

The Adventure Zone Balance: Moonlighting, Chapter Two

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Griffin: Previously, on the Adventure Zone...

You walk out of the hangar and see that you are surrounded by dome-shaped buildings, these Epcot-ball-esque buildings. You three step onto the elevator, and you actually hear the doors to this dome open up once more, and you hear a guy go...

Johann: Can you hold the elevator, please? My name is Johann.

Merle: Ah.

Magnus: Okay.

Johann: I'm like, the greatest violinist basically ever.

Travis: I tickle him.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Johann: [deadpan] Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Stop it.

Griffin: The room that opens up is very dark, save for a tank in the middle. And something is in there. You can sort of make out the shadow of something. He walks the three of you over to a spigot on the side of this tank and takes out three vials.

Travis: Magnus drinks the vial.

Clint: Of course he does.

Griffin: With each passing second, you remember more and more. You remember the Black Spider asking you if you're members of the Bureau of Balance. You remember months and months and years beyond that. You remember just this carnage and conflict that seems too enormous for you to have possibly forgotten.

Johann: We call it the Voidfish. Whatever information you give it stops existing, unless you've been inoculated and drank... "drank from the tank" is what we say.

Magnus: Who's in charge here?

Johann: That's The Director. Now that you guys have been inoculated, she'll probably want to see you.

Magnus: Could you take us to her?

Johann: I'm not, like, the valet here. I'm the gamekeeper.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: I slip him five bucks.

Johann: Oh, oh, *thank* you, sir!

Announcer: Can our heroes survive the most treacherous job interview? I see myself in five years in... The Adventure Zone!

[theme music plays]

Griffin: The three of you are received at the elevator by another guard, who walks you into the largest and grandest dome on the campus. You enter into a foyer. It's just—

Travis: Do we need to wipe our feet or anything?

Griffin: You are asked to remove your shoes—no, you're fine. Um... A magic enchantment has dirt-proofed the floor of this place.

Magnus: This place truly is magical!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You three are welcomed into this chamber. It almost seems kind of like a throne room, a little bit.

Travis: Hey, Ditto, we probably should have asked this earlier, but... throughout all of this, and like, since we got here, what's the vibe been like? Has it been like, are we getting weird glances as we walk through? Are people seeming suspicious?

Griffin: No, people don't really seem to give you a time of day. There are—you've seen a few dozen people since you've been up here. Most of them wearing—

Clint: Have we not been here before?

Griffin: No. You've never been here before. God, I'm gonna have to do that a lot, aren't I? Now that I've written in this—

Clint: Well, Bureau of Balance, I mean, we're part of the Bureau of Balance, I just thought this was the headquarters.

Griffin: Well, you're not.

Clint: Oh.

Justin: We remembered her *saying* Bureau of Balance.

Clint: Ahh.

Justin: We remembered hearing her saying it earlier.

Griffin: Exactly. You walk down sort of the carpeted runway to the throne portion of the throne room. God, I'm talking good today. Wow. You're standing at the edge of a dais that the throne is sitting upon. And sitting upon the throne, upon the dais—should we just cancel the podcast? 'Cause I'm apparently incapable of stringing sentences together.

Clint: [laughs] Let me give you a musical break. [singing] It's a dais, it's a dais, it's a dais. Take it!

Travis: That's solid.

Griffin: That helps. I'm gonna take my jacket off, actually, 'cause I'm getting sweaty.

Justin: Yeah, that was the issue.

Travis: Yeah, he needs to streamline it.

Justin: Isn't it a dais [day-is]?

Clint: It is a dais [day-is], but he's on a roll.

Justin: It's a dais, okay.

Clint: That's when the Germans bombed Pearl Harbor.

Griffin: What?

Clint: It's from Animal House, way before your time.

Griffin: Wow. Okay.

Clint: Somebody out there will get that.

Justin: Old people.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs] Zing.

Justin: Listen, if they're not 18 to 34, I got nothin' for 'em.

Griffin: Sitting upon the throne on top of this fancy-ass platform—

Travis: This shit looks tight.

Griffin: Is a human woman in her... you would say about her 50s, who is dressed in a very ornate blue and white robe, holding a white oak staff that is actually fairly plain. It doesn't really match her decorated outfit. And she says, uhh... now I gotta do another voice.

Woman: Welcome, the three of you, to the Bureau of Balance. It's a pleasure to have you. I've heard a lot of great things about your performance from Killian. Before we go any further, I'm going to need you to hand over the gauntlet so we can destroy it promptly.

Magnus: Really?

Merle: Hmm.

Magnus: But it's our gauntlet.

Merle: You see, that's kind of the business we're in. You know, we get stuff and then people pay us for it, so...

Taako: Yeah.

Woman: Oh, you will be paid. You will be paid very, very handsomely.

Taako: That's the kind of thing people say if by "paying us" they're gonna kill us.

Griffin: She says...

Woman: No, that's not how the Bureau operates. Give me a moment.

Griffin: She claps her hands and yells...

Woman: Davenport! Davenport!

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: He's sitting on a couch.

Griffin: And a gnomish man walks out, very finely dressed, very, very nice garb, walks out holding a tray with a coin purse sitting on it. The director says...

Director: Pay the men, Davenport. Pay the men their money for a good day's work. Well, it was more like a ten day, but it was a lot of days. Go ahead and give them their payment.

Griffin: And he says...

Davenport: [in a high, nasally voice] Right away.

Travis: Nailed it.

Clint: [snorts]

Griffin: And walks over to the three of you and holds up the tray with the coin purse on it.

Travis: Okay, I grab his coin purse.

Clint: Good, anybody but Taako.

Magnus: And excuse me, madam, what is your name?

Director: That's actually classified, but—

Magnus: Then how should we address you?

Director: The Director is fine.

Magnus: Director—

Director: Or Madam Director is fine also.

Magnus: Madam—Madam Director—

Merle: Lady Director.

Magnus: Shut up.

Director: Nope.

Magnus: I'm happy to destroy the gauntlet. I would like to be present while it is destroyed, so I can confirm—

Director: Oh, yes, I imagine you would. It'll be quite spectacular.

Taako: And it makes him horny!

Travis: [laughs]

Magnus: Shh! That's between me and my god.

Taako: He loves seeing things destroyed.

Merle: A stiff wind makes him horny.

Magnus: That is not true! [laughs]

Merle: Can we watch while you hurl it into the fires of Mount Doom?

Director: If only it were so simple. It's actually taken us quite some time to develop anything capable of destroying something quite so powerful.

Taako: Well, listen. I'm—I'm but a simple idiot wizard. Could you tell us a little about—

Director: No, don't sell yourself short.

Magnus: No, he's not. It's pretty accurate.

Taako: No, I appreciate it, but I'm comfortable with where I'm at. I'm just standing in my truth here. Listen, could you tell us a little about your organization, before we just... hand it over? It's really scary and it makes ouchies. When you touch it, I mean, ouchies.

Director: When you touch the... organization?

Taako: Gauntlet. It's—it ouchies.

Director: I see...

Taako: Remember—member Phandalin?

Director: You're the three who conquered Magic Brian and claimed the gauntlet, yes? That was—

Taako: Remember Phandalin?

Director: Ye-yes, sadly I—I do remember Phandalin.

Taako: Lucky, that's lucky for you. Treasure that memory.

Director: We know what's happened to Phandalin. We've been tracking the three of you—

Taako: No—it was burned. The gauntlet burned it.

Magnus: Madam Director, we're more than we appear, we promise. Just answer his question. Tell us a little about the organization. Then we'll do the gauntlet destroying, have some tea, a nice oolong.

Director: You think just because I'm a woman who is in her mid-50s, that I enjoy drinking tea?

Magnus: No, I love tea. That was for me. I don't care if you have any.

Director: Okay.

Merle: Did you get my Animal House joke earlier?

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Director: The Bureau of Balance has a singular purpose, and that is to collect and destroy certain... let's call them weapons of mass destruction. I guess you could call us a sort of disarmament organization, who is tasked with making the world safer by destroying the things that threaten it; namely, powerful artifacts like the gauntlet that you have in your possession right now.

Magnus: Gotcha.

Taako: Sounds good to me!

Magnus: Yeah, I mean, that's pretty solid.

Justin: I chuck her the gauntlet.

Griffin: One of the, uh—there are two big burly guards sort of standing on the dais in front of the director. One of them walks into a room, walks

through a door behind the wall where the throne is positioned, and comes out carrying a cart with a heavy sort of iron sphere. A heavy, perhaps, lead sphere, with a sort of glass window on it, a circular glass window that he pops open and asks you to plop that gauntlet.

Guard: Plop that bad boy right in there.

Griffin: He says.

Travis: Could you do a voice for him, please?

Guard: [in a southern accent] Plop that bad boy right in there.

Travis: [in a southern accent] Dinosaurs!

Justin: Alright, I plop the bad boy in there.

Clint: It's in there.

Griffin: Okay. He shuts it and draws a curtain on one side of the room, which reveals sort of a large window overlooking a... enormous chamber. Sort of imagine the—oh shit, what's it called? In X-Men?

Justin: Cerebro?

Clint: Cerebro.

Griffin: Cerebro, yeah. Sort of imagine like the Cerebro chamber from X-Men. He wheels the cart inside, lifts up this heavy ball with the gauntlet inside of it, sets it on the floor, walks out of the room. The Director takes her staff, walks to the window, invites you guys to sort of watch from this viewing window... sort of like those rooms that they have over, like, surgery operating rooms.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Clint: Right.

Griffin: She taps her staff on the glass, and suddenly, the ball starts to float in the air. And these bright pillars of light begin to shoot out of the walls of this chamber, stabbing through the iron sphere. And it's very, very bright. This production goes on for a minute or so, and then all of a sudden, the pillars disappear. The ball very slowly floats down to the floor of the chamber. The same guard walks in, grabs it, puts it back on the cart, and wheels it back in.

Travis: Does he do kind of like a, "ooh, hot, hot, ooh!"

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah. He's wearing two fantasy oven mitts, and he picks it up and puts it back on the cart.

Clint: "Watch it, hot sphere, hot sphere."

Griffin: Wheels it out and says...

Guard: That's one spicy meatball!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: And then he cracks open the glass door on the sphere, and it is empty.

Justin: Oh, that dipshit said spicy. What's up, counting it.

Griffin: Noooo!!

Travis: Ohhh!

Justin: Spicy meat.

Clint: Ohhh! Spicy!

Griffin: Dammit, that wasn't supposed to happen until the next adventure! Okay, nope, I said it.

Clint: Yeah, and you also said meat.

Griffin: Oh, shit!

Justin: I actually had ground meat from the—

Clint: No, we only had ground.

Justin: I had ground—well, oh, I understand grinding. Spicy meat? Spicy meat!?

Griffin: Guys...

Clint: Yep. [laughs]

Griffin: Can you give me a full rundown? 'Cause I have to like... oh man.

Clint: I got it, spicy ground—

Griffin: I'm gonna have to invent a different monster that can erase people's memory so I can take some of your taco discoveries.

Clint: No, no, no.

Justin: Sour cream.

Clint: You're not taking this away from us.

Justin: Sour cream—

Clint: We got sour cream, spicy meat, and a word, 'cheese,' but we don't know—

Justin: Cheese, I don't know what that means, and I understand grinding.

Griffin: [laughing] He says...

Guard: I just fucked up.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah there's nothing in the chamber, and the director looks very pleased, and she says...

Director: Okay, payment upon, uh... upon obliteration, I suppose.

Griffin: And Davenport hands over the tray with the sack of money on it.

Travis: How much?

Griffin: Inside, you find 600 gold pieces. A small fortune, for the three of you.

Justin: I'm never allowed to buy anything. I don't know why we keep trying to get gold.

Travis: I'm sorry, how much?

Griffin: Six hundred. After this—after this adventure, you will be able to spend your money however you see fit.

Travis: So how much do we have now?

Griffin: A lot.

Justin: I have 600.

Griffin: You all have like—

Clint: Yeah, like, a thousand thirty

Griffin: You have a thousand and thirty?!

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: That math ain't right. We'll figure it after. We'll fix it in post.

Travis: We're rich!

Griffin: The Director says... she looks over the moon. She is extremely happy. She is—

Justin: Or inside the moon.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [sings] Yadda yadda yadda, yadda yadda yadda! And that's when the podcast falls! [blows raspberry]

Griffin: She says...

Director: That gauntlet you just destroyed is responsible for some of the worst atrocities our world has ever known.

Magnus: Cool!

Director: Yeah.

Travis: [laughs]

Director: The three of you should be very, very proud of yourselves.

Magnus: Do you know anything about this umbrella?

Griffin: She looks it over and she says...

Director: No, but our artificer might. I can send you his way after—

Magnus: Yeah, just give me his contact info.

Director: Yeah, I'll... LinkedIn recommend you to him. The Phoenix Fire Gauntlet...

Griffin: She says...

Director: ... is a very special, extremely powerful magic item. It is a weapon that was created by a band of wizards and warlocks and other magic-users who refused to limit themselves. They refused to rein in their experimentation, if you will, and that resulted in the creation of what we call the grand relics. There are seven of them in the world.

Magnus: Six.

Director: Now there are six, yes, that's right. I—this is the first—we've searched for so long for these relics. Our entire organization's sole purpose is to find these relics, and—

Taako: Wait a minute. I need to clarify something. Just so I'm clear – your whole organization, that lives in a moon... so far, the score is zero?

Travis: [laughs]

Merle: One!

Magnus: No, that was us. That was us.

Merle: Oh, yeah.

Taako: I couldn't get out of a jizz-cave without nearly dying, and we—we destroyed one.

Director: Two assertions – first, don't sell yourself short. I think the three of you are capable of a lot more—

Taako: No, no, no, I know what I'm about.

Magnus: We can get out of whole tunnels of jizz-caves!

Griffin: [laughs]

Director: Second, how long do you think we've been in operation?

Merle: Sounds like about a half an hour.

Travis: [laughs]

Taako: You spend all your time on your moon base, and didn't go looking for—I've been there. I know how this game is played.

Griffin: She says...

Director: We, the Bureau of Balance, as you now know us... we have only been in operation for a little less than a year, now. What we do was not possible until we discovered the Voidfish. See, the war and the calamity and turmoil that the three of you now remember was a direct result of these relics.

When these items were crafted, and word about their power spread, every kingdom in the land, every political organization, every mercenary guild, every religious community, founded their own attempts to claim them for their own. And that contest for these relics led to a war the likes of which our world had never seen, and we simply couldn't do what we do now until that turmoil subsided. And the only way that we could force it to subside is to make everyone forget about the relics in the first place.

Magnus: That all seems pretty straightforward.

Director: It's—

Magnus: Pretty textbook.

Director: It's actually incredibly circuitous and difficult to understand, but I'm hoping the three of you are on board.

Merle: Taako, did you get that?

Taako: Oh, yeah. Every word.

Merle: Sounds like you're offering us a gig.

Director: I would be happy to hire the three of you as reclai—

Magnus: Do we get license to kill?

Director: You don't. Um...

Magnus: Ugh.

Director: We—well, I mean, you can—you don't need one, is what I'm saying.

Magnus: Oh, okay.

Director: You can just sort of do it. We would be happy, actually, to hire the three of you on as reclaimers.

Magus: Oh, The Reclaimers!

Taako: [sings] I would walk 500 miles—

Merle: [sings along] And I would walk 500 more!

Taako: Love that track. Love that track, on board.

Director: Yes, you may in fact—

Taako: Sunshine On Leith, right?

Clint: [laughs]

Director: Did you just Google “The Proclaimers” to think of other songs that they did?

Clint: [laughs] No, that—

Taako: No, I had that—

Clint: He knew it.

Taako: I had that on cassette, homie.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: She says...

Director: Let me explain. Our organization is made up of three main roles. We have seekers who look out for intelligence, regarding—

Travis: Beaters, and then keepers.

Griffin: We have snitch-grabbers—what are they called?

Travis: [laughing] They’re called snitch-grabbers. You got it.

Director: The seekers look out for any information that can aid in the finding of these relics, but they are forbidden from claiming them themselves. That is where you come in – the reclaimers.

This is actually a very hard position for us to fill, because most of the time, anybody who discovers one of the grand relics is unable to fight off the

temptation to claim it for their own. The three of you have proven that you are capable of avoiding that temptation, and so, we would be happy to have you as a part of that illustrious role.

Taako: I... just to be clear, I have proven that. I just put it in my backpack.

Magnus: Yeah, we keep him around 'cause he's our—he's too stupid to give in to temptation.

Griffin: She says...

Director: That brings us to the third role, which we call the regulators. Anybody who goes AWOL, if you will, anybody who uses information gathered about the relics for their own whim, anybody who uses a relic, even once, will be hunted down and properly dealt with by the regulators.

Magnus: Super cool. Which one of these is Killian?

Director: Oh, Killian is actually one of our star regulators. She was hunting down one of our wayward seekers, who you met also. You know him, I believe, as The Black Spider, or—

Magnus: Magic Brian.

Director: Magic Brian.

Merle: Brian, yeah.

Magnus: We killed him.

Director: Yes, that was, uh—that was very kind of you. Thank you for doing that.

Magnus: You are welcome.

Taako: I killed... I killed him.

Magnus: It was a group effort!

Griffin: She says, uh...

Director: I will be happy to welcome the three of you on board the Bureau of Balance as reclaimers. The only thing standing in the way is the test, if you wish to get your bracers.

Magnus: Oh, is it like, written?

Taako: Oh, well, I'll see you guys later.

Griffin: [laughs]

Merle: He doesn't test well.

Taako: We had good run.

Merle: Can we have a proctor, for Taako? A procto?

Magnus: Because of Taako's special magic abilities, he gets to take it untimed.

Griffin: She says...

Director: No, there's no written component.

Magnus: Sweet.

Director: All I need to know is, between the three of you...

Griffin: She says...

Director: Which of you is the smartest? Which of you is the strongest? And which of you is the bravest?

Magnus: I think that's Taako, all of the above.

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: Listen...

Director: Each of you must claim one of those three titles, and I'll leave it to you to decide among yourselves.

Taako: I think that, um...

Merle: You've got a lot of street smarts.

Taako: Yeah, tha—that's very kind, thanks. I'm not kidding myself, I think betw—Merle is sort of the smartest by default, right?

Magnus: Yeah, I would say—so, I would say Taako's the bravest, and I'm the strongest.

Taako: I'm cool with that.

Magnus: Unless you want to go for strength, and it's like strength of will and mind, and I'm brave. Either one of those is fine with me.

Merle: Square root of 37...

Magnus: Oh, okay. Super cool.

Griffin: No, go ahead and tell me what that is, Dad?

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: 6.333, and repeat the 3.

Magnus: So, quick question, Director.

Director: Yes.

Magnus: When you say strongest, do you mean like physically? Or like—

Director: I cannot tell you any more. You are in the test now.

Magnus: You can, you just choose not to.

Director: Oh, you're so deep in the test.

Griffin: She says.

Director: Oh, goodness, you are knee-deep—

Travis: [laughs] "Just the way you're standing is part of the test."

Director: You are knee-deep in test-town.

Merle: Alright. I am smartest. My friend Taako is—

Director: Well, listen to you.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: No, you guys—

Travis: Well, la dee da!

Taako: I'm the bravest.

Magnus: I'm the strongest.

Griffin: She says...

Director: Okay.

Griffin: And she taps her staff on the ground, and the three of you are unconscious.

Travis: Super cool.

Clint: How do we know?

Travis: Good question.

Griffin: I'm telling you.

Travis: We wake up unconscious.

Griffin: I'm telling your earth-avatars that your game-bodies are now unconscious.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Hey, everybody. This is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master for The Adventure Zone. Thank you very much for listening to episode eight in our second adventure of The Adventure Zone, which we ended up titling Moonlighting, which is appropriate on several levels. The Adventure Zone is sponsored once again by Crunchyroll.

Crunchyroll, the internet's premier source for anime streaming. If you are a fan of anime, or if you're not a fan of anime and you've been looking to dip your toe into the sweet anime waters, uh, you can find a shit load of it on Crunchyroll.

They have super popular series like Naruto, One Piece, Sword Art Online... If you've already torn through those particular series, they have a lot of new stuff that just went up this winter season, including a show called The Testament of Sister New Devil. Again, just a markedly better name than The Adventure Zone is.

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So again, Crunchyroll.com/Zone. Check out the free membership that they have for ya.

I want to thank everybody who has been listening to and tweeting about and reviewing the show on iTunes. As always, we try to at least get one NPC per episode that we name after somebody who tweeted about the show. This week, we went ahead and just did Drew Davenport, because we were gonna have to do him sometime. That is, of course, Davenport, the gnome butler. A lot of people were hoping he would be shamanistic in nature, but uh, I had a hard time writing that into the story.

Thank you so much, Drew Davenport, for... well, everything. Uh, and thank you all for listening and tweeting about the show. We will have new characters named after people in each new episode, so just use the [#TheZoneCast](https://twitter.com/TheZoneCast) hash tag. That's [#TheZoneCast](https://twitter.com/TheZoneCast). And if we pick your tweet, and you got a cool sounding name, we'll toss you in the show.

Also thanks to everybody who sent in item suggestions. In the next episode... we already went shopping, but in the next episode, uh, our heroes go to Fantasy Costco for just some pretty amazing stuff that you guys came up with, and you guys sent in, so thank you all very much for that.

If you want to submit an item, just email us at AdventureZoneCast@gmail.com, and we will consider your item for inclusion in Fantasy Costco. A lot of people were like, "Tortilla shells!" I think I'll handle the taco distribution for the most part, but thank you for your email.

And seriously, thank you all for listening to the show, and sharing it, and being so incredibly sweet and supportive. We've had a really good launch, and we couldn't have done that without you. We've got the MaxFunDrive coming up, which, if this is the first Maximum Fun show you've listened to, it is our annual pledge drive that we use to get money to help support and build the show and grow the network and come up with new shows, like The Adventure Zone. The Adventure Zone would not exist if it wasn't for the support that the Maximum Fun donors have given us over the years.

You all have been incredibly kind. We have some exciting stuff planned. We have a bonus episode that we just recorded that is kind of a prequel to The Adventure Zone saga that will be going out to donors, that uh, we already recorded, and I absolutely love how it turned out. So you'll definitely want to hear that. We'll have more details for you on MaxFunDrive soon, but it's going to kick off March 16th, and run for two weeks.

If you haven't listened to any other Maximum Fun shows, that's a great time to tune in. Because typically, people are gonna be bringing their A-game. 'Gob' knows, we are certainly going to try to win our episode drops in that two week span. Donors don't only get bonus episodes for every podcast on the network, which is like, dozens of hours of entertainment, we have uh, pledge drive gifts, which we will be outlining during the fun drive. So uh, we'll make sure to let you guys know all about that stuff ahead of time, and we hope that we can count on your support.

That's it for me. I'm gonna let you guys get back to the show. Uh, sorry that Dad's—that Merle's audio sounded kind of weird in the beginning part. We actually recorded this next bit, uh, later. Uh, and we managed to get him hooked up with a better microphone, so he's gonna sound better from this point on, and hopefully, like, throughout the fullness of time.

So thank you all for listening. Enjoy the rest of the episode, and we will see you again on Thursday, March 12th, where we will wrap up the Moonlighting saga. Bye!

[theme music plays]

Griffin: The three of you awaken all at the same time, and—

Travis: We're sleeping in the same bed.

Griffin: You're spooning.

Clint: Aww!

Griffin: And you've never felt—

Justin: Nice.

Griffin: No. You are actually in three different places. Taako, you awaken on the dusty floor of a circular arena. There are several features to this arena. There are three gates, three large iron-lattice gates, all around the circular arena. There's a giant stone pillar in the middle of the arena. And there is an alcove on the outside wall, where you can clearly see Merle.

Justin: Y'know, it's hard to believe that Taako has woken up in weirder places. Believe it or not.

Griffin: That is... probably true. Merle, you are in this alcove, about 20 feet up. You can clearly see the arena, and Taako inside of it. You are strapped in, very securely, to a mounted cannon. This cannon is large. You are at the helm of it essentially, the firing controls of it.

The cannon has four rows of glass balls lining it, and there—each of the first of those rows is filled with different-colored fluid. And that is where you are. And you can also see a sky bridge above the arena, where you can see... Magnus. Magnus, you are on this sky—

Travis: I wave at him.

Griffin: You wave. Everybody's waving.

Taako: Hello!

Magnus: Hi!

Griffin: Just sort of getting—do a quick Ms. Doubtfire reference.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Hello poppet!

Griffin: Magnus, you are on this sky bridge. Both of the exterior walls running the span of the arena are made of glass, so you can see everything.

Travis: Am I nude?

Griffin: You are fully clothed. Everybody has all of their equipment. Magnus—

Travis: Could I be nude?

Griffin: Magnus, you are right next to one of the defining features of this sky bridge. Right in the center of it is a metal pedestal, and on top of it is a big red button. And on the outside span of this sky bridge, in either direction, is a large metal door, about... each one is about 40 feet away from you. So the span of the arena is about 80 feet.

Travis: And how high off the ground am I?

Griffin: You are about 20 feet off the ground as well.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Suddenly, you hear almost like an intercom kick in, and you hear the voice of the Director, who says...

Director: Welcome to—

Travis: Just so we know, what kind of celebrity would you compare her to?

Griffin: She is an original creation of my own design. Trademark 2015, Griffin McElroy, Adventure Productions. It's—you've never heard a voice like hers before. It's dripping with gravitas.

Travis: And sexuality.

Griffin: Nope, just gravitas.

Clint: And a little sexuality.

Griffin: If that's your thing, sure, if gravitas gets you totally boned. Awesome. But I don't want to—I don't necessarily need to hear about that. You hear her say...

Director: Welcome to the test of initiation. The point of this test is to balance the combatants that will soon enter the arena where Taako is currently in repose. These foes are going to be far too strong for you to fight outright. You will need to work together to ensure that they defeat one another, as the consequences of allowing one too much power will be quite dire indeed.

Merle, you are strapped into a very special cannon, which you will use to keep these monsters at equal footing. Each of the different potions that the cannon is equipped with will affect these ogres in different ways. You have one that can heal, one that can hurt, one that can strengthen, and one that will draw the attention of the other two. You only have one of each of the different types of ammunition. You can fire two on each—

Griffin: Well, that's more game-talk. She wouldn't talk about the rules of the game.

Director: You only have one of each of the different types of ammunition.

Clint: Okay, so strengthen, weaken...

Griffin: You have healing, hurting, strengthen, and aggro, essentially. You can fire two of those on each turn, or you can focus your fire and aim one shot, and you'll have advantage on that roll. Does that make sense?

Clint: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Okay.

Director: Taako, you are going to be in the arena with the ogres. I would not recommend attempting to fight them. Certainly, you could try. You are able to use any of your magical tools in this test, if you so choose. I would recommend not doing that, because they're very big, very strong, as ogres typically are.

Your test will be to retrieve three gemstones from various parts of these ogres' person, and by doing so, you will grant Merle extra ammunition for the cannon, which will, in turn, help you pass this test. Each gem that you collect will grant one of each type of ammunition. If you draw their ire, though, you will almost certainly perish, as many before you have. We have a very high turnover rate here at the Bureau of Balance.

Justin: Excellent. Excellent.

Director: To aid you in this test—

Travis: Maybe that's why they hadn't found any of the items before we got there.

Clint: Yeah.

Director: To aid you in this test, you have a single potion of invisibility if shit gets crazy.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: Said with the gravitas that she did, that's—

Justin: Yeah, that's—

Griffin: Again, ooey, ooey, gooey gravitas.

Travis: The chewiest gravitas you ever heard.

Director: Magnus, you have been designated the strongest, and in this test, you will use your strength to protect your allies. You stand in the center of a sky bridge, next to a button that, if pressed, will emit a shock to both Merle and Taako, which will incapacitate them for a short time. If any enemies who will approach from either side of the sky bridge—

Travis: Magnus eyes the button.

Griffin: Press the bu— [laughs]

Director: If any enemies press that button, your friends will be harmed and paralyzed temporarily. So you will need to use your strength to protect that button at all costs.

Clint: We're dead.

Travis: Magnus gently brushes his finger over the button, and hums Johann's song.

Clint: [laughs]

Director: If the three of you understand the test fully, we can begin.

Taako: Listen, you don't have the spare hours I would need to understand this test fully.

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: Get some shiny things off the monsters. Dig.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: You hear a... [buzzer sound] And the three—

Travis: Did we lose?

Griffin: Yes, instantly. The three gates slide open, and entering the arena with Taako are three ogres. There is a blue ogre who is kind of puny, as far as ogres go.

Travis: He's the babiest ogre.

Griffin: He's the babiest ogre, yeah, certainly. And then the middlest ogre, a green ogre, walks out, maybe a—

Travis: He's the handsomest.

Griffin: [laughs] Maybe a hill ogre, walks out. He is larger than the blue, but smaller than the red ogre, the oldest ogre, who exits from the other gate, who is bigger and more badass than the other two, handily. So you have a blue little one, a green middle one, and a red big one. They enter out into the battlefield.

They're disarmed, but I mean, they have arms that are very big, that they can use for punching. And you get the sense that they could easily slaughter Taako, if they so choose. We will start at the top of the order, which I have decided ahead of time, or else this test would be impossible.

Magnus, you go first. On your turn, before you begin, the doors on either end of the hallway slide open, and two automatons, two metallic golems, enter in from either side. But they have not taken any movement or done anything. Again, both of them are about 40 feet away from you. And it is your turn.

Travis: Okay, great. And just so I've got the lay of the land, Griffy, how wide is the—like, what are the dimensions of the—

Griffin: It's about six feet. About six feet wide by 80 feet long, the sky bridge is.

Travis: M'kay. And I'm at the center by the button.

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Travis: I've got one dude at either end, 40 feet away.

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Cool. I am going to position myself so that I've got my shield in one hand and my axe in the other.

Griffin: 'Kay.

Travis: And I'm going to put the shield on one side of the button, blocking it from one automaton, and stand with my axe on the other, and ready an action that whichever one gets there first is the one I'm going to attack.

Griffin: Okay. Good idea, yeah. Okay, so you sort of stand with your arms splayed out, just getting ready for business. Next in the order is going to be Taako. Taako, you have these three, one of—

Justin: Are they all facing me?

Griffin: You are in the center of the arena, so yes, at this moment, they are all facing you.

Justin: Okay, do I—

Griffin: You sort of have your back to this big pillar in the center of the arena.

Justin: Do I have any of the, uh—do any of them have gems immediately visible on their front halves that I can see?

Griffin: Two of them do, yes. The blue one has a gem fastened to his forehead. The green one is wearing a gem on a chain around his neck. The red one is actually the only one wearing clothes, but you cannot see... He's wearing some crude shorts, and what looks like a fisherman's vest, that is just full of pockets. Like, three pockets on the left, three pockets on the right. But his gem is not immediately visible.

Justin: Okay, I'm just gonna—how far can I run away?

Griffin: [laughs] Whatever your speed is.

Justin: I mean, that's 30 feet, I'm just gonna run.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Away.

Griffin: Like, towards the outside of the arena?

Justin: Are they encircling me?

Griffin: Yeah, sort of in a manner of speaking, yeah.

Justin: Okay, I'll run between the red one and the blue one.

Griffin: M'kay. Towards the outside, away from the middle?

Justin: Towards the outside of the arena, away from the middle, yeah.

Griffin: Okay, are you going to take any actions, also?

Travis: Do you have any illusory magic?

Justin: Not much. A little bit. I mean, I can charm a person. They ain't people.

Travis: No, ogres ain't people. You heard it here first, folks.

Griffin: Wow, Jesus Christ. What if there are ogres listening to the show?

Travis: Ogres can't use iPods. They're too dumb.

Justin: Do they seem to have a look like they're coming for me? Like—

Griffin: No, in fact, they haven't even noticed you yet.

Justin: Groovy. Okay, then I'm not going to do anything. Let me—you guys let me know when you need ammo or whatever. But right now, I am just running away from them and not getting killed.

Griffin: Yeah, that's probably a good call.

Travis: Good start.

Griffin: Next in the order is Merle. Merle, you've got one of each type of ammunition. Healing, hurting, strengthen, and angry.

Clint: Okay, so if I throw angry, it just makes one of them—

Griffin: It makes the other people target the person you hit.

Clint: Alright, I'm gonna throw the aggro potion.

Griffin: `Kay.

Clint: At the red ogre with the vest.

Griffin: Okay. Are you going to fire another potion this turn, or do you want to focus your fire on this one, which will give you advantage?

Clint: I just want to focus fire on that one.

Griffin: Okay, so you will roll a d20, essentially, to aim this shot. And you want to beat a ten.

Clint: Okay. Ah, good, four!

Griffin: Okay. Well, you have advantage, so roll again.

Clint: Eight.

Griffin: Man.

Travis: Did you accidentally use a d8 instead of a d20?

Griffin: Yeah, 'cause I know that you do that sometimes.

Justin: Wait, no, that was—that's actually not the d20.

Clint: That's not?

Griffin: Oh, Daddy.

Justin: No, that's a d12.

Travis: Glad I checked.

Clint: Sorry.

Griffin: Yeah, me too. Go ahead and roll the correct dice.

Justin: Here you go.

Clint: Wait, I'm gonna—oh, okay, d20. 17!

Griffin: Yeah, okay, you nail him. He is coated in this red fluid. And the red ogre is actually up next. He spends his—

Travis: He's been jammed!

Griffin: He spends his turn—he's been jammed. He spends his turn just sort of reeling from the situation. He's a little spooked.

Travis: He's thinking about his life decisions.

Griffin: Yeah, and also about how he's covered in an indiscernible red fluid. The green ogre goes next, and is enraged, incensed, and goes to attack the red ogre, and he hits him for... uh, 21 damage.

Travis: Wow.

Clint: Whoa.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Stay away from them, Taako.

Griffin: The blue ogre is up next. He is also enraged and goes to attack the red ogre, and he attacks him for... 14 damage.

Justin: Whoa.

Griffin: Okay. He is not quite bloodied by that.

Travis: Wow.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Really?

Griffin: Yeah, but he definitely did not like taking those big, bad hits. With that, the red potion has sort of disappeared, sort of sloughed off of the big red ogre. He is clean, and we are back to the top of the order. Magnus, first of all, the automatons—

Travis: Do the robots get a move?

Griffin: The automatons are going to go now, actually. I forgot.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: The automatons now go. Both of them move in about 30 feet, so they are both about 10 feet away from you and the button, and they both hold up their arms, and crossbows pop out, and they both fire a crossbow bolt at you. The one on the shield—we'll say the one on the shield end has disadvantage, 'cause you have, we'll say, partial cover from your shield.

Travis: Excellent.

Griffin: So he rolled a 16 as his first roll.

Travis: Against my armor?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Fail.

Griffin: And a 13.

Travis: Fail.

Griffin: Failed, okay. And the one on your axe end rolls a 22.

Travis: That is, uh, successful.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: That is a successful hit.

Griffin: And he hits you for four damage.

Travis: Four damage.

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Justin: Wow.

Travis: `Kay.

Griffin: And we are back to the top of the order, which is Magnus.

Travis: Griffy, just one last question, before I decide what to do. As far as, like, construction goes, do they look pretty solid? Do they—

Griffin: No, no, they—

Travis: —do they look kind of like C-3PO, with body armor?

Griffin: No—

Justin: Which Star Wars droid do they most closely resemble?

Travis: Yeah, good question.

Griffin: They're made of, like, clockwork. They actually look very intricate, and not, like, especially solidly built.

Travis: Yeah, I'm gonna swing my axe one-handed at the axe-sided one, the one on my axe side.

Griffin: Okay, you're going to have to move toward him, though, 'cause he's 10 feet away. You gotta be five feet for melee.

Travis: Okay, well... Can I do half a move, then move back? Like move, action, move?

Griffin: Yeah, yeah, you can break up your movement.

Travis: Okay, great. Then I'm gonna step over to him, swing my axe.

Griffin: 'Kay

Travis: That is... 17.

Griffin: Yep. That'll do it.

Travis: Great. Let me dig out my d8.

Griffin: [in a southern accent] Gotta keep your d8 handy. I got a d8 holster.

Travis: Five plus four, nine.

Griffin: Yeah, he shatters. He just turns into gears and goes flying down the hallway. As soon as he is destroyed, the door on his end slides open, and another automaton walks in.

Clint: Ahh.

Justin: Aw, who saw this coming?

Travis: Whaa... Okay, then I'm going to finish my move, to move back over and hunker myself between the button and the automaton.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: You have to make a hunker throw.

Griffin: No, that's fine.

Travis: I rolled a 17 hunker check.

Griffin: Oh, good. You are very hunkered. Taako, you're up next.

Travis: Nice.

Justin: What's the layout of these cats right now? RE: Me.

Griffin: You're on the opposite end of the arena as they are. They all moved towards the red ogre, so they're all sort of locked in—all sort of engaged in punching. Although, remember, the aggro potion has worn off. So you are on the other end of the arena as these three are... I would say you're not completely on the other end. You're about 50 feet away.

Justin: Okay. Well, this seems to be going pretty well for me. So he is—let me—so I'm clear, is he out of aggro potion at this point?

Griffin: Yep. He is out.

Justin: Okay, well, that probably is in the pocket of the r—can I see the color of any of the gems?

Griffin: They're all the same color. The Director's instructions may have been obtuse, but for each one that you get—

Justin: Somebody needs to talk to her.

Griffin: [laughs] For each one that you get, off these ogres, Merle gets one of each type of potion.

Justin: Oh, wow, that's pretty good. But I'm not gonna risk it.

Travis: Man, Director should've explained that.

Griffin: She did, you just weren't paying attention.

Justin: I'm not gonna risk it until she gets—until he needs it, so...

Clint: There's a Director?

Justin: I'm just gonna keep—[laughs] Can I see any of the gems from where I'm at?

Griffin: Yeah, you can see the blue one, on his forehead, and you can see the green one, on a chain around his neck.

Justin: Alright, you know what, I'm gonna—I'm gonna try *mage hand*.

Griffin: 'Kay

Justin: On the one of his forehead.

Griffin: Okay, you cast out a spectral hand. You give him a big thumbs up, maybe, on the way, and effortlessly pluck the gem off the blue ogre's forehead. As soon as it's removed from his body, it disintegrates; and Merle, suddenly, the glass pods fill up another row. So now you have two of each potion, except for the aggro potion, which you only have one.

Justin: Excellent.

Travis: Did the ogre with the removed potion seem upset at all that he lost his gem?

Justin: Yeah, did he notice?

Griffin: He reached up and touched his forehead, and you heard him go—

Travis: A single tear rolled down his cheek.

Griffin: You heard him go "Awww..."

Travis: "Gemmy!"

Griffin: Aww. Next in the order is Merle. Which you shooting?

Clint: I'm gonna fire a hurting potion.

Griffin: 'Kay.

Clint: At my friend in red.

Griffin: Okay. Are you gonna just focus fire on that one, or are you gonna fire another one?

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay, so you are firing an acid potion at them.

Clint: 'Kay.

Travis: Like an LSD potion?

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: 18.

Griffin: 18 is definitely a hit. You are going to roll 2d10 plus 10.

Travis: Now, wait, hold on, he has advantage so he should roll again, to see if he, like, hits critical.

Griffin: It's not gonna matter. It's not an attack.

Travis: Well, then what's the point, Griffin? Of any of this? I quit!

Griffin: [laughs] It's all just make-believe!

Travis: Wait a minute, none of this is real! What fantasy world have you trapped me in, you sorcerer?

Clint: Okay, 21 plus 10 is 31.

Justin: No, no, no, 21, just 21.

Griffin: 21 is the—

Clint: Add 10—oh, I see.

Justin: 2d10s. He got six, five, and then add 10, so 21.

Griffin: Okay, 21. He is deefinitely bloodied now. Yeah, he is—he looks like shit. He looks really, really bad. In fact, it looks like a stiff wind could push him over. The red one is very badly wounded, very, very hurt. He is going to actually going to run towards Taako, and for a moment, you get petrified that he's going to come and smash you, when actually he is—

Taako: Let him try.

Griffin: He actually he runs up behind the stone pillar, and starts hiding. He is hiding behind the stone pillar from the other two ogres.

Travis: Awww. Which one?

Griffin: The red one, the very, very badly injured one.

Travis: Okay. That's kind of cute.

Griffin: The green and blue ones just sort of wail on each other. The green one attacks the blue one, rolls—

Justin: Now, why are they—can I ask a question? Why are they attacking each other?

Travis: `Cause he's making a statement on geopolitical powers.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah. Yeah, it's just they were the only targets sort of in sight. And they're big angry ogres—

Justin: They just went for it, huh?

Griffin: So they went for it. If you had been closer to them, things would have played out very differently, but you kept your distance.

Travis: Let's hear it for cowardice!

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: Yay! That's what we reward here in The Adventure Zone!

Justin: Cowardice works again!

Griffin: The green one rolled a 13, which is insufficient. The blue one rolled a 19, which does hit, and does... does 14 damage to the green one.

Travis: To the—

Griffin: To the middlest one.

Justin: `Kay.

Travis: Everybody's favorite.

Griffin: Everybody's favorite. He is not bloodied, though. Next up is the automatons. Travis, you have blocked the path of the one that was closest to you, so he is just going to attack you, while the other one approaches

another 30 feet. The one that attacks you rolls a 14. Which is not going to do it, I imagine.

Travis: No, it is not.

Griffin: Okay. That is it. Magnus, you're back, top of the order. You've got one right next to the button, right next to you, and one 10 feet away.

Travis: Okay, great. Am I able—I don't know if I've ever done this maneuver before, but can I push people—

Justin: God, it's a real short story every turn with Travis, isn't it?

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Can I pu—

Justin: He is really—

Travis: I am trying to think my way through this!

Justin: Takes you into it. It's a whole little—a whole little one act he's got planned for every turn.

Travis: Am I—

Justin: Can't just swing his fucking axe at the robot, hit it in his robot chest and kill him.

Griffin: What are you doing?

Travis: I'm sorry, I was looking at the book, what's going on?

Justin: "What's the motivation of this robot?"

Travis: Am I able to push people backwards? Or is that my move?

Griffin: Yeah, I mean, that's an action.

Travis: M'kay.

Griffin: If you want to push—

Travis: How far can I push people?

Griffin: You would do a strength test—check with them, I think. A strength contest.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Not especially far. I mean, these things have a movement of 30 feet. So, you're not gonna push them 30 feet. You're not goddamn He-Man.

Travis: Okay, fair enough. I'm gonna hit him.

Griffin: 'Kay. The one right next to you?

Travis: Yeah. With my axe.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: 17 plu—23.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Five plus four, nine.

Griffin: Yep. You shatter him. This sky bridge is fillin' up with gears. As soon as you shatter him, the door on his side slides open, and another automaton steps out.

Travis: Yeah. I'm gonna move back over now to hunker in front of the other one.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: You re-hunkered?

Travis: Yeah, I'm re-hunkering.

Griffin: You can only hunker once per day, and then you need to take a short rest.

Travis: I did take a short rest while I was killing the other one.

Griffin: I guess—

Travis: Did I not say that?

Griffin: It was such child's play that it was actually relaxing to you to kill the other one.

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Taako, you are up next. You are actually kind of close to the red one now, who ran to hide behind the pillar. You're about 15 feet away from him.

Travis: Speak words of comfort to him.

Griffin: The other ones are still about 50 feet away from you.

Clint: [imitating Taako] Well, I don't know what I'm going to do right now. Let me see...

Griffin: Did Justin leave the room?

Travis: Did Justin leave the room?

Clint: [clears throat] Yes, sorry. That was my Taako impression. I really thought that was—

Griffin: It wasn't bad.

Clint: I think he thought Travis's one act was going to go longer than it did.

Travis: Fair enough.

Clint: He's back!

Travis: Cool.

Justin: I'm gonna run over to the red ogre.

Griffin: Oh, shit, okay.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: I'm gonna search his pockets.

Clint: He's not dead.

Griffin: Okay, you're gonna—yeah, he's not dead. You're gonna have to get up on him to do that.

Justin: It's—you say he's 15 feet away. I have 30 feet of movement. I want to move 15 feet up, search him, and then run away.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, alright.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: So what you're gonna have to do is make—

Clint: So you're frisking him is what you're doing.

Justin: I'm frisking him.

Travis: "Don't mind me, sir."

Griffin: You're gonna have to make a, um... If you're doing that, you can't see, like, which pocket he's got stuff in, so you're gonna have to make a sleight of hand check.

Justin: Okay, ten.

Griffin: Ten, no, you were unable to find the gem in his pockets.

Justin: Run away!

Griffin: Okay, you run 15 feet away from him.

Travis: I just want everyone to picture what just happened. Taako basically just ran up, reached for it, ogre swatted his hand away, and he ran back to the wall.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, Merle—

Justin: That's Taako. What do you want me to do, fight him? No, thanks.

Griffin: Merle, it's time to use your super-soaker.

Clint: Alright. Um...

Griffin: You got a very, very badly injured red one.

Justin: Don't sweat him. I'll kill him next round.

Griffin: [laughs] Green one is a little bit worse for wear. Blue one is aces, hasn't been hit.

Clint: Okay, how long do these potions last?

Griffin: Just one turn.

Clint: One complete turn all the way around?

Griffin: Yep.

Clint: I want—can I fire a potion at Taako?

Griffin: Yes.

Clint: I'm going to fire one of my strengthen potions at Taako.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Alright. Is this the only potion you're firing? Or are you going to fire another one as well?

Clint: You know what, I think I'll fire—in addition to that, I will fire one of my aggro potions at—

Travis: At Taako. [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: At the blue one! At the blue one.

Griffin: Alright. So first, roll the strengthen potion at Taako, which I love.

Clint: That would be a nine.

Griffin: A nine is just barely unsuccessful. So we'll say it sort of landed at his feet and splashed up on him a little bit.

Clint: Aw.

Griffin: Yeah. So we'll say that, Taako, on your next turn, you'll do double damage.

Justin: Okay, great.

Griffin: If you should choose to exercise that option.

Clint: Now, do I have to roll the other one?

Griffin: Yep!

Clint: The aggro? 16!

Griffin: Yep! That did it. The blue one is now coated in aggro juice. That is it for Merle's turn. The red one escapes from his cowardice. He is emboldened to attack the blue one, which is very fortunate, because he was about to take Taako to... to stank town.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Appreciate that.

Griffin: He charges the blue one and attacks him. Ooh, god damn. And he hits him for 28 points of damage. Which—

Travis: Shit!

Griffin: Which—

Justin: That was the red one?

Griffin: Yeah, the red one just attacked the blue one.

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: The red one is the biggest—

Travis: Hey, how about you don't try and pick that one's pocket anymore?

Griffin: The biggest, strongest one. That takes the blue one way past bloodied, very, very, very seriously hurt. The green one then attacks him... and crits. [laughs nervously] That is going to be 4d8 plus eight, which I won't even bother rolling, because it definitely, definitely kills the... blue ogre. The blue ogre goes falling to the ground, dead.

And that is it for that round! One of the automatons that just entered the room moves, is now ten feet away from the pedestal... I forget where the— other one is going to try to slip by you, but you're gonna make—

Travis: But I hunkered!

Griffin: You're gonna make an opportunity attack against him, because he is moving by you. I don't know if we've had one of these happen before, but if you ever disengage with an enemy that you are within melee range of, then they get to make an opportunity attack against you. So go ahead and do that, Magnus.

Travis: 22.

Griffin: Okay, yeah. [laughs] He does not succeed in his maneuver. Go ahead and roll damage.

Travis: That's 'cause I hunkered!

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Ooh... That's gonna be full damage. 12.

Griffin: Yeah, he is destroyed. So he was maybe a little overeager there.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: The door on his side slides open, another automaton steps out. Magnus, it is now your turn.

Travis: Let me ask you a question. [laughing] Tell me about the doors on either end.

Griffin: They are very, very heavy metal, industrial strength doors.

Travis: Got it. I'm going to move over to the, uh, other automaton that's 10 feet away from the button...

Griffin: 'Kay.

Travis: And I am—I'm gonna grab its hands.

Griffin: ... Okay.

Justin: [quietly] Dance with it.

Travis: Well, basically—

Griffin: You grab—

Travis: I'm gonna—

Justin: [sing] Golem... paint your picture, about how it's gonna be...

Travis: I'm trying to—

Griffin: [bursts into laughter]

Justin: [singing] By now I should know better... the attacks are never free...

Clint: Promenade!

Griffin: Alright—

Justin: [still singing] Tell me all about our little cabin by the orc sea...

Clint: Form a Texas Star!

Justin: [still singing] Golem... you could always sell any dream to me...

Travis: [laughing]

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: Okay—

Travis: What I'm trying to do—

Justin: The most tender moment we've ever had on the show.

Travis: I wanna disable its hands without disabling the whole automaton.

Justin: You want to disable its hands without disabling its heart.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Yep.

Griffin: Okay, you're going to try to rip this thing's arms off, essentially.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: M'kay. Go ahead and roll a—we'll do a strength contest. This thing is going to resist having its goddamn arms ripped off.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: At the last second, it looks at him like Wall-E.

Griffin: I rolled a six.

Travis: I rolled... [laughs] A seven!

Griffin: Okay. Rrrrip!

Clint: [laughing]

Travis: [laughing]

Justin: Oh, god. It's brutal. It's like that scene in Saving Private Ryan where he's just slowly burying the knife in the guy. It's just like—

Clint: [robot voice] Don't rip off my arms! Not my arms!

Griffin: Because you—

Justin: [robot voice] I'm clockwork!

Griffin: You just barely beat him in a strength contest, which means you very, very slowly tear his arms off.

Clint: Ohh, ow!

Travis: [laughing] While looking him in his cold, dead robot eyes.

Justin: [robot voice] My piano-playing days!

Griffin: What are you gonna do with his arms?

Justin: [laughing] What are you gonna do with his arms, you monster?

Clint: Yeah! You bastard!

Travis: Put them in my pocket? I don't know.

Justin: Son of a bitch.

Griffin: Okay, your pockets aren't big enough for two robot arms.

Travis: Okay, I throw them back down the hallway.

Griffin: Okay, you throw the robot arms down the hallway.

Justin: Is there another robot seeing this?

Griffin: And you still have—and the other robot moves to the 10 foot mark.

Travis: I'm gonna move back over to hunker over between that robot and the button.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay. That's it for your bizarre turn. Taako, you are up next.

Justin: I like, can't take an action because I've just been watching this thing unfold.

Travis: [laughs]

Taako: Why... I thought I knew him! He's an animal!

Justin: Okay, so, status update. Blue's dead.

Griffin: You're very strong. Blue is dead. Green is not quite bloodied, Red is pretty bloodied.

Justin: Okay...

Clint: You're really strong.

Justin: I'm not—I mean, I do double damage with my short sword, so it's like, not great.

Griffin: Or your spells.

Travis: It's not the length of your sword, it's the damage you do.

Griffin: Yeah, you are not—you are not just strengthened, you are energized. You are potent in every way.

Justin: Ohh! Okay! Alright! Well, fire up a *magic missile* then!

Clint: Oh!

Justin: Give everybody a slice!

Griffin: Okay, um... How are you distributing these missiles?

Justin: I'm gonna send... all of them at the... green one.

Griffin: At the green one.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: M'kay.

Justin: Well, see—I mean, I don't want to kill the red one, because then it's just like, me and Greeno.

Griffin: Yup.

Justin: But I think I can like, drop him down.

Griffin: Pretty good call. Okay.

Justin: Thanks.

Griffin: Go ahead and roll damage. How did we decide how you do this? Are you rolling—do you roll one damage and it counts for all of them, or—

Justin: Yes, that's what we've been doing just for like—

Griffin: Strength, yeah okay. That's fine.

Justin: Just to expedite things. [quietly] Jeez, I need more rolling room. Okay, that's four... five!

Griffin: Five. So times—

Justin: Five damage per... so 15.

Griffin: So 15 times two is 30.

Clint: Whoa!

Justin: Right.

Griffin: You cast out *magic missiles* the size of goddamn torpedoes. You cast out these gigantic—these bolts are bigger than you are. And they go barreling out of—

Taako: Suck on these, dipshit!

Griffin: The edge of your wand, and blast the green one, who is now severely, severely bloodied.

Justin: Perfect, but not dead. Excellent, excellent!

Griffin: But not dead. And that is it for Taako's turn. Merle, you are up. You've got bloodied red and a bloodied green one. You have—just an update, you have no aggro potions.

Clint: Right.

Griffin: You have two healing potions. You have one hurting potion, and one strengthen potion.

Clint: I am going to cast a hurting potion at red. Let's get rid of red.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Well wait, hold on. Isn't green the one that's super low?

Griffin: They're both pretty low.

Justin: They're both really low, yeah.

Griffin: Are you gonna focus, or are you gonna fire two?

Justin: Could you pass a hurting one—

Clint: And I'm gonna pass a healing—I'm gonna try hitting—well, no he doesn't need healing.

Justin: No, I'm good.

Clint: Nah, I'm just gonna cast the one hurting.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: So you have two hurtings, or one?

Griffin: Just one.

Justin: Oh, okay.

Clint: I have only one hurting, right?

Griffin: Yep.

Clint: Yeah. Okay. Casting the hurting... 20.

Griffin: 20, yes. Definitely. So that's 2d10 plus 10.

Clint: That's nine... 18... 28.

Griffin: That is a very good hit. You blast the red one, who locks up stiff and falls over dead.

Clint: Yay!

Justin: Hooray!

Griffin: Leaving just the green ogre, alone—

Justin: Cool, the one I shot with magic missiles!

Clint: With nobody to attack but Merle.

Griffin: Alone in the... in the arena with Taako.

Taako: Cool day for me.

Griffin: The green one charges at Taako, and swings an open-handed slap at you.

Travis: Taako ducks! He runs away!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: He rolls a 19.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: And that is going to be... two... one... That is 11 points of damage.

Travis: Whew. I was expecting way worse.

Griffin: Taako, as he slaps you, you go flying back about 15 feet, and land on the ground on top of your wand, which—

Justin: Ow.

Griffin: Which snaps beneath you.

Travis: Oh, hurts.

Justin: What? Eh, this happens.

Griffin: So you are disarmed.

Travis: Wait, did you say wand?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Oh, okay, never mind.

Griffin: What did you think I said?

Travis: Wang.

Griffin: That's a completely different mouth-sound.

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: You're tellin' me!

Griffin: Taako, you are also prone.

Clint: But your wang's okay.

Griffin: But your wang is fine.

Taako: My wang is fine. Quick wang check.

Griffin: What does that take you down—

Travis: Roll to do a wang-check.

Griffin: What does that take you down to, Taako?

Justin: Three.

Griffin: Okay. Top of the order is the automatons. Travis, down the hallway, you see the two arms slowly start crawling their way towards you in the middle, independently. The... where are you hunkered?

Travis: Between the armed one and the button.

Griffin: Okay. The armed one is going to walk toward you and try to do the same sneak by you maneuver, so go ahead and make an opportunity attack.

Travis: It's only an 11.

Griffin: That's not gonna do it. He manages to get by you and slaps the button.

Travis: Oh, hurts.

Griffin: Which electrifies and paralyzes Taako and Merle, who are unable to act on this turn.

Travis: Sorry guys!

Griffin: Magnus, it is now your turn.

Travis: Okay, I am going to slam into the glass wall.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: With my axe. Two-handed.

Griffin: Are you going to... try and go through it?

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Or are you just trying to...

Travis: I'm trying to go through it to get to the ground.

Griffin: So you're doing sort of like a charge... okay. So you're doing sort of a charge motion, then. Okay.

Travis: Correct.

Griffin: M'kay. Go ahead and attack the glass then.

Travis: That is a... 22.

Griffin: 22, yes. That is sufficient. You blast through the glass, which comes raining down... not on top of anybody, which is fortunate, 'cause it's pretty thick glass, could probably do some damage. And you're going down with it, right?

Travis: Correct.

Griffin: M'kay, you're gonna take some falling damage.

Travis: Would I—wouldn't I roll a dexterity saving throw to see if I do an awesome maneuver?

Griffin: I'll let you do that to try and mitigate some of this damage, but you're falling two stories, so you're gonna take some goddamn damage, Tony Jaa.

Travis: 14.

Griffin: 14? Okay, yeah. We'll say you take half damage. That is gonna be 2d10—

Travis: What?? For 20 feet?

Griffin: Yeah. Ten—one d10 for every 10 feet.

Travis: That's not that far, Griffy. I think maybe one d10. Maybe one.

Griffin: Four... plus five, nine, round that down to five, you take five damage. For falling. And you are on ground level.

Travis: Great. I'm gonna action surge—

Griffin: Do what now?

Travis: I'm gonna action surge—

Griffin: Huh? What to the what?

Travis: And attack the red one.

Griffin: The red one's dead, so you hack at his dead corpse. Way to pay attention.

Travis: [laughs] Attack the—attack the green one.

Griffin: Okay, yeah. You landed relatively close to him and you still have

some movement, since falling, I don't think, technically counts as movement. So you get right up on him and attack, for...

Travis: Two-handed battle axe.

Griffin: Oh, you're going double-handed.

Travis: Yeah, that's gonna be 22.

Griffin: 22, yeah.

Travis: And a d10 plus four... I felt really guilty about paralyzing Taako.

Clint: And he's sitting there with like, drool coming out of the side of his mouth. Blahh grahh blahh.

Justin: My face is frozen in the expression of a man who just realized that his wand broke. [laughs] So it's pretty sad. But also—

Clint: His wang is intact!

Justin: His wang is intact, and also layered on that, a third layer of residual horror at watching you rip a poor robot's arms off. I'm still, like, dealing with that in my head. I'm locked in a prison.

Clint: Well, we can also still hear... [high-pitched whine]

Justin: Yeah, oh, yeah. In the distance, there's a whine of a dying robot.

Travis: I did 10 points of damage.

Griffin: Ten points of damage, okay! Not enough to kill him.

Justin: [groans sadly]

Travis: But enough to draw his attention.

Griffin: Yes, in fact, you did, and he goes next and uh, immediately returns fire!

Justin: Why does he get another turn already?

Griffin: `Cause you guys are paralyzed.

Justin: Ohh.

Griffin: He rolled a 19?

Travis: That's gonna hit!

Griffin: And he is going to hit you for... 15 points of damage.

Travis: I'm sorry, what?

Griffin: 15 points of damage.

Travis: Okay. That's not enough to kill me.

Griffin: Oh really?

Travis: So there, Griffin! Your plans fails! [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: He knocks you across the arena though, and you are... you go prone.

Travis: Aw, I forgot to hunker. Dammit.

Griffin: You did not hunker, he knocks you about 20 feet back. And you land on your tummy.

Clint: And broke your wang.

Griffin: Broke your wang. Next in the order is the automatons, who jump out of the broken glass window seeking vengeance for Magnus, and shatter instantly as soon as they hit the ground.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: So next in the order is, uh... Magnus again.

Clint: Just lay there, pal. Just lay there.

Griffin: Are you not unconscious?

Travis: No. I have four points left.

Griffin: M'kay.

Travis: I am going to... well I'm prone, right?

Griffin: Yeah, standing up is half your movement.

Travis: I am going to stand up.

Griffin: `Kay.

Travis: I am going to walk to five feet of the ogre.

Griffin: `Kay.

Travis: And I'm going to point at Merle.

Clint: [laughs] "Sic `em!"

Travis: As if to say, "You got me, right?"

Griffin: Okay. Uh, alright. That's your turn. Taako, it's your turn.

Travis: Oh, and I'm gonna hunker.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Well, I guess I'll go ahead and... how far away am I from this...

Griffin: Well, you have to stand up first.

Justin: Okay. Well I mean, I'm gonna be the same distance from him, right?

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Justin: So, okay. I stand up.

Griffin: As you stand up, something in your pack begins to... rattle, feverishly.

Travis: It's a robot arm, get out of there!

Griffin: Something in your bag is moving, and you can actually feel some warmth emanating from your bag.

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Okay, I look in the bag. What's in the bag?

Griffin: You stick your hand in the bag, reach in, searching for this movement and this warmth, and...

Travis: It's a raccoon.

Griffin: What you find—what you pull out is actually the umbrella that you found.

Travis: Oh shit!

Griffin: In Wave Echo Cave.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: And as you hold it, you feel magical energy just sort of pulsating from it. You feel more powerful just holding your umbrella.

Justin: I'm gonna use *magic missile*.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: On this guy.

Griffin: You swing around, you point the umbrella at the damaged green ogre. It opens up and deploys, and... awaits your damage rolls.

Justin: [laughs] How polite! Two. So I rolled a two, so what is it, two—

Griffin: Plus one.

Justin: Three—

Griffin: Three times three. Which is nine. Three silvery bolts emerge from the tip of your open umbrella, that all fly at him, and actually hits him for 12 damage instead of nine.

Travis: Ooh!

Griffin: You blast him again with magic missiles and he locks up, goes stiff, and falls over backwards. And you hear, [softly] "Bong bong bong!" come from the intercom. And the voice of The Director says...

Director: That was quite an unconventional way of doing that. I particularly liked when you ripped the arms off that poor helpless robot, but... congratulations! You have passed the Test of Initiation.

Clint: Yeahhh!

Taako: Woo!

Travis: Baller. Party at my place!

Justin: Griffin, can you say the part where you say we've solved your puzzle?

Griffin: You've solved... you've solved my puzzle of robot arms ripping!

Clint: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

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[music plays]

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