Perpetua 38: The Castle Eschatonica 06

Transcriber: robotchangeling

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Recap

Austin: In the little bit of light that is coming from the very top of this place, down through each of the layers of the hive, you see a thin, thin web that is puppeting this Strange Hornet. There is something else in here with you, and you hear it cackling in the dark.

["The Castle Eschatonica" by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

Austin (as **door**):

Oh, tap your casks and trade your masks to celebrate the year.

Backstab or bray, prey on or pray to lift up your career.

But do not assume you'll see this room without a feat of wisdom.

You must display you know your way around our honored system.

…

Austin (as **maidenhair dancer**): When would you find time for dancing in a year like ours?

Janine (as **Brontë**): [sighs] You work it into the everyday routine. It's not always an affair like this. Sometimes it's just a pleasant little step on your way down the

road.

…

Art: Oh, there is something I could have forcefed it, but not until I knew this.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: It's fine. Everything's fine.

Keith: It's funny to have forcefeeding as part of your toolkit.

Janine: Yeah.

Art: [sighs] It's not called forcefeeding.

Janine: West Coast people, your guy's weird. [Keith and Sylvia laugh]

Austin: So true.

Keith: We're trying to kill this spider, and you're stuffing linguini down its maw.

…

Austin (as **door**):

Oh, look! A pair, these masks of air.

You've shown a little pluck.

But do you *know*? Or might you show

less knowledge and more luck?

…

Austin (as **head chef**): Why'd you trade down? No one likes Deadwind. I mean, I guess Fog and Silence do, but no one likes Fog and Silence.

Jack (as **Elena**): I thought it would be a bit of fun. Tell me you've never thought about what it would be like to be House Deadwind.

Austin (as **head chef**): I have never thought about what it would be to be House Deadwind. They're hexers, occultists.

Jack (as **Elena**): Sure. The occult holds no joy for you?

Austin (as **head chef**): The occult holds no joy for me.

Jack (as **Elena**): Wow.

Austin (as **head chef**): The occult is what killed the world. Why would it hold joy for me?

…

Dre (as **Jonathan**): When’s the last time you went shootin’?

Austin (as **Maebela**): Well, I mean, I've been shootin’ cans.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): When’s the last time?

Austin (as **Maebela**): Been a couple years.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): [sighs]

Austin (as **Maebela**): Ain't no shootin’ here anyway. It’s fisticuffs. It’s swordplay. They got them spears.

Ali (as **Veile**): Well, yes, but it’s a point of pride and of something sinister.

Austin (as **Maebela**): Fine, then. Are you gonna go duel him?

Ali (as **Veile**): Well…

Austin (as **Maebela**): You gonna…? He’s not just going to give you the mask, is he?

Dre (as **Jonathan**): No. Well, I guess we got two choices, Mae. Either we swap and I go fight him, or you go fight him.

Ali (as **Veile**): Has anyone seen Brontë?

[song ends]

High Masque

Brontë [0:02:56]

Austin: Cut to Brontë. Brontë, what are you up to?

Janine: Dancing!

Austin: You dancing with a new person? [Jack laughs quietly]

Janine: Probably?

Austin: It's been a bit. You know.

Janine: You know, I feel like Brontë would do two, maybe three dances with the same person, but like, [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] you know, again, it is rude to not make the rounds, especially if you are a good dancer. You know. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: Like, you're going to accumulate a bit of a dance card.

Austin: Yeah, mm-hmm. No, you slipped that in. Yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, give me a roll. Give me a d12, and then give me a d30.

Janine: d12 is 8.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: And d30 is 12.

Austin: Okay. Oh. Okay. Yeah. I don't know what this looks like. I gotta look this up. Okay. It’s another… It’s mugwort. This person has a mugwort mask. This is really pretty, actually.

Janine: That one’s really good for your skin.

Austin: Yeah. This is apparently a popular herb in traditional medicine. It has this long green stems and leaves but it does also get these little burgundy flowers briefly, it looks like?

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So I think those are, like, this is a full face mask, and it’s actually a pretty plain full face mask. Like, it’s white, but it has one kind of branch of this with its purple burgundy flowers kind of up and down the mask. And so, yeah, you're dancing with them currently.

Janine: Cool.

Austin: Yeah.

> (as **mugwort dancer**): Quite a dancer, maidenhair fern.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): It’s one of the pleasures of life.
>
> Austin (as **mugwort dancer**): Indeed.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): I do try to enjoy it when I can.
>
> Austin (as **mugwort dancer**): Indeed. Normally, I think of your house as being more equipped for the workshop than the dance hall, but you've shown otherwise.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): A dance hall is a kind of workshop, just a very different craft.

Austin: As this person dances with you, I think you get the sense that they are moving— you have danced with a number of warriors before, and this is a warrior for sure. This is someone who has the… You know when an athlete learns to dance because it gives them better footwork and better balance and better control?

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Even though they're playing, like, a contact sport? That is how this person is dancing, right? Which is great. It's a totally fun dance. But compared to who you were dancing with before, there is more practice here, even though there's still a lot of bodily strength.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah. And that dancing is going on. If you would like to probe for more or something, you totally can, but I think you are a good dancer. I'm not going to make you roll to just, like, have a good time, you know?

Janine: [chuckles] Uh huh. And that's all I'm going to be trying to do, frankly.

Austin: That's my guess, right? You know.

Janine: Yeah. Brontë is not, like, I don't think there is a thought in his head of like, "I should learn more about these people or this situation." I think it's just party. We found a party.

Sylvia: [quietly] I don't think there's a thought in his head.

Austin: We found a party. Let's party. Yeah.

Janine: And, yeah.

Austin: I think, then—

Janine: If anything important happens, someone will get me. Like, it's fine.

Keith: Brontë's with a group of people who haven't learned how to [cross] utilize

Brontë's…

Janine: [cross] Manage Brontë.

Austin: Right. Right.

Janine: [laughs] Yes, that's true.

Keith: Like, Caoimhe and Antistrophe know what Brontë's about and can be like, "Hey, you have to do this," and if it's Caoimhe, will pretty much say, "Okay, sure."

Janine: Yeah. [Sylvia giggles]

Keith: Whatever. I don't know, whatever.

Janine: You have to jangle keys or be keys.

Keith: But these people were just like— I have to assume that everyone—

Sylvia: I love being keys.

Keith: I have to assume that everybody sort of thinks that you're out trying to help.

Janine: [laughs] I know. It's really good.

Dre: Yeah, probably. [Austin chuckles]

Austin: Mugwort, I think, leans down at some point. You know, after complimenting your dancing, I think says, like,

> (as **mugwort dancer**): Which means you must have picked up some news from some of your other dancing partners. Have you learned much of the other kingdoms? [Janine chuckles]

Austin: In a way that's conspiratorial. There's a—

Jack: Yeah, you have to be very careful here.

Austin: If you did have to roll with this person, you would get a +1 with them is what I will say. They are very much like, they trust you in a way, because they are convinced that you are maidenhair fern and that you are indeed an ally of theirs.

Janine: Um…hmm. What would Brontë say here? Uh…hmm. I think he says, like,

> (as **Brontë**): Well, it's only polite to make conversation with your partners.
>
> Austin (as **mugwort dancer**): Oh. I see. Just normal conversation.

Austin: And, you know, dancing as we do this.

> (as **mugwort dancer**): I do think that if you do find anything out, it would be good to go tell cow. We might be poets, but House Sun is also filled with great strategic thinkers, and cow is at the top of the list.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): I will bear that in mind.

Austin: And does a kind of showy loop. Real I want to show you I really attended to the dance classes before we came here.

Janine: [laughs quietly] I want to— Sorry, I just got, like, a vision in my mind of a fun move that they could be doing, and it's sort of like when they're doing the flying loop and things. I think if you have one person who's doing the big loop, and the other person at the bottom is sort of waiting for them and then, like, takes their hand and then flings them up for a second time.

Austin: Oh, yeah. That's fun.

Janine: It's kind of like trapeze acrobats but without the trapezes.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Ah, sick.

Austin: That's very fun.

Janine: And, like, the other direction.

Austin: [laughs quietly] Brontë is doing trapeze shit, everybody else at the door. [Jack and Janine laugh quietly] That's what Brontë is up to. I mean, maybe one of you can look up that way and see Brontë briefly, [Janine and Ali laugh] at the very height of your sight, coming up over the edge of the tier, you know?

Jack: Wow.

Austin: I should note, also, up here on the Tier of Music, it's like this is the roof of the building, and so it's open air. You can see the sort of, like, it's almost like there's a wind shield around the tower and a little bit out, and then like, you can see a different sky out here. Like, it is their sky out here, their weird end-of-the-world apocalypse sky. But every now and then, it like, flickers—not digitally flickers, but almost like a banner waving in the wind that has holes in it. Sometimes the holes line up with your sight such that you can see through them. And so sometimes, almost like a curtain that has cuts in it, you can see through the cuts and see the Dragon Way, the Dragon Path, the Aether zone, like, beyond it. So you're kind of like in an enclosed Celestial Echo in here that does have tears in it that let you see out, basically. But it's weird to see their nation or their world, their Perpetua from here.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: You're at the tallest tower at the top of the world, dancing, you know? As the world tries to end around you but is kept at bay by some magical power.

Jack: Our Perpetua seems pretty chill, compared to other Perpetuas. [Ali laughs]

Austin: There's a real range, I would say. And, you know, they each exist across time, so what might be true in one moment might not always be true for any of them.

Jack: Yeah, the Valte were bombing the hell out of Perpetua 400 years ago.

Austin: That's right.

Ali: We at least get, like, a lifespan, and it's not just like, "here's a year to sort it out and then come into this tower." [Dre laughs]

Jack: Yeah, that's true. Yes. Playing, like, year-long battle royale storm.

Austin: Though it might not have always been like that here, because apparently the people of— the hexers are blamed, the hexers of House Deadwind are blamed for having put them in this situation to begin with.

Ali: Mm.

Jack: They always blame the hexers.

Ali: Well.

Keith: And rightly so!

Austin: Yeah, see, and rightly so. That's right. Hear, hear.

Ali: Two thoughts here, which is that I obviously don't want to veto a Jonathan-Maebel duel scene. [laughs]

Austin: Not the only way to solve this. I should be as super clear as possible.

Ali: Yeah, yeah.

Dre: Sure, yeah.

Ali: But, you know, a focus there as well, because we haven't had the Jonathan side of this. But I do think at the question of being like, "Well, that's the last mask that we have to get, and we have to fight this violent guy about it," Veile is like, "We had another party member." [Janine, Ali, and Jack laugh]

Janine: Yeah.

Ali: And I don't know if that's, like—

Janine: Someone should probably think that. That's true.

Ali: I don't know if that's something as simple as, like, fluttering around to go look for him and then being like, "Oh, you're dancing."

Janine: I have—

Ali: But I just wanted to lay all of that. Yeah.

Janine: Is that what Veile does?

Austin: We should do that.

Ali: Yeah.

Janine: Okay. I have a minigame. [Ali laughs]

Jack: Whoa!

Janine: It's not a good minigame.

Ali: Are you allowed to?

Jack: Thwarted again!

Janine: Austin, if you want to help me make it a good minigame, you're more than welcome to.

Austin: I mean…

Janine: But I wanted to make whoever finds Brontë roll against the distractions he is surrounded by, all of the cuties and babes, as you can see that I've illustrated on the map here.

Ali: Whoa.

Austin: Oh, I see that. You have made a bunch of cuties and babes on the map.

Jack: Whoa! [Ali and Janine laugh]

Austin: In cursive, in kaushan script in Roll20. Oop, I moved those. I'll move those back. One second. There we go. I moved the babes. My bad, my bad, my bad.

Janine: How dare you.

Jack: The cuties are purple, and the babes are pink. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Yeah. It's a really nice gradient effect.

Janine: I really just started with the cuties, and then I just added the babes, because I was like, [cross] "There's probably more than just cuties. There's probably babes in there too."

Sylvia: [cross] This is incredible.

Ali: Yeah, well.

Janine: It's like a pretty diverse crowd, so.

Sylvia: There's a couple babes, yeah.

Jack: More cuties than babes.

Janine: Well.

Ali: I think I'd be in a better position if I was a babe, but I'm definitely a cutie, so it's going to be tough for me, just math-wise. [Ali and Jack laugh]

Janine: Eh, yeah, yeah.

Austin: What is the minigame you have in mind here?

Janine: Again, it's not a good minigame. It was just going to be rolling dice versus each other, rolling a d10.

Austin: In order to obtain what, or in order to…? What are we determining?

Janine: Basically the one I would be rolling is Brontë's, like, distraction level, i.e. how many people have queued up in order to, have like, "Save a dance for me!" That kind of thing.

Austin: Wow!

Sylvia: [quietly] Oh my god.

Janine: And then the opposing roll would be, I don't know, can you convince him? [Janine and Ali laugh] Can you get him, or do you have to get someone else to help drag him away?

Austin: Yeah, that sounds great.

Ali: All right. Okay.

Janine: All right. I'll roll my 1d10?

Austin: I mean, we should roll, but this should be skills. It shouldn't just be 1d10.

Ali: Yeah.

Janine: Okay. All right, shit. Yeah, this is why I said.

Austin: Yeah, this should be a dice roll.

Janine: If you want to help me zhuzh this up, please do.

Austin: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. I think this has to be, like, a proper contested roll. I guess this is also probably going to be, like, Insight + Willpower or depends on what you're doing to try to get Brontë's attention.

Ali: Yeah, I'm of two minds here, which is like, Insight + Willpower is the obvious one, in terms of, like, making an argument and having the willpower to be in the argument.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: But like, [laughs quietly] there's the DEX version of it, which is, like, dancing with him while I'm doing this, right? [laughs]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: Oh, true.

Ali: Which is a worse stat.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: But I do think that, like, if the challenge is even taking him away from this, to have the conversation, I've sort of…

Janine: Can I say… Okay, you said Captivate would be a worse stat for you?

Ali: I don't know those words. I have a 10 in Insight and Willpower and then a 6 in DEX and Might.

Janine: Okay. I would say, if you go— I'm sorry, Austin. I'm taking over. I'm doing this—

Austin: Go. Go. Have fun. [Ali laughs]

Janine: If you present the plan of Veile dances with him to get his attention and talk to him and you have to do the Captivate for that, you should take a +1 bonus.

Ali: Okay. I will do that. That sounds fair. I'm the cutie here. I'm the only one in the party who doesn't mistrust you actively? [laughs]

Janine: I do…mm…what should I roll?

Austin: Probably something Willpower focused. I mean, what is your— Do you not want to be pulled away from this, right?

Janine: I…again, I think if the case is made, he's not going to be like, [petulantly] "No. I don't want to." But he's very distracted. I'm having a very good time.

Austin: Yeah, then I would say—

Janine: Actually, I wonder if the call here might be Recall—remember useful information about something—because he's recalling that he's here to do stuff and he's here with other people. [Janine and Jack laugh]

Austin: Sure, but then you would almost be rolling… [chuckles] You would almost be rolling to help in that scenario versus to harm, right? Or not to harm, but you know what I mean. You would be rolling on the same side of Veile's objective, in that way.

Janine: Mm, yeah.

Austin: What we're trying to establish is, like, a difficulty for Veile to overcome, which generally is like, you would just do an Opposed Check, right?

Janine: Yes. I mean, then would it just be Dodge? Would it just be, like, DEX + Insight?

Austin: I don't know what Dodge is. Uh…

Janine: DEX doesn't seem right.

Austin: I guess the thing here is it's like, what is Brontë's— there might be a world where this is just a roll, weirdly, and not an opposed roll. If Brontë makes eye contact with Veile, and Veile's like, "We gotta go," you're going to go, presumably, right?

Janine: It depends on how… If he makes eye contact with Veile and that's it, he's going to look away and keep dancing. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Okay. Well, then, that, to me—

Janine: If he makes eye contact with Veile, [**Austin:** Yeah.] and Veile says, "Hey, we gotta go," then for me, it's a question of like, okay, is she close enough that he can hear her?

Austin: Right.

Janine: You know, does he actually have a clear line of sight on her?

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Is there, like, a crowd in the way? You know, that's the thing that I'm…

Austin: This is where I'm trying to decide whether or not it should be Veile rolling against Brontë or Veile rolling against, like, the world, the GM, right?

Janine: Yes. You.

Austin: Or a set thing. If the challenge is I have to find my way through the crowd of dancers and get close enough and be audacious enough to get your attention, simply by bursting through the crowd enough, right?

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: By being able to get your line of sight. Then that, I think, is just a generic one. But if Brontë is like, I want to be dancing. You know, I'm hesitating on purpose a little bit.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: What if I don't make eye contact enough, you know? Like, then it would be opposed, and I think at that point, it would be something like… [chuckles] I think it would be something like Insight + Willpower. I like the word Endure a lot, which is Might and Willpower here, but I think it's like a mental endurance, right?

Janine: Yeah, this is…

Austin: Of being like, [reluctantly] "Fine. I'll go with you." That type of thing.

Janine: I mean, this is why I initially pitched it as just, like, I roll 1d10, just so there's a number of how hard the opposition is there.

Austin: Mm.

Janine: Not, like, specifically attaching it to a Trait or whatever, but just specifically like, yeah, this is a 5 of difficulty. You have to get better than that.

Austin: What we could do there, though. We could say 10 plus a 1d10 is the difficulty. 10 is the baseline, you know, for a relatively difficult thing, and like, as hard as it is could be a 1d10. Or maybe 5. Mm. 5 plus 1d10 has a chance of getting you, like, a 6, which would be maybe you're not having such a good time, but it sounds like you're having a pretty good time, so probably not that low.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: You know, maybe it's a 7 plus 1d10. So, give me a 1d10, and we'll add 7 to it and hope you don't roll a 10, you know?

Janine: And like, it shouldn't be impossible, because Brontë does like Veile, so.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Janine: It would be a harder dice if, like, Jonathan came over. Like, no offense, but. [Ali and Sylvia laugh]

Austin: God damn.

Janine: What am I rolling, again?

Dre: Oh, it's fine. If I have to come over, I have a plan.

Austin: Just roll 1d10. Just roll 1d10. I'll add it to a 7, and that'll be the difficulty Veile has to beat.

Janine: 8.

Sylvia: [gasps] Oh. I'm so excited to know what Jonathan's plan would be.

Austin: So that is a 15 difficulty.

Ali: So I have to beat a 15?

Austin: You have to beat a 15 to get Brontë's attention.

Ali: Okay. The reason I was willing to do DEX was because I was establishing that they were already dancing.

Austin: Right. Right.

Janine: Ah.

Ali: But I'm going to switch to Insight + Willpower, then.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: If this is just Veile locking in.

Janine: Yeah. Whatever it takes.

Ali: [laughs] And then it’s a plus— well, I guess it’s not a +1, if they're not dancing anymore, but I will dance with you if that’s what it takes.

Janine: I'm rooting for you.

Ali: Okay. That’s a 10!

Austin: That’s not enough.

Ali: Wait. I can change the 2 to a 7.

Austin: Ohh. You can. You can.

Ali: And then that’s exactly 15.

Austin: And that’s exactly a 15. [Ali laughs]

Janine: Wooow.

Keith: Wow.

Janine: All right!

Austin: Yeah. All right, what's this?

Keith: Wow. Fate.

Austin: Fate. Yet again, here comes fate.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: What's that look like?

Sylvia: Wow.

Austin: And then what do you say?

> Ali (as **Veile**): Um, excuse me. Brontë.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): Yes, of course. Did you want to dance as well?
>
> Ali (as **Veile**): Oh. Um, as lovely as that sounds, I believe we're having a bit of a point of tension. There seems to be some sort of puzzle or something about the masks.

Austin: Worth noting you are both wearing different masks than you were before.

Janine: Yeah.

> (as **Brontë**): I see.
>
> Ali (as **Veile**): My understanding is that we were to switch, or something? And there's some kind of locked door. Elena and Jonathan seem quite taken by it, and they're debating dueling some strange man, and it just, I don't know.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): Oh dear.
>
> Ali (as **Veile**): We sort of need you.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): All right. Well. [sighs]

Janine: And I think he turns to the people who are around. You know, he's got a few people to apologize to, to be like, "I promised you a dance, I'm sorry. I have to go take care of this." You know. "My mother said, 'Dance with the one that brought you,'" that kind of thing.

Austin: Mm. [Austin and Jack laugh quietly]

Janine: And, you know, makes his excuses, and then turns to Veile and says,

(as **Brontë**): All right, let's go, but you owe me a dance later,

Janine: And then a wink.

Dre: Bleh!

Ali (as **Veile**): Oh, of course!

Ali: Blushing. [Janine and Sylvia laugh]

Austin: Mm. All right.

Ali: We flutter on over.

Door [0:20:42]

Austin: You flutter on over, and you get in front of the door. Is everybody there at this point? Is that right?

[door song]

Austin (as **door**): Three masks? Oh my. The odds are high [Janine chuckles] you know what you are doing.

Dre: Ah, yeah.

Austin (as **door**): But four is harder, for they grow smarter, and soon you'll set them stewing.

Ali: Hmm.

[song ends]

Jack: Does the door say that in the tone of voice that we know we will be irritated about it, or is it exactly the same delivery as the previous time?

Austin: [sighs] Um…

Dre: Also, [**Austin:** Yeah.] does that mean that Brontë has the wrong mask?

Janine: No, it means two of the masks that we have are from the same house, I would guess.

Ali: Yeah.

Dre: Ah. Okay.

Keith: But also that Brontë's one of the ones with the double, right?

Janine: But I got mine first, so. Sorry. [Dre chuckles]

Austin: I think that the tone is— I think that it is a living door, in a sort of fairytale living door sense.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Which means it can change its delivery, and it can purposefully be a dick.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: But it's also kind of like an enchanted door. You know what I mean? Like, it is not—

Jack: Yeah. Oh yeah.

Dre: Uh…

Austin: It has been bound.

Jack: It knows it has a part to play.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: Did you have something, Dre?

Dre: Austin, does this door count as a construct?

Austin: Sure. Hell yeah, it does.

Dre: Hell yeah, it does. [laughs] Okay.

Austin: I'll tell you this. It ain't a demon. It ain't a monster. It ain't a beast or a humanoid. It's none of the other types of things it could be.

Dre: I could just try to hack this door open.

Austin: [quietly] That's so funny. [Jack laughs quietly] How do you do that?

Jack: God. Whole fucking puzzle.

Dre: Well, okay. Mechanically, the way I do that is my Tinkerer move, Magitech Override.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: "You may use an action and spend 10 Mind Points to perform an Opposed Insight + Insight Check against a nearby soldier-rank construct you can see."

Austin: It might not be soldier rank.

Dre: Yeah, that's fair.

Austin: But I kind of want to do a— It's kind of a— Keep that in your back pocket.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Here's what I would do. I would say that doing that on this door would cost you a Fabula Point.

Dre: Oh.

Austin: That would be like the equivalent of doing, you know, yeah, the change a story thing.

Dre: Oh. Yeah, I'll spend a Fabula Point for that.

Austin: Yeah. Okay.

Dre: Let me spend that now.

Austin: All right.

Sylvia: I think that's our fifth.

Austin: I think that might be—

Dre: I think that's our sixth.

Sylvia: That's our sixth? Okay. I did…

Dre: Because Jack spent two…Janine, Art…

Austin: Jack spent three.

Dre: Jack spent three.

Jack: Jack spent three.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Wow.

Ali: Oh, so that's seven?

Keith: Wow.

Austin: That might be seven.

Dre: I think it might be seven.

Keith: You really wanted to cut that pig good.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Okay. I'm just going to write it down in the chat…

Austin: All right. What's this look like?

Dre: I'm going to roll this to see what happens before I describe what it looks like, I think.

Austin: All right. Yep. This is a contested roll.

Dre: Yes, it is.

Austin: Insight + Insight, right?

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Well.

Austin: Currently, it's beating you. It has a 13. You rolled a 7.

Dre: Yeah, I'm going to spend a Fabula Point to reroll.

Austin: All right. With which Trait?

Dre: Um…

Austin: And you will have to tell me how you're hacking this door, so really…

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

Austin: Okay.

Dre: [chuckles] Don't worry.

Keith: I hope this isn't this hex stuff that these people hate.

Ali: Well…

Dre: It’s probably—

Keith: Are you doing hexing?

Dre: Hey, you know, we're going to walk out the door, and it’s fine. We don't have to worry about them ever again.

Sylvia: No, it’s hacks, not hex.

Austin: Mm.

Dre: Okay. What did I roll here? A 5 and a 2. Should I just reroll the 2?

Keith: What is your thing in it?

Dre: My Insight is 10.

Ali: Oh.

Dre: It’s a 13. Mm…

Keith: It’s right on the edge.

Dre: Yeah, it is.

Keith: I think probably you should.

Dre: Well, yeah, because I would need an 8, and that’s hard to get, so let’s do it again. Oof! God, this fucking door!

Austin: You got a 9.

Dre: I'm going to burn my last one.

Austin: All right. And again, the Trait you're using on this is the inventor one?

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. [chuckles]

Dre: My Fabula statements just getting shorter and shorter. [laughs]

Austin: “Door!”

Keith: “D…”

Dre: Agh! It’s a tie. Fuck me.

Austin: You did it! 13! You tied!

Dre: Okay.

Austin: I believe tie goes to the…hmm, let’s double check.

Keith: I think you're right.

Austin: Let’s see. Opposed Checks. Buh buh buh buh buh… [reading] Character taking part in the opposed check, buh duh duh duh duh… Whoever gets the highest result in the case of a draw, the characters who rolled the same result simply repeat the check until one of them emerges victorious! [Ali and Jack laugh]

Dre: Great.

Keith: Oh no!

Austin: All right.

Dre: Let’s do it.

Sylvia: Let’s go.

Keith: Wait, so that means, Austin, that means you reroll too.

Austin: Yeah, I'm gonna.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: 9!

Keith: That’s actually good news.

Austin: 8 and a 1. 11!

Dre: 11! [Ali gasps]

Austin: Jonathan.

Keith: Ooh. Amazing.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Tell me what this looks like, first and foremost.

Dre: Remind me, what is this door made of?

Austin: Some sort of enchanted stonework.

Dre: Okay.

Keith: Does it have a face like the F.A.O. Schwartz tree?

Austin: It has a face. It has one of these. I don't know the F.A.O. Schwartz tree. Yeah. Yeah. You know what it has a face like is the fucking *Fable* door, right?

Janine: I was going to say. You keep describing the *Fable III* demon door.

Dre: Ohhh.

Austin: Yeah. They're in *Fable I*, you know? They're…

Janine: Yeah, but they're nice looking in III. Not nice looking, but I don't know, fancier.

Austin: Mm, I see. Yeah.

Jack: [sarcastic] As opposed to the ugly horrible ones in *Fable I*.

Dre: Mm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Janine: Well, some of them don't— they're not as facey. The ones in III are very wind facey.

Jack: Yeah, they are.

Keith: The F.A.O. Schwartz face is friendly in a kind of scary way.

Austin: Yeah. That's right.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Mm-hmm. So, what do you do?

Dre: Okay. Sorry, I thought we were still talking about door comparison.

Austin: Doors. No, I think we're good.

Dre: I think, like, while Veile goes to get Brontë and maybe Maebel and Elena are, like, arguing about, like, whether Maebel should duel or not, Jonathan looks back at the— well, no, because I guess Brontë's here at this point, right?

Janine: Sadly.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: To his chagrin.

Dre: Yeah. [laughs] Womp womp. I think Jonathan just turns to the door and kind of, like, looks over it.

Austin: Mm-hmm?

Dre: And then kind of mutters to himself and says,

> (as **Jonathan**): Well, damn. Ain't nobody keeping up with this poor thing.

Dre: And he just starts fixing it. The hinges is fucked up. There's, like, cracks everywhere. It hasn't been washed in forever. [Austin laughs quietly] And Jonathan just sees a broken object and is like, “That’s not nice. Somebody should take care of this thing.” This thing has feelings! It’s not just an object.

Austin: Mm. It’s like hearing the fact that it pronounces the words differently and delivers it as, like, a living being and isn't just a spell that has a prerecorded audio sample that’s playing over and over again but is a living construct. Yeah. That’s fun.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And so, yeah, you attend to it. And now I have to read the fourth one as if you've solved it but as if you haven't solved it. [victorious door music begins] Ahem.

Dre: Maybe he’s just winking the whole time the door says it.

> Austin (as **door**): [facetiously] You’ve brought them in, these masks of wind. You wear the full quartet! [Sylvia laughs] Now come inside and finally hide from this politics roulette.

[music ends]

Austin: And it cracks itself open.

> Dre (as **Jonathan**): Thank you kindly.

Austin: It can't say any other words, but you do think it kind of goes, like… As it’s opening, by like pulling itself up into the wall or whatever, you know? It does kind of go,

> Austin (as **door**): [creakily] Mm-hmm.

Austin: And the door's open.

> Jack (as **Elena**): Well, see. Mae, your brother opened the door, and no one needs to duel.
>
> Austin (as **Maebela**): [disappointed] Dang. I was hoping to see a duel. [Sylvia laughs]
>
> Dre (as **Jonathan**): [sighs] I know. Well, hey. Maybe when we get back, maybe… Ooh, maybe you could duel Elena.
>
> Austin (as **Maebela**): I would duel Elena.
>
> Jack (as **Elena**): Uh, we can talk about that when we get back.
>
> Austin (as **Maebela**): What's your weapon of choice?
>
> Jack (as **Elena**): Well, I'm a singer. I'm a…
>
> Austin (as **Maebela**): Oh, I'm a singer too. We sing a lot where I'm from.
>
> Jack (as **Elena**): Jonathan, we can talk about this later.
>
> Dre (as **Jonathan**): Yeah, no. Sure, sounds good. You should all figure out the logistics later. You're right. We gotta get out of this tower.

Austin: All right. As people begin to look at the four of you, even though you're not all wearing different masks, the door has opened, and that gains some eyes. And you do, in fact, make your way into a twisting hallway that goes from the kind of, you know, presumably you're all going. I guess I don't know for sure.

Dre: I hope so.

Austin: Maybe some of you are staying behind at the fun party. I can't be certain.

Jack: Gonna go win that sword from the duel.

Austin: You might be able to.

Janine: I think, you know, Brontë inherently, if he's with a group, will be inclined to follow the group.

Austin: I see.

Janine: But if he got separated. If, you know, something happened where he got a little separation from the group, he would go back. [Ali and Jack laugh]

Austin: That makes sense.

Janine: So this is a warning, I guess.

Austin: Ah, I see.

Sylvia: [quietly] That's so funny.

Ali: I want to know what it's like to dance with wings.

Austin: Yeah. You could always go back.

Janine: Well, you could have found out.

Dre: Oh, are our wings still here?

Austin: As you walk through the door, the wings vanish.

Dre: Aww.

Austin: You are no longer in Alteros.

> Ali (as **Veile**): Was it more fun to dance with the wings, Brontë?
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): Oh, yes. Very much so. [Ali laughs]
>
> Dre (as **Jonathan**): [sighs] He was fucking dancing the whole time. Of course he was fucking dancing the whole time.

Sylvia: God. The funniest possible answer.

> Ali (as **Veile**): Well, I'm glad you got a bit of rest, in that case. Well, not rest. You know.
>
> Janine (as **Brontë**): It was quite a lot of exertion, actually.
>
> Ali (as **Veile**): Right. You know, just…

Ali: [laughs] I'm so tired. What's not rest? Rejuvenation.

Keith: She's trying to think of the word "fun". [Janine laughs]

Sylvia: Recreation?

Austin: There we go. For the record—and for the completionists out there who want to go hack together an Alteros game—there are four great powers in Alteros: the North Wind Clan, the Kingdom of the East Wind, the South Wind Dynasty, the Empire of the West Wind. Each of those has three houses in it. The North Wind Clan has House Snow, Ice, and Night. Those are duelists, hunters, and chefs, predominantly. The Kingdom of the East Wind has Dew, Rain, and Arc—as in rainbow, like the arc of a rainbow—and those are gardeners, sailors, and artists. House Sun, House Thunder and House Flood make up the South Wind Dynasty, and they are poets, warriors, and blacksmiths. And the Empire of the West Wind is Fog, Deadwind, and Silence, who are miners, occultists, and assassins. Each house is laid out on a grid for me. I have a spreadsheet with them all. They all get a +1 with the house immediately to the left and right of them whenever they're interacting with each other. For that reason, sometimes, for instance, someone wearing House Deadwind would get +1 with House Fog and House Silence. The occultists have +1 with the miners and the occultists, and they are all the same empire. But the miners, who are one over, you know, they have a +1 with the occultists but also with the blacksmiths of House Flood, so it would be easier for the miner to talk to a blacksmith than for the occultist or the assassin. This advances until you get to a -4. You know, it goes from, like, +1 to the immediate neighbor, then to a 0, then a -1, then a -2, then a -3, then a -4, and then it starts to build back up the other

direction, basically.

Keith: So the house directly across from you, you have a -4 with.

Austin: That's exactly right. That's exactly right. Which didn't really come up, because you managed to actually make very nice small jumps without knowing it. Other places you could have learned about this information: the entry hall, where people were being announced. You could have, you know, tried to sort of piece together.

Jack: Oh, who's hanging out with whom.

Austin: Who's hanging out with whom. You could have asked someone about the houses, et cetera. But, you know, you got there. You got through. That's the way games work, so. And yeah, that's the schematic of the Alteros. And yes, the entries all come from the French Republican calendar, during the revolution or post revolution, but I've shuffled them greatly, so they are not where they're supposed to be in months, but that is why there are 360 or so of these and why they are broken up into 12 categories of 30. And I've also added the final one called apocalypse root, and so. That never came up, but. But yes, Jack, when you said you were wearing the plum mask, it's like saying, "Hahaha. I'm from the assassin clan," is what you basically said to that cook. [Jack and Keith laugh] Anyway. You've made it through.

Jack: We smoothed it over.

Austin: You smoothed it over. You make it through a hallway that goes from this sort of, like, ornate, you know, high fantasy stuff, into something that quickly just looks like the hall of an apartment building, and it opens right into—there is no door—a studio apartment slash art studio. This is a painter's studio, and here, in this room, you can see there are paintings on the walls. There are little, you know, mannequins and maquettes and stuff, and it is abandoned otherwise. But there is some other stuff here. We can come back to that in a moment. Let's go back over to the Beetle Alchemist's Hut.

Other Team [0:33:20]

Austin: Y'all have already recovered your IP.

Sylvia: Yep.

Austin: What else are you doing in that hut? And it is a hut, and there's like, you can hear the sounds of Redolencia outside the windows. You can peek outside the windows. It's a similar effect as to the strange shimmering fake outside that we just saw over on the eastern side, over on the High Masque. But over here, you know, you kind of have, like, the dark woods, but sometimes even the woods waver, and you can see out to the other side of this kind of long weird walkway over the middle of the map, going up towards the curved observatory where you were told to meet with Gnova.

Keith: You know, make sure there's nothing else cool in here.

Austin: You do a little Study Check?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Sure. That's a 7.

Austin: That is a 7. Nah.

Keith: You know what? This is the end. We're getting—

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: We've been recording for a while. I'm going to Fabula Point that 1.

Austin: Okay. Give me a roll.

Art: That's a good idea, because the other one's a 6.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Hell yeah, brother.

Keith: 0…oh, no. It'll do 0 on its own. Reroll. Oh, last time I did it was also to reroll finding stuff. There we go. [Austin chuckles] And then I'm going to roll a 1d8? Yeah.

Austin: That's an 11.

Keith: That's an 11.

Austin: A 10…yeah. Over a 10, you find a little poison dart kit, which is a ranged throwing weapon.

Keith: Ooh.

Austin: It's DEX + DEX. It's HR + 4 poison damage. One-handed, ranged. Each target hit by this weapon suffers poisoned, and it sells for 1000 asta. I'll put that in the chat.

Keith: It would be nice to be able to hit a flying thing once.

Austin: That's true. It is a ranged weapon. That is true. All right. That seems to be the bulk of what's here. You know, you got some deeper stuff from the Necrosmith's Workshop, including some stuff that I'd originally written to potentially be over here, so I just don't think there's too much else in this alchemist's hut.

Keith: All right.

Art: All right. Then I guess we should go to the obvious place we're supposed to go.

Keith: Do what we're meant to do. Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Down to the big— okay.

Art: Let me Study the next room.

Austin: Not to the room you've been avoiding? Okay. Damn. Drat. All right. [Dre

chuckles]

Sylvia: All right…

Art: Why would we go back there? There's nothing here. You can't convince me that there's something here.

Austin: There is a normal door at the top of the Ruined Hive. Oh, the Ruined Hive, again, ends with Honey Storage, which is where you got that honey before, right? It's just gross.

Art: Yeah.

Austin: I just want to say this out loud: it's gross all the way through here. [Jack and Dre laugh]

Keith: Sure.

Austin: And the doorway out is this hexagonal, you know, very organic. This was built with organic materials, and it's crumbling, and it's decrepit, and it stinks. And when you push past that, you see a door of, like, pure chrome. And as you approach, it slides up with, like, a whooshing sound. And you enter into the bridge of a starship, the bridge of the Cyan Star.

Jack: [gasps] Cerulia!

Austin: You've never seen anything like this. Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, my eyes are bulging out of my fucking head right now.

Austin: Yeah. Mm-hmm. [Sylvia laughs quietly]

Keith: Ooh, there's a little guy here. What is this little guy?

Austin: What? Who?

Keith: I can click him. Oh, maybe I accidentally put a dot there, a big yellow dot.

Austin: You drew a big yellow line here earlier, I think.

Sylvia: I'm not see…

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Keith: I did. [laughs]

Austin: I erased as much of it as I could, but some of it was still left. There it is.

Keith: Okay. Well, we found it.

Austin: This is a starship bridge—you know, for you as the players, not as the characters—that resembles more like a *Star Trek: Enterprise* bridge or a *Mass Effect* Normandy but brighter. This is not, like, a Millennium Falcon, lived-in, you know, poorly maintained, grubby. This is bright and shiny. You know, this *Xenoblade* or *Xenogears* or really it's *Xenosaga* is really what it is. It's more like *Xenosaga* than either of those.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Hell yeah.

Austin: Everything is super bright and shiny. There is, in the middle of the room, which is this kind of, like, arrow-shaped bridge with a big, on the far end, the kind of front of this has a big observation window or maybe some sort of screen that's projecting, and you can see out of it the real Dragon Path, kind of layered over top of a HUD, but the HUD, the head's up display, thinks that it's looking at some distant space system. In fact, you actually see the name of a planet called Capstone, which you know is the name of a city that's one of the Celestial Echoes back on Perpetua, so that must be from whatever world this is. And yes, you see the actual observatory, and actually in front of you, that is where you're supposed to go meet. That's on the other side of the big walkway where you need the sun crest and the moon crest. Also in this room, you find a couple things. There's like a hilt up on the wall, like a "in case of emergency, break glass," and behind it is just, like, a metal hilt for a sword. And then there is a solar system, like, holographic map in the middle. There's a big giant sun that is surrounded

by a number of planets, as if like, “Oh, these are the planets that are nearby.” Those are not planets or moons or anything you've ever heard of. Again, including Capstone, which is one of the ones here, which, again, is the name of a place you've heard of, because if you're from the western continent, it is one of the Celestial Echoes that became settled and there's still, like, a remnant of it left behind.

Ali: It was the *Dragon Ball Z* one from the prequel, right?

Austin: It was the *Dragon Ball Z* one. Yep. That’s right, yeah. So it turns out that that was, like, a one-off city inside of this other Perpetua.

Art: Okay. Let’s look around in here.

Austin: All right. What are you looking for?

Sylvia: Oh, I'm just, like, so taken with all the weird technology in here.

Austin: Yeah, you've never seen anything like this. There are screens.

Art: Space stuff.

Austin: You know what I mean? There's, like, projections of information running quickly that is just like glowing books?

Keith: Can we tell what the information is of?

Austin: It’s all stuff from this world, right? It’s all like, “The population of Capstone is blah blah blah.” You know, “The sun has heated to this degree in the last hour.” You know, there are some number of stars left in the galaxy.

Keith: Hmm.

Austin: And then there's like— yeah, go ahead.

Keith: Can I—

Austin: But give me a Study Check. There's more here, for sure.

Keith: Yeah. Here's what I want to study. I'm, like, looking for the first thing that I could make heads or tails of, like, at all.

Art: Wait, who has the best Insight? I don't want to…

Keith: I have 8.

Sylvia: I also have 8.

Austin: Wow.

Keith: We all have 8. Yeah.

Sylvia: So we all do!

Art: Should we do a group?

Keith: Yeah!

Art: I don't want to mess this one up.

Sylvia: Sure.

Art: 'Cause we're in space.

Keith: 'Cause we're in space.

Austin: Who is leading?

Sylvia: Don't you get a bonus for it, Keith? For Study? Or am I wrong?

Keith: Oh, that's a great point. I get a big bonus to unopposed Study Checks.

Austin: This is not opposed.

Art: All right. And we have a Bond, so if I can do well at helping…

Keith: That's true. Yeah.

Sylvia: Okay. I'm going to roll my…

Art: But is this an appropriate Group Check?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Absolutely.

Art: I'm not trying to…

Austin: Neither to that.

Art: Well, that didn't help.

Austin: Neither of those helped.

Sylvia: I got a 9. I don't think that helps either, yeah.

Keith: Okay. That's fine.

Austin: Oh, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.

Sylvia: It's all you, big guy.

Austin: Wait, did we—? Yeah, I think this is right. I wanted to make sure for a second that Group Checks, the helper doesn't get to add the Bond, right? It's only, yeah, yeah. Okay, we're good. We're good.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: I just thought for a second that I was doing something wrong, but I was not.

Keith: 16.

Austin: That is more than enough. Antistrophe's got this one.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: A couple of things. You make sense of there is in the corner a little sort of circular round plate on the ground, and there are some runes written in the wall that

they look unintelligible at first, but you kind of, like, you realize they're just written in a weird font, actually. [laughs quietly]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And you're like, “Oh. That’s just ‘teleportation pad’.” Okay. So that’s teleportation pad.

Keith: Okay. Great.

Austin: You, with a 16, notice that it’d be very easy to take the hilt from off the wall and that it seems to be an actual weapon.

Keith: Great.

Austin: And then, again with a 16, in the middle of the holographic sun, floating like in the sun, is a crest, is the crest of the sun you've been looking for. There it is.

Keith: Oh, okay. Well, I want to do three things.

Austin: Oh, okay.

Keith: I want to grab the hilt.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: I want to grab the sun crest. And I want to use Flash of Insight: when I roll 13 or higher on a Check performed to investigate a creature, item, or location—this includes during a Conflict—you may ask the Game Master up to SL questions concerning the subject of your investigation. I can ask them immediately or save them for later.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And you will answer truthfully and describe my character’s deductive process. I will describe my character’s deductive process.

Austin: Yeah, I imagine so. Yeah.

Keith: I want to take a second to try to, like, figure out some of the technology in here.

Austin: What are you trying to figure out?

Keith: Well, I'm having a big “what the fuck is going on?” moment about being in a spaceship.

Austin: Yeah, sure.

Keith: This is a totally new aesthetic environment. This is, like, unlike pretty much anything I've ever seen. I saw that computer one time.

Austin: You saw that computer one time.

Keith: And so this seems more advanced than that, so this is blowing even the craziest thing I've ever seen out of the water, and it’s all around me.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: But I'd like to think that a screen is pretty self-explanatory, and I've seen buttons and levers.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: So I want to approach, like, the console and kind of like look and see what I can figure out, especially now that I know [**Austin:** Yeah.] that the font is readable and not another language.

Austin: Yeah. It is filled with information about this galaxy.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Which is an amount of time and space and distance that is hard to comprehend needing to think about.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: It has basic information about how many trillions of people exist in the galaxy.

Keith: Yeah. And I can tell—

Austin: The name of the galaxy is KosmoKairosis.

Keith: Have I heard that before?

Austin: You have heard it out of character, certainly.

Keith: Okay. Does it scan for me that I am in another whole thing?

Austin: With the previously-obtained information from the diary that you found of the adventurer on the Bloodsmith's whatever, workshop, yeah. Yeah, it's very clear that this is now, like, a third alternate reality. Not alternate. Like, past reality.

Keith: Right. And is there any way from what I'm seeing to, like, figure out how we can get here or, like, what it mean—

Austin: It is not an alternate reality. There is no here.

Keith: There is— okay.

Austin: This is the wreckage of a world that is dead.

Keith: Got it. But we did get here.

Austin: Right, but there's no more. There might be more here, but it's other more wreckage.

Keith: Right.

Austin: There is not an alternate realm that you could go access and be there.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: Yeah. You are standing in a corpse of a world.

Keith: I tell my allies here about the teleporter.

Austin: And you picked up the hilt, right? And the crest.

Keith: Yeah, I pick up the hilt and the crest.

Austin: All right. I need you to make some dice rolls with the hilt.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: Oh.

Austin: Because one of the rules [Sylvia gasps] of KosmoKairosis…and I've mentioned this before, so I did, in fact, because I mentioned over on the western side, because I believe, [**Keith:** Oh, right.] Ali, Cerulea is from KosmoKairosis.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: That she is good at knowing about loot. And so, in KosmoKairosis, there is randomized loot, so I'm going to need you to make some dice rolls to see what type of loot you just got.

Keith: Okay. Got it.

Austin: Let’s see it here. I have rules for this. Of course I do. Which doc is this in? Here it is. All right, first and foremost, give me a d2. It is a martial sword. It is a sword, for sure, but we'll see what type of sword it is momentarily. 1: it’s a one-handed sword. Give me a d3. 2: it gets a +1 accuracy. I'm going to try to make notes of these as we go down, so that I can just put this all together. Give me another d3 to determine how much damage it does. It is HR + 10 damage. [Keith whistles] Give me a d9 to determine what type of blade it is. It is Stone Steel. The name of the sword is Stone Steel. It does earth damage. Give me a d10 to see what type of bonus effect it has. 6: it ignores resistances. It’s breaching. It is a breaching stone steel sword.

Keith: Ooh.

Art: Yo!

Keith: I might have to switch to swords. Fuck! [Jack and Sylvia laugh]

Austin: Let me type this out for you. [typing] Martial, one-handed, HR + 10, earth damage, breaching. I already said that part, so it ignores resistances. And it is DEX and Might, I should say.

Keith: Got it.

Austin: DEX + Might + 1, because of your accuracy roll before.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And it is, you know, I should be super clear. There's a button on this. You hit it, and a sort of beam of energy comes out of it. In this case, it’s a beam of earthen energy, like mineral energy. I don't know what that actually means. Maybe it’s just a—

Keith: I found a brown lightsaber.

Austin: Well, I don't— because it could be—

Janine: It sounds like a brown lightsaber. [Dre laughs] I was just going to say it sounds like a brown lightsaber.

Austin: It does sound like a brown lightsaber.

Keith: Brown lightsaber. [laughs]

Austin: It’s the one that’s the hardest one, right? Because it’s like, that just sounds like a sword actually, right? Because it’s…

Keith: Yeah. Well…

Austin: Though it’s not physical. It’s not just physical. It’s not sharp steel.

Keith: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Austin: But it's not zephyr steel or gloom steel or gleam steel, which would be light damage. It's stone steel. So maybe it's like a hardened, maybe a sort of blade of rock appears when you kind of channel.

Sylvia: A sort of vibrating blade.

Austin: Like a vibro-blade.

Dre: Hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, something like that.

Keith: Hmm, some sort of vibro-blade.

Austin: Yeah. God, if it did generate a stone blade that then broke when you hit it, but you could always generate a new one, that would actually be kind of sick.

Keith: Yeah, prints a stone blade every time?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, uh huh.

Keith: Pretty cool.

Austin: Yeah. So go ahead and write that down.

Keith: Okay.

Janine: Oh, weird. They do make a brown lightsaber, but it's specifically for…sorry, they make a brown lightsaber for the Luke Skywalker old Lego figure.

Keith: Huh.

Sylvia: Huh?

Janine: I don't know. It's on eBay.

Austin: What?

Jack: Why?

Janine: [laughs] It’s just on eBay. I don't know if it’s real.

Keith: It might be a fan thing.

Janine: It says official.

Austin: Oh, I see that.

Janine: It says “4x Official Lego Old Luke Skywalker Lightsabers Dark Brown Hilt.”

Keith: Oh, okay.

Jack: 4x?

Janine: Oh, maybe it’s that they're old, that they were made a long time ago and turned brown? I don't know.

Art: Oh, the plastic has turned?

Sylvia: Ohhh.

Ali: No, but that’s definitely an old guy.

Janine: No, a lot of people…

Austin: This is an old guy.

Sylvia: Old guy with a poopy saber.

Janine: There are just people selling lots of 20 of these, 20 Official Lego Old Luke Skywalker Lightsabers Dark Brown Hilt.

Austin: “The Rarest Lightsaber in Star Wars: The Mystery of the Brown Blade”. [Janine laughs quietly]

Dre: Oh, I just also pulled up this website. Yeah.

Sylvia: Come on.

Austin: What the fuck is this?

Keith: The Mystery of the Brown Blade.

Sylvia: Come on!

Austin: Stupid. I don't believe this is real.

Dre: I don't think it’s real either.

Austin: I believe this is fucking fake.

Janine: Official Lego.

Sylvia: It hums at the brown note frequency.

Austin: Oh, this is an AI page.

Janine: Official Lego, though.

Austin: No, no, no, not that part. The thing that Keith and I just found, I think, is fake.

Janine: Oh.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: Official Lego, though.

Dre: Oh, this is a lightsaber building company. Of course they want you to think a brown blade’s cool.

Austin: Yeah, and I think they just generated an AI site.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: An AI thing, because it’s written by Cal Kestis. [Janine laughs] That’s not a real guy.

Keith: No, that's a *Star Wars* name.

Austin: That's a *Star Wars*. He did that double jump.

Dre: That's the guy from the game, yeah.

Austin: A double jump, he can do.

Sylvia: Yeah. Yeah, that's why I know that name.

Janine: Wait. Hey. But hey, if you go to— Is this real?

Austin: [sighs] I see.

Janine: "Bnar's Sacrifice was a unique brown lightsaber crystal that belonged to the legendary Jedi Master Ood Bnar. "

Austin: Bnar's Sacrifice? Yeah. [quietly] It's so stupid.

Janine: "When Bnar was cut down during the time of the Old Republic, [**Austin:** Yeah…] he left his lightsaber crystal as a legacy to those who would come after him." That looks like a fossilized poop.

Austin: [pained] Ali, we read this comic. We've seen this before. We've seen this lightsaber.

Sylvia: You've seen the poop blade?

Janine: Coprolite lightsaber.

Austin: This is so stupid.

Keith: Can I see the one that looks like brown poop, please? [Jack chuckles]

Janine: There's, like, a picture of Bnar's Sacrifice. It just looks like holding a little fossilized dinosaur poop that's been shined up real nice.

Austin: I think this is a yellow lightsaber. I don't think this is brown. Anyway, we're going

back to the world of our world.

Janine: [resigned] Fine.

Austin: You got your brown lightsaber. And as you take the sun crest, red lights start to flash and alarms begin to roar, claxons begin to fire off, and it says,

> [as **robotic alarm**] Please move to the teleportation pad. Please move to the teleportation pad.
>
> Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Okay!
>
> Art (as **Nicky**): Great.
>
> Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): Okay.
>
> Art (as **Nicky**): Which is the teleportation pad?
>
> Keith (as **Antistrophe**): It’s this one.

Austin: There we go. Good job.

Sylvia: Standing with the straightest posture she’s ever had in her life so she doesn't have anything outside of the teleportation pad.

Austin: Yeah, smart.

Art: Oh, I hope this isn't where we learn that this is a “teleportation kills you” universe.

Austin: Yeah, great question.

Sylvia: We'll never know.

Keith: Every universe with teleportation is a “teleportation kills you” universe.

Austin: I agree, but you know, what are you going to do? Genres. Genres will insist that they are not, and who are we to complain?

Painter’s Studio [0:51:32]

Austin: In any case, over in the painter’s studio, there's— again, it seems to be an abandoned studio. You do get the other half of this view onto the side of the tower, the observatory. Let me reveal that it says Painter’s Studio, and let me reveal there's, like, you know, a whole orb up here. But yeah, as far as you can tell, it is a studio that someone paints in, and it is, in terms of visual aesthetic, this looks like a late 20th century room or early 21st century.

Sylvia: Huh.

Austin: There is, you know, a nice— no. There's not a nice. There is a chair someone found from the street that they’ve brought up here that is their work chair. There is a cheap IKEA table that they are using to store all their painting supplies. Their painting supplies—

Keith: Sorry, when did you get a picture of my office? [Austin and Jack laugh]

Austin: The painting supplies are nice. It’s clear whoever runs this place does well with, like, spends their money on that, on the actual art supplies. There are a number of paintings that are completed with a range of subjects. There's a number of natural subjects. There's like a painting of an owl. There's a landscape painting. Then there is a still-in-progress painting of a moon that is on the kind of northern wall, and there's like a little moon model in front of the painting that is clearly part of what’s being painted in a kind of light box setup so that you can project different light onto the moon or any object that you put in there to paint. And that’s what, on first blush, is here.

> Ali (as **Veile**): Why would this place be concealed by that strange door?
>
> Dre (as **Jonathan**): [sighs] I don't know. I don't feel like much of things in here make sense, at least not to me.

Austin: Elena, you know this place. This is the world of Imago.

Jack: Oh my god.

Austin: This is the strange place that you were briefly brought to by your gem, a world where art is connected to the dark spirit of the world.

Jack: Violet knows what *Seinfeld* is, possibly. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Possibly. Yeah, probably.

Jack: I'd been thinking of her as she was from, like, painter Orlais. I thought she was from, like, the previous room.

Austin: Mm-mm. Mm-mm.

Ali: Isn't she a vampire hunter?

Austin: She is a monster hunter. That is right.

Janine: You have Buffy the Vampire Slayer in a crystal?

Ali: Basically, and she's rude to you.

Jack: I mean, I…

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: I guess I do.

Dre: Yeah, that sounds like Buffy.

Janine: Okay, so like, Faith. You have Faith in a crystal. [Ali laughs quietly]

Keith: It's called quippy banter. [Ali laughs]

Austin: [chuckles] She doesn't really go for quips. She's meaner than that, but yeah.

Dre: Okay. Janine's right. It is Faith.

Austin: It's more Faith.

Jack: I guess I'm going to pull out the gem.

Austin: It doesn't seem to do anything. They've retreated here, as I've said before.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: They do not like being here and have retreated. I mean, again, you feel— the presence is there, but it's as if she has walked away. Maybe you could try to will her to come to the forefront.

Jack: Yeah, I didn't know if they might be… Obviously there would be, like, some grief in being in the ruin of their world, but I also didn't know if the connection was stronger here or something.

Austin: Potentially.

Jack: [cross] I'm going to give it a go.

Austin: [cross] I mean, again, you could try to force it to happen.

Jack: I don't know about force, but.

Austin: It is. It will be. It will be forcing.

Jack: Then I don't think I'm going to.

Austin: Yeah, you can feel that there's a real resistance to being here and to looking at this place and to confronting what it might mean. You know.

Jack: Yeah, I don't think I need the connection that much.

Austin: Yeah. To draw a line backwards, Cerulea, Veile's gem, explicitly was like, "I need you to reconnect me with Gail!" who seems to be her companion or partner. Gail's probably dead, right? The worlds these people come from do not exist.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: And so there is a, conscious or otherwise, refusal to perceive the remnants, which, to them, feel like walking through the remnants of their own worlds. They can tell,

right?

Jack: Yeah. It's some real ghost story shit.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: The, like, a ghost's—you know, you see this all the time—a ghost's unwillingness or inability to process what has happened.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And that being a source of grief as much as it being a source of misunderstanding.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Um…

Jack: Go on, Ali.

Austin: But yes, Violet Caliban, Imagist and Sinful Trader. She can enter the sins of others. And she's from this world of Imago. She was an expert in art, fashion, and culture.

Ali: I would like to do a Study Check.

Austin: Yeah. Let's do it.

Ali: As a player, I am loot focused, and as a character, I think part of Veile is like, "Oh, they were painting a moon. The moon tablet is in here." [laughs]

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Of course.

Ali: So I'm just going to hit the Study button. It's just going to open up this. Fuck me! What the fuck?

Austin: That's a 4, so that's not great. That's not ideal.

Ali: Okay, I'm going to use a Fabula Point. [typing] Studying better. [laughs] I'm going to call upon my Theme of duty.

Austin: Oh, yeah. Sure.

Ali: Because I think that I'm, like, turning pages over and refusing to believe that there is not anything useful in here. 9.

Austin: 9 is a success. Does anyone want to help?

Jack: Yeah, I'll help.

Austin: Or do you want to spend a point to use a Bond?

Ali: Oh.

Austin: Which would get you up to 10 or 11. Or both things could happen.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Remember that you get more as you go from 7 to 10 to 13 to 16.

Dre: Can only one person help, or is it a multiple person thing?

Austin: Nope. It would become a Group Check.

Dre: Okay. Okay.

Austin: We'd just make it a Group Check retroactively, which we've done.

Ali: Mm, mm, mm-hmm. Okay.

Dre: I think we should do that. I think making it a Group Check would be good. And I think it makes sense.

Austin: Yeah. I imagine everybody's looking around.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. So give me Study Checks for everybody else. You're looking for a 10 to help Veile increase that result. That's 1 from Jonathan, so that goes up to a 10. Only a 5 from Elena, so no change. [Ali laughs sadly]

Ali: So that goes up to a 10, and then it goes up to a 12, because I have a 2 bond with Jonathan.

Austin: Wait, is Brontë not helping?

Ali: Oh.

Janine: Um, maybe. I was trying to decide if he's paying attention or not. [Janine, Ali, Dre, and Sylvia laugh] I do think he's probably gone to, like, a bookshelf and picked up a copy of, like, [**Austin:** Yeah.] Kevyn Aucoin's *Making Faces* and is reading it.

Austin: [amused scoff] Yeah. That counts.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Looking at the bookshelf counts as helping here.

Janine: Yeah, cool.

Austin: Because you're still, like, exploring the space. Unless you were, like, looking in the corner like the end of, uh…

Janine: [laughs] No, no, no. What am I rolling?

Jack: Blair Witch?

Austin: Blair Witch, yeah. Study. Insight + Insight.

Janine: Okay. Here we go. [Ali and Janine laugh] Not with that.

Austin: Only 5. So, no, that doesn't help. But Jonathan raises you to a 10, and then Insight + Insight— or, Jonathan raises you to a 10, and then you were saying, Veile, you have a Bond with Jonathan, right?

Ali: I do. I have a level 2 Bond with Jonathan.

Austin: [sighs] So that brings you up to a 12. If you did spend a Fabula Point to also invoke the Bond, you would get over a 13.

Ali: Oh. Is that how that works?

Austin: Yeah, because remember, you can also spend a Fabula Point to, like, add a Bond to a roll directly.

Ali: Oh.

Austin: Separately from the Group Check thing. You can spend a Fabula Point to reroll something or to add the value of a Bond to a roll, if you can explain why the Bond is, like…

Ali: Am I allowed to do that if I've already added the Bond? I mean, I guess I shouldn't argue against this. I'll just…

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: Because it's just a Group Check. Yeah, mm-hmm. It doesn't say. Unless I'm missing something that says Group Checks aren't allowed to use Fabula Points, which that would be wild. So.

Dre: Yeah.

Ali: Okay. I just wasn't sure if it was like a double dipping thing because I got to…

Austin: Nope. You're spending the Fabula Point, right? So, you know, let yourself get a W. If you have it and want to spend it.

Ali: Yeah. I would go down to a 1, which isn't great, because then I wouldn't get one later, but it would bring the group up, and we're already down. So. [quietly] I don't want to sticky keys. [typing] Jonathan helping me. [laughs quietly] So, that becomes a 13?

We just say that?

Austin: That becomes a 14, in fact, I think. Because you have a 2 with Jonathan, right?

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: What is it about your relationship with Jonathan that you're like, “I gotta do good at this”?

Ali: I think that it’s more of like a parallel play kind of thing. I think in Veile’s head, [**Sylvia:** Aww.] she’s like, “Oh, Jonathan is really smart and really detail-oriented, and he just fixed that door, so I should be, like, kind of mirroring how he’s looking, [laughs] instead of the way that I would do it myself.”

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm. Aww. All right. You get a bunch of stuff here. First, you get 800 asta.

Ali: Let’s fucking go.

Austin: Maybe you split that up. We'll see how you go with that. Two, you find hidden in a secret compartment in the bottom of a bookshelf. There's like, under the bookshelf’s final shelf, there's like a false floor, and hidden in there is armor from that previous place. Someone came here before and hid some armor for themselves that they took from the previous place.

Ali: Oh.

Austin: This is the Valkyrie Wing or Valkyrie’s Wings armor. It is martial, 11 Defense, Insight +1 Magic Defense, -3 Initiative. When you cast the Soaring Strike spell—see Elementalist class, page 189—the MP cost is halved.

Sylvia: Ooh.

Austin: It has a 450 sell price. So there's, like, some hidden armor you've stolen. Or you've taken. You haven't stolen it. Eh, maybe you— maybe *they* stole it. [Sylvia laughs] You find the Gorgon’s Brush, which is an accessory. You have to wield it as an

accessory or wear it as an accessory. It gives you access to a spell called the Gorgon's Gaze. It's 10 MP. It's an attack spell. It has one target. It doesn't do any damage, but you summon a snake-headed creature to stun a target with its gaze. The target hit by this attack suffers slow. If the target is already slow, they must instead succeed on a difficulty level 7 check or be turned to stone. It's a pretty low check. They will probably survive that. But, you know, they might not survive that check, especially if they don't have a high Might or Willpower, you know? And they get turned to stone. And that is worth 800 asta. Most— maybe not most importantly. You find a painting that had been covered up with a sheet on one of the easels in here. You pull the sheet off—or a cloth, you know—and underneath it is a painting of the first room you were in, the room with the crystals. It's like that room.

Jack: Oh!

Austin: With the pool of water, et cetera. And you sense that that is a magical painting. And finally, you realize that you can reach into the moon painting and pull the moon out of it, the moon crest from inside of the moon.

Ali: [gasps] From inside of the moon painting or from the painting of the room?

Austin: From inside of the moon painting, the moon painting.

Ali: Ah.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. The moon crest in the painting of the front room is probably not visible, because it's like up the stairs in there.

Ali: Right, right, right.

Austin: And probably not that view, but yeah. Yeah, your hands, you know, while you're trying to move paintings around or something, maybe a thumb dips into the world inside of the moon painting in a very strange way, and you realize, "Oh, I could take the moon out of this moon painting, and it's the crest we need."

Sylvia: Whoa.

Austin: Though, as you do it, the world here begins to get dark, in a way that, Elena, you have seen before.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Oh no. Oh no! Blood drains from her face.

(as **Elena**): [urgently] We have to move. We have to go.

Ali (as **Veile**): Elena, look at all these things we can sell.

Jack (as **Elena**): Into the other painting. Into the other painting. I don't care about selling the things. [Ali laughs]

Ali (as **Veile**): Elena.

Jack (as **Elena**): What's the worst thing you've ever done?

Ali (as **Veile**): Uh— [Austin chuckles] I beg your pardon?

Jack (as **Elena**): Would you like to find out? Move.

Austin: The temperature grows cold in the painter's studio. [Ali laughs]

Jack (as **Elena**): Into the painting!

Austin (as **Maebela**): We're getting in the paintin'?

Austin: Says Maebela.

Jack (as **Elena**): [Jack laughing] Yes. Yes, come on, go.

Ali: Which painting are we going into? Oh, the one with the room.

Janine: [cross] I will say, I think, like—

Jack: [cross] Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think without answer— Oh, go on.

Janine: I think the second someone says, "Uh oh. Get in the painting," this feels like a moment where Efta and Zolfta would— like a rare moment [Austin chuckles] where they

would kind of just take Brontë, like one of them taking each wrist, and it's just like, all right, we're going through the painting! [Jack and Ali laugh]

Austin: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yeah. All right. You crawl through the painting, and Elena, before you get in there— or whoever's last. Whoever is last in.

Jack: Oh, Elena's into that painting before she's finished speaking.

Austin: Okay, so whoever's last in, you hear the sound of something creeping towards you down the crooked hallway from the masque. You know, something is like dragging itself down the hallway closer and closer to you. But you all get through the painting, and you wound back up just as the teleportation device also fires up. [Jack chuckles]

Reunited [1:05:30]

Austin: All of you back near the crystals at the center of the dungeon. Waylon is gone. [Ali gasps]

Dre: Ah, fuck!

Jack: Motherf— [Janine chuckles]

> (as **Elena**): Where's Waylon? Nicky, did you see where Waylon went? Did you find him along your way?
>
> Art (as **Nicky**): No.
>
> Jack (as **Elena**): Fuck!

Sylvia: Oh, we're back too. Okay.

Austin: Yeah, everyone's back. The teleportation pad also teleported you back here. Also, I missed something for KosmoKairosis, Bridge of the Cyan Star crew. You got 600 asta in there.

Sylvia: Hey.

Austin: That'd be 200 each.

Keith: Nice.

Sylvia: So 200 each?

Art: 200 each. How much do I need, again?

Austin: Two grand, I think, but you got a crystal, didn't you?

Art: I'm not going to trade a crystal for a crystal. That's obscene. [Jack laughs]

Austin: [chuckles] I was just saying you could keep the crystal you found. But maybe buying back the other one is, yeah.

Art: But that doesn't fix my problem that I…

Austin: Uh huh, yeah.

Keith: Sorry, what is the problem?

Dre: That there is a crystal in hoc.

Art: I might have engaged in some light slavery. I think it was 1000. I think it might have sold for 500.

Austin: Oh, maybe it sold for 500.

Janine: Wait, the— I just want to confirm.

Austin: No, I think it was more.

Janine: The wings disappeared. Did the masks disappear, or are we all still masked?

Austin: The masks also.

Janine: Aww.

Austin: Um, maybe you get to keep— no, you get to keep your masks.

Janine: Yay! [laughs quietly]

Austin: That's a fun souvenir.

Dre: Aw, yay.

Austin: Whatever mask you were wearing at the end.

Janine: I just really like the idea of [**Austin:** Yeah.] the other group teleporting in and we're all just wearing masquerade masks.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

Janine: Like, what was your side like?

Austin: Also, you got those masks before you stepped through that door, right? You got those masks outside that door, before your wings appeared.

Janine: Yeah. True.

Austin: Wow, Veile said no.

Ali: [laughs] Okay, wait.

Austin: Dre said, "Are we splitting the 800 asta equally between the four of us?" Jack said, "Yeah," and Veile said, "No."

Ali: [laughing] I said no. Two things here.

Sylvia: Wow.

Ali: Brontë got all that money and did not even look at us. [Janine laughs]

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

Ali: And secondly, even if Veile is like, "We got all this money. Let's split it," we have already established, we established in the dragon place, that Veile holds the money because she doesn't have earthly desires. I know that she really wants a new coat, and

like… [laughter] but it is like…

Sylvia: Aw man. I gotta try that one.

Ali: I've been hanging on, like…

Austin: Let me hold that. Let me hold that for you.

Ali: We all go to Disneyland and you know that you're lost, you go to the castle.

Sylvia: I don't have earthly desires.

Ali: But Veile's like, "Oh, I found this money. I'm just going to keep it, and we'll talk about it later." So we'll talk about it later, but I've added that to my sheet. We're not splitting that up. You'll get it later, [Janine laughs] it's just Brontë… [laughs]

Jack: Shit, okay.

Janine: I wouldn't even ask for any.

Sylvia: That's so funny.

Janine: If you all split it between yourselves and didn't give me any, I don't think Brontë would even bat an eyelash.

Ali: No.

Janine: I don't think he cares. [Jack chuckles] He truly would just be like, "Yeah, no, that makes sense."

Ali: Instead of it being a conversation, we all went through a painting, and Veile put it in her pocket, okay? [Janine and Jack laugh]

Austin: Uh huh. Got it. Got it. Good enough. What do the two groups look like at this point? Because one group came back with fancy masks on. [laughs] What's the other group look like?

Keith: Covered in bug guts.

Sylvia: I got some spider guts. [laughs]

Keith: Yeah. Remnants of egg.

Art: Yeah. Ankle deep in honey stains. [Austin laughs pityingly]

Keith: Yeah. Remnants of bug egg on our shoes.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): Whew!

Art: Oh, someone's carrying a demon face as a shield.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): Is that smell y'all? What did you do over there?

Ali (as **Veile**): My goodness.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): Demon spider.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): We had a lot of fight. We fought. We were fighting.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): Kind of one sided.

Art (as **Nicky**): Demon spider is correct.

Sylvia: Caoimhe looks very pleased with herself when she says,

(as **Caoimhe**): It was kind of one-sided.

Art (as **Nicky**): It did, kind of. We did not struggle.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): What's with the, uh…?

Sylvia: And she, like, gestures at her face where you guys have the masks.

Janine (as **Brontë**): We went to a party.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Yeah, what corpse did you take those off of?

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): You went to a party.

Janine (as **Brontë**): There was a masquerade.

Ali (as **Veile**): No, we were facing a challenge of the mind.

Janine (as **Brontë**): No, it was a big party. They had a lot of food, and there was dancing. Oh, I danced so much! I'm very tired.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): Yeah, that sounds right.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): Yes, and the rest of us worked the whole time to get out of there.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): That also sounds right.

Janine (as **Brontë**): Also, something bit me at one point, but I'm okay now.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): You sure?

Janine (as **Brontë**): Yes. It’s taken care of. But I appreciate your concern.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): Okay.

Janine (as **Brontë**): You look very happy.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): We saw… I can't even describe it. What would you say that—? There was a teleporter, and it spoke. It said, “Get on the teleporter pad.” I didn't really get a chance to converse with it. It was very interesting.

Janine (as **Brontë**): Oh, we had a door that spoke, and it said a bunch of stuff. I wasn't really listening.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): [interested] Oh.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): It was a nice door.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): Did it also raise vertically? Ours raised vertically.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): It did, actually.

Janine (as **Brontë**): Yeah. Yeah.

Ali (as **Veile**): Oh.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): Did yours talk?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Yeah.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): Well, like I said, I think the room was speaking to us.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): Mm.

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): I didn't really get a good gauge of the personality, though. It was kind of a “get out of there quick” situation.

Ali (as **Veile**): Mm.

Jack (as **Elena**): Where’s Waylon?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Hey, want to put these things in the door?

Jack: Well, yeah. Before we do, is there any chance I could roll to see if I can get a sense of where he might have gone?

Dre: Yeah, I was also…

Jack: I don't want to proceed further into the dungeon if Waylon has fallen out of the hole or something.

Austin: Yeah. Give me a Study Check.

Jack: Happy to roll a Study Check. Okay.

Austin: 10. His sleeping pack and stuff are still here; his supplies are still here. His camera is not. He has gone somewhere to take a photo.

Ali: Whoa.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Oh, he only has, like, six.

Austin: That's right.

Dre: Did the doors close behind us? The sun and the…amber and blue?

Austin: They did.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: They sure did. Yeah, he could not have wandered in after you.

Jack: So there are only a few places he could have gone.

Dre: Yeah, there's that front door!

Ali: Well, he—

Janine: Do you think he went to take a picture of the owl?

Jack: He could have—

Keith: A picture of the bird.

Austin: Stomp, stomp, stomp.

Keith: Uh oh.

Jack: Is the—? Can I glance up the staircase to see if the plate door is still shut?

Austin: It is still shut.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Where the fuck did he go?

Dre: Ooh! I stick my head into the hole.

Austin: He’s not out there.

Dre: God damnit.

Ali (as **Veile**): Well, he said he was going to wait ahead by the plate door, right? To…

Austin: He’s not up there.

Keith: Could I do a second Study?

Austin: No. This is what you can learn from this room.

Keith: Okay.

(as **Antistrophe**): There's only one place to go, and it’s out the front door.

Janine (as **Brontë**): He went to take a picture of the owl, surely.

Jack (as **Elena**): Unless he somehow got that door open, but…

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Surely.

Dre (as **Jonathan**): Or unless somebody took him.

Jack (as **Elena**): Someone could have spirited him away.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): With his camera?

Dre (as **Jonathan**): [sighs] I bet that chucklefuck who brought us here just wanted to get a portrait taken.

Ali (as **Veile**): Hmm. [Sylvia laughs]

Janine (as **Brontë**): You say “chucklefuck”?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Do you?

Dre (as **Jonathan**): I did. You never heard it? I thought you were smart.

Austin: Breezus christ. [Jack laughs]

Sylvia (as **Caoimhe**): No, it's a first for me.

Jack: Can we check outside the front door quickly? Can we just open the door and close the door really quickly? [Jack and Dre laugh]

Art: Raargh.

Austin: I mean, give me a roll, yeah. Give me a DEX + Might, for sure.

Jack: I'm going to need someone else to do that.

Austin: Oh, I see.

Jack: I'm going to say, "Someone who's stronger than me needs to open the door and close it quickly." [Dre laughs] Elena can't see the numbers.

Art: All right, I'll do it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Art: DEX + Might.

Austin: Difficulty here is 13. That's a 7. [Jack laughs quietly]

Art: That ain't it.

Austin: You got a Fabula?

Keith: Fabula Point time?

Art: I pretty much can't.

Ali: Oh, Trust In You.

Art: I guess I could get a 9 or a 10 on that d10. Sure, I'll spend a Fabula Point. That's my last Fabula Point.

Austin: Wow, it finally happened.

Art: Or, no. I had three earlier. Oh, I must have deleted it and then hit the button, so this one's a freebie.

Austin: Hey, that did it.

Art: That did it!

Keith: Great.

Austin: 10 plus 4 or 10 plus— yeah, 10 plus 4, presumably.

Art: 10 plus 4, yeah.

Austin: You open it. You don't see Waylon. And then you do see Xirts [Jack chuckles] the owl dragon descend, and as it does, emitting from its beaklike snout and its wings is a blast of cold terrible ice and wind. But you close the door before it can hit you, which is great, because it would have hurt a lot.

Dre: But Waylon wasn't riding on the dragon, right?

Austin: Waylon was not riding on the dragon.

Dre: Okay. Just making sure.

Austin: No.

Art: Nor does the dragon's cold icy breath smell like Waylon. [Dre and Jack laugh]

Austin: It goes, "Burp!" No, it does not. No, it's not. It's fine.

Jack: [chuckles] The camera falls.

Keith: It's hard to smell things when they're cold.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, that's true.

(as **Elena**): Okay. Through the plate door I think it is, then.

Austin: No one wants to rest here or anything. Everyone wants to keep on moving.

Keith: I'm full health, full…

Austin: All right.

Sylvia: I'm full HP.

Austin: That sounds good to me.

Ali: Isn't there, like, a Ritual I can do to leave, like, a note or something? [laughs] Or, like, find where that guy went? Let me see what my Rituals do.

Keith: This is people that do magic forgetting about pen and paper.

Austin: I don't think you need a Ritual to leave a note. I think you can just write one. [Janine and Keith laugh]

Ali: Well, no. Like a spiritual note.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: You know what I mean?

Dre: Mm.

Ali: Like a big…

Janine: Why is that better than a normal note?

Austin: Like a…

Dre: Oh. Do you have, like, a finding Ritual or something?

Austin: You want to write on the ground with the chalk from *Elden Ring* or *Dark Souls*.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: You want to, like, leave a… Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Ohhh.

Austin: Yeah, give me a…

Ali: I mean, if I cured that cow through being like, “Oh, what’s the magical, like, residue in this area?”

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, I remember this.

Ali: I can do a damn Ritual to be like, “Where the fuck did this guy go?”

Austin: Give me an Insight— Oh, oh. If you're trying to search for him? Yeah, that’s an Occult Ritual, for sure. [Ali laughs quietly] I thought you were trying to leave a note, you said.

Art: Try to spend a Fabula Point on this.

Ali: Well, I'm saying things. [Janine and Ali laugh] I'm just talking.

Austin: Ohh, you're saying things.

Ali: Talking out loud. I'm very tired.

Austin: Yeah, okay.

Janine: We should probably wrap soon, because we're…

Keith: It’s one of the main things here.

Janine: Yeah. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Yeah, I was going to wrap here, but you wanted to do a Ritual, so, yeah, let’s do

a Ritual.

Ali: I mean, I could start next time doing this, because it's…

Janine: Do a Ritual!

Ali: Okay.

Art: No, do it and spend a Fabula Point on it.

Ali: Okay, okay, okay, okay, okay, okay! [Jack chuckles]

Keith: Spend a Fabula Point.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Fail, and then spend.

Sylvia: Do you want help with this?

Ali: I would love help with this.

Austin: No, because you're going to spend— wait to spend it until you know, because you might be able to Fabula it and get the 14.

Ali: Yeah, okay.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: So this is Insight + Willpower. This is probably an Entropism Ritual, right?

Ali: I think so.

Austin: Or a Ritualism Ritual? One or the other.

Ali: Cause the decay of physical matter, twist the flow of time, teleport creatures or items. Can I, like, do a summoning circle and get him back? With his fucking laundry

and shit? [Jack and Sylvia laugh]

Austin: I guess you could. [Ali laughs]

Keith: He'd be so grumpy about that.

Ali: Well, fuck him!

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Okay. I'm going to do a summoning circle.

Austin: I think, uh, that would be—

Sylvia: [imitating Waylon] "What the hell? I was riding on a dragon."

Austin: Okay. I think moving him would be probably a major. Medium would be finding him. If you take a look at the potency thing, locate someone or something versus, you know, I think teleporting is probably one step above locating, so.

Janine: Well, now I really hope the owl didn't eat him.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: [chuckles] Ugh.

Ali: Individual human-sized creature, so it would only be 40 MP for major to get him.

Austin: Absolutely. Yep, and difficulty level 13. [Janine, Ali, and Sylvia laugh]

Sylvia: Keith, you should say that out loud.

Keith: How funny would it be if we teleport him back the instant he takes a picture and he just snaps a candid of all of us just standing around? [Dre laughs]

Austin: I want this. Mm-hmm.

Ali: Nooo. [Keith and Ali laugh]

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: He should have to roll, and if he fails… [Sylvia laughs quietly]

Ali: Okay, I am decreasing 40 MP, and I forget what the Check is here.

Austin: Insight + Willpower.

Ali: Insight + Willpower, which is something I am so good at.

Austin: Difficulty 13.

Ali: [typing] Ritual for old guy. [laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: He’s called Waylon.

Dre: Nah, he’s old guy.

Ali: I didn't know how to spell his name. I got a critical success, so.

Austin: [clapping] Holy shit.

Dre: Let’s fucking go.

Sylvia: Critical success.

Austin: Holy shit. Holy shit.

Ali: I'm a precious darling.

Sylvia: You brought back two Waylons.

Ali: I'm sorry to say it, but God loves me and it just is what it is.

Austin: Holy shit.

Dre: And suddenly he’s so nice. He’s so happy.

Janine: Oh god. [Ali and Jack laugh]

Art: You know, I don't think— well, nothing *stops* you from spending a Fabula Point. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Yeah, no.

Austin: You could just spend it to get the Bond.

Sylvia: There's other ways to spend Fabula Points.

Dre: Spend the Fabula Point and invoke the Bond. There you go.

Austin: Or do a Fabula Point to do a story addition, you know?

Ali: Oh, so true.

Dre: Ohhh.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: Okay, wait. I am going to spend a Fabula Point to…

Austin: Uh huh.

Ali: [typing] Find out what Waylon—I don't know how to spell that, which is why I said “old guy” before—took a picture of.

Austin: Yeah. Sure. Yeah.

Ali: And we all get one more XP right now, right?

Austin: You all get one more XP. Well, it’ll be at the end of the session, but yes, right now.

Ali: [laughs] Okay.

Austin: Yeah, you get one from spending your 14th Fabula Point. But what is your

regular Opportunity? Because you got a crit here, so not only are you teleporting him back, you also get the Opportunity. So you might not even need to have spent the Fabula Point to learn what he took a picture of. [Ali laughs] You might be spending it to get something else afterwards, you know?

Ali: Okay, that's…

Sylvia: [hushed] Make him do a faux pas!

Art: Make the dragon commit a faux pas.

Sylvia: He was taking a rude picture. It's a faux pas. [Jack and Dre laugh]

Ali: Let me zoom in on my…oh. Fuck. I think I maybe… I think I kind of just want an Advantage. The next Check performed by you or an ally will receive a +4 bonus.

Austin: Yeah. Take that. That's a good idea.

Ali: Why the hell wouldn't I do that?

Austin: Yeah. When you teleport him back, you open a sort of rift or something? Like, what's the actual visual effect of this?

Ali: I think that it is, like, as much of a straightforward summoning circle as you can imagine in your mind. Veile asks for, like, a little bit of paint or chalk or something. She puts, like, his bag in one part of the circle, some other stuff.

Austin: Ah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ali: And then I just am going to check the Ennead list really quick just to make sure. This is probably physical, right?

Austin: Uh, I think this is darkness. I think this is classic…

Ali: Oh my god, it's always Caliginia, man. [laughs]

Austin: Classic Caliginia, Fated Darkness. Because it's entropal magic is what you're

doing.

Ali: Right, that's true, that's true, that's true. So she's doing her little chanting of like,

> (as **Veile**): Caliginia, please hear my call. While I realize the Ennead might not hold any bearing here, the responsibility of the safety of this man is on me and my companions. [laughing, falling out of character] I would like him to be here, I guess.

Austin: And it works. A rift appears in the air in front of you, and you can see what is pretty clearly an observatory of some sort with the big orrery, the sort of twirling model of other planets, and it is Waylon, taking a photo of the masked figure who was here before. [Ali gasps] And the rift kind of closes such that it separates him from them. They, in fact, were posing for a portrait.

Dre: Nailed it. [Keith laughs]

Austin: And he has taken the picture of it, taken the picture of them, and now he is back here. [music begins] But as the rift closes… This is that crit you got. I'm giving you a little extra. Veile, you see the rift itself take the silhouette, the shadow of a figure you've seen before. It is Caliginia. And you hear her say here, with a voice that only you can hear—and I mean *only* you can hear, in all of the world, in all of the Dragon Way, everywhere.

Ali: [quietly] Whoa.

Austin: It is direct to you, and it feels secret, and it feels hidden. She says,

> (as **Caliginia**): Do you remember me yet? [Ali giggles]
>
> Ali (as **Veile**): Um, I don't believe so, ma'am. [Sylvia laughs quietly]
>
> Austin (as **Caliginia**): [scoffs]

Austin: Scoffs under her breath.

(as **Caliginia**): What a waste.

Dre: Damn.

Austin: And the rift starts to close, and it’s like the silhouette begins to recede, but the silhouette of her body is also seemingly a window, a rift into another place, her place, her base of operations. This walking shadow walks to the corner of the room where there's more of a shadow for it to, like, fade into and disappear, but you can kind of see, like, a coterie of other people, her people, including Marshal Opal, Genuine Sincere, a Passikan figure whose face I think you saw at the Passikan relic that you stumbled into, Elena, if you remember that.

Jack: Yeah, sort of like an Atlas figure.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. And D. G. Flay.

[music ends]

Ali: Do I get a Fabula Point for experiencing a Villain scene? [laughs quietly]

Austin: You absolutely do. Everybody does.

Jack: We all do?

Sylvia: Oh no.

Austin: Um, I guess only you technically heard the words, but I think everybody sees this strange thing happening and doesn't quite know. Didn't hear the words, but everyone saw a strange shadow figure appear after Veile did some summoning magic and then recede into the dark and did see figures through the dark.

Ali: Veile, calling out to no one.

(as **Veile**): I'd like to know you. [Ali laughs]

Jack: Aww.

Austin: Yeah, okay. You can only presume… I'm trying to remember. You've gotten the name of… Hmm, what words have I said out loud before? [Dre laughs]

Janine: The. And.

Austin: I've said…

Sylvia: How long do you got?

Austin: Yeah. Okay. Great.

Ali: I'm very sleepy, but I know about the statue with the girls not holding hands anymore.

Austin: Oh, I wasn't even thinking about that, but damn. Yeah, sure, uh huh. [Ali laughs]

Janine: What are y'all doing over on your side? [Ali laughs]

Jack: Oh, it was Caliginia and Lucena, right?

Dre: Getting levels. That's what we're doing.

Austin: Caliginia's group, the Night's Own, yeah.

Jack: The Night Zone. [Ali laughs]

Austin: [clearly enunciated] The Night's Own.

Ali: Did you think it was the Night Zone?

Austin: Not the Night Zone.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: The Night Zone is the Genesis game based on this.

Austin: Yeah, it gets localized as the Night Zone, and everyone's confused for, like, 10 years.

Jack: Janine, did you know that *Grandia*, when it originally released in German, translated “miss,” as in like, “the attack has missed,” as “fräulein” throughout the entire game. [Janine and Dre laugh]

Janine: Wow! Oh my god.

Sylvia: That rules!

Janine: Ohh.

Austin: That’s so funny. Oh, that’s great.

[“The Castle Eschatonica” by Jack de Quidt plays]