

Cyberscape Neo - Episode 8

by

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SCENE 1: PRESSING ISSUES - DANE, VIN

Note for Vin: Many of the lines, actions, and sounds happen very rapidly and sequentially while Vin is always in constant motion, with many interruptions, interactions, short blurted out comments, more interruptions, and difficult timing. *In short, never sound like you're standing still.*

Sound Direction Notes: [**loud crashes and thuds are heard as solid pillars of shadow are drawn from the walls of Umbra's Nightmare. They are being directed towards Vin throughout the scene and will be heard in scattered phases around them, as the scene is played following Vin's perspective. We will design the impacts around the vocals rather than on specific cues, except where noted. Also, many if not all of Vin's movements will be paired with either grass or hard surface impact noises throughout the scene.**]

Scene Details: Dane and Vin are now enclosed within a hemisphere of pure, swirling and morphing darkness that reaches all the way to the vertical limits of the zone. At the top, a small area of the Skybox is visible, radiating the only visible light in this supposed arena.

DANE

(strong extended effort
as if hefting a heavy
object above you and
driving it down towards
an opponent)

In this case you're "pulling" from the walls of Umbra's Nightmare, drawing the "pillars" like in Umbra's Grasp but from any direction of the wall of the dome that is the 'Nightmare.

VIN

(somewhat overwhelmed,
but in a state of wonder
as the pillars are drawn
from the wall of the
dome)

Wow... uh... I should *probably* dodge
those things before I get trapped
up like Dax did.

DANE

(angrily maddened by
Vin's persistence. Dane
is demanding Vin to feel
his despair)

Isn't it fair... just *once*... for you
to die?!

VIN

(hurriedly rushing while
exerting themselves at
times to barely avoid
the rapid assault from
multiple pillars)

***Give multiple efforts as if
exerting while running, jumping,
rolling, stumbling off-balance and
diving to the ground to dodge.
We'll handle the SFX***

[A pillar slams into the ground just in front of Vin,
causing them to skid and stumble to redirect around it. Vin
touches the pillar, running two fingers along the oozing
side of it as they go by. When it is found to be overly
adhesive and tries to pull them in, Vin withdraws their
hand quickly, causing the viscous black liquid to creak
like taut leather. As they continue to pull, though, they
are able to free themselves.)

VIN (CONT'D)

(Contrarily, Vin sounds
very intrigued rather
than disgusted)

Hmm? What skill tree could create
this?!

(questioningly)

Earth...?

[As they've slowed, another pillar shoots towards Vin, who is barely able to dive out of the way. The black substance, however, attaches itself to their over-sized pack, leading to Vin spinning over end to the ground from the impact, but still tethered to the pillar by their pack.]

VIN (CONT'D)
 (being spun through the
 air and slammed to the
 ground by a strong
 impact to the backpack)
 Whoaoahoooooh!
 (rubbing their face and
 groaning)
 Ughhhhh...
 (dizzied, but confirming
 to themselves under
 their breath)
 Earth... and Gravity? Must be...

[Vin slowly unsnaps the buttons that secure the thick leather straps of their backpack around their shoulders and torso, getting back to their feet slowly.]

DANE
 (irritated, but somewhat
 relieved from the small
 victory)
 Finally, I can separate you from
 your bag of tricks and mockery!

VIN
 (talking somberly to
 their over-sized pack as
 if it is a close
 personal friend)
 I'm going to miss you, buddy...

[The groaning and roar of another pillar is heard incoming front the distance over Vin's shoulder.]

VIN (CONT'D)
 (takes in a sharp breath
 as they see another
 attack about to come in,
 then speaks quickly)
 Uh oh! Gotta take whatever I can
 hold!

DANE
 (physically directing
 the attack from afar,
 aiming to crush and
 envelop the pack
 entirely)
 Hraaaah!

[Glass clinks harshly, as the incoming pillar's speed causes the grass to sway fiercely. Vin leaps and rolls out of the way before the impact hammers into the space in which the pack was. Glass and leather can be heard being crushed inside the massive cloud of dirt stirred up by the impact.]

DANE (CONT'D)

(incensed in anger at the persistently dodging Vin, but speaking to self-affirm the reason for his current confidences)

Perhaps I wasn't clear! I am *not*
 afraid of you anymore! I have been
 running away for *too* long!

[**crash**]
 Away from the *truth*!

[**crash**]
 Away from the *lies*!

[**crash**]
 And *now*?! *Now* I see that the truth
 is - everyone else should be
 running from *me now*!

**Vin is quite a bit lighter on
 their feet now that they don't
 have the weight of the pack on
 them.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Their efforts are less stressed while mid-stride. Vin calls their oversized pack Haverstache, combining haversack and mustache, because Vin put a cosmetic mustache just below two buttoned pockets on the back (which resemble eyes) on their bag to add personality. Without it, Vin is much, much faster on their feet, due to not being encumbered down to everyone else's normal travel speed.**

VIN

(spoken in a more carefree manner)

Thank goodness for the stamina skill...

(dodges an incoming pillar)

for letting me even...

(dodges an incoming pillar)

carry Haverstache with me for so long... Poor guy.

(does a forward dive roll)

[The glass of the two potion vials Vin manages to scrounge from their pack clink together as they roll over the ground and come back to their feet.]

VIN (CONT'D)

(somewhat comically, Vin imagines themselves in a roleplay event, lowering their tone slightly and putting on a false grimace)

You will be avenged, old friend...

DANE

(swelling with confidence in the control he carries over the battle, he shouts, echoing over the arena's hazy clouds of dirt, obscuring visibility)

The world looks very different when you're not the one running! When *finally*, you're the one doing the hunting! When the shadows crawling up the wall are your own!

VIN

(shaking their head, sighing, disappointed)

Come oooooon... I was beginning to think this guy was for real, but it's just another villain monologue...

(dodging a near-miss pillar, shifting their feet mid-step)

Whoa!

DANE

(enraged groan at the continued mockery, exerting to increase the rate of attack)

Rrrraaaaaaagggghhhhh!

[The velocity and rate of crashing pillars increases significantly.]

VIN

(snapping into a tactical line of thinking, speaking only to themselves)

Alright, so running won't get me anywhere... And I am barely outrunning these things as it is, even without Haverstache. Think!

[Vin clinks the two potion vials together accidentally.]

VIN (CONT'D)
 (looking down at the two
 potion vials they have
 left)
 Let's take inventory... All I have
 left is a Haste Potion and...
 (surprised, then
 excited)
 I forgot I had this! This is the
 prize I won during the Cosplay
 Thursday event last week!
 (reads the information
 on the item to
 themselves while they
 continue running)
 "Font of Bountiful Harvest," huh?
 "Effect: Harvestable flora up to
 the zone's level will grow
 relentlessly within 20 meters for
 1 minute."
 (excited, thinking of
 the possibilities)
 Does that mean?! YES!

[Vin grips the bottle in one hand then skids, redirecting to orient their movement straight towards Dane, then accelerating back to full running speed.]

VIN (CONT'D)
 (shouting as they wind
 back and hurl the potion
 directly at Dane)
 Head's up!

DANE
 (confused and startled
 at the first apparent
 attack coming from Vin)
 What?!
 (sound of exertion as
 Dane aims a pillar to
 block and destroy the
 incoming glass bottle)

[The potion shatters, then after a pause, roots start growing at an incredible pace, emanating from the pillar.]

SCENE 2: BREAKING THROUGH - DAXXIS, STAVOS, JULIUS, THE SILVER SUNS, ANDROMEDA, SUPPORT TELEPORTER, SILVER SUNS TANK, CLANCY, ANGELA

Scene Transition Note: [Transition from the root growth sound at end of previous scene to the sound of a Steel Golem's joint movements, as Daxxis is charging back towards Vin's last known location. These steps will continue through the scene at different audible distances depending on perspective.]

Scene Details: Having just been enhanced with a Haste Potion thrown earlier to him by Vin, Daxxis, in Steel Golem form, has started his aggressive trek from the spot of the original clash between the Synthetic Users and the Silver Suns at the treeline, back towards Vin. While the remaining Synthetic Users have scattered, the Silver Suns recognize a challenge when they see one, and aren't going to make the trek an easy one.

[Metallic joint movements start to accelerate with Daxxis' enhanced running speed due to the Haste Potion. On each other step, a tree is crushed underneath one of the Steel Golem's feet. At least 20 of the members of the Silver Suns survived the skirmish with the Synthetic Users, and have begun to charge after the Golem in pursuit.]

DAXXIS
(extended cathartic
roar)

SILVER SUNS GUILD LEADER, STAVOS
(shouting in a
commanding voice towards
the guild while
charging)
Take. It. Down! A level-scaled
world boss being summoned in the
middle of an event like this?! It
must be worth a hefty reward!
(to the casters)
Casters! Slow it down! You got
that, Julius?!

CASTER LEAD JULIUS
 (hoarse-voiced and still
 angry from earlier,
 responding through
 gritted teeth)
 Got it... boss!

SILVER SUNS GUILD LEADER, STAVOS
 (to the supports)
 Supports! Use anything you can -
 to get the tanks in front of the
 Golem! You're up, Andromeda!

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
 (calm and confident)
 Right away!

SILVER SUNS GUILD LEADER, STAVOS
 (to the rest)
 And the rest of you?! If it gets
 in range? Give it *EVERYTHING*
YOU'VE GOT!

THE SILVER SUNS
 (a collective aggressive
 roar of approval and
 compliance)

**[The Silver Suns' pursuit turns into a stampede of players
 brandishing weapons and casting enhancement abilities.]**

SILVER SUNS WARRIOR
 (letting out gruff
 grunts as they use a
 Leap-like ability to
 hurl themselves forward
 faster than the rest of
 the crowd. As they near
 Daxxis, they leap high
 into the air and come
 down on him with a heavy
 physical blow.)

[The impact creates an extremely loud reverberating explosion of force that expands outwards rapidly, knocking nearly every nearby Silver Suns member to the ground, and putting those further away off balance.]

SILVER SUNS WARRIOR (CONT'D)

(while still airborne,
taking the reflected
force of their own
strike, which launches
them up and over the
trees and far into the
distance. The warrior
screams from the high
velocity, fading in the
distance)

Aaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!

[The Silver Suns Warrior flies off into the distance, breaking a branch in their path and rustling the branches fiercely before disappearing into the horizon.]

THE SILVER SUNS

(more than a dozen
players simultaneously
being knocked down and
pushed back with
overwhelming force)

[Many players in various sets of armor and weapons pick themselves off the ground and resume their charge as Daxxis creates some distance from the Silver Suns.]

CASTER LEAD JULIUS

(to SILVER SUNS WARRIOR,
hoarse, angry,
reprimanding, and
getting up off the
ground)

Steel Golems reflect all physical
damage, you idiot! Watch what
abilities you're using!

[Rapid footsteps and the launching burst of each step come to the forefront as Andromeda picks up her speed, easily outpacing the more heavily-armored players.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
(Her voice is focused with even breathing, as she starts to cast movement-speed buffing abilities on herself.)
Wind's Grace. Fleeting Step.
Burden Breaker.
(shouting out to a nearby support-oriented member of the Silver Suns while mid-stride)
You, teleporter! Come with me!

[Whirring tones whistle by as her abilities are being applied. Increasing wind drag noise accompanies her speech.]

SUPPORT TELEPORTER
(getting grabbed by the arm and dragged forward at incredible speeds and flagging mid-air during the chase)
Whooaaaaaaaa!

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
(commanding and calm towards the Support Teleporter, despite the speed and exertion)
I've set markers on the tanks. As soon as I get in front of that Golem... summon one. Got it?

SUPPORT TELEPORTER
 (flailing through the
 air like a
 poorly-designed kite,
 straining to speak
 through the gusts of
 wind)
 Yesh, Dromie!

[Numerous elemental spells (earth, water, fire, lightning, and sonic) are striking against the hard steel back of Daxxis. Andromeda shifts left and right along their path to outrace the Hasted Golem while dodging debris and elemental effects bursting around them.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
 (pinpointing potential
 weak points along the
 golem's body
 analytically, speaking
 to themselves in a low
 tone)
 Where are the weaknesses...?
 Joints? No. Head? No... Any
 physical impact is going to...
 (sudden realization,
 sharpening and raising
 their voice)
 Reflect... *in the opposite
 direction!*

SUPPORT TELEPORTER
 (asking what Andromeda
 is planning, but before
 finishing, gets hurled
 forwards into the air)
 What are you doing--- whaaaaa!

[Andromeda grips the Teleporter's hand tighter, leaps up onto a tree branch, then takes another leap even higher above the canopy. She yanks the teleporter forwards, launching them up into the air ahead of her. Andromeda then whips out their bow from their back and draws back and arrow on the bowstring in a single, swift motion.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
(Andromeda grunts as she
hurls the support
teleporter ahead of her)
Hhhnnnnngggg!
(maintaining focus as
she aims downwards
towards Daxxis, she
speaks indirectly but
loudly at the teleporter
to be heard over the
winds)
I'll catch you in just a moment!

SUPPORT TELEPORTER
(freaking out as they
start to fall downwards
towards the Golem)
Ahhhhhhhh!

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
(speaks to herself as
she concentrates,
mid-fall)
Just need to land this right at
the Golem's feet... and...
(shouting out the
activation of a bow
skill)
Anchor Shot!

[The arrow fires forwards, gaining more and more density over distance, tugging on objects as it falls, and landing directly ahead of Daxxis' feet. When it lands, it detonates in a small field of hyper-gravity. This force would normally apply a strong physical force towards it, but in being reflected, the field warps, twisting uncontrollably and drilling a pitfall right under the Golem's step, then after the ground's compressed density can withstand the reflected force, it immediately recoils and launches Daxxis backwards and onto his back. The following impacts cause severe tremors on landing, kicking up massive dirt clouds.]

DAXXIS

(is caught off-balance
by the gravity-trap,
then launched backwards
two full body-lengths as
if stepping on a
concussive landmine with
a surprised groan as
they roll and skid to a
stop)

SILVER SUNS GUILD LEADER, STAVOS

(in a loud and
commanding voice towards
the guild)
GOOOOOOOO!

THE SILVER SUNS

(a collective aggressive
roar as they continue to
charge closer, still a
distance away from
Daxxis)

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA

(landing on a trembling
branch and immediately
leaping back off it with
a grunt to catch the
Teleporter mid-fall)

**[Andromeda rebounds off the flexible branch and collides
with the teleporter, grappling and wrapping their arms
around her neck.]**

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA (CONT'D)

(tilting downwards
mid-air after settling
the teleporter on her
back, once again
shouting to be heard
over the wind)

Hold on!

SUPPORT TELEPORTER
 (starting to believe
 Andromeda to be insane,
 freaked out)
 What?! Again?! We're going to hit
 the ground!

***Extend the word "ground" as if plummeting head-first
 towards the earth and in fear.***

[Along with all of her speed boosts, Andromeda's descent is
 akin to a missile's course towards the ground. The wind
 screams as they race towards the fallen Golem below - who
 is quickly rolling on their side to get back up.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
 (as they are close to
 impacting the ground,
 shouting a skill
 activation)
 Feather Drift!

[Their descent rapidly decelerates to a swift horizontal
 glide as ethereal wings of wind swing downwards in a single
 movement with a sound similar to a parachute filling after
 deployment. Andromeda skids across the dirt and grass ahead
 of Daxxis, then tosses the Support Teleporter over her hip,
 now in front of her, coming to a stop. The Steel Golem is
 almost back to its feet, but hasn't been able to resume its
 forward movement yet.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA (CONT'D)
 (shouting to get the
 Support Teleporter's
 attention)
 NOW!

SUPPORT TELEPORTER
 (with a startled
 acknowledgement)
 R-right!
 (a hasty skill
 activation)
 Blink Spark!

[A sound similar to electrical discharge accompanies the sound of heavy armor settling on a person, as if they had just landed from a short hop, as one of the Silver Suns' tanks appears instantly before the teleporter. Shortly after the appearance, however Daxxis is back to his feet, staring down at the Tank.]

DAXXIS
 (annoyed and having just
 gotten back to their
 feet)
 Go. Away...!

[Metallic groan and loud impact against metallic armor as Daxxis' arm sweeps across the ground and knocks the heavily-armored player clear out of his path with ease. The Tank flies and lands a good 20 meters away, rolling to a stop.]

SILVER SUNS TANK
 (swatted away by a large
 mass of steel, being
 sent flying away, then
 rolling to a stop)

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
 (temporarily astonished
 in an intimidated way)
 It's... intelligent?!
 (shouting to the Support
 Teleporter again)
 AGAIN! Don't let up!

[Multiple Blink Sparks are cast in succession as more and more tanks are popped into place, one at a time, in Daxxis' path with each step. The metallic groan of Daxxis' body shifts back and forth like a metronome with the four steps he takes forward, knocking away the defenders. After this last step, Daxxis hears the Silver Suns encroaching on and surrounding him.]

DAXXIS

(angered at the constant roadblocks put in front of him, as well as nervous at the tactical disadvantage incoming)

Get. Out. Of. My. Waaaaay!

[Just after "Way!", Daxxis senses the numerous players around him and performs a heavy slam into the ground, knocking all around him to the ground as it shifts out of control beneath them.]

THE SILVER SUNS

(a collective shout of surprise and groan of pain as they all impact the ground)

[During the few seconds where many people are getting back to their feet, Daxxis lifts up a foot slowly to stomp on Andromeda and to hopefully continue his path forwards. Before his foot lands, Andromeda rolls and kicks off the ground to dodge and get back to her feet.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA

(groaning, then with a gasp and in a swift motion, rolls to the side as to dodge the stomp of Daxxis' steel foot.)

SUPPORT TELEPORTER

(rousing themselves back to attention as they try to get back up, then in sudden terror, a brief scream as Daxxis crushes them underfoot)

Ugh... h-huh - Ahhhhh!

[A loud boom as Daxxis' foot slams into the ground, followed by the shattering glass from the Teleporter's character's death.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA
(hastily calling out to
the guild's supports
and then to the casters)
Support casters! We'll pin it down
here! Julius--!

[A dozen thick-robed Silver Suns casters fall into formation, flanking Daxxis. In unison, they pose their hands before them, fingers splayed in familiar means as to cast spells.]

CASTER LEAD JULIUS
(snapping back at
Andromeda, then shouting
a command to his fellow
caster squads)
You better not be ordering *me*
around! ... Casters, charge up and
cast the strongest spell you have!
(putting on a smirk as
he speaks, excited)
This one's going to be a tough nut
to crack!

[Magic energies start spooling up as the Caster Squad starts charging their strongest Fire, Water, Wind, and Lightning spells.]

DAXXIS
(looking around,
nervous, thinking hard
in the short time he
has)
Uh... That can't be good...

[Tank Lead Clancy still remains hacking away at Daxxis' leg with the Clang! Chip! Clang! of a chromatic blade that seems to crackle and hiss after each blow, indicating that

it is enchanted with multiple elements. Daxxis slowly reaches down and nonchalantly scoops up Clancy into his hand before he can swing a fourth time.]

TANK LEAD CLANCY
 (taking his slash,
 backslash, and thrust
 into Daxxis' leg with
 little effect, but
 playing up the theatrics
 of the swings)
 Hah! Hyuuu! Raaghhh!
 (taking one last, final
 blow, to finish his
 combo, which gets cut
 off by being grabbed by
 Daxxis)
 Hiiyaaaaa--- ack!
 (remaining heroically
 courageous despite his
 helplessness)
 Wha...?! Hey! Let me down!

[Clancy heroically, but uselessly, swings and clangs his sword against Daxxis' arm.]

CASTER LEAD JULIUS
 (annoyed and upset)
 Clancy, what the hell are you
 doing?! You're getting in the way!

SILVER SUNS GUILD LEADER, STAVOS
 (worried for Clancy's
 sake)
 Clancy! Hold on! We'll get you
 free before the spells go off!

TANK LEAD CLANCY
 (starting to struggle,
 but yells out to the
 guild)
 Don't worry! I have the magic
 resistance to handle anything the
 casters throw at me! I'll distract
 him while you cast!
 (MORE)

TANK LEAD CLANCY (CONT'D)
 (Clancy grits their
 teeth and shouts out the
 skill)
 Prisma Barrier!

[A magical bubble-like barrier forms around Clancy with a consistent crackle and hum.]

TANK LEAD CLANCY (CONT'D)
 (talking directly to the
 Golem with a weary grin)
 This will reflect *everything* they
 cast that hits me... right *back* at
 you again...
 (narrowing his eyes in a
 cocky "I dare you"-like
 stare)
 So. Do. Your. Worst.

DAXXIS
 (smirks, then opens his
 mouth wide as if the
 pieces of the funniest
 joke just came together
 in his head)
 Haaah! Maybe I will!

[Clancy's metallic armor crunches as the Golem's hand grips more tightly around him. Daxxis' body groans and creaks as he winds his arm back and slides one of his feet backwards, carving a jagged trench into the ground.]

TANK LEAD CLANCY
 (losing their cool and
 flailing in attempt to
 regain balance, asking
 in a demanding way)
 W-wait! What are you doing?!

****Do some light phasing with this line as he is hoisted further from the "camera".****

DAXXIS

(in a very
matter-of-fact and flat
way, as if the answer
was obvious)

Bug testing.

[Daxxis lifts his front foot up slightly and throws it forward, shifting his entire weight forwards. He then slams it down and with a tremendous build-up of speed, like a baseball pitcher's form, then hurling Clancy towards the line of focusing casters.]

[The spooling energy raises pitch as if to be ready to cast, then falling silent in unison. A huge explosion erupts of many different elements in a cacophony. Four of the casters' characters die instantly in two gigantic explosions of flame that set the surroundings on fire. Shortly after, two large crystals of ice rise into the air, each raining dozens of razor-sharp shards of ice over the Silver Suns, killing a few more. This is followed by two tornadoes that spiral inward from around the battleground, ripping up dirt, stone, as well as most of the rest of the remaining Silver Suns being swept up into the air.]

THE SILVER SUNS

(various screams of
panic, surprise, and
bewilderment, followed
by fear and the cries of
being pulled up by a
tornado)

[Stavos takes a few steps back, watching in horror as the Steel Golem countered an entire team of casters' most powerful magics with a single attack, causing a catastrophic chain reaction. His fourth step is interrupted by one of the tornadoes pulling him from the ground with ease, killing his character.]

SILVER SUNS GUILD LEADER, STAVOS

(in horror of what he
believes is the new
level of AI in the game)

This cannot be...

(MORE)

SILVER SUNS GUILD LEADER, STAVOS
(CONT'D)

Is this what we are to contend
with after the expansion goes
live...?! No guild can--

(continuing to take
steps backwards to avoid
getting caught in the
ice storm, but being
caught instead in a
tornado and thrown into
a spiral)

Huh--- aaaaahhhhhh!

[The two tornadoes combine, multiplying their wind-speeds and overall force. With the "camera" returning to Andromeda, she is running full-speed to get away from the expanding tornado, but barely making any ground as her feet scramble at hyper speeds away from the epicenter. Multiple large boulders are pulled inwards in her direction, which she leaps up and off of, but in no longer being close to the ground, she is pulled inward, leading to her character being killed.]

SUPPORT LEAD ANDROMEDA

(running with all of her
strength to outpace the
tornado's force drawing
her in)

Uuuurraaaaaaaagghhhhh!

(leaping to jump off of
the three incoming
boulders being sucked
in, then screaming
defiantly when caught up
in the wind once in the
air)

Hih! Hyah! Haaaaa-- N-nooooooooooooo!

[After another 6 seconds, the tornado starts to dissipate, raining down a glittering shower of harmless splinters of glass shards from all the characters killed. When the wind clears, the skies start to rumble. Julius, who had been tackled by the then-flying Clancy, shoves Clancy off of him and stands up shakily.]

CASTER LEAD JULIUS

(bitter and
disappointed, looking
over at the steel golem
in the distance, staring
them down)

Well, I guess we can consider this
a wipe. Better get out of here--

(surprised by Clancy's
hand gripping his pant
leg, speaking in a
condescending way to
him)

Huh? C'mon *Clancy*, it's *your* fault
we got hit by that magic. You're
not going to ensure I get killed
by that brute, too, are you?!

[Clancy grips Julius' pant leg and tugs gently, then upon Julius' inquiry, slowly scrapes and arm out from under him and points weakly upwards with his gauntlet-covered index finger.]

TANK LEAD CLANCY

(straining to speak
while his face is only
half-turned away from
being face-down in a
crater)

N-no... look!

[The skies swirl and turn black, rumbling madly as thunder cracks and lightning ripples overhead.]

CASTER LEAD JULIUS

(in a deadpan and most
disappointed voice he
can muster)

Someone called lightning, huh?
Great...

[Immediately after, lightning shoots down from the sky and violently strikes all over Clancy's armored body. The energy of the lightning strike swirls and spools up around him, raising in pitch. Julius takes a few steps away, looking down at Clancy, then turns and starts running.]

CASTER LEAD JULIUS (CONT'D)
 (breaking into a full
 sprint to get away from
 Clancy)
 Nonononononono!

[The lightning charging around Clancy fires off from around his body at the intensity it would if it had come directly from the sky itself, seeking out and instantly vaporizing Julius. Clancy very slowly rolls over in the crater their body formed. He casually opens up the game menu, then navigates to the "Submit Ticket/Report Bug" option.]

TANK LEAD CLANCY
 (sighing, speaking
 slowly and wearily into
 the prompt)
 Bug found... Intelligent World Boss
 with abilities they shouldn't
 have. Requesting assistance...

[The earth starts shaking, as unbeknownst to Clancy, Daxxis is walking forward to finish him off.]

ANGELA
 (condescending and
 spiteful instead of the
 expected cheery voice)
 We understand that there are
fearsome and *challenging*
 encounters to be found in the new
 expansion experience.
 (in a belittling voice,
 from Synthetic User to
 player)
 It is very possible, that what you
 ran into - was *simply* a creature
 at too high of a level *for you to*
handle, due to the increased level
 cap introduced in the expansion.
 (reluctantly helpful)
 Would you like me to transport you
 out of the event area and out of
 danger?

TANK LEAD CLANCY
(weary and in disbelief)
B-but... this thing... it had Haste!
A-and it spoke!

[There is a slow metallic creak as Daxxis lifts his foot up to crush Clancy.]

TANK LEAD CLANCY (CONT'D)
(sees Daxxis lifting a foot up to crush him, and in a panic, answers Angela)
Yes! Please get me out of here!

[The traditional login/logout sound plays as Clancy is teleported out of the event zone and Daxxis' foot comes crashing down into his crater.]

ANGELA
(playing at the rehearsed and cheery voice sarcastically)
Thank you for submitting a ticket.
I hope we have resolved your issue today in a satisfactory manner!
Have a great day!

[Daxxis lifts up his foot and checks beneath, then sets it back down, turning to look into the distance in Vin's direction.]

DAXXIS
(satisfied)
Bug fixed. But enough of that.
Gotta find Vin.

[Daxxis resumes his sprint towards Vin's location, just as the Haste effect wears off.]

DAXXIS (CONT'D)
 (overly disappointed
 groan)
 Ughhhhhh...

SCENE 3: APPEAL TO REASONS - ROLAND, YLLIA, THOMAS,
 RAPTURE, SAGE, ANGELA

Scene Details: Yllia and Thomas' conversation gets cut short by the appearance of Sage and a half-conscious Roland, whose face is cloaked by a fur-lined hood. The thick metallic door in which Sage steps out of, using Rapture's avatar, shows a threadbare hole in space that leads to what looks like an industrial complex - the Hub -.

[Sage slams the metal door shut behind them, and takes a step forward, letting the door disappear with a static-y sound like Myra's voice switching. Roland then loses his grip with the arm around Sage's shoulder and slumps to his knees, holding himself up from the ground with one hand.]

ROLAND
 (labored breathing, with
 the feeling of a
 headache and nausea
 hitting him. He holds
 his head with his free
 hand.)

Hahh... ha-- unngghh!

[Roland weakly collapses to the ground in pain. Yllia takes a few slow steps forward in disbelief.]

YLLIA
 (eyes focused on
 Rapture, confused)
 R-rapture? I thought you fell
 behind?
 (MORE)

YLLIA (CONT'D)
(Yllia's eyes shift to
the hunched over figure
beside Rapture, curious)
And... is that who I think it is?
The... hooded admin? You... saved him,
like we were talking about...?

**[Thomas takes quicker, aggressive footsteps forward, as if
to steal Sage's attention back away from Yllia.]**

THOMAS
(confused as well, and
almost pleading to Sage)
I have no idea what she is talking
about...! But if that is the admin,
is he part of our way out of here?

**[Rapture's voice is filtered, as if speaking inside of
Sage's mind and only audible to Sage.]**

RAPTURE
(weak and very
distraught, conflicted
about Yllia being here
to see this)
No... why did she have to be
here...?

**[Yllia sets her hands on her sides, clicking the metallic
armguards at the wrist to the waist of her breastplate.]**

YLLIA
(frustrated, starting to
get worried)
What is going on, Rapture?! Who's
Sage?
(speaks again quietly,
worried at her friend's
eerie silence)
Rapture...?

[Sage makes slow, circling, and deliberate movements with their wide and loose robe sleeves. The sound of something like a sheet of thick cloth tightening before them follows this movement.]

SAGE
 (ignoring everyone
 around her, speaking in
 her normal bitter tone)
 Veil Shred...

[Sage thrusts her hands forward, gripping the fingers of their hands onto two points of a solid "fabric-like" area of space that wrinkles and creases between their digits.]

SAGE (CONT'D)
 (lets out a grunt as if
 pulling something apart
 that has strong
 resistance)
 Hnnnnnggg!

[As a "tear" starts to form, what sounds like threads popping weakly between Sage's hands can be heard.]

SAGE (CONT'D)
 (once the "fabric"
 before them starts to
 give, they grit their
 teeth and double their
 efforts, finding
 purchase and exerting
 the rest of their
 strength)
 Rraaaaghhh!

[Sage channels and charges an enormous amount of energy into the space before her and tears it open violently to reveal a human-sized portal, rimmed with loose ethereal threads and humming with power. With another click of her armor as she recoils, Yllia is unsure of the intense awkward feeling building.]

YLLIA

(tenses up, stunned with
a feeling that something
is *definitely* off)

Where are you going?

(desperately seeking an
answer)

Please! Speak to me!

[Sage struggles, slowly lifting Roland back up to his feet with one arm, the bits of leather and metal armor brushing against each other. When he is finally upright, the sound of a fur hood dropping occurs, exposing Roland's face to Yllia. Yllia drops her spear to the ground, which bounces slightly from its slight flex.]

YLLIA (CONT'D)

(speaking softly, and in
a shock of emotional
disbelief)

R-roland?!

[Roland slowly cranes his neck up, his eyes still adjusting to the sun and his feet struggling to hold himself upright.]

ROLAND

(groans and squints his
eyes, trying to see who
just spoke his name. He
then takes in a sharp
breath as he realizes.)

Is that you...Cordyllia?

(in an emotional sigh of
relief, but also putting
on his "older brother"
persona towards Yllia)

You look different... but it's
really you, huh...? I knew you'd
find me---

[Sage, with a straight face, shoves Roland through the portal with her free arm. Roland slips through with a sound similar to when Yllia summons her spears with Valkyrie Storm.]

ROLAND (CONT'D)
(his eyes widen as he is
emotionally shocked and
unbalanced, reaching out
towards Yllia)
Huh?! No!

[Yllia thrusts her hand out, reaching towards her brother.
Her armor clicks at the reflex.]

YLLIA
(mortified and in shock
of the sudden events)
No! Noooooo!
[Yllia falls to her knees, arm
going from outstretched to falling
back to her side, her gaze fixed
on the portal. Angela's voice
starts, responding to one of
Yllia's quest prompts, filtered as
if only heard by Yllia.]

ANGELA
(Rehearsed and Cheery)
Quest objective has left the zone.

YLLIA
(has her voice catch in
her throat as a growl
through gritted teeth
comes out only as a
whimper as she starts
shaking)

[A few seconds pass, wind sweeping and a slight temporary
lift of the portal's ongoing hum. With a light brush
against her robe's cloth, Sage turns to Thomas to relay
orders.]

SAGE
(unphased by Yllia's
emotions)
Thomas, was it?

[Thomas turns his head back and forth between the wide-eyed and weary face of Yllia to the portal and Sage, somewhat taken aback by the events, then snapping back to attention at the mention of his name.]

THOMAS
(somewhat startled, but
eager)
Y-yes, Sage?

[The sound of a few torn stitches come from the portal as Sage grips her hand tightly, maintaining control.]

SAGE
(said between gritting
teeth with a groan as if
holding a heavy door
open on a windy day,
impatient and bitter)
If you wouldn't *mind*, I don't have
all day..

THOMAS
(sharply ashamed at
himself, as if "How
could I forget?!" and
"She's busy trying to
save us, why am I just
standing here?!")
Right! The evacuation! I'll go
give them the signal and be back
as soon as I organize the pack.

[Thomas takes about 8 running steps in the clearing, then leans down and scoops up a hefty stone the size of a closed fist mid-step. He tosses it into the air to test it and quickly snaps his hand back around it to catch it as it falls to head-level.]

THOMAS (CONT'D)
(nodding to himself,
trying to remain calm
despite his nerves)
This should do the trick...

[Thomas grips the stone in his hand tightly.]

THOMAS (CONT'D)
(tense, but
straight-faced as he
looks down at the stone,
reciting the ability)
Mark of Transmutation: Water...

[Accompanying the skill activation, there is a light
scraping on the stone as the mark is placed upon it. Thomas
disappears into the distance, heading towards what would be
the center of the refuge. When Thomas is gone, Yllia
slouches, her armor shifting.]

YLLIA
(Shallow, broken
breathing, as if
traumatized or crying.
Still staring into the
portal)
Why?!

[Yllia's armor rattles as her hands can't stop shaking.]

YLLIA (CONT'D)
(continues to shake,
tensing up and building
into anger, tears
rolling down her face)
Why, Rapture?!

[Yllia slowly and shakily grips and lifts her metallic spear, which scrapes inside of the grip of her gauntlet.]

YLLIA (CONT'D)
 (with a more stern face,
 but still shaking)
 Or do you mean to say that you've
 been lying to us this whole time
 about who you really are?!

[Rapture cries out, yet can still only be heard by Sage.]

RAPTURE
 (pathetically crying
 out)
 No! Please mother! Stop!

[Yllia's armor scrapes as she slowly gets back to her feet.]

YLLIA
 (determined, finally
 making up her mind about
 taking action and who
 she thought was a
 friend)
 If you don't feel like giving me
 an answer, I'll just have to beat
 it out of you...

[The portal beside Sage has a few more stitches burst. Sage's robes shift slightly as she shifts her attention away from the portal and towards Yllia.]

SAGE
 (mocking Yllia's
 bravado)
 How...
 (MORE)

SAGE (CONT'D)
 (searches for the most
 effective word to get
 under Yllia's skin)

Cute...

[There is a grinding of metal on
 metal as Yllia's gauntlet grips
 her spear even harder.]

YLLIA
 (enraged, gritting her
 teeth)
 Nnnnnrrrrrrggggghhhh!!!

[In the far distance, the whistling of an object shooting
 through the air is heard as the stone Thomas marked ascends
 high into the sky, trailing a blue light.]

SAGE
 (nonchalantly turning
 her head to watch the
 stone as it ascends)
 He really is useful isn't he?
 (sounding like a doting
 parent)
 You should find yourself someone
 trustworthy like him.
 (mocking, and with a
 sick smile)
 Isn't that right... *Cordyllia*?

[The stone high overhead transforms into a massive globe of
 water, shifting and swirling and pushing into the skybox.
 As it presses in on itself and against the game's vertical
 barrier, it crashes like a wave then bursts violently like
 a tidal wave in all directions, causing rain to start
 pouring over almost half the zone.]

Upon the burst of the globe of water, like an Olympic
 sprinter reacting to a starting pistol, Yllia charges
 forwards with her spear. Her footfalls against the ground
 are met with more and more damp grass as the rain starts to
 collect on the ground.]

YLLIA
(lets out an emotionally
charged wail as she
charges towards
Rapture's avatar)