

## **Realis ○: Embolism**

Transcriber: thedreadbiter

**a Skip,**

**Austin:** I want you to close your eyes and imagine it with me:<sup>1</sup>

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

Imagine Realis Itself,

[all audio speeding up, faster and faster]

the Radiant Planet at the heart of the Thousand Moons, that orb which lights the cosmos entire. Above it, the betrayer star, the Corpse Sun, red and sick and pulsing ill, small and fainter by the day. Below it, hungry and roiling, the Great Void, an abyss of voracious clouds. And in between, those thousand moons, countless except you know their number. Varied eternally, yet all dwarfed by the azure orb around which they glide.

And there, bring them to mind too: those four colorful moons, spinning and buzzing and twirling around each other.

Do you remember their names? The names of the Tetraspherica? The Speckled Quartet, the Marbled Quartenion? Those spinning, glorious jewels—unique even among all thousand of the moons of Realis? Let me remind you:

Placid Ulled. World of farms and cultivation and soil—and what lies beneath it.

The Crux. A vast colosseum world where victory, glory, and power have been rendered equivalent.

Prismatic Principia: Home to the Endless Academy, whose halls house famed philosophers, eager alchemists, mages, and—it seems—the occasional ghost.

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<sup>1</sup> Originally from *Realis 01: Those Nerveless Chancers*.

And Hypnotic Dokine, where mists mystify, clouds corrode, and light always reveals a new truth.

For as Long as Long has been, these four vibrant moons have swung with dancer's rhythm around one another. Long before the great Powers spread their influence across the orbital sphere, long before the founders of Sphenic Polytechnic revived the Orphan Vessels, LONG BEFORE THE MOONFOLK UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY WERE THE MOONFOLK, those who lived on the worlds of the Tetraspherica knew each other as neighbors.

[abruptly playing at normal speed, but then slowing, slower and slower]

"True as the tetrad," the saying goes. A stable waltz. Four marbles in alignment.

[speeding up, faster and faster]

Eternal. Reliable. Unshakeable.

But today...in the shadow of an Ulledd mountain, in the keep of the Citadel Bein, where negotiators bicker and showmen entertain, a treacherous conspiracy unfolds...

[last sound of "Realis" begins to drone continuously]

[fast-forwarding, melting into chirping sounds]

## **a Skip,**

[beginning to slow to intelligibility]

Ali (as **Hye**): If this is a piece of you that you think is predetermined, then that doesn't mean you can't change what part of it that you see that isn't yourself.<sup>2</sup>

Austin (as **Candide**): I saw something in myself too. And I have a better idea of where Wellaway, and Donnie, and you are headed.

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<sup>2</sup> Originally from *Realis 12: Conference on Clouded Dokine 04*.

**Austin:** And I think she reaches down to pet Escrundelio, the big lizard, and begins to pick him up to wear him like a boa around her neck. Stands up and looks back at you, is now backlit by the golden clouds of Dokine, and says,

(as **Candide**): I'm gonna say this, even though I know it won't happen. You should leave.

Ali (as **Hye**): Without you?

**Austin:** Nods.

Ali (as **Hye**): Is this something that you want, or something you think will keep us safe?

Austin (as **Candide**): It's something that I *wish could happen*. [echoed]

**Austin:** And I think like, deep, real feeling in her voice and eyes, you know? A wish like a wish. A wish, not absently throwing a coin in the wishing well. Desperately throwing the coin in the wishing well.

[speeding up, faster and faster]

Ali (as **Hye**): Well Candide, I guess if you want me to treat you as part of the crew, I'll take your advice here.

Austin (as **Candide**): Really?

Ali (as **Hye**): I'll let the others know that I spoke to you, and that we're in danger, and we'll have to gather everyone else, of course—

[fast-forwarding]

[abruptly playing at normal speed]

Ali (as **Hye**): [sighs] You've been a very good friend, Candide. We'll see each other again one day.

[fast-forwarding, melting into rumbling sounds]

**a Skip,**

[beginning to slow to intelligibility]

**Austin:** “Some of the Thousand Moons are claimed by dozens of ever-squabbling, petty baronies of the Leo Suzerainty.<sup>3</sup> Others have been conquered by the locustal fleets of the Imperial Empest, or have been forcibly converted by the hypocritical and violent theocrats of the Venerant See. More obscure factions, like the secretive scholars of the Zvezd Lyceum or the esoterics of the ReGnostica, keep to the shadows—a danger, since the shadows are home to ill worms, ghastly sovereigns, and the Drift, a realm of raw emotion and unhinged desire.

“And everywhere, Moonfolk find a way forward, claiming small joys and working toward some sort of tomorrow.”

You are one of these moon folk working towards some sort of tomorrow. Jack, can you read me your character’s name and pronouns? And then read what I’ve filled in here for the look, and I’ll have to send you an image, because I need you to know what this means.

**Jack:** Yeah, this is so exciting. [**Austin:** Yeah.] Austin sort of—we talked about what character we wanted to show off in the demo, and I opened up the book this morning to refamiliarize myself with the Sentences, little knowing that just before we recorded, Austin would hand me a character sheet in progress. It’s great. This is like the bit at the very beginning of the video game where you have a bunch of the weird powers and also you’re being pursued or something.

**Austin:** [chuckles] Well...

**Jack:** I am playing Amaretto Scandle. That’s Scandle, S-C-A-N-D-L-E.

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<sup>3</sup> Originally from *An Introduction to Realis*.

**Austin:** Yeah, “candle” with an S in front of it, yeah.

[speeding up, faster and faster]

**Jack:** Yeah. Pronouns they/them. And look here, you’ve just written “Nokko’s outfit on the cover of Rebecca’s Raspberry Dream single.” [chuckles]

**Austin:** Rebecca is an ’80s J-Rock band. This is the outfit in question.

**Jack:** Oh, wow. I think—I feel like this outfit has appeared on *Friends at the Table* before.

**Austin:** [cross] Have I mentioned this before? I have wanted it to appear for sure before. And I don’t know if it has. I’m double-checking, because it may have. But if it didn’t, it had to. You know? I think I’ve sent it to you to be like, “We have to put this in something.” So.

**Jack:** Yeah. So this is a Japanese woman with frizzy black hair. She is wearing—big ’80s hair. She is wearing what looks like a baggy, like, brocaded blazer—

[fast-forwarding]

**a Skip,**

[slowing to intelligibility]

**Austin:** For as long as long had been, the moon of Sapryc was a jewel in the many-leafed crown of the Leo Suzerainty.<sup>4</sup> But in the eternal orbit of Realis, even the endless is obliged to end. And so it is, that one hundred forty years heretofore, the gem of Sapryc—its blue waters and coral mountains, its fields of easy, green grain—was wedged from its slot.

[“[Sapryc](#)” plays]

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<sup>4</sup> Originally from *Realis 14: Out of the Burning City Pt. 1*.

No one knows when, exactly, color itself was wiped from this moon, but we suspect we know when the process began:

[speeding up, faster and faster]

The Imperial Empest, a once august empire, now voracious, glistening, and insectoid, fell upon the world like the locustal swarm it is, covering its southern pole with **terrible speed**. [echoed]

Though the Suzerain's forces held for decades, in time the internal squabbling of their many dukes and marquesses became cracks in the northern continent's walls. And thus, an opportunity.

[fast-forwarding, melting into chirping sounds]

**a Skip,**

[slowing abruptly to intelligibility]

**Austin:** I don't know what it is.<sup>5</sup> I've never been to Realis Itself, you know? But I do think that we see **Mirador** [echoed] here. Just for like a second. And whatever that experience is for you—the moon forming in your head, like, academically, or just like flowing through you emotionally, or this just, like, this process, this ineffable process that you feel in your blood and your bones—whatever it is, that is not happening for Mirador.

I think Mirador just lowers himself to the ground next to Scrundle and looks out on the Thousand Moons, or at least however many hundred he can see from here. And he closes his eyes and there's this, just, look on his face, this kind of sigh that moves through his body, and kind of comes through in waves. And I think the first one is like, just, total relief, utter relief, just like, month-long heat wave just broke, you know? Like, freedom from captivity. Like, deep, deep, deep, deep relief.

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<sup>5</sup> Originally from *Realis 28: The Skipping Stone 02*.

And then there's like a little skip, and his eyes open. *Snap* open. And there is a moment of recognition, and what looked like a moment of victory and triumph and rest is revealed to be just a temporary reprieve. And he stands back up.

[speeding up, faster and faster]

But I don't think you see any of that because of the moons that you are making. And, let me tell you, these are the moons that the player characters on the other side of the game are from. A quartet of moons.

**Dre:** Oh!

**Janine:** Sick.

**Jack:** [laughs] Yes!

**Sylvi:** This is so cool!

**Austin:** And the reason, [laughs] and this is why we recorded this first, was I needed to know what the moons the other half of the game take place on.

**Jack:** Oh my god.

**Janine:** Ah.

[a brief phrase from "[Sapryc](#)"]

[last sound of "Realis" continues to drone for several seconds]