come back so you try to get like the, connection faster, and the storm has knocked out your connection to the Internet.

ANDREW: Okay.

JANINE: You don't even have LTE?

AUSTIN: Does not even have LTE. Doesn't even have an Edge. You go in,

JANINE: Damn.

AUSTIN: You drop off LTE to try to get like, that low latency, that- or that, low level Edge connection that's still out there? 4g connection? No, gone.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Well, okay, well, okay, even if they could swim, I doubt they're swimming in this storm.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Okay, well what if they just wait it out?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, and then there will be other people that could see a lion coming. (pause) Listen, I'm not gonna tell you where this lion is because I don't want you to get killed by a lion!

AUSTIN (as Angie): Well then take me to see Gary, or whoever.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (pause) I don't know where he is!

AUSTIN (as DeSean): He's um, they, they have like, a thing. They turn part of stage two into like, a security situation. In the like, I, I can show you. There's like, a secondary security room. I don't- (sigh) You know what, let me just go lock up.

AUSTIN: And he runs up to the front door, and like, locks- and also, at this point, it should be clear: outside, the strike has, the people? They left. When it got real bad, they're like, "Time to go!" (laugh)

SYLVIA: Also, we haven't mentioned it, but I don't want the listeners to worry: Peaches is in here with us.

AUSTIN: I'm sorry.

(Janine laughs)

AUSTIN: Yeah, Peaches is safe. Peaches is safe. DeSean is petting Peaches right now. If Peaches will let him do that?

SYLVIA: Yeah, Peaches is a very good dog. Very well trained.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I gotta tell you, I gotta tell you, this is the best dog I ever met, Eve.

SYLVIA (as Eve): She's a professional.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): She's, we should get her on TV. This is my new dream. I'm gonna get,

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) Can you-

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I'm gonna get Peaches on television.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Can you teach- what was the, what was the dance that you had me...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I don't- (sigh) You can't teach a dog a dance. Well, you could, but you could not- you, I don't... I'm not trying to take anything away from Peaches. I don't think that Peaches could do the Shoot or the Whoa. (laugh) But maybe that's, Eve, maybe I'm wrong?

SYLVIA (as Eve): I mean, we could- you know, people have said that about a lot of things, and, you never know until you try.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): That's true. That's true.

JANINE (as Caitlin): You could do the Mr. Sandman one. I like that one. You have a bunch of them?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh yeah, that's a good one.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah.

AUSTIN: (laughs) Perfect. DeSean lowers like, a gate, from like, the entry, the entrance thing? It's like a big heavy metal like, grate, that covers the whole thing. And then, turns to lead y'all back outside into the covered rain, like, walkway? Which at this point, it's so windy that the rain is, like, going horizontal, you know?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Hey, are we su- are we sure about this? I mean, it's, it's bad outside. DeSean, this was gonna be your last day...

AUSTIN (as DeSean): It is gonna be my last day at this point. If there's lions on the loose, I don't want to work here.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Well, yeah, so like, why don't you just wait out the storm, and then you can like, go home?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Alright. I- (sigh) hmm.

AUSTIN: I think, I think you're going to need to convince him... you're not gonna convince Angie, right? Like, Angie is here- Angie is an investigative reporter who wants to figure this out, but if you, if you convince him, he will not help her. That will be Take A Risk. And I would say this is either Sharp or Steady. What do you think?

ANDREW: Um...

AUSTIN: I think you're appealing to reason here, so probably Sharp, right? Not-

ANDREW: (overlapping) Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: You're not like, in an argument. Sharp is, requires mental acuity, Study is, requires emotional fortitude and nerves.

ANDREW: But I think could, I also kind of like the idea of rolling Steady here?

AUSTIN: Yeah...

ANDREW: Because like, this is, this is Bart being like, the most herb-ass herb he could be.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're right.

ANDREW: And like, DeSean, like, would probably not respond to that.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ANDREW: So I kind of, I-

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Give- gimme a Steady.

ANDREW: A -1 Steady. So I kind of like the idea of doing this.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I respect it.

(roll)

ANDREW: Yeah, 6.

AUSTIN: That is a 6! Um... and so here's what happens. He goes:

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (sigh) You know what? (sigh) Naw, man, I think this is too important. Angie, Imma show you where those lions are.

AUSTIN: And like, it isn't, he is not-

JANINE: Guar- guards?

AUSTIN: He is not going for the guards now.

JANINE: (overlapping) Looking for the guards, right? Oh, okay, fuck.

AUSTIN: No, because Dre failed that roll. Um, and he's like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): If there's lions out here, we got to get footage of them. Because that is, if it's putting people in danger. If this was not a holiday weekend, this place would have been filled with people! And there's loose lions, and guns! Angie's right, like, we got to get footage of that. And then people kind of see that.

AUSTIN: And so, he starts leading her out the door

ANDREW: (quietly) God.

AUSTIN: Towards the area, you told him, you saw lions.

ANDREW: Okay... I mean, I'm gonna chase after them.

AUSTIN: Caitlin and Eve. What are you two doing?

SYLVIA: Ah... gosh, I'm not sure.

JANINE: Caitlin is looking at Eve. (laughs)

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

SYLVIA: Sorry, can I just rem- get a quick refresh on where we- we were outside, right? We're h-

AUSTIN: (overlapping) You were like, about to head outside from the Welcome Center. You were going to go towards like, the lower left area of stage two,

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Which is where there's a security, like booth set- like a security room setup? But instead now DeSean is going to lead people up towards where the lions were seen to the marshes, north of stage one.

SYLVIA (as Eve): (sigh)

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, going into a marsh during a rainstorm seems like a great idea.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Yeah, um...

AUSTIN (as Angie): (emphatically) Listen, it's the job. I understand. For a lot of people, you don't put your lives at risk to get a story. And honestly, I'm gonna break the story, and it's not gonna mean shit for me, but it might mean something for the city. Okay?

SYLVIA (as Eve): I- (sigh) There's only like, two of them, and if something happens to one, the other is going to be out there on their own. So I, I don't know. I'm just saying, personally, I feel kind of weird if we just ditch em. But like, I don't know, I'm, I'm not, I don't know how y'all do things around here. Maybe that's normal. (laugh)

JANINE (as Caitlin): Uh... um, okay, okay. Um... okay.

SYLVIA (as Eve): It's just cuz like, the phones aren't working, and like...

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, no, it's... yeah, uh... Angie, can I have your hat?

AUSTIN (as Angie): Uh... yeah, here.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Okay.

AUSTIN: And hands it to you...

JANINE (as Caitlin): I just don't want to get fired. They're really,

AUSTIN (as Angie): Ohh. (laughs)

JANINE (as Caitlin): They're really kind of hair trigger right now. (laugh)

AUSTIN (as Angie): I feel you, I feel you. Thank you. It does mean a lot, for y'all to take a chance on me like this.

AUSTIN: And DeSean leads the crew out- I guess DeSean, I guess all of you just kind of go, now, right? Because if you're going, I'm guessing you're not, not helping DeSean lead to where you saw the encounter, right?

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Bart? So you get there, I think on the way again, you- there's a lot of like, a door closes, and you turn and look, like, you don't see anyone there. Or you hear the sound of another one of those big facades, or like, backdrops being pushed into a place. And, or like, another one is leaned up against a wall somewhere. There's a lot of just like, hey, what the- like, there's a lot of activity still, for this situation. What is happening?

SYLVIA: Can I like, take a closer look at one of those backdrops that we've like, overheard moving?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

SYLVIA: I meant to do with the first one, but I'll be honest, I kind of spaced.

AUSTIN: No, that's fine. Ah, so you like pull the tarp, like you, peek under the tarp basically?

SYLVIA: Yeah, like, Eve it's still very curious about this stuff,

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: But I think it within that curiosity, she's also trying to see like, is there anything going on here?

AUSTIN: Um, so what you see is... a, this one? Let's see, what's, what's, duhdutdutdutdut...alright. This one is, a... a backdrop of, the, it's like a, it's like a... (sigh) What do you call it, not a skybox, that's a video game term. What do you call those, though? In film production, where like, you're, a fake back-

SYLVIA: (overlapping) Oh, the like, like a matte painting?

AUSTIN: It's a matte painting. Yeah yeah, it's a matte painting of a... baseball park. Of a minor league baseball park. With the sun setting behind it. And in the foregr- like, you know, it's set up in such a way that like, in the foreground, you would see like, some low shrubs and stuff. But it would be like, it would be like, a matte painting backdrop for a set where you'd be shooting from like, a motel parking lot. It is the, it is from an Aliens in the Outfield shoot.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Oh. Okay.

SYLVIA: (laughs) That's Eve's reaction.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) You don't know what that means!

SYLVIA: Yeah, Eve's like, "Oh, okay."

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yeah, Eve's like, "Okay, weird." But for the listener at home, this is now the second thing that is absolutely a Bluff City thing, that is showing up here in Bluffington Beach. Um, so yeah, it's like kind of anticlimactic? It's kind of just like,

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: There's a, probably even like, a, a, sticker on it? Or like a, (laugh) like a tag? That says like, Aliens In, In, like, "Aliens In Outfield backdrop 3B" (laugh) And then like, the little like, logo, which has like, the aliens in it or something? It's like, oh, okay, weird. So yeah, weird. You get to this little marsh area. What do you all do here, as Angie begins to look around and, I think Angie produces a, an umbrella (laugh) from, from inside of a bag that she's carrying, like, a shoulder strap, like, messenger bag thing, and puts that up. Actually, I bet before you step out all the way? She produces like, a poncho from inside of her bag, like, kind of like a clear plastic poncho. And like, not, like a cheap one. Like a very cheap- like, this is basically cellophane, (laugh) you know

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: This is not- and like puts that on. Takes off the, the trench coat she has on it and puts the trench coat back on over it? Or probably the other way- Hmm, I'm just wondering if it's big enough to fit... Yeah, it's probably big enough to go over her trench coat. So yeah, she's just puts it on over the trench coat. It's like a trash bag Poncho, you know. And just like, fearlessly steps out into, into the grass. And it's like, immediately like, Oh. This is... it's flooding, for sure. It's like, deep. It's like, coming up to her like, her like, above her shins, probably, with water, as she steps out into the marshes. She calls back and she's like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): We have to find evidence. We have- (sigh) There has to be something here.

SYLVIA: Ah, I am going to be holding Peaches in my arms right now because

AUSTIN: Good.

SYLVIA: She's too small for the high marsh plant life and stuff. Doesn't get lost.

AUSTIN: Yeah, she was like,

(Dog barking foley)

SYLVIA: Yeah, I'm trying to keep her calm and I'm trying to keep an eye out, but I'm also very pointedly staying away from like, the approach to the water.

AUSTIN: Yeah. She is, Peaches is barking at something.

SYLVIA: I, will... check that out, then.

AUSTIN: Give me a Study.

SYLVIA: All right.

ANDREW: There's no like, assisting or anything in this game, is there?

AUSTIN: I don't think that- you know what, let me double check. Let me, let me see. I don't see

SYLVIA: Oh.

AUSTIN: anything like that here.

ANDREW: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: I'd be kind of happy to bring in- you know what, the problem is, that the consequences are so specific.

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And like damage is such a such a real fucking thing that I'm like, hmmm. But let me just, let me just peek. Give me three seconds to double check.

SYLVIA: I'm not gonna say no to help if we can find out a way to do it.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I mean, we can always just hack in-

ANDREW: (overlapping) Yeah, I control+F'd "assist" and I didn't see anything, so yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I tried "assist", I tried "aid". Um, uh... there's one last place I'm going to check here, which is, I'll check the itchi- itch.io page for it. Rules questions. Nope.

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: This is a different thing. Okay. Um... I'm going to say no and I'm gonna,

ANDREW: Yeah, that's fine.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) I'm gonna say no, with the note that like, that's a, that is a particular- you have to imagine that one of the people who made Dungeon World thought about whether or not aid or interfere should be in this game? And excluding it does something very interesting mechanically in separating people, which in a game that leads horror, is very interesting, and notable? Because it means that you don't get to help each other. And that is like, okay, that is saying something with game mechanics, about the state of things, you know? So I'm gonna, I'm

gonna let it ride as it's written, and say yeah, no, no help here. So give me a Study which is roll +Sharp. Your Sharp is +1, Eve.

(roll)

SYLVIA: That's an 11!

AUSTIN: That is an 11.

ANDREW: Nice.

AUSTIN: So that means you can ask any one question about the subject, which is, what is here presumably?

SYLVIA: Yeah, like...

AUSTIN: (overlapping) So what is the question?

SYLVIA: What... is it? Right?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) What is...

SYLVIA: What is it, what is it that Peaches has caught in, the attention- caught their attention, yeah.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Caught th- yeah. Ah, so, her attention was- she's like barking and lea- and, you, you don't let her down, right? She's kinda like-

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SYLVIA: No, she's too small for that. (laugh) But I will walk in the direction she's trying to go.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You see... rapidly being washed away, blood on some of the grass.

SYLVIA: Oof.

AUSTIN: And like, it's not a little bit, it's kind of a lot. Or it must have been a lot for to have not been washed away by now, basically.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And I think maybe what you see is like, some of it... there's enough of it that like, it leads towards, towards stage two? And you can see like, clear drops of it once you get under the kind of eaves of stage two. So it's like, going back down towards the like, through the, you know, through the fences, basically. Maybe even you straight up find, an open gate or hole in the fence or something.

SYLVIA: All right. I am definitely letting the others know about this. I imagine Angie is probably particularly interested. But, uh,

SYLVIA (as Eve): Hey guys, there's a lot of blood over here. And I'm kind of starting to think that the lion thing wasn't just something Bart hallucinated.

JANINE (as Caitlin): It could be stage blood.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): That's, no... that's not...

JANINE (as Caitlin): They covered the lion in it,

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No...

JANINE (as Caitlin): And then the rain, and it would, maybe wash in the grass?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No... real blood runs like this.

AUSTIN: You're a doctor, I'll allow it. The blood leads pretty clearly towards, the like, along the side of this long, flat, like, northern wall of stage two? When I say stage, you don't, don't picture like a, like a theater stage. Like it's a soundstage. Right? So it's like a giant, it's like a football field, you know what I mean? It's probably bigger than a football field. It's a huge building, inside of which multiple sets are contained, right? So, it like, runs alongside the kind of northern wall, towards the east, and stops at a, like, a gate? That gets pulled down? Like a, like a, like a garage door style-gate, you know? Or it's a, it is like a garage door style-door, that is currently pulled down, but there is, definitely, that is where the blood leads to. And they're like droplets of blood, this isn't like, something being dragged, this is something that is bleeding as it's moving. Angie's like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): We gotta get inside here.

ANDREW: Can we just, is this a door we can just open? Or is it locked?

AUSTIN: It is locked. DeSean is like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): They don't give me keys to this. All this is on like, long term lockdown, because no one shoots here.

SYLVIA (as Eve): I'm, I mean, I'm not gonna point out the sort of obvious, like irony, in saying that right now.? Well I guess I did.

(Austin laughs)

SYLVIA (as Eve): Anyway, clearly someone shot here.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Yeah. (groan)

SYLVIA (as Eve): And they have- but like, they got in, right?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Maybe it got lowered after.

JANINE (as Caitlin): But there's like, people in there, so, and it's like, you said there's that other security office, they're probably helping them. So it's fine. They have like, a first aid kit.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, it's probably- it's probably fine.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Um... I don't think it's fine...

AUSTIN: Says Angie.

AUSTIN (as Angie): (sigh) I- I'm gonna go to that security office, DeSean, show me the security office. I gotta ask some questions.

AUSTIN: And DeSean like, looks at y'all and shrugs, like.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): They, they, they had guns. What do you think's gonna happen if you ask them questions?

AUSTIN (as Angie): Wha- I live in Atlantic City. I deal- do you know how many times I've talked to the police, for interviews? They have guns, too! Three dudes, who are not going to shoot me, on their stage campus... I'm going to get answers. Someone needs to ask questions. I don't need y'all to come with me, y'all can go back to... chillin in the museum and looking at... whatever. Puppets.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Tippy Toe.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Tippy Toe.

AUSTIN: And she and DeSean, exit stage left, leaving the three of you in the rain.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Are we, are we really gonna just let them go do that? You said, like you said it yourself. Stuff could go bad.

(Andrew sighs)

SYLVIA (as Eve): Like, I don't, we can go back, and we can wait, but we have to tell somebody, that like, this happened, right? I don't wanna, I don't wanna feel responsible if like, we don't hear about them, ever again. It's like, it's bad out here. (laugh) As evidenced by me yelling very loudly to talk over the wind and rain.

(Austin and Janine laugh)

SYLVIA (as Eve): Evidenced in my voice right now.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (sigh) Okay, okay.

SYLVIA (as Eve): If it makes you feel better, you can hold Peaches.

(Austin laughs)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No...

SYLVIA (as Eve): That offer goes for everybody, by the way. She's a great guard dog.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Okay, let's, (sigh) let's go catch up.

AUSTIN: Y'all chase after them? Caitlin?

JANINE: Caitlin's like, bringing up the rear in a big way.

AUSTIN: (laughs) Uh huh.

JANINE: But is also... (sigh) I think she probably outright says this, like... I think she probably outright says like,

JANINE (as Caitlin): Bart, if we get in trouble for this, I need that- I need you to say that you, that you made me. Do this because your talent, your face, if they get rid of you on TV, it'll be a problem. There'll be petitions, there'll be internet petitions. No one's gonna know if Caitlin Paul gets the axe.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Okay.

JANINE (as Caitlin): I need, I need this job. So...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Lis- listen. Worst comes-

JANINE (as Caitlin): I don't have any, I don't have any- no one clicks my affiliate links.

SYLVIA (as Eve): (loudly) Just blame me, y'all! I don't even work here!

JANINE (as Caitlin): Well, no, cause I vouched for you, to get you in, so that's still gonna look bad, that-

SYLVIA (as Eve): (overlapping) Bart did, too!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Sure, um...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Listen, worse comes to worse, I'll just, I'll restart the private practice, and then, you can be my business accountant.

SYLVIA (as Eve): I don't know that that would be a full time thing, but it's a start.

(Austin laughs)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Come on, I'm Dr. Bart!

JANINE (as Caitlin): That's why they won't give you your own show, because that's, because you keep saying that, it doesn't sell

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) I wouldn't- I wouldn't, I wouldn't make you call me, that. I don't, I, that, that would be rude.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Let's just, let's just get this over with

AUSTIN: As you, as everyone is laughing like the "I'm Dr. Bart!", you hear a sound from inside of stage two. It is a gunshot.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (quietly) Jesus.

(Janine and Sylvia sigh)

AUSTIN: You don't think it could be them, because, the timing is such that they would have, had to have gotten into stage two, and then toward the north side of stage two where everyone is? And that would have been very quick for them to wrapped all the way around to the south side, gone inside and gone north? But that is the sound of the gun inside for sure.

SYLVIA: Can we like find any sign of which direction they've went? Whether it's just like-

AUSTIN: They went west, they kind of went like, so if you're looking at stage two?

SYLVIA: Yeah. Oh, right.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) They went west, and then south, and then east to like this corner, the bottom left, the southwest corner stage two, where there is a door that DeSean does have access to because

SYLVIA: (overlapping) Okay.

AUSTIN: It leads just to that other security station, basically.

SYLVIA: Okay, so we're headed that way.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: Is, uh, uh, and, have we, we haven't reached there, yet? Or...

AUSTIN: You're, you're like, on the way there. And, in fact, I suspect,

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: You see them. When you turn the corner, like, when you turn this corner, you see them like, halfway through, if you want to call to them, and like, actually catch up.

SYLVIA: I mean, I'd be happy to try. But again, like, I, it'd be loud in the storm.

AUSTIN: True, true, yeah yeah yeah.

SYLVIA: (overlapping) I'm kind of fine with the drama of them barely missing us.

AUSTIN: That's actually, yeah, the drama of them moving in front of you, having not heard that gunshot, and now, like, stepping in, ahead of you. You're all like, yeah, like, a few- you're exactly far enough behind that, like, you're just out of range of voice, you know. Maybe we even get shots of you yelling and not them not hearing you over the sound of the wind picking up.

ANDREW: I think when they step in, I, I break out into a sprint.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ANDREW: To try and like, catch up to them.

AUSTIN: Totally. Give me a Take A Risk: Tough.

ANDREW: Okay.

AUSTIN: Let's see how that knee holds out. I'm guessing it was your knee? What- wait, what was your injury? I forget.

ANDREW: It was the knee.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) No, your injury was- it was a knee?

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: Okay. So that is, you have a 1 Tough. So $2d6 + 1$.

ANDREW: Yeah.

(roll)

ANDREW: Hey, 11.

AUSTIN: That is another 11. Okay, um, you rush there, and you get there in time to see them... to (laugh) to see, DeSean, like, up against- okay, so you come around the corner, there's a little hallway, and that hallway leads right into like a converted office room? That's been turned into

this other security room. And no one is in it, except for Angie and DeSean. And DeSean is like, holding the door shut? Not the door you're coming in, but like, the interior door? But no one's pushing on it. He's just like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Just in case! (laugh) I'm gonna hold it shut.

AUSTIN: And Angie is on a computer. Angie has connected her phone to a computer via USB-C. And is doing some hacker shit. And she says,

AUSTIN (as Angie): I thought you weren't coming.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): There was a gunshot.

AUSTIN (as Angie): There was a gunshot? Where?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, we heard it coming from in here. Not like, this room, but like the building.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Okay, maybe the lions are still... ah shit, okay, ah... I'm like, downloading everything I can...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Wh- what are you downloading?!

AUSTIN (as Angie): Everything I can!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I thought you were gonna talk to people!

AUSTIN (as Angie): No one's here! Second best thing!

(Andrew sighs)

AUSTIN: At this point, Eve and Caitlin can get here too. And as you two step in, DeSean looks at you and goes like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I think I hear someone coming. Everyone get out!

SYLVIA (as Eve): Okay, damn!

AUSTIN: And Angie is like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): I have to finish this.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Okay, get, get outta the way, DeSean. Get outta the way.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Uh- okay.

AUSTIN: And like, backs away, and like, comes around, like, wh- like actually, just like, steps up next to you? And is like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Alright. (exhales)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Alright, we're gonna, we're gonna, how long do you need? How long do you need, Eve?

AUSTIN (as Angie): Like, five minutes.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Okay.

AUSTIN (as Angie): It's a lot.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Okay, all right, DeSean, we're gonna go, we heard the gunshot, I'm here to try and get medical assistance.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (overlapping) You're a doctor, that's right!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, yeah, just-

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Ah, Accounting? Caitlin, you're here to make sure they didn't spend too much money, on bullets.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) No, no no no.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Oh.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): It's just you and me, it's just you can me,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): And, Eve...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): It's just you and me. No, it's just you and me. We're going in this hallway, okay?

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Okay.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Be careful.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Is Peaches okay?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Peaches is great.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): All right, Shout outs to Peaches.

AUSTIN: You open the door?

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: And there is, Gary, coming towards you, along with one of the two people you saw before. Michael, the one who dodged the lion.

AUSTIN (as Gary): Dr. Bart, what did I say before, stay out of my way. Why are you in my office? What is happening here?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I heard, I heard more gunshots is- are, are you okay?

AUSTIN (as Gary): You heard gunsho- It's a movie studio. You heard a gunshot, big whoop. What are you even doing on the campus still? Everyone was evacuated.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I was gonna leave and, I got caught up, and, then they closed the bridges.

AUSTIN (as Gary): (overlapping) DeSean, is this your doing? Why are you bothering talent, DeSean?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No, I asked him to come with me. We saw blood outside.

AUSTIN (as Gary): You saw blood out- (sigh) Whatever you- you don't know what you saw. It was probably something from... you don't worry about what it from. All right? Now move, so I can get into my office.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): You just said I'm talent, and I'm so important, what the hell is going on here?

AUSTIN (as Gary): Excuse me.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): (overlapping) Somebody's hurt!

AUSTIN: Give me a Take A Risk: Steady. Again, a -1 on that, right?

ANDREW: Mmm. Ooh, that's a plus.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) These rolls are very good so far.

(roll)

ANDREW: Oof.

AUSTIN: All right. There's a 7. There's a 7. "On a 7-9, there's a complication. The GM will give you a tough choice." The thing you want here is to keep him busy, right?

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So I think the choice here is you can keep him busy for longer, but, someone else, someone else is going to get to enter the scene, and see that you're here.

ANDREW: Okay, sure.

AUSTIN: All right. So... you like, argue basically? Do you start arguing?

ANDREW: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And you're like, shouting back and forth. Angie and, and...

ANDREW: (overlapping) I was told by AppleCare!

AUSTIN: (laughs) That I'm an important, person. They said I was part of the Apple family! Ah... inside of the security room, Angie, Caitlin, and Eve, Angie is like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): I got it. We can get out of here.

AUSTIN: And grabs her phone, and looks back over her shoulder at like, the doorway and is like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): Should we just leave them there?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Ah... that would make Thanksgiving really awkward,

(Austin laughs)

SYLVIA (as Eve): If we left Bart, um...

JANINE (as Caitlin): Yeah, aw man, everything- this is all gonna be conversation, isn't it, that we're gonna have to... (sigh)

SYLVIA (as Eve): I mean, Caitlin, if you're, like worried about your job and stuff, I can, I can hang behind? But like... I don't- should we wait, like, just outside? Would that be better?

JANINE (as Caitlin): Um, I mean...

SYLVIA (as Eve): I don't really want to get a cold.

(Andrew laughs)

JANINE (as Caitlin): That's true.

AUSTIN (as Angie): We should wait outside. Let's wait outside.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Okay.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Let's wait outside, we can stay under the eaves, it'll be fine.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Whoa.

AUSTIN (as Angie): What?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Under the Eves.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Ah.

(Andrew laughs)

— 1:30:00 —

AUSTIN: You step outside, and close the door, to like, the hallway that goes to the security room. And, the three of you hear, from a bush, a low growl. We'll come back to you in a second. The person who enters your scene, Dr. Bart is the CEO of Bluff (laugh) of Bluff City studios, Julian H. Bluff, who has like a, a scarf on now, and a pair of reading glasses, like low on his nose.? He like puts up, pulls up over his, his brow? Over his like forehead? And he's like,

AUSTIN (as Julian H. Bluff): (sigh) Gary, what is going on here? Dr. Bart? Bartholomew? What are you doing here?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I saw blood, and I heard gunshots, and as a doctor, I am ethically obligated to see if I need to render aid.

AUSTIN (as Julian): (overlapping) No no no, I mean, (sigh) why are you on the campus? It's...

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I got stuck. I was gonna leave, and, then the bridges got closed.

AUSTIN (as Julian): (overlapping) Oh, god, okay, buddy, buddy, buddy, buddy.

AUSTIN: He comes over and he puts his arm on your shoulder, and he says,

AUSTIN (as Julian): If you told me this, I- I could put you on a boat. I could have gotten you home, it's Thanksgiving! You shouldn't be here!

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Well, yeah! Let's, let's get on a boat, let's leave together.

AUSTIN (as Julian): Yeah- no, I have to stay, but you, I can give you- you know what, let's go to my office, and, yeah, well- everything is gonna be okay. (sigh) Gary, can you go back and tell, tell Chris that, I'll get back to the shoot in a second? I'm going to need to- take, 15. Tell everyone to take 15. Come with me.

AUSTIN: And he begins to lead you away from the scene, leaving DeSean behind with, Gary and Michael.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Mmmm, actually, DeSean, can you, can he come with me? I had something locked up and, he locked something up in one of the lockers for me.

AUSTIN (as Julian): Yeah- of course! Of course. You know, definitely. Come, come, you can come with us, DeSean.

AUSTIN: And Michael says- or, uh, Gary is like,

AUSTIN (as Gary): Make sure to send him back here. Uh, I just want to, check in, on his rounds.

AUSTIN: And the CEO, Julian H. Bluff goes,

AUSTIN (as Julian): Of course, Mike.

AUSTIN: Or, uh,

AUSTIN (as Julian): Of course, Gary.

AUSTIN: And and the three of you begin to head back through the security room, and towards the hallway. Outside, while all this is happening inside, there is a low growl, from a bush. What do you do?

SYLVIA: Oh... no... how, deep, of a growl, is it?

AUSTIN: Um, it's a big, animal.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Um...

(Austin does animal growl foley)

SYLVIA (as Eve): Now, I don't want to- we should go back inside. We should go back inside, right now.

JANINE (as Caitlin): (overlapping) Yeah, let's, why don't we go back inside? That sounds like a great idea.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) A lion, steps out of the bush, slowly.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Ohhhhhh, it'd be great if we went inside right now.

AUSTIN: And it is bleeding from his shoulder.

SYLVIA (as Eve): (sympathetically) Oh.

(Austin continues animal growl foley)

JANINE: That sucks, but it's not, I don't think, it's...

SYLVIA (as Eve): I mean, if it's hurt...

(the lion quietly yowls)

JANINE: Was that Peaches, or the lion?

AUSTIN: That was the lion. Peaches is like, Peaches' eyes lock with the lion, and Peaches is DEAD silent. Peaches ain't saying shit! (laughs)

SYLVIA: (laughs) I-

AUSTIN: Peaches' like, "Yup, mm hmm! That's a lion!"

(Andrew laughs)

SYLVIA: I am, I'm gonna hand Peaches to Caitlin,

AUSTIN: Oh my god.

SYLVIA: And start taking a couple, like, steps towards the lion.

JANINE: Do you have crossian- do you still have your croissant? (accent emphasized)

SYLVIA: You know, maybe I do!

AUSTIN: You do, have the croissant. What are you doing...?

JANINE: They're very buttery, and butter is, animals like butter, right?

AUSTIN: Animals...

ANDREW: Animals fuckin' love soggy, rained on, croissants.

AUSTIN: (laughs) Oh my god...

SYLVIA: (overlapping) I'm gonna like, try and, underhand toss it towards it. I don't want to hold it out for a lion to bite?

JANINE: (overlapping) Yeah, no, you'll, yeah.

AUSTIN: No, no, no, definitely not us.

SYLVIA: This is Friends at the Table?

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Hands, are dangerous! Yeah! (laughs)

SYLVIA: (overlapping) And I don't want to risk a hand!

AUSTIN: Um... (sigh) I, I don't think this is a roll. You tossed the croissant,

SYLVIA: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: And the lion, like, (scarfing noise) like, bites at it, and she like,

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Pulls it up, off the ground, and like, (nom nom nom), and then like, calmly walks down the walkway, towards craft services. And stops-

JANINE: Uh oh, we gave her a taste for buttery pastry.

(Austin laughs)

JANINE: She's going to tear that place up!

AUSTIN: She stops and looks back at you.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Wh- (sigh) Okay. She seems... one, I feel really bad for her now, uh, but...

JANINE (as Caitlin): We know she's definitely not a robot.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Well yeah, but like, she's just like, an animal, like, we should be able to-

JANINE (as Caitlin): She's probably a stage animal, too, she's probably been, like, hand raised. So she's, like, a little bit docile, but they're still a little dangerous, still have to be careful.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Which, really confuses me as to why they shot it, instead of tranquilizing... it...

JANINE (as Caitlin): You know, fuckin', security people are, idiots, sometimes...

SYLVIA (as Eve): Fair.

JANINE (as Caitlin): They do some fucking shit.

AUSTIN: She is now pacing in front of a door, back and forth, and like, clawing at it?

JANINE: The craft services door?

AUSTIN: Yeah, like, the door to the craft services building.

SYLVIA (as Eve): (overlapping) I'm, gonna... I'm gonna go try and help this lion, and, and...

AUSTIN: Angie's like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): What is happening??

SYLVIA (as Eve): What? It's like... I dunno, I've dealt with... (sigh)

AUSTIN: You're a farmer, yeah, that's, you know. No?

SYLVIA: (overlapping) Not, not lions, but...

JANINE: I don't know that helping her into craft services is actually a good situation.

(Austin laughs)

AUSTIN (as Angie): This will change my story significantly if we open the door to craft services, and the lion mauls someone inside it. You need to know, that's gonna have to... my editor will not let that be a story about corrupt, you know, capitalistic corruption anymore. (laugh)

JANINE (as Caitlin): Are you gonna take a single picture of this lion, Angie?

AUSTIN (as Angie): I'm taking, I'm taking, photos. Yeah, photos. Click click click. Video, it's going.

SYLVIA: Eve's throwing up a peace sign in front of the lion, for one of them, real quick.

(Andrew laughs)

JANINE: Oh god.

AUSTIN: Godddd.

SYLVIA (as Eve): I just think, if we her in? To the building? There is a far less chance of her jumping, at us.

AUSTIN (as Angie): All right, that's true.

SYLVIA (as Eve): You know what I mean?

AUSTIN (as Angie): Yeah.

JANINE (as Caitlin): What if we have to go into the building because there's a flood?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Then she knows we're cool!

(Andrew laughs)

SYLVIA (as Eve): I'm serious, animals are smart!

AUSTIN: Animals are smart. Yeah... (laughs) Dr. Bart: "You do gotta hit the Whoa in front of that lion for the ultimate Tik Tok!"

(Sylvia and Andrew laugh)

JANINE: Ohh...

AUSTIN: Dr. Bart's Tik Tok is just incredible. All right.

SYLVIA: Anyways.

AUSTIN: You, you go towards the lion.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And, she moves, yeahyeahyeah.

SYLVIA: (overlapping) It's like, slow movements, hands up.

AUSTIN: She open- she gets out of the way, and you open the door, and she just, "Swoop!", like, skirts inside real quick.

SYLVIA (as Eve): (sigh of relief) Okay! So, cool. Another Thanksgiving where we haven't been killed by a wild animal. A rousing success.

(the lion yowls multiple times)

JANINE (as Caitlin): There's still time.

AUSTIN: It's like, calling for you inside.

JANINE: Oh, god, the lion is?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: You know what? Yeah, let's, I'm gonna, I just walk in.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I'm, I'm going. I'm- I want to help this lion. (laugh) I am officially just like, team Lion at this point.

AUSTIN: Lions are good.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, the lion leads you down a long, dark hallway. This place's lighting is just off, because, craft services is shut down for the weekend, at this point?

SYLVIA: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: And, the... actually, that's wrong. The lighting, the lighting is up, and you can hear people, further down the hallway, working on food, working in a kitchen.

(Sylvia sighs)

AUSTIN: The lion goes a different route.

JANINE: Is the power on in here?

AUSTIN: Huh?

JANINE: Is the power is on in here?

AUSTIN: Yes, absolutely.

JANINE: Huh.

AUSTIN: It's not even like, emergency red lighting.

JANINE: Great.

AUSTIN: It's like real lighting. But the lion goes down a side hallway, away from where that kitchen is, and... begins to claw...

JANINE: Well this lion must be working with us, because she knows her way around.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, this, this lion, this lion knows some shit, for sure. And the lion stops in front of a door. And that door says... god.

JANINE: Dressing Room: Lion.

AUSTIN: (laughs) Dres- that's what it says. And inside is a little bowl, and it wants to have its meal time. No.

SYLVIA: With a bullet in it.

AUSTIN: Yeahh. (laughs)

JANINE: It wants to make sure it's rider was respected.

AUSTIN: Exactly, exactly. (laughs) When I asked-

JANINE: Felled peanuts only! Unsalted!

AUSTIN: Um... there is a... yeah. There's a, the, the door is, this door is actually ajar, at this point, and, she begins to growl at it. And... it is like a big, it is like a, like a pantry closet, type situa- it's like a big industrial pantry filled with like, canned goods and stuff. Presumably. You've not opened the door yet. Uh, Dre, at this point, Bluff has led you to, the lockers where you said that DeSean had something to get for you from a locker, and this point, DeSean's looking at you like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): (whispering) What am- what am I getting for you from the locker?

ANDREW: Um, is, is, Julian, is that his name, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, Julian, Julian H. Bluff.

ANDREW: Is he like, walking ahead of us?

AUSTIN: No, he's like with you, and I bet you he's like, he's like, talking to you. He's like,

AUSTIN (as Julian): So tell me, what do uh, what do you think of how things have been going here? I've seen you, obviously on the morning show. You're doing great work. But I'm curious if you think there's other opportunities for someone with your talents here at Bluff Studios?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, that's, I, I appreciate that. You know, I definitely... I, I didn't think things would- I didn't think I'd be as much of a recurring guest as I, as I've become, but it's it's been a great experience.

AUSTIN (as Julian): You have stepped up quite well, I have to say, Dr. Bartholomew, and uh- here we are at the lockers. I will wait right here for you.

AUSTIN: And DeSean leads you into the other room, and is like,

AUSTIN (as DeSean): He seems real friendly, but like, bad friendly.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Mm hmm.

AUSTIN (as Angie): You're- it's not just me, getting that?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): Okay.

ANDREW: I'm gonna text... Um, do I have, do I have enough service to text? Or is even that amount of cell service like, gone?

AUSTIN: I think it's gone.

ANDREW: Okay.

AUSTIN: (inhale) But I love texting...

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: Ah... no, I think it's gone.

ANDREW: Yeah, fair.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, we gonna stick to the rules here. You could write it and hit send, and it won't send.

ANDREW: Right.

AUSTIN: What were you going to send?

ANDREW: Just like, "Where are you?"

AUSTIN: Yeah, so you, that, you hit that, and it goes like "boomp", or it goes like "bloop, boodoop". Does not send.

ANDREW: Yeah. Try sending this text message, still doesn't work.

AUSTIN: Yeah, so, inside of the, the, you're at the pantry doors. Ah, Angie is holding up the phone and recording. Caitlin and Eve, who's gonna open this door?

SYLVIA: I mean, I feel like I've established a relationship with the lion, but I'll happily step back.

JANINE: I think the fact that Angie is recording, is the thing that's keeping Caitlin from stepping into frame.

AUSTIN: Oh, fair, fair. Yeah yeah yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay, yeah, I'm happy to do it then.

JANINE: Because at this point, it- at this point, it's an expose against us, because we're letting this lion deeper into a place (laugh)

AUSTIN: Yes.

JANINE: That like, a lion has no business being...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

(Sylvia laughs)

JANINE: And I feel a little bit entrapped. (laugh)

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh huh? Fair.

SYLVIA: A mysterious woman in a Kenyon Martin jersey let a lion into Atlantic City studio this weekend!

AUSTIN: (laughs) Ohh... god.

JANINE: This reporter was shocked to see it!

AUSTIN: (laugh) Why was I there? Don't ask.

JANINE: Getting coffee.

AUSTIN: You open the pantry door, slowly. And... I am going to need you, to make a Keep It Together roll, as you see a body on the ground, a human body on the ground, wearing a very nice suit, with a polo shirt- It's like, It's like a polo shirt with a blazer and a ni- and like nice slacks. And their face looks like it has been remade with clay. Like, as if, someone has like, it's as if like the prop department wanted to make a clay, like, Greek mask? But as if they just reshaped someone's face in that way. And, this person is tied up, and knocked out, it looks like? But they have this like, deep, empty, strange look in their eyes? Or like, their eyes are open, but they are not, they do not seem conscious. They're not like moving, they don't respond to you. You can see... actually, let's roll, and then I'll let you know what you see.

SYLVIA: Alright.

AUSTIN: I'll let you know if you can actually do- So Keep It Together says, "When you are confronted with the horrendous, supernatural, or mind-shattering, roll +Steady. On a 10+, you're in control, you can do as you please. On a 7-9, you choose which you do from the list below. On a 6-, the GM chooses, chooses and you wound this move." So, what is your, what is your Steady? 0?

SYLVIA: My Steady is 0, yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, 2d6 flat.

(roll)

AUSTIN: That is 11!

SYLVIA: That's an 11! The only thing I've rolled today.

AUSTIN: Whew! Unbelievable rolls, honestly? Ah... so yeah, you are in control. There is a being on the ground whose face has been reshaped as if it's clay. It's making a big frowny face.

SYLVIA (as Eve): Hey, uh, Angie, you might want to get a shot of this, this thing. Uh.

AUSTIN: Ah, she like steps forward, and,

AUSTIN (as Angie): Wah!

AUSTIN: And drops the phone.

SYLVIA: I, I'm going to pick up-

AUSTIN: (overlapping) And the phone screen breaks.

SYLVIA: Oh no.

AUSTIN: But you can pick it up, still. It's just like, broken.

SYLVIA: I was gonna try and record it myself. Yeah, just-

AUSTIN: (overlapping) You can do it. Yeah. You can do it, you know it's, the phone screen is, has like a crack down it now.

SYLVIA: It's easier to look at with the cracked screen.

AUSTIN: Yeah, honestly,

JANINE: What's the lion doing?

AUSTIN: Like laying down, in the corn- like, not in the corner of the room, but like, in the hallway, you know, in a kind of a darker corner. It's like, "I've shown you what I wanted to show you." Have you seen it yet? Caitlin?

JANINE: I think Caitlin like, hears the phone drop?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: And like, and, and goes in?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um... there's something about it you recognize. You just can't place, this creepy fucking face. Like, is this from a movie? What is this? Eve, what do you do?

SYLVIA: I mean, I'll be honest, like this whole time, in the back of my mind, I've wanted to check on the lion, and make sure it's not like, bleeding out on us.

— 1:45:00 —

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: So I might do that, but my other thing is I want to, it, this was a pantry that we opened, right?

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: Was there anything else in there? Or was it just the body?

AUSTIN: There's, yeah, it's a pa- it's a, it is a filled pantry with like, canned goods and stuff like that.

SYLVIA: But like, I guess, I guess there's more, I'd probably need to Study for this.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) There's no more people, there's no, yeah yeah.

SYLVIA: But I'm looking- is there anything out of like, that wouldn't be there normally? That might be a clue to who this guy was.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Sounds like you should give me a Study.

SYLVIA: Sounds like it!

AUSTIN: Yep. So that is +Sharp. Which you have a 1 in.

SYLVIA: That's +1...

AUSTIN: Let's see if it was another 11.

(roll)

SYLVIA: That's a 12!

AUSTIN: (overlapping) It's a 12. It's a 12. It's a 12. You can ask me anything you want.

SYLVIA: All right. I guess that it- I am going to ask, is there anything out of the ordinary here? Or... hm...

(Andrew and Austin laugh)

SYLVIA: No? That's not right.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: I guess, I guess it's... Is there anything... Is there anything related to this person in there?

AUSTIN: There you go. So you... like, start to look- do you look their pockets? What do you do? Do you look through like?

SYLVIA: I think it's like... that's the last resort. I think it's first just like, did anything else fall out with them? Like just checking around them?

AUSTIN: Yeah. You're looking on the floor, I don't think you see anything. I can't think of a way that you would have seen what happened here directly.

SYLVIA: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: You- I would, a couple things, you note that their hands are tied behind their back, which is like. A lion didn't do that. For sure. Ah, and you note that their... outfit... is like, very nice? Okay, here's actually a thing, is like, you note that they are... how do I want to bring this in... Here's what I could do. On the blazer, god though, you have to get too close for it. God, I'm to think a way to give you this person's identity without, okay, I know what I can do.

SYLVIA: I can root through their shit, it's fine.

AUSTIN: Yeah, well, you, you begin to root through their shit. They're, they don't-

SYLVIA: I guess I should ask actually really quick.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: They're, d- are they dead? Did we ch- we should check for a heartbeat, right?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) No, no, they're- yeah. You check for a heartbeat. There is a heartbeat, it's a very slow heartbeat.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Um, and, when you do, the face starts to frown a little bit more?

SYLVIA: Oh.

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Which is creepy? As you touch it?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I don't like that.

AUSTIN: And I think, as you, you like, "Wuhh!", like, step back when that happens, and... the something does fall out of a pocket. I think from an inside pocket, as you step back from the blazer. A card falls out, like a business card, and it says... Julian H. Bluff. And that is where you recognize this, the outfit from, Caitlin.

SYLVIA: Oh.

AUSTIN: Before the face was remade as a weird, clay, whatever this is. This was Julian H. Bluff. (beat) Dr. Bart, Julian H. Bluff walks into the locker room, or like, the security lockers and is like:

AUSTIN (as Julian): (sigh) We have everything we need here, gentlemen?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, I, uh,

AUSTIN (as Julian): Really got to be getting you the boat.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Can- (sigh) can we just wait here? I don't know if I want to take a boat in this, in this weather. I've always been kind of like, a seasick person.

AUSTIN (as Julian): Definitely. You know what, we should take you to a secure location. Now that way, in case, there's any flooding, we can be sure, that you're going to be okay.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Ohh, I can just, I can just stay here with DeSean and keep him company while he's kind of, you know, holding down the fort.

AUSTIN (as Julian): DeSean needs to go report back in with Gary, unfortunately, which leaves you alone, and I don't feel very safe to have my talent alone in the middle of such a bad storm.

(pause)

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): No, I think I'm just gonna, I'm just gonna wait here.

AUSTIN (as Julian): No, I know the best place for you, actually, you should come see what we're working on. Does that sound good? We'll see if maybe there's an opportunity for you, there. We're a little um, we've been calling them the night shoots. You know, the union out front has made it really tough to make, (sigh) you know, more narrative stories, lately, but if we sneak them in at night, we've been able to make some, some great stuff. Come on.

AUSTIN: And like, waves his hand, like a tech bro.

ANDREW: (laugh) I think I shoot a look at DeSean.

AUSTIN: And he shoots, he like, shakes his head at you. And is like, and then shrugs, (two clapping sounds) like, twice. It's like hard shrug, like hands on hips.

AUSTIN (as DeSean): I- uh- (scoff) Wh- (sigh)

ANDREW: I think I say, "Okay", and then I like, mouth to DeSean in a way that, trying not to let Julian see: "Don't go back to stage two."

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, he goes like "Yeah yeah yeah." And he begins to lead you back to stage two, but towards a side door. Where it opens up into stage two. He like, he like does like, it's like a key card unlocks, like to something on like the eastern side of stage two. And he says,

AUSTIN (as Julian): You know, this took a little longer than I thought, I hope that they're not waiting for me. I'm really letting you in on something pretty big here. I hope you understand what it, what it means. It has to be just between us, like kind of a "friend"D.A. situation, you know?

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): Yeah, I mean, it- (sigh) wouldn't it just make- I mean, how much money are we saving by doing it at night instead of just, you know, just paying the folks and getting everything back up and running.

AUSTIN (as Julian): You know, it's funny. I don't know that we're going to need to work with the WGA or any other writers guild in the future. We found like- you don't worry about it.

ANDREW (as Dr. Bart): I mean, I'm gonna worry about it. I had to write a script about coconut aminos this morning. It was terrible.

AUSTIN (as Julian): (laugh) That's why, I keep telling people: "extemporaneous". You know, just off the top of your head, whatever you dream, you can make it real. And if that's something about coconut aminos, all the better. Come with me.

AUSTIN: And like takes you through a labyrinthine set of halls, past a bunch of others, other dressing rooms that are very clearly active here. You pass a couple of dressing rooms that are like, so big that you think they might be apartments, like, (laugh) there is definitely like, an entirely established culture in this place of people who work here, day in, day out? A couple people walk past and go like, you know, "Oh hey Julian!", that type of stuff. "They really need you back on set." He's like, "I know, I know, I'm hurrying." And you get back to the set, and they are in the middle of a production. They are shooting... I'm trying to decide what he would be shooting- he is shooting, a movie called, you see like on the thing, like the card- not cardboard, the clackers, a thing called "Grand Opening". And there's this like, 1970's set, and everything is like, you know, coked out and you know, big and bright,

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: And, it's like a, it's like a period piece about the the opening of the first casino. (laugh) And on set is Kevin Nash. Who waves at you. Not you, at Julian, he's like "Oh, the director's back, okay. Cool." For people who are in this game, who were not in the previous game, I'm describing the previous game of Bluff City, which is currently being shot as a film in Atlantic City. Something is happening here.

ANDREW: (overlapping) Seems pretty normal.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um, before we wrap, what's happening in the pantry?

JANINE: Good question.

SYLVIA: Yeah, um...

AUSTIN: I think Angie is like,

AUSTIN (as Angie): I've never seen anything like this in my life. Something really weird is- REALLY weird is happening here. There was a lion that led us to a weird... claymation man.

JANINE (as Caitlin): It's not... claymation would be... this, this is like, this is probably like, stage makeup. They usually use like a latex? To like build... this would be a lot of latex. So I don't know that it's that... but it's not claymation cause... it's a person.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Well, he's been kidnapped. We should get- if it's a mask, we should take it off. And we should figure out who he is, and... get him out of here.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Okay, well let's look for an edge.

(Austin groans, Sylvia and Austin laugh nervously)

AUSTIN: God.

JANINE: Caitlin walks over and crouches down.

AUSTIN: Uh huh, uh huh.

SYLVIA: Uh huh.

AUSTIN: Yep.

JANINE: Looks at like- gets some angles.

AUSTIN: Mm hmm. (beat) And begins to pull?

JANINE: Um, no, no, no. (laughs)

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: This is- look, if you can't see the edge of a mask, you're not gonna dig your fingernails in and just go.

AUSTIN: Okay, well, I didn't know.

JANINE: Let's be realistic here. Also, you know, this, remember, this game takes place in the real world.

AUSTIN: Yeah?

JANINE: The action I would take in Bluff is a little bit different than the action I'm going to take here,

AUSTIN: (overlapping) Yes.

JANINE: Which is to look, with her eyes.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: And be like, "Is there a peeling part?" And then maybe like, pinch? A little bit, like a cheek?

AUSTIN: (overlapping) There is not. Yes. Okay. (laugh) When you pinch. the mask grins at you, and I'm going to need you to Keep It Together.

JANINE: Yikes. Okay.

AUSTIN: That is a, what is that... a Steady, which you have 2 in.

JANINE: So that's 2d6+2?

AUSTIN: Yep.

(roll)

AUSTIN: That is a 10. You keep it together as this thing grins at you from ear to ear.

JANINE (as Caitlin): Well, this doesn't feel like it has any robotics in it, so that's not right.

(Austin and Andrew laugh)

AUSTIN: Unbelievable.

JANINE: You work in the industry.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I guess so.

JANINE: You learn things.

AUSTIN (as Angie): Do you think this is some sort of- you said not robotics. What is it?

JANINE (as Caitlin): I don't know... I don't know. I've seen a lot of weird stuff in the cafeteria at lunchtime, but...

AUSTIN (as Angie): (sigh) I think we have enough. We should go somewhere safe and... this is- (scoff) I feel a little over my head. Where, where is DeSean, and Dr. Bart?

SYLVIA (as Eve): Last we saw, they were still in that hallway, right?

AUSTIN (as Angie): Yeah.

— 1:56:18 —

AUSTIN: I think we end on this, for today. Dr. Bart, you are, there is something... sometime after the wrestler Kevin Nash gives you a big thumbs up... You, feel yourself slipping into dream logic. Like, Julian sits down in a director's chair. And next to him is a director's chair like his, but it says "Dr. Bart" on the back and he goes "Oh, take a seat". And, you watch them shoot this movie. It is, and it is like there is something... it's as if things bleed into your vision that weren't there a moment like, you know in horror games, sometimes like, you turn and you look at one direction and you spin the camera around, it reveals there is something else there? Do you know what I mean?

ANDREW: Mm hmm.

AUSTIN: It's like that. But it's not horrific in the like, jump scare way. It's like, what if real life were a weird like, party, in a 19th, like in Boogie Nights or something, where things are like slipping in and out of frame constantly and like,

(Andrew laughs)

AUSTIN: You can't keep track of what's happening, like there's too much action happening? And, we just kind of get this like, effect of like, a bleed over? (sigh) You don't know what you're seeing, but we do which is... there is something slipping in from Bluff, or from Blough or both. It's both, given what you've seen. And... it's getting in. And I think at some point, right around now, the thing that kind of snaps you out of this, is that you feel your feet getting wet. And you look down, and... there's water, like lapping at your feet as the entire place begins to flood.

["Clair de Lune" plays]