

Setup – The Adventure Zone: Amnesty

Published January 4, 2018

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[theme music plays]

Griffin: Okay, hi, everybody. Welcome back to—

Travis: [singing] We are back in the saddle again!

Justin: Yay!

Griffin: The Adventure Zone. That was rough for me, so I can't imagine how it was for you.

Travis: [guitar sounds] [singing] We're back in the saddle again!

Griffin: Justin, do you have anything you want to sort of say to...

Justin: I was just kind of trying to let you do your thing.

Griffin: Oh, damn, dude, that's really solid of you. Um, this is the setup episode for the new mini arc that we're doing, the next mini arc that I'm gonna be running, uh, that I'm very excited about, and um, I'm just so stoked to get started, because we're playing a game called Monster of the Week, um, which was... I guess we should talk about what we're doing in this episode.

We're really just gonna be talking a little bit about the game, what sort of the inspirations for the setting, and these few episodes that I have prepared are. You guys are gonna talk about your characters, and that's pretty much gonna be it. But you all have read the full manual. The full, revised edition manual of Monster of the Week by Michael Sands, right? You all did your— your homework?

Justin: I have.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Okay, good. Um—

Travis: I actually made myself a ten-page, shortened down version of everything I needed to know. A quick reference guide, if you will.

Griffin: There actually is a reference guide.

Justin: There's a printable reference guide.

Griffin: There is a printable reference guide. But that's very cool that you—

Travis: Goddamn it.

Griffin: No, it's good that you did the, you know... you showed your work.

Travis: No, don't. Don't patronize me.

Justin: In fact, wait— I left my printable reference guide on the printer, so you guys just talk amongst yourselves.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Well, we're not actually gonna be playing any this episode. That will be for next week's episode, because, by the way, we are going weekly for the rest of the experimental arc, starting this week.

Clint: Woohoo!

Griffin: So, um, I guess, actually—

Clint: Hope we don't screw it up.

Griffin: Yeah. No, me too. I don't know why you would even say that. Um, so, let's get started. Monster of the Week is a game sort of modeled after,

appropriately enough, like monster of the week shows like Buffy and Supernatural, uh, in which, in each sort of arc, there is a monster that a team of hunters has to hunt down. It is a game that is part of the Powered by the Apocalypse system. Which, if you listened to the Balance arc, is sort of what I based the Stolen Century episodes on.

It is a very... It's sort of like the D20 system, right, that covers a lot of different games like D&D and Pathfinder. Uh, it is sort of just like, a broad rule set that you can put a bunch of different stuff on top of to make it fit whatever genre you want it to fit. And there's a ton of very cool games, uh, that use by the Powered by the Apocalypse system.

Uh, I was inspired to do an Apocalypse game because of one of my favorite podcasts, Friends at the Table, which has done a bunch of really cool ones in sci-fi worlds and fantasy worlds, and all kinds of stuff. Um, uh, but Monster of the Week is sort of this monster of the week, sort of, horror, but like, campy horror, uh, thing that's going on, here.

And um, the basic rule that covers pretty much everything in Monster of the Week, and all of the Apocalypse games, is that whenever something comes up that is not like, an automatic thing, like it's something that is dangerous, or uh, a conflict, or something that would be covered by like, a D&D move, like, oh, you have to roll a perception check if you want to actually notice that thing. Um, all that stuff is in here, but instead of rolling a 20-sided dice, you roll two six-sided dice, and then one of three things happens. Either, you roll a six or below, and you have fucked up. You have fucked up now. And something goes horribly wrong, sort of at, uh, my discretion. I'll be uh, GMing this game.

They actually call the GM in this game 'the keeper,' which is like, so great to me, that the fiction of the game extends into like, out of the game, like Stranger Things style. So, six or below is a miss. A seven to nine is a mixed success, where you get to do the thing you want to do, but usually, there is a cost. And then, a ten-plus is, you crush it, and you get to do what you want to do, and usually, it's just all great.

Justin: One cool thing to note about getting a bad roll is, if you get one of those six or below, you get an experience point. And that's how you level up.

Griffin: That's true.

Justin: That's neat.

Travis: We learn from our failures.

Justin: Thank you, Travis. Yes.

Griffin: It's beautiful. And this is a game of small numbers, for the most part, which is... it's something that I think is gonna be really, really great for us, because we would get lost in the weeds with a lot of the math of D&D. Uh, things like, you know, adding up, you know, six D10, or ten D6, for a big fireball, or something like that. Uh, that's not really true here. The margins are much smaller. If like, if you land an attack, you know how much damage it does, and it's usually like, two or three. And that's about as high as it ever gets.

Travis: Yeah, I do like that the bonuses, like the things that you add to rolls, I think the highest it goes is plus three. And the lowest it goes is negative two.

Griffin: That's it. Everybody— to really, uh, make this concrete, everybody has seven hit points. End of story. Everybody has seven hit points. If you lose them all, you die. Like, it is a game that I think is gonna be a lot more—

Clint: But not really. I mean, you don't really die, right?

Griffin: Not IRL.

Travis: Like, yeah. This isn't like, Mazes and Monsters, or whatever the shit. No, you'll be fine.

Griffin: Yeah, we're not Sword Art Online.

Justin: It's called Jumanji.

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: I'm glad that we managed to pull three different 'if you die in the game, you die in real life' things out there. It's a rich tapestry. Um, but yeah, the margins are a lot smaller, which I think is gonna be like, a lot more digestible. But also makes things like, a lot more meaningful. If you get hit by a monster for, you know, three harm, big monster gets its claws in you for three harm, that's almost half your health. You cannot take a lot more than that, uh, or else things start to get very, very bad.

Justin: It also, if I read it correctly, does away with the concept of defense. If you are— if you engage in a fight, you and the— and it goes— even if it goes well, you and the monster are both going to do harm to each other.

Griffin: Yeah, so let's get into that. Um, this game has a, uh— it handles most of its action through what it calls moves. And this is uh, these are eight basic moves that cover, more or less, every action that a player could take in the game, right? And this is a— this is a very conversational game. We are going to talk about the things that happen, and it is only when you all are describing the hunters' actions, uh, when it becomes apparent that what you are describing is covered by one of these moves, that's when we get into one of those moves.

If at any point during this, you say, um, "I want to kick some ass," which is the name of one of the moves, you— you have— you fucked up, because you should be saying, like, "I take my gun and, you know, I'm doing this, or I get my big sword, and I want to ram it through."

And then, it is my job to say, "Okay, that's a 'kick some ass' roll." And then we do that.

Travis: That's one of the things that I really like. So for example, one of the uh, one of the moves is 'help out.'

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And you can't just say like, "I want to help out." You have to be able to say like, "This is the action I want to take. This is what I have in

mind." And it is governed by like, logic, you know what I mean? So I can't be like, "I want to help out by... pulling the sun down."

Clint: Ooh, logic.

Griffin: Yeah. If you try to play this like a game that you're trying to win constantly, I do not think it's gonna work. If Justin rolls a six, and neither of you are like, anywhere close to him, but you really want to get him up to that seven, and so you're like, "Oh, can I think of some way to bullshit this so that I can help out?" Like, no. There are going to be lots of failures in this game, and lots of mixed successes in this game. And that's what makes this stuff like, so, so interesting. And it's what gives this game kind of a sense of danger.

I don't think that we're gonna get to this point in this mini arc, but one of the things that I think is cool about this game is, players like... because of how uh, like, narrow the margin of error is in fights, for instance, uh, like, death is like, pretty common. Like, uh, not as much as some of the like, Lovecraftian RPGs, where it's like, "Oh, no, you evaporated again." But, it is— it is common. And there are systems for retiring your characters, and rolling new ones, and then giving that character over to the keeper, uh, to use in whatever story and whatever way they want, which I think is really cool.

Travis: There's also a—

Justin: There's also mechanics for reviving people. Bringing people back to life.

Griffin: There are, yeah. Which has a, uh, has a huge cost. If it is a direction you want to go down, you decide, like, "Oh, I'm not done with this character, yet. I want to keep doing stuff with him." You can do what's called 'big magic,' which has like, as is always, sort of the folk tale, like a horrible cost, most of the time. There's a lot of that flavor.

Travis: I do love, too, that there's a— once you get enough experience levels, you can opt to create a second character and play both of them at the same time.

Griffin: Yeah, that would be a little— lovely little while.

Travis: It's a little much. Can I read through the actions real quick, Ditto, just to give people an idea?

Griffin: Yeah, real, real quick, and we'll give like, quick summaries. 'Cause this is— it's gonna be a lot, real fast. But then like, take— take heed. Like, it's literally all it is for the most part.

Travis: Yeah. So, the first one is "act under pressure."

Griffin: This one's great, 'cause it covers pretty much a lot of stuff. Um, I— one thing to keep in mind is, the keeper never roll—I will never roll dice in this game. I will only respond to your successes and your failures, and I can take either, what are called 'soft moves,' which is like, establishing a danger that can, like, uh, pose a threat to you, uh, and set you up to sort of take a move to—to do something to stop that threat. Or, I can take 'hard moves', which is like, I hurt you, or I do something bad to you, because you have failed somehow.

Other than that, we don't roll in combat to like, contest each other. You roll, and if you succeed, you succeed. And if you fail, you fail. And that's literally it. But act under pressure is that same idea, but like, if you're in a burning building, or you're trying to sneak through a laboratory, or you're trying to, you know, find the right key to unlock your car while the monster is charging you. All of that stuff is covered under this one move in a really like, graceful way, I think.

Travis: And you add your cool score to that, which is not like, Fonzie cool, but like, keep your cool kind of thing.

Griffin: It could be Fonzie cool.

Travis: I guess it could be Fonzie cool. Uh, the next one is—

Griffin: [Fonzie voice] Hey!

Travis: The next one is "help out," which pretty much, just like it sounds, if you want to help another player out, another hunter out, you would roll this. Um, that does not stack. So you could only add one to their roll.

Griffin: What's great about that one is, if you fail or get a mixed success, you open yourself up to repercussions, to like the same— so you can help out, yeah, but you are also exposing yourself to danger, which is real smart.

Travis: Uh, "investigate a mystery," which is pretty much like your insight checks, your investigation checks. Um, and what's cool about that is, what you earn when you get a ten or above, or a seven to nine, you earn what's called holds, and in "investigate a mystery," the holds will let you ask these questions, one hold per question.

Griffin: Yeah, it's codified. There are specific questions you ask, like "What can the monster do?" And—

Travis: Yeah, so it's, "What happened here?" "What sort of creature is it?" "What can it do?" "What can hurt it?" "Where did it go?" "What was it going to do?" And, "What is being concealed here?"

Griffin: This is—this is uh, something really important to understand about this game is that the pacing of it is gonna be different, um, in that most of the time, it's really just the one big monster that you're trying to hunt down. It's not like you're gonna be fighting through a dungeon full of skeletons and a bunch of mini-bosses before you get to— like, a lot of the game is talking to people, and investigating, and learning, uh, the monster's weakness, which is a, like, actual mechanic. If you don't hurt the monster with its weakness, you can't actually kill it.

Uh, so, like, gathering information and setting up your plan is the bulk of the game. Because if you don't do that stuff, you will get killed. Like, guaran— guaran— this cannot be a Magnus-rushes-in style adventure, because Magnus would be destroyed by this stuff.

Travis: Um, the next one is, "kick some ass," which is pretty much just like it— it's fighting. It's when you—

Clint: Hell yeah.

Griffin: It's fighting, but like you talked about earlier, it is fighting with damage on both ends, no matter what.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: And there can be situations where you get the drop on somebody, and so you— it's not a "kick some ass," you just hurt them, uh, but in a, like, "You're hurting me, I'm hurting you," that's a "kick some ass" roll.

Travis: Um, then there's "manipulate someone," which is kind of like a will contest, of trying to—

Griffin: Well, it's like charisma.

Travis: –get somebody to do something. What?

Griffin: It's like charisma.

Justin: I think it's not— it's not particularly useful, I think, to keep filtering these through Dungeons & Dragons lore.

Travis: That's fair.

Griffin: Yeah, maybe.

Justin: Like, it's more useful, I think, to use a fictional counterpart of like, it's going into the demon bartender, and you know.

Travis: Yeah, okay.

Justin: That's forcing him to tell you what you need to know.

Griffin: Yeah, that makes sense.

Travis: Um, then there's "protect someone," which pretty much is like it sounds, like, is preventing harm. But in doing so, you take the harm.

Griffin: Yeah. Or, if you fail, you make things much worse for both of you. The collateral damage in these movies is like, so tasty. Um, and then, the last one's "use magic."

Travis: Well, there's also "read a bad situation."

Griffin: "Read a bad situation," which is like, uh, you know, feeling that something is off, and like, your spider sense is tingling a bit. Uh, "use magic" is neat, 'cause there's like, uh, a bunch of different, like, effects you can do with magic, like enchant a weapon, or uh... It's not like a list of spells, it's like a list of things you can kind of do with magic, like restrain an enemy. It's very sort of like, uh, very sort of broad effects that you can do, which, then, you have to describe when you are casting this magic. Uh, and like every other move, there are really, really interesting ways that this can go horribly, horribly wrong, if you roll poorly.

Um, which, I guess we're gonna get into when we start playing the game. 'Cause at least one of you is magic.

Travis: Oh yeah, we'll definitely—we'll definitely roll poorly.

Griffin: A magical one.

Clint: Oh, yeah, I guarantee we'll roll poorly.

Griffin: Um, so, those are the moves. It's— whenever we're talking about what we're doing, it's one of those things. Um, on top of that, there are different, uh, what are called playbooks. And these are tantamount to classes in other RPGs, uh, where there are these archetypes that are modeled after, like, the kind of characters you expect to see in— one of these, like, shows, like Buffy and Supernatural.

Uh, and there are some really, really cool ones in here. I won't go over the ones you guys did, but like, there is the, uh, Divine, which is like, somebody with like, uh, holy origins. Like, maybe a literal angel. Uh, there is the Expert, who is kind of like the Giles. Um, the Flake, who is sort of like the, I

don't know the right sort of comparison here. But like, you know, the weirdo in town.

Travis: It's the lone gunman from the X-Files.

Griffin: Yeah, sure. Uh, like, the Initiate, who's a part of this secret order. Uh, the Monstrous, who's actually half monster. The Mundane, which I think is the most interesting one in the game, because it's somebody who doesn't have powers, but they have, like, moves that help the other players out when they get, like, kidnapped by the monster. It is like— it's like the Xander of the team, which I think is really fun.

So, there's a bunch of cool ones, but let's talk really quick about your characters. Or should we talk about like, the world first? What would be—

Travis: Well, my character's named Magnus Burnside.

Griffin: Okay, great.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: He's a fighter.

Clint: Why don't we talk about the world, first?

Justin: Yeah, I think we talked too much— in our last setup episode, I think we might've talked too much about our characters, rather than letting them... Although, that said, we didn't have a ton of time to like, get into a lot of the backstory stuff.

Griffin: Yes. And that said, we're going to... 'cause we had this question during The The Adventure Zone Zone, when we did that at PodCon. And it— it got me thinking. The question was the like, "Do you think that it harmed something that you had your characters way more fleshed out for way fewer episodes than you did in Balance, where like, their evolution was sort of more natural?" And I think there's a middle ground there. And that middle ground is like, I don't want to know everything about your characters. I don't— I don't want to. In fact, at this point, I— we have not all talked

together about our characters at the same time. There may be things that we need to like, workshop here, in this episode.

But I don't, um, want us to overextend ourselves. I just want to know, like, broad sort of things about your character. What inspired you to make this character, and like, what we absolutely need to know about them before we get into the first episode.

Clint: Well, Ditto, why don't you give us the setting?

Griffin: Yeah, so, I wanted—

Travis: And also, the tone. Give us the setting and the tone.

Griffin: The tone is like, really, In talking to you guys about your characters, I feel like I've been sort of, um, impossible in talking about the tone. Because you may be listening to this and thinking that I'm wanting to do like, a straight, up-and-down, like, horror story. And that is not really what interests me about this game.

Um, so, the game is uh, going to take place in a fictional, uh, ski town, on the eastern edge of West Virginia, in the uh, Monongahela National Forest. By the way, did you guys know it's pronounced like that, and not Monongalia?

Travis: I thought it was Monongalia.

Griffin: Well, so, there's a Monongalia County in West Virginia, and that's where like, Morgantown is. And apparently, they just like, spelled it wrong once, and were like, "Cool, that's the name of the county." But it's Monongahela.

There's a— real quick, I don't want to go like, too deep down the rabbit hole. But there's a real place in West Virginia called Green Bank. It's where there is a thing called the Green Bank Telescope, which is actually the world's largest, like, movable radio telescope. And it's in West Virginia, and it's in this thing called the United States National Radio Quiet Zone, which covers a pretty, actually, huge section of West Virginia and Virginia and Maryland,

where you like, can't— there's like five radio stations for the whole area, and there's restrictions on Wi-Fi.

Um, and this idea of this like, highly advanced sort of thing in the middle of very, very low population area of West Virginia was really interesting to me. So, so Kepler is kind of close to that—

Clint: 304, baby!

Griffin: Alright. [sighs]

Justin: Okay.

Clint: Okay. That's something I'm trying to get started.

Justin: It's also the 681, now.

Griffin: Yeah, there's a lot of, actually, different area codes.

Clint: Shit.

Griffin: Um, so, Kepler is, like I mentioned, a ski town. Uh, but in the fiction of this story, it's kind of like a— that part of the once thriving economy of Kepler is now, like, dying off, because of Snowshoe, which is another actual town in West Virginia that is more, like, resorty and nice. And people now go there, and not Kepler. And so, that part of the economy is kind of fading away, and so, the— the residents of Kepler kind of banded together to try to find some way to keep the town alive. And there's lots of different ways to do that. Like, it's a very uh, like, it's a very pretty, very scenic place. And so, there's hiking trails, and stuff like that.

Um, but, there's also sort of a part of the population that, in an effort to save Kepler, sort of turn it into a cryptozoological destination. Uh, there— it's—there are real places in West Virginia, and Justin, I feel like you have more experience with this, where it's just like, "Oh, come on down to uh, you know, the Sasquatch zone. Come on down to—" There's places—

Clint: Point Pleasant has the Moth Man.

Griffin: The Moth Man.

Clint: Mothman.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: Larry Mothman.

Griffin: There's— there's a lot of like, cryptid activity. And I feel like that's interesting, and the cause is, for the show, interesting. But, also, what if it was all real? And that is sort of what this story is, loosely, gonna be based on.

Um, I have a lot of stuff here about like, the geography of Kepler. It's a ski town, there's like, a funicular connecting like, the top side of town, where there's like, lodges—

Travis: Bunnacula?

Griffin: Fu—funicula? A funicular?

Justin: Bunnacula.

Clint: [singing] Funiculee, funicula!

Justin: Travis and I are making a lovely Bunnacula joke.

Griffin: Okay. There's a cable car.

Justin: Joke is a very strong term for what just happened.

Travis: Yeah, and I have to warn you. Here's a little spoiler. It's not the only Bunnacula reference I'm gonna make in this episode.

Griffin: Wow.

Justin: Okay, looking forward to that.

Griffin: Well, I have to make sure not to even come close to setting you up for that. Um, but yeah, if you've ever been—

Justin: So anyway, the celery stalks at midnight, and—

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, if you've ever been to like, a ski town, like... imagine— imagine that. Like, kind of small. I don't have an exact population in mind, but like, uh, sort of alpine—

Travis: Two.

Griffin: Two people. Like alpine-inspired architecture, but just like, not very active. Like, there's probably some shuttered, Swiss-inspired chalets that just like, nobody goes in anymore. Um, there's also, uh, an inn in this town that is going to be kind of the focal point for the story. But uh, I won't go too much deeper into that.

But to circle back to like, the tone, I wanted to tell a story about like—

Justin: Griffin, you can't just tease me like that. Let me know there's an inn in this story, and not give me any more.

Griffin: I know. There's a very, very fateful inn.

Justin: All these sexy details you're trickling out. Hold on, guys, the new Starlog magazine just showed up. Front page cover, there's an inn with a question mark on it. Tell us more.

Clint: Inn?

Griffin: I could say more about the inn, I just didn't want to spoil anything.

Justin: Whoa, don't, no! I can't handle it right now, Griffin. I need to get on my blogs.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: We're having a lot of fun speculating over here.

Clint: Wonder what Mark Hamill says about the inn.

Griffin: Back in the '80s, he was like, "There will never be an inn. I'll never do an inn." And then he does an inn.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Um—

Clint: We've told our story, it's had an ending, that's it.

Griffin: I wanted to tell a story about like, community, and sort of rural communities, and the banding together, uh, that they sometimes have to do against, like, actual, real forces. Whether it be like, predatory entities trying to take advantage of them, or, you know, ruin their town. Um, but also, have that be like, what if monsters was that?

Um, so, that is kind of... obviously, it's also kind of an idealized rural life. Like, I want this to be a very nice community. A very good community. Because I also think that, in putting monsters in that particular kind of community, like, it gives you a little bit more to fight for. Um, not necessarily Bedford Falls, but you know, gettin' there.

Travis: Is the town itself a little spooky, like Twin Peaks? Or is it like...

Griffin: Maybe in the way that Twin Peaks is spooky. Which is to say that, I think if you just look at Twin Peaks, and you remove all the music, and all the creamed corn from it, like, it actually looks like just a nice, nice place. Um, there are lots of pine trees in Kepler, so I guess it maybe has that in common with it.

Travis: How much creamed corn?

Griffin: Uh, I mean, the good kind. Just regular creamed corn. Not Garmonbozia.

Travis: Okay.

Clint: Are there poplar— are there poplar trees in Kepler?

Griffin: Mostly pines. Mostly pines.

Clint: Oh, okay. 'Cause poplar are the most popular in Kepler, I was gonna say.

Griffin: Oh, Jesus.

Justin: I thought you weren't gonna say that. And then you still did.

Clint: Oh, I did, didn't I?

Griffin: Um, there's also like, a biome diversity. Like, there's a ski mountain, and the Monongahela woods on the edge of town, and the Greenbriar River to the south. And uh—

Travis: A biodome.

Griffin: A sort of biodome, if you will. Also—

Clint: Pauly Shore's not there, is he?

Griffin: Uh, maybe. Also, the US National Radio Quiet Zone gives me a way to write out cell phones from the story.

Clint: Yeah, that's great.

Griffin: Which is going to be, I think, sort of helpful for create— I feel like a lot of stuff back in like, Buffy days, would just be like, "Oh, well, just call them." And now all the dramatic tension's gone.

Travis: "Don't go in there, there's a vampire."

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, so, yeah.

Clint: Oh, shit. How am I gonna play Solitairica?

Griffin: Yeah. Well, you can play that. Just without a signal.

Travis: You just gotta download it before you go.

Clint: Oh, good. Good, good, good.

Griffin: Um, by the way, because this is a former ski town, I am profoundly disappointed that none of you made, like, a snowboarder bro named like, Jake Coolice, who just came here to carve shit up.

Travis: Well, it's not too late.

Clint: You can create NPCs, dude.

Griffin: Oh, yeah. I mean, Jake Coolice is gonna be there, episode one.

Clint: "To the extreme!"

Griffin: That is it. There's—

Justin: Damn, that's a really good Jake Coolice impression.

Clint: Thank you. [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, there's a lot more, but I do not want to... For the first time, like, I used one big WordPad document to organize everything for Balance. And now, I'm using Scrivener. So it's like, I actually have— I feel like I have the whole world at my fingertips, which is very exciting. But I don't want to go too much deeper, uh, 'cause I think that we should talk about your characters now.

Travis: Who wants to go first?

Clint: I will.

Justin: Okay.

Clint: Um, I'm going with uh, the Crooked. The Crooked is basically a criminal, a former criminal.

Griffin: Sort of the— it doesn't have to be a criminal. It's sort of like the shady, rogue-like class of the story.

Travis: You're uh, what's-his-face from Fringe.

Clint: Yeah, Peter.

Travis: Peter, who, you know, maybe has like, been a conman in the past. Or, maybe straight up a thief, or something along those lines.

Clint: Right. Well, my character is uh, is Edmund Chicane. He goes by Ned, and Ned owns a uh, a roadside cryptid museum. Kind of a tourist-trappy kind of a place. Uh, it's called the— he's named it the Cryptonomica.

Griffin: [clapping]

Clint: Crypto-dash-nomica.

Griffin: Oh, dad, that is like, fuckin'... I feel like I just ate a big spoonful of honey, listening to that. That is the tastiest shit ever.

Clint: He uh, he hasn't— he hasn't lived here very long, but he's lived here for a couple of years. I think he's uh— and when I picture him, I'm picturing, probably, the greatest actor who ever lived. And that, of course, is Mr. Brian Blessed. He's kind of a big guy. He's, I mean, uh, kind of a barrelly kind of...

Griffin: Did he play the ghost of Christmas present?

Clint: Well, he was— he was King Volco on Flash Gordon.

Travis: Oh, of course.

Justin: Oh, of course. Everybody remembers...

Griffin: There's literally nothing. I'm going through this IMDb. Folks listening at home, trust me, I'm on your side. I'm going through the IMDb, trying to find— oh, he was in the— he played Boss Nass. Well, wait, that was a big alien, though. You couldn't really see him, I don't think.

Clint: No, but if you look at Brian Blessed's IMDb, he's a great character, and uh, that's kind of what uh, kind of Ned is. So Ned is—

Griffin: Big, bushy beard?

Travis: Big, bushy beard!

Justin: He was Colonel Gonville Toast on Toast of London, Trav.

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Clint: Yeah, we'll go with it.

Griffin: That's nothing to— that's nothing to so many people. He plays the voice of Santa Claus in The Amazing World of Gumball. You all know. You all know.

Clint: Brian Blessed!

Justin: He's Grampy Rabbit on Peppa Pig.

Griffin: Okay. Um, big bushy— you didn't— you avoided the question about the big, bushy beard.

Clint: Um... Yeah. Let's go with big, bushy beard.

Griffin: I mean, I'm just looking at pictures of Brian Blessed. He doesn't not have a beard in any of them.

Travis: He's the voice of Clayton in the Disney Tarzan.

Griffin: Okay, we're done talking about Brian Blessed's story career.

Clint: Brian Blessed. Now you know. And so, Ned has this museum all about cryptids. The cryptids in the area, and uh, that's all I'm ready to say about him right now.

Griffin: Just to uh, 'cause I do want to talk about the— the playbook. So, the playbook gives you, basically, a couple more moves, usually, on top of the basic stuff. But they are very situation-specific things. So, which— there are, for the Crooked, there are like, crime backgrounds that kind of give some flavor to your character, like uh—

Clint: Ned— Ned is a grifter.

Griffin: Okay. I was assuming he wasn't an assassin, [laughs] which is one of them.

Clint: No. There is a certain level of uh, of uhh, sham built into this— this whole museum thing.

Griffin: Right, sure.

Clint: Not that it wouldn't be useful, but it may be full of all kinds of helpful stuff, but he doesn't know it.

Griffin: I love that. When you told me this angle, like, that is what stood out to me as like, the best shit, is there's a guy who runs a curio museum that, he thinks everything in it is bullshit, when actually, some of it is—

Clint: Right.

Griffin: — real. And—

Clint: And that's kind of what's going on with Ned. He knows all about it, because you know, it—it's not like they've got a lot of entertainment options. So he's actually read every book in the place, and he's looked at all the

stuff. He just doesn't believe it, and he doesn't know what's powerful or not powerful.

Griffin: I also love, like— I talked about like, Kepler has these different sort of things that people are doing to try to keep the town going, since nobody really comes there to ski and stay in their resorts or anything anymore. Um, and I like this idea of like, there are some people in town who are just like, "Come to Kepler, we've got a beautiful river trail you can walk down. You can hike through the woods, and rest up in one of our nice places."

And then there's also a group of people who are like, "We got Bigfoot."

And the friction between those two, who are like, "Hey, uh, can you please stop telling everybody we have Bigfoot? Because we're trying to get people to come and hike in the woods and stuff."

Clint: Like the people who probably work at the Roswell Art Museum.

Griffin: Yeah, like, come on.

Clint: "You guys shut up, will ya?"

Griffin: Yeah. Um, so there's also moves. Every class has special moves. Um, and there's some—

Clint: Yeah, I got— I got one I picked. I want, uh, driver.

Griffin: Driver, okay.

Clint: I want him to— I want him to be a driver, because I figure, there are gonna be times, maybe, where we need to travel. Maybe not much. But I had this— I've already figured out, I want him... I want him to drive a 1958 Lincoln Continental Mark III.

Griffin: I'm gonna have to— you know I'm gonna have to Google that.

Clint: Oh, Google it. Because it is the—the most trunk space of any American-made vehicle in history.

Griffin: Oh, Jesus Christ, this car.

Clint: So I'm looking with all this trunk space to haul gear.

Griffin: Is this a drop top convertible?

Clint: Yeah. They came in both the hardtop and a convertible. Ragtop and a hardtop. So, we can figure that out. But I want him tooling around in this gigantic car, with this humongous trunk to haul stuff in.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: And, according to the game, since I get to pick out two vehicles—

Griffin: You do get two vehicles if you go with driver.

Clint: I have a second vehicle. And so, I uh— he's gonna have an Alpina Superclass. Uh, 1.2. It's got a 12-valve engine—

Justin: 1.2 what?

Clint: It's— I don't know. It just says 1.2.

Griffin: Gigahertz of power.

Clint: VVTs.

Griffin: This is a snowmobile that has three— it's a snowmobile that has three seats on the back, which is... a lot.

Clint: It has three seats— it hauls a three-seat trailer, and has three seats on the main thing. It goes up to 40 miles an hour.

Travis: Jesus, dad, why don't you just get like, an invisible jet?

Clint: So, he's got these two vehicles. I figure he can do a lot of tooling around, and be the chauffer. And the other one I really wanted to go with was artifact.

Griffin: Okay, yeah. I think that makes the most sense.

Clint: The thing is, if he has an artifact, he just doesn't know it.

Griffin: He doesn't know that it's a— so this is a magic artifact, and you get to basically build it from a list. So you can give yourself protective armor, or a skeleton key that opens any magically-sealed lock. It's like, a bunch of different effects, but you don't know that it does these things, probably, at the beginning.

Clint: That's it. In keeping— in keeping with Ned's story, he does not know—

Griffin: That's very good.

Clint: You know, that it has the power.

Griffin: This is a—

Clint: So that's—

Griffin: This is gonna be like, I feel like, a really... This is the character that has me like, excited for all the different ways to have you interact with— like, this feels the most lived-in, you are a resident of this town, and there's like, a lot of different uh, like, friction and stuff between you and the town. Like, I think this is gonna be really cool.

Clint: So just remember. Just visualize Peppa Pig's grandfather.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Perfect.

Griffin: Uh, Travis. You go next.

Travis: Uh, my character... She is a Spell-Slinger named Lady Flame.

Griffin: Well, what's her real name?

Travis: Well, her real name is Aubrey Little.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: She is a magician.

Griffin: Lady— pronounce it. Is it Lady Flame, or Ladyflame?

Travis: It's The Lady Flame.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: You know, I'm trying to look at it as it's a much more magical... it's not... you know? She's the lady—

Griffin: You basically—Travis wanted to play a magical one, and so, he picked the most magical class, and made it the most magical magic it could possibly magic.

Travis: Anyway, yes.

Griffin: This is Travis' repressed, like, desire to use magic in a game uh, sort of manifest.

Justin: Anyway, she runs the local pet salon, and—

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs] Well, so, she is a magician. Uh, up-and-coming. Um—

Clint: Like a stage magician?

Travis: Yes, a stage magician.

Griffin: I was really hesitant about allowing you to do this, because again, like, I wanted more grounded characters, in a more real-world feel. But then I remembered, when we were at Max Fun Con East, in that uh, resort in the Poconos, there was a magician who, like, was playing in the lobby. Like, I feel like that's not that weird, when somebody is on the starting circuit, that they're not doing big shows. They're like, playing in the lobbies of hotels and stuff.

Travis: Also, her style is very like, goth-punky magician. And I think that my concept for it is that, it's a little off-putting to people who expect like, a female magician to be kind of in like, tights and a sparkly vest, you know?

Griffin: Yeah. Not that there's anything—I mean, that is a specific style of... It feels weird to like, slam that in any way, 'cause it is a specific—

Travis: Oh, I'm not at all. She just isn't that.

Griffin: — way of performing. Yeah.

Travis: Yeah. And so she's— yeah. So she's kind of uh, goth, punk, kind of look, with just a sick undercut, you know what I mean? Just a really cool pompadour undercut. Her hair is amazing. She's got some facial piercings in there.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Really cool. Really badass.

Griffin: We should make one thing kind of clear, is that, and this is something that we talked about, and I don't know where you are at on it now. But this is— this, like, pilot arc is kind of going to be like, "Uh-oh, my magic is real."

Travis: Yes, absolutely. Currently, she does not know that she has access to any kind of actual magic. So her magic is all like, sleight of hand. She specializes in like, pyrotechnic sleight of hand. Of, you know, like—

Griffin: So like, GOB, with the like, just lighter fluid shooting out of somebody's shirt.

Travis: Yes, very much so. So, basically, what I pictured was, she has like, these gloves that, very much like the Flame Alchemist in Full Metal Alchemist, like, have, you know, kind of a flint kind of thing. So, she can snap her fingers to make— so, basically, there's a reason for this. One of the moves of the Spell-Slinger is tools and technique. So you have four options. Uh, consumables, foci, gestures, and incantations, and you have to have access to three of them, or you take a penalty.

Griffin: Yeah, your spells get fucked up. And this is a really elegant way of doing something that we never did in D&D, which is, in D&D, you remember, there were like, somatic spells, and uh, like, verbal spells. And you had components, and you had different... Like, this is that same thing, but boiled down to like, oh, you can cast it, but if you don't have one of your things, then you take a penalty to it.

Travis: So that's why like, her gloves are her foci.

Griffin: Okay, I'm into that.

Travis: And like, the consumables are like, the flammable liquid, and you know, certain, like, shavings of very flammable metal, that kind of thing. And her gestures are all of the things that she has worked in. The flourishes, the sleight of hand, all of that. So I'm basing what will eventually be her actual magic around those same things.

Griffin: Cool.

Travis: She is a... her combat magic is blast-based.

Griffin: Okay, I wanted to talk to you about this. So you get to basically build your main combat spell when you go as a Spell-Slinger. You went with blast and fire, and I think you did that just so you could get the most damage out of your attacks, 'cause—

Travis: No, that was just my style of like... Well, because it's also very, uh... So, the different attacks have different qualities. And so, like, hers is obvious and loud, and that just made the most sense to me, of like the character I was building. And also, right now, especially, I was thinking, because she's gonna have so little control over it, fire magic inherently has a lot of glitches and stuff that go with it, of it being very dangerous.

Griffin: It spreads, and...

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: This is— keep in mind, every time Travis attacks with this stuff, he's gonna roll, and him basically creating a controlled explosion of fire every time he attacks, if he ever fucks up, is going to put a huge, flaming arrow in my quiver that I can and, fair warning, absolutely will use against you guys.

Travis: Yeah. So basically, I'm trying to think a lot of like, a character in which, like, entropy and like, chaos springs forth, both in personality and in her combat style.

Griffin: I'm also very into dropping a character like that into a quaint, rural-like town. I think that, again, there's some friction there that I think can be very cool. I think we'll have to work to make sure that it never gets sort of, like, tonally weird.

Travis: Yes, absolutely. Well, my thinking was, just to justify it, I think that her family is not necessarily from the area of Kepler. But like, somewhere in the Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky region.

Griffin: I'm thinking of this character as sort of the audience surrogate, at least in the pilot, in that she is not— she's the only character, as far as I know, who doesn't like, live in Kepler, and is not from Kepler.

Travis: Correct, yeah. She's just gotten there.

Griffin: So like, I can introduce the town to the audience through, uh, Aubrey.

Travis: And most importantly, I think, is that her traveling companion is a ten-pound New Zealand rabbit named Dr. Bonkers.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Alright. And what class is Dr. Bonkers?

Travis: Well, Dr. Bonkers is a white rabbit with red eyes, very much like Bunnacula.

Griffin: Mmkay. Excellent.

Clint: Ah, there it is.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: He is of the Wronged playbook. Uh—

Travis: Yeah, he is monstrous.

Griffin: His whole family was murdered by vampires.

Travis: Yeah. He's monstrous.

Griffin: Oh, don't give me that. I'll use that. You know I will use that.

Travis: No, he is a formerly laboratory experiment, uh, rabbit that she rescued through semi, uh, questionable means, perhaps.

Griffin: Alright.

Travis: Um, and Dr. Bonkers... his first name is Harris. Dr. Harris Bonkers travels with her now. Um, and there's nothing special about him, other than the fact that he's awesome.

Griffin: Yet. I'm going to make the— I'm going to make the rabbit something.

Travis: Well, maybe someday. But right now—

Griffin: No, very quickly. I'm going to make—

Travis: He's just Dr. Harris Bonkers.

Griffin: No, I'm gonna give the rabbit superpowers.

Travis: Okay. Well, he has a PhD in philosophy.

Griffin: Uh, Justin, you want to start talking about your character and interrupt Travis?

Justin: Yeah, so uh, my character is named Duck Newton, and he is the Chosen.

Griffin: Justin, you're so fuckin' good at naming characters. That's very good.

Travis: I tried so hard. I went with The Lady Flame, and I was like, "Oh, got it." And you're fuckin' Fig Newton or whatever.

Justin: Duck Newton.

Griffin: Juice Newton.

Justin: Duck. Duck Newton. Duck's his nickname. The uh, uh, he's the Chosen. And Griffin initially sort of tried to ward us off of this, because—

Griffin: Yeah, there were two playbooks I didn't want you to use, and it was the Chosen, and the Wronged. Because the Wronged was so grimdark, like, it literally is your family is murdered, and so now, you're this rebel without a cause, and that feels way off tone.

Justin: Yeah. So Duck is a uh... Duck's the Chosen, but uh, he— the thing about Duck is, he didn't, uh, I guess. He started having the, when he was a younger man, he started having sorts of visions and nightmares that sort of

led him to, uh, what his sort of like, destiny was, to fight back some unnamed evil, and uh, he ran from that destiny. He avoided it at all costs. He wanted to... he was scared, basically. So he manifested some sort of, you know, whatever abilities you want to call it. But he decided not to use them, and instead, became a park ranger at the Monongahela National Forest, and he uh, sort of decided to make a quiet life doing that. So, that is where we sort of find him, uh, when the story begins.

Griffin: The Chosen has some like— I want to be clear when we're talking about the Chosen, in that I do not want to set up a— this is why I didn't want to do the Chosen. I don't want to set up a dynamic between your three characters, where Duck is the chosen one, hero of legend, Buffy, while everybody else is Duck's supporting cast.

Justin: Right. And that's certainly how it's designed.

Griffin: That is how it's designed, and I am not interested in that, narratively, or like, I don't think it's fun for you guys, sort of as— because then, you are literally, you are supporting cast members in this, which I think is not a cool way to do this show.

Justin: That said, the system is sort of flexible enough that I was able to not bend the rules, and just sort of make a character that like, fits this, I think, but is not, um... You know, the Chosen, just keep in mind, when we say the Chosen, it is the name of a class, not necessarily narratively, uh, power.

Griffin: Well, I'm thinking about it this way. You were chosen by something, and I kind of have an idea of what that could be, uh, just in the world fiction. Like, I have an idea. But that doesn't necessarily— that doesn't mean that you are the only thing that matters, you know what I mean?

Justin: Duck's not the Chosen, he is a Chosen.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: He was— he was chosen.

Justin: Right.

Travis: He's like a high school football star, and somebody was like, "Hey, you're gonna come play in the NFL."

And he was like, "No."

Griffin: There's some really—we have an—

Travis: I like this idea of a Chosen that's just like, "No. No thank you."

Griffin: "No, thanks." I mean, that's very, very, very cool from like, my perspective, because then, I have ways of like, trying to tempt you into... 'cause I— this is— we talked about this not going to be like an ongoing like, every episode, Duck's like, "Oh, I don't know." Like, this is a story about this coming to a head.

I want to talk about the moves really, really, really fast, just to like, highlight a couple of them in Duck's category. 'Cause this is like— this is what sold the game for me, where the playbooks and special moves, because they are so perfectly tailored to his this genre, and try to take the things that you love about the characters in this Monster of the Week genre, and turn them into game mechanics. So like, the Chosen has a move called "the big entrance," where you make a showy entrance into a dangerous situation. And if you roll really good, everybody has to stop and listen to your speech. Like, it's a—

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: It's a way of like, setting up different scenes in the way that you want them. There's—

Justin: I didn't pick that one.

Griffin: Okay, well—

Justin: That sounded like a lot of pressure. [laughs]

Griffin: It does sound like a lot of pressure. But there's stuff like, um, you get a uh, a thing called "destiny's plaything," where at the beginning of each mystery, you roll some dice, and on a success, you get like, a vision of the future. Which is like, you know, dreams, like Buffy's dreams of like— which I think kind of stopped being a thing after like, season one or two. Um, but yeah, there's some really, really—

Justin: I actually gave him—

Griffin: That's the kind of like, flavor that I like.

Justin: That's a— that move rolls against a skill called "weird," which is basically like magical stuff in this world. And uh, to sort of set the table, considering where he has been, and what has been happening, I actually gave Duck a negative one skill in "weird."

Griffin: So your visions aren't gonna be the best.

Justin: So the visions aren't great, 'cause he's like, been purposefully out of touch with this side of himself.

Griffin: Yeah, that's cool.

Travis: Love that.

Griffin: Um—

Travis: Can I just say one more thing about this game that I love? Just to like, sell the game. As I was reading through it, the different classes and stuff, as someone who has like, grown up and fallen in love with all of these different like, Monster of the Week kind of shows, like, literally, every class... One, they give great examples for, but two, like, every class I read was like, "Oh, I want to play that. Oh, I want to play that." And like, the reason I went with Spell-Slinger is that, like, one of my favorite book series is Harry Dresden, The Dresden Files.

Griffin: Which is also— they list this, in this book, as an inspiration.

Travis: Yes. Exactly. And so like, I saw that, and I was like, "Oh, shit, yeah. This." And so, like, it's just— it's such a love note to Monster of the Week. I mean, obviously. But in a way that's like, I'm so excited to play and match the tone of that, and the feeling of it, and like... augh, I'm really excited about this.

Justin: Now, here's my question, before we move on. And I don't know if this is something we want to do in the first episode or not. But there is a mechanic for history in the game.

Griffin: I'm not... this feels like four people sitting around a table, playing it not for a podcast. Which is not to— I don't mean to sound like I'm diminishing that. It's that, I mean, we can talk about this, absolutely.

Justin: Now, the pushback I would have against that is that, I do think that it's worth coming to a consensus on the relationships of these characters. Because I don't necessarily want to do another story where we're starting, you know, from square one.

Griffin: Yeah, okay. That's probably— then this is a good middle ground. I would assume that you all don't have a relationship with Aubrey, just because you are not from here, necessarily.

Justin: Well, I was thinking that, maybe, when he was talking about fire, uh, I was thinking that it might be fun if maybe Aubrey has tried to use the forest to practice before, and uh, Duck has had to chase her off. So he has like, a little bit of a relationship there. And I thought that was kind of fun, but I don't know if that, like, jives with you, Trav.

Travis: No, I think that works. Let's say that it was like, uh, on her way to Kepler, like, she camped out in the forest one night, and was practicing, and Duck came and reprimanded her, and made her dump out her beer. A thing that has happened to me before in a national forest.

Justin: So you're drawing on your real life experiences, here. I watched it, y'all. It was so sad.

Clint: 'Cause being drunk and campfires go so well together.

Justin: Travis had this grand plan about camping by himself for like, a couple days. And when we got there, he was just like, dumping out a beer while a ranger looked on disapprovingly. It's like, you could tell, like, "Oh, you're not gonna be out here for the long haul, huh, Scraps?"

Travis: Yeah. It was not great.

Griffin: You called me to come up the first night.

Travis: It gets real dark and scary up there, y'all.

Griffin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um, alright, I like that. Um, I'm curious what the... because you all... do you live in— does Duck live in Kepler?

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. So, I think Duck and uh, Ned—

Clint: Wait a minute. And is Duck a forest ranger, did you say?

Justin: Forest ranger, yeah.

Clint: So he's not gonna have that much, I mean, right? I mean, wouldn't he be at the station most of the time?

Justin: The... what do you mean?

Clint: The forest station. I mean...

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, no, but he lives in Kepler.

Travis: Well, and then you have to worry about like, if you're not there, it's deforestation.

Griffin: Jesus, Travis.

Justin: I think it's fun if he and uh, if he and Ned are friends. I think that that's something we can—

Griffin: I would love that so much more than they kind of dislike each other.

Justin: No, I think it's— they're complimentary people, but I think that like, it makes sense that they would be friendly.

Clint: And I think that brings a nice dichotomy, because if Ned is kind of a shady, somewhat crooked character, and Duck is the— is kind of an authority figure, it has kind of a nice feel to it, kind of.

Travis: I would like to play with knowing... I mean, I think it's interesting, right? Because this game has this mechanic of, everybody knows each other. Which is weird to try to force into it, but I do like this idea, especially considering that um, that Ned has some sort of shady background. I don't know what the connection is yet, but if there is something where, maybe, in his previous existence, Aubrey has encountered him before...

Griffin: If you like that, and Dad likes that, let's do that, and literally stop now, and don't say anything else to try to like, firm it up. But you know something about Ned's history that maybe you don't even know that you know it. Like, I think that could be something great.

Clint: I have a little something, too. And this might not be something that you may want to... I don't know if you want this in there. But what if something in the Cryptonomica triggers Aubrey's powers?

Griffin: I mean, something triggers Aubrey's powers in episode one. Uh, and there's a big thing that I haven't really talked about yet, that is sort of like, the reason why monsters are here, that is probably going to fill that need. But I mean, it's all connected. Like, the things in the Cryptonomica are also kind of from this source. Also, Justin, do you want to talk about the cool connection we thought of for the Cryptonomica?

Justin: Yeah. You uh, you also have my weapon. The Chosen gets a weapon, and you have my weapon. And I, maybe I gave it to you, because like, it seemed like the safest thing, 'cause you deal in stuff like this.

Clint: Hide in plain sight.

Justin: Yeah, that you could sort of keep it, you know, safe for me.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: This is a big thing for the Chosen, that you like, build a weapon from a form, and a business end, and a material. Um, and I don't know if Justin has firmed that up, yet. But I love the idea—

Justin: Oh, yeah, I did.

Griffin: What is it?

Justin: It rules.

Griffin: What is it?

Justin: What?

Griffin: Okay, I guess we don't have to talk about it.

Clint: No, no, no.

Justin: You want me to tell you about the weapon, or you want me—

Clint: No, no, no!

Justin: — to wait 'til the show?

Griffin: We'll save it. We'll save it.

Travis: Okay, shit, because I just thought of like, what had been my plan for Aubrey, and the thing... Okay. I have a way to connect Ned and Aubrey that I will tell Dad about later.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: I'm gonna— I'm gonna show Dad the video of my weapon after.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: There's a video? Okay. So, I guess, I think that's about it. I think that's all that you really need to know. Um, if— I think the playbooks are free, a free resource. If you are interested in Monster of the Week, you can go check those out, and sort of get an idea of like, what the different stuff is. But I'm really excited about this game.

Justin: You can read ours in about five minutes, if you're interested in a little more context. You can read the playbooks for our characters. Uh, just the three of ours.

Griffin: Um, it's gonna be really— it's gonna be— I'm really excited about it. I'm nervous about it, because there's— I cannot prepare as much as I prepared in Balance. The game will not work if I try to make things follow a path the same way that I kind of tried to make it do in D&D.

This is a game where things are gonna go wrong constantly, and we all have to like, improvise together to figure out where it goes next. Um, which is cool for me in a like, it's not gonna be as hard to prep this stuff, but it's also gonna be a little bit tougher to make sure that things have like, satisfying conclusions, and cohesive narrative arcs, and stuff like that.

But um, I'm so, so, so excited to get started, uh, which is gonna be next Thursday. Um, yeah. Anything else y'all wanna talk about before we uh, hop off here?

Travis: Well, Dr. Harris Bonkers attended Vassar.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Okay.

Clint: Hats off to Michael Sands, by the way. The writer, the creator of Monster of the Week.

Justin: Yeah. Thanks, Mike.

Clint: This is a— and our friends at Evil Hat Productions, who uh, also were involved with the Fate System, too.

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah, uh, it's a beautiful— it's a beautiful game. Um, and there's a lot of really, really cool Powered by the Apocalypse games that I was interested in doing. But this one seems like such a, like— this one seems like—

Justin: Maybe we'll dip back into one of those. 'Cause it would be nice to not have to start from square one every time, mechanically.

Travis: I actually, I was telling Griffin before we recorded. I really like this system. I might end up doing my arc in it. Maybe not Monster of the Week, like a Powered by the Apocalypse-style system, but...

Griffin: If you didn't love the Stolen Century, I would encourage you to give these episodes a shot. Because while I did try to model those rules after that, it was not nearly as fleshed out or codified as these rules are to wit. Like I didn't necessarily do a great job handling like, mixed successes, which is a really interesting thing in this system, where, yeah, you get to do the thing, but there's a cost. In this game, like, the costs are laid out, and very, very interesting. There's a lot of more ways—

Travis: That's one of the things I love, 'cause like, "investigate a situation," right? You can't just say like, you can't ask, like, why is it... there are specific... there is this, like, loose specificity to this game that I really love.

Griffin: And it is perfect for what we're trying to do. Like, it's perfect for playing a game, but also creating a story that you are presenting to other people, which is such a tricky needle to thread. And as much as I love D&D, like, that was a thing that we bumped into a lot, because those rules are not necessarily made for, um, what, like, third-person presentation to other people.

Um, but I think these rules are gonna fit that a lot better.

Clint: I think it sounds awesome. I can't wait. Let's start now.

Griffin: Alright. No. We're gonna go—

Clint: It's a dark and stormy night...

Griffin: It might be, but you'll have to wait 'til next week to find out.

Justin: All the shit was so creepy and weird.

Clint: Everything was really weird.

Griffin: Oh, no.

Travis: And then, things got stranger and stranger.

Griffin: Bye, everybody.

[theme music plays]

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