

## The Adventure Zone: Amnesty – Episode 20

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**Griffin:** Previously on The Adventure Zone...

[theme music plays]

**Griffin:** And as you come to, you see a black Imperial Crown Coup wrapped around a tree.

**Ned:** Well... sorry old friend.

**Clint:** I gotta run into the woods.

**Griffin:** It is a note written on the back of a Cryptonomica post card. "For my cut. Not quite even yet. I'll be in touch."

As you reach toward the crystal, the prevailing feeling that you have right now in this moment is one of absolute certainty that you are dying. As you fall, you land in a flower bed. Your right eye is now this dark orange hue.

**Minerva:** Surely you saw it, Duck. In your vision, the meteor.

**Duck:** Yeah.

**Minerva:** It was coming for me. You need to finish what I started. Go to him.

**Griffin:** You see the face of the person holding this blade. Leo Tarkesian, your neighbor and friendly local grocer, clears his throat and says...

**Leo:** We should probably talk.

[theme music plays]

**Griffin:** Welcome back to The Adventure Zone: Amnesty: 2019 edition. It's been seven years since we recorded an episode. Is this the one where we talk about medical history?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Justin:** No.

**Clint:** This is the etiquette one, right?

**Griffin:** Yeah, you wouldn't know, 'cause we're four rude mother... mother fudgers.

**Travis:** Griffin!

**Justin:** [laughs] Love it. Yes sir.

**Travis:** Griffin, we've talked about your blue comedy before.

**Griffin:** Welcome to the Blue Collar Comedy Tour: The Podcast. We're four yokels, Griffin, Justin, Travis, and Bob the Cable Man, and we're so excited to bring to you The Adventure Zone, and we're gonna play Monster of the Week.

**Justin:** In this arc, four rough and rowdy comedians have been sucked through a portal, and are charged with doing, uh, battle with the forces of evil. I of course play Ron "Tater Salad" White...

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Justin:** And uh, I'm really excited about this role.

**Griffin:** He's a paladin.

**Justin:** I'm a paladin.

**Griffin:** It's great.

**Travis:** I play Jeff Foxworthy, who is, in this universe, an actual like, fox. An anthropomorphic fox man.

**Griffin:** Yeah. And Ron White, it should be known, his paladin name is Ron the White.

**Justin:** Ron the White Tater Salad.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** So you're leaving Larry the Cable Guy for me?

**Travis:** You could do the guy with the signs.

**Clint:** Bill Engvall! No, I'll be Engvall. I'll be Bill Engvall.

**Travis:** Yeah. Engvall with his signs would probably be some kind of divination class.

**Justin:** Divination, yeah.

**Clint:** Here's your omen.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** Here's your omen.

**Griffin:** Larry the Cable Guy could be like a tinkerer class? Or perhaps like a thief or something that can work with traps, like a trapper of some sort?

**Travis:** What about a bard named Larry the Fable Guy?

**Griffin:** Oh, that's quite great.

**Justin:** That's very good.

**Griffin:** Well, okay, so...

**Justin:** Since we're jumping through time and portals and stuff, maybe it could be Cable the Cable Guy.

**Travis:** Ooh. I like that.

**Justin:** From Marvel.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** Why are we not recording this? This is good stuff.

**Griffin:** Yeah, real quick. Ned, Aubrey, and Duck killed the last big monster, and the world is saved. Thanks for listening to TAZ Amnesty. Now it's time to move on to this great season of podcasting that we have just devised over the last three minutes. I would kill for this.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** Hey, let's, uh... let's pick a name for it, so people can get on our nerves about it.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Yeah, so it'd be F. I mean, The Adventure Zone: Funny. Just to keep with sort of the convention. Um, no, we're gonna do a lunar interlude for our current arc. Uh, just to like... we haven't done a The The Adventure Zone Zone about Amnesty since we've been in it. Sort of by my guess, I think, we're probably about like, halfway through it I want to say. This is gonna be a shorter one than TAZ: Balance.

Uh, and I also like... I feel like it's getting a lot more freeform than TAZ: Balance was towards the end. I think we all tried to make this beginning of Amnesty kind of more structured, and um, I don't know, narrative heavy like the end of Balance was. And I think that the way the game has sort of moved, it's been a lot more freeform.

So when I say it's halfway through, like, I have no fuckin' idea. But it feels like we're about there. And we're gonna do like, level up stuff and Heathcliff

stuff. Yeah, you wanted to do the lunar interlude this time based on what kind of progression you wanted, based on like, what thing you chose as your level up ability, rather than like, me doing like, "Hey, you're going on a ski trip, and then for no reason at all, Duck eats some good soup and his sharp skill increases."

Instead of doing that, like, having some sort of narrative justification for it. So, that's what we did this time.

**Travis:** Also, there have also been like, scenes that like, I've wanted to... y'know, a scene, specifically one that we're doing today. But like, I wanted to do, but it feels weird to stop in the middle of like, hunting a monster to be like, "And now, let's do this."

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure.

**Travis:** This works out well.

**Griffin:** Yeah. I'm really enjoying the game. I agree that like, the constant kind of tension of, "There's a monster on the loose that could kill somebody," does kind of lend itself to railroading a bit. Like Travis said, it's tough to be like, okay, and then you go take a pottery class while the Bandersnatch eats up the kids.

I didn't watch that Black Mirror episode, but I think that's what it's about. So, who wants to start? I'll leave it up to you guys. Who is the most randy for RPG?

**Justin:** Let Ned go, 'cause there's somebody at my door.

**Griffin:** Okay. We're gonna let Ned go first.

**Clint:** Okay, great.

**Griffin:** Ned.

**Clint:** Yes.

**Griffin:** You've told me what you want your progression thing to be, and what the scene is going to be, so uh, let's hop right into it. Ned, you... this, by the way, takes place in like the couple of months between the December hunt, and the next one I guess will be the February hunt. So this is sometime in that stretch of time. We don't have to all take place at the same time, but it's in there.

Ned, you find yourself at Whistles' Auto Shop and Trusted Used Car Dealership. It is the automotive hotspot for all of Pocahontas County, and you are standing there as a tow truck sort of loudly deposits the still mangled wreckage of your Lincoln Continental in the lot, where the shop's proprietor, Whistles, eyes it over with concern.

**Travis:** Now, Griffin, I'm sorry. Is he whistling as he eyes it over, or is his name Whistles?

**Griffin:** His name is Whistles. And this is a name that Justin said offhandedly during some Duck lie, and now, he breathes life into this great character, Whistles, the auto dealer.

**Travis:** Okay, and one additional question. On this auto dealership, has anyone ever been frozen in a block of ice as a publicity stunt?

**Griffin:** Uh, yes, Clint McElroy, who is sort of a plane walker between our worlds—

**Clint:** [laughs] We have estab—that is canon, right? We've established I am able to move from plane to plane.

**Griffin:** Sure, yes.

**Travis:** That is true, yes, 'cause he does appear also in Adventure Zone: Balance.

**Clint:** And I was frozen in a giant block of ice at a used car dealership once.

**Travis:** That's the reference I was making.

**Griffin:** That is true.

**Clint:** I know. I know.

**Griffin:** So Whistles looks at like, the mangled corpse of your Lincoln Continental and says...

**Whistles:** Well, Ned, you really done it this time.

**Ned:** How old are you, Whistles? You sound like Gabby Hayes from the old western movies.

**Whistles:** That's a pretty wack way to meet somebody, to say hi to them, but uh, I'm 51 years old.

**Ned:** Wow.

**Whistles:** Yeah, no, it's hard livin'.

**Ned:** Hard livin' here in Kepler.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Whistles:** So uh, what the hell did you do to this car, Ned? It looks like it got run over by a train.

**Ned:** Close. Close. It was the um, tram thing over at the ski hill. The...

**Travis:** Nailed it. Got it in one.

**Ned:** The uh... oh, I know the name of it. It's the funiculee. The funiculee ran into my car. I'm sitting there, minding my own business, and this funiculee jumps out and attacks my car. But it's salvageable, right?

**Whistles:** Oh, Ned, no. I mean, it'll be cost prohibitive to fix this. Ned, this thing's beyond the point of no return. This car's up in heaven now, Ned. This is Jesus' car.

**Ned:** Oh.

**Whistles:** This is not something I can fix, or any human being can fix. Um, so um, sorry to tell to you, but no. There's some good parts in there, maybe. Maybe there's some good parts in there. There's, y'know, still some demand for these antique car components. I might be able to, y'know, find a trade for you somewhere in the lot. But uh...

**Ned:** There's an 8track player. A great 8track player. I'd really love to hang onto that.

**Whistles:** Yeah, I can get that out for ya. You can sell it at the flea market or something like that.

**Ned:** And I've still got a bunch of shit in the trunk. So I need to get that out too, right?

**Whistles:** I mean... yes, Ned. Why do you even need to ask me that? That's weird.

**Ned:** Well I didn't know it was gonna be totaled. I really thought you'd be able to work that Whistle magic and fix her right up.

**Whistles:** Uh, magic's not real, Ned.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Whistles:** I'm a mechanic. I use tools and stuff.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Whistles:** Um, I'll tell you, though, I don't want to leave you hanging out to dry. I'll do a trade for you. Obviously, it ain't gon' be another classic Continental, but uh, we can find something on the lot worth the... at least the parts I might be able to strip out of this thing.

**Clint:** Okay, so just to kind of... this is how long after the last hunt?



**Griffin:** Uh, I don't know. You tell me.

**Clint:** You said a couple of months, right?

**Griffin:** Somewhere in between the late December hunt, and the February which will be the next arc.

**Clint:** Okay. Well, here's the thing. Obviously, with the end of the last episode, he kind of feels some guilt that he hasn't been a more active team member.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** He has an idea of what he wants to get, and he um, he's wandering around this lot. Is Whistles doing that whole used car salesman hanging all over, hovering?

**Griffin:** Oh yeah. I think, yeah, you and Whistles I think hop in a few like, different cars, like... there's an Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera that's kind of beat up. There's an old manual Yugo. Um, there's a—

**Travis:** Maybe an old kind of rusty yellow VW Bug, but it has a spark of life in it, wink wink.

**Griffin:** Ohh.

**Travis:** It's Bumblebee.

**Griffin:** An all spark of life. Uh, yeah, there's... he probably like, puts you in like, a Lincoln Towncar, just like, trying some stuff out.

**Justin:** Griffin, you're really gonna put Transformers in this thing? What's up?

**Griffin:** Um, I mean...

**Justin:** I hear you guys talk about Transformers, like... you gonna put Transformers in this motherfucker?

**Griffin:** Don't spoil the surprise ending.

**Travis:** Oh, is that our next—we gotta hunt a Transformer.

**Griffin:** Well, the next one is gonna be the Blue Collar Comedy Tour boys and the Transformers team up.

**Griffin:** And *then* hunt the Transformer. Yeah.

**Justin:** Transformers: Generations.

**Travis:** That's Adventure Zone: Gasoline.

**Clint:** [laughs] Okay, so, Ned... alright, Ned spots something there on the lot. And he remembers what Victoria was telling him, about fate and luck and destiny. And it's this humungous food truck. A gigantic food—the biggest food truck Ned has ever seen. And painted on the side of it, it says, "Crepes by Monica." There was a lady named Monica in Kepler who tried to make a go of it with the food truck business, selling 'creps', but this is... y'know, this is...

**Griffin:** Sorry, sorry, sorry. You call them creps?

**Justin:** Did you just say creps, dad?

**Travis:** Isn't it creps?

**Clint:** How am I supposed to—it's creps.

**Travis:** Crepes. It's crepes.

**Clint:** No, it's not crepes!

**Griffin:** It is for sure crepes.

**Travis:** It is!

**Clint:** Do you say crepe paper?

**Travis:** You rube. Yes!

**Justin:** You're perfect.

**Griffin:** Don't change a thing.

**Justin:** Don't change a thing. Having crep creps.

**Griffin:** No.

**Clint:** Okay, so... this is obviously—

**Travis:** Monica's Creeps.

**Clint:** --a fried—

**Justin:** Doomsday Creppers.

**Clint:** --a fried baloney sandwich market. Creeps... are not going to... crepes are not going to be very popular. So, Ned looks at this and has this epiphany that with just a little bit of paint, he could change Crepes by Monica into Cryptonomica.

**Griffin:** Oh, that's quite good. Okay.

**Travis:** Oh, I see.

**Clint:** And it could be a rolling headquarters for whatever the hell the three of them are called. And like, with surveillance equipment inside, some weapons, and he can roll around in this thing and—

**Justin:** Damn, I can tell you're a writer.

**Clint:** Like a mobile headquarters. But at the same time, you're hiding right under their noses, because it's gonna look like a rolling billboard for Cryptonomica, but it's really their mobile base.

**Griffin:** And is it gonna... are you gonna get rid of the Crepes by Monica sort of paintjob, and write Cryptonomica, or is that part of your—

**Clint:** Yeah. Just get—it won't take very much at all. Just a couple of—a little bit of paint to change...

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** 'Crepes' by Monica into Cryptonomica.

**Griffin:** Uh, I mean, let's resolve this. You're talking about borrowing a move from the professional playbook?

**Clint:** Yes. Mobility.

**Griffin:** The Mobility move.

**Clint:** Yep.

**Griffin:** Yeah. So for that, you have a truck, van, or car built for monster hunting, or crepery. Choose two good things, and one bad thing about it. And then there's some tags. Uh, roomy, surveillance gear, fast, stealthy, intimidating, classic, medical kit, sleeping space, toolkit, concealed weapons, anonymous, armored, tough, monster cage. So, two of those.

**Clint:** I'm gonna go with surveillance gear and concealed weapons. Like night vision, stuff like that.

**Travis:** Flashlights. [laughs]

**Clint:** Flashlights.

**Griffin:** I'm into that. Like radio... you guys don't have a lot of like, ways to canvas the town.

**Clint:** A police scanner.

**Griffin:** Yeah, yeah. Uh, I think that's a very logical choice. And then, for concealed weapons, is it like, stuff inside like Men in Black style? You like, press on a panel and some guns come out? Or is it on the outside?

**Clint:** Man, I don't know how we would justify that.

**Griffin:** The outside one I think would be much harder. Like, if a chain gun comes out of the top in the shape of a crepe, like, that is way harder to justify than you have secret hidden weapons inside the panels of the car.

**Travis:** But I think you could say like, in a food truck, there are probably lots of cabinets and stuff like—

**Griffin:** Oh, for sure.

**Travis:** Where you could definitely like, store weapons. So that if we were ever like, stopped by cops or whatever, or you had to like—

**Griffin:** And had to fight them?

**Travis:** No, that they wouldn't be like, why are you traveling with like 80 shot guns?

**Griffin:** Oh, oh, yes.

**Justin:** Whoa, twist.

**Griffin:** Alright. Is that what you want, Mac? If you want a different tag...

**Clint:** Y'know what? I tell you what. It might make more sense for it to be something like a tool thing. Y'know, I don't want Ned all of a sudden to become the Terminator and have all this fire power.

**Travis:** Well, now, hold on. What if he does, though?

**Griffin:** Uh, yeah, toolkit is one of the things, so that can be the tag if you want.

**Clint:** I don't know...

**Travis:** No, that does fit, because like, that was pretty well established with Ned that the trunk was full of stuff that he needed.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Oh, that's it. This is your bag of holding.

**Clint:** There you go.

**Griffin:** Right? Like, yeah. The tool kit I think is a way to finally sort of have like, a mechanical justification for the fact that Ned can have whatever the fuck he wants whenever he wants it.

**Clint:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Alright, so toolkit and surveillance gear. And then, bad things. Loud, obvious, temperamental, beaten up, gas guzzler, uncomfortable, slow, or old. You have to pick one of those.

**Clint:** I think obvious. Because it's got Cryptonomica written on the side of it.

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure. Okay, that's great. Write that down somewhere if you do not mind.

**Clint:** I just did. [laughs] 'Cause I know how to play this game.

**Griffin:** Uh, okay. So you're in the driver's seat there with Whistles, and his name is plural, right? Yes, okay. And he says, uh...

**Whistles:** Alright, well, this one's a... interesting choice, Ned. Gotta warn ya, brakes don't work super good. You're gonna need to start pressing that pedal pretty far in advance of where you actually want to stop.

**Ned:** Good to know.

**Whistles:** No AC, so if you want to get this thing, y'know, selling enchiladas or whatever have you, it's gonna get a little hot back in the kitchen, so uh...

**Ned:** Well, we only have—we only have, y'know, adventures in like the fall and the winter, so I don't think it'll be that big a problem.

**Whistles:** Well, that's good to hear about your enchilada adventures. Excited for that to come up.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Whistles:** So uh, I'm gonna head inside and start drawing up the paperwork. You go ahead and get familiar with your new ride.

**Ned:** Thank you. Thank you so much.

**Griffin:** And he hops out of the car, and you are sort of poking around the front panel of the—

**Travis:** Enjoy your whip!

**Griffin:** --Crepes by Monica, uh, and y'know, looking around in the compartment up in the sun visor, see if there's any, y'know, if anybody left any money in here I guess. And the passenger door opens, and someone hops quickly into the front seat. And—

**Ned:** Look, I said I'd take it, quit with the high pressure stuff.

**Griffin:** And uh, he says, uh...

**Boyd:** Doing a bit of car shop—

**Griffin:** No, I don't want to do a British accent anymore. This is the second time I've bailed from doing a British accent on this show. He says, because he was in prison and his voice changed while he was in prison...

**Clint:** That happens.

**Griffin:** It happens.

**Boyd:** Hey there, Ned. It's been a bit, hasn't it?

**Griffin:** And it is Boyd Mosche.

**Ned:** Mosche. Oh. I've wondered when...

**Griffin:** Have you... you've described Boyd before, right? Like, he's big. He's like, built. He's like a strong dude. Have you like, laid out any other sort of visual...

**Travis:** He looks badass, I believe is what Dad said.

**Griffin:** He looks badass, so yeah, I guess he is like a fuckin'... he's wearing a Punisher t-shirt. I don't know what that means.

**Clint:** I think he's uh... um... I think he's a good looking guy. I mean, I think he's, y'know, can be very persuasive. Nice looking fella.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Clint:** I think everything about Boyd Mosche is colored in Ned's mind, because he sees Boyd as being the root of all of his problems. So...

**Travis:** I've always pictured him as kind of like Jason Statham.

**Griffin:** Huh, okay. Well, then, I have to make him British again.

**Clint:** Then you gotta go back to the British accent, yeah.

**Travis:** You can do it, Griffin.

**Justin:** Why does Travis get to pick what Dad's imaginary friend looks like?

**Travis:** 'Cause I'm Dad's imaginary friend.

**Clint:** [laughs]



**Griffin:** He says...

**Boyd:** Hello there, Ned. It's uh, been a bit, hasn't it?

**Ned:** Oh. Mosche. [sighs] Wondered when you were gonna pop up. Where's my stuff?

**Griffin:** He uh... he's also kind of like, looking around the car like you were, just moments ago, before he hopped in. and he says...

**Boyd:** Well, that's uh... that's quite a way to greet an old friend there, Ned. Uh, you're—

**Ned:** If you were an old friend, I'd greet you as an old friend. But actually, you're a dick who ruined my life, so let's get on with the conversation, okay?

**Griffin:** He looks at you, and he's kind of like, uh, agog for a second. And then he starts laughing, and he's like...

**Boyd:** I'm sorry if I got things confused. Last time we spoke, we were in a car, bit smaller than this one, and it was wrapped around a tree. I'm fine, by the way. And then you left me for dead as you ran off into the woods with our loot. So, you're saying that *I* ruined *your* life? That's one way to sort of frame the situation.

**Ned:** We wouldn't have been there in the first place if it hadn't been for you. We wouldn't have been on the road, driving like crazy people, if it hadn't been for what *you* did at the house. And *you* were the one behind the wheel, so don't blame me for your shitty driving.

**Griffin:** Um, he sighs. And he just starts looking around the car, and he says...

**Boyd:** Wait a minute, are you trading in your Continental? I've gotta say, I'm surprised. This, uh... this one doesn't seem to have that Ned Chicane flair that I've come to expect from you.

**Ned:** Remember the car you wrecked before? Now imagine the Continental wrecked in the exact same way. So you're not the only one having bad vehicular issues.

**Griffin:** He laughs, and he says...

**Boyd:** Well, that's uh... life has a funny way, as Alanis would say. Um, so, listen, Ned. I'm not here to further complicate your life. Although, I think I have every right to. Believe it or not, Ned, I've actually gone clean. I have been rehabilitated, as they say. My life of crime is behind me, save for taking your belongings, Ned.

**Ned:** Yeah, I was gonna say. Did that happen before or after you stole all my stuff?

**Boyd:** Well, some of that, I think, to be fair, and I think you would admit this as well, was also mine. But I wouldn't consider that a crime. But listen – I'll give you your things back. I promise. I have no need for your trophies. I just need something from you first.

**Ned:** [sighs] Okay. What?

**Griffin:** He uh, he's got a little messenger bag he starts sort of rooting around in as he talks. And he says...

**Boyd:** Well, I've got no prospects in this country, Ned. I want to go home, but I need a little nest egg to help me get started before I go, and you're just the man to get it for me. I would do it myself, but I'm on parole, Ned. I have to be a good boy.

**Ned:** Oh, of course.

**Griffin:** He says...

**Boyd:** I know you're not much for art, Ned. But uh, have you ever heard of a sculptor named Madeline Cobb?

**Ned:** Madeline Cobb, Madeline Cobb... no. Not familiar.

**Boyd:** Aw, she's brilliant. She's very reclusive, and her works are worth quite a bit of money, particularly this one. It's called Shadetree.

**Griffin:** He hands you a small print out of this like, wooden sculpture. Looks like it's about two feet tall, and it's just this... it's intricately carved out of this bright, lustrous wood. It depicts this rhododendron tree, carved in breathtaking detail. And beneath it, there's a figure sort of lying and looking upward into the trees braches. It is a lovely sculpture. And Boyd says...

**Boyd:** Shadetree is valued at a high six figures. I've got a fence lined up who will get me just that if I can bring it to him, which will be enough to get me a new life back across the pond. You steal Shadetree for me, and I'm out of your hair for good.

**Ned:** Look, I've gone straight, too. I... I am a very reputable dealer of antiquities. I run my own high quality museum. I am beloved in the community.

**Justin:** If you listen closely, you can hear Dad's butt cheeks flex as he attempts valiantly not to imitate Griffin's accent. He keeps wanting to veer wildly into it, but he's gripping on for dear life.

**Clint:** It's tough. It's really tough.

**Justin:** It's difficult.

**Clint:** Blimey, it's hard.

**Justin:** [laughs] Blimey, I'm very proud of you.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Uh, he says...

**Clint:** Squire?

**Griffin:** He says, uh...

**Boyd:** Well, I appreciate that you've managed to turn your life around while I did our sentence in the clink, Ned. But I'm only asking you for one job, and frankly, it's a cake walk. You don't even have to go that far, Ned. I've done a bit of scouting since I've been in town, and I found where Madeline lives. Get this – she runs an inn right here in Kepler.

**Griffin:** And he hands you a small stack of photographs, taken surreptitiously from behind some branches of the woods. And they are photographs of Amnesty Lodge.

[music plays]

**Griffin:** So, Travis, you wanted to do a scene with Janelle where you sort of are talking to her about the—

**Travis:** Yes. My magical guide Janelle Monet.

**Griffin:** Yeah, I'm okay with that head canon.

**Travis:** Yup.

**Griffin:** Uh, and you sort of talk about the nature of your magic stuff, which has, I think, developed over the last arc or so.

**Travis:** Yeah, I've really gotten good at this whole magic thing.

**Griffin:** Sometimes. Sometimes you drop a Pizza Hut sign on your friends.

**Travis:** I can do it all!

**Griffin:** Uh, that is true. So, I think you're training with Janelle. I like the idea of like, you all sparring. I think your training sessions have gotten a lot less, y'know, you levitating rocks on Dagobah and more like, y'know, full blown wizard duels as you sort of work on your magic together.

And so, you're in this large banquet hall in the castle in Sylvain. It gives you a lot more space to spar. And Janelle pulls up a pant leg and stomps on the

ground, and this huge chunk of stone cracks out of the floor and starts flying at you. What do you do?

**Travis:** Dive out of the way, and it's magically inspired. Like a wind... a wind blows the stone one way as it blows me the other.

**Griffin:** Okay. I like that. How do you retaliate?

**Travis:** Uh, I would say... big fireball sent towards her head.

**Griffin:** Ah, the classic. Roll... I see you in Roll 20 here. Why don't you roll plus—

**Travis:** I'm in here.

**Griffin:** Roll plus weird. And if you really hard fail this one, this may be the end of Janelle, which would be a tragedy.

**Travis:** Well, it's an eight. Well, plus weird, that's a ten.

**Griffin:** Okay. Yeah, out of ten, you throw a fireball at her, and she tries to do the same maneuver you just did. She tries to raise up this wall of water to actually just like, sizzle out the fireball effortlessly, but it actually like—the force of your fireball knocks her backwards. And she falls to the ground, and she looks at you, and she looks very impressed. And your duel—

**Aubrey:** Oh shit, are you okay?

**Griffin:** She laughs, and she says...

**Janelle:** You... will need to try a little bit harder if you wanted to really hurt me, Aubrey. But yes, I'm more than okay. I'm... I am proud. You have come so far since we've first met. It is uh, fascinating to me, both from, y'know, an arcane studies perspective, and also as a friend. I'm excited for you, Aubrey.

**Aubrey:** And we are friends, aren't we, Janelle? I do... that's nice to hear. Um, and friends... friends talk about things, don't they? They share things. They don't judge each other.

**Janelle:** Uh, is this like a relationship thing? Because I would not be great at—

**Aubrey:** No.

**Janelle:** Okay.

**Aubrey:** I'm fine with that. Um, I need... [indecipherable grumbling] I need to talk to you, and... mmm. You're gonna be mad.

**Janelle:** Okay.

**Griffin:** She pulls up a chair. She actually like, fixes... she casts a spell and like, fixes the table in the banquet hall, which like, almost certainly got exploded during your duel, and pulls up one of the chairs as it sort of reforms beneath her. And she sits down and says...

**Janelle:** I'm listening.

**Aubrey:** Okay. If I tell you, you have... if I tell you this, I need you to promise that you're not gonna like... don't react...

**Janelle:** Aubrey. Aubrey. This is not a great way to tell somebody something. What happened?

**Aubrey:** No, I know that, but I don't want you to like, get really mad and yell or anything.

**Janelle:** You have my word.

**Aubrey:** Hmm. How to... let... how about I step backwards into this, and ask this question? Has anyone from my side of the gate ever touched that crystal out there, hypothetically?

**Janelle:** Uh, that is hard to say, Aubrey. Obviously, we were under centuries of assault from—

**Travis:** And Aubrey takes off her sunglasses.

**Griffin:** I don't think she knows what that means. I get what the—I get the gesture here, but I definitely—I don't think she's seen like, the multicolored eyes. And she's just like, talking and not paying attention, and she's like...

**Janelle:** Uh, the crystal was shattered, and Sylvain left us, in some capacity.

**Travis:** And Aubrey just kind of starts pointing to her orange eyeball.

**Griffin:** And she looks up at you, and says...

**Janelle:** Oh, goodness, Aubrey.

**Aubrey:** Yeah. So I touched it. That's one, I guess. That's bullet point one.

**Griffin:** She doesn't look like, angry or disappointed. She looks like she's um, uh, like instantly like, her instant reflexive reaction is like, it looks like she's trying to solve a math problem in her head. She is trying to work something out as you fess up.

**Aubrey:** And when I touched it, did you... I don't know if you noticed the little kind of impromptu garden that sprung up around the crystal? Did you maybe notice that in the last like, month?

**Griffin:** Uh, she stops her like, calculation and looks up at you, and just wordlessly nods.

**Aubrey:** So like, bullet point two. I touched it. I felt like I was dying, like it was like, flowbeeing all of the power out of me. Oh, I pull a hand off, whoa, and then there's flowers, orange eyeball, and uh... yeah. So is that what you all feel when you touch the crystal?

**Griffin:** Um, she has like, long since gone back to like, her calculation. And then she like, suddenly like, stands up with a start. And she like, looks around the room to make sure that it's just the two of you in there, and she says...

**Janelle:** You need to come with me right now, Aubrey.

**Aubrey:** Aw, am I in trouble?

**Griffin:** She's already walking towards the door.

**Aubrey:** Okay.

**Griffin:** And she leads you out of the banquet hall, and down this long hallway, past a couple sort of uh, detachments of guards. And she takes you into this large chamber that, looking at the opposite wall from the one you entered from, you can tell is actually behind the royal hall where you first met the ministers of this world during your first trip to this place. You see the three columns that they climb up on to hold court.

And in the center of this room, there is, y'know, there's marble floor, in right in the center of it is a crest depicting this large orange crystal in front of the castle. And as you and Janelle step on it, she waves her hand, and this circular crest lights up, and then starts descending into the ground. And then you're just riding this platform downward, and very quickly, you enter into this massive, massive chamber. It honestly looks like sort of where Heathcliff lives. Like, you cannot even perceive the true scope of this chamber. It is so massive.

[music plays]

**Griffin:** And right in front of you, as you descend, you can see the heart of Sylvain. It is a huge crystal. It looks similar to the one that you see on the surface in the courtyard in front of the castle. And in fact, you can actually tell that this crystal is poking up through the ceiling of this chamber, and sort of iceberg like, is sort of poking up into that courtyard, and that's where people sort of interact with it. But it's so huge. It stretches below the



surface, below your feet, into just pitch black that you can't even see the bottom of it.

And this platform lowers down to this sort of curved observation deck, as it stops there, and you can just see this awe-inspiring, gigantic crystal. It's not the radiant orange gem depicted on the crest. It's nearly colorless, there's just a hint of orange just getting drowned out by this cloudy grey, but it is still awe-inspiring.

So you get on this observation deck that kind of curves around this chamber, and to the right a ways, you can actually see a familiar face. You see Alexandra, the young Interpreter whose thoughts you apparently read a couple episodes ago. She's sitting cross legged on a cushion, facing the crystal. Her eyes are closed. And Janelle kind of puts a finger to her lips, and gestures you away from her, so as not to disturb her. And she takes you to another part of the observation deck, and is sort of leaning on a railing, overlooking the crystal. And she says...

**Janelle:** So... this is... this is Sylvain. This is what it really looks like. You're the first, as far as I know, you are the first human to ever see this.

**Aubrey:** Well thank... thank you? So am I in trouble? Let's get back to this in trouble thing.

**Janelle:** It's hard to say, Aubrey.

**Aubrey:** Ooh?

**Janelle:** You're not in trouble with me, but... you are very much in danger.

**Aubrey:** Well, that's not better.

**Janelle:** I'm not gonna sugar coat it, Aubrey. There are things you need to understand before you can understand the shape of that danger. This is Sylvain. This is the heart of her. This is the thing that sustains all life on this planet. It is the source of all magic that we know of. It was the source of those things, I should say.

Sylvain... the entity inside of it, the entity that sustains this world, is gone now. And as a result, this planet cannot sustain us. The corruption beyond our city's walls, the same corruption that inhabits your Pine Guard chronicle, it is a reaction to Sylvain's disappearance. We call it the Quell. It is not a malevolent force, Aubrey. It is doing what it thinks it needs to do to salvage the planet. It is killing us before we can kill it.

**Aubrey:** Where did Sylvain go?

**Janelle:** Nobody's quite sure. She disappeared when we were attacked some centuries ago by humans from your world who found a portal and crossed over, and shattered the crystal on the surface. They took shards of it home as souvenirs, Aubrey. I'm still quite sore about it. But some people think that Sylvain is dead. Some people think that she is just weakened because of the damage done to her heart. Nobody is quite sure, Aubrey. But as a result, the planet is weakened, and yet, you are telling me that it seemed to respond to your human touch.

**Aubrey:** Yes. I would say 'respond' might be downplaying it, since I almost died from being, I don't know, attached to it or whatever. It felt like dying? That's hard to say, 'cause that's like saying, y'know, I had a panic attack and I almost died. It felt like it. But I have no idea... yes. Okay, so, yes, I touched it, it responded. Short answer, yes.

**Janelle:** And you breathed life into the ground beneath your feet. Okay. Our world has... not long to live, Aubrey. A year, maybe more, before the—

**Aubrey:** Aw, dip!

**Janelle:** Yeah. Before the Quell overwhelms us; before Sylvain's light fades for good. And there are those among us who would absolutely destroy your world if it meant saving our own. There are those among your people who would try to destroy our world if they recognized that threat. Don't you see, Aubrey? The tether that connects our worlds... it is built to lead to the death and destruction of both of our people if things escalate beyond our control.

If people here in Sylvain, Aubrey, find out that humans who touch the crystal will have their life drained from them to bring our planet back to life?

That is not a secret that I would prefer to get out there, Aubrey. You can't say anything like that out loud here ever again. Do you understand me?

**Aubrey:** I... yes. But also, maybe we could work out like, an exchange? Where like, the humans come over, we touch it for five seconds, and then your people touch it for five seconds, and we find a balance. Like a blood bank, y'know? We come, we donate, and then you all could take what you need.

**Janelle:** You know your people better than I do, but does that sound realistically like something that they would agree to en masse?

**Aubrey:** Nnno. En masse, no.

**Janelle:** Aubrey, I... I will teach you what I can about your powers. About what I understand of them. But your meddling in our world's affairs may very well be the catalyst for all-out war between our realms.

**Aubrey:** Aw...

**Janelle:** You are a brave woman, Aubrey. I've become very fond of you these past months, but... this is not your world to save.

[music plays]

**Griffin:** Hey everybody, this is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master, your best friend, and your gymnastics coach. And I want to see you pull those legs in a bit more when you're doing the big flip during the big gymnastics game this weekend.

Thanks for listening to The Adventure Zone. This is episode 20 of Amnesty, which is kind of wild. And uh, I hope you are enjoying it. I know there's a lot of people who sort of enjoy the more mechanical discussions, which is sort of what this episode is all about before we start the new hunt with the next episode. Thanks for being patient during our time off over the holidays. We very much needed it, and we are ready and raring to go on all our podcasts' fronts.

But before I get to the rest of the episode, let us, please, let us talk about some of our sponsors. This week, we are sponsored in part by Squarespace. Squarespace is a fantastic way to make a website that looks beautiful, it has lots of functions and functionality that you need for whatever you need it for, and you can do all that stuff, and you don't have to know anything about making websites. They make it super easy, and we have used it multiple times.

I have one for my personal website. Travis used his for the old McElroy brothers website, and still uses it for Buttercup is a Good Good Girl or whatever that website is called. It's a great way to turn your cool idea into an even cooler website, showcase your work. They have e-commerce functionality, they got a bunch of customizable templates, and they let you get the domains that you need from over 200 different extensions. It is a really great all in one way to get the website that you want.

So go check out [Squarespace.com/adventure](https://squarespace.com/adventure) for a free trial. And when you're ready to launch, use the offer code ADVENTURE and you're gonna save 10% off your first purchase of a website or domain.

Also want to tell you about Blue Apron. Blue Apron is the wonderful box that's full of great stuff that you're gonna turn into food. You may think, "I don't know how to turn a box of stuff into food." But they have little like, uh, little placards in there. Little scrolls. And they tell you exactly what to do to the stuff in the box to make it into food. And I know you're gonna be tempted to just eat the stuff in the box as it comes. But a lot of that stuff's gonna be raw meat, so don't do that. You gotta cook it, and Blue Apron's gonna help you cook it.

They have a variety of meals, including kid approved family plans, vegetarian plans, and a brand new WW freestyle plan. I believe that is formerly known as Weight Watchers. They offer chef-designed recipes that use fresh, seasonally-inspired ingredients. They have easy to follow recipes, perfectly portioned ingredients, and yeah, it's great. I learned to... I effectively learned to cook via Blue Apron, and I'm very glad that I did, because it's one of my favorite sort of new pastimes.

You can check out this week's menu and get \$60 off at [BlueApron.com/Adventure](https://blueapron.com/adventure). That's [BlueApron.com/Adventure](https://blueapron.com/adventure). Blue Apron: A better way to cook.

Real quick, just a few announcements. We're probably gonna keep talking about this for a little while, but we have a new website. It's [McElroy.family](https://mcelroy.family), or [TheMcElroy.family](https://themcelroy.family). We partnered up with Vox to make a sort of all-in-one hub for all of our different podcasts that we do, the news that comes out about our podcasts, new merch, which we are sort of constantly turning out, announcements about tour dates, new episodes of Monster Factory which Justin and I are doing on a monthly basis now. We do a ton of stuff on the internet, and Vox has helped us put it all in one place at [McElroy.family](https://mcelroy.family).

Go there, check out the new merch. I think there are still some tickets available for our next tour, coming up in February. We're gonna be doing a show in New Orleans, and we are doing MBMBaM in New Orleans and Birmingham. So if you want to get tickets to that, those are still available. You can find out details at [McElroy.family](https://mcelroy.family), and yeah.

We've been doing some work on graphic novel stuff. I'm very excited. Graphic novel two is coming out soon. Well, not soon, but this year. And you can preorder it now at [TheAdventureZoneComic.com](https://theadventurezonecomic.com). I would encourage you to do that, and yeah, I think that's it. I hope you enjoy the rest of the episode. We'll be back in two weeks with the next installment of The Adventure Zone: Amnesty, so uh, we'll see you real soon.

[music plays]

**Griffin:** Duck.

**Travis:** Oh, I should say. I took plus one weird.

**Griffin:** Oh, yeah.

**Travis:** I should mention. That's my...

**Griffin:** Yes, that is a good way of uh... finishing that. Okay.

**Travis:** I got strong—I got better at magic through training. Plus one weird.

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure. Alright, Duck.

**Justin:** Yep.

**Griffin:** Uh, you messaged me like 45 minutes ago, or 45 minutes before we started recording...

**Justin:** There's no need. There's no need to make it seem like a spur of the moment decision.

**Griffin:** You said, "I can't wait to level up my wizard." And I had to be like, aw, dog. Oh, no.

**Travis:** Oh, no.

**Griffin:** Um, you wanted to do a scene with Leo, which I think is uh, of course, kind of the scene that we have to do. Because it would be wild if he was like, "By the way, I got powers, too." And then you're mini golfing with your friend Jeff.

**Justin:** I do, though. It feels weird for it to be the same time lapse as like, you talked about with dad.

**Griffin:** Oh, no, it can be that night.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** I'm saying anywhere in that two month period.

**Justin:** I feel like that's a scene that you need to see.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Where is—

**Justin:** So here's the thing that I want to do.

**Griffin:** Yeah, he's standing like, at your doorstep when he like, had the sword, and you realized that Minerva was apparently speaking to him. And uh, yeah, where do you want to do this scene? Are we picking up literally right then, or are you in one of your places?

**Justin:** Uh, we cut to inside the apartment.

**Griffin:** Yours or his? 'Cause you're neighbors.

**Justin:** My apartment.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** And I'm lying on the floor of the bathroom.

**Griffin:** Okay. And...

**Justin:** Just like... yes. Alright, and that is... that is where the scene is happening.

**Griffin:** Uh, and he's sitting on the toilet, I guess? On top of the lid?

**Justin:** No, he's standing in the doorway.

**Griffin:** Okay. He's standing in the doorway to the bathroom, not sitting on the toilet. Thank you, Justin, that would've been a weird sort of feeling for the scene.

**Justin:** Yeah, it would've been a weird sort of feel.

**Griffin:** He says...

**Leo:** Do you got any like, uh, Pepto Bismol or something? Do you need like a... a ginger ale?

**Duck:** No, just... alright. Alright. I know. You've done it three times. Just... one more time, for me, 'cause I'm gonna get it this time. Start at the beginning.

**Leo:** [sighs] Okay, Duck. Uh, I was also chosen there for a bit, until you were chosen. Uh, before the gate opened up in the woods here in Kepler, there was one up in Manhattan. Old 91<sup>st</sup> Street station. It's been shut down for like, half a century or something. Gate opened there, monsters started to come out, Minerva showed up in my dreams like I'm sure she did for you, popped up in that weird like, spectral form.

**Duck:** Spectral form, yeah.

**Leo:** I thought she was like a Slimer or something.

**Duck:** Yeah.

**Leo:** Did you—was that your first inclination? I've never had anybody to talk to about this, but I thought it was a Slimer.

**Duck:** I thought I was high. Uh, because I was in high school, and I had... yeah, I thought I was high.

**Leo:** Well, anyways, she taught me the ropes. She, y'know, gave me the powers, and I, y'know, protected New York City from otherworldly threats there for like, 19 years or something. And uh, y'know, got older. My body stopped being quite as spritely, and uh, then my gate disappeared. And uh, next thing I know, Minerva told me that she's chosen someone new, and my shift was over, so I had to get to Kepler where the gate was now, and deliver the new chosen one a blade. And y'know, keep watch over him as he learns the craft. So that's what I been doin'.

**Duck:** So why didn't you... do that?

**Leo:** What do you mean?

**Duck:** I mean, I've been figuring all this stuff out by myself. Like, if you were supposed to come here and watch over me and help me and be all, y'know, Mr. Miyagi and shit, where have you been?



**Leo:** I just had to watch you, Duck, and make sure that nothin', y'know, seriously bad happened to you. Minerva was explicitly clear that I wasn't supposed to spill the beans. I think she... frankly, Duck? I don't think she wanted you to know there was other chosen people out there. I can understand her concern. You, y'know, not feeling as special and what have you, and y'know, also understanding that this job, it doesn't just end. It ends when you end, most of the time.

It's complicated, Duck, but she had a plan. And I was there every step of the way, making sure you never got snuffed out.

**Duck:** Can you... has there been any specific times you can point to where my bacon was preserved by you, or has it just been kind of an overall guiding light sort of deal?

**Leo:** Sort of like, yeah, a guiding light. Uh, I'm not, y'know, a helicopter parent or anything like that. Uh, yeah, you've been doing great. So anyway, uh, yeah. I didn't think we would ever get to have this conversation until a few minutes ago when she... I guess is... I guess she's just gone now, Duck.

**Duck:** Yeah.

**Leo:** I understand that this is like, quite a shock to you, but I need you to understand, this was my friend for, y'know... 30-some odd years or something. So uh, I'm also kind of trying to process some stuff right now.

**Griffin:** And I think now, he does go sit on the toilet. Fuck you guys.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** And he's... his knees bucklin', and now he's sittin' on the john.

**Duck:** Um, so, do you have like... powers too?

**Leo:** Uh, I mean, not as strong as they used to be. I haven't been doing much monster hunting these days. But uh, let me see.

**Griffin:** Uh, and I think he like, tries to rip the toilet up out of the ground. And he's like...

**Leo:** Wait a minute, I shouldn't be doing this in the first place. Uh, I don't know, Duck. I think I still got powers, but honestly, since Minerva disappeared...

**Justin:** I pick up a roll of toilet paper, and I chuck it at his head.

**Griffin:** It hits him. Like, it just absolutely hits him in the head.

**Duck:** Yeah. Yeah, man. Hey, yeah. Me too.

**Leo:** Wait, uh. Hold on. You're telling me that your powers are...

**Duck:** Punch me in the stomach.

**Griffin:** He stands you up, and he's like...

**Leo:** Are you sure, there, Duck?

**Duck:** Punch me in the stomach. Come on.

**Griffin:** Uh, do you want me to roll for this, or just, am I just gonna getcha? I think if you want the punch, he's gonna punch ya.

**Justin:** Yeah, just punch me. You don't need to roll for it.

**Griffin:** Uh, he is, uh, y'know, the humble, friendly, local grocer who's... I forget what age range I put him in, but he's up there, and you don't expect a lot. But he punches you with surprising force, right in the gut.

**Justin:** I vomit into the tub.

**Duck:** See? You see? Do you see? It's gone, man. That's the game.

**Leo:** Can we go in the kitchen and finish this conversation or something? It's yucky in here.

**Duck:** [laughs] Yeah. That's fine.

**Griffin:** Jump cut to the kitchen.

**Duck:** Yeah, that's fine, I could use some granola or something.

**Griffin:** He says...

**Leo:** Alright, let's not panic or nothin'. Uh, I mean, this makes sense. All the powers that we had, technically, we were just uh, borrowing from Minerva after all. Her people... I don't know how much she told you about her people. They got some sort of psychic thing where they can like, share their combat prowess with whomever they choose, as long as they get like, a line of communication open with them. And uh, I guess it's gone now.

For you and me, Duck, that line of communication... And this next part, it's gonna sound a lot scarier than it actually is, so y'know, baton down the hatches. Minerva was talking to us through like a wormhole, Duck, that we uh... a little, barely there even, little wormhole that was sort of inside our brains.

**Duck:** Mm-hmm.

**Leo:** I guess now that she's gone, the uh... the phone line's been disconnected, please try later, y'know?

**Duck:** Uh, Leo, I... I mean, this is a lot to take in. Um, I mean... holistically speaking, a lot. I mean, finding out that you were chosen... I mean, overall, it makes me feel a little less special, honestly.

**Leo:** See, that's exactly why... yeah.

**Duck:** If a bunch of people are being chosen, it's like... it's less chosen, and more like, I don't know, pressured into it pretty much.

**Leo:** Well this... this thing, Duck, this tether between our world and the other one, the one that the monsters keep coming through, that ain't

something new. That's been happening on earth for, I don't know man, centuries? Millennia? It's been here a while, and there have been people protecting it for quite some time.

Y'know that Minerva's planet had the same deal, right? Same sort of connection with another planet, and they killed each other off.

**Duck:** Yeah.

**Leo:** Minerva was the only survivor. She told you that bit?

**Duck:** Yeah. Yeah, she told me the part where she was the one who did the killing, too.

**Leo:** Yeah, she did. And I think that she found us, because she wanted to redeem herself in some way, to make sure that some other planet, having the same sort of situation, didn't settle things the same way. I think she was trying to make things right.

And now, I guess, it's just up to us now, Duck. I guess it's just on you and me. I got a couple decades on ya, so when I'm gone, it's just gonna be you. You're gonna be the last one to ever be chosen. And y'know, no pressure, buddy, but if you can't find a way to stop those monsters from terrorizing our planet, ain't nobody gonna stop it.

**Duck:** Yeah, well... let's hear some of the skills that I'm bringing to the table currently. Uh, made of flesh. Very vulnerable to bullets, and knives, and fangs, and acid, and poison. So those are pretty much my only weaknesses. I don't know if I mentioned fire, and blunt trauma, and drowning, and bullets, but those are my weaknesses. Strengths include... uh, large reservoir of botanical information. Pretty good at Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2. Less good at 3. I dropped off at 3.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Duck:** That is... it. I played the trombone for two years. I don't know if that's even gonna be helpful or not. But that's what I got, Leo. I mean, that's what I'm bringing to the table currently.

**Griffin:** He says, uh...

**Leo:** Well, I mean, I know that ya... your super human reflexes, some of your powers are gone, Duck. But I wouldn't say that you're, y'know, completely powerless.

**Griffin:** And he like, really quickly reaches over, and he grabs Beacon, who kind of responds to his touch and uncoils. And he throws Beacon over towards you. I think act under pressure. [laughs] With your new stats, which we'll talk about here in a second.

**Justin:** Hmm. Okay.

**Griffin:** I can roll it for you if you don't have—

**Justin:** Yeah, if you don't mind. I wasn't logged into the...

**Griffin:** Oh, that's a ten!

**Justin:** Hey, great.

**Griffin:** Plus, uh... what's your cool?

**Justin:** Uh, one.

**Griffin:** Okay, so that's 11. Yeah, you catch it. Like, you catch the sword. I like the idea of Leo just comin' at you with his broadsword, just to like, kind of shock you into heroism. He starts running in your direction with the broadsword sort of plunging toward you. What do you do?

**Justin:** I... [laughs] I throw Beacon back at him, still coiled, and go into a fetal position.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay. You grab Beacon, and it immediately coils up in your hand, and you drop to the floor and uh, Leo stabs through the rear wall of your apartment. It just goes—it cuts through—his broadsword cuts through like the uh...

**Travis:** Plaster? [laughs]

**Griffin:** It like, stabs through—

**Justin:** Drywall?

**Griffin:** Yeah, it stabs through the drywall, and you actually like, can see it through your kitchen window now, just like, peeking out of the side of your house. And uh, he looks down at you, and he says, uh...

**Leo:** Okay, we're fucked.

[theme music plays]

**Griffin:** Uh, why don't we talk real quick, Justin, 'cause yours is probably the most drastic thing we've ever done mechanics-wise in the game. 'Cause you messaged me and had an idea for a power you wanted to take, and then I suggested something a little bit more dramatic.

**Justin:** Yeah, so I am... I am no longer, uh, the Chosen. I am now Duck the Mundane.

**Griffin:** So, yes. New playbook. Uh, the Mundane. And the powers here are so, so, so... can you like, read off some of the moves that give it some of that good mundane flavor? Good powerless flavor?

**Justin:** I'll give you the ones that I have chosen, 'cause these are the ones that will be relevant.

**Griffin:** Okay, yeah. You get to pick three.

**Justin:** Uh, and I've added one, because I went ahead and took my upgrade levels, 'cause I didn't feel like I—

**Griffin:** Yeah, go ahead and take three levels up, yeah.

**Justin:** Yeah. Uh, so I have Always the Victim. When another hunter uses protect someone to protect you, they mark experience. Whenever a monster captures me, I mark experience.

**Griffin:** It's so good. It's like a way of rewarding you for playing the like, uh, y'know, powerless best friend archetype.

**Justin:** Uh, Power of Heart. When fighting a monster, if I help someone, you don't roll plus cool. You automatically help as though you rolled a ten.

**Griffin:** That is an incredibly powerful thing.

**Justin:** Trust Me. When you tell a normal person the truth in order to protect them from danger, roll plus charm. On a ten plus, they do what you say... what you say they should, no questions asked. On a seven to nine, they do it, but the keeper chooses they ask a hard question first, stall and dither for a while, or have a better idea. Quote, "better idea."

**Griffin:** And on a miss, I get to screw you over, obviously.

**Justin:** Yeah. The last one I've chosen is Don't Worry, I'll Check it Out. Whenever you go off by yourself to check out somewhere scary, mark experience.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** So this class is all about like, putting yourself in danger and having to be rescued. I also really like that Power of Heart move, because it's like, you are now, y'know, the most human one of the group, and so, you're able to talk to people and, y'know, commiserate.

**Justin:** My stats are worse.

**Griffin:** Yes, of course.

**Justin:** Obviously. Um, I have readjusted Beacon's stats. The Mundane can get a golf club, baseball bat, cricket bat, or a hockey stick. So I've readjusted Beacon's stats to be in line with those.

**Griffin:** I don't hate you still having the same—like, I don't think Beacon would get weaker with you. I don't actually like that.

**Justin:** Well, Beacon has also been damaged. So I figured—

**Griffin:** Oh, that's right.

**Justin:** The two of us are, y'know, we're both damaged goods at this point.

**Griffin:** Shit, yeah. Okay.

**Justin:** So he is two harm. Two harm, innocuous, and messy are the current, uh, tags on that.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** And also, the one upgrade is that I have a means of transport.

**Griffin:** Yes. Now, how do we...

**Justin:** So, I can no longer run everywhere without getting tired. So, upon realizing this, Duck dug back into his closet, and dug out his skateboard.

**Travis:** Yes! Yes please.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Yeah. So you've got a busted sword, you've got a skateboard, and you still do have a jetpack. So that can be a fun thing.

**Justin:** Uh, I'm pretty sure...

**Griffin:** It came back to you. It came back to you at the end of the last arc.

**Clint:** Remember? It saved Ned.



**Justin:** Okay. Yeah, that's true.

**Griffin:** It came back and saved Ned's life. Okay, that's fantastic. I'm very excited for this.

**Justin:** So anyway, I'm just a regular person now. It's not like a secret—

**Travis:** With a skateboard.

**Justin:** With a skateboard.

**Clint:** And a jetpack.

**Justin:** Yeah, here's a spoiler for you guys. I no longer have the ability to shrug off all damage. If I'm gonna use a jetpack, I'm gonna be in the next state. I'm gonna have to like—

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Justin:** Activate that shit via Wi-Fi. No way.

**Griffin:** That's great. Okay, so, the last thing we need to do is the uh, Heathcliff stuff, where you all managed to get all three of the items on his list, so...

**Travis:** Which were? Remind us again.

**Griffin:** A seer's spectacles, a law keeper badge or something like that, and the victorious seed, which you got from defeating the big tree at the end of the last arc.

**Travis:** Sick.

**Griffin:** So you got all three. Well done. And y'all are, uh... the three of you are now together in the chasm beneath Sylvain. You are in the realm of The Enchanter. And that is still the most D&D... That's more D&D-ass shit than I did when we were playing D&D.

Uh, you're in the Enchanted Realm of The Enchanter. Heathcliff, the big cat, and—

**Clint:** And there's enchantment in the air.

**Griffin:** There is. You can feel it. And—

**Travis:** And everyone's chanting.

**Griffin:** And there's Heathcliff, suddenly. Jump cut, Heathcliff is there. We're starting in medias res. You've been there, and now there's Heathcliff.

[music plays]

**Griffin:** Uh, and he says...

**Heathcliff:** I can sense the presence of a few valuables. Uh, a few precious items that uh, I requested. Um, yum yum, gimme some.

**Griffin:** And he extends his huge paw down to the platform where you are standing in front of him.

**Travis:** I put the items on his very large toe beans.

**Griffin:** Aww.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** And he retrieves them, and he says... He actually just like, outstretches his toe beans, and lets them fall down into the chasm below to land in, I don't know, some sort of mysterious pot? Who knows what he's got going on under there.

**Travis:** [laughs] Who could even say?

**Clint:** It's a big Scrooge McDuck swimming pool full of artifacts.

**Griffin:** That's probably what it is. And Heathcliff says, uh...

**Heathcliff:** Okay, a deal's a deal. What's it gonna be? An enchantment? Summoning a new item? You all, uh... you all know the score. You might not. It's been like nine months since we've spoken.

**Travis:** Yeah. I definitely remember. But maybe the folks at home don't, Griffin.

**Justin:** Yeah, let's recap for their benefit.

**Clint:** Because we know. We remember for sure.

**Griffin:** Absolutely. This is a mechanic that I sort of hacked into the game, to sort of keep some of that like, D&D magic item feel going, called Acquisition, where you roll 2d6 plus the number of items you recovered for Heathcliff, and you can either enchant an item you have now and try to get another tag added to it, or summon a new item altogether.

So for example, in the last time you guys did this, Aubrey enchanted her vest to get, uh, one armor. The one armor tag added to it. Uh, and rolled successfully, and so, that was successfully added to the armor. Uh, Duck summoned a jetpack. That's how he used his roll. So, uh, really, really, really open ended system. It is fully up to you guys. I will now drop... oh. I will drop the gear tags into Slack. There's the list of tags. It is quite long. Some of them are good, some of them are bad.

Okay, Aubrey, you rolled a...

**Travis:** 20. Well, no. Basically. A nat 20.

**Griffin:** You rolled a—holy shit, you did roll six six. You rolled a nat 12, plus 3, so 15.

**Travis:** I got 15. I want... I'm looking for what would justify this. I want a knife that I can control.

**Griffin:** You want a magic fuckin' The Phantom knife?

**Travis:** Yes. The Shadow.

**Griffin:** Was it the Shadow? Damn it, you're right. Um, hm.

**Travis:** Or maybe just like a throwing knife? I want some kind of weapon...

**Griffin:** Yeah?

**Travis:** That I can use. `Cause right now, I got the magic, and that's great. Magic, don't get me wrong, super great.

**Justin:** We need to make sure Dad hasn't been kicked off the call, because Travis mentioned the Shadow, and Dad didn't smash into the conversation Kool-Aid man style.

**Griffin:** You're right.

**Clint:** Who knows what evil lurks?

**Justin:** See, there is.

**Travis:** Yeah, it must've cut out.

**Justin:** It was like a five minute delay, apparently, on the call.

**Griffin:** Um, yeah, Trav. I think we can... I mean, we can do whatever the fuck. I'm just trying to figure out a way to make it work. Uh, the... you get a... oh, that's right. So you'll get a positive and a negative tag for it. So I think the idea of you having a knife that you are like, bonded with, I don't necessarily know that this is like, your magic magic. Like, I think the knife is magic, but like, all of your magic so far has been very elemental. Unless it's like, you're using the wind to blow this knife around in a cool way—

**Travis:** No, no, no. I want this to be like, a magic Sylvain knife. Y'know, like...

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure.

**Travis:** I don't want it—I do want it to be like, something that I have to like, guide, that I am responsible for.

**Griffin:** Uh, Heathcliff says...

**Heathcliff:** Oh, that's a breeze. Are you kidding? Magic knife?

**Griffin:** He yawns.

**Heathcliff:** Oh, no, I don't think I can do a magic knife... pshhh.

**Griffin:** And he ducks down into the chasm, and you hear a loud sound and a flash of light, and a woosh as he rises back up and extends his cat paw towards you, and hands you the magic knife. What's it look like, before I figure out its tags?

**Travis:** Um, I'm going to say it's very much like a Scottish dirk, like a small one, so there's not like... it doesn't have like a big cross... oh, I'm so mad at myself that I can't remember what that is.

**Griffin:** A guard?

**Travis:** Yeah, it doesn't have like, a big guard or anything. It's just like, straight blade, handle...

**Griffin:** Oh, I see, I see, I see. Yeah, there's basically no guard at all, it's just like a handle and then a blade coming out of it.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Griffin:** Okay. I'm into that.

**Travis:** And it does have, not a scabbard, but a sheath that one might keep, perhaps on a belt or in a boot. It's basically like a throwing knife, y'know?

**Griffin:** Yeah, I feel it. That's good. Um, yeah. That comes out of it, and uh, it, I think, flies towards you. Like, it knows what's up. And sort of stops as it gets close to you, and rotates itself to put its handle in your direction.

**Travis:** And I grab it.

**Griffin:** And nothing else happens.

**Travis:** And maybe squeal a little bit.

**Griffin:** Uh, okay.

**Travis:** 'Cause it's super cool.

**Griffin:** So I think it's gonna have the far tag. Fart. [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Justin:** Hee hee hee.

**Griffin:** And I'm trying to decide if like, that's the positive tag here, or if that's kind of like a freebie that kind of... I think that's a freebie that like, determines its range. So what's the other gear tag that's good here?

**Travis:** I mean, magic.

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure, magic. So it can affect certain creatures and armors that are proof against normal weapons. Yeah, that's good. Uh, the negative here will be... I mean, it's a knife that flies around through the air, that you do not really understand how it does that. And so, because you don't really understand that, I think there's like, not a 100% guarantee it's gonna do what you want all the time, and it is a magic flying knife. I think "Volatile: This weapon is dangerous and unstable," is a pretty good one.

**Travis:** Yep. Concur.

**Griffin:** Okay. Alright. Ned, Duck, what are you feeling? What do you want? What are you buying?

**Justin:** I'll let Ned go first.

**Griffin:** Okay. What are you sellin'?

**Clint:** Six, plus three.

**Griffin:** Six plus three is a nine. Okay, are you trying to summon something, or enchant something?

**Clint:** I think Ned wants to enchant the Nerf Blaster 3000? Or 5000?

**Travis:** Well, how much are you enchanting it?

**Griffin:** Yeah, we can add power to it.

**Travis:** It's 5000! Is that right?

**Clint:** I like the idea of it being even more powerful, but I also like the idea of enchanting it with life drain, which transfers life energy. The wielder is healed for as many points of harm as were inflicted.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Uh, okay.

**Clint:** Which sounds, y'know, egotistical enough to still qualify as being Ned.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Clint:** And yet, y'know, kind of kicks up his attack power.

**Griffin:** Yeah, I like that. I think... I like that a lot. I want this to happen very badly. The rule I wrote in like, when I was writing this is that, each piece of gear can only be enchanted one time. So I think the enchantment you got last time was magic, and so, you could shoot a ghost with it, essentially. I think you can definitely do this, but maybe it replaces magic. Which like, magic only lets you hit ghosts, basically. Magic is the tag that lets you kill things. So like, swapping out magic for life drain.

**Clint:** Okay, yeah. So yeah, I want to... I hold out... Ned holds out the Nerf Blaster, let's say 5000.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** The Nerf Blaster 5000, and tells him, um...

**Ned:** I would like this to not only hurt other people, but help me. What do you got, big cat?

**Heathcliff:** Hm.

**Griffin:** He takes a look at it, and he says...

**Heathcliff:** Didn't I already do this one?

**Ned:** Yeah. Yeah, what, do you got rules?

**Heathcliff:** Uh, I think I know what you're getting at. Hold on one second.

**Griffin:** And he dives down into the abyss, and this time, he comes back up, and he is holding like, this yellow orb as well as your blaster. And now, the yellow orb starts like, floating in the air. And he waves his hand over the Nerf Blaster, and you see this like, purple light come out of it, which he then sort of like, forms into a ball, and then drops down into the abyss. And he grabs the yellow ball out of the air, and pushes it into the blaster. And then, he hands it back down to you, and he says...

**Heathcliff:** Why don't you, um... Why don't you give that baby a blast? Just point it at the wall, for Christ's sake, but uh, why don't you give that a shot?

**Ned:** Alrighty. Oh, I don't have to pump it or anything. I just point it here, and pull the trigger.

**Griffin:** Uh, a... I think the way that it does the life drain, I think it's a beam now. I think it's a full blown like, Ghostbusters proton pack that like, whips across the wall, leaving like, a scorch mark as it goes.



**Ned:** And I feel awesome!

**Griffin:** Okay. And Duck?

**Justin:** Yes.

**Griffin:** Have you waited `til last because you don't know what you want, and we're gonna get you another jetpack?

**Justin:** No.

**Griffin:** Okay. What do you got?

**Duck:** Uh, Garfield?

**Heathcliff:** Um, I don't know who that is. And I wish... yeah.

**Duck:** Damn. Fuck. Fuck me.

**Ned:** Good try.

**Duck:** I was getting confused.

**Justin:** So I roll first, and then I decide what I want to do with it?

**Griffin:** Yeah, that hasn't been the rules, but it's what Travis and Dad did, so I think if you...

**Justin:** Yeah, that's like a weird thing to do. I'm not gonna do that.

**Griffin:** Okay, what do you want from the list?

**Duck:** I... need... a helmet. [snorts] I need a helmet.

**Heathcliff:** Like a football helmet, or a medieval...

**Duck:** Listen. Like a good... like a... like... y'know how sometimes, you put helmets on people who are going into dangerous situations, 'cause they're just regular ass people and not like, superheroes? I need a helmet. I need a helmet.

**Heathcliff:** Um, okay. Uh, just a regular old helmet, or do you want a...

**Duck:** Like a good helmet, you dumb cat! A helmet!

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** He looks kind of—

**Duck:** Don't fuck around with me, I'm not stoked to be asking. I need a helmet, alright? I need a helmet.

**Heathcliff:** Um, okay.

**Griffin:** He looks pissed off. He's like—

**Duck:** Shut up! Hey!

**Aubrey:** [laughing]

**Heathcliff:** Let me see—let me see what I can do.

**Duck:** Pipe down! Alright, yuck it up! I'm glad y'all are still fuckin' X-Men! I'm just a regular dipshit, and I need a fuckin' helmet!

**Griffin:** Uh, he says, uh...

**Duck:** Sorry, cat, I need a helmet.

**Heathcliff:** Yeah, uh, I get that. Um, any sort of...

**Duck:** [blows raspberry]

**Heathcliff:** ...design considerations, or...

**Duck:** I might be wasting this not getting a tombstone, now that I think about it.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Duck:** Them shit's is expensive. Can you give me a hologram tombstone? Nah, alright, y'know what? That's stinkin' thinkin'. I'll start with a helmet.

**Griffin:** Uh, he dives down—

**Travis:** And Aubrey yells...

**Aubrey:** Viking!

**Griffin:** He dives down, and...

**Duck:** No, like, cool.

**Griffin:** He dives down into the abyss, and uh, takes a while down there. And you see like, a few flashes of light, and he uh, comes back up, and I think he's got like, five or six different helmet designs. And he's like...

**Heathcliff:** Um, you seem like you're having maybe a bit of a week. So uh, I thought maybe you could pick your favorite. Maybe you could have some fun with that.

**Griffin:** And there's like a... y'know, like a motorcycle helmet. There's a Viking helmet, for sure. There's like a knight's full helm with the guard in front of it. There's a sort of a modern combat helmet, with like some, y'know, like the netting wrapped around it. I think he offers you a few different helmet designs.

**Duck:** Uh...

**Aubrey:** [whispering] Viking. Viking.

**Duck:** Give me the one that looks like a skateboard helmet.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Duck:** God, at least I can wear that to work.

**Clint:** [laughing]

**Duck:** 'Cause I'm skateboarding to work, by the way.

**Ned:** So you can't run without getting tired anymore?

**Duck:** I can't run like, eight miles without getting tired anymore.

**Ned:** What happened?

**Aubrey:** To be fair, Ned, you can't do that either.

**Duck:** Ned, you've—

[theme music plays]

**Duck:** Yeah, Ned, you can't run eight blocks. Shut up. God, Ned.

**Ned:** Fine, okay, be that way.

**Griffin:** Uh, I don't want to leave it 'til the next adventure with that negative... with that poo poo argument.

**Clint:** No, it's okay.

**Griffin:** No, I don't want this beef lingering in the air.

... Well, but maybe it's going to. See you next time, folks!

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

[theme music plays]

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[music plays]

**April:** Genre film fans, hear me. I know you're out there. Do not be ashamed of your love for gore, action, sci-fi, or fantasy. It's time to come out of the shadows. Because on Switchblade Sisters, we celebrate our love for genre films.

I'm film critic, April Wolfe. Each week, I have a conversation with a different female filmmaker about their fave genre film, and we cover film craft, getting projects off the ground, working with actors, and our general love for genre movies.

I've had so many great guests, like Heather Graham.

**Heather:** In the past, it's like, so many films were made by men that the female point of view is not always respected, which is why all these stories haven't come out 'til now.

**April:** Jennifer's Body director, Karyn Kusama.

**Karyn:** I think there's a lot more fantasy and a lot more expectation projected onto a woman director.

**April:** Comedian and actor, Kate Berlant.

**Kate:** I mean, it sounds so cheesy to talk about it in yourself. Like, you just keep going, I'm just a vessel. I just do it, y'know, I don't think. But like, that is what it is.

**April:** And many others. So check out Switchblade Sisters, every Thursday on MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[music fades out]