Below is the transcript of the scene in which Benny described how dimension walking works:

Benny smiles a knowing smile and nods several times, “I see your game, little lady. OK, well let's begin. First we need to find someplace safe to do this. Basically away from others. With all empathic powers, remember 'safety first.' But super-especially with Dimension Walking.”

He gets up and looks around.

<aurora> “What's Dimension Walking anyway?” aurora follows him

“Well, that's an excellent question,” he says. “The simplest answer is to explain to you how the universe really exists.”

“We experience four dimensions,” he says, “right?”

Aurora says, “That… doesn't sound simple. Four? Are you including time or something?”

“Yes, absolutely,” he says. “Einstein showed us that time was clearly a fourth dimension through which we move.”

“And importantly it always moves in one direction, forward,” he says. “That's important to understand, though sometimes the mystics will claim it's not quite so.”

“But time has to go forward for causality to be real,” he says. “And a universe without causality would not be one we'd understand at all.”

“Put another way, you can't go back in time,” he says. “Other than that, however, we can travel along these axes at varying rates. And also move along axes that are not normally perceptible to most humans.”

“These other axes are very difficult to describe to we humans who live our lives in these four dimensions, day to day,” he says. “They're better demonstrated in some ways. But I'll try to create a mental model that you can understand.”

<aurora> “What happens if you try to go back in time?”

“Just can't,” he says. “Trust me, the universe just doesn't work that way.”

“I'll explain what the mystics do in a bit, once you have the model.”

<aurora> “Ok”

“So imagine the entire universe is contained in one three dimensional bead,” he says

“Let's say it's white for this purpose,” he goes on. Benny is pretty animated now, waving his hands as they walk along to try to help describe things.

“Now, each bead is only three dimensions, so it's just one moment in time. So each other moment in time is another bead. In a nearly infinite string of such beads. Each moment we move from one bead to the next along the line, inexorably. That's the normal universe as we know it.

“So far making sense?” he stops and asks.

<aurora> “I guess, so everything in the world is inside of each bead?”

“Everything in our universe,” he corrects. “So each bead is actually infinite in size.”

“Don't try to think too hard about it,” he suggests.

<aurora> “Right. Metaphorical.” She waves her hand

“Right,” he agrees.

“So now imagine that between each of the white beads on the string, there's a blue bead,” he says. “You can't normally see these Universes, and you don't move into them, because you're moving from the white beads to the white beads. But they're there, and we call those beads the 'interstices.' What the mystics term the 'Astral Plane.'”

He uses big air quotes to emphasize the Mystic term.

Aurora narrows her eyes. “That's weird. Time between time?”

“No, universes in other directions than the three dimensions we know,” he says. “Some folks prefer to think of them as being on parallel strands.”

He gestures to indicate what he means.

<aurora> “so they're more like beady clusters”

“Maybe,” Benny says. “The point is that you can get from the same moment in time in one universe of dimensions as that in another universe that's substantially different than ours. You just have to know which way to step.”

He resumes walking, and speaks like an announcer, “But wait, there's more!”

Aurora grins

“If you like the parallel bead strings idea, then imagine an infinite number of other strings out there, each their own dimension away from ours,” he says.

“Each only a few steps away, in just the right direction,” he says.

“Only these beads tend to be smaller. Our dimension, and the interstices seem to be special.

<aurora> “Are you sure you always get back to this one? What if you never get back to the original one but you keep stepping into alternate realities forever different?”

“Great question,” he says. “There's no way to know for sure. There's actually every possibility that we're all always going our own way a little off of everyone else, and thus have our own universe, Or potential universe, depending on your POV.”

<aurora> “Are there any universes without these monsters in them?”

“Well,” he says, “That's the thing. We always SEEM to come back to this one.”

“That's kind of a long story, with lots of theories,” he says. “Fortunately, the way it works is one you can wrap your head around. Or, perhaps it works that way because you can wrap your head around it. But now I'm sounding like a mystic a bit. But it's clear that our mental facilities are linked to the universe in ways that make all of this possible.”

He stops again, having found a distant area of the underground base. He looks around, “This should do.”

<aurora> “Hmm. I guess that makes sense.”

“Now, here's a thing,” he says. “being beads on a thread of sorts, if you walk the right way, you can take shortcuts between points on the beads ahead of you. This is actually the most common use of Dimension Walking, and the least dangerous. Because you don't leave the white beads, our universe, doing so. Why do you think we do this?”

<aurora> “To get places really fast, or run away from monsters? Or because it's cool?”

“It's cool, but that's not why we do it. The other two reasons. This is what Veronica did with you to get you to your friend's apartment so fast,” he says.

“And that's a good point to hit the safety briefing again,” he changes tack.

<aurora> “Oh boy, the fun part.”

“There are very many dangers involved in doing anything empathic,” he says. “But there are more involved with Dimension Walk than with any other empathic ability. Far more.”

“In addition to the usual psychic damage one can do to themselves through lack of careful use of such powers, Dimension Walk can result in you exiting in the wrong place. It can result in disorientation on exiting. It can result in ending up in the Interstices, or stranding other travelers there when the quantum dimension in question collapses.”

He gestures to indicate that he'll get back to that term in a moment.

<aurora> “If this is the most dangerous thing, I'm surprised you're actually teaching it to me first.”

“Well, I'd rather teach you more psionic talents first,” he says. “But you seemed determined to learn sorcery. So here you must start if that's the case. Care to change your mind and learn something like telekinesis?”

He grins winningly.

<aurora> “That sounds fun, but maybe I'll learn it next.”

“OK,” he says, and resumes his pedantic tone as he continues the safety talk. “Lastly, I'm sure Panix told you this, but it bears repeating… when you Dimension Walk, it causes ripples. Actually when you do any empathic manipulation, it causes ripples. But they're generally tiny and nobody an detect them. When you Dimension Walk, it's like somebody did a canonball into the pool. Darklings anywhere nearby… and I mean up to miles away sometimes… will come running to see who did this.”

“So if you do want to do this, always try to have somebody like myself around who can dampen the noise if you can,” he says.

<aurora> “You guys ever use that to trap them?”

He smiles, “You catch on fast. Yes, this is a good way to deal with them. Well, at least with those that can't dimension walk themselves. Or just dumping them in the interstices.”

“Physically,” he adds. “You never want to go to the interstices physically.”

“And only mystics can go there mentally,” he adds under his breath.

<aurora> “Isn't that what I did when Veronica brought me to Fred's? Went through it physically?”

“Good segue,” he says. “That wasn't the interstices, that was a great example of a quantum proto-dimension, These only really seem to exist when you're traveling through one, and don't take you out of our dimension.”

Aurora raises an eyebrow and looks dubious

“You're just shortcutting in a way that only an Empath can see,” he explains. “You'll recall that everything seemed to be black, and yet you could see everything clearly? That's your empathic sight at work in there, feeling your way through.”

“Note that non-empaths can't sense anything but touch when they're in there… unless you let them borrow your sight,” he says. “Worse, since they can't see it, it fails to exist for them if you're not around.

<aurora> “Does it make them puke too?”

“Unfortunately frequently,” he says looking a little queasy as he says it. “But not always. Pilots tend to do well, for instance. I know a guy… well anyway.”

Aurora feels a little queasy just thinking about her last trip, too. “Ugh. Does it ever get better?”

“Oh yeah, just a few tries, and you'll probably be totally OK,” he says. “Do you get seasick, or airsick or any of that?”

<aurora> “I… actually don't know. Never done any of that.”

“Well, let's hope not. I bet you'll be fine,” he says encouragingly.

“To go back to what I was saying, if non-empath is left alone in a quantum proto-dimension, it'll collapse, and they'll get dumped in the interstices when the quantum proto-dimension collapses. And then they're going to be difficult to find. And then they'll likely go crazy. Or at least that's what happened to the last person I know of who was left in there. So… be careful with charges if you take people through a portal.”

<aurora> “That sounds… pleasant.”

“Yeah,” he nods and then shakes his head, “Not at all.”

“Which, again,” he says trying to find an upside, “Is why we sometimes trap the bad guys in the interstices.”

“It's even hard for Empaths to get out of there,” he notes.

<aurora> “You're going to teach me how to get out, right?

“I'll tell you what we know about it,” he says. “But there's no guarantees. Just try not to let it happen to you. It's not likely as an Empath who's been trained.”

“In fact, the only way I'm sure it can happen is if THEY throw you through,” he says.

He shrugs to see if it's OK to move on.

“Great,” she says with a weak thumbs up.

He gives a similar thumbs up back.

“OK, so remember what I said about the cannonball?” he goes on. “Well, that's about the magnitude in the pond if you cut open a quantum proto-dimension and walk it.”

“There are other stable proto-dimensions, too,” he says.

“Going to one of these is about the same noise… only staying there for a long time makes it sorta echo. Which is worse. But the loudest noise of all is that racket that Panix creates when she does that crazy stuff where she breaks open to the fire dimensions and then funnels fire through.”

“That's like ten times as loud,” he says. He gestures expansively to indicate this.

“I don't understand how that stuff works, it's very complicated,” he admits. “But whatever she does, it's the worst for detection.”

“Proto-dimensions,” he says. “Those other colored beads on other strings. Most of them are completely inimical to life. You can't go there, or they'll kill you, period.”

“Supposedly there are ones that are not completely inimical,” he says. “That's being studied right now, and I guess I believe it, since I've now been to one myself. Panix showed it to me a couple of weeks ago.”

“So, unless I've been brainwashed,” he says. “There are other worlds to which we can travel. They're just very…. not… like Earth.”

“Folks speculate that maybe there are 'alternate Earths' like you said, but that the ones that are close to ours are just so relatively few that we don't tend to run into those,” he says. “Instead we tend to run into ones that are either lethal… or very strange.”

<aurora> “Weird. What was it like?”

“Well, it was kinda nice, actually. The disturbing thing was that the trees had hands,” he says. “And they tended to try to grab you as you brushed up on them.”

He seems a bit disturbed by the memory. He looks off into the distance, remembering it.

<aurora> “I bet that would be real popular with some people”

The thought makes Benny shudder a bit. “Anyhow, where was I?”

“We don't know a lot about these proto-dimensions, but it's best to consider them hostile until proven otherwise,” he says. “We're not even sure what long-term exposure to other laws of physics might do to people.”

<aurora> “Right. So don't hang out in grabby tree world.”

“Well, not for longer than you need to,” he says. “We were there for a couple of hours, and didn't seem to suffer any ill effects. So…”

He shrugs. “OK, any questions about any of this before we try a practical demonstration?”

“I don't think so.” She wipes her palms on her jeans. “Let's do this.”

“OK, I've talked to a friend of mine, another psionic, who's just taken over covering the base, and what we're about to do,” he says. “Because, as I said, I can't do anything while I've got the shield up. This included.”

He seems to prepare himself and then interrupts himself, “Oh, another thing while I'm thinking of it… if you were a darkling, and you wanted to get from point A to point B fast, would you bend space and time a lot or a little?”

<aurora> “A..lot?”

“Right,” he says. “When you create a quantum proto-dimension, it's on a sort of spectrum that includes all in use nearby such dimensions. And, since they're smaller than other dimensions, it's easy to spot folks. We'll be using a very long shortcut, to avoid anybody who might be wandering nearby in one of the faster dimensions.”

Benny says this in a way that indicates that his mind is totally wrapped around such notions without thinking a lot about them.

Mai can feel Benny's familiar empathic touch in her mind. “I'm here, because it's only in here that I can show you how it is that I will do what I'm about to do.”

And then Benny moves his mind on an axis that Mai didn't know existed before, and as he does so, a tear in space becomes visible near them.

<aurora> “Whoah.”

And suddenly Mai can understand how it's done. Not enough to do it herself, but it's as though somebody never told her up existed, and how she's looking that way. Mai can also hear the tear pealing through her empathic sensory range, spreading out wide. And can also hear it being dampened by whomever it is who's putting the shield up around them. Anyone inside the base with empathy, listening for it, surely heard it. Outside, unlikely.

<aurora> “That /was/ loud.”

“Yeah, next time you're near Panix, and she does some of her fire shit, try listening to THAT,” he says shaking his head.

“OK, now we step in carefully,” he says, stepping halfway in and waiting for Mai to do so as well.

Aurora takes a step forward, bracing herself for the feeling she had experienced before. Inside the world is that same completely visible “Black.” Benny steps in behind her, and the portal closes. Aurora feels a wave of dizziness and nausea pass over her, but manages to keep it together, mostly.

“The duration of a portal and it's size are all one thing,” he says in his mind. “The more skill you have the larger you can make it, or the longer you can hold it open.”

He walks to the wall on the other side of the room, gesturing for Mai to follow, which she does after a moment. The room whips by in what feels like half the time it should.

<aurora> “Oh god that's so fucked up”

“OK, now I may as well demonstrate something else,” he says. “You may notice that when you stepped through, you didn't end up precisely where it was that you would have expected to from where you were stepping from. My portal created a slight inaccuracy in transit.”

This matches Mai's perception. It was a little off. “Yeahhhh…”

“Well, when you put up a portal, you're usually trying for what some folks call a 'right angle” entry,” he says. “Meaning to get to the exact place in the other dimension that matches the place in our universe.”

“But you don't have to aim right for that,” he says. “You can skew it a bit. Like this.”

He opens another portal in much the same way as if his mind had walked back in the opposite direction from the way it got here. But slightly off.

<aurora> “Why would you wanna do that?”

The image of the room coming through the portal seems wrong to Mai, not matching. “Step through and I'll explain,” he says.

Aurora steps through tentatively and comes out on the other side of the room near where she entered the other portal to get into the dimension she's now exiting. Benny follows, and the portal collapses.

<aurora> “Damn that's trippy.”

Benny smiles. “Can you see why skewed travel might be beneficial?”

<aurora> “For really fucking with people?”

“Well maybe you don't want to come out in the exact spot you're standing at in the other dimension,” he says. “Get really good at this, and you can move around even faster than usual.”

“But there's something more,” he says. “The quantum proto-dimension is a construct of the mind, as it understands gravity.”

“Gravity is really important, and we can get more into that later,” he says.

<aurora> “You're not going to make me fall onto the ceiling or something are you?”

“Not exactly,” he says. “But you'll note that the walls in there are just as strong as the walls here. You can't walk through them.”

<aurora> “But you just made a portal through one”

“You have the gist of it,” he says.

“The thing is,” he goes on, you have to have a clear picture of where you're going. “Which can make walls difficult still, and makes skewing only able to go so far in certain circumstances. But there's tricks to that.”

“Skewing takes some practice,” he goes on. “Start with right angles, until you get it down. Then you can move on to skewing.”

“As for other proto-dimensions… well, to go to one, somebody has to take you there first,” he says. “And it's more difficult, and leaves you with a better chance to get lost. So we won't be doing that any time soon, if ever. Just good for you to know that it's out there.”

<aurora> “How did anyone get there in the first place if someone has to take them there first?”

“Heh, that's a great question,” he replies. “The general consensus is that it happened by accident. If you mess up on going the right direction… probably because you're distracted or something… you can end up going some place you don't intend. Also mystics. Astral travel.”

He tries to sort of shrug these off.

<aurora> “Ok. Makes sense.”

“OK, now we do this a lot more, me leading you, like five times a day for a while until you get the feeling that you can do it on your own,” he says. “You'll just kinda know. Do it before then, and you may well end up in one of those inimical to life proto-dimensions or something.”

Aurora makes a face. “I love how everything we do here comes with dire warnings.”

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