

The Adventure Zone: Amnesty – Episode 12

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Griffin: Previously on The Adventure Zone...

[theme music plays]

Barclay: This computer used to belong to a dude named Thacker. He was with the Pine Guard from the start, too. He kept notes on everything they ever fought. About six years ago, Thacker took off in the middle of the night without a word to anyone. There's a lot of that going around these days.

Griffin: Standing just in front of the doorway is an imposing figure, who is draped in a ratty, dirt covered coat.

Mama: Either of you know how to drive?

Aubrey: Yeah?

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

Griffin: And she falls to her knees and collapses on the ground in a heap. And all the Sylvans outside look up as Dani announces the good news.

Dani: Mama's home.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: So it's been two weeks since the Pine Guard defeated the Abomination plaguing the waters of Kepler, West Virginia, with Duck's blade, Aubrey's magic, and Ned's surprising aqua dynamics, and a little help from contractor Pigeon, you all saved the town... except for H2Whoa: That Was Fun, which got pretty well enfandolined' during the ensuing battle. But that's okay, you can't break a few eggs...

Clint: Without eating an omelet.

Griffin: You'll make an omelet if you do that.

Justin: They got a new tagline. Um, it's uh, "H2Whoa: That Was Fun: It's a big pool now." Because it's just one big pool now.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: I really like how they had a big PR rebranding where they just capitalized "was," to really hit like, "H2Whoa: That *Was* Fun."

Griffin: Yeah. It's bolded.

Travis: That was. There was a time when this was fun.

Griffin: Um, we will rebuild it. Aubrey, when you—

Travis: Better! Stronger! Funner!

Justin: Wetter!

Griffin: Wetter.

Clint: Slurpier.

Griffin: Uh, Aubrey. Aubrey, when you returned home, you witnessed the return of Mama, proprietor of Amnesty Lodge, who stumbled in looking pretty worse for wear, and then looking pretty unconscious. And she remained that way as you drove her to the Saint Francis Medical Center, where she was stabilized and admitted with haste. Her condition was pretty serious.

She had a few bruised ribs, a broken ankle, some internal bleeding, and a head wound that left her just down for the count. It has been two weeks since Mama's return. It is early November now, and snow has begun to fall in Kepler, West Virginia. Despite sort of the lovely snowy scenery, Mama's condition has sort of cast a pall over Amnesty Lodge. And it is for this exact

reason that Jake Coolice suggests a day trip to get everybody's minds off the troublesome status of their leader. Y'all are going skiing.

Travis: [gasps]

[music plays]

Travis: We going to Pipestem?

Griffin: Pipestem?

Travis: Yeah, it's a ski town in West Virginia.

Clint: It's probably where a whole bunch of people go so they don't go to Kepler.

Justin: Let me, uh... let me get in on this. Fuckin' Pipestem, dude!

Travis: Come on, dude!

Griffin: No, you are all actually... You three and your sort of entire Sylvan assembly are headed to the ski lodge at the base of Mount Kepler. It's close. It's convenient. I guess I said day trip, but it's more like four minutes' walk from Amnesty Lodge.

Travis: I see.

Griffin: So, uh, you all have arrived at the ski lodge at Mount Kepler. Jake is in sort of rare form, very excited, he's waxing his board. He's sharing a few pointers with a few of his more concerned colleagues. Moira is attempting to strap on some skis without sort of phasing right through them with her ghost legs.

Dani is bundling up to a near sort of Randy from Christmas Story degree. Barclay is trying to find any kind of ski capable of housing his gargantuan feet. And I don't really have much prepared for this next part. I'm just curious what Duck, Aubrey, and Ned hope to achieve from this day at Mount Kepler Ski Trails Park... is what it's called, I guess.

Travis: Mount Kepler Ski Trails Park.

Griffin: And resort.

Travis: And resort. [laughs] And burger place.

Griffin: Colon: That Was Also Fun.

Travis: [laughs] Um, I am going to say that uh, Aubrey has never skied before in her life. Uh, so I'm gonna say maybe, maybe, she has swallowed her pride, and she has asked Jake Coolice for some like, bunny slope lessons.

Griffin: For sure. Ned, Duck, what do you think your characters are up to at the ski lodge?

Clint: Two words.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Hot toddy.

Griffin: Just bevin' out in the...

Clint: I believe Ned has had a really bad experience trying to ski, where he got to the top of the ski lift, came off, fell forward, and uh, the swing hit him in the back of the head.

Travis: Oh.

Clint: And that kind of put him off the whole ski thing.

Griffin: Can we play that out, just in fully? This is an audio medium, so maybe we can do like, a flashback of like...

Ned: Uhh, I'm not sure about this... uh, oh well! So, what, do I just plant my feet? Okay. Wait—boom! Shit!

Griffin: [sings a goofy tune]

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: Just hang out at the lodge, drinking hot toddies, and y'know, making conversation with people. Anything—

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Clint: Anything to keep from being killed on the slopes.

Griffin: Duck, what about yourself?

Justin: I'm gonna come find Ned to come eat dinner with me. Uh, for a reason.

Griffin: O...kay.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: Yeah, we're going over to Wolf Ember. It's the Wolf Ember Grill. It's like the nicer restaurant, but it's not like... I feel like this probably isn't one of the super upscale resorts. Like, I feel like local people can still go there, yeah?

Griffin: Yeah, for sure. It is the—

Justin: There's some places in West Virginia where it's not like that. Where it's like, oh boy, this is just people coming in from out of town.

Griffin: Yeah, I think this is a very accessible... this is like—that's kind of why I pinned a park to it, is that like, this is not a fancy, fancy, super expensive, Snowshoe, right? Where you come, and you stay in the nice, nice resorts, and you pay like, \$80 for a ski lift, and y'know, ski around, and—

Travis: This is more like Pipestem.

Griffin: I guess. You keep fucking saying that.

Travis: And that's for everyone.

Griffin: But I don't know it.

Travis: Well, it's a resort and state park, y'know? It's got fishing, geocaching, camping, boating, biking, golfing, hiking, horseback riding...

Griffin: Alright, we can all Google. Okay, let's start with Aubrey. Aubrey, you and most of the Sylphs that came here to ride the slopes go out, and you get onto a ski lift to go to the top of Mount Kepler. You're probably there with Dani, who looks at you from behind, y'know, 18 layers of thick fabric, and says...

Dani: So, how many stunts do you think... like, how many flips and grinds... like, what do you think you're capable of? I know it's your first day, but like, I guess my expectations are pretty high.

Aubrey: Yeah. I mean, probably, I would say, 16 to 17 like, sick stunts. Maybe like, 16 and a half if I had to guess. I can do the thing where I make my skis kind of shaped like pizza. Is that a stunt?

Dani: That qualifies as a stunt, yeah. According to the X Games rules.

Aubrey: Okay, well that's one stunt. And then, I can do the thing where they're like French fries, side by side, and inch forward. So like, that's a stunt. And then I can do a thing where I try to stop, and kind of fall over. So that's like, three stunts right there. And then, I can take my skis off and go home. So that's four stunts already.

Dani: That's at least four good stunts. Yeah, for sure.

Griffin: Um, and as you reach the top and sort of meet up with the rest of the Sylphs, who reach the top of the ski lift, Jake Coolice skis over and

says—boards over, I should say. He would not touch a fucking ski. He's a boarder for life. Uh, but he comes over to you and says, like...

Jake: Okay, so uh, what are y'all feelin' like? Should we just like, head straight to Bone Mulcher, or do you wanna go like, work our way up to Bone Mulcher? You feeling like a Black Diamond, Blue Circle, what are you... what are you feeling like?

Aubrey: Is there like, uh... like, My First Hill?

Jake: I mean, there's a bunny slope, but that's not gonna teach you the fundamentals. You gotta be in that real life, life or death, hurdling down—

Aubrey: Do you?

Jake: Yeah, I feel like it... kind of you do, a little bit.

Aubrey: Do you?

Griffin: He says...

Jake: I'll tell you what. We'll head to a nice little Blue Circle. We'll get you started up there. It's a bit of a longer one, so you'll be able to get your legs out under you. Uh, what's it called? I'm having trouble remembering...

Aubrey: The Slippery Dippery?

Jake: I think it is the—yeah, yeah. Here it is on the map. The Slippery Dippery. The Slippy Dip as we call it, or the Slip Dip sometimes, if you are, y'know, going by somebody on your snowboard really fast, and you want to be able to yell out the name to them in an efficient way. But yeah, we'll meet ya, maybe the rest of the folks will meet up with us at the top of the Slip Dip, and uh, we can just do a few practice runs down that. So you know the pizza, you know the French fries?

Aubrey: Yeah. I know pizza, I know French fries, I know fall over, and I know take skis off and go home.

Jake: A lot of people won't tell you this, the pro skiers. Pizza and French fries is basically all there is to it.

Aubrey: Jake, I can't believe that's true. I'm on two sticks on like, ice and snow. It's really cold, and I hate that. And it feels like I'm missing something?

Jake: Uh, I mean, yeah, you are missing a lot of stuff, like one of these.

Griffin: And he just like, does a flip standing perfectly still.

Aubrey: How the fuck did you do that?

Jake: Yeah, you'll work your way up to it. Think of it as just like, super advanced pizza and French fries. Alright, let's go!

Griffin: And he pushes off towards the Slip Dip. Um, and we hop over to Ned. You are sitting in the lobby of the Mount Kepler Ski Trails ski lodge, and it's real nice. There's a nice little hearth going, there's not too many people in here, just a few folks sitting around at these various sort of benches, and nice, big, comfy chairs by the fire.

Clint: He's wearing one of those big, puffy vests. Y'know, that skiers, y'know...

Travis: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Clint: In like, red, yellow, and blue, anticipating the new Captain Marvel movie.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: With no plans to actually ski. It's just a... what are the things they give dogs? A thunder... a thunder shirt?

Travis: Yeah, a thunder jacket.

Clint: Yep. Yeah.

Griffin: A thunder jacket, yeah. Just a nice warm vest on.

Clint: Well, he's wearing the vest just in case somebody comes crashing through the window off the hill, and slams into him.

Griffin: A real danger at ski resorts. They don't tell you that.

Clint: That's why he's worried. He really worries.

Griffin: Sure. And um, there is an attendant here that comes to refresh your uh... comes to refresh your hot toddy. You've had a couple at this point. Got that nice warm belly.

Travis: You've always been here, Mr. Chicane.

Griffin: And he tells you you died here in the '60s.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: And there's a picture of the wall behind me... ahh!

Travis: Wait, oh!

Griffin: We have several in-fiction ghosts at this point, so I think I maybe should be careful what I make even remotely joke-canon.

Travis: Can I change my scene to happen in the hedge maze out back?

Griffin: Um, maybe you'll crash into it.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Uh, so this attendant comes to refresh your hot toddy. Uh, and he looks at sort of your winter wear, and he says...

Attendant: So, are you... you planning on heading up the mountain anytime soon, before we lose the daylight, and getting a couple runs down?

Ned: Oh, yes. That's why they call me the Black Diamond. Ned Black Diamond Chicane. I uh, I do a lot of sluicing up there on the slopes. Zipping on down. Y'know, ever since winning the World Cup of skiing a few years ago.

Attendant: [laughs] The World Cup of skiing?

Ned: Oh, yes, yes. All the countries send their best skiers, and we ski in different places, and it's, y'know, once every four years, it's pretty interesting.

Attendant: Yeah, I heard about that. I participated in the Superbowl of snowboarding once, and that went well. Won the snowboarding Stanley Cup for that one, which was real exciting.

Ned: Ah, someone is putting his tip in danger.

Attendant: Yep, yep. Like we say up here on the mountain all the time, I've got an endangered tip. But uh, you be careful when you head up there, now, alright? It seems like something has it out for Kepler's outdoor activity centers. You hear about what happened to H2Whoa?

Ned: Oh, that was a shame. I did hear about that, and it was always a great place. But y'know, they still have the pool.

Attendant: I guess they got the pool, but they got a lot of debris, too. Sounds like what happened, based on what I've heard... I've got some buddies in the force. They say that it seems like something ripped that park apart. Now, isn't that curious? What's got enough power to tear apart a whole water park?

Ned: Uh, wild dogs. They—I've heard a lot about wild dogs. Um... we... I mean, large. Very large wild dogs. Uh, and big feet. The Bigfeet. Um, y'know, if you cross the Bigfeet, they, oh... and they hate water recreation.

Attendant: Yeah, I could see the Bigfeet and the dogs working together for sure.

Ned: Yeah, they're all covered with hair, and y'know, they're like brothers and sisters.

Attendant: For sure, for sure. I got a theory, though. Don't nobody else want to hear it. I wondered if you might want to hear it.

Ned: Oh, of course, yes. I live on theory.

Attendant: Well, it's aliens.

[music plays]

Ned: Hmm.

Attendant: Yeah, they're back here. Back in Kepler. I had a little run in with them myself. It was Tuesday night, November 15th, 1988. I was out walking my dog Braxton, got sucked up in this wormhole dealie. All these little ephemeral beings started investigating me. I told them, drop me right back down or else I was gonna get my 12 gauge, fill their whole ass full of buckshot.

And that must've scared them something fierce, 'cause they complied, dropped me right back off. Ain't never seen hide nor hair of them since now, 'cause I guess they're back, tearing up our waterparks, guess they need a reminder. So you uh... you keep a look out, and come tell ol' Eugene if you see anything otherworldly out there.

Ned: Eugene, you know what is amazing to me?

Eugene: What's that, Ned?

Ned: That a 50 plus year old man can make a living tending bar in a ski resort. How do you do that?

Eugene: That's for me to know and for you to find out.

Ned: Eh, I'm not really that interested. I just was trying to make conversation.

Eugene: Alright.

Griffin: Then he walks back to the bar of the ski lodge. And he hops over...

Ned: Oh, lovable Eugene.

Duck: Now, Eugene, you're giving him the story. Ned, have you not heard this one before?

Ned: Oh, about the aliens?

Duck: Yeah. I love the part, uh... oh.

Ned: How long have you been standing there, Duck?

Duck: Just walked up, but y'know, I need about three seconds of that shpiel before... I can recite it pretty much word for word at this point.

Eugene: It was Tuesday night, November 15th, 1988...

Duck: November 15th, 1988. Yeah, we know, Eugene.

Eugene: Braxton was there, and...

Ned: Braxton...

Eugene: My precious dog...

Duck: Braxton.

Eugene: Gone to Jesus, Braxton did.

Ned: No!

Travis: [laughs]

Duck: [laughs] I don't mean to take you away from this amazing tale.

Ned: Oh, God, please, take me away.

Duck: Interstellar adventure.

Ned: Please.

Duck: But uh, I have a very important errand that I need to run over at the uh, Wolf's Ember Grill. So if you want to join me, I'd be happy for your company.

Ned: Ooh, they have amazing poutine. Amazing poutine there. Yeah, let's go.

Duck: No, they don't.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Ned: I read it on Yelp!

Duck: No butt. That's my style. My carpet sides, no butt. Come on. Let's go.

Travis: [laughing]

Griffin: Uh, alright, let's hop back to Aubrey. Aubrey, you're on the Slippery Dippery, um, and why don't you roll to act under pressure? Let's see how you're doing.

Travis: Oh my God. Not great. What's under pressure?

Griffin: What's your cool?

Travis: My cool is zero.

Griffin: Uh oh!

Travis: So that's a six.

Griffin: You're doing fucking bad. I guess mark experience?

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: That's good. Okay. Here's what I'll say. You're actually doing... you're doing alright. It is a Blue Circle. It is a nice... God, please let me make sure... no, it's Green Circle, Blue Square. Holy shit, I'm so glad I caught that.

It's a Green Circle. Nice, calm sort of trail. Nice and uh... a nice, long trail with some cool twists and turn through the nice snowy sort of uh, mountainside. It's a nice, scenic run, and you're doing okay with it, and you're keeping up pace with everybody as they sort of go down with you. You're sort of side by side with Dani and Barclay and Jake as they are going down the hill.

But you kind of break away, because you're not so great at controlling your speed.

Aubrey: Whoa, whoaaa!

Travis: There's a lot of that.

Griffin: You get to like, the only kind of steep part of the hill, and as you go over the edge of it and start to go downward, you realize that there's some stuff on the hill that looks like it maybe shouldn't be there. There's like a plastic ramp that somebody has put there. There's like a um... like a sawhorse, but like, really, really long, that has been laid out right in front of that ramp, almost like a nice grinding rail, like they call them. And uh, just like, some obstacles that are set up that you are just not prepared for. Your pizza and French fries prove sort of, uh—make you incapable of navigating these.

And I think you hit that ramp, and just come crashing down, and uh, break through that sawhorse for zero harm.

Aubrey: Oh. Whoops.

Griffin: Yeah, I don't think it's a serious enough thing that I would make you take damage for it. It's a lunar interlude episode. We're just trying to have some fun, here. But quickly, the other Sylphs, they pull up beside you and come to a stop, and uh, Dani says...

Dani: Holy shit. Okay, that did qualify as a stunt, but are you okay? Is your neck hurt? Are we supposed to move her if her neck's hurt? It's a no, right? How's your neck?

Aubrey: Fine? Let me... yes. Still there.

Griffin: Jake is sort of eyeing over these obstacles that somebody has put out on the hill, and you see, behind you, as you're kind of craning your neck around, a figure come over that slope, and come down towards you. He's a young guy in his early 20s. He's got a short, cropped, like, mohawk. He's wearing a black windbreaker, with an insignia on the breast, featuring what looks like a hornet on it. And he's holding a camcorder.

And he kicks up snow in that really cool way that like, bullies do in movies, as he skids to a stop in front of you. And he uh, he says...

Guy: Now, that's the weirdest thing. Y'all are standing on the Slip and Dip, which our Hornets are shooting our newest promo video on. But I don't recognize y'all from the Hornets. Now, I might've missed a meeting or something, and missed some new recruits... but I think y'all might just kind of be in the way, fuckin' up my shot. Isn't that weird?

Aubrey: Hornets?

Guy: Yeah, we're the—you ain't heard of the Hornets?

Aubrey: I just—if I were going to pick like, some kind of mascot for like, snow extreme sport... hornets are not known for like, their sick ice tricks.

Guy: Well, Hornets aren't just exclusive to the snow. Listen, you don't need to know everything there is to know about the hornets. You just need to know that you don't want to get on our bad side. So, I'm gonna suggest y'all get the fuck out of here, head to a different trail. Bunny slope might be better, just by the looks of sort of your pizza French fries technique. It's okay. It's getting there. But it's not quite super stable yet. Um, so... get. Skedaddle.

Aubrey: No?

Clint: Rumble!

Griffin: He uh, hops off his board, and starts to take a couple steps towards your party, and then he looks at Jake Coolice. And he says...

Guy: [laughs] I get it. I don't know why I assumed y'all might be Hornets, if you're hanging with a scrub like Jake Coolice.

Aubrey: Excuse me?!

Griffin: Uh, let's hop over to Duck and Ned.

Travis: I might've peaked a little bit there.

Griffin: That's alright. You gotta defend our boy.

Duck: We can just sit over here in the corner. This booth is normally where I post up. You hungry?

Ned: Well, I had my heart set on some poutine, but you say there isn't any.

Duck: No. Uh, there's not. It's a pretty straight up and down place. What they do have, though, and I'll order for the both of us. Specifically, the greatest French onion soup you've ever had in your entire life.

Ned: Now, don't play with me.

Duck: I know, Ned. I know. I know it sounds like a big swingin' for the fences promise, and I know that you've traveled all over this uh, this beautiful country of ours. But I'm tellin' ya. It's the best French onion soup I've ever had in my entire life. Funny enough, I got the recipe once. The chef, Hubert, I gave him a jump when his Camry was dead back in... I guess it was probably '06, '07. And uh, I traded him the recipe for a jump.

Now, I would've given him the jump anyway, but y'know, I decided to make a run for it. Tried to make a—

Griffin: Hubert eyes you from the kitchen, through a small gap in a window between the kitchen and the dining room, just like, giving you the stink eye, 'cause he knows you know his dark secret.

Duck: The secret is – and this is gonna fuck you up – I took it home, and uh, I tried to make it. The only one part of my plan that kind of broke down is, I can't cook for shit. So I ended up with basically chicken broth and onion rings, which was not the desired effect. The only thing that seems weird when I Google other recipes, they put anise in it. Like, a little bit of anise. You'll taste it when we get it. But it's honestly... it's gonna knock you on your ass. And you will never have a better French onion soup.

Griffin: Hubert walks over to your table. I don't even think he needs you all to order. I think he knows what you need. I think he knows what you crave.

Duck: There he is.

Griffin: And he places the cup of soup down in front of Ned, and sure enough, this... oh, Ned. Oh, Ned. The smell. Ned, the smell, Ned.

Ned: Mmm, the cheesiness.

Griffin: It's unfathomable. There is a nice, nice sort of uh, browning of this cheese layer that's dripping over the side of this nice, like, terracotta pot that this fuckin' soup's in. It's so good. And he holds the cup out, and he's still holding yours, Duck, and he's just kind of lookin' at ya.

Duck: Uh, we're pretty excited about it, there, Hubert. Thanks for uh, bringing it uh... by.

Griffin: He kind of grimaces. He leans down, and he says...

Hubert: [whispers] Have you kept it secret?

Duck: Yeah, Hubert. I mean, it's not—yeah. I mean, I mentioned one of the ingredients to my friend, here, but you can trust him. I didn't—I only told him about the one thing. I didn't mention the Amish gruyere you use or nothin' like that.

Hubert: Oh my God...

Duck: Ah, damnit, I'm sorry, Hubert. Listen, Ned's not—Ned's good. Ned, you're not gonna cook this good soup, are ya?

Ned: Mmm, uh, not right away. No.

Duck: Ned, please don't fuck with Hubert, man. He's dangerous. I've seen this guy do some shit. Please don't fuck with Hubert.

Travis: [laughs]

Ned: Hubert, you have my word as an honest gentleman.

Duck: Hubert, I know this man is genetically incapable of sounding like he's telling the truth. I don't know why he says everything like that, Hubert, but please, you have to believe him.

Griffin: He sets the cup of soup down in front of you, now, Duck, and he stands up over the table, and he looks at both of you, sort of unsure if he can trust you. And he just says, right before he walks away...

Hubert: I know Krav Maga.

Griffin: And he walks away and leaves.

Duck: He does.

Ned: Let's—

Duck: What? Hell yeah, let's get—here, no, go on. I want to—I want to wait to eat, because I want to see you... I just... I know this is weird. I just wanna—I just wanna watch.

Clint: Well, to start with, I'm going to reach down and pull up just a little bit of the cheese that has melted over the side, and kind of lift that. And it kind of lifts the whole flap of cheese. Just a taste, just a little bit, to let the aroma come out. And it wafts out. I pop it in my mouth, and it practically melts. There's like, no chewing involved.

Duck: Yeah, that's what you want. See, a lot of people just put a slab of cheese on there.

Ned: No. Mm-mm.

Duck: But you gotta grate it, because it mixes into the soup, right? That's what Hubert told me, at least.

Ned: And look at the bread. The bread cube that's in the middle. What... what is that? It looks like a bagel, almost. Bread from a bagel. Look at the size of that—

Duck: Brioche!

Ned: Brioche! Ohh. So we have brioche and gruyere. Oh.

Duck: Yeah, it's not an easy to pronounce soup, but it sure is easy to eat, I'll tell ya.

Ned: Alright, it's time for a spoonful.

Griffin: It's actually pretty gross. No, I'm just kidding, it's fuckin' great. Uh, in fact, as you two both tuck into this soup, you both get one experience point, just from how tasty the soup is.

Duck: Good soup.

Ned: Alright.

Griffin: And by saying that, I realize, you could just keep coming here, and just fuckin' farm... what's up, y'all? This is a—

Justin: [laughs] This is like the uh—this is our [unintelligible].

Griffin: It's—these are the Crushbone Belts. This is an any percent run of the The Adventure Zone: Amnesty. You want to skip a lot of the leveling, you just go to the... Ember Wolf or whatever it was.

Clint: Wolf Ember.

Justin: Wolf Ember. Okay, so let's finish our soup. Here's 20 minutes of soup eating noises.

Griffin: No, and I—I've cut it. It's gone.

Justin: We did record it, just so you all know.

Duck: So, right? Was I lying?

Ned: Mm-mm. Duck, I owe you. That was life changing. That soup was soup for the soul. Somebody ought to write a book like that. French Onion Soup for the Soul.

Duck: It's got... I mean, it's catchy. Here's a wild thing—okay. We got a few more minutes, right? Alright, hold on.

Ned: Yeah.

Duck: So, okay. It was uh, right around my 18th birthday, and my uh, lady friend at the time, Tabitha, brought me up here, sort of like a welcome to adulthood kind of thing. She had a lot of friends that I didn't really get along with. She was like, uh... she was slummin' it with Duck. Let's just put it that

way. Her daddy had a lot of money. And I didn't really get along with her friends too well, and they came up here all the time, but this was my first time coming up here.

And I went out on the slopes, and none of them wanted to do the skiing class, 'cause they'd all been coming up here for however long. So I would've been the only one, y'know, learnin' how to ski. So they—I just kind of went out with everybody, and uh, I basically just kind of fell my way down the hill. Like, some of it was on my ass, and none of it was on my feet. I just kind of like, trumbled. That's not a word, but it fits.

Ned: It is now.

Duck: I trumbled my way down to the bottom of the hill, and I'd never been so cold, and I'd never been so tired. And I right then and there – they were all skiing, having a hell of a time, and I just wandered over here to the Wolf Ember, and uh, I don't know what prompted me to order French onion soup. I think they may have even brought it by mistake.

But when I tasted it, I realized, I had never eaten French onion soup. And it was the best thing I'd ever put in my mouth. And I'd spent years, 18 years, missing out on French onion soup. Like, all the times I could've eaten French onion soup, and I love the stuff. Had no idea. That was all I could think about.

And that night was the first time I turned down Minerva. 'Cause all I could think about, when she was talkin' about me putting my life out and risking it all, all I could think about... and I know this is stupid, but... all I could think about was all the French onion soup I'd missed. And if I died, all the French onion soup that I'd miss out on in the future. I swear to God. But I turned down saving the world to eat French onion soup.

And when I say it out loud to you, now, in this exact context, I feel like kind of an asshole about it, if I'm being honest.

Ned: I get that.

Duck: It's good soup though, right?

Ned: It's great soup, if you're gonna do it for anybody. Matter of fact, I have a special guest here to ask. Come in for just a moment, please. We're talking about French onion soup.

Clint: Um, it's your grandmother, boys. It's... Nonny is here.

Travis: Hi Nonny!

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: Wait a minute. Here, wait a minute. So, tell the boys. What's the best French onion soup you ever had? She's thinking.

Nonny: French Tavern in Huntington, West Virginia.

Clint: What was so special about it? Do you... what made it so delicious? For some reason, French onion soup is a hot topic on this episode.

Nonny: It just had more body. It was very flavorful. And it had the croutons. It was wonderful.

Travis: There you go.

Griffin: That sounds real good. And that was in Huntington. You can't get that...

Clint: That was in Huntington, yeah.

Griffin: You can't get that in Cincinnati. Not in Lexington. Not up in DC.

Justin: Not even in Huntington anymore. That place is closed.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Clint: Thank you, Nonny.

Justin: Thanks, Nonny.

Griffin: Bye Nonny!

Clint: Alright, I just thought I'd bring in an expert, there, since we were talking about French onion soup.

Griffin: Yeah, and now Nonny exists in the fiction of our universe, which is gonna take some time to process, I guess.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, Aubrey, we'll hop back to you. Things have gotten kind of heated on the hill.

Travis: Like hot, French onion soup.

Justin: I love you all dearly, very much, as my family. I would bury a bowie knife in any of your chests to eat French onion soup at this exact second.

Clint: I know! [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [laughing] Bury it to the hilt.

Clint: Oh, man. I see a merch opportunity for us.

Griffin: We're gonna sell soup? That doesn't...

Travis: [laughing]

Justin: We're gonna sell loose soup.

Clint: Have you ever seen soup sold? I mean, like, French onion soup sold in a store? No.

Travis: Have you ever seen French onion soup sold in a store?

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: That's a heck of a question.

Justin: Let's go back to the other scene.

Griffin: Okay. Um, things have started to get kind of heated, and right as it seems like a, perhaps even a brouhaha might break out—

Clint: Ooh!

Travis: Definitely a row of some sort.

Griffin: Yes. You see a dozen figures, now come skiing and snowboarding down that hill that this guy just came down. And they are all descending in this perfect, flying V. And as they stop in perfect formation, the person in the front of this crew pops off of their board, and approaches you, and their jacket stands out from the rest of their unit.

It's bright yellow, with black accents, with a striped ring around the collar. They're wearing these slick looking black sunglasses over this like, neoprene half face mask, which they pull down off their face as they dismount. And they snap, and Keith stands to attention, as do the rest of the Hornets behind them. And they say...

Hornet: That's enough, Keith. We've uh... we've got enough footage today, I think, anyways. It's nice to see you, Jake.

Griffin: And Jake looks kind of... in stunned silence as they continue speaking, and they say...

Hornet: I uh, hope my overeager lieutenant here didn't cause you all too much trouble. The Hornets have no qualms with other extreme sports enthusiasts, just looking to get a little adrenaline rush. You have my apologies.

Aubrey: And you would be...?

Hornet: My name is Hollis. I guess you could say I'm sort of in charge of this little outfit. And this is Keith, he's my lieutenant, and he gets a little excited sometimes. I try to keep it down. Sometimes it's a good quality to have, but not when he's just making trouble for strangers. We were just shooting a little promo video here today, and I guess you all sort of got in the shot, but I think we got enough other footage. Don't you think, Keith?

Griffin: And Keith kind of grimaces and nods.

Aubrey: Promo video for the Hornets, for what?

Hollis: To put on the internet. Y'know, to raise our profile a little bit, try and get some sponsorships maybe. We're always scrappin' out here, always trying to make a buck.

Speaking of which, we should probably get back and start editing. We got a big mountain bike shoot happening tomorrow that we need to get ready for. So, uh, have a good rest of your day on the hill. Do some sick stunts.

Aubrey: Okay. Sick jacket.

Griffin: Uh, they snap, and everybody sort of hops back on their boards, and they turn to you, and Hollis says...

Hollis: Hey, cool hair.

Griffin: And just like that, all the Hornets take off on their boards and skis once more, and go flying down the mountain in this formation. Except for Keith, who kind of sneers at you all for like, another few seconds with disdain, before following behind.

Travis: Aubrey uses magic to melt the snow right in front of Keith. Just a little bit.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah, roll to use magic, then.

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: Oh. Oh, that's the good shit.

Clint: A four.

Travis: Well... a four plus two. Six.

Justin: Dang. How's your magic?

Travis: Oh, no. I killed Keith.

Griffin: Mark experience again. No, here's what happens.

Travis: Well, I've just leveled up.

Griffin: Yeah, congrats. You melt the snow in front of Keith, and he eats shit. Or, rather, snow, I should say. And then, he stands up, and looks really confused, and really, really startled. And then, he looks back at you, Aubrey, and is just kind of staring at you, dumbfounded, for a while. And looks back down at the melted snow, and then back up at you, and then kind of looks a little, like, scared.

Aubrey: The ozone layer, huh? That was weird. Huh?

Griffin: And then, as you start talking, he like... freaks out, and hops back on his board, and snowboards away. That's gonna be a fun hard move to play with later.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: And Jake clears his throat, and he says...

Jake: Hey, I'm sorry about that everybody. I used to roll with them back when they... they had a different name. We called ourselves the Kepler Stunt Club back then. We were all—

Aubrey: That is a much better name.

Jake: I know, I thought so too. We were just, y'know, thrill seekers of different sorts. We were sharing our passion for, y'know, mountain biking, and skateboarding, and snowboarding, and...

Clint: And breakdancing.

Jake: Motocross. Just all kinds of stuff that this wonderful sort of state allows us ample access to. And then the sheriff, I guess, started cracking down a little bit on us. They were, y'know... he was saying we were a bit of a nuisance, and...

Aubrey: Parents just don't understand, huh?

Jake: Yeah. So I guess some of them decided the best way to push back against the law and keep doing what they wanted to do was to go, y'know, a little bit more illegitimate. So they started calling themselves the Hornets, and they picked Hollis as their leader, and... that wasn't my scene, so I took off. And they've sort of harbored a bit of a beef ever since then.

Griffin: Um, and then Barclay kind of like, jumps. And he reaches to his hip, and he pulls out a pager. Uh, and he says...

Barclay: Oh, shit. Oh, shit. Uh... So, good news. Mama woke up. Bad news. She did flee the hospital, so we need to get back to the lodge, like, right now.

Aubrey: [singing] I'm already there.

Travis: I just take off running down the... does stunt number four, take off skis, go home.

Clint: And Ned orders two bowls of soup to go so he can get two more experience points and level up.

Travis: Oh, yeah. There's nothing like old, room temperature French onion soup. Love it.

Griffin: Let's hop forward. The three of you and Barclay are the first ones to arrive back at the lodge, which looks sort of even more idyllic with this fresh dusting of snow. There's some icicles hanging from the roof and the branches of the surrounding trees, and the fallen sort of frozen needles crunch beneath your feet as you step out of the car, and walk towards the entrance to the lodge.

But as you approach, you notice something unusual. There is a cellar door, off by sort of the corner of the front of this building that you have never really noticed before. And it is currently propped open. There is a chain and an unlocked padlock that are hanging off of its handle.

Justin: Let me see what's going on in here with my instincts that I've honed in my many years of patrolling the parks.

Griffin: Are you gonna—so that would probably be read a bad situation?

Justin: Yeah, it's just, you get mad at me when I say that, so I'm trying to put it all fancy.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: And make you say it. That's a five. Looks fine to me, boys.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: Take it from me. What do you add to that?

Travis: Sharp.

Justin: Sharp? Yeah, so a six, actually.

Griffin: Jesus Christ.

Justin: Good rolls, huh?

Griffin: It's a good thing y'all didn't fuckin'... on the last episode, which was arguably a more high stakes episode than this mostly soup-based affair that

we've had this time, you all were rolling fuckin' those double sixes. And I guess it's a good thing that these episodes weren't switched, and you weren't, y'know, crushing your soup rolls and getting killed by the big water monster. But uh, I get to take a hard move.

Justin: Nice.

Griffin: And... I think what that is, is as you approach, you all sort of hesitate for a bit, so Duck can try to, y'know, sniff out the scene. And as you are hesitating, you see Mama. And she comes out of the cellar, and sees the four of you, and then slams the cellar door shut. And she turns back from the cellar door and faces all of you very quickly, and says...

Mama: Ohh, hey. Uh, yeah. How are you all doing? It's uh, it's been a—it's been a bit, and I'm so glad to see y'all lookin' well.

Griffin: Uh, and she kind of like, hobbles a little bit closer to you all. You can tell, she's definitely not favoring that busted up ankle that has a cast around it. She says...

Mama: How was your, um... how was October? Did y'all have any fun Halloween plans or anything?

Aubrey: Mama, um... three questions. Where have you been? Why did you leave the hospital? And why would you go into the cellar?

Mama: Yeah. Maybe we could talk about all of this inside, and head to the inside of the Amnesty Lodge. Oh, I miss it so bad, and y'know, I left a bagel in the toaster, and I got real worried about that, so I want to just check on the bagel situation before maybe we unpack all that?

Travis: Uh, she's behaving weirdly. I'm gonna do read a bad situation, if I...

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: That's a nine plus one, so a ten.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: First thing's first, when I read a bad situation, I can use my magic eye. My third eye.

Griffin: Yeah, I don't think that's gonna be relevant here. There's no magic stuff happening.

Travis: So she doesn't seem like, enchanted or possessed or whatever?

Griffin: No, no, no. Nope, it's just Mama, and she's a little, y'know, busted up. But she's not, y'know, a skin walker.

Travis: So, read a bad situation...

Griffin: You have questions. What's my best way in, what's my best way out, are there any dangers we haven't noticed, what's the biggest threat, what's most vulnerable to me—

Travis: I'd say, are there any dangers we haven't noticed? Like, I'm gonna say Aubrey notices she's acting kind of weird, and does like, quick look around, and really like, takes a hard look at Mama.

Griffin: Yeah. Um, okay. Yeah, there's uh, a low sort of constant sort of bestial growl coming from the cellar.

Travis: Okay. Mama, can't help but notice that your basement is growling.

Mama: Well, y'know, I had some chili earlier...

Aubrey: Mama.

Mama: [sighs] Why did you have to hear the fuckin'... okay. Alright. I guess there's no point in keepin' this all from y'all for much longer.

Griffin: And she opens up the cellar door, and she walks inside, and beckons the four of you to come follow.

Travis: Uh, I follow. And then I'm going to say, what's the biggest threat?

Aubrey: What's going on here, Mama? What is this?

Griffin: The rest of you following as well?

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: Ned tosses back the last of the Styrofoam cup of French onion soup, and follows in.

Griffin: That he's been drinking the whole time?

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Uh, the four of you descend down into the cellar. I will answer your question in just a moment.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: As you walk down into this cellar, the four of you are kind of... or, I should just speak for the three of you, are sort of shocked at how spacious it is down here. It's not just spacious, but it seems also kind of like, lived in. This cellar is easily the size of the lodge's lobby, and it appears to be sort of cut into several different sections, all in a considerable state of disrepair.

There's a rec room looking space with a big couch in front of an old CRT TV, hooked up to an old PlayStation 1. There's a little library, like, reading corner, with some bookshelves that are all just completely empty. There's a section of it that looks like it used to be sort of a functioning gym, with a weight bench with no actual dumbbell on it, and sort of a busted up training dummy. There's a workshop with a dingy looking bench, and like, a barren, wall-mounted tool rack.

And then, finally, there's a little kitchenette in a little alcove of the cellar, and it's cupboards, and has a small refrigerator... they are all standing open, and the contents of all of them are strewn across the ground. There's cans, and wrappers, and empty boxes of food. It looks like this chamber was recently cordoned off from the rest of the cellar.

There is what appears to be a large net, made of these thick ropes, and as you look at them, these ropes have like this shimmering thread woven into them, almost like the Sylvan fabric that you all have seen in the past, and kind of what your vest is made out of, Aubrey. And so, this net is hanging over the entrance to the kitchenette, and through it, you see the big danger, Aubrey.

At the center of this kitchenette, there is a man. There is an older man with unkempt, wild, gray hair, and this ratty looking beard. He's wearing like a button down shirt, and some khakis, but they're all just ruined. They are all just dingy, and oily, and torn. And as you all enter the room, he looks in your direction, and he just looks absolutely feral. He sort of bares his filthy teeth at you, and emits this low growl that you heard outside.

That is what is the most dangerous thing in the room.

Clint: Ned has extensive experience with weird shit from the Cryptonomicon. So I'm assuming—

Griffin: Cryptonomica.

Clint: Cryptonomica. Right. So, I think he's going to step close to the net, and peer through it, and really analyze this guy, and try to figure out what sort of creature he is.

Griffin: Uh, okay, yeah. With a ten, you hold two, so you get to ask two questions. And what sort of creature is it was your question. And the answer to that is, it's a human. It is a human man that just looks like, uh, he has completely lost his senses, and turned into this sort of bestial figure that you see crouched on the ground in front of you behind this net.

Clint: Well, then, the second question is, what is being concealed here?

Griffin: You uh, take a quick glance around the room, and you notice there is actually one book that is sitting on a table in sort of the reading corner of the room. It's the only book there. The rest have been cleared out, leaving

the room in this sort of state of disrepair. And that book is a journal, and inscribed on the front of the journal, you can see a name. And that name is...

Clint: Thacker?

Griffin: Thacker. Good. Wow, hey. Good fuckin'—whoa.

Justin: Hey!

Travis: Hey, dad?

Griffin: That's fucking unbelievable!

Clint: I'm not a complete moron. I've played—

Griffin: Really?

Clint: I've been around—I'm not complete. [laughs]

Griffin: It is the name of Thacker, who uh, if you remember, is the owner of the computer, and the sort of former record keeper of the Pine Guard, who I believe Barclay explained went missing a while ago. And as you notice that, Barclay also says...

Barclay: Holy shit. That's Thacker. Mama, where the fuck did you find Thacker?

Griffin: Mama kind of sighs, and then, she hobbles over to a load bearing sort of pillar in the center of the room. There's a few of these sort of strewn about. She leans up against one to take some weight off her ankle, and she says...

Mama: Alright. So, uh... God, where to fuckin' start? Y'all are a bit new to this, so there's a bit of context you're probably missing out on. I've been doing this for 30 years, and you used to be able to set your watch by the Abominations. They've always been dangerous, but they used to be predictable. But now, they're getting stronger. They're starting to break the

rules. Out of curiosity, what was that last Abomination like? The one I missed out on?

Duck: It was wet. It was a real watery one.

Aubrey: And it gathered around water, and made itself like, bigger, and it was like, y'know, a watery monster thing.

Griffin: And she kind of chuckles and she says...

Mama: So, let me get this straight. We get a powerful, fire-wielding magician that joins our party. And the next Abomination is made out of water? Don't you think that's a heck of a coincidence?

Aubrey: Oh. Wait. Are you—you're saying somebody planned it?

Griffin: She says...

Mama: I don't know, but for whatever reason, recently, the Abominations... they started playing for keeps. So I went out, and I tried to find Thacker. He left years ago.

Griffin: And when she says his name, he kind of like, lifts his head up and snarls, and then kind of like, leans back down to his sort of focused on the floor position. She says...

Mama: He left years ago. He headed out to Sylvain, to see what he could learn about... well, where the Abominations come from. He went beyond the walls of the city out there. He went into the corrupted lands that surround Sylvain, where those unlucky enough to get trapped end up getting, y'know, a little nasty. And he studied those folks. He survived out there in the inhospitable wilds, all the time, looking for the source of the Abominations.

Now, it took me a long time to find him. And when I did, he... well, he was like this. He spent a bit too much time out in the dark. He lost himself out there. But I managed to get him back here. Wasn't easy, but I managed to get him back here and lock him up down here, down in... well, I haven't been down here in a bit. This actually used to be the safe haven for the Pine

Guard, where we did our work, back when there were enough of us to justify having a safe haven.

Anyway, he's not especially talkative, as you can see. But as was his charge here with the Pine Guard, he kept record of his studies in his journals. He didn't find anything.

Griffin: She holds up one of his journals and says...

Mama: He found some feral Sylphs, sure, but nothing like the Abominations we've faced in the past. No cracks in the fabric of reality that these things keep slipping through. He looked for years, y'all, and he found just... he found dick.

Duck: [laughs]

Ned: And who is Dick?

Justin: The plot thickens.

Mama: He found—no, he found nothing. He didn't find anything. And what y'all gotta understand, something that I've been realizing over the last couple years of hunting monsters to protect this town is... we fight the Abominations to protect Kepler, because someone's gotta do it. But one day, we're gonna face something stronger and craftier than we are, and we're gonna lose.

Or maybe we won't. Maybe we're gonna slay every damned thing that comes through that gate. Until we get old, and until we lose our edge, until someone maybe gets wise about the portal, who, y'know, crosses over and starts a war with Sylvain. Or until the gate shuts down, and opens up somewhere else on earth, turns into somebody else's problem.

It's starting to feel a bit like a futile effort, so I headed out into the wilds of Sylvain to try and find somebody that I hope might have an answer. But once again, we've come up empty.

Griffin: She sets the book down, and she turns towards you all, and she looks, um... she doesn't look as spritely as she usually does. She looks pretty tired. She says...

Mama: The Pine Guard's work is hard. And it's necessary. But really, it's just... a stall. Unless we can figure out where the Abominations are coming from, one day... the monsters are gonna win.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Hey everybody, this is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master, your best friend, and your people's champion of the WWF. Thank you so much for listening to this episode of The Adventure Zone: Amnesty, episode 12. Our first sort of proper lunar interlude. Hope you enjoy it.

Uh, quick programming note – we are going on book tour next week. A book tour? Yes. I said it like a cave man. I don't really know why. But we are going on a book tour next week, to promote our Adventure Zone graphic novel, which comes out next Tuesday, the 17th. That's fuckin' buckwild. We've been working on it for over like, a year and a half, and it's almost finally here, so uh, we're very excited, and nervous, and hope everybody enjoys it.

If you haven't done so yet, uh, please think about preordering it at TheAdventureZoneComic.com. It's an adaptation of the first arc of The Adventure Zone: Balance, Here There Be Gerblins, and uh, yeah, that's comin' out really soon.

Uh, I'm gonna talk more about the book tour here in just a little bit. But first, I want to tell you about our sponsors for this episode. First up is Audible. Audible is fantastic. They are the source, they are the place that you go to when you want to listen to an audiobook, when you want to digest a book with your ears, and not your eyes.

Audible has the largest selection of audiobooks on the planet, which lets you fill your summer with more stories like, I don't know, I've recommended it before, but I'm gonna say uh, The Name of the Wind, by friend of the show, Patrick Rothfuss. It's just my favorite fantasy novel, and the whole series is

good, and um, yeah. You just can't recommend that one enough. That's on Audible, so go check that one out for instance.

If you go to Audible.com/Adventure, or text 'Adventure' to 500500 to get started, Amazon Prime members can get Audible for \$4.95 a month for the first three months. That's like getting three months for the price of one. After that, it's just \$14.95 a month. This offer ends real soon on July 31st, 2018, so don't sleep on it.

Also want to tell you about Blue Apron. It's fantastic. Blue Apron is a sort of meal kit delivery service that you get to your front door, and it's got all of the ingredients and recipes that you need to make delicious, home cooked meals, right in your own home. Used it for a while, and I learned a lot of super valuable cooking skills that have helped me out in, y'know, everything that I cook, and it was a really fun way to get started with cooking, and made a bunch of really, really tasty dinners for myself and Rachel along the way.

So skip meal planning, and get straight to cooking with Blue Apron. Enjoy delicious meals that are great on the grill, like honey chipotle glazed chicken with poblano and lime rice. Add smoky depth to your dinner while enjoying the warm weather, and getting those perfect grill marks. With incredible non-GMO ingredients, and chef designed recipes, Blue Apron lets you see what the power of food can do.

So, check out this week's menu and get your first three meals for free at BlueApron.com/Adventure. That's BlueApron.com/Adventure to get your first three meals free. Blue Apron: A better way to cook.

Got a message here for Mike, and it's from Astra, Haverd, Vurick, and Zerg, who say, "Six years, real time, six months, game time. Inept interrogation, wanton artifact destruction, and home alone exports. Happy birthday, Mike. Thanks for being our terrific and ever patient DM, and for all the amazing props over the years. We're also sorry for always ruining your stuff. At least we only spent three hours deliberating on this message."

This is the most D&D party ass message I've ever heard, all the way down to, sorry that we sort of coordinated to ruin your brilliant storytelling, and

also, it took us three hours to make a decision on, essentially, three sentences worth of content. But, hey, Mike, happy birthday. Keep up the great work.

Here's a message for Heather, and it's from Sam, who says, "Surprise! Hi Heather. I got you a jumbotron for your birthday, or our anniversary, or Christmas? Whatever holiday fits." Maybe none of those. "Thanks for taking me on tons of adventures, including traveling across the country to see those good, good boys. Anyways, love you lots. Sam."

Now, that there is just one of them sweet messages. That's one of those sweet messages that I love so much. Each time I read one, it adds like, two weeks to my life. So, keep them coming.

I want to thank everybody who has been tweeting about the show using the #TheZoneCast hash tag. If you do so, you might end up as a character in the show. Characters like Eugene, named for Eugene Archibald on Twitter. Thank you, Eugene. Or Keith, named for Keith Wolman on Twitter. Thank you so much. And uh, yeah, keep it going. We're about to start a new sort of act in the story, so uh, now's a great time to share the show with your friends on Twitter, and you might end up as a character. And we sure do appreciate you spreading the word, and uh, helping us sort of build our audience. It means a lot that you all have done that so much already. So thank you all very much.

And thank you to Max Fun for having us on the network. You can go to MaximumFun.org and check out all the great shows there. Shows like Stop Podcasting Yourself, shows like Bubble, and so many more. We actually—we're on an episode of Bubble that came out last week, if you haven't heard it. Go check out Bubble. It's a really fun time.

Okay, so I mentioned the book tour at the beginning of this sort of break. Real quick, two things. First, because we're gonna be on tour all next week, we are not gonna have time to record a new episode. So we are gonna put up the audio from our most recent live show, which I think was San Francisco? Yeah? Yes. San Francisco. The audio from that live show is gonna be up in two weeks. That'll be our next episode before we get into sort of the next act of The Adventure Zone: Amnesty.

The other thing, there are still some tickets available, I believe, at one or two of our stops during the book tour. Cincinnati, I know, we have some on Wednesday, July 18th in Cincinnati. But you can check out all the availability at McElroyShows.com/tours. You can also see where we're doing the other signings. I'm doing one here in Austin on July 27th. Uh, Travis, Justin, and Dad, and Carey are all doing signings sort of across the country at various points after the book launches. So you can find all those at McElroyShows.com/tours.

And finally, there's one announcement about the show we're doing on the 20th in San Diego at the Observatory. So, unfortunately, uh, because Comic Con is happening then, venue sort of competitiveness being what it was, we ended up at a place where it's going to be standing room only, which is not ideal. We have never done a show that is for, y'know, standing, and not sitting down and being real comfortable, which is weird, right? Like, we're not the fuckin' Foo Fighters. We do an actual play podcast. But that's sort of the situation, as it is in San Diego.

So what we've kind of come up with as a compromise is, we're gonna sort of have the front section where you can just sort of sit down. Not on chairs, but like, on the ground. Or, if you want to bring like, a comfy cushion to sit on, go for it. But again, it is the front of the auditorium, so like, there's a chance that it might fill up, and you might not be able to get in there. And so, don't bring something that you wouldn't feel comfortable just like, holding.

And if you're fine standing, just do that. That would be cool, too. There is, of course, gonna be ADA seating. You can call ahead to make sure that you get the ADA seating. But uh, yeah, that's the situation. Again, I apologize. I know it is not ideal. But that is the situation, and we're still gonna, y'know, be up there talking about our book, doing uh, doing some Q&A stuff, doing a live reading. We got special guests at each of the shows that are gonna help us out with the reading, and uh, yeah, we're excited to get out there and talk about this book. We worked really hard on it, and again, it's kind of unbelievable that it's actually here.

So, I know I've gone on forever. We're gonna get back to the rest of the episode. Next one, again, is gonna be up in two weeks. That is gonna be on

July the 26th, and that'll be the live show from San Francisco before we get into the next arc of Amnesty. So we will talk to you then, and goodbye.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: So we're gonna get to leveling up now. This is a lunar interlude. This is when we do this. This will also be sort of when we do the Heathcliff stuff in future episodes, but we already kind of did that this arc, so uh, gonna wait on that. But we're gonna level up. Before we get to that, I have kind of, in fiction, given you all sort of a free bonus. And it's one that... it's like a level up perk that belongs to the expert, that I think is really cool, but none of you all are playing the expert, and I was worried that we wouldn't get to that. And also, like, I don't think we... I think we were a little slow on the leveling in the pilot arc, so this is kind of a freebie. And that bonus is a haven, which is a mechanic in the game.

It is exactly what it sounds like. It is a headquarters for you all to sort of use at your leisure, and how it works is, you sort of design it by choosing the rooms that you want to have in it. So in fiction, this is the cellar of the Amnesty Lodge. It's a secure location that each of you are going to get to pick one room, or one sort of section of the cellar, that will be able to provide you some sort of bonus, or some sort of benefit, or some sort of like, in fiction capability.

Uh, for instance, you could pick the oubliette, which is a prison that you could keep a monster in, or some sort of spirit or magic thing that you don't know anything about. Uh, you could pick a workshop. You could pick an armory. You could pick... there's a whole bunch of options, and each of you are gonna get to pick one thing which you will then kind of rebuild inside of the cellar, and then, have access to.

So, I'm gonna drop a list of these into Roll 20. But yeah, there is the, uh, lore library. You can hit the books to investigate. Now, that means like... there has to be a reasonable way for there to be a book about what you're investigating. But if you do do that, and you're in your lore library, you get a plus one to your investigate the mystery roll. There is the mystical library, where you can consult occult tomes, which will grant you plus one forward

next time you use magic. So, just the first time you use magic after that, you'll get a plus one on the roll.

You can get a protection spell on your haven, which makes it safe from monsters. Monsters cannot enter. You can get an armory, where you have a stockpile of weapons, that if you need a special weapon, you can roll plus weird. On a ten plus, you have it. On a seven to nine, you have it, but only the minimum. I don't really know what that means. Or on a miss, you have the wrong thing.

We might use that for, y'know, tools and not weapons, since we do have kind of another way of getting you all gear in the game.

Justin: Right.

Griffin: There's an infirmary, where you can help heal people. A workshop, where you can repair things. There is the oubliette, like I mentioned. There is the panic room, which has supplies where you can hide out for a few days, safe from pretty much anything. And a magical laboratory, where you can find tools needed for casting spells, including big magic, which is a thing that we haven't really gone over. But um, yeah. So those are your options.

I want each of you to pick one room to sort of uh, repair and build in the cellar of Amnesty Lodge.

Travis: I think I'm gonna go with magical laboratory, because it specifically mentions big magic, which is a thing that I would like to start exploring.

Griffin: Real quick; big magic is something that is bigger than the, um... it's bigger than like, the capabilities of what the magic using moves are in the game. So a thing like, for instance, resurrecting a dead party member is a thing you can do with big magic. But, the terms and conditions of big magic are entirely up to me. I can make it cost whatever the fuck I want it to cost. I can make it as arduous as I want to make it. I can also just say like, no, you can't resurrect anybody. You don't know how. That is just not possible.

But, if you want to accomplish something that is sort of outside the rules of the game, and we sort of agree on the terms of it, then big magic is what

you do. So, I guess if you have the magical laboratory, you'd have a place to do it, and I would probably, y'know, make it a little bit easier for you to at least get the shit that you'd need to do the big magic.

Travis: Well, let me ask you this. Magical laboratory seems like it would make it easier for me to do it. But mystical library seems like it would be a better excuse for Aubrey to know how to do things that, up 'til now, she has not been able to do.

Griffin: Here's what I'll say. 'Cause I want this to be sort of our ethos in playing this game, rather than how we play D&D. Don't min max this. What's gonna be more interesting for you? For Aubrey to have on hand?

Travis: I think it's gonna be the library. Because that's the thing is, up 'til now, she's been really hungry to learn anything about magic. Learn how to do other magic. And her mentor person, over in Sylvain, told her to like, try to take some time and study and pay attention. So...

Griffin: So, when you use the mystical library, you've got like, a collection of tomes from Janelle, maybe. Like, a small collection that she allows you to take with you, and uh, when you're working on your magic stuff, you have a place to do it now, and also have sort of this kind of small, but it could be useful, mechanical benefit as well.

Now, I will say, I don't want you coming back to your magic... like, if you're out in the middle of a battle, and you're like, "I need to hit him with a really good fireball. I'm just gonna go back to the mystical laboratory real quick and get the buff." Like, I would not do that.

Travis: It's like a prep thing. I gotcha.

Griffin: Yeah. Okay. Juice, Dad?

Clint: In character, I think Ned would go for a panic room. But I can't see that being very...

Justin: I was just thinking about that. It's like, narratively, like, where would that be interesting for us to like, hide out?

Griffin: Here's what I'll say. If you want to do a panic room, I'll find a way to give you a good panic room scenar—like, and I will also say this. If you don't pick panic room, I will—

Justin: That'll be our final episode. Like, oh, I can remember all good times we've had together. Let's just think about a few of them again.

Griffin: I will also say, if you don't pick panic room, I am also going to think of a scenario that is gonna make you say, "God, I wish we'd picked a fuckin' panic room."

Travis: Well, and that's the thing is, panic rooms are not just good for you. But if we have another thing like Calvin, or something where it's like, this person is in danger.

Clint: Well, yeah. Along those same lines, though, the infirmary... I mean, how many times have we had somebody have to go to the hospital so far, just in the arc?

Griffin: Yeah. Again, do the thing that, to you, you think is gonna be the most fictionally interesting.

Clint: Okay. I'm gonna stick with my initial gut instinct, and I want a panic room.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: But I want a really cool one, with like, dart boards, y'know. And y'know, air mattresses, and not cots.

Griffin: Yeah. I like the idea of it just being like, a big sort of cinderblock room that is sort of carved out of the ground, like a very, very sturdy room, with like, a heavy, metal door that you can lock from inside, or outside, if you so choose.

Clint: With cans, and cans, and cans of French onion soup.

Griffin: Yeah. This is like, your bug-out room, where if shit gets very, very, very bad, you all have a place to hide, or you have a safe place to store somebody, or a place to, y'know, put somebody that you don't want going anywhere for a little while. I really like that pick. I think that's good.

Uh, Juice?

Justin: I'm gonna do the infirmary, but the only thing that I have is the uh... we have sort of like a uh, wildlife rescue center. Y'know, for like, especially for animals that are injured, or what have you.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: So the only gear and equipment and meds that I was able to swipe, uh, or... sorry, borrow, were ones designed for animals. So we have an infirmary, all the tools and meds are designed for animals. So, using the things there is going to be uh, a bit more challenging.

Griffin: I like that very much. Okay, so we have a mystical library, a panic room, and an infirmary down here. Uh, I'll give you the rec room for free. You have a nice place to chill out and play Crash Bandicoot.

Justin: Hell yeah.

Griffin: Um, cool. So you all have a haven. Please remember that you have it, whenever you need sort of an in-fiction place to do these things, whether it's treating wounds, or learning about magic, or you need a place to bug out. That is sort of why this place exists.

Uh, and now that we've done that, we need to answer the questions that we do here on The Adventure Zone. You remember, we've done them exactly once before. Did we conclude the current mystery?

Travis: Yes.

Clint: Yes.

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: I was talking about the French onion soup mystery. We concluded the fuck out of it.

Travis: Solved it.

Griffin: Uh, did we save someone from certain death or worse?

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: Gosh, more than once.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: Couple of times.

Travis: We did the old people in the pool. We did Calvin.

Griffin: Yes. Okay, I'll do that. Yeah. The old... I don't know that you necessarily saved Calvin. Well, I mean, yeah. Sure. I think you saved Calvin.

Clint: We saved Jake. He was gonna bite it.

Justin: Yeah, Jake was gonna beef it.

Travis: Yeah!

Griffin: Oh, that's right. Okay, yes. You saved lots of people. Uh, did we learn something about the... did we learn something new and important about the world?

Justin: Yyyes.

Griffin: I mean, I think your visit to Sylvain alone, that episode, you learned quite a bit.

Justin: Yes. Yeah.

Griffin: Uh, did we learn something new and important about one of the hunters?

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: I can do different types of magic. Also, Duck fucking loves French onion soup.

Griffin: Yeah, we learned a lot about that. Uh, okay, yeah. So if you get three or four questions as yes, you mark two experience points.

Justin: Hell yeah.

Griffin: So with that, we should have... I know all of you at least leveled up once during this arc in this lunar interlude. Maybe some of you, twice. Let's get to it. Let's start with... uh, let's start with Ned. Ned, how are you doing on experience?

Clint: Ned has leveled up exactly once.

Griffin: Cool.

Clint: Yeah. Because of his high success rate in rolls.

Griffin: Uh, cool. So you have, uh, you see the improvements section. You can increase sharp, tough, cool, or charm by one, unless you've... what was your last one? You got an ally, right? You gained, uh...

Clint: Right.

Griffin: You gained a crony in Kirby, which you didn't really use this time. I would encourage you to remember that for this arc.

Clint: Well, I tried. I tried to. We weren't around him very much.

Griffin: Yeah, that's a good point.

Clint: Can you come back to me?

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, Duck. Let's start with you. What, uh... what's, uh... how many... what was your leveling up situation like? You did beef it a few times.

Justin: Mm-hmm. Yeah. I leveled up, and then I have one extra. One extra experience.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: I think that I am going to... there's a move here, devastating, when you inflict harm, you may inflict plus one harm. I was thinking about that, but that seems like similar to tough. Like, 'cause I increased my ass kicking abilities last time.

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: Um, and... I think that I am gonna go with take one sharp. I feel like he's learning like... he's never been in situations like this before. But he is learning about them, and he has been through some stuff at this point that has like, heightened his senses a little bit. And that's maybe part of his like, power set or whatever.

Griffin: Uh, cool. Uh, so, take plus... what's that bring your sharp up to?

Justin: Two. I mean...

Griffin: That's very good. I mean, it can only go up to three. Two is a very, very good bonus.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. Let's... Trav, Dad, who's ready?

Travis: I am ready. Um, so, there is a uh, Spellslinger move called practitioner. Choose two effects available to you under use magic, and take plus one to use magic whenever you choose one of those effects. And I'm going to say that she has had enough practice with inflict harm, and do one

thing that is beyond human limitations, that she is more capable at achieving those on a regular basis.

Griffin: Cool.

Travis: So, anytime she does inflict harm with magic, or do one thing that is beyond human limitations with magic, she gets plus one to that roll.

Griffin: Just to make clear, the take harm, use magic roll is different from your attack magic, which is the... every time you roll to kick some ass, and you use the spell that you sort of built out of the, what is it, blast fire force thing. That is not use magic. That is just your attack. This would be like if you, I don't know, wanted to...

Travis: Well, so, that's the thing. Now, she's getting more access to more stuff. So like, fire, force, and wind are effects that she can do with her attack.

Griffin: Right.

Travis: But if I wanted to just hurt someone, like a magical punch that wasn't hurt by something, that would be like, inflict harm.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: So, inflict harm is just like, a magical laceration kind of thing, y'know?

Griffin: Yes. Cool. I just wanted to make it clear that you don't get—

Travis: Oh, I know. Yeah, I know.

Griffin: --plus one every time you kick some ass. Okay, yeah. I like that a lot. I think that totally makes sense. So, go ahead and mark that down. Dad, there's no other people on the podcast. So now you have to go.

Clint: Okay. Ned's gonna go with a crew. It's uh, a team of three or four people who will help you out with pretty much anything. Not like Kirby, who

is, y'know, an assistant, and he can call on a regular basis. And what I think... it should have something to do with, y'know, the Saturday Night Dead.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: From the people who love the movie show, that love the TV show.

Travis: Like a fan club.

Clint: Like a fan club.

Griffin: You're an influencer to fans of Saturday Night Dead.

Justin: The Deadites.

Griffin: The Deadites, who we will consider...

Justin: The Dead Heads. [wheezes]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: I can't believe that hasn't been taken before.

Justin: Yeah, it's right there. [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, I like that. I like the idea of you having like, a fan club who you can talk to by way of the show, or like, the fan club message boards or whatever. Um, uh, they... so, you have to pick sort of a type. Their motivation. And we kind of did this when you picked Kirby to be your subordinate. Your subordinate follows your exact instructions. They're also... that might have to be what this is, too. 'Cause the other ones are lieutenant, execute the spirit of your instructions. Friend, to provide emotional support. Probably not. That would be weird scenes to play out.

Clint: No. No.

Griffin: Um, bodyguard to intercept danger. That's also kind of strange. Come...

Justin: That's so choice.

Griffin: Ned's in danger. Come—

Clint: How about backup? How about backup?

Griffin: That... to stand with you. Um, I mean, that means that you would say on your show like, hey, I'm fighting a mummy Friday night at the old tire lot. Be there or be square. Like...

Clint: Well, but, y'know, backup can come in other ways. Hey, I need somebody who can uh, crack this code, or I need somebody who can pick a lock, or...

Justin: Knows how to post to Twitter.

Clint: Somebody who can do repair to a, y'know, my car. I mean, that's also backup, isn't it?

Griffin: Uh...

Clint: Service. The service industry.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: I don't want anybody who's gonna catch a bullet for me or anything. But somebody who, y'know, can be a resource.

Griffin: Can I make a suggestion that is in the spirit of this, that I think is gonna be a much, much better fit for the thing you were actually describing? There is a move that you can take from the flake playbook called net friends. You know a lot of people on the internet. When you contact a net friend to help you with a mystery, roll plus charm.

On a ten plus, they're available and helpful. They can fix something, break a code, hack a computer, get you special information. On a seven to nine, they are prepared to help, but it's either going to take some time, or you're gonna have to do part of it yourself. On a miss, you burn some bridges.

I think that... and if you disagree, and you want to do the crew, that's fine also. But like, this feels more like the like, fan club idea that you're describing, right? And it uses charm, which is kind of Ned's thing.

Justin: That's also like, an area that we don't have much expertise in that could be cool.

Clint: Yeah. No, I'm all in favor of it. I love it.

Griffin: Okay. So that's net friends on the flake playlist. You have net friends now.

Clint: Can we call it something else?

Travis: Nope.

Griffin: We can call it web buddies.

Clint: Ned friends it is.

Griffin: Chat... chat room pals.

Travis: Now, to be fair, Dad, I think you heard Ned friends. It was net friends.

Justin: [laughs] As in internet. He's gonna—that's the name of the website.

Clint: Ohh. The interNed!

Justin: [simultaneously] The interNed! [laughs]

Travis: [simultaneously] The interNed! [laughs]

[theme music plays]

Justin: All the denizens of the interNed!

Clint: We'll get on the interNed! Alright.

Griffin: Alright, so...

Justin: [laughing]

Griffin: That's gonna do it for this episode of Adventure Zone: Amnesty. You'll be able to catch the next one in two weeks. We're gonna put this one out on the interNed. You'll be able to catch it...

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: ... on the 26th. So just dial into your favorite interNed browser, and we'll be right there waiting for you.

[theme music plays]

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[music plays]

Speaker 1: Maximum Fun's new sci-fi comedy podcast, Bubble, is coming to San Diego Comic Con on July 21st. At one PM, Bubble cast members, Travis McElroy, Cristela Alonzo, Eliza Skinner, Alison Becker, Mike Mitchell, Jordan Morris, and Danielle Radford will be signing autographs. Tickets are required, but free. Then, at five PM, the cast will participate in a panel moderated by Jesse Thorn, held at the San Diego Central Library.

For more information, visit MaximumFun.org/SDCC.

[music plays]

J. Keith: Hi, this is J. Keith van Straaten, host of Go Fact Yourself, here on the Maximum Fun network. On Go Fact Yourself, we take the smartest people we know and make them look dumb.

Paul, by the way, how much do you know about chicken husbandry?

Paul: You gotta give `em that grain.

J. Keith: Alright.

Paul: Gotta give `em that grain.

J. Keith: And then smart again.

What future hall of fame pitcher for the Cleveland Indians became the first active player to enlist when—

Speaker 2: Rob Filler.

J. Keith: Oh, okay.

[audience laughs]

J. Keith: We've got me, co-host Helen Hong, plus celebrity guest and actual surprise experts. In the coming weeks, you can hear guests like Maria Bamford, Tom Bergeron, Paul F. Tompkins, Janet Varney, and Grant Imahara. And if you're in the New York area, come check us out live. We're doing two shows there on July 21st and July 22nd.

Go to GoFactYourPod.com for tickets and more. We'll see you in New York, or on the first and third Friday of every month here on the Maximum Fun network.

[music plays]