

Credits

Timbo the Wizard as the Dungeon Master

Raichkyu as Lux

DominoRBG as Kal

Wherewolfbf as Lance Alittle

Galaxiebot as Kite in the Wind

Live Produced by **Goldmoonster**

Character Art by **UchiVsTheWorld**

Content Warnings: sound of gunshots, falling from great heights, mention of suicide missions, surreal/dreamlike situations

Tales of the Riot Nexus: Fateful Bounties

Episode 9, Part 3

[Western music begins playing]

Lux (Raichkyu): It'd be a shame if I had to kill you if you said anything.

Kal (DominoRBG): I told you about killing people, dude.

Lance (wherewolfbf): I wanna find out what's underneath that mask.

Kite (galaxiebot): I'm not wearing a mask. I have fur.

[Western music fades into the sound of two gunshots]

[Technological sounds and the sounds of a traveling spaceship begin]

Timbo: Hello, Guilders, and welcome back to Tales of the Riot Nexus! I'm Timbo the Wizard, and we're going to go ahead and just dive right on back in. So, uh, night happens— er, or as-as best it can in the Astral Sea, and, uh, the majority of the party, save for Lux, head off to their rooms. Um, Lux, we'll go ahead and start with you.

Timbo: You are piloting the, uh— you're piloting the ship when out of nowhere, like, heading on a dead-dead set course towards the— this, uh— this outpost that you have been directed towards. Um, you, at this point— it is unavoidable that—that for you to have noticed that that location is— uh, the field of a heavy— a heavy distortion in the map.

Raichkyu: Hmm.

Timbo: What does Lux think about that?

Raichkyu: A heavy distortion? Like, it's—how does it appear, and how does it feel?

Timbo: Sure. As it's— feels— It's interesting because there was all— it reminds you of another kind of distorted field in the, uh— centralized on the Founder's Ward of Respite. Um, looking at it—it— through Helm's vision, it feels like— almost like the map itself is being distorted or being twisted and pulled, or— or being bent in a direction, um, kind of like, downward, almost as if it's being pulled taut, and you see that as you are approaching it and moving away from this old spot that is kinda that level of distortion— you see that it is similar in nature to that.

Raichkyu: Okay, is it—

Timbo: ...and it feels like— on like a feeling level? It almost feels like it is pulling you in, like, like it is like, dragging you. Like, you and like, and this is— uh, go on and make me an insight check.

Raichkyu: Okay. Oh!

Timbo: Eight?

Raichkyu: Hey! Can Itzal help me? [aughes]

Timbo: Because you are locked in with Helm right now, I'm gonna say— and this is happening in his interface, like, Itzal's not— they're not aware of what's going on really right now.

Raichkyu: [laughs nervously] Itzal—

Domino: Bork!

Raichkyu: Okay, so I just got an eight then, right?

Timbo: So with the—

Domino: Itzal's taking a nap.

Timbo: [laughs]

Raichkyu: [inhales]

Timbo: Itzal like, looks up from sleep. “Berf?” And then— and goes back to sleep, as you—

Raichkyu: Itzal, help! [laughs]

Domino: [laughs]

Timbo: ...as she says, "Itzal, help!"

Raichkyu: Goddamn it! [laughs] Okay, go ahead.

Domino: [mimics] "Itzal, help." [laughs]

Timbo: You can't tell whether or not this is your desire to get to this location, your desire to fulfill the mission, or whether or not this is a desire from Helm. You feel your— almost like those feelings are intermingled as you— as you feel this pull, almost like being drawn in...to-to this spatial fold, right? Like on the map, you—

Raichkyu: Okay.

Timbo: Almost as if you want to go there.

Raichkyu: Oh.

Domino: Ooh.

Raichkyu: Lux is going to say:

Lux (Raichkyu): Helm, is-is that you or me?

Helm (Timbo): You can feel that as well? That-that dragging.

Lux (Raichkyu): Yeah, I can't— I can't tell.

Helm (Timbo): I'm unsure. It's definitely— I felt this before when we were back at Respite, the-the Founders Ward, when I was in that docking bay. It was especially strong then, the drag—the dragging sensation. It's similar to that now, here, and I remember greatly wanting to find the source of that dragging in Respite.

Timbo: And he falls f— silent.

Lux (Raichkyu): Oh. And...go on.

Helm (Timbo): It's-it's the same. I wish to-to dive in.

Lux (Raichkyu): Do you think it's related to the black hole at all?

Helm (Timbo): It's hard to say at this point. [sighs] The— This is traveling by the black hole. Maybe?

Timbo: You get, like, a non-non-vocalized shrug.

Lux (Raichkyu): Hm. Well, we're just going to have to be careful, then. I don't necessarily want you getting mixed up with where we're going.

Helm (Timbo): If it is required for me to keep the Nexus safe, then that is where we must go.

Timbo: And in that moment, you hear a *tink tink tink* on the window glass.

Raichkyu: [alarmed] On the window glass?

Timbo: Mhm.

Raichkyu: Fuck!

Domino: [laughs]

Timbo: And do you focus your attention to that spot?

Raichkyu: Yes.

Timbo: You see a little, like, folded up almost, piece of glass.

Raichkyu: A folded up piece of glass?!

Timbo: And Lux, you immediately recognize this as a calling card, one that your friend has developed...a member of the Night's Accord who goes by the name of Syn.

Domino: [laughs]

Werewolfbf: [quietly chuckles]

Timbo: It is, like, a small, little translucent shining triangle, tapping politely on the glass.

Raichkyu: [gasps] Can I see if she's around? Like, can I try to look around the— ?

Timbo: The cabin?

Raichkyu: ...use Helm to look— use Helm to look around the—

Timbo: Oh. Yeah, absolutely, you— [laughs] Sorry. Yeah, absolutely. You use Helm's vision, his greater senses to, like, expand your own vision outward. You're— and you do not detect a, uh— any other life forms out here other than the ones that you expect.

Lux (Raichkyu): Helm, I hate to do this, but I need you to stay silent. Someone...is here?

Raichkyu: She's gonna check and see, um, if there's any other vessels in the area, any other telling signs of like— I dunno, illusioned, invisible...ships.

Timbo: Sure. Go ahead and make a perception check.

Raichkyu: Okay. [pauses] Sixteen.

Timbo: Sixteen. Again, looking out, using Helm's greater sensory apparatus than your own— than your own vision, you do see that this wave of like— of sense, like, pushes out, but you do not see any additional— any hidden ships. Uh, they— you— this wave pings past the edge of Respite. You see all the regular things that you had expected, uh, but you do not see any hidden or cloaked vessels.

Raichkyu: Ugh. Do I know, like— what would have allowed her to do this?

Timbo: Sure. Um, go ahead and make me a history check at advantage.

Raichkyu: Okay. [yells] I got two! I got [laughs] nat one, twice!

Wherewolfbf: [laughs]

Domino: Oof. Oof.

Galaxie: Oh, no.

Raichkyu: I got a nat one.

Domino: One in four hundred chance.

Raichkyu: [makes a high-pitched noise] Ooh!

Timbo: Lux, you have no idea how this is possible, but you do know that your friend is exceptionally clever.

Raichkyu: [sighs]

Domino: The dice are telling a story.

Raichkyu: Yeah... She's gonna– she's gonna repeat:

Lux [Raichkyu]: Don't...say...anything.

Timbo: You get a non-vocalized “wink!”

Raichkyu: [laughs fearfully]

Domino: Winky face!

Raichkyu and Werewolf: [soft chuckling]

Lux (Raichkyu): Thank you. Um, uh, keep, uh– if you– if you feel anything I don't for some reason, just-just tell me in my– in my head or whatever.

[*Silence*]

Lux (Raichkyu): Oh, right. I told you not to respond.

Galaxie and Domino: [laughs quietly]

Lux (Raichkyu): I know you're listening though, so– okay. Okay...okay. Everything is going to be fine.

Timbo: Do you let the tapping piece of glass in?

Raichkyu: ...yes.

Timbo: Okay. It flits into the room. It is– it's quite small, about the size of your hand, but as it goes into this small opening, uh, in the– in the, uh, cockpit window, it, uh, begins to flip and unfold and become, uh, maybe not like a full length mirror, but it's about a three by three foot, uh, square, and it is like, perfectly flat and incredibly shiny, almost chrome. And the– it-it floats there, angling towards you, towards your– towards your vision, and there is, like, a moment where the, uh– this pane shines brightly like a “fushwing!” And the– and as the light comes down, you see in the reflection, uh, the face of your friend, Syn. She is in a dark environment, which is– looks kind of strange, like, kind of reflected on this highly shiny chrome surface. Um, but she's, like, kind of– it almost looks like maybe she's kind of in a closet somewhere? Not her usual, like, work station filled with all too– all kind of manner of tools and projects that she's working on. Um, it looks– it looks someplace quiet, and she goes– and, and the first thing that you note, instead of speaking to you with her usual gusto and thunderous voice, she— her voice is quiet, and she, uh– but with as much gusto as normal, she goes:

Syn (Timbo): Oh, Lux! You're– you're alive!

Lux (Raichkyu): Yeah...yes. Where are you?

Syn (Timbo): [frantic] I'm-I'm-I'm-I'm-I'm-I'm, I'm in a- I'm in a private space at the- in the Penumbra. I-I-I can't-we can't talk long, but I-I just-I-I-I had to make sure that you were- that you were alive still. I-I didn't believe what they had said.

Lux (Raichkyu): What who- what who said? What did they say?

Syn (Timbo): I-I don't know. I had heard some-some disturbing- something disturbing in the- in the mess about-about-about you being dead about- or-or you going to be dead, or somethi-something about funeral rites?

Lux (Raichkyu): [incredulous] What? No, I'm-

Syn (Timbo): I don't know, I-I-I- it-it's-it's-it's-it's gotten weird since you've- you haven't been here for-for so long. I don't know- [sighs] I don't know what's-what's going on.

Lux (Raichkyu): I'm...wait. Who told you I was dead?

Syn (Timbo): I-I don't know who said it. It was just- I-I overheard it while I was walking in the mess hall, just-just past- i-it was some of the-the higher ups table. I-I-I'm not sure who, but-but- Y-you know the ones.like...the ones like you.

Lux (Raichkyu): ...like me?

Syn (Timbo): [whispers] The assassins.

Syn (Timbo): They were- they were just talking. It-It almost seemed like a- like a joke? I...I don't know, it scared me. And so I-I know- I-I know it's against protocol but I-I had to find out.

["Rebirth of a Fallen Angel" by Philip Ayers begins to play]

Lux (Raichkyu): [sighs] Was it like...what they usually- I'm guessing it's not like what they usually do.

Syn (Timbo): It was like they knew that the funeral rights were going to happen.

Lux (Raichkyu): [shocked] What?

Syn (Timbo): I don't know, they were- they were, like, talking about-about having a grave picked out or I- or-or-or tree?

Lux (Raichkyu): Fuck... What are they-

Syn (Timbo): But you're okay, right? Y-what-

Lux (Raichkyu): Yeah. [sighs]

Timbo: And she looks, like, visibly relieved. You see a big- a big breath go out- go out from her. Um, and you see like, maybe like, even like, a few tears, like, streak down her face as she looks just so relieved that-that you are alive.

Lux (Raichkyu): Don't...cry. Did- have you heard anything from Yra?

Syn (Timbo): No, I-I-I was scared to talk. I was scared to talk to her. I-I don't know. Things-things-things have been weird since you've been gone. Yra's-Yra's different now. I-I don't know. I-I was scared to send the- send the frac to you, um, but it- I'm glad it was able to-to find you.

["Rebirth of a Fallen Angel" ends. Technological sounds resume.]

Lux (Raichkyu): Yeah. Me t-too, um...She's sending me on a- I'm heading toward a Sharran outpost. That's what Yra wanted me to do.

Timbo: I think when you say that to her, she goes like, maybe a little pale. And you see, like, the color drain from her face, and-and she says:

Syn (Timbo): Now that-that-that can't be right. They would never send a single- a single individual to take out a whole outpost. That's-that's a- that's a suicide mission.

Lux (Raichkyu): [sighs]

Syn (Timbo): There must be- there must be some mistake. Th-There must be somebody there to back you up, right?

Lux (Raichkyu): Uh...no. No. You're right.

Timbo: Syn says:

Syn (Timbo): Lux, Lux, I'm scared, I'm- I don't- I don't know if you should go through with this mission.

Lux (Raichkyu): Yra talked to me differently...last time I spoke with her, talked down to me... Do you think they're trying to kill me?

Syn (Timbo): I don't know anymore. Things- things have been different. It's- I don't know, it's- Yra has been different. It- the situation has changed, and I don't know if I think it's for the better. I-I'm concerned. I-I have to go. They're- they'll suspect me- they'll suspect something's off if I'm

gone for too long. If– uh, we-we-we– I’ll try to reach back out to you with another holofract if I can.

Lux (Raichkyu): Okay. Yeah. Do what you need to do. Thank-thank you.

Syn (Timbo): Stay safe.

Timbo: And the holofract shatters into dust.

Raichkyu: Ugh.

Timbo: All right. [laughs] We hard cut over to–

Raichkyu: [wheezes]

Timbo: We hard cut over to, uh– to Kite, who is– wh-what– Kite is asleep right now in their barracks. What does this look like-like in their– in their little room?

Galaxie: Uh, so Kite’s room is fairly bare bones in the ship. There’s like a b– just like a small, twin-sized bed and, uh, like, a little desk that’s, like, covered in parchment and ink that’s like super well organized, like all of his magic stuff is very well-organized and there’s, like, a pile of, like, clothes and his pack somewhere in, like, a corner, um, and he’s got– he’s got like, a little, stuffed, like, plushie o-or something that’s in his bed with him. That’s really the only sign of, like, a particular person living here other than, you know, like-like the parchment doesn’t have any of his name– his name or information on it. It’s all his arcane studies. Um, so, otherwise, it just looks like a very bare bones– like, almost like, dormitory room.

Timbo: Absolutely. Would we say that maybe even the stuffed animal is a– like almost a small, a small like mousy-like figure with long, like, moustachey bristles?

Galaxie: Yeah, yeah. I’d say so.

Timbo: Hell yeah. I love it.

Galaxie: [laughs] Little-little stuffed mouse.

Timbo: Beautiful. So, Kite is curled up in their bed with their-their stuffed little mouse, and Kite is– Kite is in deep, deep dreams. Um, Kite, you are o– back on the guppy farm, uh, or the guppy ranch, rather. It is– It’s like, hot like, kind of spring morning.

[*“True Stories” by Farrell Wooten begins playing*]

Timbo: Er, It feels like a hot summer eve– morning, and you are riding a horse-sized Doldrum through, like, the-the thickets and the overgrowth. Um, you are riding so fast and free, and you

are riding faster than you ever remember riding before, and you are soaring with the wind whipling through your fur. And what-what does Kal— er— what is Kite feeling in this moment as-as he is— as he's— as he's riding Doldrum.

Galaxie: I think, Kite is feeling—

[Bubbles sound effect]

Galaxie: I-I think there is— there's a definite, um, like, kind of youthful, “I'm having the time of my life” energy, like a— like a kid who's like, uh— who's maybe, like, gotten to drive a car by themselves for the first time. Um, but then, I think underneath it, there's, like, this kind of strange feeling that you know, you get sometimes in dreams where you're like “I know this can't be happening,” uh, where he's like, “This—this isn't real. This isn't a thing that's ever happened, that can happen.” So it's like, kind of like a weird underlying feeling of, like— he doesn't know it's a dream, but he definitely knows, like, something is off.

Timbo: Absolutely, and much like in a dream, as that underlying feeling— a-as you begin to realize and think of that underlying feeling, the dream shifts, and you are still riding Doldrum, but you have to— you have ridden Doldrum, uh, like, perilously close to a cliff edge...

[“True Stories” fades out. Technological sounds resume]

Timbo: ...and as you— your vision shifts kind of like blurrily, very dream like— you see the form of your brother just erupt in front of Doldrum, and Doldrum connects with him, and you— all three of you go tumbling off the side of the cliff, and you are all falling, uh, in this moment, and you are into an empty void. You are just falling, falling into blackness, and as you are falling, you hear a voice from behind you. You see your mentor. You see Kepler standing there. What do you think he says to you in this moment?

Galaxie: I think if Kepler was looking down on Kite falling, um, he would look down and say:

Kepler (Galaxie): You know how to do this. You know how to save yourself. Make the choice. It's right there.

Timbo: Amazing, and what does Kite do next?

Galaxie: I think Kite— I think— would use Chronal Shift to essentially, uh— using the mechanics of Chronal Shift to essentially, the-the-the check that— the dexterity check that he failed trying to dodge away from his brother— I think he would kind of use Chronal Shift to kind of back himself back up onto, uh, the mountain. Uh, essentially putting his body back in the period of time before he fell, um, but obviously Chronal Shift only works on a single creature, so he's only able to do this to himself.

Timbo: Absolutely. I think— I think in this dream, it happens to both you and Doldrum. You both reverse up together to the cliff's edge.

Galaxie: Yeah. Yeah, that makes sense.

Timbo: Beautiful. And you come— instead of tumbling off, you come to a skittering whoooo-screeching, a screeching stop as Doldrum— as Doldrum rears back even though they're floating, like, a good few feet off of the ground. Um, and-and you look down at, at this— at this void and you see your brother fall into darkness, and you hear the voice of Kepler say:

Kepler (Timbo): Well done.

Galaxie: Kite's just kind of panting, you know, th— brush with death, near death experience kind of feeling. Um, and he looks back towards wherever Kepler was whether— regardless of whether or not he's still there, he's like:

Kite (Galaxie): Wha— what just happened?

Timbo: As you turn your head, he is gone. He's not in that sp— position anymore. He— it's like, like— it's like he disappeared out of your blind spot.

Galaxie: I think Kite kind of sort of like, assess the situation and is trying to understand what's happening in the moment, but he's in a dream, so it's, like, not going logically for him in any way, but he's just like, "Oh, oh boy, my brother fell. Oh boy," and panicking a little bit.

Timbo: On the surface level— on the conscious, real world, we see Kite twisted up in his sheets, desperately clinging to the small mousy figure— uh, the mousy plushie. Excellent. Dom, uh— sorry, apologies— Kal, you are in a deep trance in this— in this moment. You know, not a dream state, per say, but you are— you are tapping into-to your lived experience, the lived experience of your ancestors, the greater astral elf consciousness that exists out there, um, in the space between thought and reality. And...

Domino: Mhm.

Timbo: ...you are— in this moment, I feel like— is Kal doing anything special with the egg?

Domino: Um, I think as he sits down to go into his trance, um, he-he's sitting in his room. He-he sits on the floor, and uh, as he usually does, he-he-he takes the egg out of his pack, uh, but he also has, um, the cylinder with the bullet, uh, laid out in front of him, uh, and like, as he's entering into his um, trance, he's kind of, like, picking each of them up, uh, with his psionic energy, and just kind of like, moving them about him, uh, as like a practice of— you know, uh, practicing control over his um— his, uh, psionics.

Timbo: Excellent. I love that. So, yeah, while you are mid-meditation, your eyes shut, these objects almost, like, gently orbiting about you, uh, almost as if to aid your meditation, I feel like. It's like— it's— it's both a— it's both a simple tra— like, almost like those, um, like, meditation balls that you can, like, juggle with your hand, right, like—

Domino: Mhm.

Timbo: Something-something simple to focus on that is wh— simple using psionic powers, right?

Domino: [laughs]

Timbo: ...but is also kind of meditative and-and-and relaxing. And, so— and as you are kind of m— doing this trance in this way, you feel the mental presence of the egg reach out to you and-and begin to share another vision with you. Um, it shows almost as if, like, a dog wagging its tail or like, uh, or-or something of that nature. You sh— you see just ultimate excitement and-and eagerness, um, the feeling of being on a long journey and then being on the last ride, the last car ride home, uh, the last car ride before you are home, finally.

["Floating Kite" by Tellsonic begins to play]

Timbo: And as you feel that, that sense in the vision of arriving home, you— the vision shifts to that form of the dead god that you've seen before. And you see that, um, it-it looks like it has development on it. You see there are chunks that are missing: pieces that are— that have had extra buildings and other things like docks, crafted onto them. Um, you also see that there is...lots of ships going to and fro this, and, at least at first, they look like ships, and you realize that while they initially go to and fro, these kind of strange shapes, which you realize are starlancers, are-are flowing to and fro this-this dead god, and there is a moment where you fly in, in this vision, and you see a-a mass of starlancers, all— almost like, eagerly awaiting that in the— almost in the same boat, eagerly awaiting that car ride home to be over, and to be arrived.

Domino: Um, as he witnesses this, uh, Kal, like, kind of feeling-feeling detached from himself, um, in a way that you kind of do, like, when you meditate, uh, he feels like, there's moisture, uh, on his cheeks, um, but as far as he knows, there's nothing wet around him, and if we pull out and like, we physically see him in his room, uh, there are tears forming in his eyes and starting to stream down his face, uh, because he's so close, and they're waiting, but also he remembers what happened just earlier today, when he decided to just be that little bit of selfish, and tell Kite about this, and how it all almost went away so quickly, and he feels a pang of guilt because he harbors just for a moment the thought that maybe not completing this journey would be the best for everybody involved.

Timbo: I think as you— as you are thinking that thought, your eyes closed, you hear the sound of the cylinder spinning in a revolver.

Domino: Uh, he hears this, this very familiar sound to him, and he keys in on it.

Timbo: This sound continues to happen. The cylinder continues to spin, and you realize the sound is originating from something that has come into orbit around you, has joined the onyx kankrl cylinder and the egg, and the bullet.

Domino: He's going to open his eyes to see.

Timbo: You see your gun floating in orbit around you, which now has the cylinder affixed to it. The gun opens, the bullet slides into the chamber. It closes, and it drops in front of you, almost as if waiting to be lifted.

Domino: He's reticent to reach out a hand. He-he doesn't understand what this is. He doesn't remember. He can't remember...

["Floating Kite" ends, technological sounds resume]

Domino: ...and he doesn't know what this could cause, and he's racking his brain, trying to-to find any answer, and I don't know if one comes to him, but his hand unconsciously starts reaching for his gun.

Timbo: As your fingers make contact with the hilt of the gun, you feel a zap of static electricity jolt between you.

Domino: For— once again, he lets out a-a-a a hiss of pain, uh, feels the static, like, at the base of his brain, uh, but he's starting to become accustomed to it. He-he-he accepts it, um, as he tries to, like, decipher, uh, what may be in the lines of all the mess and noise that is suddenly entering his brain.

Timbo: Beautiful. I love that. Um, with, like, this pensive thought on Kal's face, we kind of zoom out of-of his bedroom as he is looking down at his newly modified revolver. And we push on over into Lance's room. I assume we see Lance hard at work on a whiteboard.

[Silence]

Timbo: Oh, you may be whe—muted, Werewolf.

Werewolfbf: Apologies. Um, I think that that's a fair assumption. I think he's very tired, but part of that was, like—

["Duster" by [ocean jams] begins to play]

Werewolfbf: I think it was a lie when he first came up with the idea, like: "Oh, I need to go work on a formula," and then, the more he thought about it, he was like: "Actually, I do have

some thoughts,” and he’s going to, like, start writing, but it’s, like, very messy and slow, and he is tired.

Timbo: Absolutely. I think you are almost so distracted that you don’t even pick it up at first that you see— when you see a-a communique coming in through Lady.

Lance (Werewolfbf): Oh. Um, Lady, could you show me the message, please?

Timbo: Ah— Lady complies happily. Uh, uh. She begins to, uh, you know, chirp, and-and, uh, output the information and you see, um, it is basically a standard, uh— a standard data packet, right. Like, this is just, uh, almost like the monthly digest that happens from the Mandelbrot Set where it just like: “Hey, here’s what everybody is kind of doing and going on, and, you know, we just still don’t have a great way of, you know, actually getting this information out to people, but we, you know— we can use our familiars to share with us, at least, so here we are.” Um, but something is off to you. Um, go ahead and make either an Arcana check or an Investigation check.

Werewolfbf: Um, and can I do that with Lady’s help?

Timbo: Sure, yeah. Lady is definitely— like, she is like— she’s giving you the message, but she’s also got enough agency to help. Ab-absolutely.

Werewolfbf: That’s going to be a twenty-five.

Timbo: Okay, so, with a twenty-five, it is really curious to you. You start to pick up on a pattern in the data, and before you know it, you find that there is not only a pattern, but there is a message that has been encoded into this data. Um, the message re— is a pretty short clipped message, uh, to you.

Werewolfbf: Um. I’m kind of imagining it starts with a call sign. Is there, like, one that I would recognize?

Timbo: There is one, but not— it’s not one that you recognize. This is a call sign from an individual known as Polaris.

Werewolfbf: Okay. Um. Yeah, I’ll start to, I guess, decode the message.

Timbo: Yeah, and you see— you find that this message is, like, very heavily decoded— or very heavily encoded, rather.

Werewolfbf: Yeah.

Timbo: The— as you would expect from a league of, basically, like, you know, people who are entirely about information and information dissemination and stuff. They also are real into

code-cracking, and so, this is— this is a secure code that you feel like you, like, maybe you even might have missed this, like, if you had not-not been having Lady's help on this. It's-it's a pretty complex thing, so it takes you— it takes you a good hour or so to decode, but after you've done so, you find it is a short, clipped message from Polaris, looking for, for one A. Little. It says that they believe there to be a corruption element within the, uh, within the Set that may reach to the top. And Kepler— er, sorry— Pearler, rather, was unhappy with the way that things were going at the Set, hence his absence. Polaris is looking into things on the inside, but they believe that the trial that you were a part of to be indicative of greater-greater things happening. Um...That's-that's about it.

Wherewolfbf: Um. [exhales and mumbles incoherently]

Wherewolfbf: So, when the message says, "trial," is that the having to, like, the sort of court hearing I had, or like, the trial of going and getting a new energy source?

Timbo: It is referring to the, uh, the disciplinary hearing.

Wherewolfbf: Okay. Um.

["Duster" by [ocean jams] fades. Technological sounds resume]

Wherewolfbf: Would I be able to tap something back, somehow?

Timbo: Yeah, definitely. I think—

Wherewolfbf: ...or is that just kind of, uh, like, I guess this is being sent out as like a newsletter, so I don't know.

Timbo: I think that the— um, while they don't give you a direct way to contact them, they do give you, like, a, uh— a secondary source where basically, like-like old spycraft stuff, like, they tell you to post the classifieds, uh, looking— a very silly classifieds ad in order to be able to— in the daily— er, in the monthly newspaper to be like, "I get what you're saying."

Wherewolfbf: Sure. Okay. Um, let's see. I think that the message is just like, short and sweet, like, um— but I think his call sign is, um, I— [laughs] I think his call sign is Merlin.

Timbo: Fuck, yeah.

Wherewolfbf: I just think that that's what he would have chosen, um, but it's like "Merlin," uh, "message received," um, "waiting on your lead." Um, and I think he's like, kind of— that's the message and he starts to build it out into whatever this kind of cypher is, um, and it's a— [laughs] It's going to be a, like, wanted ad for, um, offering services as, like, a-a dog walker, um, who— it's all zero-grav dog-walking, so it's like, great for exercise but great on the joints. [laughs] And like, something like that, just like, a bizarre service that I might get a couple of really weird rich

people who respond, and that's funny to me, because I'd want to meet them anyway, so I think that's what I'll go with.

Timbo: I love that. Amazing. [laughs] All right, perfect. Um, other than that, though, uh, excellent— so we-we see this scene of Lance typing out this-this little classified and sending it on off. Uh, beautiful. Uh, other than that, though, the rest of the trip passes on uneventfully. If people want to take that benefit of the long rest, feel free to do so. Does anybody want to have any other little scenes as we are— as we are approaching the—the outpost?

Raichkyu: Mm.

Domino: [fake laughs]

Raichkyu: Hm. Yeah.

Domino: [fake laughs] H-wow. [laughs]

Raichkyu: Yeah.

Domino: So you're just going to choose violence on all of us like that and be like, [high-pitched voice] "All right, so anybody else want to do something?"

Wherewolfbf: [laughs]

Timbo: I'm, uh, smiling very largely right now.

Raichkyu: This is really fucking good, um—

Domino: This is great, um—