

Realis 24: Warmth of the Cloister 02

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Recap

Austin: Realis is a science fiction and dark fantasy series that contains discussion of violence, injury, slavery, cannibalism, and disease. This campaign never depicts sexual violence, always shows you where the sword goes, but never what it does, and always errs on the side of maximalism.

[“[Sapryc](#)” by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

Austin: The first thing that you see that is evidence that you are nearing the Cloister of the Hollow Heart is windmills, or they seem like windmills at first. They are these big wooden blades spinning on tall wooden stalks, but as you near them, you notice that the air is actually pretty still here. And they are not windmills at all. They’re fans, and they’re spinning as to draw airflow towards the cloister.

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Austin: Mirador says,

Austin (as **Mirador**): I’m going to go check it out. I’m going to go see if I can talk my way in.

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Janine: But I imagine the camera kind of losing her. The sort of, on the other side, Sacea's gone, and then it's just, like, a rat.

Jack: [laughs]

Austin: Oh, you're just a little rat running around.

Janine: Yeah.

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Austin: I don't know how you would—I don't think you can necessarily see this, but you can tell that the people here have done, are engaged with some sort of vows around the senses. They're diminishing their senses, right? This is a thing that's hard to learn as a little rat. But. [laughs] Is the thing here, right. Maybe you literally overhear Mirador giving them the prayer to the gate guard, so that you can all be let in. And you hear him say, you know.

Austin (as **Mirador**): I need not smell; the truth emanates in the air. I need not hear; the truth speaks in sight. I need not see; the truth exhibits on the skin. I need not feel...

Austin: And et cetera.

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Austin (as **Lanz**): You're a visitor. It's okay. I will speak.

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Austin (as **Lanz**): Big! You're... You're big!

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): And you're observant.

Dre: Man.

Austin (as **Lanz**): And you're hungry, I bet.

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Dre (as **Flemming**): So, we, my band and I are here on the request of a merchant who we are protecting. And he has mentioned that there is a unique form of transportation in this region. I'd like to learn more about it.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): [with distaste] Oh, Cantata. Yes.

Jack: [laughs]

Austin (as **Gerennia**): He has not told you about the Wound Way?

Dre (as **Flemming**): No, I would remember that word for certain.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): I see. Well, the lift is still returning. Once we have it, you'll be able to descend.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Is it a long ride?

Austin (as **Gerennia**): The longest on Sapryc.

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Jack (as **Jud**): So, I gotta talk with you, sort of, you know. We've come here with that guy.

Jack: Points at Mirador.

Austin (as **Carmin**): The merchant.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah, yeah, the merchant. And the thing is, he's real cagey, you know. He's paying us. We're working people, but he's paying us when we reach our destination. You know what I mean?

Dinnertime Conversation

Austin (as **Carmin**): I suppose.

Jack (as **Jud**): And he keeps himself to himself about his business. I was wondering if, you know, if you could clear anything up for me. Seems like he comes by here with trinkets. Monks seem to know who he is.

Austin (as **Carmin**): [diffident] Yes, he comes by here sometimes with trinkets and gifts...

Jack: What is this guy's deal? I'm the cannibal and I'm the normal one!

Austin: You know, this is not a person who is particularly... You did not come to the social capital of Sapryc. You came to the monastery where no one's allowed to have fun.

Jack: Yeah, that's true.

Austin: Voluntarily. They decided to come here. They're living a life here.

Jack: Worm monastery, brackets, (two reasons).

Austin: Uh-huh.

Austin (as **Carmin**): Mirador is a reliable assistant to the Cloister in some ways. When we have a need to acquire something or to find a buyer. They have served in those roles or have connected us as such.

Jack (as **Jud**): They're like the outside man.

Austin (as **Carmin**): Exactly.

Jack (as **Jud**): Ah.

Austin (as **Carmin**): None of us truly believe in their faith, but a useful heathen is useful.

Jack (as **Jud**): Well, what's their faith? What do they believe?

Austin (as **Carmin**): That's just it. They seem to believe nothing at all.

Jack (as **Jud**): Oh. Hmm. I can see how that would be difficult for you.

Austin (as **Carmin**): It is no trial. It is no difficulty.

Jack (as **Jud**): Oh, well, okay then. Okay, in that case. Um...

Jack: That's not terribly useful to me.

Jack (as **Jud**): I don't, uh... What do you give him in return? For his services.

Austin (as **Carmin**): Access to the library, to the Wound Way.

Jack (as **Jud**): The what?

Austin (as **Carmin**): To the hall that runs down Sapryc's spine.

Jack: Oh. This makes several soup images that I have had make sense.

Austin: Click into place. Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah. Because like those images occasionally are, you're just in the soil and other times you're like in a long, dark tunnel, you know, and that goes down endlessly. But sometimes also just seems to go like, sometimes it's a hole and sometimes it's a tunnel, you know, sometimes it's falling and other times it's stretching out in front and behind you.

Jack (as **Jud**): But you don't know, you couldn't, you can't give me any guidance on like why he wants to use the Wound Way other than to get down to the south, right?

Austin (as **Carmin**): There's no access to the south through the Wound Way.

Jack (as **Jud**): It doesn't go to the south?

Austin (as **Carmine**): We've blocked that route. Too dangerous with the Empest, isn't it? But you can travel to the core. You can walk the path of our founder. You can relive the reaching, if not the touch.

Jack (as **Jud**): If the blockage were to be broken, it would spell disaster for you, right?

Austin (as **Carmine**): Oh. Do you suspect Mirador aims to remove the barricade?

Jack (as **Jud**): Ah, well, you didn't hear it from me.

Sylvi: Oof!

Austin (as **Carmine**): That seems unlikely. He would need a stronger wizard than he for something like that.

Dre: Hm.

Austin (as **Carmine**): And strong and devious arms for traveling further south.

Dre: Huh.

Jack (as **Jud**): Oh no, no, he can't, no. I mean, it's, the rest of our party's sort of pretty much like me, sort of.

Dre: [laughs]

Austin (as **Carmine**): Mm. Normal fellows, you.

Jack (as **Jud**): Normal, yeah, yeah, yeah, normal fellas. Normal fellas.

Austin (as **Carmine**): And Mirador, of course, would never lead normal fellows to their doom.

Jack (as **Jud**): Oh, no, he doesn't do that. He doesn't do that. Has he come through here with people before, actually?

Austin (as **Carmine**): No.

Sylvi: Oh, my God.

Austin (as **Carmine**): Mirador works alone, normally. But.

Austin: And leaning closer.

Austin (as **Carmine**): He is very reliable. I hope you enjoy the stew.

Austin: And walks away.

Jack: [groans] Yeah, we've been fucking Danny Ocean team assembled.

Austin: [laughs] Mm-hm.

Jack: [pauses] [laughs] Dinner table conversation! Time for a dinner table conversation, I think.

Austin: Uh-huh, yeah.

Jack: Jud comes back, big bowl of soup.

Jack (as **Jud**): Gaje, Gaje. Gaje.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Huh?

Jack (as **Jud**): Come and sit down.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): What's up?

Jack (as **Jud**): Come and sit down. Share some soup.

Sylvi: I'm already sitting down with a bowl of soup. [laughs]

Jack: Great. We got, Flemming's not here. Flemming is reading about the thing. Sacea is now not rat mode?

Sylvi: Yeah, Sacea's here, I think, right?

Austin: Sacea's here. Sacea's here.

Janine: Yeah, I'm just sitting. I'm enjoying the soup.

Jack: In not rat mode.

Janine: I'm not rat mode.

Dre: [laughs]

Janine: Maybe I got like a little bit of fur on my arm or something, but it'll go away.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Jack: Same! I think.

Sylvi: I love that.

Jack: From Gothgeier.

Jack (as **Jud**): I know why we're here. I know why he's hired us. I know what he's not telling us.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): And?

Jack (as **Jud**): There's a tunnel that runs from beneath this monastery. It goes down into the core of the world. Some of the worms made it, carved a big tunnel. And... usually it only goes so far before they've sort of barricaded it. You know, the Empest has the south of the planet. They've got this big barricade, magical barricade, to, you know, I guess stop them from coming through and invading the north. But I was talking to this really weird monk.

Dre: [giggles]

Jack (as **Jud**): And I started thinking, Mirador, you know, Mirador's not interested in going halfway down the world. You know, he wants to go all the way. And I think he's... He's collected us. He's collected all of us for the purposes of

breaking this barricade. He said that they'd need a powerful magician, which, you know, that sounds... I mean, I suppose that sounds like Flemming.

Dre: Wow!

Jack (as **Jud**): And Sacea. And then they said someone with strong arms. So, I have to imagine that that's you, Gaje. I don't really know why I'm—I think probably someone needed to feed Scrundle. But I think it's important that we all, you know, we need to think about... you know, what is going to be asked—that's why he's been keeping us in the dark, because he's gonna open a way for the Empest to take that—I don't think that's his goal, you know, I think he's going south for some other reason. But, you know, I think we're here to clear the tunnel.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Do you think we should ask him about this or is this a thing we should play close to our chest?

Jack (as **Jud**): Well, I think we should play close to our chest until the sort of, you know, maybe... Not at the barricade, you know, we'll want to talk to him about it, confront him about it beforehand. But I think if we do it here in the monastery, it's going to attract unnec... They're really hot on this guy here. He, like, gives them stuff from outside and, you know, that kind of thing. But, you know, maybe when we're alone, you know, we can, you know, make clear that we... We're not prepared—

Janine (as **Sacea**): We should ask.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah, yeah.

Janine (as **Sacea**): We should ask about it.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah. And there's four of us. And there's one of him, plus a donkey.

Janine (as **Sacea**): If his motives are suspicious, it's very likely that will reveal itself in his answers.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah. I mean, we saw what the Empest did to...

Jack: What was the name of that city? Krater. Yeah.

Jack (as **Jud**): We saw what the Empest did to Krater. You know.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): We've already had to deal with those guys in the catacombs. You know.

Sylvi: Holds up missing hand.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): And I don't really feel like getting caught between them and the Empest without knowing what we're getting into. So, it might be, I'm personally thinking it might be worth having a, like you said, a private conversation with our friend and employer.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah. Yeah, good. All right. Well, thanks for listening. I'm going to go and get more soup.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): You are, you're eating more than I am. It's kind of impressive.

Jack: Gone, speaking to his back as he queues up for another big thing of soup.

Austin: [laughing] Uh-huh!

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): This fucking kid.

Sylvi: Says that out loud.

Flemming [12:30]

Austin: [laughs] Fleming, you've learned a little more as the night goes on.

Dre: Nice.

Austin: The gist of it is—you can kind of put it together a little bit at this point, right? This big worm, this Worm of the Blister, landed here in a comet many, many years ago.

The Sentence is “Worm comets are always filled with nurturing flesh.” And began—after eating the comets, kind of—it’s almost like an egg, right? It’s almost like it’s the nutrients necessary for the worm to grow into its big size. After eating that and beginning to lay its own nest up here, began to dig deep down into the center of the world. And then the story goes that at some point, you know, it made its way out to the other side and was defeated by some—you know, by something. It was killed by something.

Jack: It was defeated, it didn’t leave.

Austin: Well—this is—the common story is it left. The thing that this memoir or this write-up is saying is that it was defeated. And that what defeated it is the question. And that is what the founder of the Cloister of the Hollow Heart, that he went to go investigate that. He went to go see what could have killed—are there remnants of what could have killed that? And this is well before the Empest were down there. But it’s like if I go through the tunnel, will I get some clues. And like did this huge descent down into the tunnel, down into the abyss of this thing that then towards the middle of the planet becomes a tunnel. It is hollowed out all the way through. There are some remnants of the moon’s core in there, kind of hot molten, like, iron that is hard to get past. And then eventually it becomes a—instead of being an abyss going down that you have to slowly descend, becomes an abyss you have to climb out of as you get on the other side of the world, right? You have to climb your way down to the—up the south pole, basically, up into the south pole. And once he did that, what he saw was, again, what he writes about is like the Venerant See writing about seeing the Immaterial One or kind of getting to come face to face with the power of the Immaterial One. I keep slipping into sensation words here, right? But what is written—

Jack: They like the Immaterial One.

Austin: They love—the Immaterial One is God for them, right? They believe that God is immaterial, that God exists. The most holy place is the place that touches nothing else, right? That is where God lives. God does not live in, you know, and in that way, the sea is better than the earth, because of this very Earth-centric, this land-centric vision of

being a human. The sky is better than the sea. Space is better than everything else, right?

Jack: What do they think about Realis?

Austin: Question mark, question mark, question mark, Realis is literally the thing I was going to say, right? Lots of, maybe you've heard me say this before, every scholar a schism. You know, there is a lot of debate, even inside of oneself, many people in their own life, what they believe Realis is and whether Realis is connected to this. Is Realis a gift from the Immaterial One? Is Realis the Immaterial One? No one really has ever come back from Realis. Those who have have a sort of saintly stature. The leader of the Venerant See is someone who claims to at least be someone who returned from Realis Itself, the only person who has ever, who has ever done that. And so, like, that seems like they went and visited something powerful, right? Maybe they saw a God. You're not really sure. You don't know—it's a lot of question marks, right? It's like what if the pope was Jesus but also the pope and Jesus were kept inside of a single cathedral and no one ever got to see them and they didn't give public sermons and they were almost like living relics, you know? And hard to see how much is the Radiant—this person is called the Radiant, the acclaimed Radiant. Whether their system or beliefs is really their system or beliefs or if they exist at all, right? This could be a mythological person. This could be a figurehead. This could be—it's hard to say.

But there is certainly the belief that Realis Itself, the big planet, the big planet at the center of these thousand moons is where light comes from and is—seems to be a force of good, generally speaking. And so, at the very least, Realis Itself is immaterial because we cannot touch it, right? As far as we can tell, it is out of reach. One person in history has ever come back from it, supposedly. No one is able to touch it and then be like, oh yeah, it's water down there. And so maybe it's the Immaterial One, right? Maybe it is not actually physical in that way. Maybe it is a spiritual light. Who could say?

But this is part of what the founder of the Cloister saw when he emerged from the other side of what is now called the Wound Way, which is big and bright Realis just below the planet Sapryc, at a point in its orbit where it drew very nearby. And not just nearby, but

nearby it and... Figures in the dark... The description that he gives is like children skipping stones across the Lake of God, very close between Realis and Sapryc, things in the air. And his belief is that the Worm kind of like leapt out of Sapryc, you know, having gorged itself on the planet. And leapt into this sort of stream of objects which destroyed it and like pulled it violently out of Sapryc's core, the rest of it, you know? Almost like, you know, there's a stream of, you know, a stream of water or something, you know, that you step into and it's going way faster than you thought it was and get pulled away, you know? And in that process, seeing Realis so big, claims to have seen this thing or felt this thing connected to this being between the two of them, the Immaterial One, and has now built the Cloister at the top of the world because this is the easiest way to get down there, basically, outside of trying to trek all the way down to the south pole.

Because here—and here's the other half of this that you learn, Flemming. When the Worm descended here, when the comet struck here, one of the things it ate was the atmosphere. And the atmosphere has never healed, which is why it's warmer here and why they need to bring in air from outside.

Dre: Oh.

Jack: Hm.

Austin: There is no protection from the sun or—from the Corpse Sun, whose light is already diminished, or from the bouncing light of Realis here. It's why it's warmer here. It's why it's hard to breathe here. The air that comes in does not stick around, right? It wounded the air itself. And so that is also the case down there. But it seems like at the time, it was just generally harder to get down there. As a reminder, the Root, this big continent in the south has this thing called the Coraline Chain, which is this big mountain range that was like really hard to get over or to get around. And so, it's just harder to get there naturally. It's much easier to get up to the Cloister of the Hollow Heart and where the hole in the ground was. And so built the Cloister to kind of prevent others from going down there. And again, came back and then removed all of his senses because he felt like he had seen and tasted and smelled and touched the

Immaterial One, which at once is like this incredible holy act, but also this, you know, you've fucked up. You're not supposed to do that. You know, you're not supposed to see and touch and have these sensuous feelings. So, so yeah, that's the gist of it.

Oh, I guess the big thing is the, in the moment of seeing this thing, seeing Realis so big, seeing these objects, you know, dark objects in the sky between Sapryc and Realis, again, seemingly skipping across, maybe skipping across Realis Itself, maybe skipping through reality itself, you know... Seeing those, the founder felt a sense that they could remake the world, that they could remake reality itself, that they could change the rules, the laws of the world if they reached out, right? But again, they reached without doing the final touch. They didn't capture that power that was being put in front of them, that they found in front of them. It's not clear if it was an offer or if it was something else, if they had to do a final task to earn that. But what they write is that they felt like they could change the spheres of Realis, right? They felt like they could change the laws of reality. And they rejected that because they felt that that was a test from the Immaterial One.

Mirador [22:35]

Jack: But our dear friend, believer in nothing, purported believer in nothing, Mirador Cantata, who has spoken previously about a mechanism that can change the world.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Jack: This is the problem with scholars.

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Sure is.

Dre: Oh, Mirador.

Austin: You know, just wants to go to the south pole.

Dre: That's true!

Austin: No big deal.

Dre: And hey, has to avoid a bunch of bad guys to do it.

Austin: Yeah. Where's the lie? You know?

Jack: You know how there are always, like, *Final Fantasy* games are ultimately always about killing God. And I feel like Friends at the Table has had a lot of, you know, talk in the past about how we will regularly, you know, square off against gods. The vibe of Mirador and Scrundle is the guy from the opening town of the game has decided that...

Dre: [laughs]

Austin: Uh-huh. Mm-hm.

Jack: He's skipped, you know, 150 grinding quests. And is like, what if I just get four guys? And we go and change the world?

Austin: That's an interesting read, is what I'll say.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Jack: Okay.

Austin: And here's how I will, here's how I will check that this is, you know, make this read real is, you know, that's something Jud could be thinking in character to some degree. And then you see Jud—sorry, you see Jud—then you see Mirador approach the abbot of this monastery, going up to Ketero [KETero]. And... Ketero [keTERo], rather, and presenting a small gift in wrapped cloth. And it opens, and you see that it is a finger in cloth. It is a skeletal finger. And it clicks for you, Jud. It's a finger that was already missing from Vortigern Gothgeier.

Jack: Huh.

Austin: I mentioned before that this was not the first time Mirador had been there. And in fact, Mirador had dug in that rear entrance. Mirador already walked through that place. Mirador already looted that place once. And one of the things that he took is something that's been on this sheet of theirs since the jump, which I always had in my back pocket as a potential way to help y'all if things ever got, if you ever got too lost, is that up until this moment, Mirador Cantata has had the Ephemera the Skeletal Finger Compass, "when I am used to draw the object of your desire into the ground, I always reveal the best route towards it." And in this moment, I am deleting it from Mirador Cantata's page because it is being given as a gift to Ketero. And in exchange, Ketero produces a small clay token, much like the one Gaje got before.

Dre: Hmm.

Jack: We are the fucking guys from the town.

Austin: Mirador's lived a whole damn life, you know?

Jack: Yeah. Met a donkey.

Austin: Met a donkey. My vision for Mirador is, you know, lived a life, had a party, had friends, did some adventures, grew up.

Dre: Was the party member.

Austin: Changed who they were, you know? Wound up somewhere else. Had some things to right, some wrongs to right, had some feelings to address, had some lingering old wounds and now has put himself towards this end. And then comes over to the rest of you and puts down this token on the table and says,

Austin (as **Mirador**): Ugh, listen, this is a little bit of a headache, but you're all going to need to get a token for the toll.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Way ahead of you.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Oh, look at you, Gaje.

Jack (as **Jud**): Oh, we're going on a toll road?

Austin (as **Mirador**): Yeah, yeah. It's not the road, really. It's the lift. They only operate the lift for people who've earned the right to go on it. And you need a token to show that you've earned the right. It's a whole thing. You got to impress or give a gift to, I guess, someone of one of the five who kind of run this place, you know? You got to try to impress them.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah. Okay. Well, all right. How long have we got? When do we need to leave?

Austin (as **Mirador**): As soon as possible, really, right? Heh. We both know that those knights could be chasing after us, and they would get access immediately. And who knows about the Empest? I don't know that they know about this place specifically, but, well, there ain't many places left, so...

Jack (as **Jud**): It's good that the Empest don't know about, you know, safe place on the planet.

Austin (as **Mirador**): For now. Ah. Ask again in a week, the whole thing might be Empest. It's kind of why we got to move quick.

Jack (as **Jud**): Who are the five?

Austin (as **Mirador**): Ketero up there, who does not like outsiders. Gerennia, the scribe, the head scribe, the head librarian. Alon, who is the gardener and the herbalist. Lanz, who I see Gaje has met already, the cook. And then Amari, the mason and glazier, who showed us in. And they're prickly and they're specific, aren't they? Different types of people like different types of things. I really only know Ketero and... Gerennia. And Ketero, like I said, just a tough nut to crack. Gerennia, you would think, librarian, wants some books. No. "Gerennia is always unimpressed by gifts of knowledge."

Jack: This motherfucker knows Sentences.

Austin: This motherfucker knows Sentences.

Jack: [laughs] He's got his own book!

Austin: This motherfucker knows Sentences.

Jack: Okay.

Jack (as **Jud**): Alright, well, the herbalist. What about them?

Austin (as **Mirador**): I don't know. I don't really know, uh, Alon.

Jack (as **Jud**): Alright, well, fair enough. Uh, I'm gonna get—

Janine (as **Sacea**): Forgive me for saying this, but isn't this really your problem?

Austin (as **Mirador**): Well, no.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): She makes a point.

Austin (as **Mirador**): It isn't.

Dre: God damn.

Austin (as **Mirador**): And I appreciate that Gaje has already stepped up in this regard, but no, it's not.

[quiet laughs]

Dre: I appreciate that Gaje has stepped up and done a thing that you had no idea you would need to do until I told you about it just now.

Austin: Yeah, that's correct. I am...

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Oh, you're not here, Flemming. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: I'm not here.

Austin: But yes, that is the way. Yep.

Sylvi: I am looking very skeptically at Mirador now.

Austin (as **Mirador**): I'm genuinely impressed that Gaje, you got ahead of this one. I didn't know that we would need these tokens, but this is another obstacle on the path forward. I've hired you to help me overcome these obstacles. Also, they're not really, it's not money. It's not "I need to go give you the money to get through the toll." You need a token. They're monks, spiritualists. They believe in the doing, don't they?

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Hm. This is the last thing you're keeping us in the dark about, yeah?

Austin (as **Mirador**): No!

Dre: [laughs]

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): No? Wonderful.

Austin (as **Mirador**): No! I just went over this! There are things that if I told you would be dangerous for you to know until it's exactly the time for you to know them.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): That is very convenient.

Austin (as **Mirador**): No, it's very inconvenient! It would be... [whispers] It would be very convenient if I could lay everything I need from you out. And then we could all prepare and share ideas and come up with a plan. But that phase of my life is over.

Janine (as **Sacea**): How would us knowing about the tokens have been dangerous?

Austin (as **Mirador**): I didn't know about the tokens! I just learned about the tokens today!

Jack (as **Jud**): Wait.

Austin (as **Mirador**): That's what I just said! I just said that!

Jack (as **Jud**): Are the tokens new?

Austin (as **Mirador**): I've never taken the lift. I've walked down into the Wound Way a little bit.

Jack (as **Jud**): The what?

Austin (as **Mirador**): The Wound Way—I shouldn't have even said that, but we're here now. The Wound Way is the next place we're going. It's a tunnel. It's a hole. Some people think an old worm built it. It goes from here, the north pole, down to the south pole. That's where we're going next. But I shouldn't say more than that.

Janine (as **Sacea**): You're saying that Gaje managed to stumble into getting a token without knowing about the token system, but you never did in your time here? You've been socializing with people. You've been here before.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Well, before, I haven't asked to use the lift. But I got here today and then said, hey, I want to use the lift.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Gaje didn't ask.

Austin (as **Mirador**): No, but.

Janine (as **Sacea**): I'm sure he didn't know.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): I'm just a people person.

Austin (as **Mirador**): But they knew that my pa... I'm not hiding this from you.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Okay.

Austin: This is him using the Sentence, whatever the one is.

Sylvi: Is it the “I always tempt one truth with another truth.”

Austin: With another truth, which, this is a truth. Yeah. Which can counter to try to learn—

Sylvi: Anything I can use to combat this will hurt Mirador. Permanently.

Austin: Permanently, yeah.

Sylvi: So. My methods of learning are extreme violence and that’s about it, so.

Jack: He’s on thin fucking ice.

In Search of Tokens [32:00]

Jack: All right, I’m gonna try and get a token. Yeah.

Austin: Go ahead, what are you doing? What’s the token you’re gonna try to get?

Jack: I want to go see the herbalist!

Austin: Oh, that sort of token. Sorry, I thought you meant you were going to try to recharge your token.

Jack: Oh, no, no, no.

Austin: I see. Yes, yes, yes.

Sylvi: Jack has theirs still, right?

Janine: Self-inflicted wounds. Self-inflicted GM wound there.

Austin: That token, that token, yeah, yeah, 100%.

Jack: I have my token card.

Austin: Yes, Jack has that token. Jud still has their—this is a toll booth token. This is a token for the lift.

Sylvi: This is a *tollken*.

Austin: A tollken, right. Not to be confused.

Sylvi: After JRR.

Austin: Mm. Mm-hm.

Jack: Big fans of that guy here on *Friends at the Table*.

Austin: Eh, you know, there are times that there's stuff in there that's all right. There's stuff in there that's not. Anyway.

Jack: Everyone loves going on a journey.

Austin: Everyone loves going on a journey.

Sylvi: Now that I'm with.

Austin: Everyone loves Samwise Gamgee, the little lovable hobbit friend, you know?

Jack: Yeah. I think he's okay.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Sylvia, you got hobbit beef?

Sylvi: No, I guess I'm sort of hobbit neutral.

Austin: Hobbit neutral. Okay.

Jack: But yeah, I'm going to get a bowl of soup and take it to the herbalist.

Austin: As a gift?

Jack: No.

Austin: The soup is just for you.

Jack: [laughing] Yes.

Austin: Okay, I see.

Dre: [laughs]

Austin: Alon is the gardener and herbalist. Mirador is able to point them out. They have their hair back in a small ponytail. They have finished their meal and are actually getting up to go wash their dishes and stuff as you approach.

Austin (as **Alon**): Yes?

Jack (as **Jud**): I've heard you've got tokens for the Wound.

Austin (as **Alon**): Yes. The Wound Way.

Jack (as **Jud**): Right, yeah.

Austin (as **Alon**): Visitor.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah.

Austin (as **Alon**): The only token for the Wound is hard work.

Dre: Damn.

Jack (as **Jud**): Well, yeah, well, I'm prepared to, you know. Offer my services in exchange for a token.

Austin (as **Alon**): Hmm.

Austin: And, like, looks you over and shakes his head. Shakes their head, sorry.

Austin (as **Alon**): I'm not convinced you can do the sort of work that would impress me.

Jack (as **Jud**): Well, what work impresses you? You know, I might surprise you. I can tend crops. I can muck out stables. I can, you know, I know how to feed an ailing animal.

Austin (as **Alon**): Yes.

Jack (as **Jud**): I can shoe a horse. I can weed a patch.

Austin (as **Alon**): Let's see you weed a patch. In the morning, I will see if you have what it takes to impress me, visitor.

Jack (as **Jud**): Yeah, my name's Jud.

Austin (as **Alon**): Mm.

Austin: And walks away.

Jack: I don't care for any of these people.

Sylvi: I'm glad that I found the one chill dude in here.

Jack: That's what we think, right? There's the abbot who we haven't spoken to. There's the librarian who's a weirdo. There's this...

Dre: Ah... The librarian's great.

Jack: There's the herbalist who is a weirdo. There's the cook who's great. And who's the final one?

Sylvi: Lanz is my bestie.

Austin: Amari, the mason.

Jack: Oh, the mason and glazier.

Austin: The glazier, yeah, mm-hm. Yeah. Who seemed fine, but like a little dirt under the fingernails. Maybe a little rude.

Jack: That's fine, you know?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: You can't weed a vegetable patch or whatever. Try me. Gotta go get a good night's sleep.

Dre: Did he say it was a vegetable patch?

Jack: No, he didn't.

Austin: It is. It's the garden. It's the vegetable garden. It is. It is. It is.

Dre: Well, maybe It's a worm garden, I don't know.

Austin: Would not let Jud into the worm garden. No.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: That makes sense.

Austin: Yeah. Anyone else aiming for a token?

Dre: Um... So, I wasn't there for that conversation. Is it fair to say that the topic of token probably comes up as I'm reading about...?

Austin: Yeah, as you continue to read about, oh, now they built, then the year they built the lift, da-da-da-da-da, and then they set up a system where you need to get a token from one of the five leaders of the Cloister, and there are no hard rules on how to get the tokens. It's completely up to those five people. You do see that the librarian, Gerennia, she is one of the people who... Whoever the head librarian is can offer a token, you know?

Dre: Right. Okay.

Austin: And in general, again, it's in exchange for gifts. It's in exchange for labor. It's in exchange for—and gift is like, you know, dressed up as like donations, right? Some sort of tithe, some sort of donation to the church. But also labor, but also just impressive feats, you know? If someone's impressed, they will give you a token. If they're, if, if they know that your job or your goal is to use the lift, they will offer you the token.

Dre: Okay. Well, yeah, I will, I guess I don't, I don't need to put these books back because they're in like the, the special collection area. So, I'm not, I don't, I'm not bringing those out of there to the desk.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah. So, I guess I come out 24 hours later. [laughs]

Austin: Yeah, you're there all night, huh?

Dre: Yeah. And I, you know, I approach the librarian and I very explicitly say,

Dre: Okay, well, it seems then that this journey is at least going to attempt to take us through the Wound Way. And I understand a token is required and you are one of the few people who could approve a token.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): That's right.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Is there any way I could help or prove myself useful or... worthy? I'm not quite sure what the criteria here are.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): There is no single criteria. But for me, at least, it is in... the criteria is in finding the criteria.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Hm. So, this is a "I offer" sort of situation.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): Yes. Or perform a task or...

Dre (as **Flemming**): Sure.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): Demonstrate a talent or...

Dre (as **Flemming**): Right. Important question. Would you prefer for me as I come up with potential ideas, should I run them by you first or is this a, I should just go and do?

Austin (as **Gerennia**): I am a very busy person.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Understood. [sighs] Do you have a spare book press, binding machine, anything like that?

Austin (as **Gerennia**): Yes.

Dre (as **Flemming**): May I have access to it?

Austin (as **Gerennia**): Novice Ryle.

Austin: And the novice nods and then begins to lead you to a place deeper in. It's not in this part of the library, but there's a different scribe shop where they have this kind of set up.

Dre: Gotcha. Okay. I'm going to start handwriting a copy of my book of grand, or I guess now terrible spells.

Austin: Terrible Spells, yeah. Okay. That's fun.

Dre: Very intentionally not doing this magically, because I could, very quickly and easily.

Austin: Sure. I was gonna say you could, yeah, but.

Dre: That does not seem like the vibe.

Austin: Okay. Flemming is just at work, y'all. Flemming is just, it's work hours. Real work hours, rise and grind type shit from Flemming today.

Jack: You know, he finds a library. It's...

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah. I really like this person. Flemming likes this librarian.

Austin: Yeah? This is like...

Dre: She's very straightforward.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Like she's just...

Austin: Similar.

Dre: Ask her a question, she gives you an answer, and you're like okay, all right.

Austin: It's really a like, reveals the context of people you've been around type thing, where you're like damn, this person who's just straight up and a little mean to me is better than all these people who are like, refuse to tell me the whole truth and are actually, you know, more annoying because of that even if they're not being directly rude. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: I guess it's not rude. She's not being rude.

Dre: Because I guess Flemming is interpreting this as like, yeah, she's not being rude or mean or dismissive. It's just, who am I to her?

Morning [40:12]

Austin: Yeah, totally. Yeah, accurate. As Flemming continues this quest for knowledge and a token, what else are y'all up to? The rest of you. Next morning comes, I mean, obviously Flemming works overnight here and through the whole next day, so that's kind of taken care of. But, you know, morning bell happens. There's a breakfast served. It's a light salad with some bread. And more mushrooms, probably. Probably. Some mushroom bacon, you know?

Dre: Ooh.

Austin: Yeah. Y'all go to breakfast together?

Sylvi: I mean, I'll be there, you know? If they want to be there, too.

Jack: Yeah, I'm gonna go get some more worms.

Austin: Okay. Good. And then, Jud, you're setting to it? You're getting the day done of weeding?

Jack: Yeah, oh, yeah, I'm going to go down.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Sacea and Gaje?

Sylvi: I had this, an idea of Gaje how like showing some of the people who had to like—some of the refugees that are camped outside how to like fight.

Austin: Oh, sure. Oh, that's fun, yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: I love that scene.

Sylvi: Where like, no, you're holding your sword wrong, hours, you know.

Austin: Yeah, the people that you were like playing the poker game with outside?

Sylvi: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: You kind of move up with them and begin to help them get prepared just in case the Empest show up.

Sylvi: Yeah, I probably overheard some stuff about it when I was out there the other day and...

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: It's better than just sitting around waiting for everybody else to get together so we can keep traveling.

Austin: Yeah, I mean, retroactively, I think one of the things that comes up in that first card game is people being like, do you bring news? Like, do you know where they've hit? Have they hit this village, have they hit this village? And you're like, ah, you didn't go to those villages, you know?

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: Um, so.

Sylvi: Definitely impressing them by talking about how we came through the Velutines. Not saying it in a way where I mean to impress them, but casually being like, oh yeah, now we came through the Velutines and getting a bunch of slack-jawed reactions to that.

Austin: Totally.

Sacea [42:33]

Janine: I didn't say it, but I imagine that after dinner, Sacea didn't deliberately go seek out anyone for a token. Was just kind of like... fuck this, I'm going to bed kind of thing. I've been scurrying around as a rat all day. That takes energy, you know?

Austin: Oh, I bet.

Sylvi: I was gonna say.

Janine: But also, I don't think she shows up for breakfast. Do we have access to... Because we have all the Moon Sentences for the cathedral. Do we get any...

Austin: For these people?

Janine: To read right now?

Austin: No.

Janine: Okay. Why did we get those ones?

Austin: Because those are cathedral ones that either came up during that session and got revealed, or were things that I very explicitly were like, here's the thing that's obvious about this. The one that I would say that you do know for sure now, I mean, there's two. I dropped one of them under the Venerant See. Gerennia is, this is the one that Mirador said, "I am always unimpressed by gifts of knowledge." So, that's the librarian, not impressed by gifts of knowledge. That's a reality 0 Sentence.

Dre: Fuck.

Austin: Uh-huh. Yeah. I know. I know that you went to the book press, and I was like, I don't know. We'll see what they're doing. I don't know.

Dre: That's fine.

Austin: And then it's been gestured out enough that I will now just—I will reveal the one for Ketero, which is—I'll bring it over for my sheet. "In the Cloister of the Hollow Heart, I am always unimpressed by outsiders." So, that one, you know, not great. That's a +2. That's not a great place to be for the head of this place. The other three, you're not sure of. And again, the other three are Alon, Lanz, and Amari. Actually, I will reveal what Lanz's is because Gaje did it. Lanz is +1, "I am always unimpressed by meals made with familiar ingredients." But it's because Gaje helped make meals with the local ingredients instead of working with stuff that they know already. Specifically working with worms they thought were mushrooms. That made the impression. He got a token for that. But the remaining two, Amari and Alon, you are not sure. And you're not sure of other relevant Venerant See things, too. But, yeah. That's the short stuff.

Janine: Hmm. Okay.

Austin: And theoretically, some of this is stuff that you could have exchanged information about, right? In some way. But players know this. The players know these Sentences. You know? Even if the characters don't know them in the same words.

Janine: Mm-hmm. I was... The thing I wanted more was the location Sentences but this is fine.

Austin: Oh, of this place?

Janine: Yeah. I don't remember what we have.

Austin: There really aren't that many. The only ones you have are, you have "the Library of the Cloister of the Hollow Heart always has answers for those who spend a day in its books," which I put on—I'll actually just put that under the current Moon Sentences, which is a +1, and then "the air in the Cloister is always too thin to breathe comfortably." But that is not, uh, that's not a thing I have enacted on you in any way, but I've described it, so I don't mind revealing it. Those are the ones you know.

Janine: Do we know, is that reality 0?

Austin: That's reality 0.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Yeah, you're doing, and again, it's like, it's not, no one here is suffocating. It's just not comfortable.

Janine: Yeah, yeah, I know, I know. Yes, yeah. Um.

Austin: Ah, okay, I can see a direction here.

Janine: I think my question is like, in attempting to do things, it's... Yeah, you'd always... Okay, I wouldn't be the defender.

Austin: Correct, you would not be the defender because you'd be trying to act. The thing that I'm reading from intent here is you're suggesting, oh, could I affect that Sentence? Could I change the atmosphere here?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. You would be the actor because you're trying to change the status quo.

Janine: Okay, well, I have a plan B.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: This is a really stupid plan B. Okay. [laughs]

Dre: [laughs]

Janine: All right. So, I am once again going animal mode.

Sylvi: Let's go!

Janine: I wish to be a little bird. I simply wish to be...

Austin: You wish to be a little bird!

Janine: A little bird.

Sylvi: Don't we all?

Austin: Yeah, I would love to be a little bird.

Janine: A little bird with like a... I was going to describe a Pokémon, and I remembered I hate that Pokémon. It's like a Pokémon that's like half bird, half cloud. And I was going to jokingly describe that, but I hate that thing. It's ugly.

Austin: Wow.

Sylvi: Swablu catching strays.

Austin: What is it? What's it called? We got to look at it now.

Sylvi: I just guessed. I said Swablu. I'm assuming it's the evolved one.

Austin: Yeah, there's Swablu and there's Altaria.

Janine: I think I'm thinking of Altaria.

Austin: I think it's the evolved Swablu is my guess.

Janine: But it's kind of funny because it's like a bird with a cloud. I don't think that's a serious thing. It's just, ha ha ha.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Janine: I think it's probably more like a lyrebird or something. I want something with like a long fancy tail.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Janine: And then I want to, [laughs slightly] does Ketero have a bedroom window?

Austin: Sure.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Or no. Maybe no—would they? Would he, because isn't that kind of a little gift to yourself?

Jack: To look out of the window?

Austin: To look out the window. Maybe does, but keeps it closed.

Janine: Could be a window facing a wall.

Austin: It's a window—yeah. Built a tower across from it so that there would be no view.

Janine: There's airflow, but it's not a view.

Austin: Yeah, exactly.

Janine: Does Ketero have anything like interesting or personal in the bedroom?

Austin: In view? Are you about to break into this man's bedroom?

Janine: Like a necklace or like a cool pen?

Austin: Oh my god. Yeah, I mean the answer to this is yes, right. The answer to this is there's probably some... thing.

Jack: He has a compass finger.

Austin: Yeah, there is the compass finger that was just given by Mirador, which is very funny. It's still in its wrapping back up on the desk. There is probably something like a pen or a specific hymnal or prayer book that's been used and overused until it's become a favorite. You know, actually what it is, is there's a pile of very smooth stones.

Janine: That sounds less interesting than the other stuff you've been saying.[laughs

Austin: Oh, but it's the one that he cares about the most. It's the most purely decorative. There's nothing about it that is useful. And that is his, it is a pile of perfectly smooth stones. You know, he's saying his prayers. And, you know, when you pray the rosary, you have a sort of like you pray the rosary in your hand.

Janine: Ah, okay. Yeah, this is the thing that gets it to where I want it to be. I wanted it to be something that he reaches for every day.

Austin: Yeah, this is part of that. And it's not, that's not. That's not part of the practice. Other monks here don't have these stones, right?

Janine: This seems blasphemous, but okay.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh, a little bit. But they're simple stones, right? And so, it's so easy to make that little doorway in your mind to make that exception.

Janine: All right.

Austin: But, boy, they believe—

Janine: Is he in the room right now?

Austin: If you want him to be or if you don't want him to be. He has a thing to do today. He'll be around. So, he can be here or not, depending on if you want him to be or not.

Janine: If he's not, then the thing I would do is go and find him after I take one of the stones anyway, so maybe it's easier if he is. Although I don't want him to stop me, is the other problem. Obviously. I want to take a stone. How big are the stones?

Austin: They're small. They're like skipping stones, right? They're like bigger than a quarter, smaller than a dollar, right? Like a half dollar size, right? Maybe a little bigger than that.

Janine: I take a little stone in each foot.

Austin: So, you come through the window and grab them? And you're saying he is there in this moment?

Janine: Um... [sighs] I guess I am.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: I'm going to grab the little stones and try and fly away.

Austin: Yeah, I don't think he has—I'm checking my Sentences to see if they're like a real obvious Sentence he's going to try to counter you with here. And the answer I think is not really. Veteran See clergy.

Jack: "I always protect my stones from the bird."

Austin: [laughs] Exactly.

Janine: Should I tell you the full thing of what I'm trying to do here?

Austin: Well, no, because if this is step—not yet. In a second you will.

Janine: Okay.

Austin: Because right now the stealing, unless the stealing is the thing that has an intent associated with it.

Janine: No. The stealing is a means to an end.

Austin: It's a prelude. Yeah, that's what I was reading. Yeah, I don't think he has, he's not going to stop you with the fact that he doesn't like outsiders, right? And he's not going to stop you with "Venerant See crusaders always punish non-believers" or "Venerant See clergy are always moral absolutists." He isn't even one of the crusaders necessarily. I guess he kind of is. I guess you're a non-believer, right? I guess I don't know what you believe.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: You know, you don't seem like you're a Venerant See person. Do you believe in the Immaterial One? Do you believe in, you know, avoiding earthly pleasures? It seems like no.

Janine: Well, I don't know if it's a thing that I seek out necessarily, but...

Austin: You don't go to mass, right?

Janine: We did also say, though, that Sacea has experience in cloisters and things like that. So, there is...

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: A respect.

Austin: All right, so yeah, maybe, mm. Is it respect or belief is the question. Regardless, I think that this is, you would probably, I think you would end up beating this by the nature of, in fact, here's what it is. You've done this already. We're kind of talking around it, but you used "I always shift the truth of my form with my smoke," right? Yeah, he is going to try to "Venerant See crusaders always punish non-believers" you and fail

because it's a reality 0. Right? He cannot stop you. You come in, he like, ah! And then like tries to grab at you or tries to like hit you with a pillow or a sheet or something, you know, and you're flapping away and then you get out the window with a couple of the stones. And I think like immediately drops to a knee to like pray and like try to understand what just happened.

Janine: I think before I fly away I want to like hover outside the window and, like, do a little chirp and then, like, fly obviously in the direction of, like, a courtyard or something.

Austin: Okay. Then stands back up and begins to chase you out there.

Janine: Hell yeah.!

Austin: Mm-hm. Is this, is this, okay, what is your intent now?

Janine: I'm trying to lead him outside the walls.

Austin: Yeah, so is this, and, like, brings, so he goes out to the courtyard and then are you gonna fly away again?

Janine: Yeah, and then I'm, like, on a tree and then I, like, go chirp, chirp, chirp and then I fly over the wall.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Chirp, chirp, chirp.

Austin: Uh-huh. Yes. Uh-huh. And you do this. And you make—he comes outside. Everyone's like clearing the way for him, you know. He's breathing heavy as he does all of this. Finally, he shoves open the front doors of the Cloister. He comes outside. And where does he find you eventually? How far outside of the Cloister do you—are you near the big windmills? Are you further out than that where it's cold? Where are you?

Janine: One second, I have to find... Okay. I'm just outside of the Cloister of the Hollow Heart.

Austin: Okay.

Janine: And I am human again, and I'm holding the two stones.

Austin (as **Ketero**): [sighs heavily]

Janine: And I'm smiling playfully and leaning on my walking stick. The friendly, sweet old crone. And I extend my hand, offering the stones back.

Austin (as **Ketero**): Mm. Pomesse.

Janine (as **Sacea**): You seemed like you needed a little morning exercise.

Austin (as **Ketero**): Many stories about people like you.

Austin: And reaches out to take the stones from you, and in the process, place the token in your hand.

Janine (as **Sacea**): Thank you. [laughs]

Austin (as **Ketero**): Many stories.

Austin: And slips his stones back inside of a sleeve pocket type situation. And just turns his back on you and looks over his shoulder at you suspiciously. And then moves on. And I think that the Cloister of the Hollow Heart is the actual—the token, the clay token you have is a heart that has been cored, effectively. It's a heart missing with a hole in its center, is the symbol.

Jud [56:20]

Austin: So, that leaves Jud and Flemming. And presumably, I don't know about the Cicatrix Knight. Jud, have you informed the Cicatrix Knight of anything? Or are you just hoping that because he's like an undead being, it doesn't—

Jack: I mean, is Scrundle, does Scrundle need a token?

Austin: Scrundle is a donkey.

Sylvi: So true.

Jack: I mean, the Cicatrix Knight is one of the five Knights Naturalis.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Scrundle talks sometimes.

Austin: Scrundle has, yeah, well, but they don't know that. They just know donkey.

Jack: Wait, does Scrundle talk sometimes?

Austin: I don't know. I feel like we've kind of gone back and forth.

Janine: Scrundle answers questions. That's talking.

Austin: That's talking. Yeah, Scrundle, yeah, you're right.

Jack: Yeah, I think, and I feel like this is one of these things.

Janine: Scrundle expressed not wanting to be on fire.

Austin: So, you've not had the Cicatrix Knight come to help you in the garden?

Jack: Oh, God, no. He is the Knight Naturalis. He might like it. Cicatrix Knight, he/him?

Austin: He/him, we've been doing he/him. We've been doing he/him. Maybe I did a they/them in there in the mix, but I think I did he/him mostly. I've been seeing the relationship between the Cicatrix Knight and Vortigern Gothgeier as like old man yaoi, you know?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: And so, I'm sticking at least with he. Maybe he/it. There's some fun he/it stuff happening with the Cicatrix Knight, the being of endless age with whom you've shared flesh and now serves you as sire, you know, as sired knight. There's something there. A living plant, but also living scar, you know? This is, cicatrix is like scarred flesh or scarred bark. "In botany, a cicatrix is a mark on a stem left after a leaf or other part has become detached."

Jack: I love the Cicatrix Knight. I have so many questions about this weird guy that are not for this campaign. You know?

Austin: Jud, least curious person in the world, or really very curious about one thing.

Jack: Yeah, it's a real motivating factor. You know what? I am going to bring the Cicatrix Knight, if only for the camera. I think that, you know, it might be interesting to get a little more color. The color, ha. A little more color on the Cicatrix Knight in a garden might be interesting to see.

Austin: In the armor, or like, again, the armor is the flesh, is the bark. You know, it's all, it's a mess, right? But I do feel like the Cicatrix Knight has this kind of bark-like armor, but the line between bark and skin is kind of obtuse. Like, it feels like its skin is smooth, like, as if the bark had been removed to reveal the underlying layer of the tree. You know what I mean? Instead of it feeling like armor being worn. In general, I picture this knight as looking a little bit like Kain or the other *Final Fantasy IV* knight, the Dragoon. What's the Dragoon's name in *Final Fantasy IV*?

Sylvi: I thought you were casting another wrestler.

Austin: I was not.

Dre: I thought you were talking about the vampire.

Austin: Sorry, Kain—[laughs] No. Kain or Cecil [tries different pronunciations] depending on how you read Cecil Harvey.

Sylvi: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Austin: In the Dark Knight armor or Kain in the Dragoon armor, right? That styled knight, right? Big armor, hands and lower face mouth showing type vibes.

Sylvi: The yaoi bit makes a lot more sense with that detail, too.

Austin: Oh, yeah. 100%. Yeah.

Dre: [laughs]

Austin: You can go ahead and search that up yourself. So, yeah.

Sylvi: I have and I will. [laughs]

Austin: [laughs] So, yeah, they're out there with you. I think big head-turning moment, Jud, of showing up with this legendary knight with a hole in his chest who is now kneeling down with a small spade to help do some gardening with you. Did not partake at breakfast. I don't think eats, right? We've been over that.

Jack: Can't eat. I mean, can't eat from my perspective.

Austin: Not anymore, certainly.

Jack: Whether or not he does eat, I'm not interested in that. That guy's not allowed to eat. Yeah, I'm, you know, I'm weeding the garden. I think this is something I haven't done for a long time. You know, this was very much a task of, like, when you are five.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: You know? I think I talked in the past as well about Ged herding goats at the very beginning of *Earthsea*. You know, Ged just being this sort of benighted child on Gont until Ogion shows up. Well, no, he's taught magic first.

Austin: Well. He's taught magic first. That's the damn thing.

Jack: He laughs as a witch tries to bind his tongue. But, you know, none of that for Ged. For Ged. For Jud.

Austin: Jud, who is sort of dark Ged, now that I'm thinking about it.

Jack: Yeah, just, you know, working in the fields, in the mud. Weeding.

Austin: It's a hard day. I'm going to say it outright. It's a hard day. I'm not going to make you spend a Sentence to do it. But it's a hard one. You're being put to work.

Jack: Yeah. And presumably, an herbalist in a monastery has a very specific garden.

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Jack: Is like, I have very clear criteria about what we are growing. I think Jud can feel the worms, you know, moving through this soil. I know this isn't a worm garden.

Austin: But you still have that.

Jack: Can feel the nematodes and the, like, you know, little horrible things down in the earth underneath Jud's fingernails. Hard, hard work. Is the Cicatrix Knight...? You know, we don't really know much about the Knights Naturalis, you know, from this camera perspective.

Austin: And we don't know many in the book of Realis. They show up in this book, they have like short descriptions. There's a lot of them.

Jack: We know there are five of them, right?

Austin: There's five of them. The Aerophant, the Cicatrix, the Ferronic, the Fulminant, and the Tidaline.

Jack: Oh shit, we've met the Ferronic!

Austin: Well, not in anything that's been recorded.

Jack: No. No, but I've encountered that person.

Austin: Jack, you killed the Ferronic in a first Realis playtest.

Jack: In a circus ring.

Austin: Yeah. Right?

Dre: Mm!

Jack: But I'm curious if there is any sort of, you know, when I think of elemental knights, I think of affinity, but I'm curious if the Knights Naturalis work in that way, you know, or if it is more complex than just like,

Austin: I do think they do.

Jack: They do, they have an affinity to this.

Austin: And I think that there is a, um, you know, again, we've seen, "I always inspire with my blossomed self" is one of the Cicatrix's Sentences. And I think that this is in some way, you know, his blossomed self working in the garden is the same. It's the same sort of—you know, the Cicatrix Knight is a Knight of scars and a Knight of growth. It's a Knight of, again, broken bark and living scar. And I think that there is something about gardening, the repetition of it. The blood when you touch a thorn by mistake or when you misjudge the use of a tool, but then the commitment to bandaging that up and continuing your work, that is very Cicatrix-themed. And also the long length of time it takes, right? A garden is a promise, is a commitment to be here when things bud, right? And to keep them safe while they grow. And so, I think that's very Cicatrix-y to me. And so, I think that he takes to it pretty naturally, and maybe even reveals knowledge of the past here, right? This is not something it's not done before. This is something it's done maybe throughout a life of service, right? Maybe in some other time, some other place, the Cicatrix Knight had his own herb garden. Was his own gardener, right? So, seemed to take to it very well. Moving quickly, determined, little complaint, seems unbothered by the thin air here, et cetera.

Jack: Meanwhile, I'm just having a bad time weeding a garden.

Austin: Yeah. And let's, I guess, jump ahead, because at this point it's you and Flemming who don't have tokens. The bell rings for supper again. You know, there's a lunch supper, and then there's the evening supper. And I have to reveal the Sentence from Alon, because you're going to be so annoyed with it. And I promise, I need you to understand, I promise you I wrote this before this session. It is a +1 Sentence that I need to see if you can overcome this, because here's what happens. Alon, you and the

Cicatrix Knight are standing after the long day of work. And Alon walks past you and places a token into the hand of the Cicatrix Knight. Do you have anything that can counter “I am always unimpressed by labor performed on a full stomach”?

Jack: [laughs] Oh, God. That’s so funny.

Austin: Stuffing your mouth last night, you know?

Jack: I showed up with soup!

Austin: Uh-huh. You did. Eating it. Yeah. And what did Alon say? I don’t know that you could do the sort of work that impresses me.

Jack: Meanwhile, the Cicatrix Knight, who literally does not have a stomach anymore.

Austin: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, uh-huh.

Jack: I don’t have anything that can counter this, I don’t think. No, I’m not going to offer to make this guy immortal. It would be extremely funny if he has these very specific things about, like, disliking work on a full stomach and I’m like all right, real monkeys paw closing, Alon. But, you know, I’m not gonna do that. I’m not gonna spend a token and I don’t think he would take that anyway. Let me look...

Austin: Yeah, you don’t think that you can, yeah.

Jack: You know, I’d say “I can make you immortal” and he’d be like “absolutely not.”

Austin: [laughs]

Jack: I’m looking at Moon Sentences that I could pull on using a token.

Austin: Oh, you could pull on a Moon Sentence, that’s fun. Yeah. Oh. There’s fun stuff that you could theoretically do. I don’t know if it would work, but it would work mechanically.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: You could also invent a Sentence with a token, but it would not overcome this +1 Sentence in the process, right?

Jack: No, it wouldn't. It would only be useful in the future. Oh, this is so funny. The Cicatrix. Knight gets a token. [laughs] I'm not going to challenge this. This has got to go this way.

Austin: All right. You're not going to challenge it with anything, because remember, you can mark a Sentence if you try, but I don't know what you would necessarily do here with what you have.

Jack: This is what I'm saying. I'm prepared to be pretty broad in the interpretation of Sentences, but my Sentences are "I always fight my way to safety in the dark." Not really useful. "I always find somewhere to rest." "I always protect those traveling with me from the Death Procession."

Austin: There's a world where that could work. But, you know, I think it's a little bit of a stretch, but, like, there's a world where you make a case here that's like, as long as we're here, you're in trouble, buddy. The Death Procession is coming, you know? But there's a real double-edged sword on that. Because it's like admitting that you're being chased by part of the church that this is part of, you know?

Jack: Yeah, and this guy doesn't care for me anyway, so he might take it out on me in a worse way. And then I have the Sentence, "I am always under threat," which is, you know, that's potentially...

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: It's like...

Austin: Someone else could help you. As a reminder, you are defending here, right? So, you just need to equal the 1. You don't need to overcome it. So, there could be a Bond here. You could use a Band Sentence.

Jack: Yeah, all right. I think I'm going to use "I am always under threat." And I think Jud, seeing the Cicatrix Knight give a token, puts his hand out and says,

Jack: All right.

Austin (as **Alon**): I was unimpressed.

Jack (as **Jud**): Well, unimpressed how? Wh—I weeded the garden. And you can't say he did all the work. We split it up. He did that patch over there. I did this patch over here. Same amount of work. Maybe I had a little bit more, actually.

Austin (as **Alon**): Mm.

Jack (as **Jud**): I won't hold it against you, so, you know.

Austin (as **Alon**): Do you think you provided for the garden more than you took from it in the last day?

Jack (as **Jud**): Uh...

Austin (as **Alon**): No.

Jack (as **Jud**): I don't really think it has to work like that.

Austin (as **Alon**): In my garden, it does, visitor. Your knight is a good companion. Consider modeling yourself after him.

Jack (as **Jud**): This doesn't make any sense. I worked hard. I thought you guys would, like... You know, take care of us in that way.

Janine: Is there, like, a loophole here in terms of, like, worm hunger? Can you express the worm hunger? The insatiable worm hunger?

Austin: [laughs]

Jack: Eat! The! Herbalist!

Sylvi: Jesus.

Janine: Well, I just mean, like, if your stomach, like, define your full stomach. You had worm brain. You were thinking worm thoughts.

Austin: Mm.

Janine: That's not your fault.

Austin: I don't think there's a way around it that way here.

Jack: No, I mean, I think the way I am...

Austin: Stomach full on worm and other things. Bread and salad, I discussed this morning.

Jack: Lord Roger.

Austin: Lord Roger.

Jack: Lord Roger's horse.

Austin: Yeah, uh-huh.

Jack (as **Jud**): Look, I don't... This is ridiculous. You've got to give us the token. We'll get out of here. I'm going to be real with you. You know, you have a real opportunity to make your life easier here, mister. 'Cause... I don't know about the others. I can only speak for myself, but I bring trouble. The faster you can get me out of your door and into the Wound the better.

Austin: Are you spending a token on this? So, again, the argument you're making here is "I'm trouble to be around. I'm bad luck."

Jack: I am always under threat. Yep. I'm being guarded by a knight whose entire chest cavity has been blown out by a laser weapon. Um, am I spending a token? Yes, I will spend a token.

Austin: Okay. Clear that token, and:

Austin (as **Alon**): Fine. The sooner you leave, the better.

Austin: And produces a token for you. All right.

Jack: Takes it, spits on the ground, you know, real bad faith here.

Austin: Countering that Sentence, which leaves us with Flemming.

Flemming [1:11:32]

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Hi.

Dre: So, what happens when I bring my nice big copied book in its fancy binding?

Austin: The Sentence that you're up against here is "I am always unimpressed by gifts of knowledge." So, I guess my question ends up being, so I think that she says:

Austin (as **Gerennia**): Novice, describe what he has brought me.

Austin: And the novice says,

Austin (as **Novice Ryle**): It's a book of spells, I believe. I believe this is a thaumaturge, a thaumaturge's tome.

Austin: Looking to you for your confirmation.

Dre (as **Flemming**): You are correct.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): I see.

Austin: Says Gerennia.

Austin (as **Gerennia**): Mm.

Austin: Not impressed by what was just described. “I’m always unimpressed by gifts of knowledge,” so if you want to challenge that it’s a gift of knowledge.

Dre: I do!

Austin: You can maybe do that.

Dre: Because this is not a book of knowledge, this is a book of terrible spells. It is a book of power.

Austin: Mm. Interesting. Yeah, I guess that that’s different. I think the “terrible” probably changes that. Yeah, I think that I’ll allow that. And I think she says,

Austin (as **Gerennia**): Ryle, place it in the special collection.

Dre: Oh, man.

Sylvi: Can I ask a question?

Dre: Inside, Flemming is just fist pumping so hard. In the special collection? Let’s fucking go.

Sylvi: [laughs] Is there a specific spell in it that made her go, oh, this is worthwhile?

Austin: Yeah, I guess her being like—... That’s a great question. Thank you for that extra. You tell me, Dre, what is the... The novices, they’re reading out spell after spell after spell. What is the spell where it crosses over from knowledge to power?

Dre: I’m trying to think if this should reference... If I want this... Not should. If I want this to reference something that has been on screen or something that has yet to be on screen.

Austin: I’m happy with either, yeah.

Dre: Yeah. Hmm. I think there is a spell in there that is specifically about dampening or even removing people’s access to the senses.

Austin: Mm, okay. That produces the, yeah, that's interesting. Sure. And then, yeah, brings it to the special collection and produces a—

Dre: Oh. It doesn't just do that, it eliminates any memories associated with that sense.

Austin: Oh, there we go. That's terrible. Now that's terrible. Love that. That's good. Then, yeah, does that. Puts that in the—doesn't do *that*. Doesn't do the spell.

Dre: That's good.

Austin: Isn't like, and there's your cost. Boom. You don't remember taste anymore. But does take that book, has it sent to the special collection, and gives you a token with a book and a pen—not a pen but a quill, I guess. Maybe a pen. This world is very weird. It's a pen.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: On it and has you, you know, gives you what you need to go to the Wound Way.

The Wound Way [1:14:50]

Austin: So, now everybody has what they need.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Are we leaving tonight or are we leaving in the morning?
Doesn't really matter.

Austin: Says Mirador.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Really a question—

Jack (as **Jud**): It's really dark down there anyway, yeah.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Yeah, that's right.

Dre: Right, so once we get into... Where are we that we're having this conversation, by the way?

Austin: Maybe one of the bedrooms that's connected. Maybe the bedrooms are all in sort of a little visitor suite. They have a little gathered room next to the washroom. It's like a little living room.

Dre: Gotcha. Okay.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Okay, Mirador. So, we're taking this giant tunnel that was created by a planet-devouring worm, and we're going to take it from this part of the planet down to the south end. Am I on the same page with you so far?

Austin (as **Mirador**): You've been doing research?

Dre (as **Flemming**): Yes.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Then, yeah.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Right. What's the catch?

Austin (as **Mirador**): What's the catch? The catch is, it's a hard journey after a point. The lift only goes halfway, we gotta go the second half.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Mm. Will our host be okay with that?

Austin (as **Mirador**): Our current host?

Dre (as **Flemming**): Yes.

Austin (as **Mirador**): Eh. They expect us to go down there, scrape around a little bit, and either walk back, or climb back, or take the lift back. I don't think they expect us to go further.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Would it upset them if we went further?

Austin (as **Mirador**): Probably.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Hmm.

Austin (as **Mirador**): I don't know that they'd give chase, necessarily.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Why?

Austin (as **Mirador**): Because I think in a couple of days this whole place is going to be overrun with the Empest.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Oh, I didn't mean why they wouldn't chase. I meant... Why would they be unhappy with us?

Austin (as **Mirador**): Because they built the Cloister to prevent people from going all the way through.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Okay.

Austin (as **Mirador**): We're taking advantage of an opportunity.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Okay. I've said my piece.

Dre: I'm looking to the group.

Dre: I mean, I feel like we have learned something important about Mirador and the lengths that he is willing to go in order to achieve this goal.

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Dre: He is willing to... Is betray too harsh of a word?

Austin: Eh.

Dre: Betray a whole group of people that he's had a pretty important relationship with up to this point.

Austin: Sure.

Jack: And open the north of the planet to the Empest.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: Maybe. You don't know what that looks like yet. That's—a monk told you a thing.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: That's true. Mirador thinks that this place will be overrun by the Empest, you know, in... a short period.

Austin: Yeah. This planet's on fire. Like. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: I think if we—

Austin: I mean, but you can raise this. This isn't—I'm not—Austin shouldn't stop you from raising that question to Mirador.

Jack: No, but I think we are now at the point where the kind of screws that I want to put on Mirador are better served for when we are all alone in a worm tunnel than departing in a monastery.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: So, yeah, I think I'm, like, I'm ready to go. I think that there are, like, real meaningful glances with Sacea and Gaje, you know, having had that conversation yesterday. But, yeah, getting breakfast, worm bread.

Sylvi: If we're leaving, like, if we have a chance to, if we're having a meal before we go, I think Gaje just does a quick, like,

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Thank you for the hospitality.

Sylvi: To Lanz.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: You know!

Austin: Lanz, uh...

Sylvi: Gaje isn't the type who gets welcomed this warmly, typically, and, like, especially having someone do it after he's, like, incorporated his weapon into himself. It meant a lot, you know?

Austin: Yeah, yeah. Lanz provides you with a little brown bag. And in that little brown bag are tea leaves. And it is an Ephemera. It's a +1 Ephemera that is "the tea of the Hollow Heart always calms a troubled soul."

Sylvi: Hell yeah. Added to the sheet.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvi: Oh, I don't know—I'm trying to think of, like, anything Gaje would have to, like, exchange.

Austin: [laughing] Oh, you're not going to give the Violet Blaster?

Sylvi: No, I'm not going to give him my Violet Blaster.

Jack: I could make him immortal.

Sylvi: Part of it was, like, I remember I described Gaje's cloak thing as being made out of, like, different tabards and stuff. And I'm wondering if he just cut off a bit and like rinsed it out and was like,

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Here, a new rag for the kitchen. It's all I can offer.

Austin: Aw. That's fun, though. Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah, I think it's also very—he's a really function over form type of guy.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvi: So, I think it speaks to that too.

Austin: It makes sense. Yeah. I love it.

Sylvi: Okay, cool.

Austin: Fantastic. All right. Everybody else good to go? Any other final conversational bits here before we move on to the next thing? Flemming are you tired? You were up all night.

Dre: Eh.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: You think this is the first time I've done this?

Austin: Yeah, fair.

Janine: Are you hungry?

Austin: Yeah, are you hungry? Do you want to eat some worms?

Janine: You haven't eaten in like two days.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: [thinks] I think I am like, yes, Flemming is hungry in that like his body needs sustenance.

Austin: Yes.

Dre: But I don't think it bothers Flemming.

Austin: Interesting. I think Mirador is probably going to be like,

Austin (as **Mirador**): You should bring some soup in case you get hungry on the lift.

Dre (as **Flemming**): That's a good idea.

Austin (as **Mirador**): It's a long way down.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Is the soup good?

Jack (as **Jud**): [very quickly] Yes.

Austin: [laughs]

Janine: [laughs]

Janine (as **Sacea**): It's fine.

Austin: Are you bringing some soup with you, Jud?

Dre: Yeah, sure. Oh, sorry.

Austin: I know you are, but is Jud also going like, I gotta bring some of this soup with me?

Jack: Yeah, absolutely.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: I need more soup!

Sylvi: This soup is bussin!

Austin: A classic Jud line. That's how Jud is.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Jack: I'm taking, you know, two and a half thousand worms down the path with me.

Austin: Ah... Worms Jud. Worms Jud is an outlier. The average person eats three worms a year.

Sylvi: [laughs]

Austin: Factoid actually just statistical error, average person eats zero worms a year. Spider—worms Jud, who lives in cave and eats over 10,000 each day, is outlier and should not have been counted.

Jack: Look, here's the thing. The monks are also eating an absolute shit ton of worms.

Austin: You're right. All the time.

Jack: The thing is that I have an awareness. And I gain power and vision from the worms that I eat.

Austin: [laughs] We're all saying this. It's good for your eyes, you know?

Jack: I gain power and vision from the worms that I eat! And I'm definitely not becoming massively parasitized.

Austin: Yeah. All right. The group of you is led through the Cloister in the quiet of the night to the manufactory, to the place where they are making what you now know is worm soap. And then deeper in, to the part of that building that was closed off to you as Rat Sacea. And that part is a stairwell down to a lower level that has been kind of surrounded, not in the stone and clay or the clay and wood, but in metal, carefully sealed to prevent anything from here getting out. And here you are led by lantern light past these sort of big glass containers, these big glass cubes of soil where the worms are being cultivated. You can hear them in the dark. You could hear the sounds of the worms crawling through the dirt and over each other. And in some of the containers where it is like the ones almost ready for harvest, it's almost all worm in there at this point. The dirt's all gone, and whatever else, the fertilizer, whatever they're being fed is almost completely gone, and it's just worm on worm.

And finally, you are led down another kind of stairwell to the edge of the hole at the center of the world or at the top of the world, which starts fairly small, but you can see below opens wide and goes forever. And I need to know if anyone here can counter the Sentence for themselves or for others... I need to find it. I thought I had it in front of me. I don't. Here it is.

“The Wound Way always terrifies those who have not traveled into it before.” Because even simply seeing it is halting.

Sylvi: I don’t really know whether this is a reality 0 or what, but I think it’s interesting if my Sentence fails on this. I think the one that would calm Gaje the most here is “I always carry an unstoppable weapon.”

Austin: So, you like clutch it tight.

Sylvi: I mean, can’t really clutch it when it’s in me.

Austin: When it’s you. Yeah, that’s fair. Yeah, you do.

Sylvi: But it’s just one of those things where it’s like there’s a change in posture, where you can tell that it’s closer to a fighting stance than it is a walking stance.

Austin: Yeah. I’m going to tell you, this fails. This is a +1 Sentence.

Sylvi: That rules.

Austin: So, you pull it up closer to your chest or you stand in a place where you’re...

Sylvi: Yeah it’s kind of like holding it across his torso, almost as like...

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Oh. I have a—

Austin: It offers no, it is not your security blanket in this scenario.

Sylvi: Yeah, no, it’s not.

Dre: Can I throw out an idea?

Austin: Mm-hm.

Dre: Gaje, you also don’t have your token, right?

Sylvi: No, I don't.

Dre: I'm wondering, so one of the ways we can recharge our token is a player, including the GM, introduces a way in which a Bond leads to a new complication and both players can recharge their tokens. I'm wondering here if your natural aptitude for the magical can further complicate this.

Austin: Oh, I'm sure it could.

Sylvi: [laughs] Yeah, I bet that's part of the unease, right? Gaje, in my head, is, like, someone who is very comfortable in places that are, like, hostile, but more mundane. Like, battlefields and stuff. And then when the, like, I think when magic starts getting involved, especially after the experiences in the Velutines and in the Vortigern's Hollow catacombs, that it's way harder to keep calm under pressure.

Austin: All right. Yeah, I can complicate this according to this. Is that fine by both of you?

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvi: Yeah.

Austin: In this moment of fear, your eyes begin to glow blue. And so does, soon enough, the hair on the long of your arms.

Jack: Oh, wait. Blue blue.

Austin: Blue blue. Realis blue. Bright blue. And it is leaking from your eyes. It is kind of flowing upwards like teardrops. And it is coalescing into a kind of blue energy. And what's everyone's first reaction at this moment, before I give the follow-up?

Jack: I, like, put my hand on the... Too big. Put my hand on the Cicatrix Knight to be like, hang on, don't, you know... Like, be watchful, but don't.

Dre: Yeah, don't touch that!

Austin: Oh, and the Cicatrix Knight moves in front of you protectively, right?

Jack: Me peering through the hole.

Austin: [laughs] Now, what's going on here?

[everyone laughs]

Austin: Do a little peek!

Jack: Just peep through this little window that I have. In a knight!

Sylvi: Oh, my God.

Austin: Any other reactions to the blue energy pulling off of Gaje in this moment?

Sylvi: I'm turning to Mirador and being like,

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Where have you brought me, old man?

Austin (as **Mirador**): What's happening to you?

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): You're the one who's supposed to know that!

Sylvi: I'm like stepping closer.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Gaje, are you in pain?

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): No.

Dre (as **Flemming**): Okay. Do you feel any other sensation in your body physically?

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Does unease count?

Dre (as **Flemming**): Yes.

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): Then that.

Sylvi: Actually, Austin. Are there any other physical?

Austin: You feel everything. You feel the... Every hair on your body, it's like the opposite of what's happening—it's like the opposite of what the folks in the Cloister have done to themselves, right? You can sense everything so much. This incredible amount of stimulus coming in at you right now. Every sound, including the ones you say, is like too loud, is louder than it normally would be. You can taste the dirt in the air from all of the soil that's been collected above. You can taste whatever the metal this lift in front of you is made of, right? There's a lift that you're going to get onto. It's kind of like a big copper bronze lift. You can taste the metal of it just in the air. You can smell it. You can feel it.

And you can feel that part of yourself, which is the blue energy, liquid energy, blue stuff, is leaking and is growing and growing further from you, is getting further from you, is going upstairs, is drawing a line up, is... Do you ever see one of those gifs of lightning where the connector runs up and then it strikes down? From the ground, there's like a ground spark that runs up and then it reconnects downward. That happens. A huge beam of light finds its way down, covering the Cloister of the Hollow Heart. Blue light, the light of day, striking the entire thing, finding its way, bouncing around inside, into the manufactory, through its windows, down the stairwell, to you like a bolt of lightning.

And the complication is not that you have this magic running through you. It's that in the distance, we see in the night sky the Empest ships turn, now having been alerted to the Cloister of the Hollow Heart. They are on their way now.

Dre: Maybe that wasn't worth a token, but who's to say?

Austin: Who's to say?

Sylvi: Yeah, you know what? We've got it now.

Austin: We've got them back. And it is the sound of lightning striking. Loud, tumultuous, cataclysmic all around you.

Sylvi: Having an actual description of the sensations that Gaje is feeling, I feel like his answer to Flemm is like, after saying the unease, it's like,

Sylvi (as **Gaje**): I feel everything.

Sylvi: And then the crack of this lightning happens. He's freaking out.

Jack: Hm.

Austin (as **Mirador**): We have to go. Put the tokens in. Let's go.

Austin: And there's like a little token machine that you slide these coins into, basically. The guard who's with you or the person who is with you is like

Austin (as **Monk**): Hurry!

Austin: And runs upstairs to see what the hell just happened and find help and like, go,

Austin (as **Monk**): I have to tell Ketero what happened here.

Austin: You know? Is not gonna try to like, detain you, because oh my god, you just turned blue and weird.

Jack: Gotta get you out of here, deeper into the planet.

Austin: Yeah. Basically. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Okay.

Sylvi: Oh yeah, I'm slamming that token and pushing past everybody—

Austin: I'm sorry. You're still scared. Unless you spent a token on something that I didn't.

Sylvi: No, no, you're right. I'm still scared.

Janine: I was going to spend a token to also "exert my will over the atmosphere with my perfumes."

Austin: Okay. And what does that do? Or to do what?

Janine: To calm me down. For me to not freaking out.

Austin: And I think because this is a group thing, right? You're able to—this is an area thing. This is the atmosphere. I think you can calm everybody down and give everybody the confidence to move forward here.

Janine: Okay.

Jack: Oh, great.

Austin: If you want to.

Janine: This is like an oatmeal cookie kind of—this is like a smells of home kind of incense situation.

Austin: Oh, interesting. Okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then for Gaje, it doesn't just replace what's there, but it quiets what's there. It is like a blanket has been put on the world so that it's a little less overwhelming. You know?

Sylvi: Yeah. It's like being able to, like when you have earplugs where you can still hear things clearly through them, but it's, yeah.

Austin: You do have to spend your token because this is a +1 Sentence, Sacea, but totally doable. What's this—are you, are you using the censer, like lighting it? Are you, is there something else, some other version?

Janine: I think this is a, I want to like, I think emphasize the almost mundanity of it where it's like, you know, it's the Sacea tired mode like,

Janine (as **Sacea**): All right, let's everyone settle down.

Janine: That kind of so I think it's just, I imagine the censer just like dropping out of her sleeve almost unceremoniously. Just like, thunk, hits the end of its chain. She like lifts it up and lights it, you know, shakes out the match, kind of thing.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Swings it around a little bit, puts her token in the thing, is like,

Janine (as **Sacea**): Well, let's go. Come on, everyone. Everyone get on the list.

Austin: Yeah. The token has a really pleasurable like ka-clunk, you know, old arcade machine, old early 1900s arcade machine, you know, mechanical arcade toy machine.

Sylvi: You can hear gears and stuff whirring.

Austin: Oh, 100%. And you hear louder ones once everyone is on board, including Scrundle, on board the lift.

Dre: Thank you.

Austin: Scrundle had to be led down these stairs very carefully. These are people stairs, but Scrundle's...

Sylvi: Am I still... Go ahead. Sorry. Am I still blue?

Austin: I don't think so. I think that that has happened. Unless you would love to stay blue, but I don't think that that's happened.

Sylvi: No, I just wasn't sure if I still had the glow to me while I was there.

Janine: If you were still *Black Rock Shooter*-ing.

Sylvi: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Glad we went there and not just Super Saiyan, Blue Super Saiyan. Super Saiyan God Super Saiyan.

Sylvi: Oh, Dre went there in chat.

Dre: Oh, I did that in chat.

Sylvi: Don't worry.

Austin: I see it. I see it. Good, good, good.

Sylvi: We got our bases covered.

Jack: I think I welcome this sensor, but I don't think that this Sentence applies to me. What was this Sentence?

Austin: It does.

Jack: I've been here before. Worm knowledge.

Austin: Sure. You're right. You didn't need it to begin with is what you're saying.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Uh-huh. That's fair. Worm knowledge. Yeah. That Sentence doesn't apply to you. Yeah, I get you. Then yeah, everybody all aboard. You get on the lift.

Dre: Chugga-chugga.

Austin: Chugga-chugga.

[["Sapryc"](#) by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

Austin: Begin to descend down into the darkness, into the depths of the moon of Sapryc.