

Perpetua 41: Escape the Rumbling Castle! 01

Transcriber: robotchangeling

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Opening Narration

[“[The Castle Eschatonica](#)” by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

Austin: In the depths of the Castle Eschatonica, the true beckonings called to the travelers of the Dragon Path. Led across the ether under divine shadow and holy light, to things that aren’t, but which might yet be:

New more peaceful lives. Freedom from obligation and duty. Different, more adventurous histories. A key to a door which itself beckons. The power to protect those they care for. Power for power’s sake alone.

With these behind them, the two groups re-emerge into the halls of the Castle. In the western wing, three figures push forward into the passageways of this transcendent fortress—Uncle Nicky, criminal turned chef; the terrapine Jonathan, inventor and—now—airship captain; and Antistrophe Landrace, the Ruinbringer, though he may not know it yet.

Meanwhile, to the east, an octet walks Eschatonica’s twisting paths: Famed adventurer, and Jonathan’s sister, Maebela; Veile Lyndelle, destined devotee of the Ennead; Elena Millefiori, Tesserae chanter and eager traveler; the youthful and curious Waylon of

Spillaway Peaks; Renegade Hexcloak Caiomhe Wake; and finally, Brontë Adelvys, dissipated sixth scion of the First Line, along with his attendants, Efta and Zolfta

Above them, watching with all nine eyes, is Gnova, once the God of Distant Color and Light, now the steward of this Castle. But they are not the only celestial being interested in Eschatonica. They saw Lucena's sunlight streamed across the ether towards their home. They watched as Caliginia's long shadow fell, finally, even here. Indeed, they dread how these gods now shake the diorama-like stability of Eschatonica, and how in doing so, they unknowingly have sent up a flare...

Because *she* is coming, now. Indeed. She is almost here.

[song ends]

Status

Austin: It has been a few hours since you managed your way past the beckonings. You've split into two groups. One group: Antistrophe, Nicky, and Jonathan. The other, a little bigger: I believe it is Veile and Elena and Caoimhe and Brontë and Maebela and Efta and Zolfta and Waylon. And you have rejoined with each other and begun to make your way through what you are now convinced is the back half of the Castle Eschatonica. I say it's been a few hours, but it has been a trying few hours. You have gotten lost a few times. You have overcome a number of small non-HP-changing obstacles. And you have started to feel the character of the castle change.

In the first half that you have explored at length, you kept running into room after room that seemed to represent different or be pulled from different parts of past versions of the world. You got to know these things that previously had only been Celestial Echoes and now seemed to be remnants of previous times. But there, they were kind of mishmashed together. You'd go from a room from one place into a room from another place. You would see these sort of mosaic wall tiles arranged as if by hand. Not by hand of the individual builders from the different worlds but as if by hand of who you now

know is Gnova, the god that seems to run this place, who seems to have built it. I would say that things there didn't feel naturalistic. They felt hand crafted.

Here, however, you sense the layering of time and history, and you also sense people moving through these places or creatures moving through these places. You hear sounds, not just of things that are, you know, inside of any one room but moving through the hallways. This place feels big and layered, but you figured that you're moving in the right direction. Veile, we know that you're able to do some rituals to kind of direct yourself towards an end, and your side has been doing that. Jonathan, you know where the airship is. It's that way. You have a kind of key sense in your body about where it is at this point, and you're able to direct yourself, Nicky, and Antistrophe in that direction. You are heading—you know, for our map's sake—further north.

And the other thing here is that you're finding that the areas here are more set up in blocks. You know, you are in a, for a little bit, you know, Ichoria, the sort of like dark gothic place for a number of rooms in a row. You briefly walk through what I can only describe as the inner halls of a vast space station through KosmoKairosis and then came out into, you know, what was just an apartment block from the world of Imago.

In fact, Antistrophe, Nicky, and Jonathan, you have crossed from what looks like a, you know, late 20th century apartment across a strange— I'd say, right now, you are standing on—and I'll move the map over—we call these, like, a sky bridge? You know, like a bridge that crosses from one building to another, except instead of seeing a city street below you, you just see, outside the windows, the Dragon Path. And there's a big door in front of you.

And you can see I've also moved the other group into another room. I'll describe what that room is in a moment. Does anyone want to go over anything that happened last time or get us back caught up? Are there any things that we want to check in on before we move forward?

Sylvia: Oh. Did we touch on Maebela and, um...I can't remember his name off the top of my head.

Austin: Waylon?

Sylvia: Waylon. Yeah, did we touch on that?

Austin: I don't know that— you tell me. What was that conversation like, as you're moving through the weird space station?

Sylvia: Well, Maebela's a famous adventurer now that we've always known has been a famous adventurer.

Austin: You're traveling with the famous adventurer Maebela, and also there's a— I mean, and that one is like, you just believe that.

Sylvia: Yeah, that one— yeah.

Austin: Waylon de-aged. Waylon is a young, hot— I should change his—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I should get a younger hotter turtle icon for Waylon.

Sylvia: He Substanced.

Austin: He Substanced.

Jack: [sarcastic] And that goes very well in *The Substance*.

Sylvia: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: But we know Waylon used to be old.

Austin: You do.

Sylvia: I believe so.

Austin: I believe that is what we said.

Sylvia: I think that is the crucial difference between the two, yeah.

Keith: Yeah. So, yeah, Maebela, like, changed the memories of the world to have gone off and become an adventurer.

Austin: Well, the Dragon Path [**Keith:** Yeah.] seems to have done that, or Gnova. It's not clear who did this or what did this.

Keith: It was her wish, though.

Austin: It was her wish. That is correct.

Keith: It was her wish to become...

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: To have become a famous adventurer in the past, which changed our memories of her. Versus Waylon, who's just like, "I want to be young again!"

Austin: That's right.

Keith: "Fuck all my memories! Fuck my life! I'm young now!"

Austin: Yeah, yeah. I guess he did say fuck his memories, because he did not seem to... He does not seem to, like, have lived a whole life at this point, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I think I very much described him as that.

Keith: You had mentioned that he was like, "Who am I? Where am I?"

Austin: He knows he's Waylon and that he's a cool guy, but he doesn't— I don't know that he knows— and he knows stuff about the terrapine. Like, he has that part of the knowledge, but he doesn't know where the hell he is. Where is he?

Ali: Well, he didn't know where he was when he was old either. [Keith, Jack, Janine, and Ali laugh]

Austin: So true. So true.

Keith: Yeah, but he still had a lot of thoughts about it.

Austin: Anyway, here's the new Waylon. Let me... [Keith laughs]

Art: Wow!

Austin: There we go. Thank you, Shutterstock.

Sylvia: Wow.

Keith: Oh my god.

Dre: Oh.

Austin: Yeah.

Art: He has gotten a little smaller, relative to the square.

Sylvia: Squirtle Squad.

Austin: Yeah, he does have kind of a Squirtle Squad thing going on here. I should have gotten...

Jack: Wow. Oh my god.

Keith: Oh.

Dre: Wow.

Jack: He's not the fucking Paul McCartney turtle, is he?

Sylvia: Kind of looks like him though.

Austin: He does kind of look like that, but he is not.

Keith: On Valentine's Day, he will be. [Sylvia and Ali laugh]

Austin: That's right.

Keith: [imitates "Solo and Lovin It" song] [Sylvia, Ali, and Austin laugh]

Austin: *Only* real ones know what the hell we're talking about.

Sylvia: Wow! That's a deep cut.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: What is adventuring with Maebela like? Is she like a gracious adventurer? Or, you know.

Austin: I think that she has very quickly decided that Brontë is cool and Caoimhe is cool and does not particularly— Veile and Elena do not particularly appeal to her.

Keith: Wow.

Dre: Wooow.

Jack: But she's very, very famous, right? She's like...

Austin: She's very, very famous. Brontë is a noble. [Janine chuckles]

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Caoimhe is a Hexcloak, which Maebela recognizes, by the way, Caoimhe. Even just the way you hold yourself.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: She's like, "I know that stance. You know, you don't have to hide it from me."

Art: Veile and Elena are friends of her brother.

Austin: Okay. What about him?

Janine: Cool.

Keith: She doesn't even know that yet, right?

Ali: Does she know? Yeah.

Keith: Because she just popped up. These are all strangers.

Austin: No, she—

Art: No, she's been here.

Austin: No, I think she knows her brother still. She doesn't, like, not know her family.

Keith: Ooh, but her brother's not here, so her brother can't say, "By the way, these are my friends."

Austin: I think that that's probably happened in her memory of you all.

Keith: Oh, okay. Because I remember the end of—

Austin: She's been on this little adventure with you. I don't think that she has— I don't think that, like— I mean, Dre, you and I talked about this. You and her aren't like adventuring companions. She's a famous adventurer, but she's definitely run into you before, right? Maybe not often though, because I do want to keep this thing of, like, you haven't seen them in a long time, so. Like, the family, your family in a long time. But now that she's part of this other world of adventurers.

Ali: She made the deal that she can't go home again either, right?

Austin: She sure did.

Ali: That was her part of, yeah.

Austin: That was also part of her deal, yeah. So.

Ali: Is it like residual grudge, even though she has like the same memory, because it's like, "They didn't let me duel that guy!" [laughs]

Austin: It's residual grudge for family. It's like, they wouldn't let me do this, so I had to break away. You know?

Ali: Right.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: No, I mean towards Veile and Elena.

Austin: Oh! I see.

Ali: Because during the masque, we were like, "You can't fight that guy."

Austin: Oh, interesting. Yeah, like there's like a, she has a sense that you wanted to hold her back at some point, maybe? That's kind of fun.

Ali: Even though that's, like, not part of her...yeah.

Keith: Mm, mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah, that's interesting. Yeah. So I have to make you smaller. I'm sorry.

Keith: It's like when you wake up from a dream mad at someone for something they did in a dream.

Ali: [laughs] Yes.

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh. That's happened to me. Sorry, I have to make everybody tinier to fit the new map's squares which are a little smaller for some reason. It's because I changed the scale is why. Apologies. I'm shrinking everybody.

Art: Oh, so the Waylon change hit me harder than it should have.

Austin: That's right. That's right.

Art: Because Waylon came in at the correct size.

Austin: That's right. There we go. You gotta zoom a lot in.

Art: I'm going to be okay, I just want to...

Austin: [laughs] Oh, hit you harder, yeah. Emotionally. [Jack laughs]

Art: Yeah.

Austin: So yeah, you've all survived the beckonings. You've all been...

Keith: Need to give Maebela a little sword here.

Austin: Oh, yeah, that's a great idea. I don't know that it's going to stick, but you can try it. I can try to connect the two, if you want to draw a sword on there. I should have gotten a turtle, a badass turtle warrior, because that is definitely her vibe. She is turtle warrior mode. And the other mode for her is she has been taking the lead in this way, in a...an insistent way, maybe I would even say?

Sylvia: Oh. She is trying to make us her support. She is trying to be the protagonist now!

Austin: That is right. 100%. She's trying to be the protagonist. She's higher level than you, for sure.

Ali: I said it last time, but she's a fucking loser. [laughs]

Austin: You did say that.

Keith: She is a loser.

Jack: You were mad about this, right, Ali?

Dre: Whoa!

Jack: You were, like, mad about this. You were mad about this outside of kayfabe. You were like, “We have spent our broadcasting career slowly working to be adventurers, [Ali laughs] and this schmuck, this NPC...”

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Damn. Do you feel that about Jonathan getting the airship this way? I guess you don't know that yet. We'll find out.

Sylvia: I don't know about that.

Austin: We'll find out.

Sylvia: Also, I don't know. It's different being like, “Hey, can I get, like, a sports car?” over “Can I be—”

Austin: It's not a sports car! It's not a sports car.

Sylvia: Fair enough.

Austin: The airship is like, Jonathan couldn't make that.

Sylvia: Okay, that's a good point.

Dre: I mean, I could have. It would have taken me, like, we would have been doing this show for another two years.

Austin: Yeah. [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: Okay. Okay.

Austin: Jonathan skipped ahead more.

Janine: I mean, none of us could make a sports car either.

Art: We do plan to do this show for two more years.

Dre: That's true.

Austin: That's true. Yeah. Anyway.

Keith: It just, as far as abstracting from what you are, like who you are and what you do, the airship is a smaller leap than, like, rewriting that you're a famous adventurer.

Sylvia: Yes.

Austin: The airship is like saying you painted a masterpiece, though. It's a masterpiece.

Keith: That's true. Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Jonathan's the guy who is passing off, like, AI art as stuff he drew. [Ali laughs]

Dre: Whoa!

Sylvia: But Maebela's rewriting history.

Austin: Aaah.

Sylvia: Sorry, am I firing too many shots today? [Ali laughs] I don't mean to be this punchy.

Keith: It's possible all three of the turtles are losers.

Austin: It's possible.

Dre: Ow!

Austin: It's possible!

Dre: You know? Yeah.

Sylvia: My friend Raphael said things like that. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Dre: Maybe I *should* go back home if this is how we're going to get treated.

Austin: You can't anymore, so.

Ali: I mean, not to speak for Dre here, but in terms of how I see Jonathan and the traits on his sheet, Jonathan comes from a place of like, oh, desperation, I need to protect these people, I'm a weird guy who is on a mission for a god now.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Where Maebela was like, "I'm about to graduate high school, and the thing that I want to really do is have already graduated college," and she, like, took...

Sylvia: Oh my god, *13 Going on 30*.

Ali: Like, she just took the gamble on that instead of being like, "Oh, I am on the cusp of being able to live my dream."

Keith: Sylvi, I think you're totally right. Ali, I think both of you got this. *13 Going on 30*.
[Ali laughs quietly]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: There we go. I think I can now— no, I can't. Fuck. I thought I connected Maebela with the cool sword you've added, but it...

Sylvia: Oh, I love that! Who drew that?

Austin: Let's see. Group. I've done it. I've done it. I've done it, and I can unlock. And now, can I move? No, it didn't move, but the sword is all together. Oh, the sword is mostly together. The sword was not all together.

Jack: What a horrible platform.

Sylvia: Wow, Maebela's got a levitating sword! [Ali, Austin, and Keith laugh]

Keith: That's part of the wish.

Austin: Part of this is truly my problem because of how I set up stuff, so don't worry about it too much. Anyway. Yeah, there we go. I did it. Thank you, Keith, for drawing that sword in.

Keith: Nice.

West Team [0:15:02]

Austin: Jonathan, Nicky, and Antistrophe, you come to a door that is opening up into a big octagonal room. It is... let me reveal it for you here. We're doing this again. You're all on the right thing, right? I moved you over? I did move you over. You see yourselves at the bottom. You're moving into a big octagonal room. It is a space that you or I would recognize as a late 20th century gallery space. Obviously I think you all come from a world where there is art, even inside of our Perpetua here, but this is particular to this style of gallery, right? White walls, six pieces of art in the whole room. It's a fairly large room. There is a painting. There is a sculpture. There's a couple things you might call a sculpture. There's a large window to the north, and there are two large industrial metal doors, one to the northwest and one to the west that you can see. They're large and industrial like what might go in a warehouse, like they have big metal, you know, clanging bars. You can kind of ratchet them shut and locked. And then, through the windows, you can see, and I'll actually reveal some of this. Let's see here. You see a large kind of courtyard like a plaza that has a number of buildings that I think you quickly identify as, like, church buildings. There are some stained glass. There are religious iconography. I'm trying to remember who saw what. Who was in the infirmary on this side? Was that Nicky and Antistrophe?

Keith: Yes, yeah.

Austin: You can recognize the— you found that tarot deck style thing, the oracle deck. You recognize some of the iconography from that on this here.

Keith: Huh.

Austin: And so you think that this might be tied to that. This is below you by a couple of floors, and in between you and it is just the ether, is just nothing, right? So you couldn't jump across. This is really far across. But you can see that it's down there, and at the very end of it is a dock, and Dre, there is an airship docked to it.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: What's that look like, and what's it called?

Dre: [sighs] The airship is called *Adventure Beckons*.

Sylvia: Ooh.

Dre: The rough shape of it is I was looking through a lot of pictures and I came across a style of airship where it's almost like a trident, where it's like the main body in the middle and then it's flanked on either side by, oh, like high fantasy wind turbines [cross] and big, like, ziggurat—

Sylvia: [cross] That's so sick.

Dre: Or not ziggurat, bit zeppelin balloons.

Austin: Mm.

Dre: So there's, like, two balloons on either side on these little side pieces.

Janine: Sort of like a balloon nacelle situation?

Dre: [bluffing] I know what that is, so I'm going to say yes.

Austin: [chuckles] It's those little pieces on the side of the Starship Enterprise.

Dre: Oh! Yes, 100%. Good call.

Austin: The little, you know? Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: That's where I know the word from. I'm sure there's other uses.

Art: [bluffing] We all know every word Janine says, for you at home. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Janine: Sorry, my headphones cut out right as... [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: What was the word?

Janine: Right after I said "nacelle," my headphones cut out, [Dre laughs] because my dad called me on my phone, so I just came back to—

Austin: He heard you say the word "nacelle" and was like, "I gotta chime in on that one!" [Austin, Jack, and Keith laugh]

Art: "Dial it back, Janine."

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Oh, the Starship *Enterprise* is a weird looking ship, huh?

Janine: Yeah. It's the shit on the side of the *Enterprise*.

Austin: Keith, is this the first time you've seen the Starship *Enterprise*?

Jack: Keith, what do you think it does?

Keith: I've never seen any *Star Trek*.

Janine: [sighs] Yeah.

Keith: So, the things that we're talking about, the nacelle, it's like the wing jets that stick up and out? Is that what we're talking about?

Austin: Those are the nacelles on that thing, yes.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: A nacelle is apparently also just, like...

Art: There's nothing else on the side of the Starship *Enterprise*.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I bet that those are crew quarters. That's what I think.

Janine: What?

Dre: No.

Janine: No!

Austin: They're where the engines go.

Janine: Yeah, no. It's...

Keith: Okay, well, that was my first guess, but then I see the big body, the big tubular body, and I was like, "Oh, maybe the engine goes there, and people go up an escalator and they live in these long bunkers."

Jack: Whoa.

Janine: Mm.

Dre: Oh, that sounds horrible.

Janine: Yeah, no.

Sylvia: What the fuck, man? [Austin laughs]

Janine: It's like if a pontoon had a jet engine in it, you know?

Dre: Yes.

Janine: You know pontoon, right?

Austin: That's a great way.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Oh my god.

Janine: Boat Keith? Boat Keith knows. Okay.

Dre: Zeppelin balloons on top of them.

Austin: Are we going to make it through this episode?

Janine: No.

Sylvia: Mm...

Austin: Kind of rude. [laughs quietly]

Janine: What?

Austin: We're sniping at each other over here. It's fine.

Janine: Who sniped? I said Boat Keith knows.

Dre: Yeah, I'm doing great. I don't... [laughs quietly]

Austin: Janine said, "Do you know pontoon?" like... [Austin and Janine laugh]

Keith: Well, pontoons are a weird boat. I think a lot of people don't know about pontoons.

Art: I didn't know what a pontoon was until...

Janine: To me, pontoon and nacelle, as words, are on equal footing.

Austin: I agree.

Janine: So I didn't want to assume.

Keith: Oh. I've never heard nacelle, but I've heard pontoon.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: And I do now think that maybe Keith and Janine were talking about different things when they say pontoon, so actually maybe I'm wrong.

Janine: Yeah. Well, a pontoon boat is a kind of boat, but the thing on it is called a pontoon, I think.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, you're— Janine—

Keith: I know all about pontoons.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: I thought it was the type of pie The Rock eats.

Austin: Oh my god! [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: Pontoons are the kind of boats that have nacelles.

Janine: Well...

Austin: Pontoons are the type of boats that have— they have the two little things. Yeah, mm-hmm. [Keith chuckles] But Janine is talking about the sort of pontoons, I'm guessing, that are on, like, a sea, like a water ship. What the fuck are those called? See, I'm losing it now.

Dre: Oh, like a sea plane.

Keith: A boat?

Austin: Like a sea plane. A sea plane.

Janine: No, I was talking about a boat. That's why I said Boat Keith.

Austin: Oh, okay.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's what I—

Austin: Oh, okay.

Janine: Yeah.

Keith: You know, the kind that rich people drink beer on a lake. That's what I'm thinking of.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: I figured Keith would know more about boat, you know?

Austin: That makes sense. I see. Keith knows more about boat than plane.

Art: Keith knows more about boat.

Sylvia: We're once again experiencing boat madness on *Friends at the Table*.

Austin: We have to keep fucking moving. You're right. We gotta get off the boat.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvia: They bewilder us every time.

Jack: Every time.

Travel [0:20:38]

Austin: Speaking of bewildering, I need someone over on the western side of this map—Antistrophe, Nicky, or Jonathan—to give me a Travel roll. This place is a d12 difficulty.

Art: Oh.

Dre: Oh.

Austin: As a reminder, you would love to get, I believe, a 1 here, but what you really don't want is to get a 6 or above. I believe it's a 6 or above. I will double check our special travel rolls.

Keith: I'm ready to make this roll.

Dre: Yeah, do it.

Austin: You're taking the lead here?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: 11. [laughs]

Austin: Okay, well.

Sylvia: Wow.

Dre: That's why I didn't want to roll it. I would have rolled the same, probably.

Sylvia: Wow.

Austin: That's pretty high. That's pretty high. That's pretty high.

Sylvia: It's so funny.

Keith: Well, read me how bad it is, and then maybe I'll use my Fabula Point that I have.

Austin: You cannot. Yeah, I don't believe you can Fabula Point a thing that is not a Skill Check.

Art: You can't Fabula Point Travel rolls.

Austin: Yeah, we've discussed this.

Keith: Oh, fuck!

Sylvia: Yeah.

Art: We've had bad Travel roll times.

Keith: Oh yeah, I bet Art's very familiar with what you can and can't do to Travel rolls.

[Sylvia laughs]

Austin: Oh my god! We're so punchy today.

Dre: Damn! [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: It's PvP today!

Austin: "On a 6 or higher, the group encounters a danger." Let me describe what happens to you. As you enter this room, you start feeling off. We are going to go around in a circle, the three of us—the four of us, but just you three—and you're going to roll a d6, and then a d5, and then a d4, all the way down to a d2. Depending on what you roll—

Art: Consecutively or simultaneously?

Austin: Consecutively. First a d6, then a d5, then a d4, and we're going to go in the order that you're going into the room. Antistrophe, then Nicky, then Jonathan. Then Antistrophe, then Nicky, then Jonathan. Right?

Art: Okay, so it'll be 6 6 6, 5 5 5, 4 4 4, et cetera?

Austin: Nope. It'll be 6, 5, 4, 3, 2.

Dre: [cross] 5, 4.

Keith: So we don't each roll each.

Austin: That is correct.

Art: Okay. So I gotta roll a 5 and a 2.

Austin: Yes. But we're going to start with a 6. Give me a 6, Antistrophe.

Keith: That's a 6 out of 6.

Art: That's the highest you can get.

Austin: You feel it washing over your body. You are poisoned. Mark the poisoned condition.

Keith: Okay.

Art: Okay, it seems like we want to go low, unless 1 was you're [cross] super poisoned.

Keith: [cross] Dead. Yeah, dead.

Dre: Yeah.

Art: Well, maybe poisoned was only for 6.

Sylvia: That's so—!

Keith: Oh! Oh! Hold on. I'm sorry.

Austin: Uh huh?

Keith: First, I have to say that instead of being poisoned I actually am wearing a palm leaf cape.

Austin: You are.

Keith: "You are immune to poisoned."

Austin: You are immune to poisoned. You don't get poisoned. That's great.

Art: Austin, can I do an experiment very quickly?

Austin: Sure.

Art: I'm not sure that this works. [typing]

Austin: Yeah, it works fine. You're just rolling 5. 5, 4, yeah. It works.

Art: Well, when you got two 5s in a row, you start to suspect maybe it's going to say 5 every time.

Austin: Oh, okay.

Art: Didn't we do that once? Didn't that happen?

Austin: Maybe.

Keith: Well, because also it was 6.

Austin: Your body begins to feel weak. That's Nicky, not Antistrophe. Jonathan, give me a d4.

Art: So I should take weak?

Dre: Come on. Oh, a 1! Let's do science. We're going to find things out.

Austin: Your body begins to feel slow and lethargic. You have slow.

Keith: Okay, so yeah, it's bad in one way.

Austin: We are back around to you, Keith.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: [inaudible 0:23:40] R—one is changed now. You find yourself a little bit unclear of what's going on around you. You're a little confused. You are dazed. And now finally, a d2 from Nicky. Nicky, take enraged, a thing you are very familiar with.

Art: Ha! I'm great at being enraged.

Austin: Which I believe leaves us we weak for Jonathan.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Unless I already gave weak. I don't think I did, though.

Art: No, I have weak.

Austin: You have weak. That means someone is missing...shaken! Shaken. Jonathan, take shaken.

Dre: Okay.

Art: Good thing someone didn't get stirred.

Austin: There is something oppressive about the atmosphere in here. I'd love for you to look at your respective conditions and tell me what it looks like as they settle onto you. As far as you can tell, there's no poison in the air. There's nothing physical in the air happening. Some sort of magic aura has hit you. But tell me what these conditions look like on you.

Art: I'll go first. I think it's like, I think you can sort of see the weakness. I think Nicky gets a little less swole and then gets so mad about it. [Austin laughs] All that time working on these muscles [**Austin:** Mm.] for them to just fail because of walking into this room?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: So mad. So mad.

Keith: Antistrophe is dazed. Do you know that feeling when you've taken too long of a nap, and you wake up, [Austin sighs] and you're, like, confused, and sometimes it only lasts for five seconds, but sometimes it lasts for like 15 minutes, and you're just like, "Ugh, my head feels weird. I don't know what's going on." You know, you walk out of a movie theater and it's, like, the wrong time of day.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: That's the feeling.

Austin: Bad feeling. Jonathan.

Dre: Jonathan is slowed and shaken, so I think it's the feeling of— have you ever had, like, the dream where it feels like you're walking but not getting anywhere?

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Very much that, and I think Jonathan's having to, like, pause and lean against the wall, like use his hand to brace himself.

Austin: [sighs] Yeah. You're holding yourself against the wall when you hear the door behind you close and lock shut. You're stuck in here with these art pieces, and I'll go over these art pieces now, and you can start thinking about them. There is... let me mix up the order a little bit here. What am I looking at here? We got... There is a kind of cart, like a wheely cart, a cart with wheels on it that's about ye high—you know, up to your chest—that has a box on it, like a metallic or wooden box on it that has a big glass window on it that is projecting visions of things. And it's flipping between them in a very strange pattern, so you might get like— or it's not even a pattern. That's actually the thing. It seems like there's going to be a pattern. It seems like what you're getting is a specific montage of something. You don't know what the word “montage” is. That's not— y'all don't have— montage hasn't been invented yet.

Keith: We don't have French here.

Austin: No, uh-uh. You know?

Art: Except for ship parts.

Austin: Right.

Keith: Except for, yeah. [Keith and Dre laugh]

Austin: That's right.

Janine: Collage?

Austin: There's collage. Well, no, yeah, yeah. So you'd think there's like a visual collage, because it's like, oh look, it's like a child's birthday party, and then it's like a child being measured against a doorframe, and then it's a kid's first day at school, and then it's like a horse running in a field and a wrench turning a bolt, and then it's like a birthday party again, and then it's like a steak frying in a pan, and then it's a rainy day, and then it's a steak frying in a pan again, and then it's like a video of you dancing, and then it's like a video of a woman with kind of frizzy hair, and then it's a rowboat slowly drifting away from a dock. So that's one of these art pieces. Another one—

Keith: This is challenging my perception of the unity of time.

Austin: It's challenging your perception of the unity of time.

Keith: I don't have a word for this.

Austin: Yeah, I don't know what that is. If only you could figure this out. [Art and Keith laugh] Also, this movie stuff seems cool. Wow, you can take video. There is a piece that looks like a human-sized ballerina music box that's just standing completely still, but there's like a crank in front of it or attached to it where the keyhole would be in a music box. Or, you know, where the front would be, the little latch. There is a player piano that is— I say a player piano. There is a piano that is playing itself, and it's playing a sort of experimental arhythmic tone piece that you can kind of just barely hear, but it's so quiet that you can only hear it from a few steps away, and if you get any closer, it sort of stops. There is a painting hanging on the south wall of a child's room under a blanket looking very sickly. And there is a ceramic pot on a sort of plinth that has a— the pot itself has a real, like, classic world look, but the art on it looks like a little cherub, like a cherubic angel, but it's red like a devil with fire burping out of its mouth. And that looks like what you or I would call, I don't know, like bad tattoo art or truck flap art or bumper— you know what I mean? There's like, it looks like pop art of a...

Keith: Yeah, truck flap art. Yeah.

Austin: Like truck flap art. Yeah, uh huh.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So, yeah. You see those six things in this room. And again, out the window, you see...one more time, Dre, the name of the ship.

Dre: *Adventure Beckons.*

Austin: *Adventure Beckons.* It sure does. It sure did.

Keith: Hey, I have a bunch of IP. Can I use this time to take a tonic to heal my dazed state?

Austin: You absolutely can.

Dre: Ooh. That's smart.

Austin: Yeah. There's nothing stopping. There's nothing reapplying these things to you.

Keith: Okay. Using a tonic.

Art: And each tonic does one and costs two?

Keith: Correct.

Austin: I believe that's true. Yep.

Art: All right.

Dre: Yeah, I'm going to do that as well.

Art: I think I need two tonics. Wait. How much do I need Dexterity in my life? [Austin laughs quietly]

Dre: Only you could know, brother.

Art: Oh, kind of a lot.

Austin: Yeah, it's kind of important. It's one of the big ones.

Art: All right. Where's the...?

Keith: I think Dexterity might also affect your Magic Defense?

Austin: It affects your regular Defense, in fact, I believe.

Keith: Regular Defense.

Art: All right, I did two of these.

Austin: If you're wearing armor that lets you use it. Otherwise it might just overwrite it, I believe, so.

Art: I'm back, baby.

Austin: Love it. How much IP does everybody have?

Keith: I have 6.

Austin: Okay.

Art: I have 5.

Austin: All right. This is a very IP-heavy side of the party with Jonathan and Antistrophe here, so good to keep in mind. As far as you can tell, these doors are locked. Maybe you could try to, I don't know, bust 'em open? But it might be really hard.

Investigating [0:31:02]

Keith: Obviously, there's something going on with this room, this 11 out of 12 roll room.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: We came in here, and we all immediately got sick in different ways.

Austin: You did.

Art: Mm-hmm.

Keith: That's not normal, for me. [Sylvia laughs] I'm curious about the artwork, but I'm more curious about getting sick by being in the room.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And so, I would like to perform... I would like to look around the room, see if there's anything weird going on that I can notice, maybe something with the art, maybe something around the art, in the air. You know, just sort of a general look around, like, what's going on, with a Study roll.

Austin: Yeah, give me an Insight + Insight.

Dre: We should do that as a group roll, I think.

Austin: You should do that as a group roll, probably.

Art: Yeah, that sounds like a group roll.

Austin: With Antistrophe leading.

Keith: I should lead this, [**Austin:** Yep.] because of Flash of Insight, which lets me get extra stuff.

Dre: Oh, yes, you should.

Austin: Totally. So give me Jonathan and Nicky first, Insight + Insight. You're looking for a 10 or higher. And presumably neither of you have developed Bonds with Antistrophe, right? Whoa.

Art: No, I did, right?

Austin: Oh, maybe you did.

Art: Yeah, I have a Bond of admiration.

Keith: It's true. We have one going each way.

Austin: Love it.

Art: So that's +1?

Austin: That will be...mm...I believe that will be +1, and then it will be a +1 on if you get the 10 or above.

Keith: Great.

Austin: Which you do— well, wait. Oh, is that with the +1?

Art: Oh, wait. I didn't add the +1.

Austin: I think that that helps, then. Let me double check that that's right. And unfortunately, I think that—Dre, you rolled a Crit—I don't think that that crit counts, because this is a Group Check. You hate to see it. Let's see here. Yep. Each supporting character— wait. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. Each supporting character performs a Support Check. Mm, buh buh buh buh buh...buh buh buh buh buh. I thought that you got a +1, but maybe you don't. Each supporting leader character, duh duh duh, grants a +1. I think you have to succeed to give your +1.

Art: Can you Fabula Point a help, or...?

Austin: You can. Yeah. I believe.

Art: It's probably not worth it.

Keith: Yeah, that 1 is an automatic success as long as you don't roll a 1 again.

Dre: Yeah, it's a skill, so.

Austin: Oh, you could Fabula Point the Bond. That's what you could do.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Austin: You could spend a Fabula Point to get the +1 that you need.

Keith: Oh, right, okay.

Austin: Because remember, you can call on a Bond instead of calling on a Trait.

Art: Sure.

Austin: When you call on a Bond, you just get the plus value of what the Bond is. So what is your Bond with Antistrophe?

Art: Admiration.

Austin: Mm. So you're like, "I *really* gotta look around this room good"?

Art: Someone that I admire could not possibly do a bad job looking at a room.

Austin: All right.

Keith: That would be embarrassing.

Austin: So then...

Art: All right, I'll spend it.

Keith: All right, so I have 1 from Jonathan and 1 from Nicky?

Austin: 2 from Nicky. 2 from Nicky.

Keith: Oh, 2? Okay.

Austin: Yeah, 1 and then another 1 from the Bond. So if you get a 10 here, your Flash of Insight thing should trigger, right?

Keith: So, my mod for this is 6.

Austin: Love it. Love it. So you only need to roll a 7.

Dre: Whoa!

Keith: 19.

Art: Whoa.

Austin: You roll a 19. You almost rolled a crit here. Yeah. Read me Flash of Insight?

Keith: Flash of Insight is “When you roll a 13 or higher on a Check performed to investigate a creature, item, or *location*—this includes using the Study Action during a Conflict—you may ask the Game Master up to one question, SL 1 question, [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] concerning the subject of your investigation. You may ask these questions immediately or save them for later. Whenever you ask one of these questions, the Game Master will answer truthfully, and you will describe your character’s deductive process.”

Austin: Great.

Keith: “The skill may only be used once on the same creature, item, or location.”

Austin: Great. I'll give you just the regular answer first, because you succeeded by a lot, right?

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: This room is haunted. This room is haunted? It’s a haunting of some sort. This is a haunted room. The art objects are haunted, probably?

Keith: Okay.

Austin: You have read about things like this. It’s a little overwhelming, because normally what you would think of is like, oh, there's like a spirit that makes you nauseous, you know? Or whatever. Nauseous. “Nauzeous.” What was that? Nauseous. Wait, am I saying that weird still?

Sylvia: They're both fine.

Keith: Nauseous? Yeah, nauseous.

Dre: Nauseous.

Austin: How do I say it? I've lost the way—

Keith: Nau-se-ous. You say nau-se-ous.

Dre: Oh.

Sylvia: Oh no.

Austin: That's right. I say nau-ze-us. That's right. Of course.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: But you don't normally get this many things in a row be like, "Oh wow, I feel bad in all of the ways I can feel bad."

Keith: Uh huh.

Austin: So these objects seem to be haunted, which means that there might be spirits inside of them, which means that there might be spirits, like, beings inside of them.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And that there must be some way to interact with some of these or maybe even talk to them? But then you get a question.

Keith: Yeah. I guess my question would be fairly practical, I think, which is: is the state of the spirits what is keeping the door forward closed?

Austin: Yes. That is correct.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: How do you determine this?

Keith: I think that once you determine that there's ghosts in a room, [**Austin:** Yeah.] it starts to be easier to feel where they are or, like, what they're affecting.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: And so, I think that, like, oh, this painting is haunted, [**Austin:** Ah.] and the haunted painting is making the— if a door is locked [**Austin:** Yeah.] because a ghost is doing it, that makes the lock haunted too.

Austin: Yeah. You're looking at the painting when you say this or when you start to figure this out, and the child under the blanket in the shadows is looking back at you with sickly yellow eyes, and you see the blanket start to move as limbs that are way too long reach out over the blanket and pull it up tighter, closer to his little neck and face.

Keith: And this is in the painting.

Austin: In the painting.

Keith: Okay.

Austin: And he kind of, like, leans forward just a little bit and goes,

(as **painting child**): [frightened] I told them you looked like good people and that you could help us, maybe. Are you good people?

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Yes. We are good people.

(as **painting child**): You don't look like the other ones.

Keith (as **Antistrophe**): Which other ones?

(as **painting child**): The soldiers.

Austin: And at hearing that, you actually can hear the marching of soldiers out the window, and down in the courtyard, you see a troop of a couple dozen soldiers in kind of military uniforms but also a lot of, like, flowy white robes. There's a sort of, like, this is a church guard of some sort, marching up or like out of one of these kind of structures that I've outlined on the thing, as if arriving from a different layer or level of the castle. And we're going to jump over to the other side.

East Team [0:38:22]

Austin: Hello, other side.

Sylvia: Hello.

Jack: Hello.

Austin: As you emerge out of your little area, you have been in, I would say, another place that, to our eyes, would look sort of modern or near future or, you know, the place it reminds most of you of, because you've been through some of these places, is remember the room with the cages that had the glowing screen and one of you got bit?

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: It's been places like that. Research laboratories with broken screens and vials and stuff like that. And you've been in there, and finally you open a door and come to a new type of place. You've come to a bar? It's a bar. It's a bar? It's empty right now. Actually, you should give me the roll. Someone who's leading the Travel, give me a d10 in here.

Ali: Mm.

Jack: Okay, Maebela. [Sylvia and Art laugh]

Austin: Maebela is an NPC and cannot do the Travel roll. [Ali laughs]

Sylvia: That's a good bit, though.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: I can do it if no one else wants to.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: I got a 10.

Austin: Oh my god. [Sylvia laughs quietly] All right.

Keith: This is rough.

Jack: What if it was ghosts again? We look up on the wall, and it's the same fucking painting. [laughs]

Austin: It's ghosts! It's actually not ghosts.

Sylvia: I complained so much about rolling low [Austin sighs] in the first part of the season, that maybe we corrected at the wrong time.

Austin: Yeah, the wrong way. I'm going to add just a little, like, place where there is a bar here so that there's just like, you know, there's the bar. You see it? Cool. As you come into this room, this is, you see a neon sign that says, "The Fortunate Isle." And this is like a tropical bar. It's like a tiki bar. And so there's like—

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Austin: There's, like, sunsets painted on the green wall. There are, you know, kind of cocktail glasses that are on the bar and on some bar tables. There is kind of midcentury exotica playing, you know? Sort of like on a classic hi-fi system, you know? Wood panel hi-fi system. And there is, as you approach, you hear the sound of something or someone in this room. And as you look up, you see a person in kind of bronze armor who looks back at you and then sprints through the northern door, and Maebela rushes after.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: Leaving you all behind. And as you move into the room, there is a loud blast of a barrage of gunfire. You've been shot at before. I can say the word "gunfire".

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I had to remember if you knew guns, and some of you've been sniped at before, so. [Ali laughs quietly] The person who ran away, like, rolled three little orbs into the room, actually four little orbs. No, rolled three little orbs into the room, and two of

them pop up and are little mechanical turrets. One of them floats up into kind of the air in here, you know, 10 feet up, and is like a flower. And then, already up there, sitting on top of a television, [laughs quietly] like a TV stand in the corner, is a hawk, a sort of hawk automatan, a bronze hawk. And we are entering combat.

Conflict [0:41:45]

[“[Eyes in the Dark \(Dungeon Combat Begins\)](#)” by Jack de Quidt plays]

Sylvia: All right.

Jack: [sighs] Okay.

Janine: So there's no bartender?

Austin: There's no bartender. You rolled a 10, so no bartender.

Janine: Oh.

Sylvia: I'm sorry!

Austin: Yeah, I'm sorry.

Keith: I can't believe the non-combat side is getting combat.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: I should have rolled a 1, and then we would have been just sipping some piña coladas.

Austin: You would have been sipping some, yeah, sipping some damn drinks.

Initiative [0:42:15]

Austin: I need an Initiative roll, which again is a group roll. I don't know who the highest Initiative is in this mixup of people anymore.

Sylvia: Yeah. I have a 0 mod on it.

Jack: Veile, maybe?

Ali: I'm +1.

Sylvia: Okay.

Janine: [inaudible 0:42:27]

Austin: What's your actual...? Oh, right, you just have mods. Right. The NPCs have actual just numbers, which is funny.

Sylvia: Yeah, it's...

Austin: I forgot.

Janine: My Initiative is +4.

Austin: Damn.

Ali: Okay! [laughs]

Sylvia: Whoa! Damn, all right!

Jack: Holy shit.

Austin: Some sort of equipment.

Janine: I don't remember why that is, but.

Jack: How do you do that?

Austin: It's probably equipment. It's probably equipment, right?

Sylvia: It's gotta be, or a skill.

Janine: Uh, it's probably equipment.

Austin: Is it in your backpack?

Janine: What do I have going on in my equipment? Is that the archer belt that I got? Does that have something to do with it?

Austin: Oh. That makes sense. Yeah, hit the button next to your archer belt? What's that say? Did I write it out?

Janine: +4 Initiative.

Austin: Yeah, +4 Initiative when wielding long range weapons. Yeah.

Janine: Okay, well. [laughs]

Sylvia: Wow!

Janine: Yeah, okay, sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. There you go.

Sylvia: All right, boss.

Austin: All right, so you're going to be the lead. Everybody else should still do their Initiative roll, and if you get over a 10, you help.

Ali: Thank you for being a gentleman, Brontë. [Janine laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah, thank you so much. [Ali laughs quietly]

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Yo! I rolled a 16 on that!

Austin: Hell yeah.

Janine: Wow. I rolled an 18.

Austin: Jesus.

Jack: Wow.

Austin: So that is 18, then 19, because of Caoimhe's.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Caoimhe, you don't have a Bond with Brontë yet, do you?

Sylvia: I have two Bonds with Brontë.

Janine: Yeah, what?

Austin: Okay, so then that's actually a 21. [Janine laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Blackjack, baby!

Austin: Yeah. [Janine and Austin laugh] You are going first. Again, there are two turrets, a flower automaton that's flying, and a kind of drone automaton. In fact, they're all hovering, or I guess I'd say the turrets are hovering, but they don't have flying. The bird and the flower both have flying, and I'll add some tokens down for us in a second too, so we can remember these things. [typing] Who is going first? It's your side.

Round One [0:44:15]

Sylvia: I got an attack, if that's good, but if people have, like, other prep things they want to do first, go ahead.

Jack: Yeah. What is your Defense?

Sylvia: Magic or physical?

Jack: Physical.

Sylvia: Physical is 13.

Jack: Whoa. Okay. [Ali and Austin laugh]

Sylvia: Was that a good “whoa”?

Austin: Yeah. It’s different over here.

Ali: [laughing] I have a 7, man.

Jack: What about you, Brontë? What’s your Defense?

Janine: 12.

Jack: Fucking christ. Okay, I’m just going to do it for safety reasons. I think eye contact with Veile, [**Austin:** Aw.] and I’m going to cast Barrier. [Austin, Janine, and Ali laugh] Until this spell ends, each target may treat their Defense as being equal to 12 against any effects that target it.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah. Jack, can I be honest with you? I looked at that spell and went, “That’s useless for my party. I don’t know why I would get that.” [Ali laughs]

Jack: Oh my god. So, this is 5 per target, and I am just casting this on two, [laughs quietly] so I’m spending 10.

Austin: The flower automaton begins to, like, rotate in the corner. Like, it kind of starts spinning itself up in the air, and it, like, closes briefly and then opens back up, and it projects a blast of, like, three blasts of wind, which cover up or kind of seek to the two turrets and the hawk. It is casting Barrier of Wind. Oh! Fuck. I have to go back a second and tell you something, but let me finish this really quick, because this will make it funny in retrospect. The flower releases up to three wind spirits which surround its allies and increase their Defense to 12 for the length of the scene.

Jack: Their regular Defense?

Austin: Their regular Defense is 12.

Sylvia: Oh, okay.

Austin: Maybe you've heard this spell before under a different name.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: Maybe, like, "Barrier".

Jack: So normal people do this spell.

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh.

Jack: It's really just the other party that feels like they're above it. [Ali laughs]

Austin: Yeah. I have to go back and tell you something, Elena, something important.

Jack: Oh no. Okay.

Austin: When you cast that spell, it doesn't happen. [Ali gasps] It forms into a little orb in your hands. [Ali gasps]

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Austin: Which you can use as an item to cast whenever you want in the future.

Keith: It's a spirit bomb.

Austin: No, it's like a physical...it's like a spell orb.

Janine: It's like the opposite of a spirit bomb.

Keith: Oh.

Austin: You've seen these recently.

Sylvia: It's Materia.

Dre: Yeah, it's like a technosphere.

Austin: It's like a technosphere. It's a spell orb. You maybe found one of these last time, or you at least found remnants of one, somewhere in the previous things. This is one of the Celestial Echoes of Genesika, the place that you are.

Jack: Huh.

Austin: When you cast spells here, they form into physical objects, into crystalized magic spell orbs that you can then use the Use Items skill to use it in combat, but it means you didn't use it. You just summoned it.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Okay.

Austin: So, in fact, that hasn't happened yet.

Ali: Wait, so we need—

Jack: All right.

Austin: Now, I say that because it reveals that something has— this didn't happen for this automaton, which means it has been modified in some way to just be able to cast this spell. It is something about the world that is true.

Ali: So for every spell that we have to do, we have to cast it twice basically?

Austin: You can cast them whenever you want, out of combat, and carry them around with you if you want.

Ali: Okay, but we're in combat.

Jack: We're in combat! [Ali laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I know, but I'm letting you know how Genesika works.

Ali: Okay, fair enough.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: That's the rule of how it is here.

Ali: But for this fight, everything...

Austin: That is correct. You got surprised here.

Ali: Well, actually, are they all one-time-use? Or like, once I get the omega thing...

Austin: They are all one-time-use, but you could cast four of them in a row if you wanted to, outside of combat, to save them up if you wanted.

Ali: Okay, well...

Sylvia: We're, like, all casters!

Austin: Yep.

Janine: Except...!

Ali: I feel as though this is intentional.

Janine: Dance doesn't count, right?

Austin: I did figure out this— yes, dance is not a spell. This is correct.

Sylvia: Dance is not a spell.

Austin: We very specifically explored whether or not it is, right?

Janine: Uh huh.

Jack: Except for, like, in one situation where we've decided it. Sharing. It's teaching dances to people.

Janine: Yeah, it's the downtime action of being able to teach someone a dance to use.

Austin: That's right. That's right.

Janine: Because that's cool enough that it should be allowed.

Austin: Yeah. [quietly] Sorry, I have to...

Ali: And I still have my dance from you.

Janine: You do.

Austin: You do.

Ali: And Elena, we still have our half HP thingies.

Jack: Yes, we do. What's it called? In my brain, I have decided that that thing is called Desperation, but I think it's the opposite. I think it's—

Ali: It's Daydream.

Jack: Right.

Ali: [laughs] We got it from daydreaming.

Jack: Look, it's 2026. My life is in a certain way.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah. Yeah.

Ali: Uh huh.

Jack: But I do think Elena looks down at the spell orb in her hand with the sort of expression on her face of a child who's been told by an adult, like, "Wouldn't you like five nice dollars?" and the child nods, and the adult says, "You just have to mow this lawn." [quiet laughter] You're like, shit, okay, fine. Not what I was asking for.

Austin: All right, I've now added: there is the big flower which had just produced, is hovering around and gave them all like a wind shield. There are the two turrets, and there is the hawk.

Ali: The flower's a flower, right?

Austin: It's an automaton in the same way. It's like a robotic flower.

Ali: Okay, so...

Austin: It's like a bronze machine. They are all seemingly, like, robotic in some way.

Ali: Okay, so it's not a plant.

Austin: Mm-mm. I'm sorry. Yeah, you have that cool knife. [Ali laughs]

Jack: It's currently eating another somehow more robot balustrade, which is what happened last time we fought a plant.

Austin: That is what happened, yeah.

Janine: Okay. I would love to... I'm just checking my dances real quick. Okay. [chuckles] So, I want to do a dance and then attack, as is my prerogative, my rhythm.

Austin: Yep.

Janine: It's been a little while since I've done this, so forgive my trying to find my rotation again. I would like to do my Hydra Dance, which is the one that gives me some recovery help.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: Which, in this context, I think... [laughs quietly] I think— oh, this is so stupid. Okay. Listen, Brontë's in the hot girls party.

Ali: Mm-hmm. [Sylvia laughs]

Janine: And suddenly he's decided he's going to act like a warrior fighter man. [Ali laughs quietly] So I think Hydra Dance, in this context— you know, I like to frame his dances not as dances out of context but as beautiful movement, and so I think this is a thing where he sort of pops out a little bit ahead, kind of like a run and slide kind of

thing, with as he draws his bow, it's very like, uh...you know, very, I wanted to say cinematic. It's not cinematic. It's a choreographed action, right? Like, that's I guess the root of it.

Austin: That makes sense. Yeah.

Janine: Is that, like, the things he does feel choreographed and pulled off a certain way. So he is sort of stunting a little bit. [someone snorts] Don't snort! [Sylvia laughs quietly] So I'm doing that. That's my spell I'm doing, which is a cool 10 Mind Points for my first dance.

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: Boom. And then I would like to also fire a shot, but it is specifically going to be Barrage, a Barrage shot.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: Which is when you perform a ranged attack, you may spend 10 Mind Points to choose to give it multi [trailing off] or increase whatever the, that's not relevant to me.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: Basically I spend 10 MP to make it a two target shot. That is what I want to do with that.

Austin: All right. Who are you shooting at?

Janine: The two turrets.

Austin: You're going with two turrets. Okay. Difficulty is 12 on those.

Janine: Two for two, you know?

Austin: Two for two. Yeah. Which I think we roll once? But I'm going to double check it. It's in—

Janine: I'm trying to remember if I spend my 10 MP for Barrage after I do the attack roll or not.

Austin: Mm-mm. It's when you perform a ranged attack.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Uh, hmm. Hmm.

Janine: In the past, I think I've rolled, and I don't know.

Austin: And then decided? When you perform a ranged attack. I think you are performing it. You should spend it now, I think.

Janine: Yeah, because Warning Shot is when you hit, so that one is well after.

Austin: Yes. Yes. That makes perfect sense.

Janine: You decide that. But that one also isn't a point spend anyway.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: And if you have multi, you select as many targets as you want. You perform a single Accuracy Check and compare it to the Defense of every target.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: So, one attack here. Looking for a 12.

Janine: All right. Spend my MP, and then I'm going to go and do...

Austin: They are surrounded by little kind of tornadoes of wind. That's why their Defense is up to 12.

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: Must be nice. [Sylvia laughs]

Austin: [quietly] Oh my god. Oh my god.

Janine: Wow. Okay.

Austin: You want to say what happened?

Janine: I got a critical fumble. I can't Fabula Point a critical fumble, can I?

Austin: You got it! You got it! [Ali gasps]

Keith: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: [sarcastic] Cool. Okay.

Austin: “When both dice rolled during a Check show a 1, the result is a fumble, which is the exact opposite of a critical success.”

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: “No matter the modifiers, a fumbled check is always a failure, not due to a character’s incompetence but because of some unfortunate twist. When you roll a fumble, whoever controls your opposition in the scene gets an Opportunity—see next page. When a Player Character rolls a fumble, they immediately earn 1 Fabula Point.”

Jack: Hey!

Keith: Hey.

Janine: Ooh.

Austin: I'm going to double check that. Wait a second. It doesn't say *there* that you can't use a Fabula Point, but I am pretty sure that's the case.

Janine: I feel like it would have to because you can earn a Fabula Point from it.

Keith: Well, didn't it say, "No matter what you do, it's a failure"?

Austin: No matter what you do. It does say that. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, you cannot—

Keith: So failure—

Austin: Sorry, here it is. "You cannot invoke a Trait if your character fumbled the check." It does say that explicitly under the Invoking a Trait to Reroll Dice.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: So, there we go. Okay. Oh, it's Opportunity time. So you're going to miss this one, unfortunately.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: God. I'm not going to make it a faux pas. I'm not going to make it a faux pas. [Ali laughs quietly]

Sylvia: Oh god.

Austin: I can't tell the other PCs that you look like shit. I'm not going to do it. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: Aww.

Keith: You could.

Janine: It said specifically it's not my failure.

Austin: It does say that specifically. You're right.

Janine: It's a thing that happens.

Austin: Yes.

Janine: So I still look cool. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Uh huh. Unfortunately, I think that the... God, what goes wrong on your side? Tell me how you fumble this, like physically. If it's not your fault...I guess it's not your fault, [**Janine:** Yeah.] so you do your part perfectly right, right? Yeah, then I think you just don't expect this, but the hawk that has been sitting on the kind of television stand in the corner, like, snags the perfectly shot arrows out of the air and drops them, making you a little, I'd say, shaken. Take shaken. This thing is way faster than what a hawk is supposed to be, right? This thing is moving very quick. It intercepted your two different bow shots in, like, a single bolt of action. That's shaken-worthy to me.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Which I think is the stars. Yeah.

Janine: Yeah, it is. I was mousing over to see it.

Austin: And speaking of the bird, speaking of the hawk...let me make sure I get the right one here. Here it is. Um, yeah. I think it does this. You know, it comes to land on the table, and then it, like, opens its mouth as if to do like a classic hawk scream, but instead of that, a sort of burst of little metal chits and pieces, kind of a flechette, fires out right at you, Brontë. What is your Defense, your regular Defense?

Janine: My regular Defense is 12.

Austin: And are you wearing martial armor? If you check your—

Janine: No. I'm not.

Austin: You might have to actually hit the martial button? Okay, yeah, you know you're not.

Janine: I know I'm not, because I have stuff that I can't use if I'm wearing martial armor.

Austin: Okay. I need you to take...this is HR plus 10 physical damage, but it also has this attack deals 5 extra damage against creatures that do not have martial armor on.

Janine: So, actually...

Austin: Yes.

Janine: I also have something called Frenetic Footwork.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: “After you perform a dance with a duration of until the start of your next turn,” which Hydra Dance is.

Austin: Which you just did. Which is Hydra Dance is, yeah.

Janine: “You gain a bonus equal to (SL × 2) to all Opposed Checks that rely on acrobatics, coordination, or speed until the start of your next turn.”

Austin: This is not an Opposed Check, unfortunately.

Janine: Is this not Dodge? Oh. What?

Austin: No. No, this is not.

Janine: Ugh.

Austin: You're not doing an Opposed Check. You're being shot at, unfortunately.

Janine: Mm...

Austin: An Opposed Check would be like if you were like, “And then I want to...” If this thing was like, I'm going to try to pull something from your hands or double jump over you or whatever, that would be a—

Janine: Oh.

Austin: An Opposed Check is a very specific thing. Yeah.

Janine: Okay. Well, I do also have Dodge, that increases my Defense score by 1, but that's still not enough.

Austin: That's still not enough. 14 is going to hit you for 22 damage.

Janine: Okay. Well, I'm going to halve that with...hang on.

Austin: With Efta and Zolfta?

Janine: No, I'm going to halve it with my— wait, oh right, I didn't have a bonus because I did the dancing thing. Okay. Yeah, I'm going to halve it with Efta and Zolfta, because their Fatigue is back into a state where they are usable to me. [Austin laughs] So that brings it down to 11, 12? What was it?

Austin: It was 22, so yes, it brings it down to 11.

Janine: 11. Okay. I think what that looks like is very much he has skidded forward with, you know, firing his shot, and he sort of watches the bird catch the arrows, is kind of confused. Doesn't really clock this shit coming at him, and they, like, scoot forward and each one of them takes his shoulder, and then they yank him backwards. [Janine and Jack laugh quietly]

Austin: Oh my god. Pull I'm out of the way, as best as they can?

Janine: Yeah. Just pull him back a little bit, just a scooch.

Austin: Yeah. All right, back over to y'all.

Ali: I think I'm the last one here, and I think that like—

Austin: Caoimhe hasn't gone yet either, right?

Sylvia: I have not.

Ali: Oh, did you not? Okay, my bad.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: So it's my turn?

Ali: Didn't you start? No, Elena started.

Sylvia: No, Elena started, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: Oh.

Sylvia: But I'm glad Elena did, because I mean, now all I'm doing is getting a spell ready, basically.

Ali: [laughs quietly] Okay.

Sylvia: How does this affect my Spellblade stuff, Austin? That's my question.

Austin: What do you mean?

Sylvia: Well, because I get mod— So, in my sheet, I have it for Flare and Flare Spellblade, just as an example.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: And the way Spellblade works is when you're using a martial weapon to cast a spell, you get bonuses for it, right?

Austin: Yep.

Sylvia: These are like these orb things. Do I still get these bonuses if I'm evoking it that way?

Austin: I'm going to give you these bonuses. I'm not taking your bonuses away, yeah.

Sylvia: Cool. Just wanted to make sure. All right.

Austin: You can deploy the orbs in martial ways, you know?

Sylvia: Yeah, I'm going to throw them up in the air and cut them in half with my sword.

Austin: See?

Sylvia: Yeah. Okay, then I'm going to prep... [sighs] Okay, no, their wind barrier did not give them wind defense, yeah?

Austin: That's correct. It did not change their resistances. It just gave them 12 Defense.

Sylvia: Could I get a refresher on how many are flying? Are they all flying?

Austin: The bird and the flower are flying. The turrets are hovering in place. They don't look like they can even move. They're just hovering in place.

Sylvia: Okay. But they don't count as flying.

Austin: They do not. They're at, you know, chest level.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Last question, just to make sure. Am I spending the MP for, like, I'm going to cast Ventus here. It can target up to three.

Austin: Yes. You spend the MP.

Sylvia: So if I want this to be able to target three, I spend all 30 MP?

Austin: Yeah, you spend all 30 MP. Yeah.

Sylvia: Cool. All right.

Austin: And then it can target up to three when you deploy it, yeah.

Sylvia: I want to roll that. That's going to do— I'm assuming I keep these rolls when I use it.

Austin: Yeah, let's— Yes, you've instilled it into that. Yes. Correct.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: I'll let you have that, for sure.

Sylvia: So I'm going to do— I rolled a 19 on that because of all my stuff that's got a high roll plus 21, so that's a 31 air damage whenever I get to use that.

Austin: Whew! I love it.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: And at this point, one of these turrets is going to open fire. Let's roll a die and see who it hits, or see who it aims at. It probably won't— it might not hit anybody. I'm going to go 1d4, and that's going to be in the order at the bottom of the screen, which is to say—uh, let's see—Elena, Veile, Brontë, and then Caoimhe. Caoimhe. What I would have said to begin with.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: The left turret opens fire on you. What is your Defense? 13, you said? Or was it 12?

Sylvia: My physical Defense is 13, yeah.

Austin: Okay. That is a miss! Repeating fire, HR plus 15 physical damage. This attack has multi. Oh, has multi 2. Why did I forget it has multi 2? Let me roll again. Actually, who's the other lead here? No, I'll roll twice. I'll roll twice. I'll roll 1d3. [typing] I'll be good. I'll be good and play the game the way it says I should play it. Veile. What is your Defense?

Ali: It is 7.

Austin: It is 7. Okay. So you are going to take 14 physical damage.

Ali: [laughing] What the fuck?

Austin: After this attack is resolved, regardless of whether it was successful or not, the turret cannot perform any additional actions or free actions until the end of its next turn.

So it has, like, fired all that it can fire through this turn and next turn. How you doing, Veile?

Ali: Well, I just went from 43 to 29. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Okay. Yeah.

Ali: So I'm 7 from Crisis, which is probably fine.

Austin: Oh, sorry, you're actually worse than that, because it's HR plus 15 damage, but the way the system on the back end works, it can only do HR plus 10, so actually you have to take another 5 damage. I'm sorry.

Ali: Wait, why?

Austin: Because it's actually HR plus 15, but the dice roll was just HR plus 10.

Ali: I see.

Austin: Do you see?

Ali: Okay, wait.

Austin: See, in the text it says HR plus 15, but I cannot make it do that with the way the Roll20 Fabula stuff works.

Ali: So I'm taking 5 more?

Austin: Which is not Roll20's fault. It's no one's fault. You're taking 5 more, yes. I was very careful to include that in the actual descriptions when it broke from the thing.

Ali: Okay. [laughs] I am 2 HP from Crisis, which is fine.

Austin: That's fine.

Ali: And I was...oh boy. I think I still am going to describe Veile doing a very stupid thing and not bank any spells. [laughs] Because I think the action that I was imagining is

Elena and Veile make eye contact; Elena goes to cast Barrier; Elena gets, like, an orb in her hand instead of that. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Ali: And like, Veile's eyes go kind of wide, and she sort of grumbles, like, annoyed indignantly, because she's kind of having a bad day. And I think that she is going to go up to the turret that fired at her and swing her staff like a baseball bat.

Austin: I love it. I love it. [Ali laughs quietly]

Jack: Wow! It's baseball season, baby!

Austin: When's the last time that you did a physical attack in this game like that?

Ali: I think I did this once or twice in the first session.

Austin: That sounds likely.

Ali: I know that I've described this action myself.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Willpower + Willpower, HR + 6.

Austin: Yep. You got it. And it's physical damage. You're swinging it like a baseball bat, so.

Ali: If I just click Staff?

Austin: And you're swinging at the one who— hmm?

Ali: If I just click Staff, is this going to do it?

Austin: You got it. Yeah. That did it.

Ali: Oh. That did it.

Austin: Yeah. You did 15 damage, because you rolled a 9 and a 6, so 9 plus 6 is 15. You do 15 physical damage to the first of these two turrets, which puts it in Crisis.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: Just haul off on that thing and hit it. [Ali laughs quietly] Spins around in a circle, you know? Like, it's a hovering— it's in a little hover, like a half sphere, and it's like, there's a hovering half sphere, and then there's a kind of— like the icon I've put on the map, this kind of very traditional looking boxy turret gun thing. And you hit it, and it literally spins around like it's trying to keep its balance gyroscopically.

Ali: I was trying to make her sit on this bar, but she's going underneath it, so I can't. [laughs]

Austin: Oh, I'll put it into the map. One second. I got it, I got it, I got it. Change layer: map! There we go.

Ali: Thank you.

Austin: Love it.

Ali: Okay, so she's just standing on this bar with her staff in her hands.

Austin: Yeah. And then the other turret's going to shoot at the other two people. Easy. So that is Elena and Brontë. What are your Defenses again?

Jack: [dejected] My Defense is 7. [Sylvia laughs sadly]

Janine: I'm 13, technically, I think.

Sylvia: Aww.

Keith: That's the saddest sentence I've ever heard.

Austin: It is an 11, so it hits Elena but misses Brontë, and it also cannot move next turn.

Sylvia: I got a rock delivery.

Austin: And remember that is 20 damage. It is HR plus 15, not HR plus 10. And it had rolled a 5 as its high roll, so 5 plus 15 is 20 but it can't move next turn.

Jack: Now I am 1 away from Crisis. We have the same stats.

Austin: Right! You have the same stats! That's right. [quiet laughter] And I think that that's back to... Caoimhe, you went already. Yeah, you did the thing, so we're back around at the top of the order.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I will remove the little red icons marking who has already gone this turn.

Round Two [1:06:13]

Jack: May I cast my Barrier spell at the beginning of this turn, please?

Sylvia: Yeah, your Defense is 7. You need that.

Jack: Okay, Veile! Our Defense is now 12.

Ali: Great.

Jack: Elena just throws the thing down at her feet. You know when you see those toasts sometimes where they drink from a shot glass and then break the glass on the floor? It's that except with, like, frustration and resentment [Austin laughs sympathetically] instead of the, like, cathartic jubilation of smashing the shot glass.

Austin: Yeah. I should say you hear the sounds of fighting happening behind the closed doors to the north of the bar.

Jack: Could Maebela wipe the floor with these people, in the room that we're in right now?

Austin: Uh, you know, it's tough. 4v1 would not go well, but I bet she would probably do okay. I don't know the system well enough to know if a level 20 person could beat four level 10 people.

Jack: Oh, yeah, that's true.

Austin: I just don't know, you know? That's not...

Sylvia: When we turn on Maebela, we'll find out. [Ali laughs, Austin and Jack chuckle]

Ali: Yeah, can we see her stats later?

Austin: No.

Ali: Oh. I said later, like when it's not relevant.

Austin: What do you mean, later? When you, like, jump her.

Sylvia: Like, when the season's done.

Austin: Yeah. I mean, sure, yeah. I'll stat her out. I'll have to keep stating her out, because she's just going to be 10 levels higher than you, you know?

Sylvia: We're going to beat Maebela to death with hammers just so we can see her character sheet. [Austin and Ali laugh]

Austin: I think that this flower is going to go and is going to take aim at—I'll do the dice roll—is going to take aim at Elena. You know, that makes sense. You just did the defensive thing. So it gathers up another kind of— it looks like it's going to do the wind blast again, but this time the wind takes on a sort of dark air like it's a shadow. And rolls an 8. This is to your physical damage, actually, your physical thing, so it's going to bounce off of your magical shield.

Jack: Phew.

Austin: This dark blast does not hit you.

Jack: Yeah, phew.

Austin: All right, back to you.

Jack: Hmm.

Sylvia: Could I go?

Jack: Yeah, sure.

Sylvia: Okay. I want to use my new spell orb on this sort of, like, triangle of enemies here.

Austin: Yeah. You're targeting the right turret, the flower, and the hawk.

Sylvia: Yes.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: And I guess the way this looks... I was, like, joking about finding a way to do it with the sword, but I actually do think her tossing it up in the air and, like, slashing through it and then using the sword propel the spell is kind of sick.

Austin: It is.

Sylvia: So, she's going to do that. It's 31 air damage to each of them, unless they're resistant to that, which you might tell me.

Austin: I might tell you that the Windborne Automata are all resistant to air damage?

Sylvia: I was hoping— So, my plan was to get an Opportunity, but I didn't.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Because this spell, if I roll an Opportunity, makes them all hit the ground.

Austin: Oh, I see. Yeah. You do, in fact, [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] they are all resistant to wind, unfortunately. But you still rolled really well, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: So half of 31. Do we round up or round down in this game? Do you remember?

Sylvia: It's still like— I don't remember.

Austin: I think we round...

Janine: We round up, don't we?

Austin: I think we always round down. Hmm.

Janine: Because there's like a thing about being charitable.

Austin: "Always round down to a minimum of 0."

Janine: Oh. Okay.

Austin: Says the book. I agree!

Jack: There's the thing about always being parsimonious.

Janine: There's something that we round up. Maybe it's not this, but there's definitely something that we do as a kindness, but.

Austin: There is. You're not wrong. Yeah. Nevertheless, you do 15 damage, which sends the flower and the turret into Crisis.

Sylvia: I'll take it.

Austin: Yeah. This is not the same turret that Veile hit, correct? You're hitting the far turret and not the near turret.

Sylvia: The far turret, yeah.

Austin: All right. So, the turrets and the flower are all in Crisis. I should say, by the way, we are in round two. Also, I should say, Janine, you noted that you did Efta and Zolfta's fatigue roll.

Janine: Yes, and it was only 1, so they're still good.

Austin: Love that. Love it. The flower went. The turrets cannot go, so now it is the hawk, who is going to open fire on, I think probably just at you, Caoimhe. I think I'm just going to decide on this one.

Sylvia: Yeah, fair enough.

Austin: You know, you just blasted it. So, it is going to, yet again, release this kind of flechette burst. What is your Defense? 12.

Sylvia: Physical is 13.

Austin: 13.

Sylvia: Fuck you!

Austin: That's 13. [Sylvia laughs] Are you wearing martial armor?

Sylvia: How do I check that?

Austin: If you hit the button in your backpack, that's probably the quickest way.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Because it'll pop it into the chat, and we can see if it has the little icon.

Sylvia: Yes, the little diamond next to it?

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yes, I am.

Austin: But it has to— sorry, hit the actual button so that it says it in chat.

Sylvia: Oh. Okay.

Austin: I believe the Combat Tunic is not that, is not...

Sylvia: Let's go! That's good, right?

Austin: So unfortunately— no, no.

Sylvia: Oh, okay, nevermind.

Jack: Ha!

Austin: This one does extra damage. I'll double check that Combat Tunic is not. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: Nevermind. I misunderstood it!

Austin: Yeah, Combat Tunic does not have the thing, unfortunately. So yes, you're going to take 23 physical damage, as it shotguns you, in exchange.

Sylvia: Ow! Okay, wait. Okay, I am barely out of Crisis. I'm 1 point away.

Austin: Many such cases over here, it seems.

Sylvia: Oh, story of my life, buddy.

Austin: [laughs] One step away from crisis!

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: That is all of their turns for this round, because the turrets cannot go two rounds in a row, with that main attack they have anyway. So that means we still have Brontë, and we still have Veile again this round.

Janine: Yeah. Well, I would like to shake off shaken.

Austin: Smart.

Janine: Which is my...

Ali: Oh!

Janine: Oh?

Ali: Sorry, I'm— me and Elena took half HP.

Austin: What?

Ali: We should have known that. [laughs quietly]

Jack: Yeah, I was also just thinking about this. Because of our desperation, daydream.

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Ali: [laughing] I'm sorry, Janine. I just realized.

Austin: Because of your desperation daydream. Yeah.

Jack: So, how much did we lose that first time?

Austin: Let's find out. Let's scroll back up. Who— did you get shot? What happened? I know this just happened.

Ali: I got shot, and it was on the move that says HR + 15.

Austin: You got shot by the turret. The turret hit you?

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. No, wait, because didn't we have to do the HR plus 15 thing? Yes, we did. Yes, I see.

Ali: Yeah, this is Windborne Turret attack, 9, 14 physical is me.

Austin: 9, 14. Okay, so yes. So that means it was 19 damage and in fact is only 9 damage, because it's...

Jack: Whereas, for me, it was 20 damage.

Austin: I see.

Jack: But it's actually only 10 damage.

Austin: There we go.

Janine: So, right, the thing I'm— I'm going to get rid of shaken by spending my 5 MP, since it's a consecutive dance, so I get a little half bonus.

Austin: Ooh.

Janine: And I'm doing my Lion Dance, which lets me immediately recover from a single status effect of my choice. [Janine and Austin laugh quietly] What this looks like is—not just because it's called a Lion Dance but kind of also because it's called a Lion Dance—I imagine this as Brontë, like, straightening up, squaring his shoulders, and you know that thing that people, that guys do where they call it the claw, where it's like you have your hand in sort of a claw shape and you sweep your hair back? There's like a...

Jack: No.

Janine: No one knows about this? Ali? Help. No?

Jack: No.

Janine: No one?

Art: Are you just describing moving your hair?

Ali: I know what you're describing, but I've never heard it under that terminology.
[laughs quietly]

Janine: Okay. Okay. Well, maybe there's just one person I watch or something who makes fun of it and calls it the claw. I thought it was called the claw. Either way, that's the thing that he's doing. He is sweeping his hair back with like a, you know, claw-shaped hand movement. He's like—

Austin: We gotta get Brontë into the room with the art that makes you sick. [Janine laughs] Just doing this repeatedly to clear away the various conditions. [Keith, Austin, Jack, and Dre laugh]

Janine: Just grooming, just endlessly grooming.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: You know, in the anime sense. There's sparkles. You know, it's that kind of thing. There's, like, maybe a very attractive bead of sweat on his brow or something, where he's like, [**Austin:** Oh.] you gotta get serious now.

Ali: Ooh.

Janine: That kind of, you know.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: So that's what that looks like. And then he is raising up his bow again.

Keith: Thank god the bead of sweat is attractive. [Janine and Austin laugh]

Janine: He is raising up his bow again, and he is going to take another crack at a double shot. The last one didn't count. It was a fake one.

Austin: Right. Yeah.

Janine: This time, it's for realsies.

Austin: This time, it's for realsies. Ay!

Janine: 16!

Austin: There's a 16.

Jack: Hey.

Austin: 21 damage. Damage ignores resistances. Who are you shooting?

Janine: I think this time I'm going bird and flower, because turrets are turrets.

Austin: Bird and flower. Turrets are turrets.

Janine: Bird and flower are weirdos. Get 'em out of here.

Austin: Turrets are turrets. Yeah. Yeah, agreed.

Sylvia: Bird and flower *are* weirdos.

Austin: All right, so that was 21 damage.

Janine: Yeah, and let me just check to make sure I don't have any weird stuff that applies to that. Do they have any status effects on them?

Austin: They do not, currently.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: The flower is in Crisis, and the bird hasn't been— the bird has been hit, but the bird had not yet been put into Crisis.

Janine: Okay. I was just checking if they got a little bonus.

Austin: Yeah. All right. The bird is now in Crisis, and the automaton, the flower is not dead, but you, you know, blast it with this arrow. It goes bouncing around the room, you know?

Janine: Aww.

Austin: Kind of, like, loses its— it's like, *bing, bong, bawk*, you know, and falls and kind of pushes itself— oh, it's in Crisis. They are both fallen to the ground now. They can both be hit by physical attacks.

Janine: Oh, cool.

Austin: Yeah. They're still hovering, but they're...

Janine: I mean, my shit ignores defenses anyway, but.

Austin: Yeah. But yeah, so you can—

Janine: Not defenses, sorry; it ignores resistances.

Austin: Sorry, not physical. Yeah. Melee attacks is actually what I meant to say.

Janine: Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Melee attacks can now hit the previously flying things. Is that...? Caoimhe, Brontë...

Jack: Uh, it's Veile, I think.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: It is Veile. Yeah, Veile.

Ali: Honestly?

Austin: Mm-hmm?

Ali: That I'm not so close to Crisis anymore, I think maybe Veile is able to, like, look down at this thing and like... [laughs quietly] [Austin laughs sympathetically] There has to be something in real life of, like, recognizing it going into the, like, Crisis animation change, right?

Austin: Oh yeah. I think it's, like, sparking. And again, when you hit it, it spun around in circles. You know what I mean? [Ali laughs] Like, you have to picture, like, you know the baby Goku—? [laughs] Oh my god.

Ali: Huh?

Austin: I have to go to sleep.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: The baby...

Ali: Baby Goku?

Keith: You talking about *Dragon Ball Z Daima*?

Austin: The baby Grogu, the baby Yoda floating carriage thing?

Ali: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Austin: It's like one of those that has a turret in it instead of a baby. [Ali laughs] And it's spinning around like wild, because you fucking hauled off and hit a home run swing on it, you know?

Ali: Okay. I'm just going to try that one more time.

Austin: Yeah, do it. Difficulty is 12.

Ali: Fuck. [laughs]

Austin: That is a 6.

Ali: Okay.

Austin: Do you want to Fabula Point?

Ali: I think that I maybe want to Fabula Point that. I only have one, so should I actually...

Austin: Was it the one that you got at the beginning of the session? Or was there not— did you come in with one already?

Ali: Yes. I used my final one to have a god voice clip that...

Austin: Oh, right, last time. Yeah, that's right, that's right.

Keith: A 3 and a 3, though, so if it was better, it would have been a crit.

Austin: Yeah. That's true.

Ali: If it was better, it would have been a crit.

Keith: If it was better! [Ali laughs]

Austin: If it was a 6, 7, 8, or 9. If it was two 6s or two 7s, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I think it starts at 6.

Ali: And I don't want to flip this. I could change— no, because it would just bring it to a 10, so I don't want to do that.

Austin: That's right. Yeah.

Ali: So I am spending a Fabula Point to evoke my Bond. No, to evoke my Trait.

Austin: Your Trait?

Keith: Ali, what's your thing where you can change a number to another number? What is that?

Austin: That's what she was just talking about.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Ali: Yeah, I have like a 7 dice in my pocket, basically, and once I switch it out, it stays the number it is.

Keith: Okay.

Ali: So if I switched it for a 1, it would be a 1 until the next session or when I switch it again.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Got it.

Austin: And we know these things have a difficulty of 12, so it's not worth doing that, because that would still be a miss. But depending on how the roll goes, maybe it would be.

Ali: I'm evoking my Theme of Duty.

Austin: Sure.

Ali: Because I'm pissed off right now, [cross] and it's my duty to get out of this fucking room.

Austin: [cross] And it's my duty? I see.

Ali: And I don't want to get shot at anymore. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Okay.

Ali: So that's how I'm feeling.

Austin: Give me the staff roll again.

Ali: Yeah, I'm just trying to get...

Austin: Looking for a 12. Thank you, Sylvi, for noting first Fabula Point used.

Ali: [laughing] That's a 5. No!

Austin: That's a 5.

Art: The second Fabula Point used.

Austin: It's the second Fabula Point used.

Sylvia: Oh, it's the second one used?

Austin: Yeah.

Art: I used one.

Austin: Well, I wish we had a third, because it's worse. That's a worse. It's 5, unfortunately.

Ali: That's 5. Yeah, that's...

Keith: That's a worse!

Ali: [laughing] That's a 5 instead of a 6.

Austin: That is a 5. That is a 5 instead of a 6.

Round Three [1:19:28]

Austin: Hey, good news is the— I mean, bad news is that the turrets all light back up because we are out of this round. We are entering round three, and the turrets get their turn back. The good news is it's your turn still, actually. It's your side's turn. You still win the Initiative battle, so you get to go again first.

Ali: Okay. If nobody minds me doing a comedy bit, I think Veile is going to, like... [Ali, Jack, and Austin laugh]

Keith: [joking] I mind. I'm taking a stand against comedy bits!

Sylvia: [sarcastic] Yeah, Keith hates that shit.

Janine: I do have that one dance that immediately lets someone go right after me.

Austin: Ohh.

Ali: Ohh.

Janine: So that might be a good way to, if we want to try and...

Ali: Oh, sure. I was just going to follow that failure of an action with Veile scrambling underneath the bar so she can create an orb for herself, [Jack laughs] because that

would be my move today is casting a spell but not casting it. Janine, can you do that even though they've spent an action, or is it just to make the order more in our favor?

Janine: I mean, wait, we're at the start of a new round, right?

Austin: We're at the start of a new round.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: New round starts.

[brief vacuum cleaner sound]

Janine: What the fuck?

Austin: What was that?

Jack: Whoa.

Ali: Vacuum?

Austin: Keith, are you vacuuming?

Keith: I dropped a little vacuum that I had. [laughter] It turned on right next to the microphone.

Sylvia: Oh no, it's the air turret!

Janine: [laughing] I dropped a little vacuum.

Austin: The air turret's spinning up!

Keith: I have a little keyboard vacuum, and it dropped right next to the microphone.

Austin: Oh, I see. Yeah.

Janine: That's really funny. Okay.

Sylvia: That's really funny.

Janine: Yeah, so the thing that I have is basically...yeah, it would let me take my turn, and then instead of them getting a turn to shoot and stuff, someone else on our side would get a turn, so we could theoretically maybe take a couple out instead of letting anyone attack. That's the sort of idea.

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Jack: Yeah, like sort of rush them.

Ali: But in the wording of that is that they get their turn now, or like, they get a free action?

Janine: No, well—

Austin: “They” in your sentence, Ali, is the person you're giving the turn to, right?

Ali: Yeah. Yes.

Austin: Not the enemies.

Janine: Oh! I see. “Choose one ally you can see who has yet to take a turn during this round.”

Ali: Okay, okay.

Janine: “That ally may take their turn immediately after yours during this round.” So it's a full, it's just their turn. They take their turn now.

Ali: Okay. Okay.

[brief sound of audience laughter]

Austin: Keith?

Janine: Keith, did you drop a small audience directly next to the microphone?

Jack: What is going on? [laughter]

Keith: [laughing] I'm trying to get these fucking cables fixed while this combat is happening. It felt like such a good time, and I'm just dropping everything everywhere!

Sylvia: Keith's figured out how to do slapstick on a podcast. [laughter continues]

Jack: If anyone was going to.

Sylvia: That's, like, really innovative.

Austin: Inventing, you know, early 20th century radio foley from first principles.
[laughter]

Keith: No, I accidentally turned down the faders on my mixer with one of the wires, and so I was like, "Oh, let me put everything back to normal." Also, unbeknownst to me, a laugh track was already being played. So I turned it up, and it sounded like I faded in a laugh track in the middle of nothing! [laughter continues]

Janine: Okay. Yep.

Sylvia: Maebela's doing standup in the other room.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: Hey, but I sorted it.

Janine: I'm glad. I'm so glad.

Jack: Good for you.

Austin: So, you do the dance? Yeah, what's happening?

Janine: Yeah, is that what we want? We want to have someone come in to do a turn after Brontë does a turn, or do we want to play it straight?

Jack: Yeah, I think that seems like a good play, although you should probably pull the turn of someone who isn't going to cast.

Janine: Yes. Yeah.

Jack: Because that would neuter it.

Janine: Is that anyone? Caoimhe?

Sylvia: Uh...

Janine: You castin', you cuttin'?

Sylvia: I...well, they're low enough HP that I was going to just start swinging my sword.

Janine: They're on the ground now, right? The bird and the flower.

Sylvia: I believe so?

Austin: Yeah, they are.

Janine: Okay. Let's do a good old fashioned Brontë-Caoimhe one-two, then.

Sylvia: Let's go!

Janine: Okay, I'll spend my 5 from my Ouroborous Dance.

Austin: Mm.

Janine: Which I think often manifests in, like, a beautiful gesture and pointed eye contact.

Sylvia: Wow.

Janine: And I think maybe, you know, in the like staging of this, in the visual direction of this, this is a moment of kind of "dance with the person who brought you" kind of recognition of, like, Caoimhe, you know, Caoimhe has to be the person who follows up. That's just how it is.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: That's cute.

Janine: Yeah. And then, for my actual attack... Fuck it, let's do Barrage again.

Austin: There it is.

Janine: Let's do a two shot. Let's get two arrows in that bow and see what happens.

Austin: Split 'em out, yeah. This will bring you down to 1 MP.

Janine: Sure will.

Austin: What are you shooting at? Turrets, bird, flower?

Janine: Um...turrets, I think, maybe this time.

Austin: That makes sense. Visual, like in terms of how I'm imagining the room, that makes a lot of sense.

Janine: Especially now that the bird and the flower are on the ground, so it's just like...

Austin: Yeah, good point.

Janine: You know, it's a little more doable.

Austin: Yeah. Turret difficulty is 12.

Janine: I'm going to Fabula.

Austin: Oh, that's a 4. Yeah, you should maybe Fabula that one.

Janine: Yeah. I might Fabula that whole thing.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Just do a full, just a...

Austin: Yeah, your maximum on that roll is 20, so getting a 4 is not the play.

Janine: Yeah, that's not good. Declare and spend.

Austin: What Trait are you calling on?

Janine: Mm. I think I'm calling on... I think I'm calling on Dissipated Sixth Scion.

Austin: Interesting. Not scintillation. Interesting.

Janine: No, because this is— I don't think scintillation works for this, because, you know, he's being scintillating, but this is Brontë, like, doing work. This is...

Austin: Ah.

Janine: He's not doing the fun thing. He's not behind the bar getting at the maraschino cherries. He's focused on a task.

Austin: I see. That would be scintillation.

Janine: And specifically—

Austin: This is, you were trained to be...yeah.

Janine: Specifically, you know, tagging Caoimhe in right after is a very, like, "let's get it done" kind of thing, IMO.

Austin: Interesting. Yeah. Sounds good.

Janine: Uh... [Sylvia laughs]

Austin: Oh. Okay. Sure.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Janine's written, "Mama didn't raise no miser."

Janine: Misser.

Austin: Nope. Misser.

Sylvia: Misser.

Austin: I thought you were like, "I'm willing to spend points." [Janine and Jack laugh]

Janine: No.

Austin: I'm willing to spend Fabula Points. I'm willing to spend MP.

Janine: No. Okay.

Sylvia: [quietly] That's so funny. [Austin chuckles]

Janine: And then, where...I always... Conflict, Backpack, and Classes are, as tabs, the bane of my existence.

Austin: I know.

Janine: Okay. 13.

Austin: Hey! That hits. That's 19 damage to each turret.

Janine: Fuck off.

Austin: I believe each of them explodes into— that's not true. That's not true.

Janine: Why would you tease that?

Austin: I'm a liar. I'm sorry. I'm sorry to tease it. I thought they had lower...

Janine: They explode, it's beautiful— nevermind.

Austin: [laughs] I thought they had lower HP! They don't! They are both—

Jack: They don't even die?

Austin: Neither of them dies, no. They're both alive. [someone sighs] But they both have arrows sticking in them, and they're both spinning around in circles. They're hurt

very bad, but they are not yet dead. If you had focus fired one of them as a group, one of them would be dead by now for sure.

Janine: Mm...is that how that works?

Austin: But you split your damage across all four things. Hmm?

Janine: I guess. Yeah, I guess attack gains multi isn't attack can do two targets. I wasn't thinking about that.

Austin: No, no, no, no, no. I'm not saying you specifically, Brontë. I'm saying, as a group, if you'd been like, "Let's kill this first turret," it would be dead by now.

Janine: Oh, okay. Okay.

Austin: You know? But instead, all four things are—

Janine: I thought you were saying if I had used both of my arrows on the one.

Austin: No, no, I don't think you can do that. No, no, no. Yeah, it's not multiple attacks, it's...

Janine: No, I can do that.

Austin: Oh, I guess you... Can you?

Janine: It says the attack gains multi.

Austin: With Barrage.

Janine: Yeah. It doesn't say...

Austin: Yeah, multi is...

Sylvia: I don't think multi can do that. I was always under the understanding that multi means multiple targets but not multiple hits on one, but maybe I'm wrong and the game has said that?

Janine: Oh, maybe. Okay.

Austin: That is correct. You may select as many different targets as a specific weapon or effect allows. Yes, correct.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Janine: Ah, okay, okay.

Sylvia: There's a lot of Weaponmaster skills that have it, so that's why I...yeah.

Austin: Yeah. It's about hitting multiple people. Anyway, Caoimhe, you're following up. You get your turn immediately.

Sylvia: Yeah. Let me just roll this Spellsever hit. I mean, I'll just go for this turret on the left, because it's probably got the most banged up. Right? You said they didn't explode. You walked that back.

Austin: They did not explode. They both have HP left.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: Everything is in Crisis by quite a ways, so.

Sylvia: [sadly] So, I rolled a 7.

Janine: And Tiny Turret, who did not explode...

Austin: That does a 7. [Jack laughs] That does not hit, unfortunately.

Sylvia: I gotta use my Fabula Point here.

Austin: Okay. That would be our fourth Fabula Point, or...? Yeah, our fourth.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: What are you calling on?

Sylvia: This feels like... I mean, I always— I feel like I really lean on the disgruntled part of Disgruntled Hexcloak a lot lately, but maybe this is like—

Austin: Yeah. Are you moving angry style?

Keith: Well, you're more disgruntled than you are a Hexcloak.

Austin: True.

Sylvia: That's true, but I was about to say maybe this is like a Hexcloak training thing here, where it's like, we kind of talked about [**Austin:** Sure.] Caoimhe have a specific stance earlier that Maebela recognized. I think maybe there's just like something where she misses initially and then is able to have another try at it because of the specific way she swung her sword. Are we good with that? I did spend the Fabula Point before checking. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Yes. I'm good with that. You very written, "Mama might..."

Sylvia: Mama might have raised a misser.

Austin: Yeah, Mama might have raised a misser. We'll find out. You gotta have more confidence.

Sylvia: These are both, like, pretty— yeah, I know. I thought it'd be funny.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: So, I'm going to reroll both, because I got a 3 and a 2.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: And that's...

Austin: Your DEX is 10, right? Hey, there you go. There's a 12.

Sylvia: I got a 12. 11 damage.

Austin: And you do 11 dark damage, [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] unfortunately.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: They resist dark damage.

Sylvia: That does suck, but it does dispel the barrier on it.

Austin: It does do that, yes. You've dispelled [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] their barrier using your Spellsever, which is this blade that can, like, you know, it literally, in this case, dispatches the wind around them, which makes this one much, much easier to hit. And you've learned now they are resistant to both wind and dark, at least the turrets are.

Sylvia: Okay. Cool.

Austin: This turret's going to try to shoot you in the face.

Sylvia: Yeah, that makes sense. I did, you know.

Austin: It does 21 damage to you, Caoimhe.

Sylvia: Oh, I'm in Crisis! I'm so in Crisis right now.

Austin: It opens up on you instantly.

Sylvia: [sighs] You guys didn't tell me we had a gun. Oh no! My face!

Austin: I think it's just, as you slice down at it and disperse the wind, it just starts firing rapidly as it's spinning around, [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] and you happen to get caught by some of the spray, you know?

Sylvia: I'm going to take the adjective Perforated. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Austin: Take the adjective Perforated!

Sylvia: All right. I got 4 HP.

Austin: Oh my god.

Sylvia: I was 1 point away from Crisis before that hit, and then you did 21 damage to me.

Austin: It's 16 plus...

Keith: 4 is really low. I didn't know HP could get that low.

Austin: [wearily] Oh my god.

Sylvia: Fucking guy. You're not even here.

Austin: It's 15 plus the bonus from, uh...oh, right, this is—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Sorry. Wait, wait, wait. No, I'm wrong. I'm wrong. No, I'm not. I'm right. It's because of the HR + 15 thing. It's because of the HR + 15 thing. And I'm also forgetting that this is Repeating Fire, which gives it a second target... [typing]

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Austin: Which is Veile, unfortunately. [hushed] Veile also has to take 21 damage.

Ali: I have to take how many?

Austin: [hushed] 21. 21 damage.

Ali: Did you say 29?

Austin: 21. 21.

Keith: 21. Yeah.

Ali: Okay. That's why you can't whisper, because I need to actually know what the numbers are. [laughs]

Austin: Okay, 21 damage.

Ali: I have 13 HP.

Austin: Keith?

Keith: The thing that made you take half damage earlier, that was a one-time thing?

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Okay. Bummer.

Austin: All right. It is y'all. It is Veile or it is Elena, I believe.

Jack: I'm going to prep a spell, [**Austin:** Okay.] so there is no particular timing or urgency for me. Ali, if you want to go ahead, that's fine.

Ali: Yeah, I think I have to prep a heal spell, so I'm doing the thing that I described Veile doing earlier, [laughs quietly] which is completely waffling on that second thomp attack and realizing that she has to hide under this bar to cast Heal.

Austin: To cast a spell, yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: I'm going to very gently suggest that everyone also remember all of the tools in their tool belts.

Sylvia: Oh. Um... I also need to write down...

Austin: Before we commit to casting spells instead of doing other things. And this is very—

Jack: I mean, we have melee attacks?

Austin: Yep. That's true.

Sylvia: Are you trying to say Elemental Shard?

Austin: I'm trying to say Elemental Shard.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: Oh, sure.

Austin: Which is super useful.

Sylvia: That is definitely my move, now that I know my sword is also resisted.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Which you don't have to do, but [**Jack:** Yeah.] I just wanted to make sure, before we get out of this fight, that you know that that's an available thing.

Jack: No, you're absolutely right. Yeah, it's tough, because having the spells prepared is also useful.

Austin: It is.

Jack: My health is...

Austin: Yeah, your health is—

Jack: How many—?

Austin: Elena, you're in a much better place, you know? I'm thinking specifically of Veile, who is very hurt.

Ali: Yeah. Who also just saw [**Jack:** Yeah.] Caoimhe get shot in the face in front of her.

Austin: In the chest. No, no. I redescribed it. It's spinning around. Yeah.

Ali: Well, she watched Caoimhe go to 4 HP.

Austin: That is correct.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: And whatever that means in this world [Jack chuckles] is something that Veile can sense and is casting Heal.

Austin: 100%. Yes. I think that is totally right.

Ali: So that's my move.

Austin: Yep. I think that makes sense.

Art: I think in our world, you also kind of have a sense when someone goes to 4 HP.
[Austin chuckles]

Ali: Exactly.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: I think so. Can I just get a refresher on who is our most vulnerable automata?

Austin: They are all deep in Crisis, as far as you can tell. They're all in Crisis. I'd say the hawk is probably the one you know has taken the least damage.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Both turrets have taken a lot of damage. The first turret—Turret #1—just took even more, and the flower has taken a bunch.

Jack: Okay. I'm going to target the hawk with an elemental crystal, and we know that it is resistant to wind on account of how it's a magical hawk, or a mechanical hawk.

Austin: It seems like there's something, yeah, going on with them in that way.

Jack: Does anybody in the party have a strong case for what we think it might be vulnerable to, if anything? Are flying things vulnerable to earth?

Sylvia: My guess would have been bolt, because they're mechanical. Like, you overload them or something.

Jack: Oh, you shoot them out of the sky with a lightning bolt.

Sylvia: Yeah. I just don't have— I'm a lightning elf without any lightning magic, so.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: That's interesting, yeah.

Jack: Hmm. All right, let's take a punt. I am going to spend 2 IP.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I am going to, you know, rustle around in my bag for an Elemental Shard, and I think I'm also taking cover or something. You know, I'm behind, like, a booth seat. Is this a bar with booth seating?

Austin: Yeah, yeah. There's a big— oh, on top— yeah, I think so. I think, like, in the near corner or in the near wall, this kind of front wall, there's booths.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Looking out into...

Jack: Like, ducked behind the booth.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Jack: They got a jukebox?

Austin: Yeah, they got a jukebox. It's in the bottom right corner.

Jack: Wow. Excellent. And I'm going to throw—

Janine: What does the jukebox play when it gets accidentally shot by a turret that's spinning around wildly?

Austin: It was already playing, like, slow...

Jack: Oh yeah.

Austin: Like, you know, tiki bar music, like exotica, you know what I mean? Like, “island music,” as midcentury Americans would call it. But it actually turns into surf rock when one of the bullets hits it.

Janine: Oh.

Jack: Oh, in honor of Nicky’s guy.

Austin: So now there’s, like, cool surf rock guitar playing.

Jack: Okay. Elemental Shard, bolt damage.

Austin: 20 damage, because it is in fact weak to bolt.

Jack: Okay. And that did not automatically reduce my IP, so I am doing that myself.

Austin: Unfortunately, that is not enough to kill the hawk. It’s hurt really bad, but that was not enough. Like I said, that was the—

Jack: Motherfucker.

Austin: Well, I did say it was the one with the most— I did all but say it was the one with the most HP. I said it was the one you’ve done the least damage to.

Jack: Yeah, but I did double damage to it, so I was sort of hoping, but.

Austin: You did. You did. Unfortunately, I think it is going to respond in kind. You know, you throw this Elemental—

Jack: Okay.

Austin: You hide behind the thing. You fire off the Elemental Shard. It explodes in the air and zaps the hawk, and the hawk zips down and blasts at you. Your difficulty is— your Defense is 12, correct?

Jack: Yep.

Austin: There is, unfortunately, 18, plus again 5 if you do not have martial armor equipped, which I don't think you do.

Jack: So that's 23.

Austin: Yeah. Okay. This thing is a piece of shit.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: And Veile.

Ali: Yeah, I'm casting Heal. I'm getting healed up.

Austin: All right. It just does it, right? There's no actual roll for this.

Ali: No, no, no, no, yeah. It's instantaneous. It's 10 MP. I already deducted the MP.

Austin: You already did that, yeah. All right. The flower goes. Is the flower going to try to re—? No, it can't, because it's spent its spell, so it can't do that. It has to just shoot. It is going to support the hawk and try to take out Elena. Eh, I'll roll for it. I'll roll for it. I'll roll for it. I don't want to bully Elena.

Jack: Many have tried.

Austin: Many have tried.

Jack: Many have succeeded.

Austin: It's going to hit Brontë. Brontë, your Defense is 12.

Janine: 12.

Austin: Your physical Defense?

Janine: Or 13? I can't— I'm trying to find if I—

Austin: I remember that—

Janine: I have a thing that increases my Defense, but I don't...

Austin: Oh.

Janine: Yeah. As long as I have no shields and no martial armor equipped, my Defense score is increased by 1 currently.

Austin: Yeah. It misses. It fires a blast of kind of shadow-infused air at you, and it does not hit you. And then, finally, the other turret is going to go and is going to aim at the other two people, because the first one hit who? The first one hit Caoimhe and Brontë? Or was it Caoimhe and Veile?

Sylvia: Uh...

Ali: Wait, what?

Austin: I know we just did this. Who just got hit by a turret? Raise your hand if you were just hit by a turret.

Sylvia: I know I was.

Austin: I know Caoimhe.

Jack: Caoimhe.

Austin: And?

Sylvia: My very bloody hand is raised.

Austin: And then I rolled a 2. And Veile. So this is going to go for Brontë and Elena. Hope for low roll on this one.

Jack: And yet.

Austin: And yet.

Janine: Woof. [Jack groans]

Austin: Unfortunately, I think you both might be knocked out.

Jack: That's going to be 30 physical damage for me.

Austin: Wait, how's it 30? 25.

Jack: 25. Right, 25.

Austin: [sarcastic] Only 25.

Jack: Okay.

Janine: Why would that knock me—? I'm not knocked out. That's...

Austin: Oh, you're good. Great.

Janine: I'm in Crisis, but.

Austin: Okay. What's your HP at?

Janine: 36.

Austin: Oh, you're great. Okay. Elena, we've done this dance before.

Jack: Once again.

Austin: Here we are.

Keith: The dyingest person of all time.

Jack: This is a machine gun blast that just shreds a booth, this booth seating?

Austin: It completely tears apart this booth. It's so— I just want to say something. We're in, like, a really aestheticized space, and so I try, you know, the kind of genre space that we're playing in is not gritty and grim, normally. This is a gritty and grim setting, right? Version of the world. And so it's so loud when this is happening. It's so loud in here.

Jack: And dust in the air, [**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.] and, like, splinters of...

Austin: Absolutely.

Jack: Christ! [Austin sighs] “Characters who surrender fall unconscious—”

Austin: There it is.

Jack: “—become unable to act for the remainder of the scene, even if their Hit Points are restored above 0. The Game Master cannot kill a character who surrenders but may impose a narrative consequence chosen from the list below or a consequence that makes sense within the scene. If multiple characters surrender — or worse of all, if the entire group gets wiped out!” We never did a total party wipe. We got pretty close, though. I felt like one was coming.

Austin: In the very beginning, yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: You may impose separate consequences. But I don't— I was reading this and being like, okay, when a player character chooses to surrender, they immediately gain 2 Fabula Points.

Austin: There you go. So, take 2.

Jack: Yes. That is what I was looking for.

Austin: Yeah. And then you'll come back with HP equal to your Crisis in the next scene.

Jack: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Austin: And then, I gotta look through your backpack real quick.

Jack: I didn't even get to cast my beautiful spell.

Austin: Which one?

Jack: I was going to cast Glacies.

Austin: Oh, you were going to cast. Yeah, that makes sense. Gosh, I think, of these options, the options that they're giving me, right, the sample consequences of surrendering are Darkness, which is where you change your Theme. You've already done that. Your Theme is Anger now.

Jack: Yep.

Austin: Despair: The enemy gets to make a decisive move or the heroes lose faith and the approval of an important person or group. Loss: Something incredibly precious is lost, like a loved person, a magical artifact, an important heirloom is taken from you. Resentment: You are forced to erase one of your Bonds and replace it with a Bond towards a character chosen by the Game Master. It has to become hatred, inferiority, or mistrust. I'm not doing that one, I don't think, here. Or you're no longer with your allies; I don't think I'm doing that. But I am separating something. There is a loud crash in the north hall, and we'll see what's up with that later. There has been enough time for circumstances to change.

[["The Castle Eschatonica"](#) by Jack de Quidt plays]