

## **Sangfielle 45: Wax, Iron, and Ichor Pt. 2**

Transcriber: robotchangeling

**Austin:** *Sangfielle* is a series that draws on elements of dark fantasy, horror, and gothic fiction. As such, a list of content warnings will always be made available in the episode description.

In the Blackwick Group's headquarters, Duvall and Es are resting and recovering, having driven the Magistrates away the night prior. But all around them, dozens if not hundreds of waxen thralls stumble around in unsettling patrol through the dirt streets and alleys of lower Blackwick. This is where we come back in. At this moment, the three of you have entered into town. You have no idea where Pickman, Marn, or Bucho are.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Can we— do you need help?

**Art:** I could probably use some medical attention. I don't remember how I'm Bleeding.

**Janine (as Es):** Well, your heart is pumping...some kind of fluid, presumably.

**Dre (as Chine):** Mm-hmm.

**Art (as Duvall):** I'm not sure about that.

**Dre (as Chine):** I can check the fluid for you.

**Art (as Duvall):** I don't know how that helps.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Did you just mean where are you bleeding from? Or did you mean—

**Art (as Duvall):** That's what I meant, yes.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Right, not, "In what manner does one such as me bleed?"

**[Music begins: "Sangfielle"]**

**Austin (as Bucho):** Are you yourself again?

**Jack (as Pickman):** Yes. I think so. I think so.

**Austin (as Bucho):** [sighs] Why the hell's...eh, where are we? Can you see?

**Jack (as Pickman):** No.

**Austin:** Marn looks bad, Pickman.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Is she dead?

**Austin (as Bucho):** No. No, not yet.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Did I hurt her?

**Austin (as Bucho):** Mm, I am not sure.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Okay. [sighs] Um...are you much of a doctor?

**Austin (as Bucho):** Heh. I can assist.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Yeah, uh huh. Same. Shape Knights.

**Austin (as Bucho):** [chuckles softly] Shape Knights.

**Art (as Duvall):** Is this...?

**Keith (as Lyke):** Yeah, yeah! Yeah.

**Art (as Duvall):** I hadn't decided what the end of that question was, so your answer is really surprising. [Art and Austin laugh]

**Keith (as Lyke):** Oh, okay. Well, yeah, ask it.

**Art (as Duvall):** Is this...is this safe?

**Keith (as Lyke):** Yeah, yeah!

**Art (as Duvall):** Is this still a secret?

**Keith (as Lyke):** No, no. Well, I mean, it hasn't— I haven't spread it around, but it's also, no, not a secret.

**Art (as Duvall):** [still doubtful] Okay. Okay. Okay. Great.

**Keith (as Lyke):** Yeah, we should, you know, make sure we're prepared to go before we go. It'll be quick.

**Art (as Duvall):** It's really dangerous there.

**Dre (as Chine):** Uh, so was when I was in prison and Marn came and got me, as did Pickman.

**Art (as Duvall):** We'll go. We'll all go right away. I promise. It's safer to go together.

**Dre (as Chine):** Okay, fine. I'll be waiting out here.

**Austin (as Alekest):** So you're a Cleaver.

**Austin:** Says Alekest, immediately just opening up small talk with you as they all go in this door.

**Dre:** Um, is the door— does the door like close behind you all or something?

**Keith:** Uh, it does, yeah.

**Dre:** Okay, cool. As soon as it closes, I'm leaving.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** [alarmed] W- wait, hey!

**Austin (as Alekest):** Come— hey, hey.

**Sylvia:** Please hold on. You are one of the like three people I know here now.

**Austin:** Um, the wax gets on you and in you, as you— it like splashes up into you, and some of it, eck, ugh, bleh. Some of it gets in your mouth.

**Keith:** Ugh.

**Dre:** Ugh.

**Austin:** And begins to run through your body. You begin very quickly to take on wax-like skin, and your own bones slowly begin getting coated. It was only a single drop, but that drop continues to spread.

**[song ends]**

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** It kind of continues to like spread outward. You've killed this person, also. You've killed this zombie, this thrall.

**Keith:** And so we don't have an answer my question, which is...

**Austin:** You do not. With a failure, you do not have an answer to your question.

**Art:** Words appearing as bruises is a...

**Austin:** It's a fun one, right?

**Keith:** What does that mean?

**Art:** Hell of a sentence.

**Keith:** Like, I try to say words and instead I am bruised?

**Austin:** No, I think it's like, on your skin, other words begin to appear.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** On your body.

**Keith:** Any in...

**Austin:** Um, and in this case, I think, you know, I think Alaway's the sort that taunts. And I think on your skin, coming through your pores, is wax that just— it's as if it's just someone has put hot wax on your skin in the shape of the words: "You're already too late." Except it's come out— it's pushed out of your skin like hair follicles.

**Keith:** Like one of those playdough heads?

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Mm-hmm. You're already too late.

**Art:** Well, that's what they'd want you to think.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Yeah, they would want that. That's true. What are y'all doing? Let's stay here for a sec.

**Keith:** [laughs softly] I wanna go and get...heal Echo, spend some money at a Haunt to heal my Echo Stress, Fallout.

**Dre:** [sighs] Um, okay. Es, do you think that you made your...your idea about like flying people up there, did you say that aloud?

**Janine:** Um, probably.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Y'all work together. Y'all do weird shit together all the time, right?

**Janine:** They've probably seen— yeah, they've probably...this is also probably like...

**Keith:** I thought we were still doing the—

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Keith:** —Hazard and the three amigos plan.

**Dre:** Right, that's just taking a lot of time.

**Keith:** We haven't even started it.

**Janine:** I do think—

**Dre:** I know.

**Janine:** I think, uh...I don't think it's feasible to fly, you know, like 10 people one by one onto a roof. Especially 'cause it will attract attention, and et cetera.

**Dre:** Sure. What if you just flew Chine and the creature up there while the three amigos plan was executed?

**Janine:** Then what?

**Dre (as Chine):** We'll approach it from two angles. [Austin laughs softly] [Sylvia laughs]

**Janine (as Es):** [sighs] I don't...

**Austin (as Alekest):** Chine, you are really determined to throw yourself at any problem that approaches you, huh?

**Austin:** Asks Alekest.

**Dre (as Chine):** Yes, because the two people in there did the same thing for me.

**Austin (as Alekest):** No, they didn't. That's not what they did. They didn't throw themselves ceaselessly and without preparation, or alone. If they did, all of you'd be dead by now. I like working with Cleavers. You're, in general, well trained, whether that training came formally or informally. But again and again, I see folks who call themselves Cleavers decide that they are the blade. The blade is a thing you hold. You let the blade get dull and broken so you don't.

**Austin:** Shakes his head and like walks over to the side of the building and looks up at the Magistrates and puts a hand up over his eyes so he can kind of block out the suns. But he's not gonna stop you, to be clear. He just had to say his piece.

**Janine:** I really just think it's a better idea to put a little bit of fire in front of the door so the wax zombies can't get close to it and then take our chances going in that way.

**Sylvia:** I'm down with that plan. I think that would work. We've already tried carving one of these people's faces open, and it didn't work out great. [Sylvia and Dre laugh]

**Art:** Weird!

**Janine:** And if we kite them around, we're just...we're just losing manpower, and I don't know that it really gets us anywhere other than two slightly smaller large groups of wax zombies. And if we can't all come in from the top, then we still need some sort of way for people to get in elsewhere, and...we got a lot of wood, we got a lot of fire. You know?

**Art:** I'm not familiar with that expression. Oh, you mean literally.

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Art:** I thought you were like speaking like a metaphorically...

**Janine:** No.

**Sylvia:** No, there's a big tree near us.

**Janine:** Uh huh.

**Art:** No, no, I know, but for some reason, 'cause it was at the end, it was "we got a lot of wood, we got a lot of fire," [Austin chuckles] I was like, yeah! like, like we got a lot of chutzpah or something.

**Ali:** True. You know, it's both.

**Austin:** It's both.

**Art:** There's Yiddish in this world. I just...

**Austin:** Uh huh. [Ali and Sylvia laugh] Love it.

**Janine:** Okay, so how about that?

**Sylvia:** I'm on board.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Okay.

**Austin:** All right. What's this look— what roll is this? What's this look like?

**Dre:** Um, well, I was gonna say, I...I would like to shapeshift

**Austin:** Mm.

**Dre:** So that I can just break limbs off easier.

**Austin:** [laughs softly] You say it like that.

**Dre:** Uh huh.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Sylvia:** You mean with the tree, right?

**Dre:** Well, and, you know, of the wax people. [Sylvia and Ali laugh]

**Austin:** Of other things that— yeah

**Sylvia:** Okay, well.

**Austin:** Uh huh, yeah. All right, well, mark D4 Stress to Echo.

**Dre:** Do you want me to roll that?

**Janine:** Oh. [laughs]

**Austin:** You still have to do that, right? Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** Major Fallout, by the way, clears both...

**Janine:** I'm a fucking fool!

**Keith:** Why?

**Dre:** Uh oh.

**Janine:** I'm so stupid.

**Keith:** Oh, you have your wax sleep move.

**Janine:** [laughs softly] I do! [Keith laughs]

**Dre:** What?

**Janine:** I do.

**Sylvia:** What?

**Janine:** I just took that thing that when I do my true form—

**Austin:** Mm.

**Janine:** —everything that sees it is stunned.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh. Yeah, Janine. Yeah.

**Ali:** Ohh.

**Janine:** Fuckin'...

**Sylvia:** Oh my god.

**Janine:** Mm-hmm. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. It's pretty useful.

**Dre:** Well, I can...

**Janine:** It's pretty useful!

**Dre:** We can both take our true forms, and it'll work out great. [Dre and Ali laugh]

**Janine:** [frustrated sigh] It's literally that— I took it and the upgrade, right?

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** [sighs] So one of it is—

**Austin:** You want to read it?

**Janine:** The first—



**Austin:** Yeah, go ahead and read it.

**Janine:** Yeah. Great and Terrible: “You unlock the power of your true form, an awe-inspiring union of magic and flesh.” We spent so long on this!

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** “You are no longer forced to assume your true form—see True Form above—when you take Major Fallout. When you choose to enter your true form, all adversaries who can see you take D4 Stress.” That’s step one. Step two, Great and Terrible, Enthrall: “When you enter your true form, you may mark D4 Stress to Echo. All who see you transform are stunned into inaction, and you have enough time to make a single action entirely unopposed.”

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Dre:** Wow.

**Sylvia:** [laughs] Ugh.

**Austin:** Ugh.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Art:** Think of how many faces you could have ripped off in that time. [Ali laughs]

**Janine:** Mm.

**Sylvia:** Whatever. That was for science. [Janine and Austin laugh]

**Keith:** It was for really bad science.

**Austin:** Classic scientist line.

**Janine:** [laughs] Ugh.

**Austin:** All right, so what do you— what’s this— what are you doing? Are you just gonna get down there and get their attention and become true form so that they all get fucking stunned?

**[0:10:04]**

**Keith:** And then we just run through as one action?

**Austin:** It’s a single unopposed action, yeah. Uh huh.

**Janine:** Yeah, I think we got— we have to—

**Art:** Well, aren't we all stunned?

**Keith:** Not if we shut our eyes.

**Janine:** I'm gonna say, like, "Don't look." Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, don't look. "All who see..."

**Art:** We're gonna— we're all gonna close our eyes and run into a building surrounded by zombies? [Ali laughs]

**Keith:** No, we close...

**Austin:** Well, it's when you enter the true form.

**Janine:** You can look after.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** Okay.

**Janine:** It's the moment of transformation, is...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Is Great and Terrible.

**Keith:** Close, transform, open, enter.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Sylvia:** It's...

**Austin:** I'm gonna do the thing that is— that is— you would guess the door is gonna be locked. So get ready to break it down or figure out another way.

**Janine:** Yeah, that's Chine time, right?

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That's Chine time. So think about that, yes. [laughs softly] Ali says Es does a Solar Flare like Tien when she transforms. [Janine laughs]

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Hell yeah. [Ali chuckles] Great move.

**Janine:** Oh, man.

**Austin:** Tien doesn't get the respect he deserves, IMO.

**Sylvia:** He doesn't. Underrated maneuver.

**Keith:** Underrated Tien. I've been saying this for years.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And also Solar Flare, uh, major move that just gets almost totally forgotten about.

**Austin:** A hundred percent. Anyway.

**Keith:** Hey, you know who's got eyes? Buu's got eyes too, you know?

**Austin:** Buu's got— [laughs quietly] Yeah. I'm always saying this. All right, so you're gonna take that D4 Stress. Do you just jump down there, Es? What's the...

**Janine:** Yeah, I—

**Austin:** Also, how do you communicate this to the group?

**Janine:** Um...I think I say like... 'cause there's also the thing of like, how does Es know she can suddenly do this?

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** I think a part of it is just that like Es has been coming into some shit. I wonder if it's— I do wonder if it's just a thing of like, she's gotten more familiar with this body and has been more able to like exert her...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Her heritrixness through...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Through it. And so she's, you know, things like...things like the scrying and stuff, she's just kind of coming into that. So I think she's, in her mind, this is like a, "I wonder if I can get away with this now. I wonder if I can do this thing that I sometimes can do." And I think, I think Es just kinda says, um...

**Janine (as Es):** I need everyone to kinda— to look away for like just a second. You'll know when it's okay to look again. Probably. Or I'll maybe just say. It's probably easier if I just say, huh?

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine (as Es):** And then, Chine, I'll need you, I think, to probably...it'd be nice to be able to close that door behind us, but one thing at a time, you know? Yeah.

**Austin:** All right, give me your— I mean, take that D4 damage to yourself. Your Echo Stress, right? Is that what it is?

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You're also gonna give them D4 damage and then stun them. This is— first one is your Stress, 'cause that's the cost. That's the trigger.

**Janine:** Yeah. Also, like, in terms of...in terms of like narrativising how this is different...

**Austin:** Yeah, I'm curious. Yeah.

**Janine:** Um, I think the form itself— 'cause there's another, there's another thing that can happen that like changes what this form looks like.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Janine:** And I don't think this is that. It says, "You unlock the power of your true form, an awe-inspiring union of magic and flesh." I think, in terms of the true form itself as we've seen it, I think the...I think the main difference is that the white eye flesh—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** —is a little bit more mother of pearl, kind of.

**Austin:** Ooh, sure.

**Janine:** There's like a, there's like a strange opalescent weirdness. Actually, opal is better than mother of pearl for that.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's fun.

**Janine:** Because opal always looks like it has bits in it.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** That the light catches, and it's a little bit like weird and disorienting to look at.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** And I think the eyelashes look kind of...I want to say they're like sort of translucent and glassy, rather than being dark and contrasty.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** Because I also do really like the idea of the like light burst being part of what's...what's disorienting here is like it's bright and there's a very horrible thing all of a sudden.

**Austin:** Yeah. All right, give me that. Okay, so you take two Echo.

**Janine:** Two Echo.

**Austin:** Two Echo. Well, let's do the damage first, and then we can do the Fallout test after.

**Janine:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** So give me D4 Stress to them.

**Janine:** [brief typing sounds] Hell yeah.

**Austin:** All right. Yeah.

**Janine:** Did those in the right order.

**Austin:** They are...they are stunned and harmed badly from this.

**Janine:** Wow.

**Austin:** They're, you know.

**Janine:** [laughs] We really, really should have just done this from start.

**Austin:** Uh, yeah, and they all back away. I will continue to give a little bit here, which is that like some of them back away very rapidly as if they are covering their eyes in a more active way. And other ones just kind of automatically back away, they don't even cover their eyes from the bright light and energy, they just kind of go [groans] and like kind of pedal backwards. Now give us your Echo Fallout test.

**Janine:** Uh...Minor Fallout.

**Austin:** Minor Fallout. I mean, what are you gonna do? This is...

**Janine:** That's a shame, 'cause I was— I wanted to do that— I wanted to finally do that move I have that lets me roll Echo stuff to do stuff.

**Austin:** Oh. [laughs softly] Ah, well. [thoughtful exhale] This is fucked up. I'm gonna give you something fucked up, Es.

**Janine:** Mm-hmm. Great.

**Austin:** Deja Vu: “You notice minor elements of your past life appearing in the Heart as though it is reading your mind and adapting itself to your expectations. The GM tells you what happens. Immediate, ongoing.” As you look at the thralls around you, they are previous hosts you had.

**Janine:** Ah, cool.

**Austin:** And this is going to carry on until you can undo this. All of them will have it, and this is going to increase the difficulty of dealing with them. Because...

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know, these are people who you presumably cared about for quite some time, you know?

**Janine:** Yeah, and that's also a full on part of the heritrix faith is that the body of the host is like...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** You know, to be preserved and respected.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. I pasted it in the chat for you to drop into your thing.

**Janine:** Cool.

**Austin:** Chine, you're up.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** What— how do you— what's your signal for it's okay to open your eyes?

**Janine:** Um, I think the immediate signal that she was like you'll recognize was that the light dims.

**Austin:** Mm, right.

**Janine:** But I think in general Es just calls for Chine to hurry.

**Austin:** All right, Chine. Give me that Delve. I think Delve Occult here.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Break down this door. Uh, Alekest is helping you, as the other big, strong character here.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Uh, shoulder down with you to try to get in. I guess we don't know if it's broken or if you've just forced it open and can kind of close it back up and...so take Mastery on this.

**Dre:** Great. Uh, Risky? Standard?

**Austin:** Um, no, they're stunned. You're unopposed. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Really the only thing you're opposed by is the door is locked, right? So.

**Dre:** There we go.

**Austin:** Oh, that's a crit. So yeah, you manage to open it in a way that will let you re-close it behind you. Right? You like...I don't know what that looks like. You push on it in a way that just, you know, clicks past the mechanism instead of breaking the mechanism. And the door is open, and the whole group can get inside and lock the door behind them. Inside, you are in a little kind of entry hall, and then past the entry hall is the large open air...or not open air, but, you know, high ceilinged kind of church floor with three altars—one in the front, one on the left, one on the right—and then a doorway, you know, towards the back right of the big room that clearly is leading down. The pews and stuff here have been pushed aside. There is wax kind of all over the place, just kind of gooey wax spread across the floor and over some pews. There are a couple of waxen thralls here, just kind of standing in the corners and like, you know, between certain pews, but you can move past them pretty well. And, and let's jump to the other side. Marn, Pickman, Bucho. How's it going in the wax room?

**Ali:** Bad, it seemed like, last time we were here. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. Mm-hmm. I think, Marn, you pick up on something, which is that some of the other people here are also pretty hurt and pretty scared. This is not a cool place to be, as you've noted.

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** But I just want to emphasize that Marn's particular history and training would...not that Pickman and Bucho aren't empathetic people, but you've dedicated your lives to different things, you know? And so I think it's pretty quick that you can tell that like, oh, this person needs their arm to be like put back in the socket, you know, their shoulder is out of place. Oh, this person is coughing and like has some sort of throat situation going on, you know?

**Ali:** Sure.

**Austin:** This baby is hungry. [Ali laughs sympathetically] Crying baby in here right now.

**Ali:** Yeah, I think that like the presence of other people is something that Marn would be, like, so focused on in that moment. Just like, part of what's creating the fear of this situation is not just like, the three of us are in this room, but like...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** The like, amount of people that there are.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** And I, you know, I think that there might be some sort of impulse there to like...small talk, or at least be like, "How long have you been here?" You know, the sort of like—

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Ali:** Make a community out of the people who are in here—

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Ali:** Instead of just like having it be like small groups in corners sort of glancing at each other. You know what I mean?

**[0:20:00]**



**Austin:** And you learn pretty quickly from talking about, talking to these people, you do get some details about that sort of stuff too. Like, on top of calming people's nerves, I think a thing you get is that like most of the people had been here for a week or two, had been kept in the first basement floor one floor above you. You're two basement floors down. The first basement floor has been turned into just sort of a mass prison of people that Alaway is turning into wax thralls. They believe that you're now on the second floor down, the second basement floor. And you were brought here overnight. So like, you weren't part of that other group at any point, the bigger group.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** But there are dozens of other people that need to be rescued. At least one person is like:

**Austin (as NPC):** Oh, my friend didn't— my friend didn't come with us down to here. I hope that they're okay.

**Austin:** It's a lot of people who are very scared. You know most of the people here from being in Blackwick, you know?

**Ali:** Oh, right. Yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** And I'm just gonna say, we don't need to do a particular roll for it, that like you're doing your best to attend to basic injuries and other stuff as you can do it. You don't look very presentable, but neither do any of these people, so, you know.

**Ali:** Oh, sure, yeah. [laughs] The idea of being respectable in this moment, when it's like people you've already introduced yourself to, sort of...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah. Y'all have any thoughts on this brick wall?

**Jack:** I think, like...I don't know, Pickman is resting next to Bucho on the wax floor against the the thing. [Austin laughs softly] And there's definitely this like, there is this look. I think Pickman gives Bucho a look, which she is not able to articulate but amounts to like...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** That was— like, the thing that happened to me was terrifying, and I know that you know that too.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jack:** But I don't think Pickman would even know how to say that. But it's just like...

**Austin:** And Bucho would need to not be in a room with 15 other people and also dripping wax to start that conversation on his part.

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** You know? So.

**Jack:** It's like coming down through the metal of the tree above.

**Austin:** Yeah. The tree's branches have begun to take on the shape of the Shape, by the way.

**Jack:** Oh, good.

**Austin:** They cross each other in the shape of the Shape. [Ali laughs softly] Put brick on my brick.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** You should figure something out. I think Bucho is like:

**Austin (as Bucho):** We have to do something, or all these people will die.

**Jack:** Uh...

**Jack (as Pickman):** We break the second door, we break... You want to try and break the second—the second wall? What is it, one row of bricks?

**Austin (as Bucho):** [sighs] Oh, the...

**Austin:** Shrug. Yeah. [laughs softly] Yeah. With a shrug, I think he's like:

**Austin (as Bucho):** Yeah, we may as well.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Be another one behind it.

**Austin (as Bucho):** [sighs]

**Jack (as Pickman):** Another set of bricks.

**Austin (as Bucho):** It's bricks all the way, isn't it?

**Jack (as Pickman):** Uh huh.

**Austin (as Bucho):** Another wall, another wall, another wall.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Okay.

**Austin (as Bucho):** [grunts as if standing up]

**Jack:** Helping each other up, like leaning on each other.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly that! [Austin, Jack, and Ali laugh] Yep. Ah, cracking the neck, cracking the back, you know?

**Jack:** All right, let's delve through this wall.

**Austin:** What are you using to do it? Is it just your—

**Jack:** My human body. Well, not human. My caprak body.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Just the armor.

**Austin:** Yeah. I think...I think that this is like, there's a— I guess there's a roll. It's a roll, is what it is.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** And it might hurt you. That's all. It might physically just be very diff— very...

**Jack:** I don't think that Pickman could—

**Austin:** So yeah.

**Jack:** I'm wearing armor. I don't have any explosives. That's sort of Marn's deal.

**Austin:** Yeah, no, I get it.

**Jack:** Sometimes you gotta try—

**Austin:** Yeah, Marn, you don't have anything about getting through a brick wall, right? Secretly?

**Ali:** Yeah, explosives have never been my deal. Um...yeah, no. I have...

**Austin:** Oh.

**Ali:** I have some Coursed crystals. I have a charged wicker finger.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Ali:** But I think that's only gonna work if like Pickman is doing a spell, which is not Pickman's...  
[laughs softly]

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jack:** I have a prayer for safety to Fulmina, which is so funny. [laughs softly] It's a D4 Religion resource, which I can't really use for anything.

**Ali:** [gasps] Okay. Now hang on, though.

**Jack:** What?

**Dre:** Mm.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Ali:** You're like, in the church of that deity.

**Austin:** You are in the church of that deity.

**Ali:** And you could be like, yo, your whole deal here is being...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Talk this through. Let's hear it.

**Jack:** Yeah. I mean, like, I'm tangentially...I'm like, I'm like the aunt of...like, what's it— I'm like a...I'm an...I would, the closest thing that Pickman would worship here would be the fiery train.  
[Ali laughs softly]

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah. Uh huh.

**Jack:** But Fulmina is kind of like the fiery train's sister.

**Ali:** Right.

**Austin:** Yeah. From your culture, too. Or not from, but that— yeah, I mean, yes, actually, that is true. She is a caprak deity.

**Jack:** Yeah. Pickman has never been much of the whole immed— well, hmm. I was about to say, never been much for the whole immediate justice thing, and then I was like, well, [Ali laughs] I bet generations of how faith works have filtered through into Pickman's conception of the world.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Even if she doesn't think she's very religious.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah, but it's just a— it's a D4 resource. What am I doing here with this, Austin? Do we just use that as a way into a roll where I make a Compel roll or something?

**Austin:** We've seen you do— yeah, it's a Compel Occult roll, right?

**Ali:** Mm.

**Jack:** Uh, it would be a...

**Austin:** Yeah. We've seen you do this with the Shape before.

**Jack:** Yes. And then I would, I would remove the prayer.

**Austin:** Yeah, you'd consume it.

**Jack:** Pickman like unfolding this tiny piece of paper in big figures, and it's just like, it's written in Caprak, I imagine, or in the Caprak script.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jack:** And just mumbles her way through this, kind of self consciously through this prayer of safety to Fulmina. This is Option A, and Option B is break down a wall with mine and Bucho's bodies. [Ali laughs] So.

**Austin:** Yeah. Are you— Marn, are you giving over this charged wicker finger as a component to this spell, as some sort of offering?

**Ali:** Yeah, I would be willing to. I'm—

**Austin:** I only raise it, 'cause that's how we— that's how— that was the thing we were talking about when you realized that, oh, wait a second, we're in a... [Ali laughs] So I didn't know if...

**Keith:** What is it charged with?

**Ali:** I got it from a cult guy? I got it— oh, I got it from a cult...

**Austin:** You got it from a cult guy.

**Ali:** Puppet master lady who was...

**Jack:** The puppet cultist.

**Austin:** The puppet master. Yeah, mm-hmm.

**Ali:** Performing a ritual before she'd like gotten the go ahead, or something? Anyway.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** I'm super willing to assist on this, because like, if it becomes like...we have Marn like talking to people, but at the point that like Pickman and Bucho are standing up to like take an action...

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Be aware of this action, be like, I can help you communicate that this is blasphemous.  
[laughs softly]

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** All right. I'd say between those two things and the help, go ahead and give me Compel Occult, uh, and— or Compel Religion, maybe? And D...

**Jack:** I would prefer Compel Occult, given that we are in an Occult domain and I don't have Religion.

**Austin:** You're also in a religious domain, and you're praying to a God. But you are in Occult domain, and that is how the rules are written, so I'll let it happen.

**Jack:** The other way to narrative this, right—

**Austin:** But you could see where I would—

**Jack:** Is that like, I burned the cards—

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** —to get Occult, so Pickman's whole spiritual—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** —frame of reference right now is within the occult.

**Austin:** Is this transactional occult thing, not a deep spiritual religious relation.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** Yeah, I gotcha.

**Jack:** Praying to a god I don't, quote, unquote, "believe" in. So this is Compel, Occult, plus one.

**Austin:** Yeah. Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Oh no! Oh, how did I do that? [Jack and Ali laugh]

**Austin:** Unbelievable roll.

**Jack:** I rolled a four.

**Austin:** You rolled a one, two, two, four. This is not even a Risky situation. This is not even a...oh, buddy. Oh, pal.

**Jack:** I'm seeing if I have any things that are like "reroll a dice," and Pickman absolutely can't do that.

**Austin:** Yeah, I don't think so. No, I don't think you have that, unfortunately for you.

**Ali:** Oh.

**Jack:** I'm all about taking the hits, and then...

**Austin:** Marn? What were you gonna say?

**Ali:** I have the— I have that move that's like, you just do a six.

**Keith:** This is very funny, because...

**Austin:** Oh, you should've done that.

**Ali:** [laughing] Should've done that.

**Keith:** Because meanwhile, meanwhile, you were talking about breaking down the door, right? You have five Blood Protection, right? [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** There's no way that door would have hurt your shoulder more than five. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Um, the...Pickman, take three, uh... [concerned sound] [Ali laughs] Take three, um...Mind, for what's about to happen. And Marn, take...also take one Mind. The clouds above rumble, and a second bolt of red lightning— and everyone feels this who's inside the church at this point. Red lightning streaks down through the sky, through the flame, and is swallowed whole by the canopy of the Shape tree, [Ali laughs] preventing it from blasting its way, blasting you free.

**Jack:** Oh my god. Oh! This is great.

**Sylvia:** Ah.

**Jack:** I have a— 'cause I have been thinking of something else here, which is that Pickman is trying to pray to Fulmina, and all she can see in her mind is the like, the awful sound and black smoke and fire of the fiery train. And it's like, even as she is—

**Austin:** Oh, the train god?

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

**Jack:** Even as she is trying to pray to Fulmina.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** It's not even like she's going, "but I'm actually...I actually support the train god," it's just like... [Austin makes amused sound] All she can think of is just the awful scream of the wheels on the brakes and the fire.

**Austin:** Give me a Fallout test, Pickman.



**Jack:** Wahoo! No Fallout.

**Austin:** No Fallout. Nice work. And then, Marn, I think you just take that hit fine, right, 'cause you have Protection? You one Mind Protection, still?

**Ali:** Oh, okay, so I don't even take the Stress. Yeah, yeah.

**[0:30:00]**

**Austin:** Yeah, you didn't even take the Stress.

**Ali:** [quietly] Wahoo.

**Austin:** Um, you, Pickman, I think with that extra little hint though, that rumble in the sky continues until you all realize that it is the sound of an approaching train. You did clear that anti-train protection from the city last session, right?

**Jack:** This is a fucking nightmare! [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Right? So.

**Jack:** This is— [laughs]

**Jack (as Pickman):** This is a fucking nightmare.

**Jack:** Says Pickman. It's just...this is like a— this is nightmarish in a very real sense. We're in a room being filled with wax with people who are, rising panic in the townsfolk as the lightning bolt hit the Shape tree. And we can hear a train coming.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack (as Pickman):** You want to try and break down—

**Ali:** Pickman, you mean you don't think this is gonna be majestic? [Austin chuckles, Jack groans, Keith and Ali laugh]

**Austin:** So, I think, I think Bucho shakes his head and says:

**Austin (as Bucho):** It's fine. It's time for Baby Blue to do work.

**Austin:** And [pats something] taps the shoulder plate of his armor. As a reminder, Bucho's armor is called Baby Blue, because it's a sick baby blue color, sort of more like a powder blue.

**Sylvia:** Not a nickname for himself? [Ali laughs under breath]

**Austin:** No, no. He has other nicknames. We know this.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** And then like points to you, Pickman, and is like, all right, let's do it. And so yeah, give me this Delve, um...this Delve plus Occult to try to break through this, uh, brick.

**Jack:** No help, no Mastery?

**Austin:** Uh, take Mastery. Take Mastery, but it's also Risky. So this is a double...it is a double dip. To try to run your fucking shoulder right into a...

**Jack:** Brick wall.

**Austin:** A brick wall over and over again until it breaks open?

**Jack:** This is like those, um...those great videos of people making mochi and timing the hammer strikes, where I don't think we're charging it at the same time.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** I think we're just like...

**Austin:** Yeah, you're trading off.

**Jack:** Yeah. But let's see how it goes.

**Austin:** Boom! Chh. Boom! Chh. Yeah.

**Jack:** Yes! Beautiful!

**Austin:** Hey, an eight.

**Jack:** Success, take no Stress.

**Austin:** Full success.

**Jack:** I lost a 10, but, you know.

**Austin:** You did. Um, the rocks do begin— or the bricks begin to, you know, wiggle free. Like I said, it was hastily done. It just, it is also a brick wall. And you begin to push your way through.

Let's come back upstairs to the group who is looking for you. How's your journey going? Have you already begun moving downstairs? Have you begun looking elsewhere?

**Sylvia:** I mean, I'm down to go downstairs.

**Keith:** Yeah, unless there's anything in the way, I'm gonna go downstairs.

**Austin:** Again, there are other thralls around. There are probably other rooms up here, in terms of there being like, you know, the kind of side rooms near the various altars. There are definitely, you know, stairs up to a higher level. So it's like, you could fuck around up here. But you're pretty sure your friends aren't just like up in the balcony, [laughs softly] looking down, you know?

**Keith:** Fair, yeah.

**Austin:** As you move down the stairwell, the first— your first level that you come down to is a...is like locked under lock and key but then also very clearly barricaded shut. We know that this is the level in which more prisoners have been kept. Uh, I guess we don't know for sure that there are other prisoners. Oh, yes, we do, 'cause the one person said that their friend was still up there. So we know at least some prisoners are still behind that door. You don't necessarily know if your friends are there or not. Do you try to open this door? Do you keep on moving? What do you do?

**Keith:** I think we gotta check if we don't know.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. I suspect this door is actually just openable. You move the blockades away.

**Keith:** Mm.

**Austin:** The barricades away, rather, and unlock the door. Like, it locks on this side.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know what I mean? So you don't have to like do a roll to unlock this. And you, um...inside is a large storage room, and the storage room has basically been converted to a really bad prison. And I'd say there are like two or three dozen other people in here, who like peel away from the area where the door is to the back wall in fear, as you open it and the light streams in.

**Keith:** Well, I mean, I want to assure them that we're there to help but that it's also, it's not safe to go yet. Right? 'Cause we didn't clear the door, we just...

**Austin:** No, you did not clear the door.

**Keith:** Yeah. So stick...

**Austin (as prisoner):** Can we— [sighs]

**Janine:** It's fair to let them leave the room. I can imagine they might not want to...as long as they stay in the building, right?

**Keith:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin (as prisoner):** [frightened] Did you take care of the guard?

**Keith (as Lyke):** The guard? [muffled laugh from someone]

**Austin (as prisoner):** The guard.

**Keith (as Lyke):** No.

**Austin:** Stomp, stomp, stomp. [Keith laughs]

**Janine:** Okay.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** Oh, gosh.

**Keith:** Great.

**Janine:** Well...

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Someone is coming up the stairs.

**Janine:** All right, let's take care of the guard.

**Sylvia:** I am pulling out my gun.

**Dre:** I am transforming into a weird rat shrew.

**Austin:** I thought you already did that. Remember, on the way in. You're good.

**Dre:** Oh, I need to roll my Echo.

**Art:** [mimicking others' cadence] I am full of bees.

**Austin:** Oh, you should do that. [laughs softly] You're full of bees still. Yeah, do that Echo.

**Dre:** One. Okay, that's not bad.

**Austin:** Hey, you're good. That's, yeah, eat that easy. Yeah, coming up the stairs is...you remember the goats? Remember the goats?

**Jack:** Oh, these guys!

**Austin:** One of them is coming up the stairs. You dealt with them, if I recall correctly, right? You more or less— I think a train actually hit like a big amalgam of two of them. But they...do you remember, like, it was, uh...it was Eyes, Ears, and Mouth, right?

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** One of those see no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil situation. And you dealt— I believe you dealt with— you dealt with them. The being coming up the stairs is, at first glance at least, not made of wax, but is made of a sort of...or it looks like maybe there was a wax foundation that was then covered in dripping liquid metal that hardened. And instead of one goat head, it's three goat heads, one facing each direction, missing the appropriate part of their face. So there is, uh, there is one without a mouth. There is one— it feels like these were broken off. One without a mouth, one with missing eyes, and one with no ears. And it's just one head facing the three— but facing forward, left, and right. And this thing is covered in this kind of dripped, you know, metal, this hardened liquid metal, and holding a big ax, climbing the stairs, this kind of twisty clock, you know, uh, or not clockwork. Uh, what do you call that? The sort of stairs that twist around?

**Jack:** Spiral.

**Austin:** There's a specific word for that.

**Dre:** Spiral.

**Sylvia:** Spiral?

**Keith:** Spiral staircase?

**Austin:** Spiral staircase. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh, kind of stomping up it towards you. There's not a lot of room to work with, with the staircase.

**Keith:** Um, I have a quick question.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Keith:** Uh, is it possible that I intentionally got rid of my gun to heal at some point? Or did I—

**Sylvia:** I believe you did do that, yeah. 'Cause we were—

**Keith:** Okay. At the train?

**Sylvia:** I was sad about no longer being gun twins.

**Austin:** Yeah, you weren't gun twins anymore.

**Keith:** Right. Okay. 'Cause I was like, I don't have my gun.

**Sylvia:** Which we wouldn't be anyway, 'cause now my gun's fucked up. But, you know.

**Keith:** Right. Okay.

**Sylvia:** Yeah. Didn't I give— did I give you the good knife or did I give that to Chine?

**Jack:** I think you gave me...

**Keith:** Uh, Chine. I have a good—

**Jack:** Oh, Virtue gave me a knife.

**Keith:** I have an almost equally good knife.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I— Virtue gave you. [Ali laughs] I, Sylvi, gave you that, but not I, Hazard.

**Austin:** God, I would...I would love like a contemporary data journalism animatic of like graph of resources going into each person and then going between people and then getting used up and like what that looks like in like— you know what I mean? Like a...

**Jack:** All the ones highlighted green have been eaten. [Dre, Sylvia, and Keith laugh]

**Austin:** Right, right, right. Exactly. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh huh.

**Keith:** I will say this is definitely the most trade-y season we've ever done.

**Austin:** Oh, easy.

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Easy, a hundred percent.

**Sylvia:** That's 'cause this game's very heavy on resource management.

**Austin:** It is. It is.

**Keith:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Austin:** Anyway, yeah, you don't have that gun anymore, 'cause you ate it or whatever.

**Keith:** That's okay, because I can— I have a long ranged unarmed attack now.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Keith:** And I also have my good, um...Good knife.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Art:** Um... [pause] No, I'm good.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Sylvia:** Okay. [Janine makes amused sound]

**Art:** Um, I was...I want to cast Unchaos at some point, but I should wait to clear my Ringing Head before I do it.

**Austin:** You should do something else first. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I see. Well, this creature is climbing up at you as we speak.

**Dre:** Cool.

**Janine:** Yeah, Hazard, uh...who else wants to...who else wants to— I'm happy to jump in here as well.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I'm ready. I was gonna use, um...

**Austin:** So, I'm gonna say something.

**Sylvia:** Hmm?

**Austin:** You cannot help each other on this stairwell.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** It's too cramped.

**Sylvia:** Oh, that's actually a question worth asking. Is it too cramped for me to fire my gun in here?

**Austin:** You could fire your gun, but you...it's, you don't have the safety of range.

**Sylvia:** That's fine.

**Austin:** You're in melee. Do you know what I mean?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So.

**Sylvia:** Um, can I take my D4 Blood Stress to roll with Mastery using that?

**Austin:** Oh, yeah. So you're gonna open up by like pointing down here and— I guess you've said this before. Hazard's ready to like show off, right?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You're trying— so, yeah. I'm gonna let—

**Sylvia:** Also, like...

**Austin:** I want Hazard— yeah.

**Sylvia:** I want to make it like...this is also a conscious choice of me being like, Hazard does not show that they are like a capable killer enough, and that is a thing I want to communicate.

**Austin:** I love this. Yeah, absolutely.

**Keith:** Is this your— this is like your job application for Blackwick Group? [Ali laughs softly]

**Sylvia:** Little bit. Little bit.

**Austin:** Little bit, little bit.

**Sylvia:** Also me just being like, please take me seriously about my revenge plot.

**Austin:** Yeah.



**Sylvia:** I am not just a silly little guy.

**[0:40:00]**

**Janine:** Aw.

**Austin:** [sympathetic] Mm.

**Sylvia:** So, yeah.

**Keith:** This is what all serious people worry about, is being... [laughs softly]

**Sylvia:** Yeah. Anyway, I don't take any Blood Stress.

**Austin:** Oh, what's that from?

**Keith:** That's good.

**Austin:** What's the—

**Sylvia:** That's from activating Bloodbound.

**Austin:** Oh, oh, oh.

**Sylvia:** Which lets me roll with Mastery for, um...

**Austin:** In exchange for one D4 Blood.

**Sylvia:** Yeah,

**Austin:** Damage, but you...

**Sylvia:** I just want to make sure the length on it real quick.

**Austin:** I think it's the situation.

**Sylvia:** I think it's the situation as well, yeah.

**Austin:** But I'll check. I'll check the tags page. Mark D4 Stress to Blood—

**Sylvia:** Yep.

**Austin:** —to roll with Mastery for the rest of the situation. Yep, you got it, and you have one Blood Protection, so that means you get Mastery with this gun for the rest— er, it's a gun, right?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, it's a gun.

**Austin:** The rest of this situation.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** All right.

**Sylvia:** I'm ready to shoot this guy.

**Austin:** This is Kill Occult, for sure.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** Or Religion.

**Sylvia:** Uh, Kill...I got Occult, so.

**Austin:** Uh, this is Risky.

**Sylvia:** Okay. Risky, and I have Mastery. [disappointed sound] Success at a cost.

**Austin:** That's a success at a cost. Listen, there are worse things than...I mean, let's see what the damage is real quick. Uh, this thing does...

**Sylvia:** I'm wonder— okay, now I kind of wanted to use a move that I haven't done before, that might backfire, but it is cool.

**Austin:** Oh. Okay.

**Sylvia:** So my Calling move, No Relish in Salvation, is—

**Austin:** Mm.

**Sylvia:** Once per session, after you successfully hit but before you roll damage, increase your damage dice one step.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Sylvia:** Which would make this a D10, right? 'Cause it's a D8.

**Austin:** This would make it a D10, if it's a D8 now. Yeah, absolutely.

**Sylvia:** Okay, so I'm gonna roll damage on this, and then I'll roll...

**Austin:** And then you'll roll, you'll take this D8 damage back at you. Yeah.

**Sylvia:** That's a two.

**Jack:** Ah.

**Austin:** Oh my god, it's a two. That's a two.

**Sylvia:** The gun does like some like transformation thing to show that it's going to shoot more, and then it just does normal. [Ali and Jack laugh]

**Austin:** And then it goes...and then it goes *ping!* as it bounces off the armored, the metal, the dripping metal on this body. And then this large three-faced goat construct swings its huge ax at you.

**Sylvia:** Aah! [typing sounds] Okay.

**Austin:** Hey, take four— oh, wait, sorry. It's, uh, it's Brutal. I forgot that it was Brutal.

**Sylvia:** [apprehensive sound]

**Austin:** So it's two D4, or two D8, take highest, right? That's how Brutal works?

**Sylvia:** I believe so, yeah.

**Austin:** All right, well, take four.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** That second one was only a three. But it is Piercing.

**Sylvia:** Oh, it's Piercing, so the Protection doesn't matter?

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Okay, cool. So that's five total...ah. I took a Minor Fallout. I rolled a five.

**Austin:** This is Blood. This is Blood.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** To be clear. Uh, take Bleeding. It cuts you deep in a way that makes you feel like...you know, if I was writing just prose about this in like a horror or adventure story of a pulp or something, it would be about you recognizing something is true about metal that you didn't know was true. Like, this is sharp in a way nothing has ever felt sharp to you before.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** There is something special about the metal that this thing's weapon and that its body are covered with. And it keeps stomping up towards y'all in this very cramped space.

**Sylvia (as Hazard):** Okay, well, does somebody else want to take a shot at it? No— no pun intended. [Janine makes amused sound]

**Art:** I would like to bees it.

**Dre:** [singing] Bees it! [Keith laughs]

**Art:** I would like to do bees to it.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Art:** I would like to Release the Swarm.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Art:** Using...using Hunt.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yep.

**Art:** And, uh...what'd we say? Occult, right?

**Austin:** Hunt Occult would work, yeah. Sure.

**Sylvia:** It was Occult or Religion, I think was the other one, right?

**Austin:** Yes, that is correct. 'Cause you're in a church, yeah.

**Art:** And it is Risky for me.

**Austin:** It is Risky, correct.

**Art:** It still counts even though it's inherently Risky, right? Just says the next thing you...

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, uh huh. I believe so. I don't think that it stacks. I think it stays at Risky. I guess I should look it up, but I think we'll just roll with it. Hey, that's a nine. Take no Stress. I love that for you.

**Art:** And get the fuck out of here, Ringing Head.

**Austin:** [amused] Uh huh.

**Art:** All the ringing bees went. And then it's, uh, Kill D4, Spread, Ranged.

**Austin:** Uh huh. Give me that D4.

**Art:** Um...two!

**Austin:** And like the bullet— I mean, these don't ping off. Instead, as they try to— what do they try to do? Do they try to like bite? Is that what they're doing?

**Art:** Um, I guess, or like sting.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** It's a...it's a variety of insects.

**Austin:** It's a variety of— yeah, sure.

**Art:** And so it's a variety of approaches.

**Austin:** I mean, the first time one of them breaks skin, blood, you know, comes out, but the blood is very clearly extremely hot liquid, liquid metal. Red, molten metal, and it burns them, and you've done no damage. This thing has two Protection. With two exact two damages, I can tell you outright it has two Protection. Chine, you smell the smell again, when the blood comes out.

**Dre:** Hmm.

**Keith:** What was the smell? Tell me the smell again?

**Austin:** It's the smell that Chine recognizes but can't place, because Chine hasn't done a Discern yet.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Dre:** Um, I'm gonna roll my Blood Stress to activate Bloodbound.

**Austin:** Uh huh. I just want to say again: if you continue fighting in this space, you cannot help each other.

**Dre:** Sure.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Sylvia:** We're all very stupid people.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** I'm smart.

**Dre:** Are we still Tier Two, by the way?

**Austin:** Uh, we are still Tier Two, yes.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Up here.

**Dre:** I'm gonna take two Blood Stress, and I guess I need to roll Fallout, right?

**Austin:** You do need to roll a Fallout now, yeah.

**Keith:** Lyke is smart, and he knows that one—

**Austin:** Minor.

**Keith:** It should be one more knife stab should be enough to not just plink off. It'll break through, finally.

**Austin:** It'll break through, obviously. That's how that works.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** Everyone else loosened the top.

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And now I'm gonna pop it off.

**Austin:** This is a Minor Fallout is what just happened.

**Dre:** Uh huh.

**Austin:** Is that what happened, Dre?

**Dre:** Yep.

**Austin:** Oh my fucking god. Why are y'all...

**Keith:** Dre, what were you rolling to do?

**Dre:** Uh, well, I have to roll Blood Stress to activate the Bloodbound tag on my attacks.

**Keith:** Gotcha.

**Austin:** And can you remind people what Bloodbound does?

**Dre:** Uh huh.

**Austin:** I know we actually just did this actually, didn't we?

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

**Austin:** With...with, uh, Hazard. I almost said Virtue, apologies.

**Sylvia:** [laughs] It's fine.

**Austin:** You know, I think that this is just appropriate for the way you're acting. I think you're Furious: "You're hurt, short-tempered, and perceive slights everywhere. You cannot help another character by adding dice to their roll."

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** You're just like, you stab into yourself here to get that blood going or whatever for this thing.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** And it's just like, this should be done by now. You should have already dealt with this.

**Dre:** Yep.

**Austin:** You know? But you get your Blood, you get your, uh, your Bloodbound tag. Make sure you clear that Blood Stress.

**Dre:** Cleared.

**Keith:** Major Fallout clears all Stress, right?

**Austin:** Major Fallout clears all Stress, correct.

**Keith:** Okay, so I no longer have my Mind Mastery.

**Austin:** Right. I forgot about that. I forgot that you had Major Stress. And give me this...give me this attack.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** I guess.

**Dre:** So I'm gonna roll Kill Occult?

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Dre:** Get Mastery.

**Austin:** Is this you're attacking with your big, uh...

**Dre:** No, I'm unarmed.

**Austin:** Oh, you're unarmed.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Dre:** Because when I shapeshift, my unarmed attacks get Piercing.

**Austin:** Right. Yes, good, useful.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm. Uh, da da da da...I guess I'll go ahead and do Pounce too.

**Austin:** Yeah, you may as well. That will not have Piercing on it.



**Dre:** That's fine.

**Austin:** That's a different damage.

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

**Austin:** So it doesn't get all added up, but.

**Dre:** Um, I'll do my roll first, and then we can do the Pounce.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Dre:** So Kill Occult with Mastery, uh...

**Austin:** And Risky.

**Dre:** Risky, yep.

**Austin:** All right, success at a cost. Take Stress.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Give me your damage. I guess I'll do my damage first here.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Which, uh...that is two, but it's Piercing.

**Dre:** Okay. So that goes through even my...

**Austin:** Uh, it's Blood. Goes through...yeah, a hundred percent.

**Dre:** Okay. Gotcha.

**Austin:** Yeah. As it swings its ax down at you, as you try to come in at it unarmed, it's like, all right, I'm just gonna keep swinging. Like, even if you hit me a little bit, I'm going to hit you, 'cause you don't have a weapon up to defend.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So go ahead and do your, uh, I think your default, unless you have something special. You didn't have like...you don't have like the claws or whatever, right?

**Dre:** No, I just do D4.

**Austin:** Yeah, so you're just— I mean, you're clawing at it, presumably.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** You're biting or something. You tell me. What's it look like?

**Dre:** Uh, all the above.

**Austin:** Okay. Just scratchin' and clawin' at this thing.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Give me your D4 damage.

**Dre:** And I do get Brutal, so I get to roll twice. Oh, well.

**Austin:** That's, well, there's a four.

**Dre:** Okay, four. I can't do better than that.

**Austin:** So it's gonna be a four. That gets through. And the blood, the that— actually, like, that's part of what's done this damage to you, is its hot blood has, you know, burned your tongue and your mouth as you take a big bite.

**Dre:** Eh.

**Austin:** Give me the creature's attack.

**Keith:** And that was Piercing, Dre?

**Dre:** Woof.

**Austin:** That was Piercing. Oh, yeah, the one doesn't get through.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** But the Piercing does. Hey, people downstairs, you can hear, now that you've opened the hallway. [quiet laughter] I guess I'll give you a little space. One, you opened the gate down there. You've opened the door. Everyone has popped successfully out of the...the furnace room, the big room that you were in that was filling up with wax.

**Keith:** Into the fire room.

**Austin:** Yeah. Out of the fire room and into a hallway. The hallway runs to your left and to your right. To your right, there is another doorway. There's actually two doorways to your right, and there's one doorway to your left, is what I will say. One of the doorways to your right is like another side room like yours. I'm gonna pull you over to a map in just a second. I just have to move some shit around on this map, because of the way you've come in here. Do you know what I mean? So, give me a second here. Yeah, turn on... [jokingly reluctant] turn on fog of war, I guess. [Dre laughs] Reveal areas. Okay.

**Jack:** [same tone] Reveal areas, but only partially, I guess.

**Austin:** But only a little bit. Yeah, uh huh.

**Jack:** If I have to.

**Austin:** Here we go. I'll move you all over here.

[0:50:00]

**Dre:** Austin, I did forget.

**Austin:** Boom.

**Dre:** Something bad happens to me.

**Austin:** Oh, did you get a Minor? You got a Minor Fallout, didn't you?

**Dre:** No. Mm-mm. No.

**Austin:** Oh. What happened?

**Dre:** Actually, I still haven't rolled my Fallout. But also, when I do maximum damage with my hands 'cause they're Weird, I have to roll one D6 Blood Stress.

**Austin:** Oh my god, Dre. [laughs]

**Dre:** Or, no, Echo Stress. Sorry.

**Austin:** Echo Stress. Okay, sure.

**Dre:** It's fine. Okay, I don't take anything.

**Austin:** Is that a two? You're fine. You're good. You're good. You're good.

**Dre:** Uh, let me roll my Fallout test, though.

**Austin:** Yes. Agreed.

**Dre:** Oh, hell yeah! Let's go! [Sylvia, Keith, and Jack laugh]

**Austin:** Fucking...what is happening?

**Sylvia:** Wait, that's like the third time this session someone's rolled the exact number, right?

**Dre:** Uh huh. Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah. It's happening right now.

**Sylvia:** I did it. Lye did it.

**Austin:** Why is it?

**Dre:** I clear all Stress, right?

**Jack:** Mm-hmm. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, on a Major, yeah. That was Major...

**Keith:** Ooh, shoutout to Major Fallout right now!

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** [groans] Normally, I don't...I don't like to shout out the military, but shoutouts to Major Fallout. [Sylvia and Keith laugh]

**Ali:** Wow.

**Dre:** A real one, you know?

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Goddamnit.

**Keith:** Hey, there's— we can— there's a world in which Dre had so much Stress that maybe a Major Fallout in exchange for all the Stress is okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, you know what? You're not wrong.

**Dre:** I didn't have *that* much Stress.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh...

**Keith:** Oh, I guess you only had seven.

**Austin:** "Your eyes become wide black orbs. Or perhaps you find more eyes blossoming on your body, growing in your sternum like a nest of spiders. You can see perfectly well in the dark, but lights dazzle and hurt you. The GM can call for an Endure check when you enter a well lit area, and you take Stress on a failure or partial success. Ongoing."

**Sylvia:** Oh, that's a fun one. I've had that one.

**Austin:** Yeah. Mm-hmm.

**Art:** Hey, it's a moment that was in the content warning.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** [laughs] Ahh. What's this look like, Dre?

**Dre:** Ah...I'm waiting for you to...

**Austin:** Do you get more eyes?

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Do you get big black orbs? Do you get...?

**Dre:** Oh, I think it's big black orbs. I think it's...

**Austin:** Yeah, okay.

**Dre:** I mean, it's the...I already have Darkling Eyes, right? I think it's just...

**Austin:** Right.

**Dre:** It is the continuation of like, Chine going full, like...ah, bloodlust is probably the right term for it, right? Just like...

**Austin:** Sure.

**Dre:** Fully getting lost in this fight.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah. Which, again, is bad, because you don't have the room to do a fight in right here. Let's go back downstairs. Hey, you've made it out of this furnace room. You can now see this. I moved you over to the right map, right?

**Jack:** Mm-hmm.

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yes, okay. So you can see the basic layout here. There's kind of a long hallway going east to west. There are doors on the west and east halls. There is a door on the southern wall that goes into the room that y'all were in, the big wax room, and then there's another smaller door on the northern wall, a little ways away. Everybody moves out of that room immediately and begins to spread out. And like, people are thanking you, et cetera.

**Jack:** We were in what was marked here as Furnace Room?

**Austin:** Yeah. Yep.

**Jack:** Yeah. Okay.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Um, all right. Before we do anything, I would like to try and get some order or temporary control over these frightened people.

**Austin:** How are you doing it? What's this look like?

**Jack:** I think this is like Shape Knight Compel.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Jack:** Um, this is Compel Haven?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** I don't have Haven.

**Austin:** They are Haven people.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Uh, you could use Occult or Religion, 'cause this is an Occult slash Religion place.

**Jack:** Yeah. Yeah, that's a— yeah. Oh, also, real quick. Now that I've moved out of the room with the Shape tree.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Thanks, Shape tree.

**Austin:** Thanks Shape tree.

**Jack:** Uh, I no longer have Mend, right?

**Austin:** Uh, no. No, no, no.

**Jack:** The way I keep thinking of it was when—

**Austin:** You only had Mend for that one roll. Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah. Okay. Goodbye.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Um, Marn, would you be up for...since you were having these conversations with them.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Would you be up for helping with this?

**Ali:** I was just about to say this would be an easy assist, especially since I have the Haven domain, and like...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Ali:** It's as simple as Marn just like clapping and being like, "Hey." [laughs]

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Ali:** And then Pickman can start just saying, you know, whatever.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Ali:** Whether or not the speech is convincing is on Pickman.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** Oh, great.

**Austin:** What's the speech?

**Jack:** We're asking Pickman to speak nicely. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** All right. I mean, I can elide it into narration, but it's basically something like:

**Jack (as Pickman):** Everybody listen up. We're gonna try and do our best to keep you safe, but that's contingent—

**Jack:** Pickman wouldn't say contingent. [Austin laughs]

**Jack (as Pickman):** But you need to listen to us. Follow behind. Move as little as you have to. Listen closely to the other Shape Knight, the Keen, and myself.

**Austin:** Give me the roll. This is Standard.

**Jack:** This is Compel, Occult, plus one.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Nine!

**Jack:** Oh! Lovely. Nine.

**Ali:** [quietly] Yay.

**Austin:** Big success. Everyone— you can feel the ease move into people's bodies. You can feel them starting to relax. The baby stops crying. The folks who were last in there, you know, are able to get out safely. And there were people who were like, "I don't want to leave. What if I leave and it's worse out there?" you know? And what I'll say is one person does come over, a little kid comes over and like pulls on your...you don't have a sleeve, Pickman, but you know, your armor or whatever, and says:

**Austin (as kid):** Uh, Miss Shape Knight, there's...something's...you should come over here and look.

**Austin:** And like draws you over towards the western, the western door here.



**Jack:** Yeah, I mean, let's go. This is like very wary, very sort of suspicious looks back at Bucho and Marn.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh. Outside— or, sorry, they lead you to this door. This door has like iron— it has like a window with iron bars over it, like a prison door might. You know what I mean? Like a head level window, no glass, just an opening that has the iron bars on it. And through those iron bars, red light is streaming through. And outside, you can make out an open air bridge.

**Jack:** What? Huh.

**Austin:** That goes, uh, 50 yards in the other direction and is raised up over a long river of molten red metal, which you haven't seen before, 'cause you went to Bell Metal Station. But the party, uh, Chine, Marn, you will have seen this when you went down to Yellowfield. You briefly crossed this river further up in the mountains, much higher up in the mountains, on your journey southward. It ran underground as it does here. And in fact, this is a massive cavern, Pickman, that you can see without even opening the door, that runs from the mountains down towards that big lake, the big kind of crescent lake to the east of...

**Jack:** Oh, where the skeletons live?

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, totally. It's running that direction. And in the...even from this distance...it takes you a second, 'cause you just think that it has a weird texture, that the river has a strange texture to it. But then you see a bureau bouncing up and down in the molten metal. Objects are just in this metal, the same way that they're in— in this molten river in the same way that they are in the caves and mines of Blackwick. They seemingly get generated inside the river and then bounce up and down and, you know, come into and out of existence as your eyes follow them. Strange things you've never seen before, you know, pop up and down in there. I think there's a boat in there briefly. It pops up and then disappears. [someone laughs softly] And then, at the far other end, there is another brick structure. Uh, this map is facing the wrong way. I was saying east and west before, but that is south. And I think it takes you a second to like put it together, but you're starting to think that this building connects to the Boundless Conclave's building, that that other brick wall across that bridge is the Boundless Conclave's lower basement.

**Jack:** Like there's a...in the same way that like office buildings might have a bridge that connects them over the street?

**Austin:** Possibly. That's possibly.

**Jack:** There is an underground bridge linking these two temples?

**Austin:** Uh huh. Um, it is fair to start wondering: is it two temples? Or was this here before?

**Jack:** Mm.

**Austin:** Was this a single structure at one point? There are some objects on the bridge about halfway across, over the where the, um...or there's one object, one big rectangular object at this point. It looked like an altar from this distance, something like that. Anyway, the kid runs back to their parents, and the rest of everyone is looking to Marn and Bucho and you for guidance. Again, there's a door on the other side, and there is, uh, there are two other doors here that you haven't investigated.

**Ali:** Um...

**Austin:** Marn, you had something?

**Ali:** Yeah, I just wanted to ask quickly, like, being outside of the furnace room and like looking back at the wax into it.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Is there anything like noticeable? I think the reason it's a concern for me is that like, the Alaway wax figure had like the faces and stuff in it.

**Austin:** Yeah. No, I think that you are...there...there's an...like, I think that you, being particularly keyed in with that, start to think like, where the fuck is Alaway?

**Jack:** Mm.

**Austin:** Because the Alaway you know would have come to taunt you specifically for having gotten one over on you. You know what I mean?

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** So.

**Jack:** What, and it seems like...it seems like they didn't when they were in the body of Pickman? 'Cause we—

**Austin:** I guess they—

**Jack:** We skipped ahead.

**Austin:** We did— no, no. Yeah, that was it. That was, there was...we skipped ahead, and what we skipped was...I mean, Marn was already dying. I think Bucho gets— or was Downed. Bucho gets knocked out, kidnapped, and tossed in here.

**[1:00:00]**

**Jack:** And Alway leaves possessing Pickman's body.

**Austin:** Once—

**Jack:** And is now...hmm.

**Austin:** Off somewhere else. Somewhere where the one piece of taunting we've seen is they said to Lyke, "You're already too late."

**Ali:** Right, yeah.

**Austin:** Also, the three of you really pick up the sounds of fighting [Ali laughs] coming from this right, this wall over here.

**Sylvia:** A lot of pinging.

**Austin:** A lot of pinging, yes. [Ali laughs]

**Sylvia:** A lot of noises of things bouncing off of armor.

**Austin:** Yes. Yes. Yes.

**Sylvia:** A lot of, "Ah, shit."

**Austin:** Uh huh. [Jack laughs]

**Ali:** Okay, cool.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. I'm trying to find a compass to put on this fucking map to make it clearer what directions are what, but it's fine.

**Ali:** Just draw like a plus and then a...

**Austin:** I recently bought a bunch of cool stuff for literally a table.

**Ali:** I'm sorry to say, but you put south on the wrong side. [Ali and Jack laugh]

**Austin:** Well, listen. I'm gonna put this cool— one second, I'm gonna put this cool candle on here now. I got plans.

**Jack:** He got so excited about putting a compass on that he forgot it had to face a specific direction. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh. There's a candle.

**Dre:** We've all been there.

**Austin:** This one's fucking just like a dagger stuck in the fucking map. [Ali laughs] Boom.

**Ali:** Whoa!

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Sick!

**Ali:** It's got a shadow.

**Austin:** It does have a shadow.

**Dre:** Ooh.

**Austin:** Anyway. [Ali laughs] I can stop now. Uh, what are y'all doing?

**Sylvia:** Sorry, which group is this directed at?

**Austin:** The group— at this point, you're very close by.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** You don't see the stairs, but they can hear your fighting at this point.

**Janine:** So who all's taken a crack at this thing so far?

**Sylvia:** I mean, I'll take another one.

**Dre:** Yeah, I mean, I'll keep going.

**Janine:** I also—

**Art:** You really don't want to get out of the stairs?

**Keith:** I was gonna take a crack at it.

**Sylvia:** I mean, if we... [laughs]

**Keith:** But we're also in the stairs.

**Janine:** I'm... [Jack laughs]

**Dre:** If I can put an idea forward, I was gonna try and like tackle it down the stairs so that we don't have to keep fighting on the stairs.

**Sylvia:** I mean, that would also work for you being angry, if you just dive at them.

**Austin:** Yeah, I love that, actually.

**Sylvia:** So like, if you want to do that first, go ahead.

**Austin:** Uh huh. That's a Kill, for sure. Kill or an Endure, right? Uh, still Risky.

**Dre:** Yeah, and I guess I'm not...I guess I'm not rolling to do damage here, per se.

**Austin:** You could still do your unarmed Piercing damage.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** I'm not gonna make you not, right? Because a failure will—

**Janine:** Tackling someone down the stairs is going to hurt...someone.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. A hundred percent.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Probably both of you.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Keith:** I don't know how much health this thing has, but I do also have a Piercing attack now.

**Austin:** Again, the point that I think Dre is trying— or that [Ali laughs] is trying to get done is...

**Keith:** Mm...

**Austin:** Get it into a place where dam— where you can help each other in a fight. [Jack laughs]

**Janine:** Yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** No, they're all like, "We love fighting it on the stairs!" [Austin laughs softly]

**Keith:** Yeah. I love fighting it on the stairs.

**Sylvia:** It's cool.

**Dre:** It's my favorite. It's my favey.

**Art:** There's a clear divide in the stairs issue.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Dre:** Jesus.

**Austin:** Oh my Jesus Christ. [Dre laughs]

**Ali:** Hmm?

**Keith:** See, it's safer on the stairs.

**Sylvia:** You know how in, uh...

**Jack:** Dre rolled a two.

**Austin:** He rolled a two, four, two, two, and the four gets taken away, 'cause it's your highest.

**Dre:** [sighs] We used up all the good rolls in that last session.

**Keith:** So what do you get for triple two?

**Austin:** This is brutal.

**Sylvia:** You know how in *Dark Souls* when you meet Havel the Rock in that one...

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Sylvia:** This is real vibes here of us—

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** —just getting squished by this thing over and over again.

**Austin:** Havel is chasing you up the fucking stairs. And I'm like, if you just get it down below the stairs, it won't be so bad down there. And you're fighting on the stairs! I've gotten killed by Havel there a bunch of times thinking I could just take this motherfucker on the stairs.

**Keith:** Yeah, but wasn't this damage taken trying to get it off the stairs?

**Austin:** I mean, yeah, in this particular case, yes.

**Dre:** Listen, sometimes you still die in *Dark Souls* even though you know what you're supposed to do.

**Austin:** That's exactly right. Take six Piercing Blood damage.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Jack:** Oh my god!

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** How's that looking for you? I'm gonna need that— I'm gonna need that Fallout test.

**Dre:** I'm fine.

**Austin:** Okay, Well, no, Dre.

**Dre:** Wait, no.

**Austin:** 'Cause you rolled against zero.

**Dre:** Goddamnit. I forgot to click off of the thing. Yeah. Okay.

**Austin:** But that's still, you're still...no, you're gonna be under, for sure.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Right? You're gonna be...yeah, yeah, yeah. But that's Minor Fallout.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Right? Uh, that's another Minor. That's a Minor Blood Fallout for you. You're already Furious.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** Super furious.

**Austin:** No, I think that you are, uh...

**Dre:** I could be too fast.

**Austin:** No, I think that you're Shattered: "Your armor is useless. You cannot use Blood Protection."

**Dre:** Okay.

[something clatters]

**Austin:** Jesus. That was it. That was the armor getting shattered. [Ali and Sylvia laugh]

**Janine:** That was the sound of it shattering. What's the like head clearance in this stairwell?

**Austin:** Are you trying to fly? You trying to get over top? What are you trying to do?

**Janine:** I just want more information. 'Cause like, the thing...

**Austin:** It...you know how sometimes you go like, well, it's gonna be with the dice say?

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** For me, it's like, well, what are you trying to do? Is it cool? 'Cause if it's cool, we'll make it work.

**Jack:** Wait.

**Janine:** The thing I wanted to do was fly over their head and shoot them in the back.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** To at the very least maybe convince them to start coming the other way.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** But ideally, to shoot them in the back.

**Austin:** Right.

**Janine:** [laughs softly] Would be the dream there. Which is also a thing where like, I would argue someone could help me with that by distracting it while I fly over its head.



**Austin:** Yes. I think that that's, that that's a hundred percent a help-able situation.

**Sylvia:** I think I've shown that I'm good at distracting, so. [Janine and Austin laugh] Just putting that out there.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Um, did Chine roll Fallout?

**Austin:** It doesn't— three is under six. We can keep the three of that roll, Jack.

**Jack:** Oh, I see. Right, yes. I (??? 1:05:32)

**Austin:** We can just do the math ourselves. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** Right.

**Sylvia:** What?

**Austin:** 'Cause we know what the— I know. It's hard to accept. It's doable, though.

**Jack:** But why would we do that, Austin?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** [laughs softly] That's what the computer's for.

**Austin:** [laughs softly] And you've just gotten tossed back, Chine. Actually, I do think that maybe you've made it onto the other side as well. Which helps this follow up that Es is gonna try to do.

**Dre:** Yeah, maybe he just like fucking flings me over his shoulder.

**Austin:** He a hundred percent does that. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Ax first. Flop. Chonk. All right, Es, what are you doing here?

**Janine:** I want to fly over and use my rifle at a really unpleasantly close range.

**Austin:** Mm, mm-hmm.

**Janine:** Sniping at point blank. It's...what could go wrong?

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** Uh, it's called no scope, and it's actually sick. [Austin laughs]

**Janine:** Uh huh.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Es is spinning around.

**Janine:** I was considering like... [Keith laughs] I was considering like, do I just want to Exsanguinate here? And it's like, no, this fight has been going on long enough now that like, I...

**Austin:** You should use one of these special bullets.

**Janine:** I would love to one shot one kill, you know?

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Did you want help from a distraction still? Or is that like a thing?

**Janine:** I would love that.

**Sylvia:** Okay, I'm happy to take...

**Janine:** I would love.

**Sylvia:** ...take the Stress on that, if something happens.

**Austin:** All right. Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** So this is...

**Austin:** This is Kill Occult, I think, for you.

**Janine:** Kill Occult. I get to roll with Mastery, 'cause I'm in my form.

**Austin:** You are in your form.

**Janine:** I get Mastery on Kill, I believe, right?

**Austin:** I believe that's from the very basic version of it, right? From True Form. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** Yeah, roll with Mastery on Hunt and Kill.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** And it's Risky and plus one?

**Austin:** Yep.

**Janine:** That all sound true?

**Austin:** That all sounds true.

**Janine:** I'm steeling myself.

**Austin:** Uh huh. Hey, there's a success.

**Janine:** Hey!

**Sylvia:** Hey!

**Austin:** Look at that. An eight! An eight. Three, five, four, eight, nine. Nine goes away. Keep the eight. Do your very strong damage against this thing.

**Janine:** Hell yeah. Gonna roll this D12.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** Again, I'm steeling myself!

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. That's eleven.

**Janine:** That's an eleven!

**Austin:** It bursts through the center of it. It does eleven damage to it. It turns and begins to follow you down the stairs.

**Janine:** Oh, remember this is...

**Austin:** Scraping the ax against the...uh huh?

**Janine:** Kill, Debilitating, Piercing.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know.

**Janine:** Okay, yeah. Just making sure.

**Austin:** It turns and begins— it's dragging the ax, you know, along the stairs. Sparks are shooting up, and this kind of liquid steel blood is falling out of it from its bullet wound on the stairwell behind it. But it does follow you, and now also Chine who it first tossed over, down the stairs, to the second, the lower basement, where there is enough room for other people to show up and kind of breathe a little bit here.

**Janine:** Okay.

**Austin:** Let me reveal the rest of...or most of the rest of this situation. Zhoop. There we go. Another long hallway. And that little square room that you're in is the— or that's down here, is the stairwell, which you've now left, and y'all are just kind of in this long hallway, this tall hallway that goes east to west. Again, imagine that we could rotate this whole map safely. Maybe I could, but seems unlikely.

**Janine:** Then all the words would be sideways.

**Keith:** I'd like to attack this thing now.

**Austin:** Uh, let's get this group together.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Uh, real quick. Um, the...the group that was in the furnace room, you can hear this creature begin to stomp its way, you know, into this big long hallway to your north. And you can hear your friends fighting it. I think there's certain fighty sounds that are unmistakable, unmistakably your people.

**Jack:** Biting.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Eating.

**Art:** Bug noises.

**Austin:** Bug noises and whatnot.

**Jack:** Bug sounds. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh huh.

**Janine:** Eyelashes, just quivering.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Eyelashes quivering. Yeah.

**Art:** A fluttering noise is the eyelashes, right? It's like a...

**Austin:** Mm.

**Jack:** Lyke saying, "Can I pick that up?" [someone laughs softly]

**Keith:** Is there— can I pick something up?

**Austin:** You could try to pick up that blood. It seems like it would burn your fucking hands, though.

**Janine:** That seems like a terrible idea.

**Austin:** Yeah, don't do that. Don't do that.

**Jack:** Okay. I'm looking to Marn.

**Ali:** You keep doing this. [laughs softly] (???) Um. [laughs] I mean, it's obvious it's them, right? I think we do the like, look back at the group of people and do the like fist towards the group. Y'all hang tight. We're gonna go to the end of the hallway.

**[1:10:10]**

**Jack:** Oh no.

**Austin:** That didn't work. It didn't work. [Ali and Jack laugh] I tried. I fucking tried. I fucking tried.

**Janine:** Mm...

**Sylvia:** [startled] Oh.

**Jack:** Austin—

**Ali:** Wait, you know what you can do now?

**Austin:** [quietly] Can I slide the...uh...

**Ali:** Is you could erase or like draw white. Oh, wait.

**Austin:** I got it, I got it, I got it, I got it. I got it. It's gonna be good. It's gonna be good. I just needed a little more headroom.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** A little more clearance.

**Art:** I had my character sheet up. I missed the whole thing.

**Janine:** You've revealed that room to us now, though. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** It's fine. It's fine. It's good. Almost.

**Art:** Oh!

**Austin:** Fuck.

**Janine:** Oh, god.

**Austin:** It's close. It's close. It's close.

**Art:** Oh, god!

**Janine:** Mm... [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** It's fine. It's fine. It's fine. It's fine. It's fine.

**Keith:** What was that, uh, Roll20 alternative you were talking about? [Sylvia and Ali laugh]

**Austin:** I don't know that it's gonna do any of this shit better, you know?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** Uh...

**Keith:** Hey, it had a nicer looking UI.

**Janine:** You have to wait for rotate 90 to come out.

**Austin:** Yeah. [laughs] You know, this could be worse.

**Jack:** Every time, it's wrong in a different way.

**Keith:** I'm totally fine—

**Austin:** It's basically right now.

**Keith:** No—

**Ali:** There's nothing wrong with the orientation.

**Austin:** Yeah, now it's fine. Yeah. [Ali laughs]

**Keith:** Well, the N...

**Janine:** Lost a couple letters.

**Keith:** Right.

**Ali:** I just (??? 1:11:05) more of this.

**Art:** Wait, two of the letters are over there. Two of the letters are over here.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. [Ali laughs]

**Janine:** Mm.

**Keith:** But we all get it. We all get get it.

**Austin:** We all *get it*.

**Keith:** We all get it.

**Ali:** Right. Wait, why are you— what are we—

**Art:** Right. So it's coming—

**Austin:** And now I can just reveal everything really quick.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Art:** So it's coming from the zorth? Is that right?

**Austin:** That's right, the zorth. [Keith, Janine, Jack, and Ali laugh] I've hidden everything by mistake. I want to reveal it all! Let me reveal it all!

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** There it is. Okay.

**Ali:** Okay.

**Austin:** So, we can just keep playing as if it's fine, you know?

**Keith:** Zorth, west, be, best.

**Janine:** I was hoping it would just be like a JPEG of a dolphin or something.

**Ali:** [laughing] It's so...

**Austin:** Bridge is here.

**Jack:** You unequivocally made it worse.

**Austin:** God. Okay.

**Jack:** Austin!

**Keith:** The Course has introduced new directions to everyone.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Where it says Stairs in the stairwell room, it had embedded itself into the wall.

**Austin:** Into the wall, yeah.

**Jack:** And it looked so pathetic. [Ali laughs]

**Art:** Oh, and the N looked like a Z, in case you couldn't figure that out.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** All right.

**Jack:** Is this better?

**Austin:** It's the correct direction now.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** North is north.



**Jack:** [laughs softly] Okay. Well.

**Austin:** This matches our map of Blackwick now. We've zoomed in. [Sylvia laughs]

**Ali:** Okay.

**Janine:** Why is it like tilted? It's like askew.

**Ali:** It's fine! [laughs]

**Austin:** I'm not gonna touch it. [Janine laughs] 'Cause it's askew. 'Cause nothing is actually perfectly north, Janine. [Ali laughs]

**Janine:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Ali:** The building had to settle a little bit.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Ali:** It shifted.

**Janine:** [laughs] Right.

**Austin:** Yes, it's been hundreds of thousands of years.

**Ali:** There's the implication of time. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** It settled horizontally.

**Ali:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Anyway, we walked over to the group.

**Jack:** Austin, I'm gonna kick the door down into— I'm gonna kick this door down.

**Austin:** Okay, sure.

**Jack:** And I...can I just make an attack roll on the goat?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Straight away?

**Austin:** Hey, Pickman's here, everybody.

**Dre:** Yay!

**Keith:** Hey, we saved you.

**Austin:** Oh, I'm really sad you didn't see what I just had to do. I'm really sad you didn't get to— [Ali laughs] I was wondering why no one was responding. Do you see this doorway that's on the stairs, this little red line?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** It used to be down here! [laughs] And I've been buttoning it up there, across... [Ali and Jack laugh] Okay, it's fine. There we go. Back in place.

**Ali:** Thank you for doing— thank you.

**Austin:** Uh huh. I take it seriously. [Ali laughs] These maps are important. Give me— what do you— what is your attack?

**Jack:** I'm gonna go for my espagnol, and it's not there.

**Austin:** Oh, yeah.

**Jack:** It's like when you try and use a weapon in *Dark Souls*, and the character just goes, “no.” So I reach in my pack, and I pull out William Blick's rif— like, um, pistol.

**Austin:** Hand cannon, right? It's like a fancy hand cannon.

**Jack:** Yeah, this is a Blick hand cannon. I think it is described as— yes, Blick's gilded hand cannon.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Point Blank, Reload, Expensive.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** D8.

**Austin:** D8 and you take Mastery, because of the shot that Es put on it. Es's super gun made it Debilitating, so that means the next attack made against it is rolled with Mastery.

**Jack:** Made what Debilitating? Oh, oh! I see. Shot the...

**Austin:** Es's attack, yes.

**Jack:** Shot the goat. Okay.

**Keith:** Yeah, the goat is bleeding.

**Jack:** Um, and I'm gonna just try and walk up to the back of this goat and shoot it point blank with the gilded hand cannon.

**Austin:** I mean, it's walking towards— it's walking your direction at this point, because it's chasing Es and Chine.

**Jack:** Well, then I'm gonna walk up to it.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** This is not a problem.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** My gun used to only be Point Blank. Um, so I'm gonna roll Kill.

**Austin:** Yep.

**Jack:** Occult.

**Austin:** There you go.

**Jack:** With Mastery.

**Austin:** And then Point Blank increases your damage on it, so let's see if you hit first. Still Risky.

**Jack:** Uh, yeah, still Risky.

**Austin:** Yeah, okay. Hey, that's a eight!

**Jack:** Success, take no Stress.

**Austin:** Wow, ten, eight, two, seven. Not so bad. Yeah.

**Jack:** Just kicks the door down, walks up to it, and fires a shot from the hand cannon.

**Austin:** Real “dodge this” moment. Yeah.

**Jack:** And Point Blank upgrades it to a D10?

**Austin:** What's it— what is it normally?

**Jack:** It's a D8 already.

**Austin:** Yeah, Point Blank, increase it by one step. Blick doesn't play.

**Jack:** Well, he tried, and then he got eaten by *Black Hook*. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** He did try. That's true. [Art laughs] Mm-hmm. Give me that D10.

**Jack:** Aw, come on.

**Austin:** That's a four.

**Jack:** Well, fine.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's not so great. That's not so great.

**Keith:** That's two?

**Austin:** It is what it is. That's a two. You've done two damage to it. Yeah, it goes *ping! bwoom*. It gets through, but it starts— it's like, *ah*, it has to drill its way in there. Also, you cannot fire again. It has a Reload.

**Jack:** No, I need to reload it.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Jack:** This is just...

**Austin:** It has one big shot. [Keith laughs]

**Jack:** It's the worst.

**Keith:** It's kind of like a shotgun.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** It's kind of like the same gun that you had, except I *guess* you could fire from far away if you *wanted* to.

**Jack:** It's worse.

**Keith:** I'm gonna attack this thing, finally.

**Austin:** Oh yeah, everyone is now down here in this hallway.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Give me your attack, Lyke. What are you doing?

**Keith:** So, I have—

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

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Is that— uh, no, you're good. I just had to remember how much damage you just did to this thing.

**Keith:** Okay. I have my Aterika'Kaal move, my touch...

**Austin:** Mm.

**Keith:** With a touch, I can conjure barbed vines under the skin of those who oppose me.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Keith:** Um, it's a D6 Piercing, and I'm assuming that we're not shin deep in water.

**Austin:** No.

**Keith:** Okay. Or wax?

**Austin:** No.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Not in these hallways. No, no, no.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** There's some wax here and there, and there is increasingly this bloody, like, steel everywhere, but.

**Keith:** Yeah. So, I've had to jump down, I assume, but now it's facing away from me, right?

**Austin:** It is. It is.

**Keith:** So I'm gonna run up to its back. This is just a touch move.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** And I'm just gonna sort of like hit it on the back of the neck, like just sort of like...

**Austin:** Give me that roll.

**Keith:** Like a push.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Okay. That's a...

**Austin:** It's still Risky, despite, you know, the...having three heads looking in three directions still makes it pretty aware, is what I would say.

**Keith:** Right. And this is Kill Occult.

**Austin:** Kill Occult, correct.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** You don't have that protect— you don't have that super— oh, look at that.

**Keith:** Nope, but it's a nine.

**Austin:** That's a nine. Yeah. Six, nine, nine. One of those nines disappears. The other one appears.

**Keith:** All right.

**Austin:** And you can give me your damage.

**Keith:** D6 Piercing?

**Austin:** Yep.

**Keith:** It's a two, Piercing.

**Austin:** Two, Piercing. That ain't bad.

**Keith:** So that's two.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Two Piercing is not terrible. Um, these, you can see, I guess like Pickman, Marn, uh...who else is down here? Es and Bucho see the barbs and thorns of Aterika'Kaal breach from the inside of this wax and metal figure, and then like, you know, the camera moves to the side, and there's Lyke, you know, touching it from the back of the neck. Scary, IMO.

**Janine:** Mm...

**Art:** All right.

**Keith:** The whole game's scary.

**Austin:** Yeah. [Ali laughs] Uh, it is swinging wildly with this battleax now. And like, each of the—I guess the one that doesn't have the mouth isn't doing this, but the other two are like bleating loudly in pain and anger.

**Art:** I would like to cast my spell.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Art:** Because it's new and fun. But if I cast it on myself, I worry this is gonna be over before it comes back to me.

**Austin:** Right.

**Art:** So who's...

**Austin:** Who wants the alley-oop?

**Art:** Yeah, who wants to...who wants to not have things be Risky?

**Dre:** I mean, I'll take it, if you're...

**Austin:** Yeah, I think it's Chine. Chine's the one— another one down there who'd benefit from this quite a bit.

**Art:** Well, I've seen how Chine's been rolling, and no they wouldn't.

**Dre:** I'm due, baby! Come on. [Ali, Jack, Janine, and Keith laugh]

**Art:** All right, so it's, uh, it's Mend Occult.

**Austin:** Which, you have those, right?

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Okay. What's it look like? And what's it— read me Unchaos.

**Art:** Unchaos. Oh, I closed the flavor text, didn't I? Um, wait, hold on. I'm bringing it up. "The Heart is a chaotic place, and you seek to undo that with ancient magic. Roll mend plus Occult to cast a spell. On a success, for the remainder of the situation, you or one nearby ally treats Risky actions as Standard actions—keep the highest roll of dice—as probability coalesces around you and crystallizes at your feet."

**Austin:** Love it. Love it when probability coalesces around you.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** This is the height of Fascination: Luck, to me. Give me...

**Art:** Yeah, I think so too.

**Austin:** Give me mend, uh...are you doing this from the stairs or are you down here also?

**Art:** I'm down here, I think.

**Austin:** All right, then this is Risky.

**Art:** Um...

**Austin:** Casting a spell in front of this thing is Risky.

**Keith:** Aw, it's Risky to cast the no Risky spell?

**Austin:** Oh, yeah.

**Art:** Well, then I'm gonna use, uh...



**Austin:** Yeah.

**Art:** The thing where...which one is it?

**Austin:** Unorthodox Methods? You just—

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Are you sure? Okay. You want the success. It's a lot of Stress you're about to hit.

**Keith:** Um, can I help? Could I have like, maybe the thorns are like rooting it for temporarily while this happens?

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah. You could help if Art wants to roll, but Art has to roll for you to be able to help.

**Art:** All right, I'll take the help, and I won't do the thing.

**[1:20:00]**

**Austin:** Wait—

**Keith:** Oh, this is just, it's taking a six? Is that what it is?

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That would take six, which would get Brutal D8 Piercing damage.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Is what you would take from this thing.

**Art:** All right, all right.

**Austin:** To do that spell on the six. It's Risky. It's bad. You know?

**Art:** So this should be four dice, right? That's how many?

**Austin:** Uh, you're rolling one, two, three, four, yep. Four, but it's Risky.

**Keith:** Four but it's Risky.

**Austin:** Yeah. The Aterika—

**Keith:** Eight! That's three eights and a six.

**Austin:** That's a ten. That's a ten. That's a ten.

**Art:** It's a ten!

**Keith:** [shouting] It's a ten!

**Sylvia:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** That's a ten. Success. Take no Stress. Because you rolled eight, eight, eight, six, and as always with you, a six is a ten once per situation.

**Keith:** God, it's so good.

**Austin:** Majestic. So yeah, this thing is no longer...what's it— why is it no longer Risky? Is it because you're literally twisting luck around you?

**Art:** I'm twisting luck around Chine, but yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** You get a little blowback luck.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh, take Mastery on this too because of this crit, 'cause the six is a ten. So Chine, your attack comes with Mastery.

**Dre:** Uh, what if I already have Mastery?

**Austin:** Uh, ooh...

**Keith:** Plus one forward? [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Oh, you do already have Mastery, don't you?

**Dre:** Yep.

**Austin:** And you already have Piercing. Uh, act as if it's help, I guess.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Take plus one. Is anyone else helping on this roll?

**Dre:** Oh, whoops.

**Austin:** Oh, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. That's an eight. That's a success, no Stress. Give me your damage, and tell me what this looks like.

**Dre:** Ugh.

**Austin:** Phew!

**Keith:** Oh no!

**Austin:** That's a four.

**Art:** And it would have been a failure, so it's a lot of crystallized luck.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm. Yep.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh huh. That eight would have been gone. You're right.

**Keith:** Yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Chine rolled three, eight, four, four. That eight gets taken away normally, but it's Standard so it stays. What's the— what do you do, Chine? as this thing is held down by these thorns and vines and as the luck flows into you.

**Dre:** What did you say...does this thing have multiple heads?

**Austin:** It has three heads that are— it has three faces. It has one head with three faces.

**Dre:** Mm.

**Keith:** Same. [Austin laughs softly]

**Ali:** Mm-hmm.

**Dre:** God. I think I just, I rend two of the faces to tatters.

**Austin:** Um, without their— without them to support it, the third one just falls flat on the floor. This creature falls down to one knee and then another and then is dead. Its body begins to

bubble and boil, returning to— the metal in it returns to its liquid form and begins to burn through the ground underneath you.

**Keith:** Can I scoop up some of this liquid metal into some sort of liquid metal holding container?

**Austin:** You could definitely give it a shot, yeah. What do you have that— I guess you have something on here for especially super hot stuff. Take—

**Keith:** Yeah, I carry a set of like...

**Austin:** Adventurers should have that sort of stuff.

**Keith:** Yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** So yeah, go ahead and give me— take, uh, take D4 of Occult super hot, you know, permanently molten metal, basically. This weapon is on the ground and is super good also, I should remind people.

**Dre:** Ooh. I mean, I'll grab that.

**Austin:** Yeah. This is a...it's Brutal, Piercing, D8.

**Keith:** Damn. That's pretty good.

**Austin:** It's Brutal, Piercing, D8. Uh, it is Tiring, which is— or not Tiring. What's the one where if you hit too hard you...

**Keith:** Uh, Dangerous.

**Dre:** Weird?

**Austin:** Uh, yes, yes, yes.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** Dangerous. Dangerous: When you inflict Stress with this item and roll the maximum amount, mark D6 to Blood.

**Keith:** Which Dre still needs to do, right?

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know what? Let's say it's Weird. Let's say it is Weird, because Weird makes more sense with it being this very magical object, this like pure essence of metal, right? than...it's not

that it cuts you. It is that it...it fucks with you somehow, you know, magically, right? The metal flows into you.

**Dre:** I still had to roll my Weird from getting max damage.

**Austin:** Right, from getting the maximum damage. So, was that four...

**Dre:** Four to Echo.

**Austin:** To Echo. So take that, and then give me a Fallout test.

**Dre:** Yeah. And it's just Blood that I can't use, right?

**Austin:** Oh, buddy. It's just Blood. Correct.

**Dre:** Okay. So I only take one Fallout.

**Austin:** Yeah. Or you only take one Stress.

**Dre:** Or one Stress. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Yes, yeah.

**Dre:** Thankfully I take no Fallout.

**Austin:** And there you go. No Fallout. Yeah. All right. You've done it. You've gotten through that.

**Keith:** That would be a tough one to get Major Fallout on. [laughs softly]

**Austin:** Yes, yes. At this point, here's what I'm gonna give you. Having freed these people, the Toll Collectors slash the Knights of Virtue are willing to run them back to the Boundless Conclave for you, safely.

**Keith:** Nice. The downstairs people and the upstairs people?

**Austin:** Both. Yeah, those full sets.

**Ali:** Nice.

**Keith:** Great. That's a great deal.

**Austin:** Yeah, totally. There are two other, three other rooms down here to look through. I will tell you that I think we can probably go quickly through them. There's not challenges in those rooms, is what I would say.

**Keith:** Is there cool stuff? [Dre laughs] I'm looking for stuff.

**Austin:** You're always looking for stuff. I mean, you have to start looking.

**Jack:** I mean, I think just in response to that, I'm gonna walk back down the room and try and try the door to the bridge.

**Austin:** Oh, that— yeah, uh huh. That door is locked, but it's locked from...it's locked from this side. You can open it. Yeah. There's just like a wave of hot wind. Hot air coming up from this molten river hits you in the face. Alekest comes out to you while you're out here and puts a hand on your shoulder, Pickman, and says:

**Austin (as Alekest):** Phew. Eh, this is a lot, but I want you to know, um...I'm glad you made it through it.

**Jack (as Pickman):** [slightly apprehensive] Thank you.

**Austin (as Alekest):** And I owe you something, and I gotta tell you, every minute of the time we've spent in this town has made me feel like my...my fear of giving this over to you was not only misplaced but could have been disastrous for you. This is for the books, you see. I knew immediately what it was that was equal in value to what you had given me, but I, uh...it's a big thing to give.

**Jack (as Pickman):** What are you doing?

**Austin:** And reaches up to a panel on the chest of his porcelain armor and kind of rubs a finger along an engraving. And as he does, a sort of—this is over the right side of his chest—a panel opens up and kind of slides open, and inside is a second heart, a porcelain heart. And he pops it out of his chest and offers it to you.

**Jack (as Pickman):** W- what's this.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Just a little thing I cooked up.

**Jack (as Pickman):** I don't...I don't know that I feel that way, Alekest.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Oh, it's not— [laughs] Do not— do not misunderstand me.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Oh, good.

**Austin (as Alekest):** You're not my type, in any way whatsoever.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Okay, good.

**Ali:** Damn.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Art:** Whoa! [Keith laughs]

**Austin (as Alekest):** Top to bottom, just not who I'm looking for.

**Janine:** Uh...

**Art:** Rude as shit.

**Austin (as Alekest):** I'm gay? Like, what is your problem? [Ali laughs] I don't know what your deal is.

**Art:** I think it's just over— it's gilding the lily! [Jack and Austin laugh]

**Jack:** It's some real Mr. Darcy...

**Art:** You can just say it once. You don't have to say it four times, that's like... [Ali laughs]

**Jack:** In addition, Ms. Bennet, I think your family is... [Jack, Austin, and Ali laugh]

**Art:** Yeah. One time is the appropriate number of times.

**Austin:** [laughs softly] I think the way he phrases this is:

**Austin (as Alekest):** Bad things happen between the beats of a heart. So I built one that doesn't beat at all. Or it's always beating, always pulsing. The blood moves through it smooth.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Is it a kind of weapon? I'm not sure what you're saying.

**Austin (as Alekest):** [sighs] It's a kind of way to twist the world around you, a second armor.

**Jack (as Pickman):** [interested] Oh.

**Austin (as Alekest):** I think it'll...

**Austin:** And you have that hole in you, right? Where the symbol is?

**Jack:** It's in my...it's in my back.

**Austin:** Is it between your—

**Jack:** It's between my shoulder blades.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. It'll fit right there.

**Jack:** This is very...

**Austin:** And it'll hover in place, sort of, you know?

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Pickman's eyes are very wide. This is very peculiar. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack (as Pickman):** I thought you were gonna give me a sword or something.

**Austin (as Alekest):** This is better than a sword. Trust me.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Well, thank you. I don't quite know what I'm thanking you for, but I appreciate it. And the books are garbage anyway.

**Austin (as Alekest):** Do you want me to... [laughs softly] You say that. I've already read through one of 'em. It was a pretty good read.

**[1:29:06]**

**Austin:** This is going to give you an ability from the ICHOR-DROWNED expansion. This is giving you the core move for the class the Gibberwright [pronounced with soft G] or Gibberwright [hard G]. Gibber [soft G], probably. It reads, [clears throat] "Sound and fury. You build rapport with the unreality...uh, with the unreality in the Heart and stockpile the madness it bestows within you like a boiling cauldron of potential. When unleashed, the margins of reality become yours to nudge. You can shift reality via your imagination and your parallels to the Heart's power, as long as you have fuel to burn. Place a D6 before yourself to set this to two. This represents your chaos. At any time before another player makes a roll, you may describe how you rewrite reality by one chaos. Represent this by turning the die one value lower. You can spend chaos in order to increase or decrease a Stress die by a step, minimum to a D4 or a maximum of 12, or adjust the highest result in a dice pool by one, to a minimum of one or a maximum of ten. To replenish chaos, unleash your holy performance in whatever manner you see fit that connects you to raw unreality, then roll Compel plus Cursed. On a success, roll D6 and add the result to your current chaos. If your total chaos ever exceeds six, your total immediately returns to two, and you take D8 Mind Stress as you lose control of the power that it barely contains. We've talked about Alekest, the, um, the porcelain Shape Knight, the Porcelain Knight, the Tescano Margrave. You know, he has an art practice. He makes cool shit out of



porcelain. He's a, he makes molds and makes porcelain figurines and porcelain armor and porcelain statuary. And he's also just a sculptor. He'll work in other forms. This is part of how he makes sense of the world around him. Pickman, I know you're not much of an artist. [laughs softly]

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So I don't know what you're gonna do. I don't know how you are going to unleash your holy performance in whatever manner you see fit that connects you to raw unreality. But, for now at least, you start with two chaos. And you can spend chaos, again, to boost or reduce damage for somebody— for somebody else, or to adjust the high— I guess it's anybody. It's not— no, it's another player. So it's helping other people. Adjust the highest or lowest, or adjust the highest result in a dice pool by one up or down. So if you happen to, you know, if you're gonna roll a six, it becomes a seven, for instance.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** I'll send you all of this in text so you can paste it in there.

**Jack:** Great. Great. This has touched Pickman, and she doesn't quite know why, and she doesn't know how to respond to it, which bodes badly for the gift. But she just sort of like...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack (as Pickman):** Thank you, Alekest.

**Austin:** Pat on the shoulder again, and off back inside. Inside, the rest of the people who have gathered by this point have begun to move on.

**Keith:** I'm still gonna check those rooms, though.

[Music plays: **"Sangfielle"**]