

The Adventure Zone: Amnesty – Episode 4

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Griffin: Previously on The Adventure Zone...

[theme music plays]

Mama: Where these gates appear on earth, so do the... we call `em Abominations.

Victor: I'm just as eager to avoid a war between our worlds as the next Sylph, so you gotta promise me, Duck... you gotta forget this night ever happened.

Mama: We've kept this gate a secret for—

Griffin: And Ned, you can see the gate right in front of you. And you can see it sort of pressed into the fender of your Continental.

Ned: Shit.

Griffin: The three of you survey this nightmare in an instant, and then, it charges.

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

Griffin: As this thing picks up the scent of a bunch of different animals, you see it whip its head around, and look toward the direction of the jug. And there's a peel of thunder overhead, and then the skies open up. And it douses the flames that were spreading across the beast, which looks up at the sky, and then, back down at the three of you.

[theme music plays]

[rain and thunder sounds]

Griffin: So, the rain is coming down in sheets, nearly to the point where the three of you are having trouble seeing this beast that is right in front of you. You see a faint plume of steam rising off of it, where that fire that was spreading across its patchwork pelt was doused. And through that steam, the three of you faintly see another shape behind the monster. And actually, as you look around, you notice that these shapes are surrounding you at the edge of the clearing.

It's more woodland creatures, all seemingly possessed in the same way that you saw, Ned, in that bobcat. You count eight animals in total, surrounding you.

Travis: Eight! Eight animals! Wa ha ha ha!

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: That's a classic bit, of course. Long time listeners know, any time there's a number on the show, we kind of do that bit.

Griffin: Yeah. Which makes it tricky every time we like, roll dice, or like, every other sentence.

Justin: Yeah, pretty much anything.

Griffin: There's like a smaller black bear prowling toward you. There's a couple other bobcats. There's a deer, and just a handful of other animals, all slowly walking in your direction, beckoned by the pained roars of that beast that you were just fighting. And as they're approaching, a light flashes from the archway, and suddenly, there's Barclay and Mama. And without a second of hesitation, Mama retrieves her sawed off shotgun from her duster, and shoots two shells into the side of the big beast, who, surprisingly, doesn't look terribly damaged by the gunfire, but kind of roars reflexively, and turns toward Mama.

[ambient music plays]

But then, there's another light – this time, in the distance, deeper in the woods. There's another vehicle, hastening toward your location. And sensing danger, the beast roars again, and those animals that were surrounding you spring toward it. And in kind of a grisly display, they seem to leap into the beast, who absorbs them into its form before leering, one last time, in your party's direction, and then dashes away into the woods.

And just mere seconds after the monster disappears, that vehicle that you heard rolls to a stop at the edge of the clearing. And Duck, you recognize it as a response vehicle for the Monongahela National Forest service. And real quickly, like, before anything else happens, Mama says under her breath...

Mama: Nobody say a word about this stuff, please. I'm begging you.

Griffin: And from out of the forest wagon steps ranger Juno Devine, your coworker, Duck. She—

Travis: And owner of the coolest name in town.

Griffin: She uh, deploys an umbrella, and jogs towards you, and she shouts...

Juno: Ranger Newton, what the heck's going on, buddy? Why'd you call me in?

Travis: Now, Griffin, is it a magical umbrella?

Griffin: No, it's just a re—I mean, all umbrellas are magical if you think about the sort of incredible purpose they serve. I want to be clear that this is the result of you calling in somebody on your radio as you were running through the woods. This is sort of a reaction to the action that you took.

Duck: Uhh... Well, hey, Juno, thanks for coming out so quick. Uh, you know, honestly, stories don't come much sillier than this. But uh, we had a sort of... [sighs] I guess you could say bear attack, and you know me. It gets late at night, I get a little jumpy. And uh, I thought it was something a little bit worse than that. And I was honestly as fearful for the animal itself as my own sort of safety, you know. Animal, uh, dealing with animals is always a

tricky business. So I called you in, but I guess, you know, in hindsight, maybe I uh, overreacted a little bit.

Juno: Well, you were pursued by a black bear? That doesn't sound really like bear M.O.

Duck: Juno, that's what spooked me about the whole thing. Uh, it was very aggressive. I mean, you do not see that in the species, especially around these parts, 'cause there's so many people. You know, they tend to get almost a little too comfortable with humans. So that was not—you know, I just wasn't used to the behavior, and I think that's kind of what got me a little jumpy, if I'm being honest.

Griffin: She turns sort of towards everybody else, and she's like...

Juno: So, what are y'all doing here? Did you antagonize this bear or something? Did y'all—were y'all trying to do like a fun Winnie the Pooh joke that turned horrible? What's the story? What are y'all doing out here?

Aubrey: We were just practicing, um, community theater. Do you know, uh, Midsummer Night's dream?

Juno: Yeah, I'm familiar with the works of Bill.

Aubrey: Yeah, we were just working to get, uh, into, you know, the character of the mechanicals, uh, out in the woods, practicing. You know, basic stuff.

Griffin: She says...

Juno: That's great. If it weren't raining cats and dogs right now, I might ask if I could sit in and watch. That's one of my favorites.

Aubrey: Well, you know, it started raining, and we were about to head in. And that's when ranger... Newton, was it? Uh, came through. And I think the bear saw all the people here and got a little spooked, and ran right back into the woods.

Duck: Yeah. That's literally the only time anyone's ever been helped by community theater.

Travis: [laughs]

Duck: It was a miracle, honestly. Uh, and I was so relieved that I could be here for this momentous occasion.

Ned: Of course, that's why that fur suit over there, hanging out of the back of my car, 'cause I'm a character actor. And I believe in embracing all aspects of it.

Griffin: Uh, she notices the car, but obviously, does not see the archway. Uh, and I think the damage to the car is like, surface level enough, that it doesn't even register that it ran into something. Uh, and Juno says...

Juno: Yeah, you know, I... I might have to write you up for this. You're really supposed to stick to the roads and the trails. Um, you shouldn't really be driving your car through the woods, especially not in like, a four wheel drive vehicle like, uh... What is that, a Continental?

Ned: Lincoln Continental, yes. Lincoln Continental. Mark III. I hope you like it.

Juno: Uh, yeah, it's great. Okay, um, well, ranger Newton, we should probably head back and write this up. Uh, any of y'all want a ride back to Kepler? Are y'all alright?

Ned: Uh, I can drive. My uh, my car's okay, I think. I think it's drivable, and I'll be very careful. I'll just retrace my path so that I don't tear up any more of the woodland beauty.

Travis: Aubrey looks to Mama for kind of a lead, here.

Griffin: Yeah, Mama says, uh...

Mama: You know, I think we're probably just gonna walk back to the lodge. It's pretty close. I need to work on my lines for the um, part. The part I'm playing in the play.

Aubrey: She's Peter Quince in the play.

Mama: Yes. That's me. We're having a lot of fun with it. So uh, I'll head back, and Aubrey, we still got a room ready for ya if you want to come with me.

Aubrey: Sounds great!

Griffin: Uh, and you all start to walk off in the other direction. Duck, are you going with Juno back to the station, or what's your plan?

Justin: Yeah, you know what, I can't think of a good reason why I would go with Ned, as much as that probably seems like it would advance the story a little better than me...

Clint: We're friends!

Griffin: Alright. You all—

Justin: ...departing from the three of them.

Griffin: You all start to—Juno goes back in her car, and you see her turn on the uh, the light inside her car, and start writing some stuff down in a notepad. Taking some notes about this bear attack. There's some paperwork to do. And uh, as everybody else kind of starts walking towards the edge of the clearing, and Ned, you get in your car, and it starts, and uh, Mama turns towards everybody and she says...

Mama: If y'all wouldn't mind, could you swing by the lodge tomorrow around noon? Barclay will cook you up some lunch. I got—I got something I need to pitch you all.

Duck: Yeah, that's fine.

Aubrey: I'll be there anyways, so like, yeah.

Mama: Okay. I was mostly talking to the other two, but...

Aubrey: Oh.

Griffin: Um, and with that, you all uh, start making your way back through the forest toward town. And the storm kind of dissipates, just as quickly as it appears. Um, and you all sort of make your way back through the forest with the strange events of this evening sort of rattling around your heads. And uh, we'll jump forward, now, and Aubrey, you've settled into your room in Amnesty Lodge for the evening. And just as Mama promised, the accommodations are pretty nice. There's a soft, queen-sized bed. And next to it, there's a small, round cushion where Dr. Bonkers is already fast asleep. And he's got a little bowl of diced carrots right in front of him, which—

Travis: Now, here's the thing, Griffin, I want to say. I've spoken with some people recently. Carrots are a good treat for rabbits, like cake. But not a meal.

Griffin: Oh.

Travis: You wouldn't feed—there's a lot of sugar in carrots.

Griffin: Interesting. So what's the rabbit eats?

Travis: That, I don't know. Maybe a pellet. Let's assume that there's like, rabbit food that Aubrey has.

Griffin: Alright, yeah. There's some rabbit food, uh, dished out in the bowl.

Travis: I didn't research that far. Just enough to say, like, don't just straight up feed him carrots.

Griffin: Give him carrots all the time. Yeah, also, turns orange. But the eyesight gets almost too good, actually.

Travis: So terrifyingly good.

Griffin: Uh, so, you assume that like, Dani did a pretty great job rabbit sitting here. So, you're in this room, and you've kicked off your boots, and you're preparing to settle in, and there's a soft knock at the door. And Mama pokes her head in, and she says...

Mama: Hey, sorry to bother you. I just... I need to ask you something. Can you think of anything... anything at all from your past that seems strange? Like the way the things you saw tonight were strange, like some sort of weird portal in your basement, or a visit from a sorcerer or something?

Aubrey: Yeah, yeah. You know, now that you mention it, there was that time when hell poured into my... What the fuck are you talking about?

Mama: No, no, listen, I know this is... What's happening here is uncommon. But you have some sort of connection to all of this already, and I'm just trying to figure out what that is, Aubrey. So like, are any weird runes etched in stone out in your backyard in the house you grew up in? Any, just... do me a favor, and think about it. And if there's nothin', that's fine. I'm just tryin' to make everything make sense.

Aubrey: No. I... um... [sighs] Uh, no. I mean, listen, my family, it's about as boring as could be. I mean, it's one of those like, keep this between us, okay? Old money, but the money's not there anymore, but the name old money, history, that kind of thing. But it's about as bland as bland could be. I mean, that's on my mom's side. I mean, my dad, you know, my dad is not that. And—and so, when he and my mom married, we kind of fell out of touch with the family, and then I fell out of touch with my parents. And so, like, not that I remember. But I don't really know that much about my family, past my mom and dad.

Mama: There's gotta be a source for this stuff. I just... I'm sorry for grillin' ya, I'm just tryin' to figure out what it is.

Aubrey: Grilling? Ehh? Like fire?

Mama: Yeah, I mean, there's probably gonna be a lot of that from now on, huh?

Aubrey: Yeah. A lot of like, me acknowledging that it might be a pun.

Mama: I guess... I guess if you can't think of anything, that's fine. It's just, I want you to wrack your brain, if there's something in your past, something you ever came in contact with that had something that you couldn't quite explain.

Aubrey: Um... There was... well, there was the necklace.

Mama: Oh. Alright, you had a cool necklace? What was that about?

Aubrey: Well, I mean, it's just kind of the one thing my mom took with her when she fell out with the family. The Flamebright pendant.

Mama: Now, Aubrey...

Aubrey: Yeah?

Mama: It's called the Flamebright pendant, and you didn't think that that was germane?

Aubrey: Well, I... I—now, right now, in this... you know, like, it's something, you know, I heard so much in my—but I don't have it. I'm not wearing it. It's gone.

Mama: Where'd it go?

Aubrey: Stolen.

Mama: Well, ain't that just peachy.

Aubrey: Yeah. Yeah. That was the shit. So like, I didn't think about it. It's not like I'm wearing—it's not like it's warm against my skin as I cast my bewitching magics.

Mama: Yeah. That—that's fine and everything. Alright, I'll try to find out what I can about it. You get some sleep. I got a project I'm gonna need some help with tomorrow.

Aubrey: Like crafting?

Mama: Something like that.

Griffin: And she slips back out the door. Ned, you pull your car, just a little bit worse for wear, in front of the Cryptonomica. And you see a light inside, still on. And as you head in, you see Kirby—

Travis: [singing] There's a light on.

Griffin: You see Kirby with a mop and a bucket, cleaning up a puddle on the floor near one of the displays. And as the bell above the door rings as you enter, he looks up at you, and then back down at his work, and he says...

Kirby: Roof's leaking again. How'd, uh... how'd it go out there?

Ned: Um... Not entirely as expected. But I would have to say, the uh... the views of monsters was, um, the best. Ever. I hope I actually got some... some... some good footage.

Griffin: He says...

Kirby: It's late. We don't have to worry about that tonight.

Griffin: And he puts the mop in the bucket, and starts to wheel it away. And just as he does so, another trickle of water drips down at a different spot in the room, and Kirby kind of sighs and walks over to it. And he puts the bucket underneath it to catch the water. And he says...

Kirby: Ned, I don't want to sound ungrateful, but I... I gotta ask. Why on God's green earth did you decide to open this tourist trap here in the middle of nowhere?

Ned: Um, well... I didn't really open it, Kirby. I kind of um, found it? [sighs] You see, I was uh, I got in a little bit of trouble, uh, in my not so shining past. And um, and made a friend. And uh, that friend said, perhaps, I would want to avoid, uh, my trouble, by coming here to this lovely community and kind of uh, uh, taking a prolonged vacation from my trouble. And uh, this was actually her establishment. I, of course, you know, I contributed some. I jazzed it up some. You know, brought a little joie de vivre to it. A little flair, so to speak.

Kirby: As you bring to everything.

Griffin: He kind of chuckles.

Ned: Um, and so, uh, she uh... she went away, and now, I'm stuck with it. And stuck with the mortgage, and apparently, stuck with an eviction notice, and stuck. Just stuck.

Griffin: Um, he kind of sighs, and uh, sets the mop down in the corner with the bucket still catching the water in the middle of the room. And he says...

Kirby: Yeah, uh, I know that feeling.

Griffin: And he uh, he collects the like, dozen or so empty cans of RC Cola up off his desk, and he drops them in a recycling bin. And then, he picks up his old MacBook, and walks toward the door, and he says...

Kirby: I'll see you tomorrow, Ned.

Ned: I'll see you too, Kirby. I'll tell you what I'll do – we've got, what, 30 days left before we're evicted?

Griffin: Uh, I think you have one week is what we established. So like, six days.

Ned: Well, I'll tell you what. In that six days, I'll contact the landlord and tell him he can fix the damn roof, and at least, maybe, we won't get rained on in seven days. So, wait a minute, let me... now, I'm writing a note to myself on a Post-It. Call Mr. Garfield...

Griffin: No, come on. You don't get the—you don't get to wield the power of the Garfield insert. He says, uh...

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: He says, uh...

Ned: I'm not worried about it, Ned. You've always been pretty resourceful.

Griffin: And with a ring of the bell, Kirby walks out the door. Duck, you are... you've finished your work for the evening. Your shift is over, and you're back at your place in Kepler. What's your place? Where do you live in Kepler?

Justin: I have a...

Travis: Bungalow.

Justin: Apartment. Yeah, but it's a nice apartment.

Griffin: Okay. One bedroom?

Justin: It's like—

Griffin: Studio?

Justin: Uh, two bedrooms. One is sort of the—

Griffin: Whoa.

Justin: I know. One's a bedroom, and then I have an office where I mainly do my ship building. Like, model ships.

Griffin: Hell yeah.

Justin: And uh, that's kind of all that happens in the office, really. That's kind of where I go to like, unwind. But uh, and then, I got a bunch of, you know, exotic animal heads from all my big game hunting.

Griffin: Jesus, no. No.

Justin: That's right, twist. What a twist.

Griffin: No.

Justin: No one saw this coming.

Griffin: Vetoed. Black balled.

Justin: No, I have a lot of paintings of wild life put up around the house. Some accommodations from the park service for distinguished service. That kind of thing. And uh, you know, it's a nice place. It's not sad. It's nice.

Griffin: Good. Okay, so you're in your bathroom, brushing your teeth. And you finish up and take a look—

Justin: If someone has to say their apartment is not sad, it probably is, right?

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, you finish up brushing, and you take a look in the bathroom mirror. And you turn, and you shut out the light, and you close the bathroom door behind you. And as you enter your bedroom, there she is again. That vision, that faint blue silhouette of the woman who talked to you in the woods earlier tonight. And she's standing still, between you and the bed, and she's not really moving.

Justin: Ditto, would I know this thing's name from like, previous encounters, or whatever?

Griffin: Yeah, I think we should set that up, just because it's getting to the point where just referring to it as 'the vision' is kind of strange. Also confusing, 'cause people might think I'm talking about the comic book hero.

Travis: You are. That's the thing.

Griffin: And you are, that's the twist. No, it's uh, I think you used to have a lot more contact with her when you were younger. And so, just to be cordial in the way that Duck is cordial, you wanted to know her name. And back then, she introduced herself as Minerva.

Justin: Minerva. Okay.

Griffin: Um, but she's just kind of standing in front of you, not really moving, and doesn't really seem to acknowledge you as you enter the room.

Clint: Who you gonna call?

Griffin: Well, don't bust Minerva. That's...

Justin: No, I'm not gonna...

Duck: Well... [sighs] God. Hey, Minerva.

Justin: And I walk through her, towards bed.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, you do that, and you just phase right through her, and head to bed. And as you do, she doesn't respond. Um, she doesn't respond with speech, and she doesn't seem to be like, moving. She looks, actually, like frozen in place. Uh, she has like one of her arms like, half raised. The other one is kind of at her side, and she's just frozen and static. And as you sort of realize that she's not responding at all, you maybe get a little bit confused. And as you look at her standing perfectly still in the center of your room, you do start to hear something. You hear music coming from Minerva.

[guitar music plays]

Griffin: Old, like kind of tinny, distorted music, coming from her form. And it's like a sad and beautiful like, acoustic blues tune. One that you don't really recognize, but the music is moving, and for a minute or so, it's all you hear, just reverberating around your bedroom, before, in the blink of an eye, Minerva fades away.

[ambient music plays]

Griffin: So, it's tomorrow at noon, and the three of you at Mama's behest have gathered in the lobby of the Amnesty Lodge. Aubrey, you stayed the night here, and Ned, you said you've been here before, but Duck, the scene here is so unbelievably quaint as you enter. The windows are all, uh, around the lobby are all half open, letting in a nice breeze. And you see Barclay through the kitchen window, working over a large pot with a hair net on. And the smell coming from the kitchen is incredible.

There's a few guests in the lobby, just enjoying the day. Jake Coolice is sitting with his snowboard up on a table, just meticulously waxing it.

Travis: Have we established what kind of creature Jake Coolice is when he's at home?

Griffin: Uh, no, but we'll get to it.

Travis: Oh, I can't wait to find out.

Griffin: They're all also in human form right now. Uh, there is a young woman, uh, sitting at a piano, just jotting down something on some sheet music. Dani is in the corner with a large sketchpad in her lap, doing some kind of charcoal drawing. And everybody here just seems so at ease. And Mama comes into the lobby, and greets the three of you, and says...

Mama: Uh, Duck, Ned, um, thank you for coming. And Aubrey, I guess, thanks for staying. I have something grave I need to discuss with you in my office. And oh, right, I promised you some food. Did y'all eat yet?

Aubrey: No.

Travis: Griffin, have we eaten yet? Should we roll to see if we ate?

Griffin: Yeah, roll the hunger dice, and that's a special dice that I mailed each of you. It's a two sided dice.

Travis: I got a nine.

Duck: I'm starving, thank you.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Two.

Griffin: Uh, and Barclay kind of hears you say that you're starving, and he nods from the kitchen, and Mama smiles, and then, leads the three of you into her office down one of those hallways off the lobby. And her office is a mess. There's like, five book cases, all handcrafted, of different shapes and materials, all loaded with these big, like, historical tomes, and books on folklore for various regions. Um, there's a couch against one wall that is just covered with maps, mostly of the Monongahela Forest. Her desk is similarly covered with books, and maps, and a leger filled with paperwork for the lodge that's just sort of sandwiched between the pages of the leger. And her desk also has a few empty mugs on it.

And at the center of her office is a large, round table, also handcrafted by the look of it, with several chairs around it. And as you all walk into the room, Mama enters behind you, and she locks the door behind her. And she says...

Mama: So, how was everyone's night?

Aubrey: It was fine.

Duck: Uh, a little shitty, if I'm being honest.

Ned: I realized this is not a nightmare when I woke up again. So... I had a fitful night's sleep.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Yeah, it's not a nightmare. There's, um... there's a lot going on we should probably sort of—

Aubrey: I slept great!

Mama: Well, that's... yeah. I was hoping you would.

Aubrey: Full six hours.

Mama: That's, uh, I mean... that's... people say they recommend eight, but I get by on like, four. But you know, I'm spinnin' a lot of plates. Um, let's uh—

Ned: Mama, what's your secret? What is your secret, Mama?

Justin: Let's take a deep dive into your sleep habits.

Ned: What is your secret, Mama?

Griffin: She says...

Mama: I just drink a lot of water during the day, and it gets the—

Ned: No, I mean, here we are. Let's face it, Kepler not exactly the uh, you know, the gay Paree of the ski set. And I haven't seen three customers in three months. And yet, your lobby out there is packed. You've got people all over the place. They're writing music, and they're waxing their skateboards, and everything else.

Travis: With their hula hoops, and their rock music.

Ned: What is your secret? Are you online? Do you have a—do you have some kind of deal with Yelp? What is the—what is your secret?

Justin: [laughing]

Griffin: She says, um... She says...

Mama: Yeah, I opened up a—I guess someone opened up a Yelp page for me a couple years back. But that's, um...

Ned: Oh, I knew it.

Mama: That's not really where most of my industry lies. We should, um—

Duck: More Trip Advisor?

Ned: Oh.

Duck: Yeah, I heard they're coming up in the ranks.

Ned: Retirees? Are they bus people?

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Why don't y'all pull up a seat, and I can kind of get y'all on the same page?

Griffin: So you all sit around this table in the center of Mama's office, and she catches everyone up on what she told Aubrey during the last evening about Sylvain, and the Sylphs, and the lodge, and the arch in the woods that uh, these Abominations cross over from, into our world. Duck, do you tell everybody about sort of your experience in Sylvain that night?

Justin: No.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: I promised I wouldn't.

Griffin: Okay, yeah, sure. Absolutely. Yeah.

Travis: Duck knows how to keep his lips shut.

Griffin: Cool. Um, so, Mama says...

Mama: Alright, and so, these Abominations, the... what you gotta understand is that the Sylphs—

Aubrey: Seems mean.

Mama: Well—

Duck: It is a little judgey.

Mama: I'm not talkin' about everybody who comes over from Sylvain. It's—

Aubrey: Well, I know, but I mean—

Mama: This is a—

Aubrey: You know, like... I don't know, it just seems mean. Abomination?

Mama: I mean, that was their term for 'em, not ours. But I mean, in their defense, they do pretty abominable shit.

Aubrey: Yeah, but I mean, what is... what is social, you know...

Mama: Okay. What would you prefer to call these big, deadly monsters?

Aubrey: Nom Noms.

Mama: No, we're not gonna call them Nom Noms.

Ned: Bom Boms.

Aubrey: Bom Boms?

Duck: Goombas?

Ned: Goombas!

Duck: No, abomination fits. I got my butt kicked by one last night.

Aubrey: Okay, but in my head—

Duck: It's on the level.

Aubrey: In my head, I'm gonna say Bom Boms.

Duck: Okay, just as long as you don't vocalize it.

Aubrey: I can't promise that.

Griffin: Uh, she says...

Mama: What you gotta understand about these... about the Bom Boms, is that—

Aubrey: Thank you.

Duck: No, now, don't—

Mama: Okay, the Abominations. Yes.

Duck: I can't push back by myself.

Clint: [laughing]

Mama: What you gotta understand about these things is that the Sylphs, they don't claim credit for them. They swear up and down, they don't know where they're coming from. They don't originate in their world, despite the fact that they come through the gate into ours. But wherever they come from, the fact remains that they show up at our door, and they try to make a mess of things. And obviously, that's not gonna happen.

Aubrey: Can I ask you a question, Mama? In your experience with the things?

Mama: Yes.

Aubrey: Is it just like, they come in, and they are chaotic? Are they trying to... do they want something?

Mama: I mean, that's what makes it a little bit tricky, is that they have sort of different impulses. They got different, uh, different instincts. And figuring those out is sort of part of the process. But it's an important thing to do, 'cause we can't let the folks of this fine town live in fear of some big monster who's lookin' to do them harm. And Sylvain doesn't want that, either. Some monster comes over here and makes headlines, and some far less understanding, far less patient folks, are gonna make a beeline to Sylvain, and rain hellfire down on them in return. And that's a war that neither of our worlds can afford.

So, by our estimate, the gate showed up in Kepler back in '88. And quickly, some of us realized what the deal was, what we were up against, why we had to keep it a secret. And I was one of those folks what had that realization, and I've been fightin' 'em ever since. Now, these days, it's just me and Barclay doin' the fighting. Some of the guests here, they have... they got some idea of the score, but our numbers have dwindled, and for obvious reasons, it's a tough gig to hire for. The repercussions of bringing someone on with loose lips would be... and I'm not being hyperbolic, here. It would be apocalyptic.

But y'all know the truth now, and by my countin', you've kept it to yourself for like, twelve hours, and that ain't nothin'. So yeah, I'm asking for your help to defend this town, and this world, and Sylvain.

Griffin: And she goes to her desk and opens up a drawer, and she pulls something out, and walks over to the three of you, and places this object that she retrieved down in front of you. And you see, sitting on this handcrafted table, is a circular patch. A sew-in patch, crafted with shimmering Sylvan wool, depicting a tall, green pine tree, standing in front of a sunset-hued gradient, with a sort of decidedly, like, retro, '70s, '80s graphic design aesthetic.

And when you look back up at Mama, she pulls back the lapel of her duster, and you see that same patch sewn into the inside of her duster. And she says...

Mama: I'm asking you three to join the Pine Guard.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Hey, everybody. This is Griffin McElroy, your keeper. I'm just trying that on for size. That's what this game calls game masters. Your keeper... that sounds weird, though. Like *your* keep... anyway, thanks for listening to The Adventure Zone. The fourth episode of our Amnesty arc, it's a mini arc that we're doing here while we're kind of between big seasons. I think we're planning on doing one or two more, and uh, thank you all so, so much for all the great feedback on this arc.

We are so thrilled that so many of you are enjoying it. I think we'll have probably one more episode, the climactic finale in this arc, before we move on to the next thing, which we're still kind of figuring it out what that's gonna be. Kind of the result of us trying to do this weekly while we're doing the experimental arcs is, we're kind of building the plane beneath us as we fly it, which is exciting, and also horrifying.

I wanted to tell you about a couple of jumbotrons that we have this week for you. I want to tell you all about 8-Bit Saga. That is a Star Wars D&D podcast created by seven friends who were inspired by The Adventure Zone. 8-Bit Saga follows the outlandish adventures of a group of mercs working for the Huts, set during the time of the Old Republic.

You can find it on iTunes, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts. Just search for 8-Bit Saga, and I am going to do that. Just set a reminder to do that right now, because that sounds sick as hell.

I have another personal jumbotron. This one's for Tina, Tea Leaf, Blargar... Blar... Blarargar. Oh, man, this next name's gonna be buckwild. Hur... I swear to God, this is not what these characters are named, they're just trying to put me through the wringer. Hrarglarb. [laughs] Hrargarlb, uh, Ithimaya, and Nom. Alright. We made it, folks. We've made it through to the

other side. It's from Robert who says, "I want to thank my faithful party for joining me on this multi-year journey as I weave a world and story for our weekly adventures. I met some of you through RPGs, and others, I could stay in touch with because of them. We've all gotten to be better friends over the years, and I'm happy that this shared hobby of ours became something so wonderful."

That is so, so sweet. And I'm really just filled with so much resentment that this didn't come with phonetic pronunciations. You've made an ass of me, Robert. You have made me into an ass.

I want to thank everybody who has been tweeting about the show using the #TheZoneCast hash tag. We really, really appreciate you spreading the word about the show. We do not pay to advertise the show at all, and we rely entirely on word of mouth, and you all have been so great about that during the experimental arcs, which we appreciate, because, you know, it's like the nature of stopping one season to like, try a bunch of new stuff, that there's a little bit of fall off, there. And we really, really appreciate you helping bring in new folks who might be into the new stuff that we're doing.

I think we're nearing the end of this Amnesty mini arc, and so, I don't know if there's any characters left to name. But who knows what the other boys are planning on doing when they're running their arcs? So, uh, go ahead and tweet at us using the #TheZoneCast hash tag, and someday, you might end up as a character on the show.

Also want to remind you that we are making a graphic novel with First Second and Carey Pietsch, an adaptation of the first arc of the Balance campaign, Here There Be Gerblins. It's gonna be out this July, and there's lots of ways to find it, and preorder it, and do all that good stuff. And you can find all those ways at TheAdventureZoneComic.com.

Also want to thank Maximum Fun for having us on the network. We love being a part of the Max Fun family. You can find out about all the great, free shows that are available at MaximumFun.org. They have shows like Stop Podcasting Yourself, and the Flophouse, and Lady to Lady, and a ton of other amazing shows waiting for you, all at MaximumFun.org. And if you want to hear other stuff that we do, or see video series that Justin and I make at

Polygon, with Travis guesting sometimes, you can go to McElroyShows.com. And we appreciate you checking that out, too.

And also, one more thing: thanks to Lobo Loco for the use of the song All Night Long. It was that kind of dreamy blues song that you heard earlier in the episode.

I think that's it. I'm gonna let you get back to the rest of this episode. This one's kind of a strange one, because we never really had episodes like this in Balance, where it's just sort of like, planning for the big fight. I thought it was like, kind of fun, to like, have the boys set up something, rather than me sort of set up the big finale. Like, I love sort of the collaborative nature by these Powered by the Apocalypse games. Uh, and it was, I don't know, I was really, really happy with it.

But yeah, next episode's probably gonna be the last one in Amnesty, in the mini arc, before we move onto whatever else. So yeah, thanks for sticking with us, and we will have a new episode up for you next Thursday, which is gonna be February 8th. So I will talk to you then. Bye.

[theme music plays]

Mama: I'm asking you three to join the Pine Guard.

Aubrey: [snorts]

Mama: I know, it kind of sounds like a brand of cleaning products.

Aubrey: Pinesol.

Mama: Yeah, it's a different... it's a different thing. I mean, we're not too worried about copyright infringement, because um, you know, this is not something that we're gonna go around talking about. There's not gonna be like, you know, t-shirts and merch for the Pine Guard.

Griffin: There will definitely, definitely be merch for the t-shirts and the patches of the Pine Guard. You can find it on our online store.

Clint: [laughs]

Aubrey: Is the badge scratch and sniff?

Mama: I mean, it can be with you spray it with some sort of thing, or rub it up against a car air freshener or something. Listen, I know this is heavy, but y'all don't need to decide right now. But I think—

Aubrey: I'm in!

Mama: Just like that?

Aubrey: Yep.

Ned: Is there health insurance?

Griffin: She says...

Mama: There's the opposite of health insurance. There's health endangerment, if anything. Listen, we've reached a point now where it's all hands on deck. I've been doing this for 30 years. And I've never seen anything like that beast in the woods.

Aubrey: You've been doing this since you were five? Eh? 'Cause—it's like a compliment. You look so young.

Mama: Oh my gosh, okay, Aubrey. Thank you.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: These things in the woods, they're getting stronger for whatever reason. And y'all got ambushed last night, and you held your ground. And so, I truly believe, with a bit more prep work, you're gonna tear that thing down.

Griffin: And with that, Barclay enters the room, and he's got a tray with um, some bowls of radish stew, which he places in front of each of you. And then, you see him take out that paper that Dani was sketching on out in the

lobby, which he places on the center of the table, and you see a detailed drawing of that beast in the woods. And Mama says...

Mama: This office is the ready room for the Pine Guard, now. We figure out what the beast is capable... the Abomination is capable of, what it's weak against, what kind of upper hand we can hope to gain on it before we go hunting. And gang, we gotta go tonight. These things, they show up every couple months, like, 'bout three nights before the full moon.

And then, we got one advantage. Just one advantage. For the next week, they gotta stay within a mile or so radius around the gate. But we lose that window. We lose that week, and they can go wherever they want. And if that happens, well... word, and you know, death and destruction, starts to get around.

So the window's almost closed, so it's best we get started right now. So...

Travis: Aubrey looks over at the map.

Aubrey: How big is the Mon... Monan... Monangalia Forest?

Mama: Monongahela.

Aubrey: What is it?

Mama: It's trick—Monongahela. I know. It's tricky.

Aubrey: Okay. How big is that compared to where the gate is, and where Kepler is? Is that mile... do we need to worry about Kepler?

Mama: I mean, yeah, Kepler's in the radius. I've had to, very discreetly, dispatch some stuff here in Kepler. A lot of the woods is in it. The mountain, Mount Kepler is obviously in it. There's—there's a lot of places that we can go hunting. It's not, you know, it's not a small area.

Duck: If you're asking how big's the forest, that's 1,439 square miles.

Mama: Yeah, that's a big ass forest.

Duck: It's a big forest.

Mama: That's a good forest. It's got Kepler in it, it's got a bunch of stuff in it. It's not a small space to hunt them down, and that is what we do. We hunt. It's not like these things are gonna wait for us. We gotta figure out what they want, how we can find them, and once we do find them, what we can do take them out.

Ned: I need something clarified for me. So you're telling me, that all of these Bom Boms that have been—

Aubrey: Thank you.

Ned: --wandering through these woods—

Duck: I quit.

Ned: --for decades, have not really been the goat boys, and the moth dudes, and the big feets, and the yahoos, but have been these creatures that came from the other place?

Mama: Yeah, I mean—

Ned: Is that what you're telling me?

Mama: Well, I mean, the Sylphs who come from Sylvain, they're good folks. This is—that's not who I'm talking about, and I want to make that entirely clear. Fuck, Barclay's Bigfoot. You ain't never seen him going around, you know, trashing a—trashing a—

Aubrey: Barclay is Bigfoot?!

Griffin: Barclay kind of sighs and says...

Barclay: Yeah, I'm uh, I am Mr. Bigfoot.

Aubrey: Hell yeah, dude! You're famous as shit!

Barclay: Yeah, it's regrettable. I've been irresponsible, I guess, in the past. But um, yeah.

Ned: And you've traveled a lot. Washington...

Barclay: Yeah, I get around.

Griffin: Uh, Mama says...

Mama: That's—that's not what we're facing, here. These things, they ain't Sylphs, whatever they are.

Ned: I want to know how many of them were you talking about, here.

Mama: I mean, if we do our job right, there's only one at a time. It shows up every couple months. Now, I know you—

Ned: I saw nine or ten!

Mama: Yeah, and here's the thing: I think that's all part of the same Abomination.

Ned: The same booger.

Mama: What else do we know about this thing?

Griffin: I want to set up that this is the part where we are going to like, discuss around the table, like, what you know about the monster. This is the part of the—and this is kind of unique to this game, is that like, a lot of the time, I'm not gonna set up the final battle. You all are, using what you have learned about this monster.

So, this is the part of the game where you all are going to like, kind of formulate the battle plan, and figure out like, what this last scene is gonna look like, and what you're gonna do. And this part of the game, I want to be clear, is incredibly vital, because the monsters that uh, I am able to create in

this game are so dangerous. And if you are not as tactical and thoughtful about it as is possible, things can go like, very, very bad.

So that's—that's kind of what we're doing here.

Justin: Well, before we get into that, uh, Duck sort of almost, I think, mid-sentence... not one of his, somebody else's, stands up from the table, and says...

Duck: Listen, this has been... well, I was gonna say fun, but that would be inaccurate, obviously. But uh, I—I can't do this with y'all. Um, I—I think it's real neat what you all are doing. It seems like good work. But uh, you're gonna have to count me out of this. Just, um... stay out of the way of the forest service, and I'll try to keep things clear for y'all as best I can. But uh, you just... continue on with your exposition, there, 'cause I gotta be gettin' back to work.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Well, what is your work, Duck Newton?

Duck: Well, I patrol my sector of the Monongahela National Forest, and keep the wildlife and the plant life safe. And I watch over it, and I learn, and you know, do some research from time to time. It's kind of an even split.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Protecting the wildlife, huh? How many animals you think this thing's, uh, killed? Sucked up into its body? Just a rough estimate, do you reckon? Like, how many?

Duck: How many fish do you think the black bear kills in a given day? I mean, that's nature, right?

Griffin: And she points down to the drawing of the monster on the table. She says...

Mama: This ain't fuckin' nature, Duck. This is something from somewhere else that came into our world to destroy it. To destroy the forest, and kill everything inside of it. That sounds like it fits your job duties 100%.

Duck: And I am a guy. I'm just Duck. I looked at that thing last night. You don't understand – you've been dealing with this a long time. I looked at that thing. It wanted to kill me. It could've killed me, if I had given it half a chance. And maybe you all are itching to throw yourselves into the fire from the proverbial frying pan, but I'm not. I want to keep living. Hell, I got a boat to finish. I got a cat to feed. I—this isn't me.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: I think you're selling yourself short, there, Duck. I think... I mean, hell, do you think most folks could've faced off against this thing last night, and lived to tell the tale about it?

Duck: I mean, I'm not... I'll admit that I'm—I mean, I'm tougher than your average—I was gonna say bear. But I mean, that's technically, I guess, still accurate. But I mean, really think about this for a second. I mean, walk through it with me. We could sit here and make all the plans we want. And then, we go out into the forest, right? We find it, and then it sees me, and I see it, and then I rear back, and what the fuck finishes that sentence? Seriously. What do I do, do I run up and punch it in it's stomach? Am I gonna spin kick it? What—what is my—what exactly is the plan, here, that your buddy... I'm sure I'm kind of hard to kill, but you know, I'm not exactly, you know, packing heavy artillery over here.

Aubrey: Duck? I think you're scared. And I think that's okay. I mean, that thing... That Abomination was scary. But there's lots and lots of people in that town, and lots and lots of people everywhere, that don't know about it, and can't do anything about it. And we can. We can help. We can keep them from being scared. So our little bit of being scared is still way less than all of theirs added together. We can help. We can do something. And I don't know what it is yet, and you don't know what it is yet. And maybe even Mama doesn't know what it is yet. But we can do it, at least something. Something is better than nothing, right?

Duck: Lady Flame, I appreciate it. I honestly do. Those are kind words. And they also came from the mouth of someone that can shoot fire out of their hands. I mean, you understand why you might be a little better equipped to take on something like this, yeah?

Ned: Duck?

Duck: Ned.

Ned: I just remembered something. What about your special item in the Chicanery?

Duck: Oh, God, Ned... Ned, I told you to throw that thing away!

Ned: I don't throw anything away. I'm a big, hairy hoarder. I've got it in my—in the Chicanery. In the inner, inner sanctum at the Cryptonomica.

Duck: Goddamn it, Ned. One thing, man. Fuck. I ask one thing. I mean, shame on me, I guess. I should've seen this coming. It seems pretty blindingly obvious in hindsight.

Ned: Well, it's even worse. I tried to eBay it about two years ago.

Duck: Okay, good.

Ned: Nothing happened.

Duck: From the start of that word, I thought you were about to say you tried to eat it.

Aubrey: Yeah, I actually did think that, too. [laughs]

Duck: [laughing] I thought you were gonna say that.

Griffin: Mama says...

Mama: Look, I know it seems impossible, Duck. I get that. But let's just talk it over. We'll talk over the plan. If we get to the end of the plan, and

you still feel like, you go out there, you're gonna meet your maker, I don't blame you for walking away. But let's just sit down, and eat your stew, and we'll just talk it over.

Duck: Fine.

Griffin: And with that, you all start formulating the plan. Uh, so, I have like, a few questions here that I want you all to kind of answer, and it can be sort of in fiction, if you want, as you sort of devise this plan. But they are sort of the things you need to know. And they are things that you already do know, if you can, uh, if you were paying attention, and remember sort of the things that have happened so far in order to make this plan happen. So, Mama says...

Mama: Alright, so, this thing is obviously some kind of animal in nature. Whatever it is underneath it has sort of animal instincts. What kind of, uh, what kind of behaviors y'all picked up on?

Ned: Well, there's the black spot.

Mama: Yeah.

Ned: That seemed almost be like, alive, on its own?

Duck: Yeah, that's how it seemed to me. And it seemed to be able to absorb other animals into itself. I couldn't tell if it was just dead or alive animals, but it seemed to be able to absorb them, for lack of a better word.

Aubrey: Well, and there was the moment where it was gonna attack me, and then you threw some shit, Ned, and that...

Ned: I do throw a lot of shit.

Aubrey: You threw some shit, and that distracted it.

Mama: Animal shit? Human shit? What was it?

Aubrey: I didn't stop to look.

Ned: Kind of a goulash.

Griffin: Oh, God, stop, stop. You're eating stew as you're saying this, you ghou. She takes out a little felt tip marker, and starts writing on the drawing, some of these notes, that it's like, patched together with this living back slime, and that it was attracted to animals that it seems to want to hunt animals, and so, this powerful sort of stew of animal scents attracted it. Writes all that down. Barclay chimes in and says...

Barclay: And don't forget that, um, it seems to be able to have other animals out there looking around for it. Other animals that are sort of possessed by that slime. So, we should keep an eye out for that, also.

Griffin: And he takes a note on that. And she says...

Mama: Alright, so, we don't want to get caught surprised when we're fighting this thing. So what's its abilities? What's its capable of, while we're...

Aubrey: Big.

Mama: Big.

Griffin: She writes down "big."

Duck: Yeah, write down "big."

Griffin: In big letters.

Duck: Angry.

Aubrey: Uh-huh, yeah.

Mama: Angry, got it.

Duck: Yeah, it was... it was, uh, it seemed real, um, hm. Impulsive, you know? A lot of animals are pretty easily spooked if you make enough noise or enough light. But um, I, you know, tried to provoke it, and uh, it made a

run at me right away, which is pretty unusual for the wildlife you find around here.

Aubrey: Well, and that happened, too, 'cause when the vehicle, when the thing drove up, it ran.

Griffin: She writes all that down. Impulsive, acts on instinct, prone to run away. She says...

Mama: Sounds like we're gonna have to keep this thing contained if we want to have a chance of taking it down for good, just so it doesn't run off again, and we lose our window.

Ned: And you two did hurt it. The walking stick, the fiery walking stick, did hurt it. And the fire seemed to hurt it. Not a lot.

Aubrey: I mean, to be fair, fire hurts most things.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Now, hold on, hold on. This is important, because in my experience, every one of these things has something that it is susceptible to. Are you telling me that fire seemed to do some damage to this thing?

Aubrey: Yeah?

Griffin: She looks over at you, Aubrey, and says...

Mama: Well, ain't that a coinkydink.

Griffin: And writes down, in huge letters, "Weakness: Fire."

Aubrey: Now, okay, but to be fair, I want to point to the biggest... to "big." Remember, big? I can make some fire. But like, we're going to need... we hit it with the oil lantern, and that helped. I think we're gonna need more oil, or something.

Griffin: She is grinning ear to ear as you say that. And she says...

Mama: Alright, then. We got everything we know about this monster. What's the plan?

Griffin: Yeah, I don't have an idea for like, where this fight's gonna take place, or how it's gonna play out. This is now your guys' turn to give me an idea. Where do you want this thing to take place, and what are you gonna do to make it your sort of most ideal situation?

Travis: Okay, so just to cover our bases, right? Here's what we've just discussed. We need somewhere where we can corner it, or at the very least, like, contain it a little bit for the fight. Um, we're going to need to draw it there. We are going to need to, then, set up some kind of oil propellant and flame trap.

Griffin: By the way, Travis and I talked about this before we started recording. We've all been playing a lot of Monster Hunter lately, and it's so choice, the way that this is kind of in line with that. I fuckin' love this game so very, very much. Um, but yeah, that's—that sounds solid to me. I want to make it clear that I don't have like, a map of Kepler, where you guys are gonna like, pick a location. There's a whole concept in all of the Apocalypse world games of leave empty spaces on maps for you guys to fill in, so you can will places into existence. Not that I'm saying, like, oh, the old, fiery tar pit that is covered in spikes.

Travis: Wait, do we have that? That would be great.

Griffin: No, but like, something within reason, where you can, you know, set this thing up to fight it, is what I'm hoping for.

Aubrey: Duck, is there any kind of like... cave... maybe not cave, but like, ravine? Or...

Duck: Here's something else, man. I'm not gonna have a big goddamn fire in the middle of my forest. So we're gonna need to be pretty smart about where, exactly, this takes place. Now, caves... that's an interesting idea. The caves are actually... huh. They're closed, right now. Closed to the public, 'cause of uh, white-nose syndrome. It killed a bunch of bats in the winter,

2006, when we closed down the cave system. So they wouldn't be actually open to the public. So maybe, the caves. At least, there, the fire would be contained.

Griffin: Uh, Mama goes over to the couch with all the maps on it, and grabs one of the Monongahela Forest, and spreads it out. And she says...

Mama: Duck, you know this forest better than anybody else on earth. Can you pick a place?

Duck: Yeah, I got the spot.

Griffin: And she hands you the marker.

Duck: Right here. Crooked Bend.

Mama: Crooked Bend Cave?

Duck: Crooked Bend Cave. We all make fun of the name, because honestly, Crooked Bend is like, yeah, what other kind of bend is there? But who knows.

Ned: Oh, I always thought it was Crooked Ben. I thought that was old—

Duck: No, no, no. A lot of people...

Ned: I thought that was ol' Ben Whoopsie.

Duck: Well, they made the sign... they painted over it. We just haven't had the budget to fix it up yet, honestly.

Ned: Okay.

Duck: But yeah, Crooked Bend Cave.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Alright. Uh, we gonna attract this thing to the cave using what? And then, what are we gonna do once we get it in there?

Ned: Oh, I can't believe I'm gonna say this... what about... [sighs] ...the Wookiee costume, doused in all of the animal shit? I'll pop the top on the Lincoln, and drive around until I get the big booger's attention, and lure him to the cave.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Yeah. That seems a bit dangerous for you, Ned, but if you think it'll work, I think it's worth a shot.

Ned: Well, danger is my middle name. Oh, I'm sorry. Fuckin' is my middle name. Danger is the other middle name.

Mama: Alright, we get this thing to the cave, and then what?

Aubrey: Do you have a generator?

Mama: Yeah, sure. I mean, I would prefer not to destroy my generator—

Aubrey: Is it diesel?

Mama: Um, I mean, yeah. We got lots of gas around here.

Aubrey: Okay. So, we get that to the cave, we get the thing to the cave, and we get me to the cave, and I think we're pretty much gonna be set.

Duck: Yeah. We're also gonna need to finish it, though. I mean, that'll start things off, but it won't be enough to put an end to it.

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Yeah, let's um, let's talk weapons. What can y'all get your hands on before nightfall? I got plenty of stuff. I've been doing this a long time. I've got sort of my own routine I like to follow. I think it'd probably be best if um, me and Barclay handled the reinforcements that are probably gonna show

up once this thing starts howling. We'll leave the uh, we'll leave the beast to you guys.

Aubrey: I have a knife.

Mama: I think, uh, I think you're probably gonna be set. Your hands are kind of your weapons, there, Aubrey, what with the mystical flames and all.

Aubrey: Oh, yeah.

Mama: Duck, Ned, what about you two? You mentioned something about something you had back at the Cryptonomica.

Ned: Yeah, we did. Didn't we, Duck?

Mama: Ned, what about you? What are you packin', bud?

Ned: I uh, actually have something of my own back at the Cryptonomica. A trophy from my past. It's called a 357 Magnum, the most powerful handgun made. It can take your head clean off.

Mama: Might be able to take my head clean off. I'd hope it wouldn't. Um, please be careful with that thing while you're out there. But uh, did uh... you think that'll actually be able to take a piece out of this thing?

Ned: Well, it might get its attention. [laughs]

Griffin: She says...

Mama: Alright. Sounds like, uh, sounds like we got a plan.

Griffin: She looks at the newspaper on her desk. She says...

Mama: Alright, sun sets at 5:50 tonight. We'll meet at Crooked Bend at six. Ned, bring your car, and everybody else, bring your weapons.

Griffin: And Mama stands up from the table, and she says...

Mama: I feel like... Look, it's just been me and Barclay doing this for a while. So, I'm a little out of practice with my motivational speeches. Just... just watch each other's backs, and play it smart, and I guarantee you, we're gonna take the night.

[theme music plays]

Mama: I don't know why these things show up in our woods, but I think they're here to scare us. We're gonna show them that the fine folks at Kepler, West Virginia, ain't so easily shook.

Justin: Duck stands up, and he starts walking out of the room.

Aubrey: Duck? Where you going?

Duck: [sighs] I'm going to take back what's mine.

[theme music plays]

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[music plays]

Biz: Hi, I'm Biz.

Theresa: And I'm Theresa.

Biz: And we host One Bad Mother, a comedy podcast about parenting.

Theresa: Whether you are a parent, or just know kids exist in the world, join us each week as we honestly share what it's like to be a parent. Turns out, it isn't what we thought it would be. For example, stickers on car windows? It's no longer about what type of monster would let that happen, and more like realizing, you are that monster.

Biz: So join us each week as we judge less, laugh more, and remind you that you are doing a great job.

Theresa: Download One Bad Mother on MaximumFun.org, or Apple Podcasts. And yes – there will be swears.

[music plays]

April: Hi there. I'm film critic April Wolf, and host of the Maximum Fun podcast, Switchblade Sisters. Do you love genre films? Do you love female filmmakers? Do you love discussions on craft? If your answer is yes, you'll love Switchblade Sisters. Every episode, I invite one female filmmaker on, and we talk in-depth about their fave genre film, and how it influenced their own work. So we're talking horror, action, sci-fi, fantasy, bizzaro, and exploitation cinema.

Mothers, lock up your sons, 'cause the Switchblade Sisters are coming for you. Available at MaximumFun.org, or wherever you find your podcasts.