

Bluff City 09: The Grapplers Down at Promenade Arena Pt. 1

Transcriber: Lizzie [0:00:00-0:15:00]; meko

[Music: "[The Grapplers Down at Promenade Arena](#)" begins]

AUSTIN (as Goldfinch): You know, when I told Waxwing I was leaving, the first thing she asked was what I thought you all would do without me. But the thing is, there will be heroes in Bluff City long after I leave. There's something in the blood or the spirit or the history of you humans that draws you to figures like me. And I don't just mean to doctors or firefighters or soldiers, I mean those who understand the value of an icon—the power of a bright pair of boots and the potency of a cape and a catchphrase. You folks don't need me flying around the shoreline; you have movies and comic books and *wrestling*! You know that columnist Nathaniel Bridges? He once wrote that pro-wrestling was an insult to people like me. The costumes and the signature moves, he said, were no more than craven mockeries of what the real heroes look like. But when I first showed up to this town, back when I was still insisting everyone call me the American Goldfinch, that same Nathaniel Bridges said that I was, and I quote, "a four color and two-bit knock off of the grapplers down at Promenade Arena." And you know what? He wasn't wrong. My first costume—the one with the all black wings and that hideous beak mask—I stitched that thing together while watching Jeff Bereft Moran get revenge on that lobster wrestler who stole his pet dog! Which is why I'm not worried about leaving. I'll miss you all, I'll miss Waxwing; you, her, this whole city. You've been the loves of my life, but you are not my home. Right now, there is a little girl tuning into the Saturday night show just like I did once. She's gonna see Aqua Illusion, and Charlie Cupid, and Jake the Jackal, and all the rest leap from that top rope and fly through the air without any powers at all, and SHE is going to grow up to be Bluff City's next great hero. She'll have the sand, and the sea, and the chimes of the casino floor in her blood; *that's* what you need in a hero, Bluff City, not someone like me, not this old Goldfinch.

[Music ends]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical world-building, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host and GM Austin Walker. You can follow me on Twitter @Austin_Walker. And today we are continuing Bluff City and we're starting a new game of Bluff City. We're playing World Wide Wrestling the Roleplaying Game by Nathan D. Paoletta. PA-letta? PO-letta? Joining me today in—you know, at ringside: Sylvia¹ Clare.

SYLVIA: Hello! I'm here, obviously.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

¹ The name in the audio recording is no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancy.

SYLVIA: You can find me on Twitter @captaintrash and elsewhere on the internet at Videogamechoochoo.com or my other show Emojidrome.

AUSTIN: Uh.. [chuckles] Art Martinez-Tebbel.

ART: [sucks teeth] I was gonna—I was gonna, like—I had myself all psyched up to do, like, the macho-man voice in response to that, like—

DRE: [cuts in] Aw, fuck I was going to do that!

[Ali laughs]

ART: [continues] —being like, like, [gruff voice] “This is the ghost of the macho man!”

AUSTIN: [cuts in, impressed] That’s pretty good!

ART: [continues] “—running through—” and... but, like, it cheapens it somehow, you know?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

ART: It cheapens it. You can find me on twitter @atebbel. Tryin’ to bring respectability back to Twitter. I’m not doing that, that’s not—

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: You’re not doing that, we do a Kanye West podcast, it’s *impossible* for us to do that at this point [snorts].

[Art sighs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh!

[Art continues sighing]

AUSTIN: Speaking of, you can follow that @OneSongPod on Twitter. [laughs] Also joining us Andrew Lee Swan.

DRE: [hesitant, slightly gruff voice] Hey...brother...

[Austin starts groaning]

DRE: You can find me on Twitter @Swandre3000.

[Austin continues groaning]

DRE: What?

AUSTIN: [stops groaning] And, uh—that's fine—and, uh, Ali Acampora.

ALI: Um, hi that is who I am. You can find me @Ali_West on Twitter.com.

AUSTIN: As always you can follow the—

ALI: /aliwest [laughs].

[Austin laughs]

ALI: Sorry.

[Austin and Sylvia laugh]

ART: You know what would have been perfect for *Sylvia*, because Sylvia had three things that they plugged, is to do the Okada three-things style—

SYLVIA: [shouts, frustrated but smiling] OH MAN!

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: Do we [laughs]—Do we wanna do a second—

AUSTIN: Do we want to go back and do a pick up?

SYLVIA: [overlapping] No, it's fine...the moment's passed...

DRE: [overlapping, singing?] doo-do-doo-do.

AUSTIN: Sylvia Clare...

SYLVIA: I have—I can't even remember what he says because it's in Japanese, so I don't remember the exact translation anymore.

AUSTIN: Fair, fair. Umm... So we're doing wrestling today, uh...as always, we love wrestling. That's us. The wrestling crew. This is a joke because I'm tired and we do! And we've actually

been looking forward to doing this game for literally 16 months? Maybe? Longer? [firmer] Longer.

SYLVIA and ART: Longer!

AUSTIN: Two years? Two and a half years?

ART: When we started COUNTER/Weight, this is what I wanted to do for season three—I didn't even want to go back to Hieron [ALI and AUSTIN laugh]! I just wanted to do COUNTER/Weight, then this. And like, you know, Hadra-who?

AUSTIN: Right...Is that your character for this? Hadrawho

ART: Yeah, uh-huh, Hadrawho, um...

AUSTIN: [laughs] Some sort of clown? Maybe?

ART: Yeah, it's a clown and I'm using the gimmick...uh...Indie Darling!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. And when you come out the crowd goes Hadra-WHO! [Hoos like an owl] [Ali squeals] and that's like your thing. Right?

ART: Uh-huh!

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Real quick, my agenda today is: to celebrate and challenge the players, to make it look like I had it planned all along, and to entertain the imaginary viewing audience and also hopefully the real uh...viewing audience. The imaginary viewing audience is a—if you've been listening to the other Bluff City games is a concept that you already heard in Action Movie World. Which is a kind of technique of thinking about the audience at home and them watching the show and watching the events role out in the ring or, in the case of Action Movie World, on the silver screen. Dre and Sylvia have already dealt with this concept. I think we all have a pretty good idea of this concept because of having a real audience. But it is a useful premise to—and because we do lots of, like, “the camera does blank,” you know? But in this game you can take it a step further and think how the viewing audience is watching you—you know, Audience is a major stat in this game—and think about how people are reading your actions.

You also have an agenda here, as players. Your agendas are: first, be generous, ask the other players questions about their characters and invite them to interact with your wrestler; two: be positive, answer questions by building on them, join in other story lines when invited or opportunities present themselves. And be obvious, what seems too obvious to be interesting in your head is probably something nobody else at the table would come up with; at worst you will establish a baseline to grow from. Trying to come up with the most creative material can lead to paralysis or things too abstract for others to work with. Your contributions reflect back on you; by

making other players look good or other wrestlers look good, you also look good. The characters compete but all the players share the goal of making the most awesome wrestling storylines possible; being generous, positive, and obvious is the easiest way to do that.

So, with those things said—and also, as always, we should have said at the top if we ever stray into territory that we don't want to go into we can all throw up the "X" or ask to, you know, to veil something and say "Oh, let's fade this scene to black," or "hey can we re-do that?" Obviously, I think that we're all close enough friends at the table here to know that we can do that, but I'd rather just say it outright that, hey, if something makes a turn and oh, there's a spot in the ring that you think is maybe going to go bad in a way that you're not interested in, we could just completely roll back the clock and start over. It's always good to put that out there.

So, I actually can lean on y'all a lot here, because unlike most of the time we have like—we come into one of the Bluff City games and it is a pretty free-form game, where it's something like Fiasco or Noirlandia where the characters are created at the table very quickly and then you kinda roll right into the game itself. Today, maybe, we get to a little bit of wrestling action, but I wanna just block out time to actually sit down and make these characters finally, because we've been trying to run this game for two years [chuckles]. Um, and because I think the character creation here is really interesting. You know, it's a Powered by the Apocalypse game, so to some degree it's still just, like, stats, but there's a little more interaction between characters since, after all, in wrestling, characters have to interact directly with each other way more often than in a game like Apocalypse World or—I mean in Apocalypse World, there's some good interaction, but something like Dungeon World especially where it's like, "Oh, I'm fighting goblins. The thing I'm going to do is fight goblins I'm not really... fighting each other." In here, you're collaborating in the ring a lot, and so there's like relationships between characters, is really important, and then lots of—kind of slightly more complex rules, since the game—this isn't a game that pretends that wrestling — that the storylines in wrestling are real. This isn't a game that takes place in what the wrestling world would consider kayfabe, right? You're not—It's not like a wrestling video game where the goal is to win the match. This is a game about pro-wrestling as a cultural practice...and so it is about having a match that the crowd really likes, and growing as an entertainer and as a professional wrestler throughout your career, and feuds that spill over from the ring into real life and vice versa. And so that has always been one of the biggest and most attractive things about this game—and about telling wrestling stories in general—has been the ways in which those things overlap. So, I mean, let's start this at a high level because I want to give you the big picture pitch about where this is and what this is in Bluff City, and we can kind of zoom in on this. And this is literally the pitch I've had in my head for years.

I think that there is a local federation that is operated by someone in his—who's like 30 years old, named Simeon Shaw IV. He is the son of the Shaw Hotel Dynasty and he is a fuck up. He is an entertainment, and music, and wrestling promoter. He is constantly trying to find the next big thing. He has never succeeded at it. And he is his father's favorite child. His sister Serafina Shaw runs the hotels and casinos that her family still has in Bluff City—they have two casinos, I

don't know the names of them yet. Most of their fortune is out in Las Vegas at this point, but they are Bluff City—like, the family goes back to the days of founding the colonies nearby Bluff City. They are white people [chuckles]. It is important that they are white people because they are a shitty family. [lilting tone] Not that other families can't be shitty, but they are shitty in a particularly, you know, [Ali laughs] capitalistic white-colonizer-ass way.

Serafina runs the businesses here—runs the corpora—or runs the casinos—while her shitty brother does his best to bring a local band—you know, turn a local band into something marketable, or to run his local federation. We zoom in at a moment where both Bluff City is struggling—I imagine, you know, maybe one of the two—maybe there used to be more Shaw Casinos open and now there are only two left, or maybe we're at a moment where there's only one left. People are...you know, other casinos are opening up around the country, not just in Vegas and in Bluff City. You know, people can just go up to Connecticut or stay in Pennsylvania. People—I think this is definitely a recession-era game; the world is in a place that the boom is over and obviously this is a services and resort-focused town, so it was never an industrial town, but when industrial jobs elsewhere dry up, the people who would come to a place like Bluff City on holiday, they also stop coming.

And so, for the people here, wrestling is both an old stand-by when it comes to entertainment—you know, you need a ring, you need some lights, but mostly what you need is people willing to put their bodies on the line—and that's stuck around. And also for those here who are performing in the ring, it's a potential way out. And I bring that up because here's the thing that I'm putting on the line. tonight. The main event [chuckles]. Whoever ends with the highest Audience rating is getting a job offer from one of the big leagues, from Constitution Sports Entertainment, which is the kind of northern of the two wrestling leagues. There's a southern one too, it's Old Dominion—Old Dominion Wrestling Federation, which has changed hands a dozen times and is storied and really believes in good wrestling, but, like no one cares about them. This is like the WCW that never quite died off, right? And obviously the northern—Constitution Sports Entertainment – is very much our WWE stand-in.

The Shaw family has close relations to the family that runs Constitution Sports Entertainment and as a favor to Sebastian Shaw—sorry, Simeon Shaw III. I feel like Sebastian Shaw is probably an X-men villain? Is that true?

ART: Absolutely is, yes.

AUSTIN: Yeah okay, it's my own brain. Simeon Shaw III is friends with the owner of Constitution Sports Entertainment. And so as a "favor" is coming down to show pity on his friend's son's shitty little wrestling thing and is going to offer something—it's not particularly clear what, probably not a full-time job offer, but something, to whoever ends up with the highest Audience—whoever is clearly the most over at the end of this special event. No one in the crowd knows that of course, right? Not at the start of the show at least, but that is kind of—I want that to be on the table as you build characters and think about characters. These should be characters who

maybe either *really* want to get out or who would never want to leave, right? That sort of "do I stay or do I go?" should be in the air for this game. And maybe we don't get to it all the way, but that is part of the vibe, I think, around this stuff. The world is big and Bluff City is small and I think we're done a lot of blowing Bluff City up in a way, we're done a lot of "the locals boys got it" like, "hey, just cuz this shitty crew from Trenton comes in, fuck em! Bluff City's own can handle it" you know? I want to do the opposite here, and make Bluff City seem small [chuckles] and even the people who have money don't have real money, you know?

So...that's my pitch for this setting and the time and the space—as it's Bluff City, we're not giving a specific year, I'm not saying this is 2007. I think it is always this weird blend of late 70's through near future, but it is definitely recession-era Bluff City at the very least. It is definitely this moment in its history where things are not super appealing. The neon lights, the neon bulbs, have started to burn out. So...any questions about that kind of broad picture of the setting?

ART: So this—we will be—we will entirely be within one card? We're doing one show?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think we're doing one show. And we can wrap back, right?

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: That's the thing is, I have no fear that if in six months, or three months, we're like, "Man, I really liked that,"—we'll figure out how to make that something we can come back to. And also these characters exist in Bluff City, right?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: So we can see them in other games. Any other big picture questions or thoughts?

DRE: No, I don't—nothing from my end.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. So let me link you to a file [chuckles].

[Dre, Sylvia, and Ali laugh]

ALI: Tabletop games!

AUSTIN: Tabletop games! Here's a Google Doc.

DRE: Oh hel-lo!

ART: Hey!

DRE: What's up, Google Doc?

AUSTIN: So, this is a super simple Google Doc; it just has the basic things you need for your character. Which is Gimmick, which is kind of your character's basic...gimmick...like, what type of wrestler you are; whether you're, you know, a veteran, someone who's been around the block for a long time. Or if you're playing the hardcore wrestler who uses weapons and sneaks stuff in and plays dirty, or is just, like, great at that. Or the golden boy, who is like the next big thing, or the antihero, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. I think we have all of the available Gimmicks, between the main ones and then International Incident, which is the expansion to this game. They're all in that folder, is that right?

ART: That's correct.

SYLVIA: Uh, yeah.

ALI: Yeah, I think we red-flagged, uhhh, which?—the Wasted. Which is—

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: We are not going to use the Wasted.

DRE: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Which is a thing that I could imagine a game getting into and doing well. But I don't know that we've done the prepwork necessary—I know we have not done the prepwork necessary to play the Wasted.

ART: I—

AUSTIN: The Wasted is a character who is—who has a fanbase and is well-established, but has substance abuse and addiction problems, or is dealing with substance abuse and addiction. Again, I think there are stories to be told substance abuse and addiction, and I believe in the power of games to tell those; I don't believe in the power of me at 8 pm on a Tuesday [Dre and Ali laugh], after a full day of work, when one of you goes like, "Oh, this is what I want to do," to make sure that I can guide that well. And I think it's more responsible to, like, "Hey, let's make sure we just do this right."

SYLVIA: Especially when we have time constraints with how Bluff City's format is.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: A hundred percent.

SYLVIA: We're not gonna be able to explore that properly.

ART: Yeah, if we were gonna do this for, you know, months—

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: —we could—yeah.

AUSTIN: Yep, totally. Totally. There's too much of a structural pressure to fuck that up [chuckles], basically, if all you do—if all you have is a one-in. Any other questions about playbooks? I mean, are we at a place where—are we at a place where we want to just start with Gimmicks? Or do we want to start broader with that, with just broad character ideas?

DRE: I'm think I'm pretty good on both the Gimmick I'm gonna be and kind of my broad character idea.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: So I guess I could start if other people—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

DRE: —wanna still have some chance to. So my character is—my Gimmick I'm choosing is the Jobber.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Okay.

DRE: So the description the book gives is [reading] "You're a nobody; you're there to make the other guy look good. You may not have the fans but you have a job to do and you can do it well. How long will that keep you and your family fed?"

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: So the character that I'm playing is—like, his actual person name is Lenny Reed, and I kind of see him as—he's like the second cousin of somebody who is in a big, like, kind of wrestling family dynasty. So like a Hart dynasty kind of situation.

AUSTIN: Mmmm. Mm-hm.

DRE: And he just happened to become, like—he and his second cousin became really good friends as kids and was probably very simple as “Ah man, I’ve got the Super Nintendo, you’ve got the Genesis, we’re six [Ali laughs]. Let’s hang out together so we can play all the video games.”

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: “Cause my mom won’t buy me the Genesis [Austin laughs] and your dad won’t buy you the Super Nintendo, so.”

SYLVIA: [quietly] Oh my God.

DRE: But so then, because he was hanging out with his cousin, he, you know, started training in the gym and stuff like that.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

DRE: But he never really had the passion for it. But because he has these connections and the training he just kinda...kept doing it.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: And so I think that’s how he’s kind of come into this Jobber role, where he is technically good enough to be in the ring, not hurt other people, and, like, make other people look good. And there’s probably a mix of people backstage who are both like “Aw yeah, Lenny, he’s a pretty chill dude, he’s fine.”

[Austin laughs]

DRE: But there’s probably also a group of people who are, like, really frustrated with him.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Because they can tell he’s not passionate about it. Like, he’s not like—he’s not the kind of person, I don’t think, who fucks up a bunch and gets people hurt.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: But he’s like, “This is—I clock in, I clock out. I’m not about the life.”

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

DRE: So when you said, like, “Should I stay, should I go?” I think he’s very much the person who’s just, like, “Why would I go?”

AUSTIN: [laughs] Right.

DRE: “This is what I do.”

AUSTIN: This is your job. You don’t want to be in the spotlight.

DRE: No.

AUSTIN: At least at the start of this game.

DRE: Right. Now, his wrestling persona is where I’m gonna just get on my bullshit here.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Oh boy.

DRE: Because his wrestling persona is Count Faustofle the Third.

ALI: Oh, right.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: I’ve got a—I’ve got a Pinterest board linked.

[Austin and Ali laugh]

DRE: I’ll go ahead and drop it here.

AUSTIN: Please, thank you for that. Thank you. I appreciate it.

DRE: It’s a—oh boy.

ART: This is a first, I think.

ALI: Oh *woow*.

AUSTIN: Oh, this is—

DRE: There’s a lot going on here.

ART: Ooh.

AUSTIN: Oh boy.

DRE: Yeah.

ALI: Wooow.

DRE: So it's a lot of, I mean, like very—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

DRE: It's like—it's like Gangrel, but if then Gangrel was like, "Mmm, no. This—my—I'm too subtle. Everything I'm doing is too subtle right."

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

DRE: Um—

ALI: Um, sorry Dre—

DRE: Yeah, go ahead.

ALI: Are you attached to the ten-by-eleven inch [laughs] hat? Dimensions for your hat?

AUSTIN: Black stovepipe hat?

DRE: Yes, *absolutely*.

ALI: Okay, just making sure.

DRE: I need that big-ass hat.

AUSTIN: [sighing] Oh my God.

ALI: [laughing] Okay, just making sure.

DRE: I *need* that big tall hat.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: But yeah, so this character is—Count Faustolfe the Third is just a fuckin' shitty rich person from, like, up Northeast.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: I think his 'hailing from' is either Salem, Mass., because, like, you know.

AUSTIN: Witches.

DRE: Witches and stuff.

AUSTIN: Right. Like, that doesn't actually mean anything. But—

DRE: No, it doesn't.

AUSTIN: It's a—

DRE: But somebody's like, "Aw, yeah, the witch trials! Yeah, okay!"

[Austin and Ali guffaw]

DRE: The other one is a deeper cut, so maybe it doesn't work.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: But, there's a town—there's a castle in this town of Gilford, New Hampshire, where it's, like, just a bullshit European-style castle that I think some train magnate built for himself in the 1800s or something.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

DRE: And that's castle's been on every travel channel haunted ghost-hunter show.

AUSTIN: I have two thoughts here.

DRE: Yeah?

AUSTIN: One: that could be—that would be the one that I could imagine the character using in their mid-90s WWF promo.

DRE: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: Before they make the—"I'm here in Gilford," you know what I mean?

[Dre cackles]

AUSTIN: Like, that—the prerecorded video version of it.

DRE: Yes.

AUSTIN: And could totally see that being the thing. And it feels like—to some degree, it feels like Salem is the cheesier—

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: —basic, bare bones one. On the other hand, it feels like you would have—what was your character’s name again?

DRE: Lenny. Or, wait—the wrestler or—

AUSTIN: Lenny or Linny?

DRE: Lenny. L-E-N-N-Y.

AUSTIN: Okay. Lenny would have the freedom to do research and be like, “Oh, I’m from Gilford; there’s a castle there.” In the indies, but the second you get to WWE—sorry, Constitution Sports Entertainment’s—creative team, no one knows what the fuck that is, you’re from Salem.

DRE: Yeah. [laughs]

[Ali giggles]

AUSTIN: You know?

DRE: Yep.

AUSTIN: So it’s up to you which of those two you want to go.

ART: Are we properly considering the Anne Rice possibility here? [Ali laughs] That, like, that the real answer is New Orleans.

AUSTIN: Oh!

DRE: Ahh. Maybe! But I kinda like—

AUSTIN: I—

DRE: I kinda like the idea of him also—you know what? I could—I mean, just from a performance perspective—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: I could probably do a shitty Southern aristocrat.

AUSTIN: A fake—yeah.

DRE: Better than a fuckin' Northeastern one. So there we go.

AUSTIN: I will say that there is—

ART: Were they doing accents in Interview with a Vampire? Were they doing—

AUSTIN: Mm—the book did. Because it was written.

ART: But no one in wrestling reads.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Um—

ART: I kid, of course.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, of course. I could go either—that's not true; Chris Jericho has that whole long list of holds he knows. And he has a list, also. He also has the list, right?

SYLVIA: Dude loves reading.

ART: [condescendingly] Anyone can hold a list, Austin.

[Austin and Dre laugh]

SYLVIA: Not anyone can read off of it, Art!

AUSTIN: Which he has.

SYLVIA: Or accurately.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Right. The various lists of Chris Jericho.

ART: Chris Listy Jericho.

AUSTIN: So I guess—[laughs]. The thing that I'll say is there actually, because I've set up metagame here, about being the Northern federation and then there's the Southern federation,

like, there is almost something layered on top of that, right? If you are the shitty Northeastern elitist Jobber vampire, then—are you actually a vampire? In character?

DRE: Yeah, fuck it. Yes. Absolutely.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Hundred percent.

AUSTIN: Alright. So—but Lenny is not a vampire.

DRE: No. Lenny's not even, like, goth.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Lenny is like normcore as fuck.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Okay.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The—'cause listen, it's Bluff City, I needed to ask the question [Ali laughs]. I think it's something funny if it's the Northern one, because then you're like—you will be read as poking fun at Constitution if you're from the North, right?

DRE: Mhm.

AUSTIN: And if you're from the South, you will be seen as poking fun at Old Dominion.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, there's no—there's no—because either way it's like, "Oh, you're the elitist." And even though it's the same exact character, you know how wrestling fans are [laughs].

DRE: Yeah. I think originally I was thinking Northeastern elitist 'cause it was like a—there was almost like a thing where it's like, "Aw man, these are the kind of weird assholes who come into Bluff City on vacation and treat all the locals like shit."

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: And so it's, like—it's like quick heat.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: Where the people are like, “I know this asshole. I know this kind of asshole.”

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: Right, right, right. Here’s the other thing you could do, is you could definitely be ‘Parts Unknown.’

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And namedrop whatever bullshit place you ever want during whatever promo. Where you’re like [Southern accent] “I’ve spent time in New Orleans.”

DRE: Oh, yeah.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: And, like, adopt a terrible accent for the next few lines. And then in a different promo talk about how “when you spent time in old Paris [pronounced Paree].”

DRE: God.

AUSTIN: And like—‘cause you’re a vampire. You’ve been everywhere.

DRE: Yeah, no. It’s ‘Parts Unknown,’ you’re right.

AUSTIN: Okay! [laughs]

DRE: That was, like, my original thing was like “Ah, should I do ‘Parts Unknown’?” But yeah, no, now—yeah, we should. Yeah. It’s ‘Parts Unknown.’

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Or—yeah, something like that. Or something traveling. We’ll go—yeah, I think ‘Parts Unknown’ is solid. Alright, so that is your ‘Hailing from.’ The next thing that we need is Entrance.

DRE: Yeah. So the options it gives you are like: silly and overblown, strangely sympathetic, or something else. I think it probably is silly and overblown.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: In just that it’s just the most edgelord—yeah. It’s very much like loud organ music and the lights go off and—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

DRE: Yeah. He probably has like—I think that he has a comically large cross necklace.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah.

DRE: That he parades around as he's going down the ramp.

AUSTIN: Does he take it—And he takes it off. And hangs it on the turnbuckle, for sure, right?

DRE: Yes. Yes.

AUSTIN: Right, okay. Okay.

DRE: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Great. Perfect. I love it. Um, alright...stats is next.

DRE: Yeah!

AUSTIN: We—there's three stats. Er, four stats. There's three stats, uh wait, no—four. There's four stats [laughs]. They are—I'm gonna see if I can get the larger description of them from the book real quick, that way I can talk about them instead of just being like "Oh, that one is basically blah blah blah." Um...here we go. So there's Look, which is, quote, "Your charisma, your 'it' factor, your ability to inhabit your character and"—quote-on-quote—"live the gimmick." Look is most important for if you want to cut exciting promos and create memorable character—create a memorable character—for the fans to follow." Power is "Your raw strength, aggression, and impressiveness. Power is important if you want to enjoy physical dominance over other wrestlers and stand out for your extraordinary physical presence and abilities."

Real is "Your ability to—"quote—"break the fourth wall', bring in real-world concerns, and deal with legit issues. Real is most important for you if you want to blend the line between character and performer and captivate the audience with your actual personality. And Work, "Your ability to tell a story in the ring, execute moves correctly, and make others look good. Work is the most important for you if you want to use your ring work to create your legacy." So your Gimmick gives you initial scores and then you can kind of adjust it by adding and subtracting from there. So do want to talk through that?

DRE: Yeah, so my base stats are: Look minus two, Power zero, Real zero, and Work plus one. And then I get to add one to one stat and subtract one from one stat.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

DRE: So I'm gonna add one to Power, to make my Power one.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: And I'm gonna subtract one from Real, to put my Real at minus one.

AUSTIN: Okay [laughs]. So you just—you cannot—there's—you're never gonna be able to be like, "I know how things are going; I know the truth behind the scenes!"

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: "I know what happens backstage! I know the people—I know the people in the creative team." But also, you're—you're actually—you're buff. You're kind of a buff boy.

DRE: Yeah

AUSTIN: Okay. I was picturing you as thinner than that, but I kind of like it better if you're almost popping out of this Victorian wear.

[Dre snickers]

AUSTIN: A little too buff for the gimmick, you know?

DRE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Which is why your Real is lower [laughs]. "That motherfucker ain't a goth! Get out of here! I see him in the gym!"

DRE: [laughs] Exactly! Yup. Yup.

ALI: Has Jojo's Bizarre Adventure not been localized for Bluff City yet?

[Austin laughs]

DRE: Oh, fuck.

AUSTIN: Perfect. Perfect [Ali laughs]. Alright...next up is Heat, but we'll come back around to Heat. Heat is sort of like History in other Powered By The Apocalypse games or similar sorts of rules in various games. We're gonna jump down to Roles. So you pick your starting Role and you can use the move of the same name. Which Role are you? There are two [laughs].

DRE: I am a Heel.

AUSTIN: You are a Heel. Alright, that makes—you're not the world-traveling elitist vampire who people love?

[Ali chuckles]

DRE: Man—

ART: Oh my God. It's a while down the road but I want to be here for that Face-turn.

DRE: Yeah. Yeah.

[Ali and Austin laugh]

SYLVIA: Oh man.

AUSTIN: Me toooo. Alright. Is there anything that you start with here? You start with Audience set to zero, um—

DRE: I have a couple of moves that I get to take.

AUSTIN: Yes.

DRE: And I did not figure that one out...so I get the—

AUSTIN: Alright, so yeah, start with your basic—

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: With your—not your basic, everyone has basic, start with the two that you definitely have.

DRE: Right. So I get one called Do the Job. [reading] “You are always booked to lose your matches [laughs, Austin laughs]. When your opponent pins you for the win, roll 2d6.” On a ten plus, I make them look great and they get one Audience. On a seven to nine, I do okay and I get one Momentum or one Heat, I get to pick that. And then on a botch I don't sell it right; we both lose minus one Audience.

AUSTIN: I should briefly talk about what those are just so people know, 'cause we're gonna hear the words Heat and Momentum and Audience a lot.

DRE: Mm-hm.

SYLVIA: Oh, right.

AUSTIN: Audience is how into you the audience is. It's kind of your—again, how over you are, how excited the audience is to see you. When you get to four, when you get to Audience plus four, you then can do an advance, basically. You can get a level up, effectively. When you, when you hit zero, I think you also get an advance but there's a risk there. Which is you should probably pick plus one Audience because if you ever end an entire session—or an entire card—at Audience zero, you get fired [laughs]. So, try to avoid that.

The other two terms that came up there were Heat, which again is the kind of the History term here, and that is about relationships with other wrestlers. Those are other players by default and that is kind of like how you have—what your relationship is and how excited people are to see the two of you together. If you ever have a match with someone who you have plus four Heat with, so if your history with them is really long, you have a long-running feud—or a long-running friendship, who knows? And you're ever in a match with them, then you can gain Audience from that, basically.

And then the other was Momentum, and Momentum is like bonus dice, basically. You can spend Momentum after—not bonus dice, but bonus points to spend on rolls. You can spend Momentum after you do any roll to add to that roll. So if you rolled a nine, you can add, you can spend—is it just add one or is it flip up to the next highest success level? Here we go...[reading] “Players can decide to spend any amount of Momentum to add that amount to any roll and they decide after the roll. If someone groans at the result a roll, it's a good time to ask them if they want to spend Momentum.” [chuckles] There you go. So that is like how—there are rolls where you just do 2d6 and nothing—like your Finisher roll is just 2d6, so if you gained a lot of Momentum you can then spend that to make sure that 2d6 turns out to be a success for you, you know? Um, alright is there anything else here? So, yeah, what was your second move?

DRE: Career Wrestler. If I end an audience with Audience plus three or higher, I get to—

AUSTIN: An episode.

DRE: Sorry, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, of course.

DRE: I get to change to another Gimmick. If I do end the episode on Audience zero, I'm not fired. Instead, my Audience is reset to plus one.

AUSTIN: Listen, that's—that right there? That is job security.

DRE: Yeah, I'm just out here working.

[Austin and Ali laugh]

AUSTIN: Perfect. Alright, and then what is your pick one? What is your bonus move here?

DRE: I'm gonna pick Sympathetic. Where I roll Work instead of Audience when I do the Work the Audience move.

AUSTIN: Okay, and your Work is plus one, right?

DRE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Awesome, cool. So that means that even when—even though the fact that you're going to have zero or one Audience, like, a lot, you're going to at least have the chance of—you're always going to have a plus one. You're never—even at Audience zero, you're always going to at least have a plus one to just kind of get the audience into things. Um, alright. Again, you start at Audience zero, and...is anything else here? You don't have any advances and you don't have any injuries. I don't believe, right?

DRE: Yeah, I think that's it.

AUSTIN: Alright, awesome. Cool. And again, we'll wrap back around to Heat after we know other characters are. Who wants to go next?

ALI: Um—

ART: I could.

ALI: Oh, okay [laughs].

ART: Oh, but I certainly don't need to. You can go, Ali.

ALI: Yeah, I mean, I have some solid ideas if—

ART: Alright, I was just reading the pause, so [Ali and Austin chuckle].

AUSTIN: Okay, do you all have Pinterest boards ready or...?

ALI: I—[laughs]. Lemme make my Pinterest board real quick. No.

SYLVIA: Maybe.

[Ali laughs]

DRE: Oh man. I forgot that me filling out this Pinterest board is how I did a Google search for 'goth vampire man' and ended up with a picture of Austin in the Google image search results.

AUSTIN: Excuse me?

ALI: Oh my God, I forgot about that.

AUSTIN: Excuse me??

DRE: You don't remember that, Austin?

AUSTIN: No! A lot of things happen.

ART: That's in this—that's in this chat.

DRE: Somewhere. Yes.

AUSTIN: Why—

ART: You might have to go too far back [Ali snickers]. But you're—Google thinks you're a goth wrestler, man. Or goth vampire.

DRE: What it is is that—

AUSTIN: Vampire man or wrestler man?

DRE: You were—yeah [Ali chuckles]. If you do a Google image search for 'goth vampire man' and scroll down, it's—you show up.

ART: Oh, yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: Oh, there I am! I'm in black and white too. That's wild. I'm not even—I don't even look like a vampire in this picture.

ALI: Uh-uh.

DRE: No, you don't.

ART: Well you're in black and white, which is the official color palette of vampires.

AUSTIN: Well, I couldn't be outside in the sun. This is clearly not a sunny day, so.

ART: It could be an eclipse.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly, true. Alright, so... Ali or Art, who's up next?

ART: Ali should be.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Yeah, okay. So I have been struggling with this a little bit because I, like, had some ideas when we were gonna do Bluff City full time—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: In the middle, was just like "I don't want to do this, I'm scared," [laughs] and then like forty-five minutes ago was like "I have a really good idea." Um, so. I think, like—I think I'm the newest to wrestling here so my, like, wrestling fandom has evolved.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: Where it's like, beginning here, I was like I wanted to play someone who was earnestly fitting a role within a card.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: Was a heel, but from the neighborhood.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Like, had a part-time job dealing blackjack and, like, I think I'm moving away from that a little bit—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: Because I think that wrestling as performance art is funnier to me [laughs]. You know?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: Today I was just like, how do we get from Switchblade being a good wrestler having a really good look and having a 'knife pervert' shirt? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[Dre laughs]

ALI: By not caring, is how.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh!

[Ali laughs]

SYLVIA: I'm so happy. So happy.

ART: If this ends with "And my character has a 'knife pervert' shirt," [Ali and Austin laugh] I'm gonna lose my mind.

ALI: But yeah, so I—the basic thing was I was thinking of, like—I was like "What wrestling gimmick would I want to be?" And it was just like "What if seapunk was a wrestling character?"

AUSTIN: Ohhh.

ALI: Like, what if there was a person? And then from there—

AUSTIN: I just you to know that, like, I, and lots of other people, thought you just forgot to say 'm'. [Ali laughs]. 'Cause you said seapunk and I thought you just—like, 'did she forget that there's an 'm' in—' [Ali chortles]. And also CM Punk *is* a wrestling character [Ali keeps laughing].

ALI: Nooo. No.

AUSTIN: Alright, so what seapunk—

SYLVIA: UFC fighter.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, sorry, apologies. Apologies.

ALI: But from there, it was like 'what if someone really earnestly just wanted to be a wrestler but got a local artist grant—'

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: From her, like—from her art school—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: To do performance art—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: Which is, like, doing this shitty wrestling thing. But because nobody has money, it's a sponsorship from like a fisherman or whatever.

AUSTIN: God.

ALI: [laughing] And like her whole gimmick is that like she's the evil whatever from Bluff City Bay or whatever [laughs].

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh [Ali keeps laughing]. Wait, is she just playing the Beyonce character?

ALI: I think she might be? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Do you know what I mean? Like she isn't—she isn't the selkie from InSpectres. But that got written about.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like, that was in the whatever cryptid papers are.

ALI: But this is years before it, right? I don't want to spoil Art's thing, but.

AUSTIN: Oh, I don't know that it's before it.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: I have no reason to—I have no idea. We'll find out when we talk to Art.

ALI: Okay [giggles].

AUSTIN: I've always been imagining this as not being before, but.

ALI: Okay, fair. I—'cause before we started recording, at like 7:05, I was like, "Should I tell them this idea and ask if it's too close to the selkie?"

AUSTIN: Nah.

ALI: And then I was like, "No, 'cause we're about to record right now and I don't have a Plan B."

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yeah, uh-huh.

ALI: [laughing] It's just gonna be what it is. Um, but yeah, I don't know, I think having a finishing move that's just basically the thing that John Cena does but called the High Tide is really good.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, that's good. Uh-huh.

[Dre laughs]

ALI: I think that having a denim jacket but half of it is cut away and the rest of it is just, like, a fishing net—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: Like sewn into it and just hanging down is really cool [laughs].

AUSTIN: That's a very good look.

ALI: It is what it is.

AUSTIN: So, what is the—what Gimmick is this?

ALI: Oh this—

AUSTIN: 'Cause I could see it going a bunch of different ways.

ALI: Yeah, so, I was leaning between Antihero and Golden Boy—

AUSTIN: Oh, interesting.

ALI: And I think Golden Boy fits more, because it's like local businesses, you know, funding her gym membership, right?

AUSTIN: Mmm. Mm-hm. Oh, oh—did you go, okay here—wait [Ali laughs]. Is it—are you from the Firebird Gym? The Tawny Buck gym?

ALI: Oh, maybe! [laughs] I don't see why not.

AUSTIN: You know?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Keep it in the—keep it, you know, in the canon.

ALI: Just, like, an art student who is also going to that gym.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah.

ALI: Oh, that's so good [laughs].

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. It's very good.

ALI: Wait, but then should my Gimmick—no.

AUSTIN: No, no. Of course not.

ALI: No, no. 'Cause the Firebird is a different move. That's a whole different thing.

AUSTIN: It's a whole different thing.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: There could be a different local—I mean, you're all local wrestlers, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So—maybe not all of you, but you know. Some of you are from parts unknown [Austin and Ali laugh]. But, you know, you—multiple people might have been to that gym.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So you're the golden—you're thinking Golden Boy over Antihero.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Let's just read them out loud, just so that you can—do you want to read the Golden Boy's summary at the top?

ALI: Uh, yeah, it's "You're the next big thing, whether the audience or the other wrestlers admit it or not. Someone backstage is putting all their weight behind you; you just have to hold up your end in the ring."

AUSTIN: Gotcha, yeah. Yeah, that definitely—yeah, that definitely suggests local hero, has local connections. You know, maybe this is a situation where Simeon, who's the promoter here, you know, knows the person who is paying for you to—Simeon isn't paying your check. Whoever [laughs] gave you this grant is paying your check [Ali laughs]. And so you're like free talent for

him, and he probably knows who they are and is like “Yeah, great, great, is she a mermaid? Perfect [Ali giggles], we can work with that.” So you—

ALI: I was gonna say, I ended up at the seapunk thing by being like, being a women’s wrestler is still probably hard.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: And Alexa Bliss’s whole thing is like “I’m a goddess,” is kinda weird where she just wants to be goth and listen to No Doubt.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Right.

[Dre laughs]

ALI: [laughing] And I feel like this is the same kind of thing where it’s like—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: “Please just let me wear a plaid shirt.” And it’s like, “No, no, no—”

AUSTIN: “No, no you’re—”

ALI: “You have to wear this blue wig and these tights that look like fish.” [laughs]

AUSTIN: [laughs] Uh-huh. “We read this thing in the newspaper about some sort of evil fish lady; you’re her.”

ALI: [laughs] Yes.

AUSTIN: “That’s you.”

ALI: Uh-huh. Exactly.

AUSTIN: “Nathaniel Bridges wrote about you [Ali giggles] and now you gotta—now you gotta be the seapunk...the Seapunk Selkie, that’s what they call you.”

ALI: Yeah, mm-hm.

AUSTIN: So you’re hailing from Bluff City? Or are you hailing from, like ‘the Seven Seas’?

ALI: I—yeah, I was gonna ask if, like—‘cause I know Long Island has the Long Island Sound or whatever.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Does Bluff—New Jersey have an equivalent where it's, like, not just the Pacific Ocean but like, whatever Bay or—

AUSTIN: Or the Atlantic Ocean.

ALI: [laughs] Yup, yup. Oceans.

AUSTIN: Uh...you know. Not—

ALI: As much as we need?

AUSTIN: Yeah. We can invent something, do you know what I mean?

ALI: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: I'm trying to think if there is, like, a phrase. Like there's [sighs]—there's shit I would recognize if you said it but I'm not remembering it right now, you know?

ALI: [laughs] It should be something cooler, though. It should be, like, "the Depths of the whatever," you know?

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: "Depths of the Atlantic Ocean" should work, you know?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I think that that's—I think that's probably fine.

ALI: The Bluff City—

AUSTIN: I'm just Googling 'Atlantic City ocean'...that's not really what I want though. I want, like—I don't know what I want.

ALI: I was trying to move away from, like, something that sounded too spooky since we have a vampire and—

AUSTIN: Oh, it's gonna be a spooky wrestling fed—group. Apparently.

ALI: Yeah, this is true [laughs]. This is gonna be the Halloween wrestling—

AUSTIN: Maybe it is. Maybe it's Halloween [Ali laughs]. Like maybe that's the thing.

DRE: Oh shit.

AUSTIN: See?

ART: We'll record this and not release it until October.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: Oh boy.

AUSTIN: Welcome to our holiday special. Our Halloween special.

[Ali laughs]

ART: I'll just—oh, wait, nevermind.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: I was like, "Oh, does Bluff City get a holiday special?" We've had a holidays. The answer was 'no'.

[Austin laughs]

ALI: We did! Noirlandia was a holiday special.

AUSTIN: We did—yeah, Noirlandia was a whole Christmas thing. It was snowy, there was a Christmas party with the cops...

ART: It wasn't a—

SYLVIA: We also timed InSpectres to be a Halloween thing too.

ALI: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Which is kind of holiday special as well.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Yep. And this was a holiday special 'cause we were planning it around Wrestlemania.

ART: Happy Wrestlemania, everyone!

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: God. Alright, Wrestlemania's not a holiday. Not anymore.

ART: I sure am excited for those upcoming matches.

SYLVIA: You're supposed to enjoy holidays [Ali chuckles].

AUSTIN: Yeah. Alright.

ART: No one enjoys holidays!

AUSTIN: No, yeah, fair. Uh-huh.

ALI: I love to tweet! What are you talking about?

AUSTIN: [laughs] Alright. So let's talk about your Gimmick—can you write down Golden Boy?

ALI: Uh, yes.

AUSTIN: Golden Girl? I feel like it's a different thing, 'cause of the show.

[Ali laughs]

ART: Yeah, Golden Girls the show really ruined the shift. Unless you want to add that into your thing.

[Austin laughs]

ALI: Mm.

ART: Everyone should have a Rue McClanahan impression.

[Austin laughs]

ALI: Oh my God.

AUSTIN: Um, name and look. Do you have a name yet? Or are you just gonna sit on that until next recording?

ALI: No, I have a real person name, which is Erica Rizzo—.

AUSTIN: Good name.

ALI: But I don't have—yeah.

AUSTIN: Erica Rizzo sounds like a character on Golden Girls [Ali bursts out laughing], so.

ALI: But yeah, I don't have a sea name yet.

AUSTIN: Okay. [laughs] A sea name...[Ali laughs]. Um, alright. Hailing from, again, something like "The Atlantic Ocean." Alright, is your entrance "classic and impressive, showy and ostentatious, mild and unremarkable, or something else?"

ALI: Ohh! Um, hmm [laughs]. Probably classic and impressive?

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So what's the mean for the seapunk [Ali laughs] siren selkie?

ALI: Oh! You know what they probably do? They probably—they don't turn the lights off.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: But they turn them down. And then they project, like, you know when you're in a dark room but there's light outside and the light hits the waves and then on your walls it's spooky.

AUSTIN: Ooh, that's good! Yeah, I like it.

ALI: I think it's like that.

AUSTIN: Can I tell you what I thought you were gonna say?

ALI: Yeah!

AUSTIN: They turn the lights down and then they, like, project, you know, one of those old screensaver aquariums [Ali starts laughing]

SYLVIA: *God.*

DRE: Hell yeah.

[Ali keeps laughing]

AUSTIN: But yours is better.

ALI: I mean, that happens on the projector behind her, I guess.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

ALI: And it just says, you know, my name, whatever it is.

AUSTIN: Great. Whatever it is [Ali laughs]. Alright. And then music hits.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Is it seapunk? Is it in the seapunk extended genre?

ALI: [laughs] I don't—

[Sylvia laughs]

ALI: [nearly cry-laughing] Um, I guess? How do you get from, like, Tragic Kingdom by the way of vaporwave?

AUSTIN: That. What you just said.

ALI: [laughs] 'Kay.

SYLVIA: Add some Lisa Frank stickers.

AUSTIN: Yeah, exactly.

SYLVIA: If you really wanna lean into the seapunk thing.

ALI: [sighs] Yeah. Oh boy.

AUSTIN: 'Cause, like, I'll find that for you, in twelve seconds, you know?

ALI: Okay.

DRE: That sounds like—are you just coming into the Donkey Kong Country soundtrack?

[Ali laughs]

SYLVIA: Oh my God.

AUSTIN: I mean...

DRE: Listen, Bramble Scramble's a dope song.

ALI: [through laughter] Bramble Scramble...

SYLVIA: It's the—[laughs]. You know the video of the Russian kid in the club?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

[Dre laughs]

SYLVIA: Where it's Drake and the Donkey Kong song mashed together?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

ALI: [laughing] I do.

SYLVIA: It's that!

AUSTIN: Yup. Uh-huh. I'm finding it. I'm finding it.

ALI: It is that. That's the song [laughs].

AUSTIN: Oh my God. It's, uh—

ALI: It's the song.

SYLVIA: "1997 In Russia Was Fucked Up, Dude."

AUSTIN: "In Russia Was Fucked Up, Dude," right? Yeah.

SYLVIA: Yeah. [Ali laughs] Don't worry, I got you.

[Ali and Dre laugh]

AUSTIN: That's a jam. That's a jam. So it's "Started From the Bottom"—

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But with the Donkey Kong beat.

ALI: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: [singing] And the whole team here—

SYLVIA: The bottom of the ocean!

ALI: [shrieks] Yes!

AUSTIN: Right! The bottom of the—[Ali dissolves into wild laughter]! Oh, and that's your hailing from! [Ali keeps laughing] “[announcer voice] Hailing from...the bottom of the ocean!”

ALI: [laughing] Started from the bottom, now we—oh, this is so good.

AUSTIN: Oh, I'm furious.

[Dre laughs]

ALI: This is the only way this could've gone [laughs].

[Sylvia inhales]

ALI: Oh my God. AUSTIN: Sorry, I'm watching this video now. It's great.

ALI: Yup.

ART: Welcome to everyone's least favorite arc of Bluff City.

AUSTIN: Disagree. Alright, let's keep moving.

ART: No, I—people are gonna love it.

ALI: I like this video 'cause you can hear what it sounds like in a big room.

AUSTIN: It's unbelievable. It's very good audio work. It's amazing that Drake put this track out in 1997 in Russia [laughter from the table]. So name and look I think we've just kind of talked a little bit about. We talked—you want to be wearing plaid but instead...fish. Jean jackets.

ALI: Yeah, the jean jacket with the fishnet leggings made out of the, any—quick cosplay for anyone out there, any costume fabric store has that holographic material with the fish...swoops in it, you know?

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

ALI: And probably, like, a V-neck, [laughs] you know?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh.

ALI: [laughing] Sometimes you're an indie wrestler and you just wear a T-shirt, it happens.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, it does. What can you do, you know?

ALI: I, you know, I spent the hundred dollars I had on the jacket, so. The patch on the back looks really nice.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. Um—Wait, what's the patch?

ALI: Oh. Um, it's probably like the back of it is a big black panel that says "Started from the bottom." [dissolves into laughter]

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: [laughing] I can't do this. I can't.

AUSTIN: It doesn't say, like, fake— "Fuck a fake fish, where your real fish at"?

[Sylvia laughs]

ALI: Oh my God.

AUSTIN: And then your friends are called "The real fish." Your fans, rather. Your fans are called—no? 'kay.

ALI: Do you know what—do you know something really wild about how we ended up here?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Is that there was moment today where I was like, "Should I watch the Drake video for 'No New Friends' to get my inspiration?"

AUSTIN: Wowwww.

ALI: 'Cause all the outfits in that video are so good.

AUSTIN: That's true.

ALI: And somehow I just got full circle, [laughing] and I'm really happy.

AUSTIN: We made it. We made it around.

ALI: But yeah. It just says "Started from the bottom" on the back, in, like, the Thriller font and sequins, you know?

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh. Perfect. You can get "No New Friends" as your—when you do your—some other turn, 'cause you're already starting as a heel, right?

ALI: [laughing] Sure.

AUSTIN: I'm guessing you're heel, actually, I actually don't know.

ALI: I don't know! I don't know, I'm gonna see where everybody else wants to be, I think.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: 'Cause we have four players, you know.

AUSTIN: That's fair.

ALI: I think I could be either, pretty easily.

AUSTIN: That's fair. Listen, as someone who's part of a thing called "League of Heels", there is no bottom.

ALI: [laughing] This is true.

AUSTIN: As the only face who has been murdered in that league—the only face, and also I'm dead, I, you know, there is no bottom.

ALI: This is true.

AUSTIN: Alright, let's talk stats. Look, Power, Real, Work. Your look—do you want to go over what the starters are?

ALI: Uh, yeah. Look is plus one, Power is zero, Real is negative two, and Work is negative one.

AUSTIN: Alright. Then you add one to one of those.

ALI: Yeah, I think I'm gonna add it to Work?

AUSTIN: That adds up to me.

ALI: Just so kind of face level, but trying her best.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you go to the gym, you actually care about this. You're gonna try to be a good wrestler. But also, your look is a plus one [Ali laughs], because...look at you.

ALI: [laughing] Yup.

AUSTIN: Again, we will skip your Heat for now. You said you will come back around on Roles. Can you tell me your default move and then you get to pick two from this list?

ALI: Yeah, so, my—is the finishing move the same for everyone?

AUSTIN: I think so.

ALI: Okay. Which is—

AUSTIN: Except for the Jobber—no, we did not. The Jobber is different.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: The Jobber is—because the Jobber is booked to lose every match. [amused] So they don't get a finishing move.

[Ali laughs]

ART: And they have different things for—there's different results.

ALI: Oh.

AUSTIN: Right, right, right. You're right.

ART: The move's the same but they have different—

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: Okay. So mine is "Roll 2d6 when you're booked to win. On a plus ten, I hit my finisher clean and gain plus one Audience. Seven to nine, they make me work for it. Choose 'They obviously allow you to with and you gain plus one Heat with them,' 'They push you; you both gain plus one

Momentum,’ and then on a botch, ‘An authority figure interferes and calls the match in your favor on a technicality, losing one with the Audience.’”

AUSTIN: Oof.

ALI: Or “There was a last-minute change to the booking from backstage and your opponent wins the match.”

AUSTIN: Ooof. Okay.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And so that’s the thing with booking. Is I—as the Creative, I book who wins matches by default. And the way that the game works is there’s a lot of moves that let you then be like “No, no, no, this thing is happening.” [Ali laughs] Or “Actually, I fucked up this roll. I’m going to lose this match.” And again, it isn’t about you losing. It isn’t about the wrestler not being good enough. It is—and, like, failing to win the fight, ‘cause there’s not fight. It is a wrestling match. It is about booking changing last minute, like this one said, or about something real getting involved, or about, you know, you being screwed over by the Creatives in the back, or whatever it is. You know, or whatever it is. Or about you deciding to break kayfabe and actually spin things your way, depending on what the move is. So, now you get two more moves.

ALI: Um, yeah. I’m gonna go for “Always Learning,” which is “When you work a match with someone you know is better than you, roll plus Work. On a ten plus, pick two; on a seven to nine, gain—pick one.” And the choices are: “gain plus one Momentum, gain plus one Heat with them, gain their respect.” and then on a botch, I “make a mistake and I lose negative one Audience.”

AUSTIN: Oof. Bad.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. And so what’s the other one?

ALI: And then the other one is “I am the Future.” “When you keep a promise or follow through on a threat that you made on camera, roll plus Look. On a ten, you pick two; on a seven to nine, pick one. Book yourself a match with any opponent, add a stipulation to the match, or gain plus two Momentum. On a botch, you get booked in punitive match.

AUSTIN: Ooh. So that’s—okay, good. That’s when Simeon Shaw comes out and says [as Shaw] “You know what? No. You’re in a triple threat match [Ali giggles] against the number one and number two contender, and it’s an undersea water cage match.”

ALI: [giggles] Yes!

ART: That feels like an advantage.

SYLVIA: Yeah!

ALI: Ohh boy.

AUSTIN: "But it's fresh water."

SYLVIA: Ohhhh.

ART: Ohhhh!

AUSTIN: See?

ALI: Uh-oh.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, see? There you go.

ALI: I can't live in that! [laughs]

[Austin and Sylvia laugh]

ALI: Do we want to talk about—[dissolves into laughter]

AUSTIN: Do we want to what? Hmm?

ALI: Do we want to talk about Simeon's sneaker collection real quick? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh, we'll get there. We'll get there.

ALI: [laughing] Okay, just making sure.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Yeah. Like, this—

ALI: Any—

AUSTIN: Yes, uh-huh [Ali giggles]. He is that, but worse, do you know what I mean?

ALI: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: He's not good, he's a shitbag. Not that Shane is, like, a good dude—I don't know Shane. But, like, Shane at thirty was probably definitely not great, right?

ALI: [giggles] Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, is that it? Do you start—you start with one Audience, right?

ALI: Um—

AUSTIN: Starts and resets to one Audience.

ALI: Yes.

AUSTIN: And then...is there anything else here? Alright, that leaves Sylvia and Art. I'mma just say it: there's a high bar at this point.

[Ali laughs]

SYLVIA: [exhales] No pressure though!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yup!

ART: Um, I have a lot of stuff to talk through, but I'm ready. But also, Sylvia, if you have, like, a quick—

SYLVIA: I—mine's probably not quick either.

ART: If you think yours is gonna be quick and you want it to get it out of the way before I talk everyone to death, you could—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: If you want to get a fresh audience.

[Ali laughs]

SYLVIA: Alright, sure! [sighs] Okay [Austin snorts]. Where do I even start with this?

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: I don't know.

SYLVIA: So I guess...first thing is the Gimmick I'm going with is the Technician.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Which—I'm saying that now, 'cause it's gonna seem at odds with some things, unless I get this right out of the gate.

AUSTIN: Okay. So what is the Technician?

SYLVIA: My idea—which is, sort of like a—they're very good at wrestling but don't have the charisma, is kinda how I'd describe it.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. The Dean Malenkos of the world.

SYLVIA: Yeah, yeah. Sort of. Like, it's all about, like, chain wrestling and submissions and stuff like that.

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

SYLVIA: I think Daniel Bryan was also an inspiration for this, just guessing.

AUSTIN: Oh, sure.

ART: By—going from the “Hailing from”, which are usually the inspirations.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ART: It's Bret Hart...is Manchester, England Zack Sabre Jr.?

SYLVIA: That could be a few people. Because England is just known for the style there.

ART: Sure. I don't know who St. Paul, Minnesota is, but.

SYLVIA: I'm blanking on that too. Someone's gonna—someone in the wrestling chat on the Friends at the Table Discord is gonna be like—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: “Sylvia, I can't believe you didn't know it was—”

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: I don't know...Heath Slater, but good.

DRE: Wait.

SYLVIA: I don't—it's not Heath Slater, I just couldn't think of any other wrestlers. And this is—

DRE: X-Pac is from St. Paul, Minneapolis.

AUSTIN: X-Pac is not a technician.

DRE: I know, but that's the one I could think of; that's the only wrestler I could think of from—'cause that's a—

AUSTIN: Mmm.

SYLVIA: Oh, they might say Minnesota because of this also ties into amateur wrestling.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Oh, sure.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SYLVIA: Anyway...so the idea I had was, like—so the whole—the Technician is based around being good at wrestling but not so good at the other stuff that wrestling involves. And what if my character was someone who was told they were not good at that and really wants to prove everyone wrong?

AUSTIN: Oh buddy.

SYLVIA: So they went *way* far in the other direction. And are trying to do this very out-there character, which I'll get into in a second—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: But they might not have the talking ability to take it—like, really make it work.

AUSTIN: [quietly] Okay. Tell me—tell me—I think a lot of this is gonna hang on the second part of this, which is what that character is.

SYLVIA: So [exhales]. I thought it would be really fun to play a wrestler who is firmly convinced that they are everybody's favorite wrestler.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[Ali giggles]

SYLVIA: And, like, that they see themselves as the sort of idol-type thing almost. Where it's like—not like a J-pop or K-pop idol, but very much like “hang a poster above someone's bed”—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: Like, “Of course you love me, I'm Charlie Cupid!” Which is his name, which is very good.

AUSTIN: Oh my God.

SYLVIA: Comes out wearing heart sunglasses.

AUSTIN: I love it. Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: And a lot of heart aesthetics and stuff like that. And is very much like “I'm going to show everyone in Bluff City who their new favorite wrestler is; it's me.”

[Ali giggles]

AUSTIN: Charlie Cupid.

SYLVIA: But then people are like “Why is this dude just doing wrist locks?”

ALI: [laughs] Aww [laughs more].

AUSTIN: I mean, you must have some sort of lock finishing move, right?

SYLVIA: Oh no, for sure.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Trust me, the total wrestling nerd in me is gonna forget about this a little bit once we get to the actual wrestling.

AUSTIN: Oh—uh-huh.

SYLVIA: And it'll be like “I'm gonna do this cool Japanese suplex that nobody knows!” [Austin, Ali, and Dre laugh] I'll get GIFS, don't worry. I'll link them.

AUSTIN: Okay, good. Thank you.

SYLVIA: But yeah. So that's the whole basic aesthetic idea, is, um—

AUSTIN: Charlie Cupid is your in-ring name or is that your real name?

SYLVIA: In-ring name. His real name is Charlie something.

AUSTIN: Yeah, of course.

SYLVIA: I was thinking he'd be from—'cause you mentioned the sort of WCW parallel. Dominion, I think?

AUSTIN: Yes, Old Dominion. Old Dominion Wrestling Federation, yep. ODW.

SYLVIA: I was thinking that could be where he came from originally.

AUSTIN: Ooh, okay.

SYLVIA: Um—

AUSTIN: So wait, did he step down to the indies? Or is this like a horizontal move in his mind?

SYLVIA: It was kind of a horizontal move.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: Where it's like, I'm not—it's like—I don't like A.J. Styles—

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: But there was a brief period of time where he was a mid-card guy in WCW.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

SYLVIA: And he just didn't have a character. It was—it's kind of a situation like that where it's like "I'm not doing anything here."

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: "It'll be in the same position if I move to this town. And now I have an opportunity here."

AUSTIN: Right, and also "I can stay in this town. This thing doesn't move." So, like, I want to be clear that I don't—so we don't have a name for this wrestling federation yet, for Shaw whatever. I don't know if it's Shaw Wrestling or if it's Bluff City—I don't know what it is yet. We'll—open

door to hear some stuff from y'all [Ali chuckles]. But the—I definitely am imagining it as a weird combination of Ring of Honor and also ECW.

SYLVIA: Mhm.

AUSTIN: In terms of it having a dedicated local fanbase with local memes and local history and very much—less the ECW thing of people jumping off of balconies and foreheads not being a thing you want to look at anymore. But definitely the thing of like, “Oh, yes. This federation has to do with this city.” Right? ECW is a Philadelphia organization. Whatever this organization is, it’s a Bluff City organization. And also the bit about ECW where, like, it is being run on a shoestring budget and people are waiting on their checks and the promoter is not fulfilling promises and everyone—the best thing that could happen is to get a call up to a bigger place where you can get up and maybe not break your whole body so badly. Also, again, we are not using any of the substance abuse storylines here.

SYLVIA: Mm-hm.

AUSTIN: Because of prep. And I think to do an ECW story, you absolutely need to think about that stuff, because woof.

[Sylvia sighs]

AUSTIN: Some real heavy and hard stories about ECW wrestlers out there. Also RVD, who is just a stoner. So, I mean, probably not the Wasted in that case.

[Sylvia sighs]

AUSTIN: Wrestling. Wrestling is rough, it turns out.

SYLVIA: Especially looking back at the 90s and early 2000s.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

[Sylvia shudders]

AUSTIN: Not great. Um—

SYLVIA: So I’m not entirely sure where I’m gonna put from hailing from, but definitely sort of, like, Southern U.S. area.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: I figure I can—since we're just doing characters today, I can nail something down for next week.

AUSTIN: Yeah, definitely. I will say that Old Dominion specifically is based in...is that Tennessee? Is Old Dominion a Tennessee thing? There's somewhere—somewhere is the Old Dominion state—wherever that is the state that that's from.

DRE: Hmm. Old Dominion University is in Virginia?

AUSTIN: So maybe it's Virginia. Maybe that's what I'm going for.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: I did just think of another thing I could put [Ali chuckles].

AUSTIN: Oh, I'll listen.

SYLVIA: But I feel like literally none of our characters is listed being from a real place and I don't know if I—I might just continue that trend here.

AUSTIN: Oh, fuck. Uh-huh?

SYLVIA: Where he's announced as coming from "Your wildest dreams."

AUSTIN: Oh my God.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: Alright, write it down.

ALI: [laughing] So good.

AUSTIN: Write it down. Uh-huh.

ALI: [still laughing] Oh, I love this.

AUSTIN: Good. Uh-huh. Perfect. Here's the one thing where I will break from reality. Or, so, two things, real quick. One: I think that there are openly queer characters in this, in this federation. And no one fuckin'—they are not queer-coded villains; they are openly queer characters. But also, at the same time, Ali, you talked about—part of the pitch for your character is, like "But women are still being treated sort of shitty; you're not allowed to just be 'I like No Doubt'." [Ali

laughs] So do you want to maintain—you want that to still kind of—not open misogyny, not shittiness that’s, like, “Get out of here, broad.” That’s what misogynists say, right?

ALI: Well, I—oh jeez [Dre laughs]. I think it’s less that and more that she was like “I, you know, I did theater in high school and now I want to be a wrestler.” And then, like, someone with a checkbook was like “Okay, but we’re gonna talk about what your look is,” right?

AUSTIN: Right, right, right.

ALI: So it was like—it’s touches of that but it doesn’t have to be built into the, you know.

AUSTIN: Right. I don’t think we do an angle on that.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: I’m not interested in like—again, unless you are. If you’re interested in the “I’m the woman who’s going to be the first champ of this—like the first—you know what I mean? We can do that storyline. But that storyline means we have to go in that direction to some degree, you know?

ALI: Yeah. I don’t want to like—I don’t want to tilt the scales that way, so like—

AUSTIN: Oh, is that the name of your move? [Ali giggles] Is that one of your signature moves?

ART: Ohhhhhh.

ALI: [laughs] Yes.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[Sylvia sighs]

AUSTIN: Anyway. Um, okay. So. Your wildest dreams, Charlie Cupid.

SYLVIA: Yes.

AUSTIN: Entrance?

SYLVIA: Entrance, yeah. So the options on the playbook are “generic and easy, loud and overblown, raw and intense, or something else.” And I think the closest is “loud and overblown”—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: —for what I have in mind.

AUSTIN: Which, like, fits because it doesn't work, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Because if it worked, it wouldn't be overblown. It would be like—you know, when you look at the Golden—You're basically a Technician who wishes they were a Golden Boy, right?

SYLVIA: Exactly.

AUSTIN: And so, like, those entrances are "classic and impressive" or "showy and ostentatious". You don't get those. You get "overblown". You don't even get "showy and ostentatious".

SYLVIA: It's very much like what I'm—it rem—you're completely right. What I'm basically—it's—I don't know how many p—I know Art has been to a couple local wrestling shows, but there's always, like, the new guy.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: On the local wrestling show. Who's trying way too hard with their character when they should just, like, tone it down.

AUSTIN: I think we've all watched NXT at the very least.

SYLVIA: Exactly! Yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So.

SYLVIA: This is like, "what if the kid who took three seminars worth of promo classes wanted to be a Velveteen Dream type?"

AUSTIN: Right, right.

SYLVIA: But couldn't pull it off.

AUSTIN: Right. Did not have the natural talent and also did not have the training.

SYLVIA: Yeah, just doesn't have the charisma for it or like—

AUSTIN: The two things you need.

SYLVIA: Like, all the wrestling training is there but none of the—

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: Like, no one ever sat—like, 'cause he's from the traditional wrestling places, like this was all about like, workrate, that sort of, like, you gotta know how to do all your holds and shit before you even care about doing promos.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

SYLVIA: Promos are secondary. And that shows in the—that teaching shows in the way he is.

AUSTIN: Cool.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. So that is Entrance. Stats?

ART: Could I just have a quick note about characters you see at local indie shows?

AUSTIN: Of course. Uh-huh?

ART: The last local indie show I went to had a character that was “the Samoan Werewolf”.

AUSTIN: Oh my God. Art, why are you spoiling the character you're gonna play?

ART: And the show before that, which was a different federation, just had Gangrel there [laughs].

[Austin laughs]

ART: Actual Gangrel. He has a new name now [Ali giggles], but that's who it was.

AUSTIN: Does he still have the teeth?

ART: Yeah, yeah. He's still doing the exact same thing.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: But Gangrel is owned by White Wolf, so he's not doing that.

AUSTIN: Right, you can't use that. Yeah.

ART: And that's where Rusev came from. Rusev came from that federation.

AUSTIN: Huh.

SYLVIA: Huh.

AUSTIN: Good on him. I guess.

SYLVIA: I always assumed he just kind of got picked up by WWE [ali giggles] out of nowhere. Like—

ART: No, he comes from Knokx Pro Wrestling.

ALI: Wowwww.

ART: Out of California.

AUSTIN: Jeez.

ART: Which you would think would be from Knoxville. It isn't.

ALI: Um—

AUSTIN: Was he Vampire Warrior? Which is one of the names he used?

SYLVIA: [snorts] Boy, ho.

ART: Yes, I believe he was Vampire Warrior.

DRE: *Hell* yeah!

AUSTIN: [laughing] I can't believe he got the, like, knock off Dollar Store action figure name of himself. Like—[laughs].

[Ali sighs]

AUSTIN: Sorry. Anyway—

SYLVIA: Oh, are we talking about Gangrel? Sorry, I thought we were talking about Rusev and I got really excited.

AUSTIN: No, we were talking about Gangrel. We were talking about Gangrel.

SYLVIA: [dejected] Okay.

DRE: Fuck, no I thought we were saying Rusev was Vampire Warrior.

ALI: No, I also thought we talking about Rusev.

AUSTIN: I *wish*. I wish.

ALI: Ugh.

AUSTIN: Happy Rusev day, everybody.

[Ali and Dre laugh]

AUSTIN: Stats?

SYLVIA: Stats! So, my starting stats are Look minus two.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Yeah.

SYLVIA: Power zero, Real minus one, and Work plus one. And I get to add one to any of those.

AUSTIN: Okay.

SYLVIA: And before this, I was debating adding it to Look just so I wouldn't be so bad, but no.

AUSTIN: Oh my God, really? Okay.

SYLVIA: I think—I don't know, I think it'd be more fun! The way it works in this mechanics, I think it'll actually flow pretty well when I fuck up those Look rolls in a match.

AUSTIN: Right. Fair. Think about the imaginary audience, you're right.

SYLVIA: Yeah. So I think I'm gonna put the—you know, yeah, I think I'm just put the other plus one into my Work so I can just—

AUSTIN: Yeah. That's the character, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Plus two Work, minus two Look. But thinks it's plus one Work, plus one Look. And it's not.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Love it.

SYLVIA: I'm also gonna be taking—just scoping out the move that gives me plus one Work, so I'm really leaning into it.

AUSTIN: Oh my God. Okay. That is the Technical Expert move.

SYLVIA: Yes.

AUSTIN: Are you a Face or a Heel?

SYLVIA: I was thinking Heel.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Okay.

SYLVIA: I feel like it doesn't work as a face. Because the whole thing is that it's an annoying guy who wants you to love him.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

SYLVIA: Like, the audience. So, you know.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Is it a little like NXT Bo Dallas?

SYLVIA: No, it's less—it's more like—Bo Dallas is too, like...a weird baby gremlin for me to make that comparison, with his weird smiles and stuff, do you know what I mean?

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: Okay, we don't have to insult his appearance.

SYLVIA: I'm just saying, that's how he acted with his weird little yells and his running around.

AUSTIN: Fair.

SYLVIA: This is much more self-serious, I'd say.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

ALI: Is there like a drop of Elias in here?

SYLVIA: Definitely.

AUSTIN: Ohh, thank God.

[Ali laughs]

SYLVIA: Definitely. The two people I've been thinking about—

AUSTIN: The best thing happening in wrestling in America?

SYLVIA: The two—Ali, I'll let you know who the two people I've been thinking a lot about with regards to this are. It's Elias and Hiromu Takahashi.

ALI: [laughs] Good. Perfect.

SYLVIA: So, you know. I'm gonna put down Heel.

AUSTIN: Yeah, go for it. So then you get moves. Again, one of them is Technical Expert, then you also have Finishing Move and one more.

SYLVIA: The other one I'm gonna take is Excellence of Execution, which lets me roll plus Work for my finishing move.

AUSTIN: Which does what? 'Cause it's a little bit different for you.

SYLVIA: The finishing move—oh yeah, I forgot that the effects are different.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

SYLVIA: So...on a ten plus, I hit it clean and gain Audience, like all of them.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

SYLVIA: And on a seven to nine, they make me work for it. I choose either: "They counter and I have to slap a real submission hold on them, gain plus two momentum; They no-sell my finish and I have to hit them with it again, gain plus one Heat with them. On a botch, pick one: It's sloppy, lose minus one Audience and win the match; or you go overboard and really crank in a hold. You injure your opponent and end the match in a no contest."

AUSTIN: [snorts] Don't fail. Rough.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. No injuries, obviously. And you start with an Audience of plus one, I believe. Yes. Okay. And again, we'll come back to Heat in a second, once we finish Art's long talk. Art?

ART: Hi, it's me, Art with long talks.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: Talk to me about your wrestler.

ART: So I, of course, want to continue with Jake the Jackal.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Introduced in InSpectres. And in that, I sort of envisioned him as an Egyptian stereotype Undertaker.

AUSTIN: Yep.

ART: And I have since then sort of wondered, you know, while that was kind of cute and funny for that—

AUSTIN: For a thing that wasn't actually on screen.

ART: Right. Like he used to do—

AUSTIN: That was like "Yeah, I used to do this." Yeah, uh-huh.

ART: And if perhaps that is less cute and funny as like a really thing.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: That like, I don't know anything about ancient Egypt; I am not Egyptian.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Again, the two things you would need to be [Ali laughs]. At least one of those two to fuck around in that space adequately.

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: You'd at least need to know some shit about ancient Egypt to get it wrong in a way that would be—you know what I mean? Like, I don't want you just swinging.

ART: Right. If I were an Egyptologist—

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: —we could talk about it, right, if I was—

AUSTIN: And not the sort that raids tombs and takes things from Egyptian culture.

ART: Is that still—is that still an Egyptologist? I thought there'd be—I thought there were, like, academic Egyptologists—

AUSTIN: There are real Egyptologists now, yes. There are also shitty treasure hunters out there.

ART: Right. I don't know that a lot of shitty treasure hunters are also doing Actual Play podcasts, but.

AUSTIN: [laughs] It takes all kinds.

ART: Anyway.

AUSTIN: So you think moving away from that for the Jackal.

ART: Right. But, like, I'm sort of thinking American badass Undertaker.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Where it's like, it's moved away but there is still—you can't move away from all of it, because, like—

AUSTIN: From the Tombstone Piledriver.

ART: Right, the Tombstone Piledriver. He's still from Death Valley, I'm pretty sure.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: You know, that like you have to—

AUSTIN: But Death Valley definitely has a biker bar in your mind, now. Do you know what I mean?

ART: I'm sure Death Valley does have a biker bar.

AUSTIN: Right. But before, it used to only have a graveyard, you know? Like, that was the whole—like, ooh, you imagine old West Death Valley versus, like, modern Fred Durst Death Valley.

[Ali snorts]

ART: Sure. Um, is Fred Durst from Death Valley?

AUSTIN: I'm so glad, I'm so glad that Kid Rock didn't show up to Wrestlemania.

SYLVIA: Ahhh.

ART: Did you see his whole "Body slam some Democrats" speech?

AUSTIN: [flatly] Shut up.

[Dre guffaws]

ART: Okay. Uh—

[Dre keeps laughing]

AUSTIN: I did not. I can't. I can't, Art. [Dre keeps laughing] I don't have it in me. Kanye West is back on Twitter, I can't.

ALI: It's been a long week.

AUSTIN: It's been a long week; it's *Tuesday*.

ART: Kanye West is back on Twitter so you can't remember that Kid Rock's an asshole? Um—

DRE: He forgot.

AUSTIN: You know, I can't have two of my loves betray me in one week.

[Ali and Dre laugh]

ART: Um...anyway.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: But like, biker scenes—I don't want to do biker and I'm struggling to come up with another, like, tough guy thing?

AUSTIN: [gruff voice] The Dog-catcher.

ART: Yeah, for example, not the Dog-catcher [Austin laughs]. Um—

AUSTIN: What else is there that's cool and badass? But not good. Ali?

ALI: I mean, if this is post-InSpectres, you could just be the Ghost-hunter. For, like, the "walks with the dead". But then that's too Undertaker maybe, I don't know.

AUSTIN: The—

ART: I mean, I could be like John Constantine, right? I could be like—

ALI: Oooh.

AUSTIN: Ohhh.

ART: Like I'm Ghost-hunter, but cooler.

AUSTIN: Hey, can I tell you—wait, can I tell you a real thing real quick?

ART: Of course.

AUSTIN: Have you looked around this federation? 'Cause, motherfucker, I got the selkie you literally helped [Ali laughs]. And I got a vampire already. And this motherfucker's name is Cupid. Cupid is like a mythological thing.

ALI: Mm-hm.

ART: Alright, I'm gonna finetune it a little bit but let's go somewhere between Blade and Constantine.

[Ali giggles, Austin laughs]

AUTIN: Alright, what's that—

ART: Probably closer to Constantine, I imagine it's not a leather jacket. I do imagine it's like—I don't know. John Constantine had a lot of looks; I'll find the right one.

[Ali giggles]

AUSTIN: Okay. But also, you're like an old dude.

ART: Yeah, it's an older—I'm an older dude. Yeah, I think this is going to work. I think as like—you know, I'm thinking a lot of looks in term of late-career Kevin Nash, like when Kevin Nash decided to stop fighting his gray hair.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: I might even mean like—what's that movie? The movie with the—Channing Tatum.

SYLVIA: Magic Mike?

ART: Magic Mike 2 Kevin Nash might be really what I mean in terms of, like—

AUSTIN: Ohhh. Right. XX [clears throat] Excuse me.

ART: More clothes. No stripping.

AUSTIN: Magic Mike double-X L, or whatever. XXL.

ALI: Mm-hm.

ART: Yeah, Magic Mike XXL. If you're in Vegas looking for something to do, the Magic Mike stage show is pretty good.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Um—

AUSTIN: Oh, he looks—Kevin Nash looks good in Magic Mike 2, huh?

ART: Kevin Nash still looks good. He's just very clearly not—it's just not 1994 anymore.

AUSTIN: He looks great! Just in life!

ART: Yeah, if any of us could look as good—I don't know how old Kevin Nash is but, like, he definitely looks the best of any big wrestler at his age I've ever seen.

AUSTIN: Yeah. He also looks like he owns a lot of real estate.

[Dre laughs]

ART: I don't think I'm gonna take that part of the character.

AUSTIN: [Googling] Does...Kevin Nash...own real estate...question mark...

DRE: He definitely flips all of it, right?

AUSTIN: Oh, one hundred percent. I got this knash.com, "Real estate is my business. My only business." This is not [laughs]—this is not our Kevin Nash.

ART: Aw.

AUSTIN: [laughing] It's really funny though.

ART: But, like, I think the, you know, that the Jackal motif can still get kind of in there.

AUSTIN: Wait, like, it's still—do you still have a big jackal silhouette on your—on the back of your jacket, or whatever?

ART: Yeah, and it probably still looks like it's from the merchandise stand outside the Stargate ride.

AUSTIN: Right. It's that—yeah, yeah, yeah.

ART: I don't know that there is a Stargate ride but, like—

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: Uh [laughs], because these are branded symbols and, you know—

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: That's how commerce works. You can't just throw away all your trademarks. But, like, I'm actually like [Googling] Are...jackals...predators...or...scavengers?

AUSTIN: [laughs] I think they're—I think that they're scavengers, aren't they?

ART: Small canines...

AUSTIN: Like, not vultures but—what are those things called? They're omnivorous, but—

ART: Um—

AUSTIN: Coyotes. They're basically like desert coyotes. I mean, coyotes are desert coyotes.

ART: A coyote has tried to eat my dog. So.

AUSTIN: Jesus! Is your—is Mabel okay?

ART: Yeah. But like—

ALI: It's just a Californian thing.

AUSTIN: Mhm.

ALI: They're just out there.

ART: Yeah. There's just a lot of coyotes.

AUSTIN: Huh.

ART: And they will—if they're hungry, they'll try to take your small dog.

AUSTIN: They are opportunistic omnivores and predators, and proficient scavengers.

ART: Okay. Okay, so like "The Jackal's on the hunt," can be a—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Yes.

ART: Great. Sold.

AUSTIN: We'll just leave out that you eat [laughs] small mammals, birds, and reptiles.

ART: Why? What?

AUSTIN: And that your large feet have fused leg bones that give you a physique well-suited to long-distance [laughs] running.

ALI: Hmm.

DRE: Why are we talking about Even Gardener right now? I'm very confused.

[Austin and Ali laugh]

SYLVIA: Oh my God.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: So that's it. It's like moving on but keeping the thing. But there's no ankhs. There's no—

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: He's not the avatar of Anubis anymore. This is all, like, "We're all a little embarrassed by it, but that's what wrestling in the '80s was like—"

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: And now—

AUSTIN: It's some other time, indeterminate.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And we're embarrassed.

ART: I'm just trying to figure out where he's announced from. Because he was certainly originally announced from, like, "The Nile Delta" and I'm trying to figure out a way to turn that into, like—

AUSTIN: I'm—we didn't ever det—was he Egyptian?

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like he isn't just from Cairo, is he?

ART: Oh no, he's not *from*.

AUSTIN: That's what I was asking.

ART: I mean, I bet he—I mean, I'm sure he's—I've always imagined him as having a complexion from which you could assume he was vaguely Middle-Eastern.

AUSTIN: [snorts] Oh, like a wrestling brown person in the 1980s? When they just attached some shit because that's how wrestling creatives were back then? Still?

DRE: Still, yeah.

ART: Yeah, but I haven't like internally decided where he's really from.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Gotcha. He'll just be from there, right? Like, part of that turn—or maybe not. Or maybe do we do something else? Which is like “Parts Unknown.” But that for Constantine, do you know what I mean? From “The Realm Between Realms” or whatever, do you know what I mean?

ART: Yeah, from “The Realm Between Realms” is—

AUSTIN: Like, from Miskatonic University, or whatever, you know what I mean? Wherever you hunt vampires and whatnot from.

ART: Sure. Um, yeah. From—yeah, from the—“Crypt of the Daywalker”.

AUSTIN: We can come—right, exactly. You can sleep on that. We have a couple of days before we have to actually step into the ring.

ART: It's not that one. It's not

AUSTIN: It's not the “Crypt of the Daywalker”? Okay.

ART: No, that's—that's bad.

AUSTIN: Um, so that is—we haven't talked about Gimmick yet.

ART: Oh. And that's the other thing I'm struggling with a little bit. Because my idea was the Veteran.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: It fits very well.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: But that playbook is very much about, like, politics?

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: So the two moves that I found the most interesting for my pick one—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: Were “Top of the Card: redemand a match; it must be granted by Creative.”

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: Which for a game we're only gonna run one show feels like—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: —I'm just like, it sounds like a real middle finger to just literally everyone—

AUSTIN: No, I'd be—yeah. Eh.

ART: You, the other players, the audience

AUSTIN: No, I don't think so. I think that's a good moment.

ALI: No.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: Because remember, you don't have to demand a match for *you*.

ALI: Mm.

SYLVIA: Mm.

DRE: Mmm.

ART: I never read it like that, but you're right. It certainly doesn't say that.

AUSTIN: It doesn't.

ART: And then the other fun move from this playbook is Bury 'Em.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: "When you go to management to stop another wrestler's push, roll plus Real. On ten plus, you book their next segment; on seven to nine, pick whether you book yourself to win next time you wrestle them or add a stipulation to their next match; on a botch, you accelerate their push instead.

AUSTIN: It's very good.

SYLVIA: It's *very* good.

AUSTIN: Especially given the kind of, like—again, the metagame of whoever leaves with the most Audience leaves with the contract.

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: Um—and so what is the alternative here for Gimmicks?

ART: The other—the alternative is Monster.

AUSTIN: Okay. Which is?

ART: And the move that that gives me access to that is fun is “Not of This World: pick or create a signature match stipulation.”

AUSTIN: That’s very good.

ALI: Eee.

ART: “Whenever Creative books you in a match, you may choose to add that stipulation even if the match already has one, and you start the match with plus two Momentum.

AUSTIN: What does that—what’s that—?

ART: So, like, “The casket match!” or the—

AUSTIN: Right, right.

ART: The—I don’t have one but, you know. “Three stages of hell” or whatever.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: [quietly] “Egyptian strat match”—I don’t. That’s not—not that one.

AUSTIN: Mm, not as good.

SYLVIA: Nm.

AUSTIN: See, not as good!

[Austin and Sylvia chuckle]

ART: I’m just thinking of things that people in the meeting where they pitch these things that’s on the list.

AUSTIN: Yes! Oh, it's absolutely on the list. I'm just making sure there's nothing else—

ART: Just 'cause every strat match is, like, a location.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. There's nothing in International Incident here that matches, right?

ART: No, not really. Um, I mean, like, there is if you want to do, like—you know, I could just decide that, you know—I could bend this to be the Ace, but that isn't right.

AUSTIN: No. You may have been the Ace at one point. In the past.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Like, you were probably the Monster but there's probably a little bit of a period where you were also the Ace. Or you at least had an Ace move or two.

ART: Well, like the Shoot Fighter, right?

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Because, like, being an act. But saying, like, "I'm a ghost hunter and so I am a Shoot Fighter" is not really right.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: You are actually a ghost hunter though, so, you know. In this league, I don't know. But you're not a Luchadore, you're not a young one. You're not the Young One.

ART: Right, I'm not a Young Lion, which is what this definitely is.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: I mean, I think the thing to do is take the Veteran and trust that we'll come back to this. Because long-term the Veteran has the fun moves. You know, the demand a match move is fun—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: The put-over move is fun. You know, "When you show vulnerability to an opponent in the ring in order to make them look good, roll plus Work.

AUSTIN: Right, right, right.

ART: On a ten plus, you both gain—the idea of, like—the idea of being an older person who wants to help but also wants to protect their own spot—

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: Like, try to build that Hulk Hogan late career—like WCW Hulk Hogan, where I'm ruining the company but think I'm doing great.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Uh-huh. Yeah.

ART: That seems fun. But, like, on a one-card thing it's just hard to get there.

AUSTIN: To get there, yeah. I'm just double-checking you aren't the Ace. The Ace does have "Amazing Entrance."

ART: Uh, let me see [reading under his breath].

AUSTIN: Most of the one there is Fighting Spirit, which is like you're basically able to—like, that would—here's the question: are you good at being a weird ghost hunter?

ART: Yeah. I—

AUSTIN: Like, are you good at—here's my real question: do you do the same six moves? Or are you a good wrestler? That's unfair. Do you do the same six moves in a way that is—do you do the same six moves and everyone loves them? Or are you, like, still working at the technique of in-ring performance and storytelling?

ART: I think that Jake is, like, as, you know—he's wrestled so many matches that he is good at it.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: But he was never—he was never like—he never had a thousand and four holds or whatever it was.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: And he was never like—

AUSTIN: But you know what I'm saying, like, there's a big difference between even the Miz and Roman Reigns. No offense—I—no offense to Roman Reigns who I think is doing his best to find shit but, like, I don't like watching Roman Reigns in the ring that much because he does five moves.

ART: Sure. No I think it's a little better than that. I'm thinking more of like—

AUSTIN: But he's not a—he's not Daniel Bryan. He's not the indie darling. He's not the, like, he knows a bunch of holds and—

ART: Right. He's more of a territory person, he's—

AUSTIN: Right. Okay.

ART: He's Jake the Snake, right?

AUSTIN: Right, he is Jake the Snake. Right, that's true.

ART: I mean, Jake the Snake was a good wrestler.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: But you remember Jake the Snake because of his out-of-the-ring stuff.

AUSTIN: I remember Jack the Snake because of his snake.

[Ali laughs]

ART: There's no snake; I don't have a snake?

SYLVIA: Fair.

AUSTIN: Do you have a jackal? Have you considered having a jackal?

ART: No, I think that would—I don't think you can tame them.

ALI: Mm.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's what you said in the Creative meeting. And I was like, "Oh, he's right, and also put that on a shirt: 'You can't tame the Jackal.'" Okay, but that's a good argument for being the Antihero [laughs]. "Shaw, you want me to be your man...but don't you know? You can't tame the Jackal."

[Ali snickers]

ART: Hahahahaha. Um, yeah. The problem with the Antihero is the—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Is the—

ART: Is the minus two power.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's a big problem. You're right.

ART: Because, because this is definitely a power wrestler gimmick.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah. And you're not working stiff. 'Cause you're not that person.

ART: No, I'm not.

AUSTIN: You're working. You're really in the ring; you're really trying to make this look good. So yeah, I think it's probably Veteran then.

ART: And I'll use my plus one stat to Power. So it's—

AUSTIN: So what's your overall stat line then?

ART: It starts with Look zero, Power minus one, Real minus one, Work plus one.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: And I'm gonna add one to Power to go zero, zero, minus one, plus one.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool.

ART: [muttering] Where is my sheet?

AUSTIN: And you are Face?

ART: Yes. With two Heels...with a—

AUSTIN: With two and a half heels, with—'cause, Ali, have you decided what you're doing yet?

ALI: Um, I was just gonna fit whatever we needed.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: 'Cause we have an even—we have four people, so.

AUSTIN: Okay. So then, yeah, you and Ali are Faces, it sounds like

ALI: Okay [laughs].

AUSTIN: Art—

ALI: That means we can't do the "Jake the Jackal versus the Selkie."

ART: I mean, not right now.

AUSTIN: Right, not right—

ART: You don't put all your big matches first.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You probably did that bit already, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I mean, that's a question: are we doing intergender? Are we living in the world of Lucha Underground, where they just do intergender matches sometimes?

ALI: I don't have anything against it.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: I like gender wrestling a lot, so.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Let's do it.

DRE: Okay, cool.

AUSTIN: Mixed wrestling is happening. So yeah, maybe y'all did an arc together and, like, have come around the other side. I mean, we don't need to ask—I don't need to ask that general question because now, once we finish Art's moves, we can talk about Heat.

ALI: Oh, right.

AUSTIN: So, let's talk about moves really quick, Art. What is your Finishing Move?

ART: Finishing Move: “When you’re booked to win a match, roll 2d6. On ten plus, you hit your finisher clean. Choose whether you or your opponent gains plus one Audience. On a seven to nine, they make you work for it. Choose you use your veteran skills to force a win and gain plus one Heat with them or you let them look strong in defeat and they gain plus on Audience. On a botch, you win by count out, disqualification, or interference, Creative’s choice, and you lose minus one Audience.”

AUSTIN: Mm-hm. And then you have?

ART: Veteran Instincts: “Gain plus one Momentum when you start a match.”

AUSTIN: That’s great. And then you get to pick one.

ART: Um...I’ve read three of them already, let me make sure I know what Respective Business does [Austin chuckles]. I don’t have enough plus Real to really make that feel good...

AUSTIN: It’s cool though.

ART: It’s real cool. But I’ve rolled dice on this show before [chuckles]. For this, I’ll take Put Over—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: —and I’ll take Top of the Card next time.

AUSTIN: Okay. So Put Over says?

ART: Put Over says...I already moved over to write it down...“When you show vulnerability to an opponent in the ring in order to make them look good, roll plus Work. On a ten plus, you both gain plus one Audience. On a seven to nine, one of you gains plus one Audience, the other loses plus one—minus one Audience, your opponent’s choice. On a botch, you lose minus one Audience and your opponent resents you for your pandering.”

AUSTIN: [amused] Mhm. That’s good. And again, you don’t start with any injury. And you—when you spend an Advance...blah, blah, blah. You start, *you* start with Audience two. You start and reset to Audience two.

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: ‘Cause you’re a veteran. You’ve been here. They know who you are. They’re never gonna forget Jake the Jackal, even if you change Gimmicks. I mean, I guess if you changed Gimmicks you wouldn’t reset to Audience two. But you know what I mean.

ART: I would if I came back as one of the Prestige classes.

AUSTIN: Oh, true. Um, and I think that that is it. So, it's time to talk about Heat. Let's jump back to the top here...actually, the bottom of this page. And Dre, do you want to the Jobber's Heat questions?

DRE: Sure. Umm...do you want me to read all of these? 'Cause I think—don't we take turns asking a question? I'm trying to remember.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I guess you do—maybe you do actually ask—we do, like, go around the horn, is that right?

ART: "Ask one per player."

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: So everyone should know that they have to omit one.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Ohhh.

AUSTIN: You do not get to have all of these. Yeah. So let's start with you. Which of these ones are you asking first?

DRE: "Who was my tag team partner before they made it big?"

SYLVIA: I—I'm fine to have that.

DRE: Okay.

AUSTIN: That sounds right to me, yeah.

SYLVIA: I think that works pretty well because, again, I also—like, not to go too into it but I also have the question "Who was holding me back as my tag team partner?" as the first question on my sheet, too.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, mm-hm. [Ali giggles] Damn.

SYLVIA: So I was actually gonna ask that and see if you wanted it, so.

DRE: Heck yeah.

SYLVIA: I think it works pretty well.

AUSTIN: Damn. Alright, so both of you take plus one Heat. That's easy. On each other. That's a good first set. Ali?

ALI: Mine is "Who did I debut with and leave behind?" And especially based on that, I was thinking Sylvia?

AUSTIN: Mhmm.

ALI: Where Sylvia comes in, thinks they're the best wrestler ever, but it turns out, like, people really like Drake music? [laughs]

AUSTIN: People do really like Drake music and seapunk and fish.

ALI: [laughing] They're just slightly over.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: Plus the tag team thing which started on bad footing, I guess. If—Sylvia, if you're cool with that.

SYLVIA: I'm totally down with that, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay, so there you go. So then that means, Ali, you take plus one Heat with Sylvia, with Charlie Cupid. Alright, Art?

ART: "Who has no respect for the work I've put into this company?"

ALI: Ooh.

SYLVIA: Ooh.

ART: Face me, you coward.

[Ali, Dre, and Austin laugh]

DRE: I wonder if it's me? Maybe Lenny thinks you're kinda like a try-hard.

AUSTIN: Huh.

DRE: Because you want to do something with this. But he's just like, "Man, it's just wrestling."

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: Like, “You had your—you did this already. Why—like, you have another job.” [laughs]

DRE: Right.

AUSTIN: “You hunt ghosts for real.” But it’s not like a—it can’t just be “Let the young kids get it”—unless it can be, but not for you. Right? Like, maybe you’re protective of—like, “I can’t believe we’re still dealing with Jake the Jackal when we have Charlie Cupid and...Seapunk Selkie [Ali laughs] who should be getting a push.”

DRE: Yeah. Yeah, I could see that.

AUSTIN: Um, sleep on it. See how you feel.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So then, Art, take plus one with Dre. And we’re back around for Art, your second question.

DRE: Oh, we’re snake-drafting it.

AUSTIN: Oh right, sorry. No, ‘cause—you went first last time, Dre. Right?

DRE: Yeah. That’s what I said.

AUSTIN: Did I just say Art? I said Art.

ALI: Yeah [laughs].

AUSTIN: I meant Dre. Sorry. I meant Dre. We are not snake-drafting it.

DRE: Okay. Uh, let’s see. “Who can’t remember who I am?”

[Austin snorts]

SYLVIA: [quietly] Fuck.

ALI: Aw.

ART: Um, I mean I want to take that in retaliation, but it doesn't make any sense, if—

AUSTIN: Right. If you're upset that he doesn't give you the credit you deserve, then you probably don't [laughs]—you probably do remember who he is.

ALI: Unless it's just like "That weird guy should respect me!" [laughs]

ART: Yeah, "Whatshisname with the shirt!" [Dre laughs] "He's gotta re—" Okay, yeah, it's me.

DRE: "Have you seen that asshole's hat? Can't even remember his name, he's a—I hate that motherfucker."

ART: "I hate Hat Asshole and I don't remember him [Dre laughs] and he says he's been around the whole but I don't think that's true. And honestly, what's with the hat?"

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: God. Um, alright. Sylvia?

SYLVIA: Um, "Who is trying to teach me to be more of an entertainer?"

AUSTIN: [softly] Oh, that's good.

ALI: Um—

ART: I'll—oh.

ALI: Anyone can take that.

ART: I'll take that.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: I don't want to say yes to everyone's thing; that's what I'm trying to avoid [laughs].

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Lot of Heat.

SYLVIA: I had that problem the first go-around too.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Ali? Remember that you're picking three of these total, so.

ALI: Okay. Um—"Who's taking me under their wing?"

SYLVIA: I could do that in terms of, like, we could make it be more about taking you under my wing as, like, wrestling stuff.

ALI: Okay, yeah.

SYLVIA: Like I'm coaching you to be better in the ring.

AUSTIN: In the ring, right, right, right.

ALI: [laughs] That makes me want to be the person who's trying to make you better performer.

AUSTIN: Ohh. True.

ALI: By being like, "Look at this—" [laughs]

DRE: That makes a lot of sense. Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: We could have some fun with that, where it's like you're trying to do that but my character's like, "Okay, cool. I'm gonna go talk to Jake about this."

ALI: [laughs] Fair.

AUSTIN: *God*. Brutal.

ART: We could do it the other—'cause I have a "Who is my protege?"

ALI: Ohhh.

ART: So we could make a triangle here.

[Ali giggles]

SYLVIA: That's pretty good.

AUSTIN: Wait, what's that triangle look that? I need to understand this triangle.

ALI: So I'm trying to teach Cupid to be a better—have a better look, I guess.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: But Cupid is *my* protege.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right. And Cupid is—

ALI: Is trying to teach me to be a better wrestler.

AUSTIN: How to be a better—yes. I kind of like that.

[Dre laughs]

ART: Alright, so I'll write that down for protege.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: So then, Sylvia, are you changing to Heat with Ali from teaching you to be a better—

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Cool, cool, cool.

SYLVIA: And then I can just change, um—hmm. I'm gonna have to rewrite some stuff to make it fit but it'll work, yeah.

ALI: Oh wait, but that means we immediately have two Heat, which is good [laughs].

AUSTIN: That's great! God, I've lost whoever's next. Who's left?

ART: I think we've finished this round.

DRE: Is it back to me?

AUSTIN: I think it's back to you.

ART: Does everyone have two?

AUSTIN: Everyone should have two at the end of this.

DRE: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Everyone has two questions answered? Yeah.

DRE: Alright.

AUSTIN: Okay.

DRE: Ughh, I can't pick from these last two. It's either "Who refuses to work with me?" or "Who is always trying to get management on my side?" I don't know if the last one really fits because Jake doesn't like me and neither does Cupid, and Ali, unless you want it to be a part of your character that, like, Seapunk is trying to encourage this sad, Jobber person [laughs]

AUSTIN: Maybe she doesn't—

ALI: I *could*.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: I, like—there's something interesting in being like "I love wrestling and you're important to this—"

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Hmm.

ALI: "So they should book you better—"

AUSTIN: Right!

ALI: Is kind of a thing? I dunno.

DRE: Okay. Yeah!

AUSTIN: You show up every night! [Ali laughs] You're here all the time, and you put in work, and you should get a push.

ALI: Right. Kind of like, "I'm gonna talk to Mr. Whoever." [laughs]

AUSTIN: Shaw.

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Oh, everyone gets plus one Heat to people of the opposite role; don't forget that.

AUSTIN: Oh, important. Good catch.

ALI: Oh wait, what?

AUSTIN: People—you get plus one Heat to someone—if you're a Face against anyone who's a Heel, and vice versa.

ALI: Okay

DRE: So it's me and Sylvia are the Heels, and then Ali and Art are our Faces, right?

AUSTIN: Yes. Correct

ALI: Completely ignored for this bit, but [laughs].

ART: But this is backstage-y.

DRE: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: This is backstage, real stuff, yeah.

DRE: Okay, cool.

AUSTIN: Sylvia, did you already—? No, you did not already answer your third question.

SYLVIA: No. Yeah, I have—yeah, I have one question left and I don't know if either of them are gonna work great.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm?

SYLVIA: Well, maybe. There's "Who's jealous of my skills?" which could work. Or "Who's trying to learn by watching me in the ring?" but I think we've covered that last one pretty...clearly.

ALI: Mhm. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Not necessarily.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Because either Art or Dre could be who's trying to learn by watching me in the ring. There's a difference between "I'm trying to help them get better" and "I'm watching their technique."

SYLVIA: Okay. So this—maybe I'm misinterpreting—are we supposed to—are we only able to have one question—

AUSTIN: No.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: No, no, no.

SYLVIA: That's where I—

AUSTIN: Heat goes up to four.

DRE: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. You're not trying to fill out a chart, like "Here is my—"

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: Heat is a thing that—these are just questions that give you Heat plus whatever. And so, when this starts, remember what these are 'cause they're important for your characterization, but Heat is a thing that goes up to four and then you have a match and then you kind of cash that in to gain Audience.

SYLVIA: Okay.

ALI: Ohh.

AUSTIN: It's like you're—"What is your heat with that wrestler? What is the—how excited is the Audience about your relationship with them?"

ALI: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: And so you want that Heat to go up. You actually would love to have a Heat higher with somebody, because it's one of the ways that you can get to four and then get more Audience.

SYLVIA: Okay.

ALI: Yeah. For instance, you're already plus two with me, and then plus three because we're different.

SYLVIA: Yeah. I must have misread that in the book.

AUSTIN: Yeah, no worries.

SYLVIA: So yeah, I'm not married to either of these so the two—if anybody thinks they've got a good idea for either option—again “Who's jealous of my skills?” or “Who's trying to learn by watching me in the ring?”, let me know?

DRE: I mean, I could see my character as jealous of your skills.

SYLVIA: Sure, we could definitely work that in there. I think—I kind of like the idea of estranged tag team partners?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: Aww.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Lean on it.

[Ali giggles]

ART: Yeah, don't you think Marty Jannety was jealous of Shawn Michaels's skills? Also his ability to not drive drunk.

SYLVIA: That's—

DRE: Wow, that got dark quick, huh?

SYLVIA: I don't want to talk about Marty Jannety.

AUSTIN: Welcome to wrestling. Welcome to wrestling.

SYLVIA: It'll just get darker.

AUSTIN: Yeah, see? Ugh, it's brutal. Wrestling is—yeah. Next person, Ali.

ALI: Mine—okay. So I have two and both of them are fair game. Which is: “Who’s jealous of my rapid rise?” and “Who’s taken it upon themselves to teach me a lesson in the ring?” Which could be, like, also you want to beat me up.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ART: I could be jealous of your rapid rise.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Oh, that’s interesting. Yeah, especially with the triangle that we’ve established.

ART: Sometimes we just give softballs to the fanfic writers.

[Ali and Austin laugh]

AUSTIN: And I think we wrap back around to Art for the last one. Is that right?

ART: So my last two are “Who am I keeping out of the spotlight?” and “Who is undercutting me?”

AUSTIN: Mhmm.

ART: And I—mm. I think I prefer “Who is undercutting me?”

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

ALI: Hmm.

AUSTIN: It ain’t the Jobber. So it’s really an Sylvia or Ali question.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah, can we—

ART: Well isn't it undercutting like—it's undercutting backstage, right? It's like—

AUSTIN: Oh, is it? Okay.

ART: That's what I thought it was.

AUSTIN: So yeah, it could be—it could be Dre then. Because it could be the, like, “Listen boss, I know you like the guy, he’s a veteran, but, you know...” Blah blah blah.

DRE: Yeah, I could take that. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, can we get the final Heat scores, please?

ART: So I've built myself this big feud with the Jobber.

[Ali and Austin laugh]

AUSTIN: Who's a *vampire*.

DRE: And you're a monster-hunter! It's perfect.

ART: Yeah, it fits.

AUSTIN: Oh, I've figured out what we mean by jobber. Bray Wyatt.

DRE: Goddamn.

SYLVIA: Ohhhh.

DRE: *Goddamn*.

ART: Brutal. It's more like—

DRE: Just give it to him with both barrels.

ART: It's more like Adam Rose.

AUSTIN: Mm. Mm-hm.

ART: That's what they mean. They don't mean like the “nobody's come in to lose to Braun Strowman,” or whatever. They mean like—

DRE: Yeah. Well, I think they—

AUSTIN: No, yeah.

DRE: Well I think they even say in the book you're above the local jobbers—

ALI: Yeah.

DRE: —that get paid twenty dollars to lose in a squash match.

ART: Yeah.

SYLVIA: It is very much the Heath Slater—

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: —of “I’m around forever and I’m here just to lose on TV,” type of thing.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh—

ALI: Do we want to go around the table? I can start.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm?

ALI: Um, so I have plus two with Charlie Cupid and plus one with Jake the Jackal. Charlie Cupid is “We debuted together and I left them behind,” and they’ve also taken me under their wing. And Jake the Jackal is jealous of my rapid rise, which is don’t be a hater.

[Austin laughs]

SYLVIA: I think we have three because I’m a Heel as well.

ALI: Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: Right.

SYLVIA: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

ART: I have plus three with Count Faustofle.

[Ali snorts]

AUSTIN: Oh my God.

DRE: The Third.

ART: One for our—

DRE: The Third. Please.

ART: I'm sorry, that wasn't on your name when I went and copied it.

DRE: Is it not there?

ART: It's not.

DRE: My apologies.

ART: So I have—

DRE: It's there. I'm looking at it right now, it's totally there.

ART: Oh, I was looking for, like, the III [eye-eye-eye].

DRE: Oh.

[Austin laughs]

DRE: No, yeah, he just writes "the Third."

[Ali chuckles]

ART: Well I didn't.

[Art, Austin, Ali, and Dre laugh]

AUSTIN: You don't want to call him the Third?

ART: Which is part of no respect. Oh, it's you have no respect [Austin laughs]. I have plus three: one for opposing alignment, one for no respect for what I've done for this company, and one for undercutting me. I have plus two with Charlie: one for opposing alignment and one for being my protege. And I have zero with the Seadrake.

[Austin and Ali laugh]

AUSTIN: Oh, Christ.

ART: Which is, like, a cool—I know you don't have a name and I was just throwing something together but, like—'cause drake means dragon.

AUSTIN: It means dragon.

DRE: Mm-hm.

ALI: It does mean dragon.

ART: So Seadrake isn't terrible.

AUSTIN: Yeah...

ART: It's a good wink, you know? Wink.

ALI: Well, we have forty-eight hours before we're recording this again [laughs], I'll have a name then and maybe it'll be the Seadrake.

AUSTIN: [laughs] Perfect. Sylvia or Dre?

SYLVIA: I'll just go. So I am former tag partners with Lenny-slash-Count Faustolfe the Third. And he is also jealous of my skills, so we have two Heat together. And then, Al—or I guess I have your character's real name, Erica, written down—Erica is trying to teach me to be more of an entertainer, and because I am a Heel and she is a Face, I have three Heat with her. And then—Heat goes both ways?

AUSTIN: It's the third one there—no, Heat goes one way. You get Heat—

SYLVIA: Oh, one way? Okay, cool.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SYLVIA: Good.

AUSTIN: So—

SYLVIA: I don't need to add that then.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So wait, I think it's only—so wait, how do you have three with her?

SYLVIA: Oh, I guess I only have two with her then.

AUSTIN: Right, yeah.

SYLVIA: She has three.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that's right.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. And Dre?

DRE: Uh—

ART: Oh, wait, you have one Heat with me because we're opposing alignments.

SYLVIA: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: Yes, yes. Make sure you all have that one Heat for—yeah, there's a chance you'll have someone who you don't have Heat with from questions but do because of opposition in the thing. In alignment.

DRE: Alright. I have plus one Heat with Charlie Cupid, who was my tag team partner before they made it big. I have plus two Heat with Jake the Jackal: one for opposing alignment and one because Jake can't remember who I am. And then I have plus two Heat with the Seapunk, who is always trying to get management on my side, and for opposing alignment.

AUSTIN: Okay. [sighs] I think that that's it for tonight.

ART: Should we talk about the rest of the federation—the rest of the promotion?

AUSTIN: Yeah...sure. I still have to make some of those.

ART: 'Cause you don't want to have to—I mean, I guess what I'm asking is do you want to make five more wrestlers or should we shoot the shiit a little bit?

AUSTIN: Let's shoot the shit a little bit. I have another ten minutes before I have to run down the street to see if a UPS package is sitting for me in a minimart.

[Ali makes sympathetic noise]

AUSTIN: So I think there's probably a shoot fighter. Like an MMA fighter. There's just like another Ken Shamrock type from Firebird Gym whose character is just "I go to Firebird Gym and I am a fighter." Like, that is her whole bit. I don't have a name for her yet, but I will.

DRE: Uh—

AUSTIN: I don't think it's Dione Gabreau.

DRE: Yeah, I was gonna say.

AUSTIN: But I thought—but I did think about it.

[Dre laughs]

AUSTIN: I put down "Dione Gabreau???" in my notes.

[Dre chuckles]

ART: I kind of like the idea of a Golden Boy who didn't make it. You know, like a Lex Luger type.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: But in a Bluff City kind of way. Like that could be, like the, you know, "This is gonna be—" like someone was, like, giving a Springsteen gimmick but blew it.

SYLVIA: Oh man.

AUSTIN: Yeah, got it.

[Ali chuckles]

AUSTIN: [typing] Springsteen...gimmick...but blew it. Which is, like, it works—and hasn't—has that character made the transition into, like—I think they have. I think that they've now reached over—they've crossed over from not having made it to living the fact that they didn't make it. And they are doing—they are also doing the veteran gimmick of like "You can't make it out this town." You know, that style of—I think maybe they are also a Bluff City—they're from Bluff City, they did this bit in the 90s or in the 80s or whatever, and now today they are still doing the "You can't make it out this town. I'm here for good; I'm stuck here now." The old veteran who has given up on getting out and is now—I think when they're in a good angle, is like "I'm gonna make this the best federation in the world," you know? And otherwise is not gonna do it. Also, they're probably some sort of blackjack dealer. I think I'm writing down the name Blackjack.

[Ali giggles]

AUSTIN: Alright. Need a couple more, what we got?

SYLVIA: Hmm.

AUSTIN: Other wrestler ideas. It sounds like we're gonna need another tag team.

SYLVIA: Oh.

AUSTIN: Of some sort.

DRE: Hmm, yeah.

ALI: Oh, do we think they're still in a tag team?

AUSTIN: No, I just think there's gonna be a tag team match [laughs].

ALI: Oh, okay, fair.

ART: Um—

ALI: I—[laughs]. I really want there to be the R2D2 and C3PO of wrestling.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, got it [Dre laughs]. [typing] R2D2...plus...C3PO. And then next to it I'll put "They're robots that bicker and wrestle together."

ALI: Mm-hm. And one's like really technical and one's like on the money, kind of loud talker.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ALI: Maybe they actually go in the ring dressed as robots? [laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah, no, they're robots. This is a supernatural league already.

ALI: Mm-hm.

SYLVIA: [sighs] Oh.

ART: Two people come down in suits and sunglasses and they're called "The House" because the house already wins.

AUSTIN: Right, the house always wins. Yeah, yeah, uh-huh. The House is definitely a stable, right?

ALI: Yeah.

ART: Yeah, they can be more than those two but suits and sunglasses are the look.

AUSTIN: Right. Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: Not quite robots, but I want to throw out Tekno Team 2000 as a touchstone for the robot guys.

[Ali laughs]

DRE: Oh—

SYLVIA: And that's Tekno, T-E-K-N-O.

DRE: Yeah.

SYLVIA: That's a very important detail

AUSTIN: Excuse me? Tekno what? Oh, yeah.

SYLVIA: Tekno Team 2000.

AUSTIN: I thought you were saying it's techno and then the way you spell "team" was T-E-K-N-O, and I was like "Excuse??".

SYLVIA: No, no, no. Yeah, Tekno 2000.

DRE: This is a good look.

AUSTIN: This is a good look.

ALI: That sure is a 2000 on there.

SYLVIA: It's some—they came from the future.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm.

SYLVIA: In kayfabe.

AUSTIN: I just need you to know that in my mind—so, they loaded in. And I scrolled down because was like, "Wait, when is this from?" And then on my right, all of my Up Nexts are Desus & Mero. And I'm so tired that I rolled up and thought that I was gonna get a Desus & Mero bit about Tekno Team 2000 [Ali giggles]. And I'm so sad I didn't.

SYLVIA: Oh, man.

ALI: If only.

AUSTIN: Do they win this match? Yes, they win this match. Shout outs to Tekno Team 2000.

SYLVIA: They were fuckin' terrible [laughs]. Anyway.

AUSTIN: Well this the—the name of this video is “Boring WWE Tag Teams: Tekno Team 2000.”

SYLVIA: They are literally considered one of the most boring teams of all time, despite having—

AUSTIN: But it's published by WWE! They published this.

SYLVIA: Oh, I know! I know! They latched onto it after people were like “Hey, look at this dumb tag team from the 90s.”

AUSTIN: Oh my God. The 3090s, 'cause they're from the future.

ALI: Mm-hm.

SYLVIA: Exactly.

AUSTIN: [laughs] I know it's Tekno Team 2000, but. They're from 3090.

[Ali laughs]

SYLVIA: They thought just saying 2000 would, you know, ingratiate them more.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

[Ali laughs]

AUSTIN: Also their 2 on the back looks like it's an R, so it looks like it says “TTRooo” on the back of their jackets [laughs].

[Ali laughs]

SYLVIA: [sighs] There's a lot of really good, like—if you need imagery for these robot guys, there's a lot of really good bad tech—turn-of-the-millennium technology stuff they tried to do.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

SYLVIA: There's no shortage.

AUSTIN: Perfect. I need a couple more things. I could probably work with what we got here, but if I could get one or two more that would be great.

ALI: Um—

SYLVIA: I feel like we kinda need just like—like a younger big dude. You know, they always have the sorta big hoss in the promotions?

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah.

DRE: Yeah.

SYLVIA: But I don't want to step on Jake's toes too much there. So maybe not.

ART: No, I mean, for the non-player wrestlers it's really like you could—we can have whatever we want.

SYLVIA: Yeah, true.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

SYLVIA: Earlier today, I was thinking—like, I was just kind of going through like I was thinking “If my Gimmick doesn't work, what else could I do?” And it was “Man, but his motif is that he is also a truck.” I don't know how to explain it better than that. He's just a man, like he—

AUSTIN: Oh, Man-Truck? You're talking about Man-Truck?

SYLVIA: He loves trucks and he's big. And—

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: Okay?

SYLVIA: This was gonna be—

ALI: Well—

ART: [laughing] So his name's just Man-Truck?

DRE: Does he love trucks or does he *love* trucks?

AUSTIN: Nope. Bad.

SYLVIA: He—

DRE: Is he a dinosaur?

SYLVIA: Not the second one, I can promise that.

ART: Is he in Optimus Prime costume?

SYLVIA: Yeah, it's—kinda? But like—more like, "Oh, why is this dude always come out wearing a Ford logo on his T-shirt?"

[Ali cackles]

SYLVIA: And also he looks like every step-dad I've ever met. You know?

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

DRE: Is his name just Ron?

SYLVIA: Yeah? Probably

DRE: Now coming in the ring: Ron.

SYLVIA: "If I don't get my title match, I'm turning this federation around."

[Dre laughs, Ali shrieks]

AUSTIN: Um—[laughs] that's very funny.

SYLVIA: Sorry. I know you've got a time limit.

AUSTIN: No, it's fine. It's fine, 'cause I just wrote down "Monster House? It's a stable." And then under that I just wrote "Sasquatch, Godzilla, King Kong, Loch Ness, goblin, ghoul, and zombie with no conscience."

SYLVIA: Yessss.

DRE: Yep.

ALI: Being—

AUSTIN: Question?

ALI: Yeah. I was wondering if my name should have Nessie in it somewhere, so I don't want there to be too much overlap [laughs]. But Seadrake is pretty good.

AUSTIN: Oh wait, maybe you left the Monster House.

ALI: Oh, maybe I did.

AUSTIN: Maybe—you're a Face now, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Maybe you Face-turned.

[Ali gasps]

AUSTIN: Maybe—like, go in the Monster House, and then you, like, did a couple of pro—a couple of shows. And then, boom, Face-turn, fuck off Monster House [Ali chuckles]. I don't know why I'm calling it Monster House when there's already [laughs] a stable called *The House*.

[Ali laughs]

DRE: No, they're—yeah, they're like the underground monster/demon casino.

AUSTIN: [laughing] It's like—it's like NWO Black and NWO Red is The House [laughter from the table] [The Grapplers Down at Promenade Arena begins playing]. [Austin still laughing] And then there's the Monster House.

[Art and Ali laughing]

SYLVIA: Oh my God.

[Ali keeps laughing]

AUSTIN: Alright, I'm writing it down.

[Music continues playing to end]

