

The Adventure Zone: Amnesty – Episode 11

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Griffin: Previously on The Adventure Zone...

[theme music plays]

Griffin: You just see water. Then, you see your body, and you are face up. You look unconscious, and you are falling.

Janelle: You will be unable to harness all of the elements until you stop thinking of them as primitive weapons, and instead, treat them as they truly are: as blessings from a cosmic force, beyond your current comprehension.

Duck: You mean H2Whoa: That Was Fun.

Ned: That was it! H2Whoa! Might be manageable. Might be workable.

Aubrey: If we can get it in the wave pool, and turn it on, that's probably gonna like, fuck with it, right?

Pigeon: I'll shut down the supply to the water park, Duck. I gotta be on site for it to happen, but I can do it. But you gotta satisfy my curiosity a bit. I think you are doing a bit of monster hunting. And if that's the case, I got a follow up question for ya, I guess...

Y'all hiring?

[theme music plays]

Griffin: The last slivers of sunlight cascade down the peak of Mount Kepler, and onto the scene at H2Whoa: That Was Fun, casting long shadows off the towering waterslides at the rear of the park. The last member of the skeleton crew working here to prepare for the park's closing weekend left around a half hour ago. Now, it's just the three of you with Barclay in tow, standing at the entrance, readying yourselves for the battle to come.

And Duck, just on cue, Minerva appears right in front of you. She turns, and she looks at your surroundings, and she says...

Minerva: It seems to be a work night, Duck Newton.

Travis: Do we see Minerva?

Griffin: No, only Duck can see Minerva.

Duck: Uh, yeah. We're—we're takin' a shot at it. I don't know how good of a plan we got, but we... kind of forced our hand, y'know? We gotta try something.

Aubrey: Duck, who are you talking to?

Ned: Yeah, we knew that.

Duck: [sighs] Just psyching myself up, y'know?

Ned: Ah.

Aubrey: Okay, yeah.

Duck: Y'know. Feeling a little nervous. Like to talk to myself.

Ned: Go, Duck, go!

Duck: Yeah. Thank you. No, that's very much appreciated. I think we should all go... go, go. But uh, I'll just... let me step away for a moment, just kind of get myself pumped, if that's alright.

Aubrey: Yeah, totally.

Griffin: You step away, and Minerva follows suit, and she says...

Minerva: Duck, it sounds like your confidence is suffering.

Duck: Uh, well, I mean, we're fighting water, which... I mean, I feel like I've seen that in like, kung fu movies, when they're trying to illustrate pointlessness. Um, so, yeah, I'm a little stressed out, honestly.

Minerva: Do you not feel the warrior's excitement for the battle you are about to face? I don't understand.

Duck: I mean, I feel a deep and profound desire not to die. Does that count?

Griffin: She laughs, and she says...

Minerva: You will not die, Duck Newton. You are filled with a warrior's instinct that we share, together. And it will service you well in combat. Your confidence, Duck Newton; it is not unearned. Your aim will be true. Do you believe me?

Duck: Well, I mean, I want to. But, I also had a spooky vision where I drowned, I think. So I don't know, I'm kind of 50/50 on it. If I'm following the omens to try to achieve my own personal legend, I got one omen that tells me I'm gonna beef it in a big pool, and then I got you telling me that it's gonna be okay. So, I don't know.

Griffin: When you mention the vision, again, this vision of Minerva that appears in front of you is not very... there aren't many specific features that you can pick out. But you can tell that she kind of takes a step back, and she looks kind of nervous as you say that. And then, sort of realizing like, uh oh, that's probably not good for getting him psyched up, she says...

Minerva: Look into my eyes, Duck Newton. Or, I guess, as where you would guess my eyes would be.

Duck: Okay.

Griffin: And she says...

Minerva: I will see you tomorrow.

Griffin: And then she disappears. And with that, the light finally fades as the sun finishes creeping back behind Mount Kepler, and floodlights, fastened to tall metal poles all around the park, kick on automatically, illuminating the battlefield. And Barclay gathers the three of you together and says...

Barclay: Okay, everyone ready?

Aubrey: Um... I mean, I guess.

Ned: Is anybody worried about something bad happening to the car? If somebody needed to stay, y'know, stay here and keep an eye on the car, I—I'd miss the big battle, but uh...

Aubrey: Ned, I want you to listen to me very closely.

Ned: Mm-hmm?

Aubrey: You are literally the only person here with a weapon that can kill it. So move your ass.

Ned: Well... [laughs] Okay. I feel better now. Sure. [deadpan] Fine.

Duck: Hey, listen, y'all. Before we head in there, I got one more thing to say. The one good—I know we're all freaked out right now. But the one good thing about fighting a huge body of water is that nobody will be able to tell when we've pissed our pants.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Duck: Alright, let's do it.

Griffin: Barclay says...

Barclay: Alright.

Griffin: And he gestures you all toward the wave pool in the center of the park, and he says...

Barclay: Let's get wet and wild.

Aubrey: No, Wet and Wild is down the street.

Ned: I thought it was Sploosh and Goosh.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Okay, well, then, Aubrey will volunteer as tribute.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: I assume that this is like a slope into it, kind of gradienting.

Griffin: Yeah, absolutely is. Yeah.

Travis: So she kicks off her super cool boots that are so, so rad, you guys. Y'know, they're leather. Don't want to ruin them.

Justin: Wait, are they real leather?

Travis: No, fake leather.

Justin: There we go.

Griffin: Okay. [laughs]

Travis: Fake leather. They're fleather.

Justin: As they say.

Clint: That's leather made out of feathers. Yeah.

Travis: Yes, fleather.

Justin: I love when Robin Williams invents fleather.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: The whole basketball team looks great in a very humane way.

Travis: Yeah, it's really wonderful. Everyone is just so awed by their cruelty-free uniforms that they just let them dunk as much as they want.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: They've earned this one. The other team is Cows.

Travis: And she just kind of like, walks into the water, and then just kind of stands there and tries to think, like, "How would bait think?"

Griffin: Uh, I don't think you have to think that for very long.

[music plays]

Griffin: There are just a few moments of quiet that falls over the park, and then, you all hear a deep groaning from the pipes below the park that reverberates up through the ground. And the floodlights shining down on the wave pool, they begin to flicker erratically, and then they turn back on as the pipes fall silent. And then, a small ripple forms in the middle of the pool, and lazily rolls outward towards its edges.

And the ripple bounces off the perimeter of the pool, and travels back to the center, where it collides into itself, sending a single, small droplet of water into the air. And it hangs there for several seconds, and then crashes back down into the water with a massive, continuous splash.

And from this turbulence, an arm, thick as a truck, and easily eight feet long, pulls itself out of the water. And then another follows suit, and then, the two arms hoist a massive, school bus sized, watery torso out of the pool. And this vaguely humanoid shape pounds its enormous fists into the water, sending water cascading high into the air. And as it falls, the Elemental, now towering over your party, begins lumbering towards you.

Let's start with Aubrey. Aubrey, what do you do?

Aubrey: Barclay!

Travis: And she, y'know, hands him the keys.

Aubrey: Go turn on the wave pool! Maximum... wave? I don't know what the settings are, but whatever the highest one is. That.

Griffin: You toss him the ring of keys, and he uh, catches it from the side of the pool, and then sprints back to the control booth. And you see him uh, quickly make his way into the booth and start fiddling with the panel. And he smiles, and knocks on the glass, and the Elemental turns to the sound of knuckles rapping against the glass in the control booth. And you see Barclay with this big, shit-eating grin on his face, and he starts to wave. And he yells...

Barclay: I'm waving! Get it?

Griffin: And then he slams his hand down on a button on the control console, and the Elemental sort of turns away from this distraction, and starts floating back in your direction. And then it seems to like, miss a step. And then, it tries again, and it nearly falls over, as another small wave pushes past it across the surface of the pool. And then larger and larger waves still begin to just belt the Elemental, who pounds its hands down into the water, just trying to stay stable, affording you all a window to attack.

So, as long as the Elemental is in the wave pool, and the waves are active, you all take plus one ongoing for all actions against the water elemental. That just means you get a flat plus one bonus to everything you try to do.

Travis: Sick. So with that going, I guess I'm gonna like, hurl a fireball at it.

Griffin: Yeah, sure. Roll to kick some ass.

Travis: So then, that's eight. I rolled an eight, plus two, plus one. So eleven.

Griffin: Okay. On a ten plus, you definitely hit it. You also get to choose one extra 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.

Travis: I'm going to say I'm going to grant plus one forward to Ned, because I know Ned's got the Narf blaster, and I'm trying to stand as like, distraction, so he can line up a shot.

Griffin: What does that look like? What are you like, doing to give him the advantage, like, in fiction?

Travis: Well... and this is a line I thought of yesterday, that I'm very proud of. Aubrey holds a ball of fire in her hand and says...

Aubrey: Hey, aqualung!

Travis: And throws it at his head. Um, and trying to like...

Aubrey: Look over here, look at me, stupid!

Griffin: Okay. You're just trying to gain its attention.

Travis: Yes. I feel like you guys don't appreciate the aqualung thing.

Griffin: I mean, you just said aqualung.

Justin: The problem was the several minutes of build up, I think.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, that's fair. But like, how clever, though, y'know? Like—

Justin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Clint: Does that mean there's—

Justin: It's like in uh—you know in uh, I love the moment in Casa Blanca where he's like, "Hey, I'm about to say some dope shit. Here's lookin' at you, kid." Like, it's like... it's a little bit blunting.

Griffin: Um, okay.

Justin: "I just thought of something cool to say before I leave, Scarlet. Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn." And then he opens the door back up. "What did you think?"

Travis: [laughing] Did you get it?

Justin: [laughing] "Did you get it?"

Griffin: "I feel like it didn't really land."

Travis: "I didn't get as much appreciation from that as I thought. Can I try it again?"

Griffin: What, uh... how much harm do you do on your fireball attack?

Travis: Two harm. And then, with fire, another two harm, and because I rolled a ten plus, I don't have to worry about the fire spreading in the water.

Griffin: Yeah, that would've been wild for me to try to get that going. But um, I think, just like last time, you do hit it. But it does not seem to be quite as damaging as you would've hoped, because you are throwing a fireball at a massive creature made out of water. You threw a really good fireball, so it definitely still does some harm, and it definitely accomplishes what you were hoping, in uh, gaining its attention. In fact, it sort of... it's got its two arms, its two huge arms down in the water, just trying to keep itself stable.

After you hit it, it kind of rears backwards, and one of those arms flings upward, and throws just an enormous ball of water at you with tremendous force that plows into you and knocks you backwards, just out of the water. You were standing kind of in the shallows. Uh, and you take two harm. I actually probably—

Travis: Well, thank goodness. Because of my armor, I take one harm.

Griffin: Yeah, I think your vest like, glistens with that shimmering, red thread, as the water hits you and protects you, and you only take one harm. Let's do Duck next.

Justin: Uh, where's like, the uh, ball of light? Can I detect it, currently?

Griffin: You cannot. As we've sort of established in the past, if the ball of light is surrounded by too much water, it is sort of invisible to you.

Justin: Okay. Uh, I wanna go away from Aubrey, and away from Ned, to like, just distract it in yet another direction.

Griffin: Okay, like, to the side of the pool?

Justin: To the side of the pool. Exactly. That's exactly what I was thinking. So, Duck, I think, is gonna half climb down the ladder into the pool. I'm imagining he's right about there.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: And just like, take out Beacon, and like, sort of futilely slash at the water in the pool. Just like, "Is this anything? Is this doing something? Is this an attack?"

Griffin: If you did that, you could definitely reach like, one of its arms. Just because this thing is pretty broad, and you would definitely be able to reach it hanging off the ladder on the side of the pool.

Justin: Right. Then, that's what I'm doing. I take out Beacon, and um, slash at one of the arms.

Griffin: Okay. Go for it.

Justin: While hanging off the ladder.

Griffin: Roll to kick some ass.

Justin: I will roll to kick the proverbial ass.

Griffin: Ooh!

Travis: Hell yeah!

Griffin: Holy shit, that is an eleven for the roll, plus tough.

Justin: Plus uh, two tough. So thirteen.

Griffin: Plus one for the waves. So that's—

Justin: Fourteen!

Travis: You kick its whole ass and its asshole.

Justin: I kicked its entire ass.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Oh, you got a little taint in there, too.

Travis: Oh, no.

Griffin: [laughs] Gross. So, choose a benefit from the list. You can, uh, gain an advantage, or grant it to somebody else, do terrible harm, suffer less harm, or force them where you want them.

Justin: I am going to give one forward to Ned.

Griffin: Alright, so Ned will have two forward on his attack.

Clint: Woo!

Justin: And that's two harm, right?

Griffin: Uh, yes.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Okay, so you deal two harm. Describe what this looks like.

Justin: Duck's kind of hanging off of the side, and he pulls out Beacon. And I think that when he pulls Beacon out, it's coiled. And as he's swinging, Beacon unfurls, which catches the monster off guard. Y'know, they aren't prepared for it. They didn't really think they were gonna be in danger, and then, Beacon unfurled at the last moment and just like, slices through the arm.

Griffin: That's sick, yeah.

Justin: It's cool. The other thing I will say is, we gotta start naming these bad boys, or else it's gonna be a lot of like, "the monster." They have names. They have hearts and souls, right?

Travis: Aqualung. What about Aqualung?

Justin: Aqualung is what it is called now.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Excellent.

Griffin: Uh, Aqualung swings one of its arms at you as it sees you kind of vulnerable, hanging off the side of the pool. And as you unfurl Beacon, it tries to just pound you against the wall, and your sword just vivisects the arm. And the water sort of harmlessly sprays around you, off to each side, but it sort of loses its balance, and just kind of collides into you, kind of crushing you up against the wall of the pool. And you take two harm, as you

sort of are crushed, and then the continual force of this thing falling into you pushes you backwards, out of the pool.

Which, if memory serves, is actually zero harm, because you're a tough boy.

Justin: Yes. I'm a tough boy.

Griffin: Ned, they have teed you up real nice.

Clint: First of all, Ned runs over to the other side of the pool, opposite from Duck. So we're basically hitting from three different sides.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: And um, he climbs up on the lifeguard stand, so he has an elevation. Little bit of an elevation, and he's not in the actual water, which he does not want to be in. Takes aim towards the base of Aqualung, where it's flowing up from the actual wave pool, and uh, Ned's gonna shoot it with uh, with the Narf blaster. Surprise, surprise.

Griffin: Okay. Go ahead and roll to kick some ass.

Clint: That is a ten.

Justin: Oh, yeah.

Clint: Plus, uh, nothing for tough. But three forwards, correct?

Griffin: Yeah. So that's a thirteen total.

Clint: So thirteen. So Ned nimbly climbs up the lifeguard stand...

Travis: [laughs] Who's Ned Nimbly?

Clint: Ned Nimbly. He's Aqualung's buddy.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: Ned Nimbley Chicanne climbs up the lifeguard stand, kind of hooks his feet in like, the arm rests, cradles the Narf blaster on his hip, and pulls the trigger, and yells...

Ned: Say hello to my spongy friend!

Clint: And fires.

Griffin: The glowing dart comes flying out of it, and uh, hits it at the base. Oh, choose a bonus effect, please.

Clint: The extra harm.

Griffin: So, that's gonna be three harm. Uh, with that, the uh, dart comes flying in, and hits the elemental at sort of the past of its trunk, where it was connected to the water. And you just cut completely clean through it. And this figure, which was still kind of reeling from fucking up the attack against Duck, just sort of collapses down into the water, just losing its form completely. And you probably have a brief moment of relief, thinking, "I just dunked on Aqualung."

And then, I think, in lieu of just doing the harm back to you, I'm gonna set up a soft move. All of the water now doesn't have this humanoid form in it anymore. But the water of the pool starts gathering towards the side of the pool that is facing Ned. And it starts raising up out of the water, forming this huge wall of water that threatens to come crashing down to just royally fuck up your whole shop. That is the situation, and we get back to Aubrey.

Aubrey, Ned is about to get smushed. What do you do?

Travis: Um, so, Aubrey flings out her hand and says...

Aubrey: Ned, look out!

Travis: And instinctually, uses some magic.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: So that is nine, and Aubrey instinctually bars a... let me see what the actual terminology is. Bar a place or portal to a specific person or type of creature.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, let's do this. You reach out your hand, and yell to warn Ned, and you feel something stirring inside of you.

[ambient music plays]

Griffin: It feels like when you have, y'know, cast your fireballs, and lit up fireplaces all cool, and done your fiery tricks in the past. But there's something different about this feeling, and time seems to slow down.

Aubrey, we see you, and you're back in your childhood home, several years ago. As you've kind of talked about before, it was sort of a palatial estate. It was a testament to the comfortable upbringing that you received, due to your family's wealth. And yet, despite the luxuries afforded to you in this place, you are leaving it tomorrow. You are going to set out to follow your dream to become a famous stage magician, the Lady Flame.

And you are seated at the dinner table with your mother and father. He's prepared you your favorite meal for your last evening at home. What is that? What is Aubrey's favorite meal?

Travis: Y'know, like a really good like, fig and pear and blue cheese salad.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Something like that.

Griffin: That's your favorite meal.

Travis: More and more, I was gonna say steak, but we just had the whole fleather conversation. So...

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Sure. This is a very cruelty-free world that we've created here.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: So, your favorite meal is here, and you're all enjoying it. But the air around the room is kind of uneasy. And after nearly completing the meal without a single word spoken over the table, your mom says...

Mom: So, you all packed up, kiddo?

Aubrey: Yeah.

Griffin: She says...

Mom: Are you sure you don't want to leave Nougat here with us?

Griffin: And she gestures towards a baby rabbit, eating from a small dish at your side. And she says...

Mom: I don't know if it's such a good idea for him to go, y'know, traveling around the country. He's just a baby.

Aubrey: Okay, A, how can I do magic without my assistant? And B, his name is not Nougat. That's what his name was at the store, because they did not appreciate the work that he had put into in receiving his doctorate. His name is Dr. Harris Bonkers, PhD. Thank you very much, mother.

Griffin: She smiles and says...

Mom: Of—of course. I'm so sorry.

Griffin: And then there's another couple minutes of silence as you all finish your meal, and then, your father clears his throat. And he says...

Dad: I'm sorry, but is there a... is there a time limit on this plan of yours?

Aubrey: What... what do you mean?

Dad: Like, if you—if you don't, y'know, make it within a year, do you think you would come back home to us, or...

Aubrey: N... no? Why wouldn't I make it? What does making it mean? Y'know, I—no. No. If I come back, it'll be to visit, or to... no. I'm leaving.

Griffin: He sighs, and he says...

Dad: I've just—we've spent your whole life trying to be as supportive as we could, Aubrey, trying to give you the kind of life we never got. But I don't know how to support you on this, Aubrey. With your grades, you could get into any school in the country. Leaving to do magic is such a waste of that, and it's so dangerous, Aubrey. We're not gonna know where you are most of the time.

Aubrey: Listen, I'm gonna be fine. And the fact of the matter is, I don't want to go to school, and it's just not for me. This is... this is not just what I want. It's what I feel like I'm meant to do. It just feels right, y'know? Like, when I'm performing, when I'm doing my act, that's me. Y'know what I mean? Lady Flame is me. Aubrey feels like a stage name, right? And Lady Flame is the only time it feels right.

Griffin: He stands up from the table suddenly, and he looks dejected, and he picks up his plate and his silverware, and starts to walk into the kitchen. And he says...

Dad: [sighs] I'm sorry.

Griffin: And he leaves the room to start cleaning up. And it's later that evening, and you and Dr. Harris Bonkers are in bed. You had some trouble falling asleep that night, and your door creaks open. And in the moonlight, you see your mother enter the room. And she sits down beside you in the bed, and picks up Dr. Harris Bonkers, who she pets affectionately in her lap, and she says...

Mom: That was a bit cliché, wasn't it?

Aubrey: [laughs] Yeah. Little bit.

Griffin: She says...

Mom: We both love you unconditionally. You know that, right?

Aubrey: There is a difference between knowing it and feeling it, sometimes. I know it. But I also feel like a disappointment to dad. I—I wish—like, it would be a lot easier if I wanted to go to school. It would be a lot simpler.

Griffin: She says...

Mom: I get it. There's just... there's an ugly part of parenthood, Aubrey. A selfish part that rears its head sometimes. You convince yourself that you've invested your mind and your body and your soul and heart into your child. You worked so hard for them, during the part of their lives that they share with you, even before their lives sometimes. We went through... a lot, just trying to conceive you, which... sorry, you probably don't want to hear about that.

Sometimes, that manifests with a feeling of betrayal for us, like it did downstairs. And I'm truly sorry that that happened your last night with us.

Aubrey: It's just... I don't understand why this is the thing, right? Like, you guys have always been so supportive of me, when I wanted to dye my hair, y'know, at thirteen. You guys didn't care. And like, dressing however I want, you don't care. You don't care, y'know, who I choose to date. And that has never been a problem I thought that this would be exciting, y'know? Like, I'm gonna make a name for myself as the Lady Flame, and I just... I don't know why this is the thing that dad just can't seem to get behind.

Mom: It's that you'll be gone, Aubrey. But you're... I get it. You're about to go on a grand adventure, the likes of which every person during their life should be lucky enough to embark on. And the thing is, with the exception of our furry friend here, you're gonna go alone. And I understand why it has to be this way, but... Okay, I have something for you. Something to keep us, y'know, in your heart, even when you're away.

Griffin: And she unclasps the necklace that she's wearing, and a beam of moonlight catches it perfectly, refracting red light back up onto your face. And she says...

Mom: We have lots of jewelry in this house, Aubrey, but no piece is as precious to me as this. My mother gave it to me when I left home, as did her mother before her, and her mother before her, for generations. It's kept our family safe through unspeakable hardships. Some of your more imaginative ancestors gave it a name. Flamebright.

Griffin: And she scratches her neck, and she says...

Mom: I haven't taken this thing off for nearly 25 years, Aubrey. A doctor tried to remove it when I was in labor with you, and I bit him. I bit him good.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Mom: I was pretty doped up at the time, but I like to think I knew what I was doing. I was keeping it safe, because one day, I knew I would be giving it to my daughter on a very important night, to remind her that she is, and always will be, loved.

Griffin: And she gives you a tearful hug, and slips it on over your neck. And it hangs down, nearly to your navel, and your mom smiles, and she says...

Mom: I tell you what. I'll go take some links out, and shorten the chain, and then maybe we can try this little ceremony again in the morning.

Aubrey: Sounds good. Thank... I love you, mom.

Griffin: She says...

Mom: I love you, too.

Griffin: And she walks out of the room. Later, we see you asleep in the dead of night, your entire family having retired after an emotional evening.

[music plays]

Griffin: And then we see a car, an Imperial Crown Coup, pull up just in front of your house, with its lights off, with two figures silhouetted from within.

And then we're back in the present. And what do you do?

Travis: Um, so, when her hand flings out as this thing is like, about to crash onto the lifeguard stand, I'm just picturing it kind of like, hitting almost an invisible barrier. Like, y'know, a little bit of like a wah-wah-wah in the air. Y'know what I mean? Just kind of stopping it from hitting Ned. I would say that it is kind of a like, blast of wind, stopping it from hitting. So like, blowing it backwards, y'know what I mean? And I think, with it being water, it looks awesome.

Griffin: Yeah, okay. So, Ned, you actually feel... you see this wall of water about to come crashing down on you, and then, you feel this like, gale force wind at your back that blows forward. And just as this water's about to crash down, this wall of wind curves upward, and catches it in the air. And it just starts peeling away at the water, just throwing it effortlessly backwards, into the pool, creating almost like a reverse pipeline. And not a single drop gets on you, as the wall of water is turned away.

And with that, the Elemental, Aqualung, I guess, uh, splashes back down into the pool, and kind of just thrashes there. The water is just thrashing, just furious at its failure. Uh, and then, Ned, you, from your position, you see that faint, yellow light on the surface of the water, still kind of fighting against the waves. And it dives downward, into a drain at the bottom of the pool, and disappears, out of sight, attempting to make its escape.

Ned: Duck! The drain! Your sparkly yellow friend just ducked down into it, ironically enough!

Aubrey: Did you guys see what I did?

Duck: Alright, two things. Just taking it in order. Uh, Aubrey, that was radical, first off.

Aubrey: Thank you.

Duck: Let me say that.

Justin: Uh, I yell out...

Duck: Pigeon, he's making a run for it!

Griffin: In the woods, we see a section of chain link fence, boxing in a series of pipes, just sort of making a U shape in and out of the ground, with a large sort of hex bolt valve at the center of them. And there, we see Pigeon, and she has a huge wrench that she kind of nods and yells...

Pigeon: Yep!

Griffin: And throws the wrench onto the hex bolt and turns it. And then, is kind of knocked backwards, as a force sort of slams against the closed valve, rattling the pipes. And then, it tries that a few more times, and you hear Pigeon say...

Pigeon: Yeah, that pissed it off pretty good!

Aubrey: Duck, who is that?

Duck: Yeah, that's Pigeon.

Ned: Is everybody in your world named after birds? [laughs]

Aubrey: This is a very good question. Also, why is Pigeon here?

Duck: Pigeon is helping us out a little bit. Sort of a contractor.

Aubrey: Okay.

Duck: Hey, listen. Is personnel sort of the top pride right now, or do we want to—

Aubrey: No, you're right. Yep, yep, yep.

Duck: Okay, good, good, good, good, good.

Griffin: Um, the pipes beneath you, underground in the park, creak again, louder and longer than before. You all actually feel slight tremors beneath your feet, which causes the windows in the main office to just shatter from the vibration. There's a tower of maps next to an info desk that just topples over. And then, silence falls over the park once again, and you all hear the sound of water lapping against cement – this time, from the lazy river surrounding the park.

[music plays]

Griffin: You all see a mound of water lift off, a few feet from the river, traversing its path around the park, gaining speed as it moves. And that mound lifts higher and higher from the water, growing slowly as it collects all the water in its path. And then this form splashes downward, and suddenly launches up and out of the river's path, with every drop of water from the river following it, forming a massive, snake-like form that is barreling towards your party at ramming speed.

Duck, what do you do?

Justin: Is it sort of... is it still serpentine? Is it coming sort of straight at us, or...

Griffin: Now, it's just charging right at you like a train.

Justin: Alright. Duck extends Beacon in front of him, point first, and just starts sprinting at it.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Yeah. He's just gonna try to skewer it. I don't have a better plan.

Griffin: I think as you get close, you actually see, in the head of this thing, the yellow light as you are just sort of several feet away from it, about to collide. I guess roll to kick some ass.

Justin: Yeah, I guess, man. I was thinking about chickening out, but I think he's just kind of thinking on instinct at this point. Yeah, that roll to kick the proverbial ass is... do we still have an advantage, or are we—

Griffin: You do not. This thing is not in the wave pool anymore.

Justin: Alright. [gasp] Oofa doofa!

Griffin: That's a double snake eyes, I guess, for a big nasty four.

Justin: That's a big nasty four. Whoo.

Griffin: Uh, plus what for tough?

Travis: Well, that's an experience.

Justin: Oh, yeah. Plus uh, two for tough.

Griffin: That is still a six, which is a failure. Go ahead and mark experience.

Justin: I've learned something from this.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: This is uh, this is a good experience. Y'know what, honestly, I'd rather have the experience. It's a good experience. Okay, so I guess I'm um, sprinting at it. Just like, "Ahh!" With Beacon extended. And I think there's a moment just before we collide where Beacon sort of like, almost half whispers, like...

Beacon: Duck Newton, this is going to go poorly.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: And then they collide.

Griffin: The snake, which is just barreling at you... you are not harmed by it ramming into you with this like, tremendous amount of force. It kind of opens up as it is about to collide with you, and just kind of like, envelopes you, and catches you in the form of this snake. And Ned and Aubrey, you now see Duck kind of flying backwards, back into the rear of this snake shape, just twisting around helplessly in the water.

Uh, it whips up its tail at the last second, and you are launched, violently, out of the form of this snake. And now, Ned and Aubrey, you see Duck just rag dolling through the air, just 20 feet high, sailing away and out of sight, back towards the corner of the park, and down into the reservoir at the back corner of the park. And Duck, you're just barely able to hold onto your senses as your arc turns back toward the ground.

You see the reservoir just flying towards you, and you also see the metal bridge spanning the reservoir's circumference, which you fly closer and closer to, and then your head collides with its guardrail with a sickening thunk.

[ambient music plays]

Griffin: You remember a night from decades ago. You have woken up with a start in your childhood bedroom, just doused in sweat. You take a moment to collect yourself, and your senses, one by one, sort of flicker back to life. And that is when you smell smoke. It is pouring into your bedroom through the crack under your bedroom door, through which you can see dancing orange light, pulsating in from the hallway. You hear a furious crackling noise from beyond that door. You do not, however, hear the smoke alarm. What do you do?

Justin: I go to the door. I um, I'm trying to remember like, my...

Griffin: The red cross, like, fire safety...

Justin: Yeah, exactly. I think, do I have any—

Travis: You gotta check with the back of your hand.

Justin: Yeah, right, exactly.

Clint: Stop, drop, and roll. Don't forget to stop, drop, and roll.

Justin: I'm not currently on fire. Am I on ground level, and is there a window?

Griffin: You are on the second story of the house. There is a window.

Justin: [sighs] Um, I kick the door.

Griffin: Okay. The door just like, easily gives way as you kick it. Actually, you are surprised by how easily it gives way. You are sort of surprised by the strength you muster as you just effortlessly boot the door open. You see the sort of lock mechanism, the actual door knob interior part of the doorknob, just come completely off the door, and come out into the hallway. And a blast of searing hot air hits you in the face, and you see the hallway of your family house just up in flames. The fire is climbing up the walls, engulfing rows of framed photos of your family hung there.

A burning beam has fallen through the ceiling, cutting off the rest of the hallway that's leading to your parents' bedroom, the door to which is still closed. Um, and you also notice that, on the other end of this hallway, leading downstairs and into the living room, there is no fire. Your path leading out of the house is free and open to you, should you choose to use it.

Justin: What about the door to my little sister's room?

Griffin: Uh, that is across the hallway from your parents' bedroom. That door, you can also see through the flames, is also closed.

Justin: Uh... [sighs] Alright. I grab a blanket off my bed, and I kind of drape it around myself.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: And I sprint through the fire, towards Jane's room.

Griffin: Okay. Roll to act under pressure.

Justin: Isn't it odd, conceptually, to roll during a flashback? I understand that we are doing this, but it just strikes me as weird.

Travis: 'Cause listen, it either happened it or didn't.

Justin: It either happened or it didn't. But is it immutable nature of fate, I suppose. Uh, so this would be... I rolled an eight. I have a two to cool, which would make it a ten.

Griffin: Okay. You set out to do what you want to do. So, there's this burning beam sort of cutting off the rest of the hallway, between you and the bedrooms of your sister and your parents. How do you—what does it look like as you get around that?

Justin: I think I just jump over it. And maybe I'm like—

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: That's instinctual. And I'm kind of surprised, like, oh, shit. Wow, I really cleared that. Because I wasn't big into sports or anything.

Griffin: Yeah, I think—

Justin: I haven't really like, put my body to the test or anything.

Griffin: Yeah. You like, sort of effortlessly contort your body into this shape as you kind of dive, covered in this blanket, just clean over this beam that has fallen down at a diagonal into the hall. And uh, do a just perfect roll as you land, and come to your feet, just surprised at what a badass you are right now. What do you do?

Justin: Uh, I smash open the door to Jane's room, and I'm screaming, also, to try to wake everybody up. But uh, I smash open the door to Jane's room to make my way over to grab her.

Griffin: The walls and ceiling of this room are just completely engulfed. Burning embers are raining down from above. One lands on your forearm as you kick this door open, and you feel it singe your skin before sort of reflexively shaking it off. And the bed in front of you is occupied by a shape that is completely covered by the blanket, seemingly still unconscious, despite the sort of immediate danger posed to them by this blazing bedroom.

Justin: I throw off the blanket, and scoop her up. She's uh, seven. So, it's not too tough. I scoop her up, and uh, take the blankets with me so I can cover both of us on the way out.

Griffin: Okay. As you scoop her up and sort of wrap her in the blanket, uh, that was on her bed, another two beams fall through the ceiling inside the room, right in front of the door back out into the hallway, cutting off your exit. And with this, she kind of comes to, and starts coughing. And she says...

Jane: Duck? What's going on?

Duck: It's alright, Jane, just close your eyes and try to breathe real shallow, okay?

Jane: Okay.

Justin: I grab her TV VCR combo that she has there, little twelve inch job, and I chuck it at the window as hard as I can.

Griffin: It's like picking up like an empty cardboard box. The weight is nothing to you as you lift up the TV VCR combo and throw it through the window. And it smashes apart, and the heat from this room is incredible, but as you smash open the window, you feel an even more powerful heat coming from outside. And there's a flash of light, and it takes a moment for your eyes to adjust. And when it does, you see outside, and there's the sun.

[ambient music plays]

Griffin: It's not hanging in its usual place in the sky. It looks like it's just mere miles away from the surface of the earth, just occupying the entirety of the horizon. And in the distance, you see a white beam of light shooting upward from the surface of the earth, traveling all the way up and into this nearby sun.

And you see everything around the base of this beam just getting sucked up into it, trees, and cars, and houses, and the earth itself, all traveling up to beam to be destroyed by this massive ball of fire in the sky. And as you gaze upon this scene, the gravitational pull of the beam gets stronger, pulling in more and more of the earth, until your house starts coming apart. And you feel yourself flying upward, into this beam, into the sun.

And then you wake up in your bed again. And standing at the foot of your bed, watching over you intently, is a humanoid shape, made out of faint, translucent light. And a voice comes from it, and says...

Minerva: I apologize for the rude awakening, Duck Newton. If you must take a moment to collect yourself before speaking, I completely understand.

Duck: I... what the fuck?

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Minerva: My name is Minerva, Duck Newton, and I—

Duck: [screams]

Justin: I jump through her, throw open the door, not kick it. I'm not that out of it. I throw open the door to like, check for fire.

Griffin: Nope. Nothing is amiss. You actually see Jane open the door, deeper down the hallway, and she kind of peeks out and rubs her eyes, and says...

Jane: Duck, are you okay?

Duck: Go back to bed, goofus. There's nothing going on. It's fine.

Griffin: She kind of like, gives you a sneer, like...

Jane: Okay. You don't have to call me goofus...

Griffin: And uh, dips back into her bedroom. And Minerva from behind you says...

Minerva: If you're quite done, I must tell you that you have been chosen to fulfill a fate of cosmic importance.

Duck: Yeah, but what the fuck?

Griffin: [laughs]

Duck: Who are you? What are you doing in my room?

Minerva: My name is Minerva, Duck Newton, and I am here to tell you, you've been chosen to fulfill a fate of cosmic importance.

Duck: Alright, first off, who the hell are you? I know you're not a friend of my mom, 'cause you're calling me Duck, and I know she hates that. So, that's—you're not a friend of my mom. Who are you? Who sent you? Is this—aww, okay. This is computers. I've been hearing people talk about that at the AV club. They're saying a lot of stuff about computers and all the stuff they can do. You're computers, aren't ya?

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: This is, by the way, this is tripping me the fuck out, because the voice Justin is doing right now sounds like 15 year old Justin.

Griffin: It's very good.

Travis: It's tripping me out.

Justin: Now I'm in my head about it.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: She says...

Minerva: I am not computers, Duck Newton. I come from a faraway place. You're not ready, quite yet, to understand that. But you must understand, Duck Newton, and this will be difficult news to hear. Your world is imperiled, Duck Newton. It is besieged by a supernatural threat that would spell certain doom for not just your planet, but for two planets that have found themselves linked by destiny itself.

Even now, horrific abominations march on your world, threatening to destroy the lives of your neighbors, friends, and loved ones without hesitation or remorse. The forces your world have assembled to defend itself will prove insufficient to see to this threat. You have been called, Duck Newton, to do what they cannot.

Duck: What's that?

Minerva: To—to fight. To fight them.

Duck: Yeah.

Minerva: Do not fear fighting them, though, Duck Newton. You will be imbued with the strength of ancients to see to this task, outfitted with the mightiest armaments in existence, and trained by one of the greatest warriors this universe has ever known...

[ambient music plays]

Minerva: Which is me.

Griffin: And this figure extends its hand outward to you.

Duck: Yeah, I got a class tomorrow.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: And then we are back in the present, and we see Duck Newton, unconscious, sinking to the bottom of this deep reservoir as his vision dictates. Next in the order is Ned.

Ned: Aubrey, listen. I'm the only one that can hurt that thing. I'm the only one that can keep it distracted. You need to go rescue Duck. I'll shoot it a bunch with the Narf blaster.

Aubrey: Okay!

Travis: And she's running toward the reservoir.

Ned: [yelling] And then you'll come right back and help me, right?

Aubrey: What?

Ned: Oh, shit.

Griffin: Ned, this thing kind of... it stopped for a moment as it did its little maneuver to chuck Duck through the air. Oh, that's fun. Chuck Duck. Uh, but now, it turns back towards you as you are yelling to Aubrey to come back when she's done saving Duck's life, and it starts moving and picking up speed as it moves towards you. What do you do?

Clint: I am going to do what Ned does best, and that's run away. But as Ned is running, he's going to basically, y'know, just fire away with the Narf blaster, just kind of raking along the body of the water snake, just to try to distract it and keep it away from Aubrey and Duck. And at the same time, running away is a big component in this.

Griffin: Okay. Since you are shooting it, I think still kicking some ass is the way to go.

Clint: [laughs] And that's a twelve!

Griffin: That is double sixes, folks.

Clint: I have zero tough.

Griffin: Alright. So, pick your bonus effect. I think it sounds like, based on the maneuver that you said, if we want to like, keep this in the rules of the game, you force them where you want...

Clint: I think that would be, because I want it to move away from Duck and Aubrey.

Griffin: Alright. Describe what this looks like.

Clint: Ned says...

Ned: Shit!

Clint: And just starts firing away, just shot after shot, while he runs. He's kind of leaning backwards, shooting at the snake, along the length of its watery body. And basically, heading towards one of the big waterslides, just away from them.

Griffin: Here's what happens. You do this sick dodge roll out of the way, and the snake rolls past you, and now, you're sort of running, parallel, alongside it, as it continues its trajectory past you, just firing bolt after bolt into its side. It takes two harm, and uh, one of the bolts, I think, hits it close to its head. And as that happens, you see the snake form, just for a moment, kind of spasm. And a bunch of water sort of shoots out of the side of it, almost like it had this surface tension containing all of it that it just sort of loses at a few points, and water just spills out of it.

And you manage to get past it, but it does a quick U-turn, y'know, 30 feet behind you, and then, starts chasing you towards the waterslides. The waterslides at the back of the park, there are three main, large waterslides. They are all built into this same, tall, wooden tower, with staircases leading up it, with a line sort of separated into three parts, where people, y'know, wait in line, and then, get to the slide that they want to go on and disembark from there.

But it's all part of this one, central structure, and you run it towards that direction. And it is gaining on you and gaining on you, and right as you hit the pool at the base of this waterslide structure, it finally catches up to you, and collides with you, knocking you forward. The tremendous force, though, of this thing just barreling towards you, hits you and knocks you into the water for two harm.

And it continues its path and sort of travels over you, as you are now in the pool. Not unconscious like your friend Duck, but sort of dazed from the force of the impact. And as you look upwards, you see the snake start to lift up and away from the surface of the pool, and it begins to climb this wooden tower, this tower of slides.

And then you see the water from the pool that you're actually in start streaming upwards, like a sink faucet that's been left on, and it's pouring water upward and out of the pool. And then, you see a few more appear, and then, dozens more, until like, a hundred streams of water are pouring upward as this snake starts coiling around this wooden tower, just twisting all around it, weaving between the stairwells leading to its peak.

And soon, the water from the pool floats up and joins it, and now, it's no longer a snake coiled around this wooden tower of slides. Now, it is just a mountain of water, just completely engulfing the whole structure. You can see, sort of silhouetted from the floor lights shining into this mountain of water from behind, you see pieces of the slides start to break apart.

[music plays]

Griffin: You see a set of stairs from this wooden tower get torn off the structure completely, and all this debris is just sort of revolving around

inside of this huge mountain of water, like they're caught in a whirlpool. The water from the pool has drained out from around you. You are now sitting at the bottom of this empty pool at the base of the structure, and uh, a piece of one of the slides, just this gigantic section of black pipe comes flying out of the mountain.

And it lands with a crash just a few feet in front of you, bouncing a few times before rolling to a stop at your feet. And you can tell that the elemental is panicked and wounded, but now, also, it is armed.

Aubrey, you are up.

Travis: Um, so, uh, Aubrey is sprinting over to the reservoir.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: How far is it?

Griffin: Uh, it's not too far. There's a chain link fence between you and the water. Although, I assume, actually, there is a gate with a padlock on it for easy access to park employees.

Travis: Okay. I am going to do... can I do another instinctive magic?

Griffin: Yeah, for sure.

Travis: Okay, so Aubrey is going to climb the fence, is her plan.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: And so like, she's kind of running, and goes to do like a running jump at the fence. Rolled a ten, plus two. Yeah, and I'm gonna say that that is, y'know, like a gust of wind as she goes, y'know?

Griffin: Okay, sick. Yeah. You're running and you leap, and you feel this uh, y'know, this emotion of, you want to defend your friend. You want to save your friend. And that sort of creates, if you will, a literal wind beneath your wings as you leap. And the wind sort of also catches you as you fall to the

ground, and you just sort of keep speed as you hop effortlessly over the fence.

Travis: And she says out loud...

Aubrey: Thank you, magic!

Travis: And just keeps running.

Griffin: Okay, now what?

Travis: So when I get to the reservoir, what do I see?

Griffin: You can barely see, thanks to a floodlight shining down into the reservoir, you see Duck's form. He is about 20 feet underwater. This is a deep, deep reservoir, with this metal bridge sort of spanning across its center point.

Travis: Okay. Well, she's gonna jump in, and y'know, grab him and pull him out.

Griffin: Uh, okay. I think this would be another act under pressure. Unless you want to use magic to somehow do some cool shit with the water to help you out.

Travis: Yeah, so like, she, y'know, same deal. Takes a big, deep breath. Let's say that's what it is. A big, deep breath, and like, once again, finds that she's able to stay underwater longer because of that. Y'know what I mean? Surprised that her ability to hold her breath. And I rolled a six plus two, so an eight.

Griffin: Um, okay. It works imperfectly. Choose your effect and a glitch. The keeper will decide what effect the glitch has. So you want to do something beyond human limitations. You are using the wind to, I guess, fill your lungs, as you want to dive down and reach Duck. You have to choose a glitch from the list. Usually, we don't get these, because you got those hot magic rolls, but...

Travis: Yeah. I am going to say... I'm going to do the one harm, and say that it works, like, I hold my breath, but it ends up like, hurting my chest. Y'know?

Griffin: Yeah, for sure. You, uh... most notably, you take one harm, ignore armor. So, you take this deep breath, and it's kind of crazy deep. You take this huge inhale, and as you do so, you feel, actually, a pretty terrible pain from inside your chest. And I think you start feeling sort of heart palpitations that kind of stop you in your tracks a little bit. Take one harm. However, you now have just what feels like endless breath as you dive into the water. Describe what happens next.

Travis: So yeah, she's swimming for that... gotta grab that Duck. And y'know, she's swimming, trying to grab him by the back of his shirt, y'know, trying to pull him out of the water. So, this is probably another like, act under pressure, right?

Griffin: No, I think you've rolled enough on this turn that I would just give it to you. I think, actually, what we can do is, you actually feel the wind inside of your lungs make you buoyant as you grab onto Duck by the scruff of his collar, and pull him upwards. And you kind of just shoot upwards as the wind takes you to the surface of the water, and you pretty easily get Duck out of the reservoir.

And with that, Duck, as you feel like, the wind on your face, your head is just pounding. Did I make you take harm when you hit the bridge?

Justin: Nah, but it seems legit.

Griffin: Uh, I'm gonna say... I mean, you fell two stories and cracked your head on the side of a bridge. I would say that's pretty extreme damage. Uh, I would say that's four harm. But you will obviously, that'll be cushioned a bit by your natural armor.

Justin: Mmkay.

Griffin: But as the wind hits your face as you are pulled out of the pool, you regain consciousness. And there is Aubrey, kneeling over you, looking like she just has really bad gas, I guess.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: Alright. The first thing she hears is um...

Beacon: Congratulations, new owner. My name is Beacon.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Beacon: My former owner has tragically died. But fear not—

Aubrey: Beacon, shut up. Duck, are you okay? Duck?

Duck: I got class tomorrow.

Aubrey: What? Duck!

Travis: And she smacks him.

Duck: Okay, alright, I'm here. What's up?

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Aubrey: A water snake thing flipped you, you hit your head on the reservoir, um, you're... I jumped a fence. It was sick.

Duck: Sorry I missed that.

Aubrey: Yeah. I'm sure I'll do it again. Um, we have to get back over, 'cause Ned's by himself, and that's probably not gonna go well. Are you cool?

Duck: Hey, real quick, though. The monster stuff is real, isn't it?

Aubrey: Yeah?

Duck: I was kind of hoping it was a dream. Oh, man. Oh well. I'm pretty banged up, but let's get back over to Ned.

Justin: How far away is he?

Griffin: He's pretty far away. He led—he purposefully led the snake away from you all, so he is uh—

Clint: What a brave, brave man he is.

Justin: So heroic.

Griffin: He's kind of on the opposite corner. You all are towards, all towards the back end of the park, but he's in the other corner where the waterslides are.

Justin: Alright. I'll guess we'll just start... I won't say running, but I mean, I think we have to start moving towards Ned. There's a fence, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I could probably slash through that with Beacon.

Clint: Ooh.

Justin: That would like, speed things up a little bit. 'Cause I'm not jumping any fences right now. In fact, let me just say that.

Griffin: Okay. I don't even think this would be a kick some ass roll, because that's for like, if you and the thing are gonna do damage to each other.

Justin: Kick some fence's ass.

Griffin: Yeah. So as funny as it would be, the image of this fence, you slashing it, and then it falling over onto you to deliver the death blow, I think you just slash through the chain link and open up a hole in the fence. And probably supported by Aubrey, the two of you start making your way over towards the slide structure that is engulfed in this mountain of water that, Ned, you are currently at the foot of.

And Ned, you climb to your feet at the base of this pool, right in front of this mountain. And you see, towards the peak, just sort of right at the surface of the water at the peak, probably 30 feet up, you see that yellow light. And it is glistening at the peak of this mountain of water above you. What do you do?

Clint: Um... [sighs] No, y'know what? There comes a time in every coward's life.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Clint: Where you know the only way you're gonna survive is by attacking back. In this case, maybe the best defense is a good offense. So, what the shit. Just, Ned has a strap that the Narf blaster is on. So he kind of flings it back, so it's hanging off his back, and goes running and dives into the water, trying to climb up that wood framing.

Griffin: Uh, okay. This is definitely gonna be act under pressure. You get inside this mountain of water, and the world around you just goes silent as you dive just straight forward. It's not like a pool of water. It is a just massive tower of water, and you just jump right into the side of it. Uh, and it takes a second for your eyes to adjust, but you see just huge pieces of lumber, just swirling around, and you see a slide just get easily smashed apart by one of these huge pieces of lumber.

And so, all this stuff is swirling around in the water towards you. And as you swim upward, toward that light at the peak, you are sort of avoiding it as you go. So roll to act under pressure.

Clint: Ha! Twelve!

Griffin: Another double six?

Clint: And, also, add one for cool. So that's thirteen.

Justin: That can't be right. [laughs] There's no way.

Clint: Sorry, Ned has one cool. He's got zero tough, but he's got one cool.

Justin: Alright.

Griffin: Uh, okay. Then, the scene is, you are swimming upwards, and easily avoiding these huge chunks of the tower that are flying all around you.

Travis: I'm gonna say, wherever Duck and Aubrey are, they just like, stop, and they're like, "What the fuck?" And Ned's just like, fwoof, fwoof, fwoof, fwoof!

Griffin: There are a series of floodlights, shining into this mountain, and so, you all can just kind of see the silhouettes of these pieces of tower and slide swirling around Ned's form as he just doggy paddles upward into the sky, towards the peak of this mountain. I think, at one point, a huge chunk of that same slide that landed at your feet earlier coming right towards you, and you just kind of plank your body and go completely through it as it flies in your direction.

[ambient music plays]

Griffin: Uh, and you are swimming, and not sure if you're gonna be able to hold your breath long enough, and that light is getting closer and closer and brighter and brighter... and then, Ned, you are standing in a dark room that you are not supposed to be in.

It has been a week since the wreck that saw you and your partner in crime separated, which left him to an almost certainly unpleasant fate. And you've spent this week putting your distance between yourself and that scene, just as much distance as possible. Mostly hitchhiking and walking down highways, probably discreetly trying to catch a bus, probably with a hood

pulled up as you go. And you have found yourself in some Podunk town where, finally, you can catch a breath. However, it's kind of hard to do so when you are as cash strapped as you find yourself at the moment.

And so, you stop to find a few quick bucks the only way you know how: by taking it from someone else in the dead of night. And so, you went in the first seemingly unoccupied building that you came across in this town, this modest looking shop of some sort, down by the river, by the entrance to town.

There were no cars parked outside, and the location is far enough away from the rest of town that you figured you'd be in the clear if you wanted to poke around and see what you could burgle. So, you jimmied open a window and you crept inside.

And the moonlight through the open window highlights a few peculiar things in this room. Some weird taxidermied animals that look like they've been sort of composited together, using parts from multiple animals. There's a pedestal with a large, clay disk on it, which is pressed with what appears to be a large footprint. There is a wire rack tower, with a bunch of maps to local tourist attractions. And toward the back of the room, there is a desk, sitting on which is an old timey looking cash register.

What do you do?

Clint: Well, Ned Ninja Chicane very quietly moves towards that cash register and opens it.

Griffin: Okay. I think there's a lock, which you, y'know, certainly have experience popping open. Go ahead and roll to act under pressure.

Clint: Seven plus one, which is for cool. So that's eight.

Griffin: The register pops open, and you see just an empty drawer inside as it pops out to greet you. And then you hear a shotgun cock from behind you. And you hear a voice say...

Voice: Well, alright now. This is, uh... this is just a bad beat. You could'a broken into any shop in this town and gotten away scot free, but you just had to pick the one place where the owner lives and sleeps on the premises. That's just plain ol' bad luck.

Ned: Not to mention, the one broke place.

Voice: Yeah. Don't make any smart moves, by the way. I got you dead to rights. You're just gonna stand there real still, and we're just gonna have ourselves a little conversation, okay?

Ned: I'm a statue, my friend.

Voice: What's your name?

Ned: Uh, my name? Uh, Edward.

Voice: You got a last name, Edward?

Ned: Uh, Edward, uh, Bonaventure.

Voice: Okay. Yeah, that's not real, but... what brings you to Kepler, there, Mr. Edward?

Ned: Uh, the fowl winds of fate, my new friend. Um, little down on my luck. Need a grubstake, and I was looking for, perhaps, something I could be—I could borrow, with every intention of paying back with interest, to whoever was the kind soul who would help me in my dire hour of need.

Griffin: You hear her laugh, this just sort of joyous, kind of croaky laugh, and flips on a light switch. And there, you see an older woman, you'd guess, probably in her 70s. She is wearing some pajamas. She has an eye patch, and she is holding a shotgun that she has pointed in your direction. Uh, and she smiles this big, toothy grin, and says...

Woman: Well, I find that pretty—oh my God, that's a nasty bruise you got there on your forehead. How'd you get something like that?

Ned: Um, it's a little foggy. I'm—I'm not quite sure. I—I believe I hit my head on a uh, on a window casing. But I'm not 100% sure.

Griffin: Um, she says...

Woman: Well, you may want to get that looked at. Um, so...

Ned: Yeah, I don't really have health insurance. And I'm pretty sure that if I go to a doctor, they're going to ask me the same intrusive questions that you're asking, like how did it happen, and I'm not prepared to go there at this time. And your name is?

Woman: My name is Victoria, there, Ned. It's a pleasure to meet ya. Sorry it's not under better circumstances.

Ned: Yes, I'm... I, as well.

Victoria: So, what made you decide to relieve this little here monster museum of its riches, huh?

Ned: Uh, the apparent lack of a security system, which... [laughs] I get now, appears that I was really off base, since you seem to be the security system.

Victoria: Yeah, it's just more damn bad luck, I'm afraid, there, Edward.

Ned: [laughs] I have a lot of it.

Griffin: And she says...

Victoria: Also, as you can see, ain't nothing green been in that register, save for a little bit of weed, for the better part of a year, now.

Ned: Oh.

Victoria: It's medicinal for my leg.

Ned: Of course, yes. Everything is medicinal.

Victoria: For my legs.

Ned: What exactly, if you don't mind me asking, since the only other topic so far has been shooting me... what is this place?

Victoria: Well, this here is a wonderland of supernatural delights, there, Edward. It's called the Cryptonomica. It's my little museum, sort of my footprint here in Kepler. Lots of strange stuff happens 'round here. I seen it. Lived here my whole life, and seems like folks 'round here want to try to ignore it more than celebrate it. So, I opened up this shop a few decades back, and uh...

Ned: Looks like they're still ignoring it.

Griffin: She smiles, and she says...

Victoria: Yeah, as it turns out, folks here, they don't want to address the reality of the situation as I see it.

Ned: Of course.

Victoria: Don't nobody in this town here like me, Edward, and don't nobody in this town trust me. In fact, this is the first conversation I've had with another living person in weeks. And to be honest, it's one of the more entertaining conversations I believe I have ever had.

Ned: Well, thank you, I think, Victoria. Would you mind just lowering that shotgun, just so it's not pointed at the more vital parts of my body? I'm really... I'm really harmless. I'm strictly B&E. I do not do arms stuff. I don't do... I don't do anything with violence. I abhor violence. Matter of fact, my middle name is Pacifist. And so, if you wouldn't mind not pointing that at me in such a lethal manner.

Griffin: She says...

Victoria: Nah, I appreciate that you have a nonviolent approach, 'cause if you didn't, you would be dead. I'll tell you what, how about this. It's late,

and I'm tired, and you probably are too, guessing by that bruise on your head. Cash register is empty, but the fridge ain't. Got some smoked turkey in there you're welcome to. Maybe grab some ice for that noggin of yours, while you're at it. And uh, tell you what. There's a cot in the supply room back in the back you can use. You should use it, and then, tomorrow morning, maybe you can explain what it is you're doing in this neck of the woods. Maybe you can tell me your actual, real name, if the spirit moves ya.

Ned: It's Ned.

Victoria: Ned...?

Ned: Ned Chicane.

Victoria: I still get a feeling like that ain't your real, Christian name, but...

Ned: That's probably about the best we're gonna do on such short notice, Victoria. Let me ask you this – are you sure you want to do that? I did, I mean, break into your hovel of a business.

Victoria: It ain't a hovel. It's a great business. Just 'cause we don't get patrons don't mean it's not worthwhile.

Ned: It is charming, I must admit. I find myself very, very comfortable here.

Griffin: She says...

Victoria: Yeah, I'm sure of it, Ned. And let me tell you, you ain't got nothing to worry about. I'm not gonna come back into that supply room and murder you in your sleep or nothin'.

Ned: Thank God.

Victoria: Yeah, probably sounds spooky, the fact I even had to say that at all, huh?

Ned: Yeah, a little bit.

Victoria: I guess it is maybe a bit strange for me to decide to open up my home to a burglar, but I got a peculiar set of beliefs.

Ned: Yes, I noticed.

[ambient music plays]

Victoria: I'm letting you into my home, Ned, because... you found your way here. And if living in Kepler for 70 years has taught me one thing, it's that nothing happens in this town without a damn good reason.

Griffin: And then, we are back in the present, and Ned, you dodge a few more pieces of debris. And now, you can actually see the night sky through the surface of the water at its peak, and floating immediately in front of you, is that yellow light. That as you approach it, you actually feel it starting to control the water, creating a current that is desperately, desperately trying to pull you back down. What do you do?

Clint: This is the best time to take the shot. I think he's gonna have to take the shot.

[music plays]

Griffin: Roll to kick some ass.

Clint: Okay. That's a seven.

Griffin: You are point blank with this light – rather, you were. It is trying to pull you away, and I think it's sort of gaining some ground. And you desperately try to paddle against the current, and then, just grab the Narf blaster, and sort of twirl it around you on its strap, and let a dart fly.

Clint: Opens his mouth, and yells out...

Ned: [garbled yelling]

Griffin: And then, Aubrey and Duck, you see from outside, Ned's silhouette pull up the Narf blaster, and then you see, just for a moment, a sharp light leave Ned's silhouette and enter the light at the peak of the water mountain.

And then... you see pieces of debris just start falling inside this mountain. Some of it falls out the side, and tumbles down into the empty pool below. And then, you see the water in this mountain just start to melt away. It just starts lowering, down to the ground, losing its shape, dispersing back down into the pool, overflowing that pool, since it had some water from the river in it, too.

And Ned, you see, right in front of you, the dart, still sort of pushing up against the yellow light that was controlling everything, until finally, it pushes its way through. And then, this light, it starts to flash, over, and over, and over again. And as it flashes, it almost looks like it's growing into a new shape and color.

What you see, floating in this water, as you are descending down to the ground is what appears to be a humanoid being, made out of white light, about your size, with two legs, and four arms, and a domed head, all made out of this gentle, white light. And you actually see two small, black eyes appear on its face and meet your gaze. And you instantly know that this being, whatever it is, it means you no harm.

And then, finally, the mountain disintegrates completely, and now, you and this figure are just standing on the ground, right outside of the pool. And you see this figure sort of look at its arms, one by one, just sort of examining its body. And as it does so, the light from one of its arms starts to break apart, just sort of disintegrating and floating away in the air. And in its last moments, this white humanoid shape, it looks back up in your direction, Ned, and then it slowly and cautiously nods. And then it evaporates completely, in a cloud of soft, white particles of light, drifting upward and winking out of view, one by one.

[music fades out]

Griffin: Hey, everybody, this is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master, your best friend, and your Texas strong man. Thanks so much for listening to

episode eleven of The Adventure Zone: Amnesty. It is the final episode of this hunt. Next episode is probably gonna be a lunar interlude, kind of like we talked about during the last The Adventure Zone Zone. I think. God, that was so long ago.

But, I hope that you're enjoying the episode. There is still a little coda coming at the end, so stick around for that. But first, I want to tell you about some of our sponsors. First up is Texture. Hey, magazines are really good. I don't know if you know about these things. They're like newspapers, but with like, way more pictures, and it looks like a book, but don't be fooled. It is a magazine at the end of the day. It helps you keep in touch with what's going on in the world, and you can get all the magazines that matter with Texture.

Magazines like National Geographic. Nat Geo, the Natty, as I call it sometimes. Vanity Fair, and more. They offer more than 200 of the best magazines, all in one place. You get complete issues, you get back issues, anytime, anywhere, all in one app. Stay connected to the biggest and best series today with Texture.

To start your seven day free trial, go to Texture.com/adventure. Why wait to start reading the latest issues of your favorite magazines? Try Texture for free today at Texture.com/adventure. That's Texture.com/adventure, and start your free trial.

I also want to tell you about MVMT. You might know them as MVMT, which is a cool way of spelling the word 'movement,' I think. Anyway, summer is upon us, and MVMT is dropping all new sunglasses to get you ready for the big, long days of soaking up the sun. I got some MVMT wear, and it's very fashion forward. I get lots of compliments on my MVMT stuff, and the people sure do appreciate seeing it on my bod.

The folks at MVMT don't just make great watches, though. They also make great, awesome sunglasses, and just released a ton of new styles. These are high quality, premium acetate frames in lots of styles. Classic, trendy, round, aviator, mirrored, polarized, for him and for her.

You can get 15% off today with free shipping and free returns by going to MVMT.com/adventure. That's MVMT.com/adventure. You know MVMT for how they've revolutionized the watch industry. Now, it's time to check out their sunglasses. Go to MVMT.com/adventure and join the MVMT.

I want to tell you about a roleplaying podcast called Quest Friends that comes out every other Monday at QuestFriends.podbean.com, or wherever you get your podcasts. Here's what they have to say.

"The Adventure Zone sure is great." Oh, thank you very much. "But how are you supposed to get your roleplaying fix the rest of the week? Quest Friends is a roleplaying podcast released every other Monday that takes place in the scavenging tech future of Numenera." I really should know how to pronounce that word, but I don't. "If robot cowboy shop keeps, old ladies giving bad guys the chair, and uncomfortably long handshakes sound like your jam, then check us out at QuestFriends.podbean.com, or your favorite podcasting app. Quest Friends: We're another podcast." That's a very good catchphrase.

I also want to tell you about Bohemian Galaxy. It is another actual play podcast that you can find on iTunes, or you can follow on Twitter, [@BohemianGalaxy](https://twitter.com/BohemianGalaxy). "On February 1st, Captain Sully and the crew of the good ship, Mayfly, blast off on an out of this world adventure in the new real play RPG podcast, Bohemian Galaxy.

Come along with Sully, Amy, John, and Barney as they unravel a dark conspiracy, and maybe find love. Or, some good udon. We're playing in a homebrew, sci-fi setting, and using the Savage Worlds rule system. So find us wherever you get your podcast fix. Bohemian Galaxy: Malevolent cosmic powers. Itty bitty ship in space."

That sounds really good, too. This is a rich, vibrant community of actual play podcasts going on right now. You should go dip your nose in, and taste the waters, like they say. Y'know, taste the waters.

I want to thank everybody for tweeting about the show using the [#TheZoneCast](https://twitter.com/hashtag/TheZoneCast) hash tag. If you do that, you might end up as a character on the show. We got a new arc coming very soon of Amnesty, and so, there's

gonna be new characters, and new naming opportunities. Really, we just appreciate you spreading the word. Most of our growth has come from just you all telling your friends who you think might be into the show about our show. And we really, really appreciate the hard work that y'all have done to build us up, buttercup.

I also want to thank Maximum Fun for having us on the network. You can go to MaximumFun.org and check out all the great shows there. Shows like Jordan, Jesse, Go, and Bullseye, and Stop Podcasting Yourself, and Lady to Lady, and Can I Pet Your Dog, and so many more, all at MaximumFun.org. And if you want to check out more stuff that we do, it's all at McElroyShows.com.

Two more things. Preorders are still available for the Taako's Correspondence School of Wizardry, Cantrips, and Other Magics, which is a collaboration project that we have done with the Mysterious Package Company. You will get a package that is sort of designed as a correspondence school from Taako's school from the Balance campaign, and it's gonna have all kinds of cool activities and some physical stuff that you get in the mail.

I've gotten a couple Mysterious Packages before, and they are a real treat. And so, you can find out more about that at MyseriousPackage.com.

And I also want to mention that our graphic novel is coming out really soon. Preorders are also still available for that at TheAdventureZoneComic.com. And if you want to come see us talk about the book, we're doing some readings and a Q&A at certain spots around the country. We are also each, individually, doing some signings at, y'know, usually close to our respective home towns.

You can find all the details for those book tour shows, and the meet and greet signings, at McElroyShows.com/tours.

That's it. We are gonna be back in two weeks with another episode of The Adventure Zone: Amnesty. So if my math is correct, that one's gonna be on July 12th. So we will talk to you then. Goodbye!

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Duck, you have returned home to your apartment building after your successful hunt. It is pretty late. The lights in your neighbors' windows are all out. Only the flickering street lights outside shed some light onto your approach as you return for the night. And as you crest the top of the stairs to your second story apartment, you see a figure at your door. They are kneeling down, and they appear to be busying themselves with something you can't quite ascertain, right in front of the door into your apartment. What do you do?

Justin: I yell...

Duck: Hey, what the fuck?

Travis: Duck's new catchphrase.

Justin: Duck's new catchphrase. Hey, what the fuck?

Griffin: Uh, as you yell that, you startle this figure who kind of falls down. And you hear like, some objects hitting the floor. And as they turn to face you, you see the warm, craggy face of Leo Tarkesian, your next door neighbor, and proprietor of the local general store, who you whipped into existence at the beginning of this arc with your beautiful brain.

And he is knelt over your doormat, where he has left a couple of paper bags filled with groceries, which he is now trying to refill with some of the objects that he dropped as you yelled and startled him. And he smiles as you catch him in the act, and he says...

Leo: Ah, damn, Duck. I was hoping I could get the drop on ya. How's your night? It looks like it was maybe kind of a tough one.

Duck: Yeah, there was a, um... a... uh, a black bear got uh, fell into the river, there. A baby. And I had to swim in and uh, rescue it. 'Cause they're, y'know, they're keeping count now, trying to monitor the population.

Leo: Damn, Duck, you are a credit to the park service. I don't know what they'd do without you there, saving bears from rivers. You big hero.

Duck: Yeah. I do our part, I guess.

Griffin: He says...

Leo: You haven't stopped by the store in a while, so I figured you might be runnin' low on sundries, so I thought I'd swing by and leave you some supplies, keep you fed. Just, y'know, try to be a good neighbor over here. You're out there saving bears, seems like the least I can do.

Duck: Did you, uh... did you get any of that new Wild Berry Froot Loops? I've been hearing some good things.

Griffin: Uh, he pulls out a box of Wild Berry Froot Loops from the—

Travis: [laughs]

Duck: My dude. My dude, thank you.

Leo: I know I—yeah, I know what you need. So, uh, how else... how's the rest of the forest stuff going? I admit, I haven't been out hiking lately on account of my back. Is it still as pristine and verdant as ever?

Duck: Yeah, Mr. Tarkesian. I mean, the splendor is all still in place. Uh, I... it's a little more, um... demanding, lately, to uh, to keep the peace, as it were.

Leo: [sighs] Well, you make sure to take care of yourself, there, Duck. I can't have you starving in the cold, just 'cause you got too busy serving the needs of the community to take care of yourself. You need anything, you need anything at all, you just come knock on my door, alright?

Duck: Yeah. And hey, Mr. Tarkesian? Um, I know you always uh, leave your place unlocked. You uh—you start locking up, okay?

Leo: Yeah, I can do that. It's a little bit... sounds a bit nefarious there, Duck.

Duck: Y'know, it's just been some strange, uh... it's just some strange times.

Griffin: He says...

Leo: Alright, I'll take care of myself, you take of yourself, Duck. That sound like a fair trade?

Duck: Yeah, thanks for the Loops.

Griffin: You and Mr. Tarkesian go to open your doors, and um, he turns the knob into his apartment, and he stops, and he turns to you, and he says...

Leo: You got good form, by the way. I seen ya in the lot, back behind the building, practicing with that sword. I figured you were prepping for a ren faire, or something like that. You look... you look good. Real professional. That kick thing that you're doing is top notch.

Duck: [inhales] Yeah, I'm, uh... This is gonna sound stupid, but I been kickin' around the idea of finally gettin' involved with the community theater. Y'know, the big fight scene in uh, Romeo and Juliet, when all the...

Leo: Oh, yeah, sure.

Duck: The two families are going at it?

Leo: Love it, yeah.

Duck: I'm trying to learn some real basic stuff. I don't know. It's kind of silly. Thanks for not telling anybody about it, though. I appreciate it. I'm a little embarrassed. Not even sure I'm gonna go through with it.

Griffin: He says...

Leo: Aw, no, nothin' to be embarrassed about. Again, you look great.

Griffin: And he starts to step into the room, and he takes one more step back outside, and looks at you, and says...

[theme music plays]

Leo: But you should keep your elbows in. Just... just a little bit tighter.

Griffin: And then he walks into his apartment, and shuts the door behind him.

Ned, you've returned to the Cryptonomica, which you have barely spent any time in the last couple of sort of frantic, monster hunting days. And as the chime above the door rings out, announcing your entrance, two figures in the room turn to face you: Kirby and Agent Stern. They are both hunched over Kirby's computer, where you can see that they were watching the video, captured on Kirby's camera, of your first run in with Bigfoot.

Now, you have a display set up in the Cryptonomica, showing some of this video. Namely, Bigfoot's appearance from out of frame, where he engages with this corrupted bobcat. Um, this sequence, this part of the video, runs for about 30 seconds or so, before the video loops, and it edits out a few things.

It edits out your attempt at faking a Bigfoot sighting with a Chewbacca costume, it edits out you beginning to sort of take the camera equipment apart, where you unplugged the shotgun microphone out of it, which, luckily, then, muted the video during your conversation with an off-screen Barclay when he sort of stumbles upon you.

Uh, and it also edits out the final shot of the footage, of the Bigfoot and bobcat battle being lit up by your headlights, as you drive full speed into the scuffle, knocking over the camera, and ending the recording before your involvement in Barclay's rescue sort of is shown.

Uh, but Agent Stern has just seen this footage. And he says...

Agent Stern: Thank you, Kirby. Your assistance is most appreciated by myself and my superiors at the FBI. I'd like to have a word with your employer, if you don't mind.

Griffin: And Kirby, who looks understandably kind of nervous, excuses himself to the back room. And Agent Stern says...

Agent Stern: Ned. Is it raining? Why are you wet?

Ned: Uh, I've just come from a very strenuous workout, and I have a bit of a perspiration issue. What—what do you need, Agent Stern? I am so, so very tired.

Agent Stern: You know what I need there, Ned. I've been asking for it for two days now, and yet, you've continued to turn me away. So I decided to come here myself, and I met your assistant, Kirby, who was more than willing to show me what I needed.

Ned: Yes, and he and I will have a discussion about that after you leave.

Griffin: Agent Stern kind of picks up on your tone, and he says...

Agent Stern: Why were you trying to hide this from me, Mr. Chicane?

Ned: I will be honest with you, Agent Stern. And it's honesty that is very difficult for me. But since I am so fatigued, and so tired, coming up with a bunch of snappy repartee is just not in the cards tonight. Here's the thing. Why should I fucking help you?

You have shown shaky, at best, credentials. I haven't seen a warrant. Why in the world would I be cooperative? All you have been is a giant pain in the ass since I encountered you. Now, you tell me, why should I help you out, so called Agent Stern?

Griffin: He has a briefcase that he walks over to the main desk, here in the Cryptonomica, and he pops open, where he pulls out his badge with his name, and picture, and badge number, and identification info on it, that he sort of lays out. He reaches in and pulls out a case file that he opens up, and

inside, you see pictures of other Bigfoot sightings, along with missing persons reports sort of attached to each picture and each sighting from various points across the country. And he pulls out... well, there wouldn't be a warrant, I don't think. But he pulls out this documentation to sort of support his case. And he gestures towards it, and he says...

Agent Stern: My bona fides are available for you to see, if you had only asked, Mr. Chicane. I must say, I do not necessarily appreciate your tone. I am here on a job, Mr. Chicane. And I don't mean to cause you any trouble; I just don't understand why you are being so evasive about the facts.

Ned: [laughs] Oh, you... you took my little act there as real? No, no, friend Stern. Listen, let me get you—what, a latte? Would you like a latte? Sit down, we'll go through all this. I'll tell you whatever you want to know. My goodness, so thin skinned.

Agent Stern: Ned, I don't need a latte. I just need information. I have two questions for you, and then I am out of your hair. Kirby has given me a copy of the video on this flash drive, which I will take with me. But I need to know two things. One, have you had any further contact with the creature that you encountered on that day, since the video was first shot?

Ned: Uh, no.

Griffin: He sighs, and he looks kind of disappointed. And he says...

Agent Stern: Okay. Uh, well, it appears at one point in the video, you were having a conversation with a subject off screen. Who was that?

Ned: I uh, I'm having trouble remembering.

Griffin: He pinches the bridge of his nose with his fingers, and looks up at you, and he says...

Agent Stern: Okay. Alright. Ned, while you were evading me, I decided to look into you a little bit. Ned Chicane. And a funny thing is, I couldn't find anything under that name before your inheritance of the Cryptonomica here in Kepler, West Virginia. Now, a person in my line of work, they see a

capable guy, using a fake name, living in a small, unquestioning town like Kepler, they start to make certain assumptions as to why that is.

Now, I'm not here to cause trouble for you, Mr. Chicane. I'm here to put an end to a threat that few people, even within my own department, believes exists in the first place.

[music plays]

Agent Stern: All I ask is that the next time I ring your bell... you come running.

Griffin: Aubrey, you are sitting in the dining room of Amnesty Lodge, and joining you at your table is Dani, who has Dr. Harris Bonkers sitting in her lap, who she is kind of petting absentmindedly while looking out the window. And just outside that window, you see Barclay step out of a small maintenance shed, and look over into the hot springs, which begin refilling, much to the delight of the lodge's Sylvan patrons, who are all standing around the empty pool expectantly, sort of ready for a rejuvenating, late night dip.

And they all cheer at Barclay as he turns the water pump back on from inside the shed, and Barclay looks up and gives a big thumbs up in yours and Dani's direction.

And Dani smiles, and says...

Dani: Well, I guess that crisis is taken care of. You all saved everyone's lives here, so I guess we all kind of owe you one.

Aubrey: Yeah, but, okay. Here's the thing. I haven't even got to the best part yet.

Dani: Oh, right, you were telling me.

Aubrey: Yes. So like, I did some shit that wasn't just like, fire. It was like, wind, and I like, jumped a fence, and I like, made a shield. No idea how.

Can't do it now. I've been trying since we got back. I can't make it happen again, but it was badass.

Griffin: She says...

Dani: So, it sounds like you learned a thing or two over when you were down in Sylvain.

Aubrey: Nope. Didn't learn anything.

Dani: Oh.

Aubrey: I have no idea how I did it. Like, I talked with the Minster of Magic or whatever, and they were like, "You need to think about how you do what you do." And I definitely need to do that, because I have no idea how I did it. It was amazing. Oh, I wish I could do it now.

Dani: I don't think you should push yourself. I didn't get a chance to catch up with you after your trip. What did you think of my hometown?

Aubrey: There is a big giant like, gem, crystal thing. I want to touch it so bad, Dani.

Dani: Okay, but what else? I mean, I haven't been there in quite some time. I guess I'm asking you how everything is going over there.

Aubrey: It was really cool. Um, there were, y'know, people lined up to touch the crystal, and there was a goat man who was pretty nice, actually.

Dani: Oh, Vincent. Yeah, he's great.

Aubrey: Yeah. Very nice. But he was very strict on his policies of crystal touching. And yeah, it was great.

Dani: Yeah, it was, uh... it was a great place to grow up. I mean, constant threat from humanity and the corruption beyond the city's borders notwithstanding, it was home. I miss it a lot.

Griffin: And she looks out the window at the springs filling up outside, and she says, kind of wistfully...

Dani: My family... my family's still there, Aubrey. My parents and my little brother. I'll probably never... Sylvain is a beautiful place, but the things its people do to survive are... are unbearable. Do you have any idea what it's like, knowing you have a home out there, and knowing that you'll never be able to return to it?

Aubrey: Y... yeah, actually. I do.

Griffin: Uh, she smiles, and lifts up her hand from petting Dr. Harris Bonkers, and places it on yours, on the table. I don't think she was expecting you to respond in the affirmative when she asked you about your family. Um, and she smiles, and she says...

Dani: Sorry. I'm being unnecessarily maudlin. Let's chalk it up to the old starvation. Which, I believe you promised me a dip in the hot springs a while ago, and I think it's time that we...

Griffin: And Dani's interrupted by the slamming of the front door, into the lodge's lobby. Standing, just in front of the doorway, is an imposing figure, who is draped in a ratty, dirt covered coat, and a cloak partially obscuring a scratched up, filthy face. And this figure is clearly wounded, using what appears to be a shotgun as a crutch as they stumble into the lobby. And after taking a few steps forward, they say...

Figure: Either of y'all know how to drive?

Aubrey: Uh, yeah?

Griffin: And she throws you the keys to the truck parked outside, and says...

Figure: Great. You're gonna need to get me to a hospital.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: And she falls to her knees, and collapses on the ground in a heap. And without missing a beat, Dani pushes herself back from the table, knocking over her chair as she rushes and throws open the window. And all the Sylvans outside look up as Dani announces the good news.

Dani: Mama's home.

[theme music plays]

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[beeping]

Ben: Well, Adam, we're still putting out the Greatest Discovery podcast while we wait for season two.

Adam: What are we doing with these episodes?

Ben: We've uh, talked to a whole bunch of interesting people, like The Wall Street Journal's Ben Fritz, and MaximumFun.org's own Danielle Radford. We're kind of using this time to find ways to entertain ourselves and you while we wait for the next season.

Adam: So catch yourself up with Star Trek Discovery, and join us Tuesday on the Greatest Discovery. It's on MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[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.