

TAZ: Dust Season 2 - Episode 0: Setup

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Travis:

All right everybody, first and foremost, welcome, uh, back to Adventure Zone: Dust. But mostly welcome to Erika Ishii, new to Dust, new to... Well, at least recorded Adventure Zone podcast. Hi, Erika.

Griffin:

Hi, Erika.

Erika:

Hi, Travis.

Clint:

Hi, Erika.

Erika:

Hi, pals!

Justin:

Hi, Erika.

Erika:

I'm so excited to be here.

Travis:

Yeah, I'm excited to be here as well because I've been, uh, I've been planning, uh, Adventure Zone: Dust, part two, for about two years.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

So I'm very excited to be here.

Travis:

Um, we're doing a session zero, which we don't formally, normally do. Um, so I think, uh, the three kind of major, like, areas I want to hit in this are character stuff, um, game mechanics, and like, kind of like house rules stuff.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

So, do you guys want to start with characters? Because we've got some new PCs here.

Griffin:

Is anybody playing the same PC as Dust One?

Travis:

Yeah, so...

Justin:

I am returning to my previous role. I will be playing, I will be playing Augustus Parsons, the CEO, in absentia, the GEO, ghost executive officer if you will.

Travis:

Okay, great, yeah.

Justin:

Of the Augustus Parsons...

Griffin:

Not the chief executive ghost?

Justin:

Nope, excuse me. Excuse me. My enemy, Garrett Althiser, has changed the name of my beloved company.

Travis:

What?

Justin:

Yes, he has retitled it. Cashewniverse.

Travis:

Oh, boy.

Griffin:

That is a better name, in Garrett's defense.

Erika:

I love a portmanteau.

Griffin:

Sure.

Erika:

I'm so sorry.

Justin:

It is a better name, what a dagger through the heart!

Griffin:

It could be all, it could also...

Justin:

Garrett Althiser, my murderer and life-long, death-long enemy.

Travis:

He didn't murder you, that was not originally established. Garrett Althiser did not murder you. Unless you're retconning that for, I believe it was...

Justin:

No, he, he had me killed. He had me killed. I owed him a debt as a result.

Travis:

I thought it was Flint Chittles that killed you. [laughs]

Justin:

Flint Chittles.

Erika:

I thought it was Chint Flittles.

Justin:

Chint Flittles... Okay, Flint Chittles is the one I came up with. And then dad came up with Chint Flittles right afterwards.

Erika:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, it could have, it could have been so much. He could have named the company Deez Nuts, which I would have definitely gone to. If I wanted to sort of, um, as a punishment rename somebody's cashew company, that's probably that I would have gone with.

Justin:

Hmm.

Travis:

We haven't started an official episode yet and I've lost control.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

So, J-Man, uh, a couple questions I wanted to hit. Uh, remembering your, uh, the moves, the specter moves that you had chosen, right?

Justin:

Yes.

Travis:

Comes with manifest, that's built in. Then I believe you had picked...

Griffin:

We should describe, so, are we going to be approaching this like people did not listen to Dust One? Because if so, we have not even mentioned the game that we are playing in The Adventure Zone: Dust.

Travis:

Oh, sure, sure, sure, sure, sure. Uh, so we are playing, uh, Urban Shadows from Magpie games. Uh, Urban Shadows is a game system built primarily on the interactions of factions within a city. Um, and those uh, circles that those factions exist within. Uh, and so each of those will respect you in different ways, you'll make debt moves. You'll make connections between people, and that's like the major mechanics of Urban Shadows.

Uh, if you want to hear more about it, we did do a Dust setup episode, uh, way back when where we went way more in-depth in it. But it's, uh, I think a really cool game system and I enjoy it immensely. We'll be going into the mechanics more later, just to go over everything together to make sure we're all on the same page. Uh, but Augustus Parsons is a specter, uh, that is that archetype that Justin will be playing. Um, he has the ability to manifest. Uh, he can be seen, heard, or touched, any two of those at any given time.

Um, and I think the other ones, if I'm remembering correctly Justin, were Ghost Town and Wall, What Wall? Is that correct?

Justin:

Correct. That is correct. I refer to the Wiki.

Travis:

Which I did a lot.

Justin:

Flint Chittles did kill me. Okay, Flint Chittles killed me, fair. Why?

Travis:

Okay. But you think maybe he might have been an agent of Althiser?

Justin:

I think that he was hired by Garrett Althiser, yes. That is my theory.

Travis:

Then I think that that is a personally reasonable thing for Augustus to believe happened.

Justin:

Okay, good.

Travis:

That like, maybe no, like, direct proof yet, but that is Augustus' belief, I like that.

Justin:

Okay, fair enough.

Travis:

Um, the other question I had is, so, after playing through uh, the first Dust session, did you end up, uh, completing an advancement level as Augustus? Let's say that you did. Because, I mean, you went through enough.

Justin:

Yeah, that would be weird if I didn't.

Travis:

Yeah, so.

Justin:

At least, maybe I did in the off-time. In the off-season.

Travis:

Uh, so you were able to, uh, choose, uh, plus-one status in anything, a new specter move, a move from another archetype, or you can change your circle.

Justin:

Say those one more time?

Travis:

You can add one status. So, basically you start off with status. For a specter, you have one status, status one, in, uh, Night, in any Night faction, and you have no status in any of the other ones. So as an advancement move, you can add plus-one to your status with, uh, Mortals, Night, Power, or Wild. You can pick a new specter move to go along with Ghost Town and Wall, What Wall? Uh, you can pick a move from another archetype if you wish, or you can change your circle, uh, to go from Night to something else.

Justin:

I will do, um, Won't Be Ignored.

Travis:

Great, okay.

Griffin:

What is that?

Justin:

When I get in someone's way, I take a 10-plus instead of rolling. If I mislead, distract, or trick someone with an obvious supernatural display, roll with spirit instead of mind.

Travis:

Great, perfect. So that is a new specter move, got it. Okay. Um, we'll go over starting debts together once we've introduced all of our characters, because I want them to be linked. Um, but, uh, I don't think that this was in edition one. But since we recorded the first one, edition two has come out.

Griffin:

Ooh.

Travis:

And as a specter, you are going to choose four anchors that you have to the material world. And those anchors then allow for, uh, different things, um, that allow you a, you know, a crushing move, advancement moves, all kind of different stuff. And uh, do you have any thoughts as to what those four might be?

Justin:

I've just realized they exist.

Travis:

Yeah.

Justin:

I've just come into knowledge of their existence. I didn't even realize—

Travis:

I have a feeling like, a location of personal importance might be one of them, that being your cashew company.

Justin:

Yes, that's true. And a family member. Because his daughter, Anna Cardium Parsons, um, would definitely be one. And the Augustus Parsons Cashew Company.

Travis:

Uh-huh.

Justin:

A marker of my success in life now claimed by another, slam dunk.

Griffin:

Yeah, for sure.

Justin:

And uh, a beloved possession of my youth passed on to a new owner. That was, that would be good. It's the first dollar I ever made.

Griffin:

Hm.

Justin:

And dumbass Garrett Althiser has it hanging in his office.

Travis:

Okay. What, and uh, the last one, uh you picked a marker of your success in life now claimed by another. Is that the CEO title?

Justin:

That's the company.

Travis:

Got it.

Justin:

That's the company.

Travis:

Got it.

Justin:

Yeah. Not the physical business, that's a different anchor.

Travis:

Got it, got it, got it. Let's see, do you want to go next, uh, uh, Erika?

Erika:

I will go next.

Travis:

Perfect. Well, so Erika is, uh, from the first session, the Dust session, we have an organization called The Graysons, which are, uh, sort of, they're guns for hire. Um, they get jobs done, uh, as you need them. They are not a law-keeping organization. Strictly they are like, enforcement, or tracking someone down, or protection, or whatever, what have you. Right? Um, and

so that is what Griffin's character, Dad's character, and Justin are a member of.

But, uh, Erika's uh, character, is a resident of Crescent City and a friend of Pearl Blackwell, who is the daughter of the Blackwells of, uh, Dry River, um, that you all will primarily be, uh, working with. Uh, so Erika, would you like to introduce your character?

Erika:

Uh, I will being Louise "Lulu" Kagiyaama.

Travis:

Uh, what are Lulu's pronouns?

Erika:

Uh, Lulu's pronouns are, uh, mostly she/her. But under, uh, demonic circumstances, it don't really matter none.

Travis:

Perfect.

Clint:

[laughs]

Travis:

Yeah, she, she is a Tainted. Uh, has a connection to, uh, a demon which we will also get to. Um, let's see, let's start. We'll just go at the, at the top and work our way down. Uh, what is, what is Lulu's kind of general demeanor upon first, uh, interacting with her?

Erika:

Uh, Lulu is the vivacious proprietress of, uh, the well-known establishment in the city. She is always quick with a smile and a deft helping hand. And she does her utmost to make all factions feel welcome in her establishment. Um, which is the, which is Maison Nihon, the uh, gambling and uh, pleasure club in town. But uh, do not cross her. Because she has, uh, made an arrangement with, with a very powerful patron. And in her more, less

genteel form, she is uh, what would be referred to in the old country as an oni.

Travis:

Perfect.

Justin:

Awesome.

Travis:

Uh, now that, that quick with a smile and welcoming demeanor, um, and you don't have to answer this now. The, the question, the answer might be, well, we'll see. But how much of that is, um, kind of her natural, uh, you know, kind of personality, and how much of that is like, good business for running this establishment.

Erika:

Oh, it's genuine, through and through.

Travis:

Right.

Erika:

It's very, she loves her community.

Travis:

Uh, and what would one see upon first looking uh, at, at Lulu?

Erika:

Uh, Lulu, uh, you'd see that she, most folks comment on her cute little flat button nose. Um, she's got a little beauty mark on, on the left of it. Uh, her left. Not, not the viewer's left. Uh, she's got a little moon-shaped face and hooded eyes. And dark, unmanageable curls piled high atop her head in an artful twist. She's got light olive skin, and generally will be dressed in a fashionable, uh, gown with black-beaded fringe and a bustle pinned up in the back.

Travis:

Love it. I love a bustle. Man, I love a bustle. Okay.

Erika:

It's the— Love a hustle and a bustle.

Travis:

I love both of those things and I love how they rhyme. Um, so, her circle, her starting-out circle, uh, ratings. She's got a one with Mortals, a negative one with Night. Zero with Power and a one with Wild. And you can add one to one of those. What, where would you like to add a plus-one?

Erika:

Um, now, I think I would like to play this as... So circles are different than status.

Travis:

Correct.

Erika:

Um, and right now I have one status. I think that I'd like it to be, uh, where... The, the feeling where she wants everyone to feel welcome. So she wouldn't— She'd try her best to understand everybody in equal measure. So perhaps, uh, add one to night to make it zero...

Travis:

Perfect.

Erika:

Instead of negative one?

Travis:

I think that makes complete sense. Now, as a Tainted, you begin with the move The Devil Inside. Uh, that allows, uh, you a lot of really cool shit...

Erika:

Oh, yeah.

Travis:

When you, uh, summon your demon form. Uh, your demonic movement, your demonic weapon, and your demonic senses. And if you're working on a job for your patron, you pick one more. Uh, and you can do even more if you mark corruption. And we'll talk about corruption in a little bit. But then you get to choose two more moves. Uh, you have, uh, a couple different ones there. Tough as Nails, Invocation, Tongue and Silver, uh, and Dark Bargain. Which two would you like to choose?

Erika:

I was thinking Tongue and Silver. Uh, because right now my mind's not the strongest part of me. But I don't know if that's quite right. Because, you know, when you're looking at... When you're looking at someone and you're trying to figure them out, it's just as much about intuition and your heart as it is with, as it is your intellect.

Travis:

Yeah.

Erika:

Um, so I'd say Tongue and Silver. Uh, and uh, let, let's go with Dark Bargain.

Travis:

Okay, great.

Erika:

Let's go with Dark Bargain.

Travis:

And then, you start off, uh, with one status in Wild. So you will have, uh, some moves related to that. Ooh, this is where it gets very fun with the patron. Uh, you're going to choose, uh, two things related to your patron. Uh, "Your soul has fallen into the hands of a dark patron, a powerful demon whose reputation precedes them, but whose true name is known to few. They have given you terms of employment, access to terrible power, and terrifying insight into their true nature." And you get to choose two qualities that this patron possesses.

Erika:

Um, I'd like to say that they, uh, they seduce all who come into contact with them with pleasantries, gifts, and vices.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Erika:

And they require deference from their minions. So their strange obsession with a mortal pastime.

Travis:

Ooh, okay. Okay, we'll figure out what that pastime is as we play. I was thinking about this because, uh, Urban Shadows by its nature is kind of, uh, originally developed to be, uh...

Erika:

Modern day.

Travis:

In modern times, yeah. And so a lot of the starting gear includes like, a smartphone and a car and stuff. And I was like, but we don't have phones. And then I thought, this is a fantasy world. You guys have phones. It's just a different kind, it's magically powered or whatever, who cares? You can communicate to each other via phones.

Griffin:

Okay.

Travis:

Right? Yeah.

Erika:

Excellent.

Justin:

All right, fair enough.

Travis:

It's, it's like a little tiny, you have a little tiny, morse code, you know, I don't know, whatever you want to do. But.

Erika:

Like a...

Justin:

A pock.

Erika:

Like a little hand-held morse-code, uh, clicker. Doot doot, doot doot, doot doot.

Justin:

I love that.

Travis:

Yeah, there you go.

Justin:

It's like a pocket telegraph. A pocket telegraph.

Travis:

A pocket telegraph machine.

Justin:

Pocket-graph. Pock, yes.

Erika:

Doot doot doot, doot doot doot.

Travis:

Uh, let's go next to dad. So dad and Griffin will be playing new PCS. Um, and we'll talk about where your old PCs are in just a moment. But first, dad, tell me about your new character.

Clint:

Um, he's a Hunter. That's the archetype, named Callan.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Griffin:

I think it's, I want to start out by saying, I think it is straight-up baloney that this is the character name that you chose instead of the original character name. Because Travis did tell us the original character name, and the fact that you had to change it is...

Clint:

Well, yeah, I gave into peer pressure.

Griffin:

Okay, but.

Travis:

It wasn't peer pressure, okay— [crosstalk]

Erika:

What was it, what was it, what was it?

Griffin:

This is peer pressure coming at you from the other side.

Erika:

Yeah, that's right.

Griffin:

Pulling you toward this incredible first pass at the name.

Erika:

And it's all of us versus Travis.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Clint:

The original...

Justin:

Uh, now I'm on Travis' see, side.

Travis:

Yay.

Griffin:

Okay, so it's me and Erika versus Travis and Justin for the fate of dad's character's name.

Erika:

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Clint:

Okay. The original name, uh, uh, he's a gunfighter. Gunfighter for hire, in this case working for...

Justin:

There's no context you're going to give that's going to make this name make sense.

Clint:

He's working for Grayson, right?

Erika:

Yes.

Clint:

And so I had the idea of naming him Darnell Tootin.

Justin:

Okay, I'm going to—

Erika:

[laughs] Darn Tootin!

Clint:

And his friends called him...

Erika:

Yes!

Clint:

Darnell Tootin, and his friends called him Darn. Darn Tootin. And then as we refined the character and what I wanted to play, Travis said, "I'm not sure that name fits."

Travis:

You told, you said to me, "I want to play like, a hard-ass, like gunfighter named..."

Clint:

You said play against type.

Travis:

"Darn Tootin." And I was like, well, now.

Griffin:

That's good to me, though. That makes sense to me. That's good to me.

Erika:

I mean, that's such a good, that's such a good, uh, uh, juxtaposition. I feel like that's such a good game to play. Of like he's this hardened, grizzled. "It's me, I'm Darn Tootin."

Griffin:

I'm bringing this up so the audience will revolt if you do not name your character Darn Tootin.

Clint:

Oh.

Erika:

Well, they won't hear this until...

Travis:

Okay, listen, by all means.

Griffin:

No, that's fair, until it's too late.

Justin:

That's true, they'll have no, they have no recourse. We're doing this in a vacuum.

Griffin:

True.

Clint:

Um, Trav?

Travis:

I, no, hey, listen, it's your character.

Griffin:

It's your character, man.

Clint:

I really want to play him as a badass, I really want to play him as somebody who's aloof and is there for a job, and doesn't care if people like him or not, and doesn't want a cute name. So I'm going to save Darnell Tootin for Dust three.

Travis:

Okay, perfect.

Justin:

Perfect.

Travis:

When you're playing a cowboy clown. Perfect, sounds great.

Erika:

[laughs]

Clint:

Or when I die and I have to pull an Arlo Thacker and come back from the dead as a different character.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

Tell me about Callan's demeanor. And you've already touched on it, you said he doesn't care if people like him and he's a bit of a hardass.

Clint:

Yeah. He's, he's aloof, he's not a team player. Doesn't give a shit what anybody thinks. He's not there to make friends, he's there to kill supernatural ghoulies. And um, he's very, uh, you want me to play against type, I'm definitely going to try to play against type. Because he is not there for fancy patter or jokes.

Travis:

I love it.

Clint:

Which I think is convenient in the, you know, because I'm, you know, I don't want to have to strain to come up with hilarious bon mots that I've come up with in the past.

Justin:

Yeah. Here, dad.

Travis:

Let, let us carry this one down.

Justin:

Let me, let me take that, let me take this, this burden off your shoulders, of carrying this show.

Travis:

Yeah. You've done so much.

Justin:

Thank you, dad, for your years of service.

Erika:

I'm just going to say, strain? You make it look effortless. So.

Clint:

Aw, nah.

Justin:

Thank you. That's such a nice roast.

Clint:

Thank you.

Justin:

For dad.

Griffin:

[laughs]

Justin:

That's a great, that's a great bit.

Erika:

[laughs]

Travis:

Uh, what does Callan look like?

Clint:

Um.

Justin:

He's got a t-shirt that says, "My name's Darnell Tootin."

Clint:

And all I got was this lousy t-shirt. I've envisioned him as kind of a Lee Van Cleef. Very lean, you know, kind of tall but just that squinty, uh, tanned by the sun, sunburnt, leathery skin. Just looking like a bad, like a snake in human form. Um, so I envision him as being that guy.

Justin:

All right.

Travis:

Uh, so your circles begin, uh, one in Mortal, one in Night, zero in Power and minus one in Wild. You can add one to those, where would you like to add one?

Clint:

I'm going to put my one in Power.

Travis:

Okay, great.

Clint:

So it's basically one, one, one, and then minus one in Wild.

Travis:

Sounds good. So, your hunter moves. You get to choose three from the list there. Which would you like to pick?

Clint:

Uh, Deadly.

Travis:

Uh-huh, which allows you to flick, inflict extra harm.

Clint:

Uh, Prepared for Anything, which means I have a very well-stocked armory.

Travis:

Great.

Clint:

With modern and ancient weapons. And then I decided to go with Watch Them Closely. Because the other one's, like, Safe House.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Clint:

And This Way, and Worst Thing's Out Tonight were all involved with him being involved.

Travis:

Yeah.

Clint:

With somebody else, like protecting somebody or making a deal with somebody. And I don't think Callan would, would be like that. So, Watch Them Closely.

Travis:

Yeah, so with Watch Them Closely, you're able to, with some uh, extra observation, find weaknesses of supernatural, uh, creatures. Um. Now we'll go on to, as a hunter, you belong to a society. Um, and, uh, you need to pick, uh, a couple things with your society. First, what is like, the main prey of your society? And you have some options here.

Clint:

Um, is this a decision that you can inform at all? With our mission and what we're going to be going after?

Travis:

Well, I'll tell you this...

Clint:

Because I think, here, here's my justification, here's the reason I'm asking. Is, if we are being brought into the story by Grayson, if I, if Callan's being brought into the story by Grayson, then there's a specific job they want him to do.

Travis:

Correct. I would say, so, this is uh, different from Monster of the Week in that way, in which the mission you guys are being sent on is less of a hunt. Uh, and, and more of a, uh, you know, more general than that. But I would say, um, this is one of those things where I can almost guarantee that whichever one you pick, there will be, uh, an encounter that will fit with it. Because I'll be telling the story, and that's why I'm asking you the question.

So it really just comes down to, what flavor of hunter do you want to be? Because all of these are not just like, a vampire. It's vampires who feed on the weak and coerce, demons who corrupt the good and the just, angels—

Clint:

Right.

Travis:

So it's like, you can meet plenty of vampires that you're fine with. You can meet... Now, I will say this. If you want to add some drama to the story, the main person you are trying to convince here to come home is Pearl Blackwell, a vampire. So if you want to have that vampire kind of in-built connection, where maybe you're a little untrustworthy of vampires, or you know more about vampires than you know about anything else, that might be a good choice for why they sent you. But your job will not be to hunt her in the traditional sense.

Clint:

I think, uh, angels who subjugate the will of the faithful.

Travis:

Okay, cool.

Clint:

Bad angels.

Travis:

Uh, what did you have to sacrifice to join?

Clint:

I think his soul.

Griffin:

Whoa.

Travis:

Hoo boy, okay. That does fit with the angel thing, great. Uh, and where does your society gather?

Clint:

A hallowed religious ground.

Travis:

Perfect. And then finally, uh, Griffin, you are up.

Griffin:

Hi, um, uh, well, you lied earlier in that I am not playing a brand new character.

Travis:

Yeah, it's not ... New to Dust.

Griffin:

Um, well, I have retired Errol Ryehouse. Who I think we had discussed, his pol, his political career has finally proven fruitful. And uh.

Travis:

Well, yeah. I went, I went back ... Let me see how this grabs you. Because I went back. And as I was re listening to the first four, it occurs to me that, uh, the Dry River ends in quite disarray.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

And that it would make complete sense for Errol to want to stick around as like a community organizer, and then possibly as like, an alderman of the city or something.

Griffin:

Yeah. I think, uh, I think that that's great. Maybe even mayor? Ooh.

Travis:

Ooh.

Griffin:

That sounds good to me.

Travis:

Yeah, I like that.

Griffin:

So he's the mayor of Dry Creek. I am playing, uh, Indrid Cold.

Clint:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Otherwise known as The Mothman from, uh, TAZ Amnesty.

Clint:

[laughs]

Travis:

Now I, obviously, there are so many questions associated to what exactly that means and we'll get to that in a minute. But first, the mechanics of the character. Uh, what are Indrid's pronouns?

Griffin:

Uh, he/him.

Travis:

Uh, what are Callan's as well? Sorry.

Clint:

Um, he/him.

Travis:

Got it. Um, what is Indrid's demeanor?

Griffin:

I mean he's, I would say, uh, almost annoyingly detached and vague with his manner of communicating with people. I think that comes from him not necessarily being of this world, and also being able to see into the future gives one a certain amount of detachment from the here and now, and everyone who is in there.

Travis:

Oh, in case it wasn't, uh, obvious, Indrid is an Oracle. That is his archetype.

Griffin:

He's an Oracle is the archetype. Yeah, I basically saw the arche-tyke, archetype. And I was like, ooh, that would be, that would be fun. If I could be the Mothman again.

Clint:

Arche-tyke would be a little tiny baby.

Griffin:

Just a little oracle. No, yeah, he's a, yeah. I mean, and go listen to TAZ Amnesty. You'll know all about his, his demeanor.

Travis:

And uh, his look? What are we looking at?

Griffin:

Uh in Amnesty, and I don't see any reason why it would be different, he was uh, a sort of, uh, slender, uh, pasty fellow with red circle glasses. I don't, I forget the name of the, what type of glasses those are. But, um.

Justin:

Pince Nez?

Griffin:

Not Pince Nez, no.

Travis:

We can't use that again. We said the word Pince Nez like 18,000 times in Dust One.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

We can't do it again.

Justin:

Okay.

Griffin:

Um, but yeah. He, he is not a very, um, he does not dress in any kind of a eye-catching manner. I think he, uh, tends to want to fly below the radar a little bit. Um, and so aside from his, you know, blood-red glasses, I think he dresses rather, rather plainly. Um, yeah.

Travis:

Uh, you can add a plus one to any one of your circles. Currently it is one in Mortal, minus one in Night, one in Power and zero in Wild.

Griffin:

Uh, I think, uh, oh, Wild is like, uh, fey magic stuff, right?

Travis:

Yeah.

Griffin:

I think it would be wild, it would be wild for me to not put one in there. Just because...

Travis:

Yeah.

Griffin:

That sounds like Sylvain, the... Wow, you really need to have listened to a lot of The Adventure Zone to hang with this, this mini-arc.

Travis:

It's fine.

Griffin:

Um, but yeah. I mean, I think Wild would be absolutely wild.

Travis:

Perfect. Uh, you get to choose two Oracle moves. What are you going with?

Griffin:

So, I don't know if maybe I was looking at an old playbook. Uh, but the one I was looking at had Soothsayer already, like unlocked. Is that not how it works in the 2.0?

Travis:

Yeah, that. So that might have been, uh, First Edition. Now it's Second Edition, uh, Soothsayer is an option. You can choose Psychometry.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

Uh, which is examining an object.

Griffin:

I'm leaning towards that, Soothsayer and Foresight, just because the other stuff isn't really, like, Mothman can't read your mind as far as I know.

Foresight allows me to advance Keep Your Cool for any or all characters you choose in your presence, including yourself. And when you advance a move, uh, you make it so that if somebody rolls very well, a 12-plus on the roll, uh, it does, the move does something extra. And in this case it allows you to not only keep your cool, but to like, destabilize the cool of your, you know, opponent in any given scenario.

Um, which feels right. Like, if I can see the future really good, then I think being a bit more untouchable in that regard, uh, makes the most sense. So I think that's, those are the two I'm going to go with.

Travis:

Um, great. So then your benefactor.

Griffin:

Yes.

Travis:

That allows for these things. If, if you're connecting it to, like, they fey and the, uh, you know, to Sylvain, then is it like, coming from Wild?

Griffin:

Um, it has to be, right? If that's the source of my power?

Travis:

Yeah.

Griffin:

Yeah, it's got to be Wild.

Travis:

Well, is the name of this benefactor, Sylvain?

Griffin:

Hmm.

Travis:

Let's, let's call it right now, uh, name is question mark, question mark, question mark. Right? That like, your, this thing is happening. And you can even have like, the prophecy that connects you to them.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

But, uh, there is a flaw, right? That is, they have defenses against your sight.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

And I think that, like, you are not able to determine exactly, right now at this moment, exactly where these visions of the mortal plain are coming from.

Griffin:

Yeah, I like that. We, and we can figure it out as we, as we play. And then the other sort of thing that I have is foretellings.

Travis:

Yes.

Griffin:

Which is a lot like Duck's sort of prophecies that he got as The Chosen back in Amnesty. Where, before the game starts, I get to sort of ask a prophetic question of the GM. Or the MC, as they are known in this one.

Travis:

Yep. Great. Okay, so those are our four characters. Um, our four player characters. Now, um, when we talk about starting debts, right, um, we're going to have things that, that connect, uh, our characters. We can connect them, uh, to each other. We can connect them to things here in town, or other people in town.

Now, debt is a very powerful mechanic in, uh, Urban Shadows. So we'll start with Indrid, since that's where we left off. You, uh, owe two debts to someone who helps you decipher your vision, uh, with unique insights. Do you know who that is?

Griffin:

I think that when Indrid rolled into town, um, not knowing anybody, he was just sort of naturally, magnetically drawn to supernatural stuff. Um, and his, how powers aren't like, particularly acute right now, because of sort of binding that he's under. Um, but he met a ghost, a spirit, that calls itself Micah that has inhabited a few forms that has lent him some aid in, uh, utilizing his powers, uh, even in their hampered form.

Travis:

Perfect. Uh, you had a dark vision about someone but you gave them bad guidance, and you owe them a debt. Who would this be?

Griffin:

Um, can it be that I sent a letter to Augustus Parsons, warning him to not trust Althiser, but did not tell him to keep an eye on Flint fuckin' Chittles. And so I got him looking in the wrong direction.

Travis:

Yes.

Griffin:

And got him iced.

Justin:

Yeah. Makes sense, that.

Travis:

That also makes sense as to why, uh, without proof, Augustus is like, "I think it's fuck, I think it's, I think it's Garrett Althiser. But I don't have proof." But he's, yes. Um, and then someone interfered with your destiny, and they owe you a debt.

Griffin:

Can it be the Gray— Am I a Grayson, do I have to be in—

Travis:

You are a Grayson, yes.

Griffin:

Okay.

Travis:

You are at least an agent of the Grayson working here. It's not like a lifelong commitment or whatever, it's a job. But.

Griffin:

Who's in charge of The Graysons? Do we know that?

Travis:

Huh. Probably someone...

Clint:

Dick Grayson.

Travis:

Yeah, someone with the last name Grayson, for sure.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

I'm going to say Dallas Grayson.

Griffin:

Dallas Grayson is pretty good.

Justin:

Oh, nice.

Griffin:

Uh, I'm going to say Dal, Dallas Grayson, um, when, uh, Indrid came into the world through the gate, right, from Sylvain, Dallas Grayson did something thinking that, uh, he was some sort of monster. Thinking that Indrid was some sort of monster who had come to, in, interfere with the world. Because that is how those gates work, is they are sort of kindling for war between these two worlds. Uh.

Travis:

Yeah.

Griffin:

And so, maybe, uh, Indrid was incarcerated, or otherwise sort of like, captured.

Travis:

May I recommend.

Griffin:

Yes please.

Travis:

May I suggest that performed a binding on him to try to contain him.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

But what it did was limit his ability to shift to Mothman.

Griffin:

Yeah. Well, it's not like a physical transformation. He doesn't actually— I don't think in, does Indrid turn into— I can't man, it's been so...

Travis:

Yeah, when he takes the glasses off.

Griffin:

Oh yeah, that's right.

Travis:

Yeah. So, but with this binding, Dallas is working on undoing it currently.

Griffin:

Yeah.

Travis:

Because it was done, you know.

Griffin:

That's fucking great, yeah.

Travis:

And so currently, Indrid is stuck in the human disguise.

Griffin:

Yeah, that's great.

Travis:

And not able to, uh, switch forms. Um, okay, let's go to Lulu. Lulu, you're protecting someone from a dark power, a rival, an enemy of your demonic patron. And your charge owes you a debt. Who is that?

Erika:

Uh, can it be people that are, uh, owed and owe debts to...

Travis:

Yeah, definitely.

Erika:

Other players?

Travis:

Oh, you should also know, for reference...

Erika:

Because I feel like...

Travis:

There is you, in this like, three person friend group. It's you, and Pearl, and a woman named Lorelei. And Lorelei is, uh...

Erika:

Lorelei.

Travis:

Part of like, a family that runs a big livestock farm, uh, that supplies a lot of livestock to Crescent City. Pearl is of the Blackwells, who, uh, run, uh, the copper mine in Dry River. And then there is you as the third. So you can also have debt connections with them as well.

Erika:

For, definitely for someone who is trying to save me from damnation and keeps suffering for it.

Travis:

Okay.

Erika:

Um, and I owe them a debt, I'd say is Pearl Blackwell. We've been friends since we were little, and she knew, knew me in the before-times. Uh, when I, when I was just a hellion, just running around. Um, before I took over the family business, and... So I'd say Pearl is someone I owe a debt to. Um, someone who owes me a debt. Uh, are there other, um, are there underground organizations, or perhaps a banshee might be a good...

Travis:

Um, I would say a good connection, because uh, she was in the first one and she, uh, is a inveterate gambler. And as you run, uh, Maison Nihon, she, uh,

spends a lot of time there as well. So, Em, the ghost gambler. I would say that there is maybe somebody who, uh, is not happy with her. Um, and so she is seeking refuge, uh, in your establishment as you seek to protect her.

Erika:

Mm-hmm.

Travis:

So she owes you a debt for that. Um, and she's connected heavily with, here in Crescent City there is the Crossroads, which is, uh, the specter territory. Uh, so she's connected strongly with that territory. So she is a good ally to have, but also, uh, there's plenty of people who maybe don't like Em.

Erika:

Lorelei. On my demonic patron's orders, uh, Lorelei's family was providing animal sacrifices for a rival, uh, demon lord.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Erika:

And so, under their orders, um, I, I uh, had the family farm, uh, hit by like a Hoof-In-Mouth disease.

Travis:

Hoo boy.

Erika:

For a season. And it was devastating to the farm. And it was very much against my wishes, since Lorelei and I have also been friends for quite a long time.

Travis:

Does Lorelei know about that?

Erika:

I've been trying to tell her. Um, I know she knows that maybe I might have something to do with it. And, but we just hadn't, I can't bring myself to confess to her yet.

Travis:

Perfect.

Erika:

And I'm so terribly ashamed.

Travis:

Okay. Callan. Uh, someone helps you unwind and keeps you sane despite the horrors of your hunt, and you owe them a debt.

Clint:

Erika, what kind of, uh, what kind of services are provided at your place?

Erika:

Oh, uh, all kinds. It's, uh, gambling and, uh, stage shows, and refreshments of all sorts.

Justin:

That's awesome.

Erika:

High-end ones too. It's just a, it'll help ease a lot of the tensions and um, tribulations of surviving in the Crescent territories.

Griffin:

What you all are hearing right now is our dad balancing the fact that he wants to play a more straight-shooting, uh, serious character, versus the fact Erika has just introduced that he can send his character to theater camp.

Clint:

Yep.

Griffin:

If he does decide...

Erika:

[laughs]

Griffin:

Uh, and that's really hard for him. It's—

Justin:

It's really hard. I feel your struggle, dad.

Clint:

That's Callan's secret power, is jazz hands.

Travis:

Yeah. It's like if I play a character, you know they have impulse control problems. And if dad plays a character and there's theater involved, that's, that's where he's going to end up, baby.

Erika:

Well, you know, I'm sure that trick shooting would really bring in the customers.

Travis:

Oh, boy.

Clint:

Um.

Erika:

Annie Oakley style.

Clint:

So here's what I was thinking.

Justin:

That's dad's next character is Trick— "My name's Trick Shootin."

Erika:

Trick Shootin.

Justin:

[crosstalk] Darn Tootin—

Travis:

Are you the man who killed my brother, Darn Tootin?

Justin:

Darn Tootin and Trick Shootin, tonight at the Maison Nihon.

Clint:

Whoever killed him, I'm out to get 'em. Um, would you have...

Travis:

It's me, Rooty Tooty.

Erika:

[laughs]

Travis:

What, I'm the one that killed what killed Darn Tootin.

Justin:

Here's the fresh and fruity you ordered.

Clint:

All right, we're coming up now with brand new Kool Aid flavors.

Travis:

[laughs]

Justin:

Great.

Clint:

Um, I was thinking that whatever had happened to Callan in the past, his body is just nothing but scars. And, I mean, and he's in constant pain. I was wondering if, perhaps, there would be somebody in the Maison who practices acupuncture.

Erika:

Oh, absolutely. Acupuncture, massage therapy, hot stones.

Griffin:

Cupping.

Erika:

You name it. It's...

Clint:

I think, I think that the... I think, matter of fact, I think even more than just relieving the pain, if he doesn't have this, he can't move, can't act, can't walk. So I think there, uh, is, uh, somebody who's very familiar with acupuncture.

Erika:

Mm-hmm.

Clint:

Um, that works at the Maison. And, uh...

Erika:

Absolutely. And this week we have a special on chiropractor services.

Griffin:

Get the balloon up your nose.

Travis:

Yeah. Is that a thing?

Justin:

Under-tabling, the whole bit.

Travis:

Uh, your hunts incurred the wrath of a powerful person, and someone helped smooth things over. You owe them a debt. Who helped smooth things over?

Clint:

[inhales]

Travis:

Well, let me tell you this. There's another person in town, right, who's going to be a major player here. Uh, and he is the prime bad guy, uh, Jackson Blue. And he runs the Crescent City bank, and has his fingers in all kinds of pies. Uh, owns a lot of the town, um, and would be a person who could smooth things over with dangerous folks, uh, for the right price.

Um, so that's a possibility, especially since Callan once had, uh, some, a lawman position here in Crescent City, that I could see that being connected with him.

Clint:

I think I'd like to go with Lulu being that person, if it's okay with Erika. I mean, I think they would have an association, um, because of her business. And because he used to be...

Erika:

Absolutely, absolutely.

Travis:

Uh, finally, someone enlisted you to protect them from something dangerous, and now they owe you a debt.

Clint:

Well, I had this idea that he, um, failed to save a church full of people.

Griffin:

Whoa.

Travis:

Okay.

Clint:

26 people died.

Travis:

Okay, I'm going to say, uh, to make it an actionable debt, then you owe that debt to the entity of The Church. Um, so that they can remind you, uh, of that debt. That way it's, uh, a mechanical, actionable thing.

Travis:

Uh, okay. So finally we're going to jump back to Augustus. Because Augustus, you had some, uh, from the last run. Uh, someone or someone's progenitor was involved in your death, they owe you a debt.

Justin:

That's Flint Chittles, right?

Travis:

Yeah.

Justin:

Yeah. He was an important character last arc, and I have no doubt he'll be just as important.

Travis:

He'll definitely come up again.

Justin:

I will say this. It, Flint Chittles will be equally important in Dust Two as he was in Dust One, guaranteed.

Clint:

[laughs]

Travis:

And then the Church, specifically Leader Janet.

Justin:

The Church has been watching.

Travis:

Yeah.

Justin:

I owe a debt to The Church. Maybe two debts.

Travis:

You do, it's two debts, yeah.

Justin:

Uh, because they've been watching my daughter, they've been protecting my daughter, Anna Cardium, since my passing. So.

Travis:

Um, and someone almost destroyed one of your anchors, perhaps by accident or carelessness. They owe you two debts. And that sounds like Althiser and the business?

Justin:

Yeah.

Travis:

Yeah, great. Two little, uh, mechanics that I'm adding into it. Um, I was actually just watching a game of Urban Shadows on the channel Saving Throw run by Aabria. And I don't know if it's built-in, but I haven't seen it anywhere. But she added advantage and disadvantage.

Griffin:

Oh, fun.

Erika:

Ooh.

Travis:

Where with advan... Basically you roll three dice instead of just two. And for advantage you take the two highest, and for disadvantage you take the two lowest. Um, so I'll be adding that in. Also, if you are a Grayson, I'm adding in a mechanic called Flash Your Badge. Which you can use to try to say, like, "You can tell me, I'm a Grayson." Uh, but if you do, you will, uh, need to mark a corruption point, one, for using the power of your badge to convince someone to help you. And two, the rolling will be how that person feels about The Graysons.

Griffin:

Okay.

Travis:

So there's a chance that if you do a miss, they're like, The Graysons are terrible and I hate them. And you lose any chance for them to help you. And, you know, mixed success is like, well, I've heard about that but I don't know. You know what I mean. So that's a mechanic that any Grayson can do, but there's a risk associated with it. And pushing your badge means corruption.

Griffin:

Okay.

Travis:

I think the last thing I wanted to hit before we go, so we know what happened to Errol. What happened to Gandy, why isn't Gandy traveling? Where is Gandy at, currently?

So, when we left off at the end of Dust One, she had gained the Chaos Demon book, um, and was making plans to go over that with Uncle Oni. So it's quite possible that there's some shit—

Clint:

Yes, I think she's studying, and she's gaining in power and wisdom. But she's basically...

Justin:

She got a dog, she got a dog.

Travis:

Yeah, whatever.

Clint:

She got a dog? Named Louis.

Justin:

She got a dog.

Clint:

Got a dog names Louis.

Travis:

Cool.

Clint:

Yeah.

Justin:

What do you feel like, base-line... We need to, Griffin alluded to it, but I do think we should agree on, what do we assume the person knows...

Erika:

Right.

Justin:

About.

Travis:

Uh.

Justin:

Like, have we assumed they've listened to Dust?

Travis:

Uh, okay, here's baseline, all you need. Here's all you need to know. Um, at the end of Dust, uh, the Blackwell's eldest son, who is set to take over, uh, the Blackwell Copper Mining industry, had been murdered. Um, and so then now they need to bring Pearl Blackwell home so that she can act as heir and successor.

And I think that's, that's the major thing you need to know. Uh, we've already mentioned the Banshee is like a criminal, uh, you know, overlord. Uh, who runs many different criminal industries in the Crescent— Oh, the Crescent Territories is a, uh, old west-esque area that's unincorporated into the greater, uh, area within. So it is fairly, uh, lawless as far as like, government goes. But there are agencies within, like The Graysons, like The Law, like The Church that act to try to keep some kind of order.

And also, the, this game system is uh, uh, a set up of, uh, Powered by the Apocalypse, where you will roll two D6s. Um, on a six or below it is a miss, on a seven to nine it is a mixed success, and on a ten or above, uh, it is a complete success. And if, on a 12 there's usually added benefits as Griffin mentioned earlier. And you will add your different stats and such to it.

Uh, I will also say just as a general rule, um, the rating that we're looking at on this that everyone agreed to is, with, it might get upwards of R-rating in terms of movies and such. So if that's a thing that you, uh, are not comfortable listening to with children, uh, that's, that makes sense. There will also be, uh, guns present in, in this old west-esque story, and there will be, you know, probably some, some violence related to that. But I wanted everyone to know about it going into it so nobody's surprised by that kind of thing. I mean, and also there's going to be blood. Um, if that's a thing that you...

Justin:

Yeah, there will be.

Clint:

There will be blood.

Justin:

There will be blood.

Travis:

There will be blood, if that's a thing that, uh, makes you uncomfortable. There will be mention of blood as we, you know, there's going to be stuff with vampires and everything like that. So just go into that, uh, ready for it. And so excited to begin. Thank you, Erika. Thank you everybody, uh, for joining us for episode zero. Join us again for episode one, bye!

[theme music plays]

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