

The Adventure Zone: Amnesty – Episode 3

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Griffin: Previously on The Adventure Zone...

[theme music plays]

Vision: There is no more time to delay, Duck Newton. Events have been put into motion that require your immediate action.

Duck: I mean, I guess I run through the gate.

Griffin: Uh, you hear the sound of the monster getting louder and louder, and you run toward this empty gate. And then, we see that clearing again, and the archway, within which, Duck Newton was just standing, is empty.

You catch Dani out of the corner of your eye, and you get a little nervous for a second, and then a big blast of fire appears in your hands.

Travis: Yes.

Mama: There's another world, connected to our own.

Griffin: And one by one, they transform.

Mama: So... that's the truth of the matter. Monsters are real.

Griffin: The bobcat starts charging toward you, and Barclay looks at you, and he says...

Barclay: God, I hope you can keep a secret.

Griffin: And in the blink of an eye, this gentle, bearded man you were just talking to disappears, and in his place... is Bigfoot.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Ned. There's Bigfoot, Ned. Uh, he is standing about seven, seven and a half feet tall.

Travis: How many hands, Griffin? How many hands tall?

Griffin: Uh, like twelve Bigfoot hands.

Travis: Whoa.

Griffin: Yeah, and those are big hands.

Clint: That's a big... that's a big Bigfoot.

Griffin: Uh, he is covered in fur that makes your current sort of Wookiee outfit, which you're definitely still wearing, which is such a charming little scene. Uh, it makes your Wookiee outfit look positively inauthentic. Um, and he's racing towards this lifeless, but animated bobcat, and the two of them crash together a couple dozen yards in front of you. Your car is a couple dozen yards behind you. What do you do?

Clint: Oh, I run for the car! Ned runs for the car.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: And uh—

Travis: And you're still wearing the Bigfoot snowshoes?

Clint: No, I kicked off the snowshoes. I'm sorry.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: I kicked off the snowshoes, and the gloves.

Griffin: You just left those behind?

Clint: Hell yeah. I gotta get—I gotta get in the car.

Griffin: Alright.

Clint: Ned's gotta get in the car, man.

Travis: Now, I do want to remind—a bobcat is not like, a mountain lion, right? A bobcat is like—

Griffin: Uh, I'm envisioning about that size. Big ol' cat.

Travis: It's a big bobcat.

Griffin: So you're—you're just gonna take off?

Clint: Oh, I'm gonna jump behind the wheel of the car. Let me explain something a little bit about Ned's mindset.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Ned is not, ordinarily, somebody that jumps into the fire. Uh, Ned is not somebody who likes to fight. Uh, if Ned can avoid a conflict, he will. But in this case, Ned, having just seen a man transform into a Bigfoot, and seen a ghoulish bobcat, is absolutely, 100% convinced this is a dream.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: So, Ned is going to live it as if it's a dream.

Griffin: Alright. It's about dusk. So, you hop behind the wheel of the car, and sort of, uh, fumbling, maybe a little nervous, start the ignition. And as you do, the headlights kick on. And now, you can see this fight scene happening in front of you, uh, much clearer.

Clint: Oh, yeah.

Griffin: And you see that, uh, this bobcat has Barclay pinned down. And Barclay's kind of in trouble. It's sort of slashing at him, and tearing at him, and it looks like this thing's got the upper hand on Barclay.

Clint: Oh yeah. Well, I throw the Linc into drive, and gun it. Because it's a dream, man. Let's enjoy it. Let's have some adventure. He's been stuck in this crummy museum, so he's gonna floor it and drive right at them.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, are you trying to hit both of them?

Clint: I am going to drive straight for them, and hope that the Bigfoot, that Barclay, is able to either roll away, or...

Justin: A lot easier to hit the Bigfoot than the bobcat.

Griffin: No, no, no, it's... yeah.

Clint: But it's—it's a dream! If I get 'em both, it's two monsters. What's the big deal?

Travis: "So, did you listen to that new Adventure Zone?"
"Yeah, I really liked it. Then Dad killed Bigfoot, and..."

Griffin: "Yeah, who was like, a dude? And then..."

Clint: I am a—

Travis: "Who we spoke to, and was already a fan favorite, but now he's dead, I guess."

Clint: Ned is a terrific driver. Remember, that's one of his things.

Griffin: I didn't know he could lift a car up in the air while he was driving it.

Clint: He is going to do some amazing Joey Chitwood stunt driving shit.

Justin: No scope car skills.

Griffin: Uh, you are—you're gonna have to roll to act under pressure. And I will remind you—

Justin: And roll real good.

Griffin: The way that rolls in this game work, if you don't do amazing, things can happen.

Travis: And I want to remind everybody, because we didn't do this at all in the last two episodes. You have the luck option that you can exercise at any time—

Griffin: Yeah, so we have not talked about luck. Luck is a fascinating thing in this game, and it kind of makes up for the fact that there's not like, a ton of healing, or whatever. Uh, you have a meter, and I think it has like, seven marks in it. And this is for your character's whole career. You never refill this. You never really get this back. Where, if you want to, at any time, you can change a roll to a twelve, or avoid all harm from an injury, and you mark one luck.

Now, once you've gotten rid of all your luck, really bad things can start happening to you. I basically get to go as hard on you as I possibly want to go, because you are, what the game calls "doomed" at that point. So, uh, but, yeah. Let's do this thing.

Clint: Alright, so, I can invoke... Do I do it before I roll?

Travis: No, I think you do it post.

Griffin: Yeah, it is reactionary.

Clint: Okay.

Justin: And it should be a pretty desperate thing, right? 'Cause you've only got seven.

Griffin: It is worst case scenario things. Like, for instance, if you're gonna kill Bigfoot with your car, you may want to use a little bit of luck on it.

Justin: Alright, Clint, just... okay. That's legit.

Clint: Eleven.

Griffin: Alright.

Justin: Dad has his—

Clint: And I add a plus one for driving. I get plus one to any rating...

Griffin: Oh, wait, what is it?

Clint: Plus one, ongoing, while driving.

Griffin: Uh, yeah. This would definitely count for that. So that's a twelve.

Travis: Sick, bro.

Griffin: Um, yeah, with that, Barclay is fighting this bobcat, and is kind of underneath it, and then, sees the headlights, like, soaring towards him. And he puts a foot on the bobcat's chest, as it's sort of on top of him, and flings it backwards, and then quickly rolls out of the way. And the bobcat sort of slams right into the hood of the Continental as you're going. And it's a, you know, it's a big sturdy boat, so a mountain cat slamming into it—

Clint: Detroit, man!

Griffin: --doesn't do a whole lot of damage, um, to the car. Uh, it does plenty of damage to the bobcat, who just rolls over the car. And then, I imagine you bring it to a halt after that, as you see in your rearview mirror...

Clint: Oh, yeah. I do one those sweet moves where I change the gear shift, slam on the breaks, it does a little curve, and—

Travis: You e-brake, yeah.

Clint: And it pulls up right next to Barclay.

Griffin: Uh, alright. Yeah. You look in your rearview mirror. The bobcat is not moving. And then, from your rearview mirror, you see, uh, you see the

bobcat, defeated, on the ground. Although, it looks just as lifeless now as it did, sort of, during its attack. Um, and sort of right as it lands, that black fluid that was dripping out of its mouth, it like, spastically shoots out of its body in this thick rivulets, which kind of tangle together on the ground, before slithering, like with a will of its own, quickly back into the forest. Like, within a few seconds, that black fluid is out of sight.

Ned: [laughs] How hideously obnoxious! [laughs] I love this dream.

Travis: You're going a little bit Odin, there. Was that what you were going for? "Tiny man!"

Clint: Ned's having fun, man. He doesn't think any of this is real.

Griffin: Uh, let's jump over to Duck. Duck, you step through the gate. And for a moment—

Travis: Can I just say, I've been kicking myself since we recorded, because none of us made an Exit, Pursued by a Bear comment. And it was like, right there, you guys.

Griffin: Yeah, we could've done that. Then we could've done some quick improv games, like maybe some freeze. And then we'd talk about like, what song from Jesus Christ, Superstar is our favorite.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Um, Duck. You step through the gate, and you are... you're in this bright place for just a moment, Duck.

[ambient music plays]

Griffin: And the wind that you felt whipping at you from the stone archway is still like, blowing through you, while you're in this space. But you're quickly out of it, and the light fades, and you know you're somewhere else. But your vision is, somehow, off, almost like you're seeing this place with like, a watercolor filter. Everything is kind of shifting wildly, almost like the A-ha video.

Clint: [sings]

Griffin: Yeah. And you also feel somewhat sick, and kind of like, angry? It is disorienting, to say the least. And behind you, pretty close to you, you can see it, despite your sort of disorientation. There's another stone gate in this place, identical to the one you entered. And from the hard stone floor that you're laying on, you can tell that whatever, wherever this gate is, it is enclosed inside of, sort of, another large, stone structure.

There are these massive pillars propping up the ceiling overhead, and through the pillars, you can see the world outside. Only, your vision is so, sort of, impaired, that you can only faintly make out, like, there's some bright, colorful shapes in the distance. Uh, some round buildings. There's a massive castle beyond them, with a large, orange shape jutting out of the ground, just in front of that castle.

And you feel that anger inside of you just kind of building, almost unnaturally. And it's alarming, but not quite as alarming as these two figures who are standing in front of a pair of columns in front of you, who respond to your presence with surprise. And in an instant, they are on you, jabbing you with these rods, and you feel this shock... and you're unconscious.

And when you awaken, you are in a dark, small room, and your arms are bound to a wooden chair, positioned in front of a big, sturdy, wooden table. And you feel something soft and light draped around your neck, and as you kind of look down, you realize you're wearing some sort of scarf that your captors placed on you. It's made of some sort of incredibly soft fabric that you can't quite deduce. And for whatever reason, that anger and disorientation you felt when you entered this place is gone. You're Duck again.

And seated across from you is a person you can't really tell too much about them, other than that, thanks to the large set of chainmail armor they're wearing, covered by a tabard, featuring an orange crystal, radiating light in every direction. You can faintly see these two black, beady eyes through a slit in the helmet this person is wearing, which is adorned with two goat's horns on top. And as you regain consciousness, strapped to this chair in

front of this table in this dark room, this person immediately addresses you. And they say...

Vincent: You're in a lot of trouble right now. But I want you to know that I am willing to give you the benefit of the doubt. Because, based on your outfit, I'm guessing you're part of some sort of local woodland army, or forest militia, or something like that.

Duck: Yeah, that... that'll do.

Griffin: Uh, he says...

Vincent: We're both men of the law, and so, I'm hoping we can come to an understanding, here. I'm thinking, maybe, you just stumbled into the gate accidentally. Maybe you didn't come here with any ill intent. Am I on the right track?

Travis: Now, I'm just a small kingdom lawyer...

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: I've never...

Duck: Um, yeah, I mean... that pretty much sums it up.

Vincent: What's your name, pal?

Duck: It's Duck. Duck Newton.

Vincent: Excellent name. Powerful name. I'm Vincent.

Travis: [laughs]

Duck: It's a nick—it's a nickname.

Vincent: I'm Vincent, and uh, well... before we go any further, I gotta know. And this is real important that you tell the truth now, alright? I need

to know how you knew that the gate was there in the first place. Did the human called "Mama" tell you?

Duck: Mama... no, I don't know... I mean, I know my mama. I don't know a Mama. Uh, to be honest, uh... it was just sort of there, man. I—I don't know. It just sort of appeared. I was, uh, being pursued by a, um, a large, I would say, non-earth bear, maybe. I don't know. I'd never seen it's like. And uh, I just kind of ran for the gate, man. I'll be honest, I don't really have a great, uh, explanation for ya.

I'll say this, you know, I'm not freaking out right now. I've seen some weird shit in the past, and uh, narrowly avoided being sort of looped up in it. Seems the uh... that ship has sailed. But uh... I'm uh, you know, all non-malicious on my part. Just a uh, just trying to exit, pursued by a bear.

Travis: Yeah!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, he takes out a little notebook from a fold in his tabard, and he's like, writing down some of the stuff that you say, almost like he's taking a statement. And um, he takes his pencil, and he taps at a point of his notes, and he says...

Vincent: A big non-earth bear, huh?

Griffin: He says...

Vincent: Well, it sounds like... sounds like Mama's maybe not keeping up her end of the bargain, but I guess we'll circle back on that later.

Duck: I mean, I'm not saying... I don't know if you want to write this down. I'm not saying it was a space bear, I just, you know. Not sort of a regular bear, you know?

Griffin: He says...

Vincent: Believe me, I know better than you might think.

Griffin: He says...

Vincent: But, I still don't understand how you found the gate. It is unfortunate that you don't know how, 'cause buddy, I can't let you leave here until I figure out where the hole in our security protocols lies.

Griffin: And with that, this figure takes off their helmet. And as they do so, you notice those two goat horns on top of the helmet actually slide through holes on the top of the helmet as it's removed, and they place their helmet gently on the table. And as they do, you see the face of the person sitting across from you. It's the face of a goat.

Aubrey, you are walking in the woods behind Amnesty Lodge with Mama, who is carrying an oil lantern in one hand as she leads you, swiftly, through the pines. And you've just left the Amnesty Lodge, after sort of the big reveal from the last episode, and she says...

Mama: Now, there's something I need to show you. But before we do anything else, Aubrey, I need you to swear on your life that you're not gonna tell another soul about what you learned tonight. Can—can you do—I'm not... I don't want you to take this lightly. This is like, end of the world level secret. I need your absolute discretion on this.

Aubrey: Mama, not only do I swear on my life, I swear on the life of Dr. Harris Bonkers, PhD.

Clint: Whoa.

Griffin: Uh, is Dr. Harris Bonkers with you? Is Dr. Harris Bonkers always with you?

Travis: Do you mean like, spiritually?

Griffin: And physically.

Travis: Oh. Um, yeah, you know, I've actually... the term I've been thinking about a lot, and I think Aubrey has, now that she has done real magic is, "familiar."

Griffin: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

Travis: Okay. Um, but I think, maybe, for this, I think just for, because it's dangerous, maybe she left Dr. Harris Bonkers with Dani.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, I think Dani was happy to play with Dr. Harris Bonkers.

Travis: Does Dani have kind of a Laura Dern vibe?

Griffin: Uh, I don't... we'll figure out Dani's relation to Laura Dern, I think, as we play. It's one of those things. You're supposed to leave empty spaces in the world, and fill it out as you go.

Travis: Yeah, I understand.

Clint: Last Jedi Laura Dern, Jurassic Park Laura Dern?

Travis: Jurassic Park Laura Dern was where I was...

Clint: Jurassic Park Laura Dern, yeah.

Travis: Peak Dern. Peak. We're talking about top Dern, here.

Griffin: Um, Mama says...

Mama: I don't—I don't mean to scare you, Aubrey. It's just, can you imagine what would happen if the wrong people learned about a place full of magic and monsters and everything? What they might do to take advantage of that kind of power, to own it? I—

Aubrey: Let me reassure you right now. I can make fire with my mind. I'm not really scared of anything. So...

Griffin: She says...

Mama: I know that, but it's important you understand the gravity of the situation. 'Cause I've dedicated my entire adult life to keeping that stuff out of the public eye. It is—it is the most important thing we do around these parts.

Aubrey: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Uh, and you're walking a bit further into the woods, and she starts to explain. She says...

Mama: Okay, so. This other world, it's called Sylvain.

Griffin: Which, by the way, I picked that name out like a year ago. Then when dad had a character called Sylvain in TAZ Commitment, I was like, "Oh, interesting." It's a good sort of—

Travis: Wheels within wheels, my friends.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Well, you actually returned the favor, because I got Sylvain from an actor that I worked with, Remy Sylvain.

Griffin: Whoa.

Clint: And then, you turned around in the same episode, and named your character Remy.

Griffin: Yeah, it was...

Travis: Sympatico. Also, I want everyone to picture that, during this whole walk, and like, as Mama is talking, like, uh, she is just—Aubrey is like, snapping her fingers, and like, making... like lighting a lighter. Like, lighting a zippo.

Griffin: Absolutely. I love it.

Clint: Always good to do in a forest. Yeah.

Travis: Well, she's snapping her fingers, and like, her thumb catches on fire, and then she's snapping it out, and just kind of doing that.

Griffin: I love this. We got some of that in Commitment. The like, few minutes after you discover you have superpowers. Okay, anyway. Mama says...

Mama: Sylvain, Aubrey, it's an incredible place. It is a living world, and I mean that literally. Whole place is alive, sustaining its inhabitants with this magic power, and that's a thing that those inhabitants are, understandably, pretty protective of.

Aubrey: Uh-huh.

Mama: But problem is, throughout history, those gates on our side have been popping up all over the place. And humans have been crossing over into Sylvain, and making a mess of things. Made some bad blood between us and the Sylphs. It's—it's hard to blame either side, really, 'cause where these gates appear on earth, so do the... well, we call 'em Abominations. But don't you worry none about that, though. That's mine and Barclay's cross to bear, not yours.

But the worse that things got in Sylvain, because of the humans, the stricter their laws got. And today, they got some pretty draconian laws in effect, governing who can and can't live there. And the outcasts... well, they don't—they don't really got anywhere to go. Hence, the Amnesty Lodge. I give those Sylphs a safe place to sleep at night, and that seems about the least that I can do for 'em.

And Aubrey, I don't know nothin' about your life, and what you want from it, but you could be safe there, too, I think. Somehow, you fit into this picture. I—I know it.

Aubrey: Okay!

Griffin: Let's jump back to Ned. Uh, you see Barclay kind of wounded. He's got some big scratches down his neck and his torso, and he's kind of shambling away from the car, towards the bobcat. And he hunches down, looks at the bobcat, kind of rolls it over, eyeballs it, sees it's thoroughly dead, and he walks a little bit closer to the car—

Travis: [singing] Not nearly dead, but really, most sincerely dead.

Griffin: So let's get as many show tunes—

Travis: How many more musical theater references—yeah.

Griffin: Yeah. The joke. Uh, and then he walks a little bit closer to the car, and he hunches down, and he picks up that hempen bracelet up off the ground. And he wraps it back around his wrist, and instantly, he's Barclay again.

Travis: Is he still injured in this form, Ditto?

Griffin: Yeah. In this human form, Ned, you can actually see, those scratches are still there. Um, he's breathing sort of heavily. He's not like, horribly injured, but he's definitely sort of battle damaged nonetheless. And he walks over to you, Ned, and uh, opens up the passenger's side door, and gets inside. And he puts on his seatbelt, I think, because he's a very safe boy. And he says, um...

Barclay: You said you've been to Amnesty Lodge before, right, Ned?

Ned: Yeah, I uh, obtained one of your delicious Monte Cristos.

Barclay: Yeah, the sandwich was great.

Griffin: He says...

Barclay: I—I need you to get me there—

Ned: And I think there was a junior chamber of commerce meeting there, I believe.

Griffin: Uh, he says...

Barclay: I need you to get me there right away, Ned. I—I can explain everything when we get there.

Griffin: And as he says—

Ned: Are you sure you wouldn't rather go to a vet?

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: He kind of chuckles, and then, uh, as he laughs, he's kind of like, hurting a little bit. And so, he kind of catches himself. And he says...

Barclay: No, we gotta get to the lodge. I can't... for obvious reasons, I kind of can't go to any sort of medical practitioner back in Kepler.

Ned: Of course. Of course.

Griffin: As he's saying that, you see a couple more shapes stalk out of the woods. I think it's just two more bobcats. Uh, and they're sort of prowling, like jungle cat style, out of the woods, towards your car. And he says...

Barclay: I know this is a lot to take in right now. I know you probably think you're in some sort of weird dream. I assure you—

Ned: Oh, yes, I certainly do.

Griffin: He says...

Barclay: I assure you, it is not. Things are pretty bad right now, and if you want to keep Kepler safe, I need you to get me to the lodge, alright?

Ned: Oh, good. That's good. I like that. You've kind of heightened the danger. Of course, my friend. Let's go to the lodge. You must do me one favor – try not to bleed on the fine Corinthian leather, alright?

Griffin: He says...

Barclay: I'll do my best...?

Ned: Onward!

Griffin: He says...

Barclay: Take the woods, Ned. Time's of the essence. I can get us through it, but we—I need you to cut a straight a path as you can, alright?

Ned: [laughs] You've got it.

Clint: I throw it into drive, I press the pedal, and yell...

Ned: Yoikes, and away!

Griffin: Do you aim for either the bobcats as you're driving forward?

Clint: Aw, hell no. I'll throw it in reverse.

Griffin: Alright.

Clint: And yell yoikes and away.

Griffin: Alright. You take off into the woods, towards the Amnesty Lodge. And we're moving at a nice clip right now, boys. Uh, gonna jump back to Duck.

Justin: Alright, listen, I got some questions for you. What's the name of this place? What are the laws that dictate who can and can't cross over? On the other side, what are those... uh, where do the people who get caught from the other side stay? I need these questioned answered in excruciating, lengthy detail. I am not aware—

Clint: Between you and Vincent, you're playing bad ranger, good ranger.

Justin: I am not aware of any of the answers to these questions. Please begin and include them.

Griffin: I think you guys are all about to meet up. So I think there will be some sharing of notes once that happens, so that we don't create a uh, a hole in the fuckin' narrative universe I'm trying to—

Travis: No, this is where the propeller spins, the goat man answers all the questions, and then Duck's like, "Oh, okay. That all totally makes sense."

Griffin: Vincent, the goat man, which, uh, is not pejorative. There's a real cryptid named that.

Justin: Vincent the goat man?

Griffin: Well, just—

Justin: That's very familiar.

Griffin: The Goat Man.

Clint: [singing] Vincent, the goat man.

Griffin: Uh, he looks at you, and maybe you are a little bit uneasy, 'cause it's now this sort of humanoid goat talking to you. He says, uh...

Vincent: So, our two worlds, Duck, they have something of an uneasy truce. And it's based around your side, keeping the existence of our side under wraps. So, when strangers just stumble into our world, you can understand how that's a problem for me. I'm kind of in charge of homeland security around here. So, I need you to tell me... and really think about it... how did you first find out about the gate?

Duck: Well, first off, I wouldn't say I stumbled. I did move with sort of a dignified gait into the gate. It was very purposeful. Let me start there. Uh, secondly, um, so, I've got this... [sighs] I guess you'd call it like, a weird spirit kind of thing that's been trying to get me... used to try really hard, um, and then kind of let up... to sort of, I guess, fight evil? I know that sounds

ridiculous, but uh, sort of fight evil. And they pop back up. Um, I kind of thought it was a dream for a long time, but seeing it, just uh, recently, sort of dispelled that notion. Um, so, I think, maybe, they showed it to me? I'm honestly grasping at straws here, man. I'm a little bit out of my depth.

Griffin: He is writing all this down in his notebook, and he kind of chews on the end of his pencil. And he catches himself chewing on it a little bit too much. And he like, pulls it out of his mouth, and looks a little bit sheepish. Or, goatish.

Justin: Goatish. Thank you.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: And he says, uh...

Vincent: Well, Duck, I wish I could say something to help. But that doesn't really ring a bell for me. What you gotta understand about Sylvain – that's what this place is called, by the way.

Duck: Thank you.

Vincent: This really ain't a place that builds up, you know, prophecies, and heroes of legend to fight evil and stuff like that. We're a bit more humble than that. Kind of goes against our whole ethos, you see.

Duck: See, that's what I'm talking about. I think I could hang here, honestly. Like, that sounds pretty good to me.

Griffin: He says...

Vincent: Um, I wish I could help you out, but that's not really possible. Resources are... well, they're pretty scarce around here. It's really—

Duck: No, you're—listen, I'm having a bit of fun, man. I got a job I gotta get back to and stuff, and there's apparently some sort of space bear, uh, in my forest. So I do need to rectify that pretty quickly. But uh—

Griffin: He says...

Vincent: Yeah, I'll have to talk about... I'll have to talk about that with Mama next time I see her. But um, listen, uh, I'm just as eager to avoid a war between our worlds as the next Sylph, so how about this. Why don't we let...

Griffin: I'm trying to avoid giving him a... [laughs] An Appalachian accent. It's hard to switch that switch back off. He says...

Vincent: So, how about this. Why don't we let bygones be bygones, and I will let you go back through the gate, unhindered. But you, you gotta promise me, Duck. You—you gotta forget this night ever happened. You walk through that gate, and never come back. And you don't tell anybody about the gate, or Sylvain, or the cool goat man you talked to, and we won't have a problem.

Duck: Hey, listen, partner. Uh, right underneath preservation of forest and the wildlife within, my number two skill is forgettin' about weird shit. So you have come to the right department, here. That is no issue.

Clint: [laughs]

Duck: Can I ask... As long as you know that your buddy Duck can keep a secret, what's with the fancy, uh, the neckwear, here?

Griffin: He says...

Vincent: Oh, that. The scarf is um, well, it's mine, actually. It's Sylvain wool. It's one of the curious parts about our arrangement of our two worlds, and their connection. If a human steps foot into Sylvain without wearing a garment from this world, they just absolutely lose it. Most of the assaults on this world, they happened long before my time. But from what I heard, those unadorned humans who crossed over went into something of a rage, and tore the place apart without a second thought. Broke Sylvain's heart right in two. You take that scarf off, and I imagine, you'd get pretty hostile, too.

Travis: Humans are the worst.

Griffin: Um, he says...

Vincent: I will take that back, but only once we get you to the gate, ready to cross back over. But listen—

Duck: So, technically, I guess it'd be mohair, right? I mean, if you made it yourself. Is this your own—

Vincent: No, God. It's not from my—Jesus, it's not from my...

Clint: [laughs] That's what I thought too.

Vincent: That—that would be pretty gross. No, it's mine. I wear it to keep warm. It's not from my fur, Duck.

Travis: It's Burberry.

Griffin: He says...

Vincent: Listen, Duck, I am trying to be a good guy, right now, Duck. Which is tough for somebody in my position. So, I gotta warn you, I'm not the type to really forgive someone who backs out on a deal. So, keep up your end of the bargain, and please, do not make me regret this night. Alright?

Duck: Alright. Listen, I'd ask you to shake on it, but I have a feeling that could break weird pretty quick.

Griffin: Uh, he puts up a hand. You notice, actually, that his, sort of his bottom half, his like, hindquarters, is straight up goat legs. But then, he has sort of these long, furry fingers on his hands that he uh, he holds up. He actually takes off like, a gauntlet that he's wearing, and holds it over the table.

Clint: Oh my God, it's Pan. It's Pan.

Duck: Well, I'll be dipped in shit in rolled in breadcrumbs. Look at you, you got... you got hands and everything. Alright. Uh, well, let's shake on it, then.

Griffin: Alright. You shake on it. Let's jump back to Aubrey. Aubrey, you've been hiking through the woods with Mama for about 20 minutes now.

Aubrey: Are we there yet? I mean, I don't want to be that person, but like, I'm wearing combat boots.

Griffin: She says, uh...

Mama: Well, Aubrey, believe me when I tell you, you're gonna know when we're there.

Aubrey: And I don't, uh, I so don't want to complain. But I'm just—it's late, I set fire to a hotel, and then, I saw a werewolf, and I'm—

Mama: No, you're having a pretty big night, I getcha.

Aubrey: Yeah, and I can do magic. It's just been a big day, you know?

Griffin: She says...

Mama: We got a room ready for you back at the lodge, and I don't mean to brag, but it's a pretty nice, uh, little setup we've got there, so...

Aubrey: Do you guys do in-room dining, or...

Mama: We can. I mean, Barclay can bring food to your room. It's like, you know, 30 feet away. But...

Griffin: Um, you're walking through the woods with Mama, sort of having this conversation, and her oil lantern and the moon overhead are the only light on your journey. And now you see—

Travis: Oh, is it? Ktshhh.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: And the flames you're producing with your hand.

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: And now, you see the moonlight shining down on a clearing, just in front of you. And there's a carpet of pine needles on the forest floor, but they are distributed in a kind of peculiar pattern. They're giving a wide berth to the clearing's most eye catching feature. There is a stone archway standing before you, in the center of the clearing. It's a humble structure, just two large slabs of stone with a third perched on top of it. And Mama clears her throat, and she says...

Mama: Okay, this is gonna sound pretty strange, I reckon. But there's something here that you cannot see right now, so don't go running forward, 'cause I don't want you to bash your face right into it, alright? And it's gonna look like I'm just sort of speaking it into existence, but that's—

Aubrey: The Stonehenge thing?

Mama: You... you can already see it?

Aubrey: In ancient times, hundreds of years before the dawn of history... Have you not seen Spinal Tap?

Griffin: She puts a hand on your shoulder, and she says...

Mama: Aubrey. I—that doesn't make any sense. There's—

Aubrey: It's three rocks. Can you see it?

Griffin: She puts her sort of hands on her temples, which is sort of the go-to move for any Adventure Zone NPC. Uh, and she says...

Mama: It is not supposed to work like this, Aubrey. There is—there's supposed to be an enchantment on it that makes it so you can't see it unless you know it's there.

Aubrey: Hewn into the living rock of Stonehenge! No? Nothing?

Griffin: Uh, you see her not responding to your—

Aubrey: `Tis a magic place...

Griffin: To your japes. Um, she is—she's pondering. Her face is towards the ground. And then, there's a third light source, shining into this scene, from close by in the woods. And you hear a loud sound, getting louder, moving quickly in your direction.

And Ned. Barclay's in the front seat, and he's surveying his wounds in the mirror, in the sun visor. And he does that for a few minutes, and then, uh, as the Continental is rumbling over the occasional sort of root, as it maneuvers through the woods, and then, he flips the visor back up, and he slams a fist down on the dashboard, and he points forward with his other hand, and he yells...

Barclay: Look out!

Griffin: What do you do?

Clint: Well, obviously, I... do I need to do like an investigation, or an observation thing?

Griffin: Not really. I mean, I can tell you, you don't... you're going through the pines, and so, your vision is kind of occluded a bit. But you do not see anything in front of you.

Clint: Well, then, I slam on the brakes.

Griffin: Uh, I think this would—this would probably be a good act under pressure roll.

Justin: To press the brake pedal?

Griffin: Uh, well, to slam—

Justin: How's he gonna wang that?

Griffin: Slam on it with the proper—

Travis: Oh no, you get the gas!

Griffin: Reaction time. You do have a plus one, 'cause it is a driving thing.

Clint: Okay. Eight.

Griffin: Eight. A mixed success.

Justin: So he presses the brake pedal down halfway.

Griffin: You slam on it.

Justin: And a Taco Bell cup gets stuck underneath. You careen into a tree.

Griffin: Uh, I don't know if there's a Taco Bell in... yeah, there's probably a Taco Bell.

Travis: It's a combination Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, KFC.

Griffin: Thank you, thank you, thank you. There is a canon Pizza Hut.

Justin: Gas station.

Griffin: No, you uh, you slam on your brakes with pretty good reaction time. Um, and as you do so, you enter this clearing. And you see, uh, a young woman with a sort of hip haircut, and a sort of larger, older woman, wearing a big, long duster, holding an oil lantern. And that's all you see. And you slam on the brakes, and the uh, the car uh, starts to careen to a halt as you drive into this clearing, and you are moving pretty slowly when the car runs into something.

And it's weird, 'cause there's nothing there. it's not a tremendous amount of damage to the car. The fender's probably pretty busted up, but the car sputters to a halt as it collides with some sort of invisible shape. And Barclay

looks at the two other people in this clearing, and he hops out of the car, and his eyes lock with Mama. And Mama says...

Mama: Well... evening, Barclay.

Travis: And I want you to picture Aubrey waving, but her hand is on fire.

Griffin: Yeah.

Aubrey: Hi!

Griffin: And Barclay says...

Barclay: Hi, Mama. Hi...

Aubrey: Aubrey!

Barclay: It's, uh... hi? Aubrey?

Griffin: He looks just as uncomfortable as sort of he did when you first ran into him in the woods, when you weren't supposed to, Ned. And Mama says...

Mama: So, uh, what brings you out into the woods in the middle of the night with Ned fuckin' Chicane, Barclay?

Ned: How did you know my middle name?

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, and Barclay says...

Barclay: He's, uh... he's seen a lot tonight, Mama. I think we've—we've gotta tell... wait, wait. What are you doing in the woods with her?

Aubrey: Aubrey.

Barclay: Yeah.

Griffin: Uh, and Mama, at this point, looks like she's about to like, lose it. She is—things are going very, very... things are getting out of hand. And that's—in fact, she says, like...

Mama: Alright, look. Things are getting a little bit out of hand tonight. We've kept this gate a secret for—And Ned, you can see the gate.

Ned: What gate?

Griffin: Yeah, and she says that, and it just appears right in front of you. And you can see, uh, it's sort of pressed into the fender of your Continental.

Ned: Aw, shit. This is gonna end up on a Farmers Insurance commercial, isn't it?

Griffin: Uh, she notices you, like, now you can see the gate, 'cause she said that, and she didn't even think about it. But now, she knows that she's sort of let this slip again. And she says...

Mama: Shit! Alright, okay! That's it, though! Ned, there's powerful cosmic forces at work here, stuff that's gotta stay out of the public eye. I don't know if we can trust you, Ned fuckin' Chicane, but I need you to trust me when I say that there'll be dire consequences if anyone else in Kepler found out about this gate in the woods. Do you understand me?

Griffin: And it's at that point that the gate is, just for a moment, filled with light, and out steps Duck Newton.

Duck, you are back in the woods, and here's four people who are all kind of looking at you with shock. Especially Mama and Barclay, they look kind of dumbfounded, and kind of horrified as you step foot back into Kepler.

Duck: Uh... I'm district ranger Duck Newton. It's a nickname. And uh, ma'am, I'm gonna need you to extinguish that flame, please.

Aubrey: Oh, yeah. [flame extinguishing sound]

Duck: Thank you very much.

Travis: And I also want to say, Aubrey makes that sound when she does it. Fchooo.

Griffin: Mama looks at you, Duck, for a few seconds, just her mouth agape, in sort of disbelief at how quickly this situation has spiraled. And she says...

Mama: Duck Newton. What the hell have you done?

Duck: I have absolutely no idea.

Griffin: [laughs] She says...

Mama: How did you see the... why did you go through the gate, Duck?

Duck: Well, I was being chased by a spooky bear.

Clint: [Yogi bear voice] Hey there, it's Spooky Bear.

Griffin: [laughs] She says...

Mama: A big, spooky bear, huh?

Griffin: And Barclay says...

Barclay: He's, um... he's not lying, Mama. Ned and I, we had a run in with... well, with part of the Abomination, I think. It's complicated. We—we really should get hunting tonight.

Griffin: And Mama kind of sighs and rubs her head, and she says...

Mama: But how did he find out about... [sighs] Alright. Okay. Here's the plan, everybody. Me and Barclay, we gotta pop through that gate for just a couple minutes, find out how much diplomatic damage Duck just wrecked over there, try to smooth it over. You three are gonna stay put. Right here. Don't move a muscle, and when we get out, I can explain how much trouble the five of us are in back at the lodge.

Aubrey: Okay!

Griffin: And with that, Mama reaches into the interior pocket of her duster, and she pulls out this small, compact mirror. And she opens it up, and she catches some of the moonlight above in it, and it reflects back onto the gate, which hums quietly, and Duck, you see that wind whipping off of the gate again, just before the span of the archway is filled with this white light. And Barclay steps through, and disappears. And Mama turns to you, Aubrey, and she says...

Mama: I need you to have my back on this, alright? I need you to make sure these two chuckleheads don't run off. We gotta keep this secret. Remember?

Aubrey: Yeah, if they try to run off, ill... burn them? To the ground?

Mama: Well, don't—no. Don't—come on.

Aubrey: Okay, no. I—even as I was saying it—

Mama: Yeah.

Aubrey: I knew that was too much. Um...

Griffin: And Mama turns, and steps through the gate, and the wind stops, and the light inside the archway disappears. And now, it's just the three of you, standing in the middle of this clearing in the middle of the woods, in the middle of the night.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Hey, everybody, this is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master and your best friend, and your root beer boy. I just drank a whole mess of root beer. Thanks for listening to The Adventure Zone: Amnesty. It's the third episode in this experimental arc. We are having so much fun with it, and the response to it has been so incredible, and uh, since we've been going

weekly, it's like, a lot more work, and I really, really appreciate all the feedback that we've gotten. It really does mean a lot.

Got a few sponsors to tell you about this week. First off, The Adventure Zone is sponsored in part by Boll & Branch. We've talked a lot about Boll & Branch. They are a really, really good supplier of soft things. Specifically, like sheets and stuff. Getting a great night's sleep is easier and more affordable than you might think, and it can start with a change of sheets. That's why you should check out Boll & Branch. All of their products are made from pure, 100% organic cotton, which means that they start out super soft, and they get even softer over time. Luxury sheets can cost like, a thousand bucks in a store. But Boll & Branch sheets are only a couple hundred bucks.

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Also wanna tell you about MVMT watches. I love... I have two MVMT watches, and I love them both equally. I love one more, but I won't say which one, because they get terribly, terribly jealous. These are living watches with real emotions. You may have heard about us talk about MVMT. They have recently doubled the number of watch styles available, and now sell, uh, they also sell high quality sunglasses and women's bracelets. They continue to revolutionize fashion, and the belief that style should not break the bank.

MVMT and their stylists have curated an interactive gift guide, to make Valentine's shopping painless. You can find the perfect gift for your loved one, watches, bracelets, and sunglasses, or any combination of these gifts in

a limited edition gift box. They really are really nice watches. They're very stylish, big, bold faces, and just dripping with style. Dripping wet style.

Anyway, get 15% off today with free shipping and free returns by going to MVMT – that's "movement" – dot com slash adventure. Go to [MVMT.com/adventure](https://mvmt.com/adventure). Join the MVMT.

I also want to tell you about Dice Dungeons. DiceDungeons.com was started by two friends who wanted to take their passion for tabletop gaming, and create a unique shop for roleplaying game accessories. At Dice Dungeons, you can find a variety of metal dice in a wide selection of colors. The dice come in traditional polyhedral sets, as well as D6 and D10 sets for specialized systems. They also just released a new line of portable cloth battle maps. Each map displays an iconic adventure location, and has an inlaid grid for character movement.

So, visit DiceDungeons.com today, and enter the promo code TAZ, T-A-Z, for 10% off your purchase. You'll also get free shipping with any purchase over 50 bucks.

I also want to tell you about another actual play D&D podcast. It's called Legend of Renob. Uh, they say here, if you're all caught up with the McElboys, and need more of your comedic D&D fix, check out the Legion of Renob at... well, just that. And I'll spell it out. It's R-E-N-O-B. So, LegionofRenob.com. They're another D&D podcast. They are just recently off the ground, so it's a good time to hop on board, and if you just can't get enough of people rolling dice and then making fun of each other when the numbers aren't high enough, go check out this podcast. One last time, it's LegionofRenob.com.

I want to thank everybody who has been tweeting about the show using the #TheZoneCast hash tag. We do not pay to advertise the show at all, so it really means a lot whenever you uh, whenever you spread the word like that. If you do use that hash tag in your tweets, you might end up as a character on the show, like Vincent Zed on Twitter, who is Vincent, the character you just met. Got a couple more, maybe like one more character name that I can drop in there, so uh, go ahead and get those tweets in, and I sure do appreciate it.

And thanks to Maximum Fun for having us on the network. You can go to MaximumFun.org and check out all the great podcasts there. Shows like Can I Pet Your Dog, and Tights and Fights, and the Greatest Generation, and so many other shows, all waiting for you, at MaximumFun.org.

And if you want to hear more podcasts or see the video stuff that we do, you can go to McElroyShows.com and see it there.

I think that's it. Thank you so much for listening. We will be back next Thursday. That will be February 1st, with a brand new episode of TAZ: Amnesty. I think this arc is gonna do like four or five episodes before we try out the next thing, and we hope you are enjoying sort of us wandering around here, as much as we're enjoying it. So yeah, we'll see you next week, Thursday, February 1st. Talk to you then. Bye.

[theme music plays]

Ned: Welcome to my fucking awesome dream, Duck.

Duck: Well, I hate to break it to you, uh, I don't think you are technically dreaming, uh, Ned.

Ned: What?

Duck: Well, if it's one of those... unless it's one of those shared dreams. I saw on Dr. Oz, some people... anyway.

Ned: Oh, I saw that one.

Duck: Yeah. Shared dreams.

Ned: Yeah. So you're trying to tell me this is real?

Duck: Yeah, real as, uh... I mean, as far as I know, it's as real as anything.

Ned: Holy shit.

Aubrey: I mean, real is really a relative term, if you think about it.

Duck: Aw, hey.

Aubrey: Yeah, hi, Ranger Rick.

Duck: I recognize you.

Aubrey: Yeah.

Duck: Yeah, well, it's... it's Duck.

Aubrey: Okay.

Duck: Uh...

Ned: Hello.

Duck: I remember you. You're that um... where was that? Over near Laurel Fork, right?

Aubrey: Yeah.

Duck: I busted you for...

Aubrey: Sure.

Duck: What was it, Torch Girl? Was that—I'm trying to remember.

Aubrey: No, it's... the Lady Flame. I had the—

Duck: Lady Flame, that's right.

Aubrey: I had the rabbit.

Duck: You, uh... your hands were on fire, huh?

Aubrey: Yeah. Yeah, apparently, I can do magic. Right?

Duck: Huh. Sounds like a big night.

Aubrey: Yeah. I mean, yeah, right?

Duck: Can I ask, Ned, and I do expect some sort of recognition for waiting this long to sort of inquire. Why is it that you are dressed like uh, the Chewbacca?

Aubrey: Oh, yeah. That was the—I was trying to—I couldn't put my finger on it.

Ned: Well, I have some friends. We get together and go see Star Wars. No, I was goofin' around. I—I was trying to do a whole Bigfoot thing. And it's hotter than shit. I'm gonna take it off.

Duck: Just like a... like a yahoo?

Ned: Yeah. I was dressed like a yahoo for a big ol' yahoo. You know.

Duck: [laughs] I get it. I get it.

Ned: Well, I mean, up until tonight, I thought all this was horseshit.

Duck: Torch Girl, you probably don't know this. But—

Aubrey: Lady Flame.

Duck: Sorry. Darn it.

Aubrey: You can just call me Aubrey, if that's easier.

Duck: You know what, I get confused between Aubrey and Audrey so much, I'm gonna stick with Lady Flame, I think.

Aubrey: Ookay.

Duck: But uh, 'round these parts, we have a... the old timers call it yahoo holler, 'cause uh, the... they called them the... well, we call them—most people call 'em Bigfoots. But they called them yahoos, 'cause that's the same—

Aubrey: Ah, the sasquatch.

Duck: Sasquatch.

Aubrey: The woodland ape.

Duck: Yeah, sasquatch, I guess.

Griffin: While this conversation is happening, I like the scene of Ned sort of in the background, trying to unzip the Wookiee costume, and is like—

Ned: A little help, please. Little help.

Griffin: --in the middle of stepping out of it. And suddenly, there is a deep, guttural sigh from the edge of the clearing, and the three of you turn to face it. And with the moon's light above, and the light from the oil lantern, which Mama set down, sort of right in front of the gate, before she stepped through, there is no obscurity about the beast the three of you are facing, just like, ten yards away.

[ambient music plays]

Griffin: It is a horrible sight. Eight feet tall, and nearly as wide, and a roar comes from this beast, projected from the agonized face of a massive black bear. And Ned, you see that same sort of lifeless expression that you recognized in the bobcat, earlier. Horrifyingly, you also see it on several other faces that are jutting out of this beast. A wolf's face sits, motionless, on the neck of this creature. From its shoulder, a stag's head is like, half submerged in its form, and its antler is protruding sharply from the mass.

A half dozen forest creatures are embedded in this thing. And not just their faces – this whole being is covered in their pelts, forming a thick, patchwork

hide all around it. The three of you survey this nightmare in an instant, as it makes its presence known, and then... it charges. What do you do?

This is our first sort of group combat thing, and I want to make it clear, in this game, there is no initiative. I don't really roll. I can set up soft moves to set up like, elements of danger for you all to respond to, but uh, I don't really get a turn to attack. My actions are all in response to you. And because there's no initiative, the three of you kind of have to play fair, and play collaboratively.

If one of you takes a turn, I kind of won't let you go again until the other two also take an action. But in terms of who goes first, and who does what in what order, it's up to you guys to decide, and you kind of need to keep in mind, like, what is gonna be the most narratively interesting, and you know, set each other up and help each other out. It's pretty loosey-goosey.

So, with that in mind, what do you do?

Travis: How far away is the bear?

Griffin: It was ten yards away, getting closer.

Clint: Ned reaches into the trunk of the Lincoln, and pulls out the big, heavy walking stick. It's got a huge grip. It almost looks like a uh, a drum major's baton from marching band.

Griffin: It's got a thing at the end?

Clint: Yeah, a great big, heavy, metal, brass knob at the end of it. And he says...

Ned: Duck!

Clint: Which, he realizes now, if he does, everybody is gonna duck.

Justin: And they do.

Clint: Says it anyway. And so, he throws it, and it goes sailing over Duck's head, 'cause he ducked.

Justin: No, I caught it. I'm used to it.

Griffin: Yeah, I won't make you roll for that. I think you toss Duck the weapon. Do you do anything else, sort of, with your action, here?

Clint: Uh, I start rummaging through the trunk, 'cause I got another idea. As long as I'm at the trunk, I think that enabling Duck will accomplish what I want to do. You want me to roll?

Griffin: Uh, no. No, I think we can figure out what you... You have gear that is like, on your starting character sheet. And if you're looking for something else, that's cool, and we will get to that here in a little bit.

Clint: Yeah. He starts rummaging through the trunk.

Griffin: Alright. Uh, Duck, you catch the walking stick. We'll go to you next before we get to Aubrey. What do you do?

Justin: Can you lay out the scene for me? Like, positioning wise, what's going on?

Griffin: Yeah, I mean, the three of you are pretty close. You got your back, basically, to this arch with the oil lantern laying on the ground. Uh, and the Continental kind of busted up a little bit in the side of the arch. Which, by the way, I should mention, the archway was not even remotely damaged or seemingly affected at all by your car crashing into it.

Um, the beast is now like, five yards away from you guys, and is sort of charging right at you, towards you and the archway. And you're holding the walking stick.

Justin: Alright. Uh, Duck scoops up the lantern, and then, runs around to the other side of the gate, and starts yelling at the monsters.

Duck: Woohoo, come here! Come on, dumb dumbs, right over here!

Justin: Making a lot of noise, and trying to get them to charge straight at him.

Griffin: I love it. Um, I think this would be an act under pressure roll. Like, you're trying to do some... fuck it, like, you're under pressure. And you are acting like this is explicitly that. So...

Justin: Uh, let's see, eight.

Griffin: Eight, a mixed success. Okay. Alright, um, I think that the tradeoff here is, with a mixed success, you do what you're trying to do. And I know what you're trying to do. But there's a slight cost to it. So, you are taunting this creature to run right at you, and it does, and it slams right into the gate. Which it does not see. And uh, as it does so, it sort of... you hear it sort of whine in pain as it does. But, that, the antlers in its shoulder kind of goes through the gate, and you are just a little bit closer. You did not expect it to have this much reach. And those antlers just get you for... I mean, they jab right into you for three harm.

Justin: [sighs] One harm.

Clint: What happened to invincible? Oh, right. Two.

Griffin: Yeah, he has two armor, which like, negates some of it. Uh, and the beast, I think, takes uh, takes two harm. Um, well, it would take two harm, but for whatever reason, this plan went, you know, perfectly how you kind of envisioned it. It was a very good punked you did to this big beast. Um, but it didn't seem to do quite as much damage as you were expecting. Almost as if, like, this thing is also pretty tough right now. And it kind of wedges itself out, backward, from the gate. And we will jump to Aubrey.

Travis: Uh, Aubrey grabs the lantern from Duck, and throws it at the creature's face.

Griffin: Uh, okay.

Travis: It is still lit, correct?

Griffin: Oh, it's lit as hell.

Travis: Excellent.

Griffin: Uh, I don't think you would need to roll for this. This is not, you know... this thing is not... if you're throwing a lantern at it, right? Like, you're not... maybe you act under pressure, but I think you just do it.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: I'm trying to follow the rules, here, and I feel like this is not a traditional, like... It's not kick some ass, right? You're throwing a lantern at a thing. If anything, it's act under pressure.

Travis: It's very close, right? At this point.

Griffin: It's real close, and it's huge. I think you can pretty confidently throw this oil lantern at the thing. Alright, you chuck the oil lantern at its face. You don't have to roll, this is not a fight thing. This is just you doing something very clever. Uh, the oil lantern shatters as it hits the beast's face, and the oil sort of covers it, like, at least the top portion of it.

And the fire quickly spreads, and that pelt, that patchwork pelt, which you can kind of see like, that black slime that you saw earlier, Ned, is kind of like, holding it together a little bit, like glue. This pelt is now just ablaze. It's ablaze because it's now covered in burning oil, but it also just seems like it is very flammable, almost, 'cause this thing just goes up. And it is on fire, and it takes three harm as this fire is spreading all around it.

And it looks pretty enraged. And I think, with that, Aubrey, it is going to look at you and kind of roar, because it knows that you just set it on fire.

Aubrey: Shit!

Griffin: And now, it is charging at you. This is a soft move. It's not me, you know, saying I'm gonna do some damage. But now, there is some danger going on.

Clint: Ned has found what he's looking for in the trunk.

Griffin: Alright.

Clint: It's that great big jug. And when she yelled "shit" just a minute ago, that reminded him. It's that great big jug that he filled from the septic tank with all that nasty shit.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: And animal droppings, and everything else.

Griffin: I did not know that that fluid was as gross as you're describing.

Clint: Oh, it's really gross.

Travis: So wait, in the septic tank, animals have been using your toilet, too?

Clint: Well, everything says... it's not a very effective septic tank.

Griffin: It's a service the Cryptonomica provides where animals can come and use their toilet.

Clint: And also, I've been dumping all this shit in there. I'm not a very good homeowner.

Griffin: You're a real fuckin' cousin Randy, from uh, Christmas Vacation.

Justin: Eddy. Eddy.

Griffin: Cousin Eddy, thank you.

Clint: Yeah, well, he's got a lip fungus we ain't identified yet.

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: Ned grabs this jug, runs over, and throws it in the air. It's arcing towards the path in front of the beast, and it hits the ground and shatters in this horrible stench, this horrible stink, and all of this stuff splatters all over the place. And uh, and Ned says...

Ned: Huh. No methane. Well, it was a great idea.

Griffin: Uh, I think this thing... you were trying to create some sort of literal stink bomb. Which I appreciate.

Clint: Napalm. Yeah, a little napalm.

Griffin: But I think that something kind of curious happens. This thing was about to come down on Aubrey, but as this jug of uh, you said there was like, animal droppings and stuff in it?

Clint: Oh yeah.

Griffin: As this thing smells, like, picks up the scent of a bunch of different animals, even though it's on fire, and even though it was about to attack this thing that is endangering it, it's almost like this more, like, primary instinct kicks in. And you see it whip its head around, and look toward the direction of the jug, and it's... now it's sniffing around, almost like a hunter who has just picked up the trail of its prey. And you have definitely, definitely, accidentally, it sounds like, sort of distracted it away from its attack. What do you all do?

Travis: Aubrey's gonna do some magic.

Griffin: Alright. This is your magic attack, or do magic?

Travis: Well, one of the things that I can do, one of the effects I can do, is enchant a weapon. And it gets plus one harm, and plus magic. So, I am going to, uh... this is my logic. The fire hurts the thing. Duck is standing there, holding a weapon. I'm going to enchant it, set it on fire.

Griffin: Alright.

Travis: Uh, that's a seven, plus two, so nine.

Griffin: Yep. That's a mixed success.

Justin: She sets it on fire, but then it burns Duck's hands, and he drops it.

Griffin: Okay. The walking stick is on fire. It is also made out of wood. So it is on fire, and is enchanted. And what does that do? It gives it plus one magic attack?

Travis: It says plus one harm, and says plus magic, which I don't...

Griffin: Yeah. So, there's a system of tags that comes on every single item in this game, and it just sort of informs the fiction. So there's a monster that could only be hurt by magic, so for instance, like a ghost or something who couldn't be hit by a physical weapon, but a magical weapon could actually harm it. Then, if something has the magic tag, then you're good to go. So, you have set this walking stick on fire. But it is also made out of wood. So if it stays like this for a long time, it's going to be gone. But Duck, you can safely hold it.

Justin: Well, I guess I'm gonna kick some ass.

Griffin: Hell yeah.

Clint: Yeah!

Griffin: Uh, roll 2d6.

Justin: I'm gonna slam the, uh... I'm aiming to just slam the thing right down on its noggin. Oh, shit! That is a thirteen.

Griffin: Jesus Christ, these rolls.

Justin: Rolled two D6s.

Clint: Yeah. Sure did.

Justin: Two sixes.

Clint: Plus uh, since the gear had a one harm hand...

Griffin: Uh, it actually has two harm, 'cause it was enchanted.

Clint: Cool.

Griffin: And it was enchanted with fire, so, uh, on a ten plus, choose one effect. You gain the advantage. Take plus one forward, or give plus one forward to another hunter. You inflict terrible harm, plus one harm. You suffer less harm, minus one harm. Or, you force them where you want them. So you get to pick one effect, in addition to the uh, the two sort of fiery, magical damage that you are also dealing.

Justin: Okay. Um, I guess I'm just gonna inflict an additional harm, then.

Griffin: Alright.

Justin: I was trying to preserve it, somehow, 'cause I feel like that would be Duck's instinct. But he also, you know, he's not a doofus like this, obviously.

Clint: Yeah, preserve us, first.

Justin: An imminent danger, right, to these other people. So...

Griffin: So on a kick ass, on a kick some ass, the way this works is, both of you deal damage. So describe what you do, again.

Justin: Uh, I'm just—the lantern, the oil is on its head as well, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: That's where I would be aiming for. One of the heads. Are there multiple heads?

Griffin: The way this thing is, it's got this main bear head. It kind of almost has the body of a bear, sort of, but a huge one, with all of these other animals kind of absorbed into it.

Clint: Like their faces?

Griffin: Like their whole—all their bodies and stuff.

Clint: Yeah.

Justin: Alright, yeah, so I'm aiming for the bear head.

Griffin: Alright. You clobber this—you bring the flaming brass tip of this walking stick down on top of the bear's skull, and you hear this sort of, if you'll pardon the pun, grizzly crack as you do so. And uh, this thing takes three harm, as you bash into it, thanks to all of your different bonuses. And it sort of whips around as you do that, and it catches you with the horns again. And this time, it kind of like, picks you up, and sort of knocks you back a few feet. You keep your footing, but it sort of hits you real hard with these antlers for another three harm.

Justin: Damn.

Griffin: So, by my calculations—

Duck: Fuck, that hurts.

Griffin: You've taken two harm, at this point. And once you get to four, things start getting very, very serious. But you're not quite there, yet.

Alright, here's what happens next. The three of you, at this point, have sort of independently experienced something profound in this moment. You have been confronted with death itself. With a monstrosity that defies every known natural order of this world. And yet, your instinct was not that of absolute fear, as it would be for any other human who encountered this beast.

You stood your ground, and you fought. And maybe you knew why you're

fighting, and maybe you didn't. But regardless, you all have this remarkable feeling - a kind of inexplicable assurance that you can do this.

And then, Ned, you feel something fall and tap on your shoulder. And Aubrey, you feel it too, in your hair, kind of dripping cold down the back of your neck. And Duck, you see the trees start to sway in a manner you've seen countless times during your patrols of these woods. And there's a peel of thunder overhead, and then, the skies open up.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: And this sudden storm is bashing against the roof of the Continental, and it douses the flames that were spreading across the beast, which looks up at the sky, and then, with otherworldly malice, back down at the three of you.

[theme music plays]

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Matt: We could get rid of Snap, Crackle, Pop. I won't even miss them.

Freddie: You're crazy!

Matt: They die in the second act.

Will: Oh, come on!

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