

Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step out for a walk and deliver an episode to you while I stroll around.

I'm Brendan Riley.

[music]

Well, good afternoon, Listener.

It's a lovely day here in suburban Chicago and I'm out for a walk.

The sun is shining.

There's a light breeze blowing and it is a lovely day.

I'm looking forward to a nice stroll to the library and back.

I don't have anything particular to get at the library but I thought I'd take a look around, maybe pick out a graphic novel and generally just enjoy the weather.

Although I do see some clouds over there, I hope I don't get rained on.

It looks like it did rain earlier.

There's some water in the gutters, so maybe that's what we're dealing with.

I was looking around and it's been 15 episodes or so since I dove into the secret and mysterious arts of the cosmos with my astrology files.

For those of you who knew this segment, astrology files is a series in which I look at the idea of astrology and the common ideas about different astrological signs in the context of board gaming.

Now, I will fully admit I don't particularly put a lot of stock in astrology as a phenomenon but I think it's an amusing way to sort the world and there are some people who do put a lot of stock in it, so maybe I'll learn something by making this video.

So usually what I do for the astrology files is I pick whatever astrological sign is

currently in, I don't know, ascendancy in current space.

It applies to people born right now and I look at a website that sort of tells what the characteristics of people with that sign are supposed to be and then I talk about board games that fit those characteristics.

So if you want to read the summary that I read before I came up with the answers to this topic, head to [rattleboxgames.com](http://rattleboxgames.com) where I posted the show notes for this episode which include the link to the website that explains this star sign and its qualities.

So with that in mind, let's talk about gamers who are

Taurus from recording this episode in late April and so just past the end of whatever was in early April and we're now in Taurus.

The star sign of Taurus is the bowl and according to the website I was looking at, the dominant planet is Venus.

So first it talks about that like the majestic cosmic bowl, Tauruses enjoy relaxing in serene and bucolic environments.

You know that stereotype of how bowls like to relax in serene bucolic environments.

So that first thing, that's the first call of you that popped out to me and I figured that strikes me as games that take place in serene bucolic environments and have a relaxing feel.

So for example I'm not including Agricola in this list because Agricola is often very high tension.

The tension involved in trying to manage the food supply so that you can feed your family while also making your way around getting different professions and trying to maximize your points is often not relaxing.

It's in fact intense.

Sometimes they call that game misery farm.

But from what I've read it seems like the relaxing version of that or the version that fits better with the sense of peace and calm that we'd be looking for in this context would be uve Rosenberg's Ora et Labora.

This is not a game I've had a chance to try.

It's been out of print for a while and whenever I've encountered a version of it that I would like to try I've never been able to acquire it either.

It's too expensive or if it's like a trade or something I never actually win it in the trade but the result is I haven't played *ora et labora* but I would enjoy trying it at some point.

The two other games that I thought of that seem to fit this perspective.

One of them is based on a video game.

It's called Dorfromantik.

Dorfromantik is a game in which you are enjoying the feeling of romance and relaxation in a village and trying to get the most out of laying the tiles down in a careful way.

Dorfromantik is a cooperative game so you're working together with the other players trying to maximize your score.

The challenge is of course there's a variety of different ways that your score can be influenced by different points that are set up in the game and so part of the trick is trying to walk that line, try to find the best combination of points.

But generally the game is pretty chill.

It's a nice relaxing game and while you're trying to get a good score you can just kind of enjoy making a nice puzzle out of the pieces and that sort of thing.

The name Dorfromantik actually comes from the German word for the pleasant feeling of being in a village.

It's literally enjoying relaxing in a serene and bucolic fashion so not surprising to me that that would be a good fit for Dorfromantik or for the Taurus.

The third one on point two is similarly a very relaxing tile placement game.

There is a little bit of competition if you, especially if you're getting into like, if you're going for the sheep, the person who has the most sheep gets a special award.

But generally you're just kind of trying to lay out a nice array of tiles and this is in their burn hearts, tipperary, which is a relatively light tile placement game.

It's just sort of a delightful experience.

So that is the relaxing in serene bucolic environments part of the Taurus gamers astrology files.

Next up I want to focus on the presence of Venus.

So in the description, the idea of the presence of Venus is the presence of love, beauty and money, which seems sort of summarized in the interest or engagement with the idea of luxury.

So apparently Taurus is enjoy luxury.

I mean, don't we all?

But I was thinking about like, so if you were enjoying luxury or you wanted a game about luxury, here's a couple that came to mind.

First off, Rococo is a really interesting worker placement game or card management game maybe about built creating dresses for fancy balls.

And it's long had a very strong reputation.

Eagle-Gryphon Games released a deluxe edition of it a few years back that I did get to play and I thought it was pretty good.

I didn't think it was quite as amazing as that I always heard, but certainly really interesting in a game that I would like to try again at some point, I think.

Definitely one you should try if you're a Taurus.

And you're interested in playing a game about luxury.

Two more that came to mind that are from that same idea of like trying to acquire luxury.

One is where you're trying to acquire all the luxury as fast as you can.

This is Last Will from one of my favorite designers, Vladimir Suchy and artist Thomas Kusarovsky.

I'm sure I said his name wrong.

In Last Will you play somebody who's inherited a ton of money, but you only get to keep it if you spend it faster than the other people who've inherited a ton of money.

The idea is it's a sort of, I can't remember the name, but there's a movie where Richard Pryor and Herod's all this money, but he has to spend it all in 30 days in order to inherit the rest, something like that.

And that's the way Last Will works.

The person who spends the money fastest inherits the rest.

It's a very silly game, but it's all about like obscene luxury and displays of wealth.

And it can't involve like buying stuff that you could turn around and sell for profit again, like property.

You can't buy a house with the money.

So that's Last Will.

The third one that's about luxury that I wanted to point out was ladies and gentlemen.

It's a really dumb game where players play couples in a Victorian era, high society.

The game is very stuck in traditional gender roles and traditional pairings.

One player plays the gentleman and one player plays the lady and they play separate games.

The ladies go shopping each round and they try to acquire the best stuff that's going to get them points in trying to develop the best outfit for the ball.

And the ladies are the gentlemen.

They go and play the stock market and try to make money on the trading market each day with this sort of dumb scramble to find these tokens.

Well, I keep using word dumb because the game itself is fine.

I think the collecting the outfit game is a little more interesting than the men's trading game, but they're both pretty dumb.

Where the game becomes, I don't know, at least amusing is the next phase where the ladies have to negotiate with the gentleman to please buy the stuff they want and the gentleman have to say yes or no based on how much money they have, but they're not allowed to talk about how much money they have.

There's this amusing back and forth.

I think we really think we should buy these things in the gentleman if they don't have enough money, they have to kind of hem and haw.

They can pay to keep something un-hold or they can just refuse to buy it.

It's an interesting and kind of grim view of marital relations in Victorian England.

And then at the end of seven days, the couple whose wife has the best outfit wins.

So these are all games about luxury that are worth checking out if you're a tourist and luxury is your thing as influenced by Venus.

Third thing, the article says that tourists, people, are driven by consistency and reliability and they stick to plans which on the negative side can be seen as a tendency towards stubbornness and that they often will stick with a thing too long or stay in a relationship longer than they should, that sort of thing.

So the way I was thinking about that, I was thinking about three games where stubbornness or consistency are crucial parts of the gameplay.

First one is Sidereal Confluence, which is a trading game where consistency is crucial.

In fact, it's required by the game.

You have to be consistent and truthful in your negotiations.

You can't fail to deliver.

The game doesn't allow it.

Significant penalties if you do.

On the negative side does sound like this consistency or the stubbornness can be a flaw for tourists.

If you have made an alliance with somebody and you stay longer than you should, that's often how you lose is the person that you should have broken your alliance with and betrayed them.

In fact, betrays you instead and you end up with the sharp end of the stick, so to speak.

And that makes for a very unpleasant experience, of course.

But there's also the question of like tenacity or consistency stubbornness.

And I think one game to point to that maybe benefits from this kind of experience are very difficult cooperative games, something like Arkham Horror, the Card Game or Gloomhaven

/ Frosthaven.

These are games where you and the other players benefit from you being very tenacious, very consistent, very stubborn and very careful because you're anticipating trouble or you're anticipating danger and so your preparations and your play often are reacting in line with the fact that you might have to resolve things in challenging circumstances.

And so I think the effect of the idea of stubbornness or consistency and reliability is that you are challenging or you are an effective co-player in something like Gloomhaven / Frosthaven or Arkham Horror, the Card Game.

So I can put that as a positive characteristic for our friends of Taurus is out there.

Next up we've got, so finally the last characteristic.

I always like to end with something about the actual sign itself.

The sign of the Taurus is the bowl and the planet that is most closely associated with it is Venus.

So I think about games that have to do with Venus.

There are games that have to do with bowl of course would be like stock market stuff.

I thought about that but I wanted to go a different way.

That one felt too obvious.

So I decided to go to the games that have Venus in the title or are using Venus the planet.

So the three that I came up with, the first one is Concordia Venus which is the newest edition of Concordia.

I didn't really understand what it was.

I thought when it came out it was just like a dedicated two-player version.

But everything I've seen just said it says it's like the second edition of Concordia.

If you have Concordia Venus that's enough to play the game.

You don't need the first one at all.

Which is a really interesting, I don't know, twist, weird part of the game to me.

And then the first expansion of Terraforming Mars was Venus next in which you can have these floating colonies that are mining clouds from the atmosphere of Venus which I think is really nice.

There's a lot of people who don't like that expansion.

I think that expansion is just fine.

In fact I think it's pretty fun.

So the Venus next expansion.

And then finally Martin Wallace made this weird IP-based game called Onward to Venus which is based in the idea of like a Victorian space exploration with a kind of steam punk aesthetic.

And the game that you're playing there is really goofy.

There's aliens and Martians and you're occupying different planets and you're exploring.

It's a combat, a war game or a combat game.

I really like it.

It's weird but pretty fun and it's got a strange setup.

It's got these like circular discs as the map of the game which is really unusual on well with checking out.

So those are Venus games which seems like a good last thing.

So I'm curious.

Are any of you tourists?

Do these fit with the kinds of games you enjoy?

Head over to board game geek guild 3269 and share your thoughts about Tauruses, bulls,

luxury, consistency, reliability and Venus over there.

Well thanks for joining me on my walk today.

I hope your next walk is as much as mine was.

Bye bye.

[Music]

Brought to you by Rattlebox Games.

[Music]

(gentle music)