

The Adventure Zone Balance: Murder on the Rockport Limited, Chapter One

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Griffin: Previously, on the Adventure Zone...

[theme music plays]

Director: Congratulations are in order. The three of you are now fully fledged members of our order. We are happy to have you on as Reclaimers. We will send you out on missions, and you will do what you did in Phandalin, ideally without involving the destruction of an entire city and the loss of thousands of souls.

Magnus: Well... I mean, ideally, yeah. But like...

Justin: Griffin put the capsule game from Shenmue into our game.

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: Well, and also, the capsule game from Kroger. You pop open that capsule, uh, and inside is an axe.

Leon: It is said that the Railsplitter can, in a single swipe, chop down any tree.

Griffin: Why don't we go to Fantasy Costco, and you can level up while you're walking around? You get the Extreme Teen Bible and the Scuttle Buddy.

Merle: And I want a warranty!

Cashier: Uh, the bible doesn't need a warranty, sir. It's the good book.

Griffin: Alright, let's level you guys up.

Travis: Um, so I chose Battle Master.

Clint: I was kind of thinking of maybe nature.

Griffin: Interesting. I never pictured you as the Captain Planet type.

Justin: Yeah, I'm gonna be joining the school of transmutation. Keep your fucking feedback to yourself.

Griffin: Romance—well, no, don't—

Justin: Stuff it in your magical ass.

Announcer: Are you not entertained? And if you are, why don't you make it rain on our ass? It's a MaxFunDrive Adventure Zone!

[theme music plays]

Griffin: The three of you are sound asleep, like sweet little lambs. Uh... in your... um... we'll call it humble. It is a humble dormitory, provided to you by the Bureau of Balance.

Travis: Have we put up like, girly posters, and like, there's maybe like a lava lamp?

Griffin: No, no posters. The RA comes by every night.

Justin: [groans] That guy.

Griffin: And he is a real stickler for posters.

Clint: He is a dick.

Justin: What about the dean? What's our relationship with the dean like?

Travis: Good question.

Griffin: Um, you've pranked him a lot, so you're kind of on his shit list.

Clint: We're like the Delta House. We're on double secret probation.

Travis: I don't get it. Is that a reference to something?

Griffin: He makes Animal House references every...

Clint: You're children. You don't know.

Griffin: Every episode. Um...

Justin: Welcome to Leonard Maltin's house of old movies.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, so—

Justin: Leonard Maltin.

Griffin: Your dormitory, your room, uh... it—no windows. Kind of like living in a submarine.

Travis: Are we in a prison?

Griffin: No, but sometimes it feels like it. It's not a prison as much as it is the ground—the entry level living compartment. That's the actual classification that the Bureau of Balance uses. The intro—

Clint: Co-ed dorm, maybe?

Griffin: Nope. Just—well, if they're—not for you specifically. You do have a roommate. You got a double bunk bed situation. Um, uh, and you have a roommate. He is a halfling named Robbie, and he's kind of shitty. He's not a

great roommate. Um, he uh... he eats all of your snack chips before you even have a chance to get to them.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: He loses your DVDs.

Justin: I kind of like his style. [laughs]

Griffin: There's loose—there's loose DVDs from your West Wing, like, full collection box set just like, laying all over the place.

Justin: Oh, I hate that.

Travis: But he's always got the choicest potions.

Griffin: He does have some dank potions, and that's kind of like, the only thing that he has going for him. Um... so, it is, uh... it's about three in the morning. Uh, you all—

Travis: Griffin, I have a serious question for you real quick.

Griffin: Ookay.

Travis: Since we've brought the gauntlet in, are we kind of like... are we like, big shits? Like, here? Like, do people know who we are? Is it like, "Oh, they're the first people to actually collect one of these artifacts!"

Justin: He's saying, are we a big deal?

Griffin: Um, I would say yeah. You guys are somewhat big shits. You kind of got a Harry Potter vibe going for ya, right?

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: You're not, y'know... nobody's—

Clint: Who's Harry Potter?

Travis: Okay. Alright.

Griffin: Okay. He's like a, um... he's a wizard.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: Oh. Sorry.

Griffin: Nobody's like, lifting you up in the hallways and carrying you to your destination, but you got some respect. And that's important when you're on the inside. Again, you're not in prison. I don't know why I said that.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: So it's about three in the morning. You're all sound asleep. Or at least, you were, until you were awoken by—

Travis: Robbie masturbating.

Griffin: Robbie just fuckin' blastin' it.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Where are you guys—I should—

Clint: I hope I'm on the lower bunk.

Griffin: Yeah, to set the scene, what is your guys' bunk situation?

Clint: Well, I guess I'm the shortest, so I'm probably under... Robbie's bunk.

Griffin: Why would you think just the smaller races have to sleep in one set of beds, and the taller—

Clint: No, no, just because the big guys would overpower me, and they would want—

Travis: Whoa, hey.

Clint: They wouldn't want to sleep with a halfling.

Griffin: That doesn't—no, dwarves are not necessarily less physically capable.

Clint: I'm talking emotionally. Emotionally.

Griffin: Oh, well then, yes, you are not equipped for confrontation.

Clint: No.

Griffin: Unless it involves, um, y'know, spiritual magicks.

Clint: Or touching my Kenny Chesney CDs.

Griffin: Right?

Travis: Magnus wanted to be on a bottom bunk, but he's too passive aggressive, so he's on the top bunk, Taako's on the bottom bunk. But he wants to be on the bottom bunk.

Griffin: So he just picked the top bunk and he just hates it?

Travis: Well, it depends. Taako, where do you want to be? I'll defer to you.

Justin: Am I in character?

Griffin: Yep. We're recording the podcast now.

Justin: I mean—no, I mean, are you asking Justin, or are you asking Taako in character in a conversation you're having with Taako?

Clint: Ask Taako.

Travis: It's tough. Uh...

Clint: Which do you want, Taako?

Justin: Who do you want to speak to, Travis?

Travis: I'm terrified to state. I'd rather speak to Justin. I like him better.

Justin: Yeah, I get that. Like, uh, I'll take whatever—I think Taako would be pretty chill about it. I feel like he'd probably fall asleep, like, just on whatever the first bed he touched.

Travis: [laughs] I think that this is actually how it worked out in character, in the scene. Just the three of them like, "No, it's fine. Do you want—" And Robbie going, "Fuuuck."

Justin: "No, please, I insist." I'll say top. Top bunk.

Travis: Okay, Magnus is on the bottom bunk.

Griffin: Okay, you are eye level—

Justin: I can levitate, so it's less of a risk for me to be up there. [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You're also eye level with Robbie, which you may or may not want, 'cause he gets into some wack shit up on the second story of these sleeping—

Travis: He's got boundary issues.

Griffin: He does. Um, I mean, his boundaries are fine. But he gets into your boundaries. And just makes a mess of things.

Travis: He's all up in your boundaries.

Griffin: It's three in the goddamn morning, and the three of you are woken up by the sound of chimes coming from the intercom. Bing bing bing! And you hear, uh—

Magnus: [surprised] Ah!

Griffin: You hear the voice of Davenport say, um...

Davenport: Would the Reclaimers, Highchurch, Burnsides, and Taaco report to the briefing room? Mm, Davenport!

Travis: I forgot that Taako's last name was also Taaco.

Griffin: Yeah, it's like Mario Mario. Or Luigi Mario. Um... you are all awoken with a start. Robbie's like...

Robbie: Oh, man, what a bummer! I was just gettin' some—those good Z's.

Griffin: And he takes a potion out from under his pillow.

Robbie: I don't know why I keep these under here. They're real uncomfortable.

Griffin: He slams it.

Justin: [laughs] What soda does it most resemble?

Griffin: I mean, it's not in an aluminum can.

Justin: Right. It's a liquid, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: He pops the top. Slams it.

Justin: So what liquid... what liquid does it most—what liquid soda does it most—

Griffin: It's actually kind of got like—it's kind of like Orbitz. You remember Orbitz?

Clint: I was gonna say, it looks like that nasty stuff with the gel balls.

Griffin: With the gel balls floating in it.

Travis: That would be Orbitz.

Griffin: He looks, and he's like...

Robbie: Caught you eyein'—hey, caught ya eyein' my gel balls. That's what makes it extra crunchyyy.

Griffin: And he winks. Swigs again.

Clint: Hey, can we get the hell away from him as soon as possible?

Justin: Griffin, I want to side bar. I'm a little worried about this episode. I'm worried that you exhausted yourself so much, coming up with the fantasy name 'Robbie,' that you may not have the creative juice to get us through the rest of the ep.

Clint: Yeah, we need to be reassured.

Griffin: Well, to actually make up for that, all of the characters in this entire campaign chapter will be named Robbie, and that's gonna be very confusing for both you guys and the listener.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: Well, but it's—I think it'll all be based on inflection though, at that point.

Clint: Rob-bob-bee!

Travis: Rob-ee!

Griffin: Rob-bob-bee!

Travis: Rob-beeeee.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Um...

Justin: Me? I'm [weakly, like a zombie] Rooooobbieeee.

Griffin: And I'm a skeleton.

Magnus: Yo, Robbie. Can I get one of them potions before we leave?

Robbie: Um, do you got... what do you need? Like, what's your flavor? What's your poison?

Magnus: Give me your crunchiest potion.

Clint: He's gonna want something that attracts dogs.

Robbie: I'll give you a sampler, of uh... this is called my hair of the dog potion. It won't attract dogs as much as it will just get you real fucked up.

Griffin: He says. Hands you a very small sampler vial of uh, of hair of the dog potion.

Travis: Okay, I slip it in my bag.

Griffin: M'kay. Uh, Robbie's like...

Robbie: Hey, can you—do you think, while you're out... some Pringles? Maybe?

Magnus: You got it, dude.

Robbie: Come on. Can you take, also—I got a DVD that's like, four months overdue at the Redbox.

Merle: No, uh-uh.

Taako: No, that's too much.

Merle: Too much.

Magnus: Pringles, yes. DVD, no.

Merle: And it's gonna be the dill pickle Pringles too, you smart ass.

Robbie: Aw, man...

Magnus: Extreme dill?

Griffin: Uh, okay. I'm imagining you guys are going to the briefing room. It's up to you.

Travis: I also imagine we don't exactly know where it is.

Clint: [singing a silly tune]

Justin: Yeah, how are we gettin' there?

Clint: Just go to a dome.

Justin: Are there helpful signs?

Griffin: Yeah. There's a dome, and then there's a sign that says, "This dome is the briefing room."

Travis: And we're all still in our PJs.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay.

Taako: Footie pajamas here!

Griffin: Uh, the three of you walk into the briefing room in your footies. In your onesies and your snuggies.

Clint: Mine has a flap in the back.

Griffin: Of course it does. Um, is it half open so you can see a little bit of butt?

Clint: Yes. The left corner's unbuttoned.

Travis: You can see the little tattoo on his bottom.

Justin: You scamp.

Griffin: And what is that tattoo of?

Clint: That's actually Kenny Chesney, too. But that's the face. I got the face on my left butt cheek.

Travis: And what's on your right, the body?

Griffin: Yeah, I was gonna ask. Do you have other body parts of Chesney sort of scattered about your body?

Travis: That's the mystery to be unfolded for the rest of the podcast.
[laughing]

Justin: On his other cheek is Tim McGraw, and it's like this terrible hydra with like, Tim McGraw and Kenny Chesney's face—heads emanating from his buttole. It's a real horror show back there.

Clint: It's actually—it just says, "She thinks my..." And then there's a tattoo of a tractor, and apostrophe S, sexy.

Griffin: So kind of a pictogram on your ass.

Clint: It is, yeah.

Justin: A full rebus.

Griffin: Kind of a country music rebus.

Clint: Actually, it's Rebus McEntire.

Travis: A Rebus McEntire. Whoaaa!

Griffin: Oh, right. So...

Justin: [laughing]

Clint: Thank you, I'll be here all week.

Justin: I hope not.

Griffin: You are, uh... in the briefing chamber with the uh, director. She is reading a large roll of parchment that actually kind of looks like the parchment that you saw the monk carrying when you first encountered the, uh, Void Fish that had all of Magic Brian's information on it.

Uh, and uh, she's sitting over a large map, showing the lands of the earth world below. And she's reading this parchment, and she's very frustrated, and she places it down on the chamber and says, uh...

Director: What... are you wearing? What is—what are you wearing?

Magnus: What are you wearing?

Director: I'm wearing my full business regalia.

Magnus: Cool.

Merle: You got ink underneath that thing?

Director: And the three of you look like little Nemos. Merle, I can see three quarters to four fifths of your entire butt.

Travis: [laughing]

Merle: I'm sorry, I'm cheating you of one fraction.

Director: You look like Jeffy from Family Circus.

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: This is my uh, sleepy sack. I get night terrors.

Merle: I guess Mr. Wrong told me not to.

Director: The three of you will need to—

Taako: Somebody unzip me!

Director: The three of you are going to need to suit up into your business regalia, because I have a job for you that I need you on right now.

Magnus: Well, give me like 45 minutes.

Director: You don't have 45 minutes. At most, I can give you four.

Magnus: Okay.

Travis: Magnus starts changing.

Merle: Three of that's gonna be hair product.

Griffin: Uh, she says...

Director: Mere hours ago, one of our Reclaimers, uh, a brave soldier named Leeman Kessler, was... murdered in the city of Rockport.

Magnus: Aw, bummer!

Director: And his murder came at a most inopportune time, because he managed to locate—

Justin: Griffin, is Leeman Kessler a listener?

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Justin: So somebody listening at home was just like, "Hey—aww."

Travis: "Aww."

Clint: [laughs]

Magnus: Also, I would ask, when would a murder come at an opportune time?

Director: His murder came a most inopportune time because he had just managed to locate and retrieve one of the Grand Relics.

Travis: "His murder came at an opportune time. He'd done everything he wanted to with his life, and couldn't think of anything else."

Griffin: "He was surrounded by family."

Clint: [laughing]

Justin: "They watched solemnly as an assassin came in and buried a knife in his heart. But it was what he would've wanted."

Travis: "And everyone agreed, it was the right time for that to happen."
[laughing]

Director: Last night, we received a missive telling of his success. But before we could extract him, a thick fog set in over Rockport, which prevented us from sending a sphere to collect him and the Relic. However, there is a commuter train that operates out of Rockport, that runs from Rockport through the... uh, the Teeth, the mountain range that separates the continent below, and ends in Neverwinter, where we could more safely and discreetly extract him.

He managed to secure passage on this train, loaded his cargo onto the train, but before it could depart, he was murdered. Uh, which is leaving us in quite a sticky situation.

Merle: Hmmm.

Magnus: Do we know anything about the murderer, or how it actually, like, went down?

Director: We know nothing. We haven't been able to get into contact with the authorities, and even if we could, there's not much information we could tell them. It could—it could lead to, uh, I don't know. It could lead to a... a very difficult situation for us. We can't explain what he was doing there, why

he was murdered... we don't even know why he was murdered, because, ostensibly, nobody would know about the Grand Relic unless they were in the, the, Bureau of Balance. There's a lot—we have a lot of unknowns.

Taako: Do we know the status of the Relic right now?

Director: It's on the train, as far as we know. Um, and that is where the three of you come in. We will need one of you. It's up to you to decide whom.

Taako: Dibs!

Director: Uh... okay. That was... we will need one of you to impersonate Leeman.

Taako: Double dibs.

Director: Leeman Kessler. I have secured two other tickets on the train, so all three of you can board, but one of you will need to be Leeman Kessler. You will need to retrieve the Relic, and get it back to us, any way that you can.

Magnus: What can you tell us about—

Merle: What did Leeman look like?

Taako: Yeah, what race was he?

Director: Uh, Leeman was a half-elf man, and uh... but—but he—there's no guarantee that the operators of the Rockport Limited even know what he looked like. He could've secured his ticket in advance, so it's up to you. Any one of you can be Leeman. Whoever has the, I guess, the most panache, the most flair for the dramatic.

Magnus: The highest performance skill.

Director: Whatever it takes. We'll need you to... we'll need you to make believe. Make pretend. Like a couple of actors. Or just one actor.

Taako: I'm actually negative one there, so I'm gonna dip-a-rooski.

Travis: [laughs]

Merle: What will the other two be doing?

Director: Uh, the other two will be ensuring that the new Leeman Kessler, the fresh-off-the-block Leeman Kessler, isn't murdered. Because obviously, someone's going around, murdering Leeman Kesslers. Uh, this will be also a security job.

Magnus: I got a—I got a plus one.

Director: You don't have to figure it out right now.

Taako: Who are you bringing—who are you bringing with you?

Travis: [laughs]

Merle: Well, if I need a body—if somebody needs a body guard, I say I'll be Leeman, and that way, our best fighter is able to protect me, and our best magician is able to protect me.

Taako: Oh, I'm flattered.

Magnus: As opposed to all of our other magicians.

Taako: Well, let's—listen, that's semantics.

Magnus: Uh, what can you tell us about the artifact?

Director: Uh, we don't know. We can't sort—we know that it—

Magnus: What the shit.

Director: Well, we know he collected an artifact, but if that missive had been intercepted in the air, that information, that incredibly valuable and dangerous information, could have fallen into enemy hands. So, we purposefully keep it vague.

Magnus: Well, great.

Merle: Let's do it.

Taako: Are you gonna fire us out of the cannon?

Director: We absolutely are going to fire you out of a cannon.

Merle: Yaaay!

Taako: Yaaay!

Magnus: Yaaay! One more question before we go – how do the gauntlets work?

Director: The what now?

Magnus: The gauntlets? The bracers?

Merle: Our bracers.

Director: Oh, you just...

Taako: The bracers.

Director: Point and click, baby. Windows 98.

Magnus: Okay, cool. Where's Killian? Is she gonna come with? I'd feel better if she were there.

Director: Killian... Killian is a Regulator. She cannot go with you on a Reclaiming mission.

Magnus: Well, can we signal for her if we get in trouble?

Director: You—the only way you will signal for her is if you find the artifact and use it.

Taako: And keep it. Right?

Director: And then, she will—that signal, yes, will sound off, and then she will come, but not for hang time. She will kill all of you.

Merle: You were gettin' a little obvious there, Maggie.

Magnus: What? Listen, she's a fan favorite! I'm trying to reintroduce her to the story!

Merle: [laughs]

Director: Yeah, I guess let's get Johann and Klarg in the mix too, huh? As long as we're pandering.

Magnus: Yeah, I want to keep—I want to keep the people.

Merle: Can we bring Billy Bluejeans back?

Director: Barry Bluejeans—

Magnus: It was Barry Bluejeans. His brother, Billy Bluejeans, is in Neverwinter.

Merle: Oh, we met Billy, too.

Taako: How quickly you forget, huh? Barry must've made a real impact on you.

Clint: [laughs] Alright, let's go change clothes.

Travis: Magnus has already changed.

Griffin: Uh, how did you already change?

Travis: I started changing when you started telling your story about murdering somebody or something.

Griffin: You got your dick out and your whole naked body out while she was talking to you?

Travis: Yeah.

Taako: Grody.

Travis: But nobody noticed!

Griffin: You need to tell me these things—you need to tell me these things while they are happening in real time—

Travis: I literally said "Magnus starts changing!"

Griffin: Oh, okay. Well... that was a successful—

Clint: We thought you meant change of life.

Griffin: Yeah, I thought you were pupating.

Travis: [laughs] Magnus starts changing his opinions about politics.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, you run back to your uh, your dormitory. Robbie's there and is like...

Robbie: What's up? You all goin' on a secret mission? Ha ha haaaaah!

Merle: Hey, do you have any disguise potions?

Robbie: Nope.

Taako: Oh, that's a good question.

Robbie: No, but I've got a Rusted Root CD.

Magnus: [laughs] I'll take it.

Taako: `Kay.

Merle: Perfect.

Robbie: Um... let me see, disguise potion...

Taako: Iii'm gonna be sent on my way... on this adventure.

Robbie: No, my potions aren't necessarily, um...

Merle: Useful.

Robbie: No. Yeah, they, yeah, they're not utilitarian in nature. I mean, unless the utility you want is to get... real fucked up.

Griffin: He says.

Merle: I'll take one.

Robbie: Well, okay, I can't just keep giving you guys these—

Merle: I'll bring you back a Rusted Root CD.

Robbie: If you guys actually bring me back a rusted root, I can throw it in a mortar and pestle and whip up a kind of potion that has never been invented yet.

Merle: Alright. We'll do it.

Griffin: Um, okay. The three of you report to the hangar. It's a... there's not a lot of people out, walking around the campus, obviously. Most people are sleeping. Uh, not everybody's been assigned a secret, three AM mission. At the hangar, there's, uh—

Travis: So you're saying like, the line at security is pretty light?

Griffin: Yeah, you make it through TSA like, pretty quickly. Um...

Travis: We stop—we stop at the—at the Hudson News.

Griffin: Magnus, actually, the TSA wants to know about the super fuck up—the hair of the dog potion that you have. 'Cause it's over two ounces.

Clint: Oh. Drink it.

Griffin: You're gonna have to slam that right now, they say.

Travis: Nooo!

Griffin: Yep, sorry. You can either slam it right now or throw it away.

Travis: But I don't want to be fucked up in the cannon.

Justin: Slam iiit. Fuck up.

Clint: It may be better that way.

Travis: Okay, Magnus slams it.

Griffin: Okay, you immediately—

Justin: Aw, gross, we just had to talk Magnus into something.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] Uh, you immediately, uh, forget like, how to speak well. Uh, you're—you are uh, you will suffer a penalty to any wisdom checks until—we'll say disadvantage to any wisdom checks until this thing wears off. But you're real chill. You're super, duper chill. And you're real happy about it.

Justin: Uh, Ditto, is this the first night that we are there? Like—

Griffin: No, sorry, I should have—yeah, I should have set up the timeline. It's been about—it's been about uh, three weeks since you've been there.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Things have been pretty quiet, there just hasn't been a lot of new intel coming in, and this is the first mission that you guys have really been assigned.

Justin: Have we done any sort of, like, learning, like, in the three weeks we've been here? Have we learned anything about the Relics or the nature of this organization, or anything that we've picked up of use?

Griffin: That's actually a good question. So, yeah, what you've learned... you've learned a little bit about the Relics. The... there's not a whole lot that is, like, concrete information about the Relics, because, uh... it just, by nature of the fact that they were never in the possession of one entity for long enough for that information to be, y'know, especially trustworthy?

Maybe there were a lot of misinformation campaigns spread during the conflict when people were trying to hunt these down to get people off of the

scent. So there's not a lot that you know for sure. Well, one thing that you do know is that each of the seven Relics, uh, belongs to a different school of magic.

So the uh, the gauntlet that you found, which can summon huge bouts of flame, and y'know, was mainly based around destruction was from the Evocation school of magic. So that one was dealt with. You don't have to deal with that one. But yeah, each of the Relics belongs to a different school of magic, so there's—

Justin: Alteration.

Griffin: Alteration—

Justin: Illusion.

Griffin: Illusion, Necromancy, uh...

Travis: Accounting.

Griffin: Accounting. Um... Hufflepuff. So like, there's a lot.

Justin: Heat and air repair.

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Um... so yeah, there's um...

Justin: Medical database entry.

Travis: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. [laughing]

Justin: I can think of a couple others. Give me some time.

Clint: That's actually at Bureau of Balance Tech.

Griffin: Yeah, at the Technical—

Justin: [laughing] That's a two year Bureau of Balance.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Bureau of Balance community college technical institute. Yeah. Uh, yeah, that's about all the information you've gained. It's been kind of boring. You just haven't had like, a lot to do. You've done some training, keeping your bodies right. But...

Justin: Gain any levels or anything?

Griffin: No, I gave you two levels in the last episode. Don't get greedy.

Travis: We gained six levels. We're now level ten.

Griffin: We can't spend more of an entire episode just leveling you guys up, so...

Justin: It was a smash hit, though.

Travis: People loved—people love leveling up.

Griffin: Yeah, people love mechanics. Uh, there's only one guard standing watch at the hangar. The night shift. The graveyard shift. Uh, and it's your old pal, Avi, who uh, gave you the brandy when you first arrived here.

Justin: Aviii!

Griffin: Aviii. And he's like...

Avi: Hey guys, what's up?

Magnus: [interrupting] Avi, I'm real fucked up.

Avi: Oh, dang. What... what happened to this guy?

Merle: Oh, hair of the dog that bit him.

Avi: You're not really supposed to, like, get on one of these if you're... I mean, I won't tell.

Magnus: I'll be fiiine!

Avi: Okay...

Clint: [laughs]

Avi: You kinda sound like, uh, some kind of wolf-man.

Magnus: It's totally coool, duuude.

Avi: Why are you—why is it whisper time now?

Magnus: Shhhhh... Shhh... Shh.

Avi: Okay, uh... do you guys—

Magnus: [whispering] Avi... Avi... Avi...

Avi: Yeah?

Magnus: [whispering] Avi...

[pause]

Magnus: [whispering] You're great.

Avi: [laughs] Thank you! Yes, thank you.

Merle: You're his best friend!

Avi: I think you guys are pretty—

Magnus: [still whispering] I think you're... a cool duuude.

Avi: Yeahhh.

Magnus: Avi!

Avi: Yeah?

Magnus: Do you want to go on a mission?

Avi: I can't. I'm not... I can't. It's my job to—

Magnus: Okay, we'll meet you down there.

Avi: I can't—well, I won't be able to...

Magnus: Avi! Be cool for two seconds!

Avi: I think I'm being pretty cool.

Magnus: Just—Avi!!

Avi: Yeah?

Magnus: Shh, shh, shh, shh. Be cool for two seconds.

Justin: [absolutely losing his shit in the background]

Avi: Okay.

Magnus: We'll see you down there.

Avi: I... won't—

Magnus: Don't—shh! Avi! It's a secret mission! Shh, shh, shh, shh, shh, shh, shh.

Clint: [laughing]

Justin: [laughing]

Magnus: We'll see you down there. Wink!

Clint: [still laughing]

Justin: [still totally losing it]

Magnus: Wiiiink. You're a cool dude.

Justin: Sorry, for clarification – did he just wink, or say 'wink' out loud?

Travis: [whispering] Both.

Justin: [laughing]

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: Uh...

Merle: He'll be okay. We got him. We got him.

Avi: It seems like you're having a great time. I would wink back, but I can't. Never learned how. Um... no, I—

Taako: Do you have any of that brandy we could take with us, though?

Avi: No, it's like... it's like three in the morning. I'm gonna actually cut you guys off.

Magnus: [yells] You're cut off!!

Taako: Last call already, eh?

Avi: I... I don't—you don't have to go home, but you can't stay here, because I'm about to fire you out of a cannon.

Clint: [laughs]

Avi: Have you guys used one of these before? Is this your first time getting, uh... gettin' shot? Gettin' blasted?

Merle: Well, obviously we've been blasted before.

Avi: Yeah. Clearly.

Taako: But no cannons, homie.

Merle: No cannons.

Avi: Um, okay, well, it's pretty easy, guys. Just uh, pop in.

Travis: Magnus gets in.

Griffin: He taps on the sphere to open the door. Somehow, Magnus got in before the door was open.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, it's the same type of sphere that you guys came in to the Bureau of Balance on. Um... uh, it is a Volkswagen-sized glass ball with uh, heavy brass fittings all around.

Travis: Are we talking like Jetta, Beetle... like a van? What kind of Volkswagen?

Griffin: Like a Golf. Volkswagen Golf. Um...

Travis: Okay, thank you.

Griffin: And uh, yeah, taps on it, same sort of situation. Four chairs with straps for you to lock in on. And uhh... yep!

Travis: Magnus sits down and immediately falls asleep.

Clint: I get the extra chair!

Griffin: You get the extra chair? You're gonna like, recline one and lean back?

Clint: Nah, let's let him lay down in two chairs.

Griffin: Okay. He actually, uh—Avi says, uh...

Avi: Ooh, careful man. If you do that, you'll definitely die.

Magnus: Shhh. Shh shh shh shh shh.

Merle: That's okay, let him.

Avi: Well... Okay, it'll be kind of a weird way for his character to be, uh, written out of the story, but...

Merle: I'll buckle him in on both seats.

Taako: Why is this a thing? Can we just get in the fucking cannon or what? Put him in a seat and—

Magnus: Avi, be cool!

Merle: Taako wants action!

Taako: I want out! Of this place!

Griffin: Okay. So there is one seat that is something of the, uh... captain's seat, which somebody will need to be in charge of. There's no—

Magnus: I got it!

Merle: No! No, man. Don't drink and drive. Don't drink potions and drive.

Griffin: Who wants to be in charge of, uh, the landing of this—

Merle: Taako!

Taako: [skeptical] Mmm...

Travis: [laughs]

Merle: Get up there, big boy!

Taako: Well, I mean, okay. My intelligence and dexterity are both pretty good. I guess it—I guess it makes sense. I'll, uh, I'll take the reins!

Griffin: Okay. Avi says, uh...

Avi: Well, there's not really reins to speak of. You're gonna wanna sit in this um, this front left chair, and uh, there's a handle that you're gonna feel. You feel it, on the left side?

Taako: Yeah, right there.

Merle: He's feeling his handle.

Griffin: Dad!

Clint: What?

Taako: Yuck-o, moving on.

Travis: I get it!

Taako: I've got the—I've got the totally non-sexual handle. What's next?

Griffin: He says, uh...

Avi: Before— this is super important.

Taako: Mm-hmm?

Avi: Before... this thing hits the ground...

Clint: And then the door shuts.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] Okay, the door shuts.

Avi: [muffled and rushed] Before it hits the ground you gotta pull the handle! Pull the totally non-sexual handle right before it hits the ground! Or else you'll go bang. Okay bye!

Taako: Got it!

Merle: Who was that?

Taako: [laughing] Probably Avi.

Merle: Okay, kick it! Floor it!

Griffin: Uh, as soon as the door shuts, a uh, large tube pops out—uh, slowly ascends from the ground.

Magnus: Hee hee hee hee hee!

Clint: Hey! How come Travis can get away with it?

Griffin: Uh, the sphere—

Travis: That was in character, Dad!

Griffin: The three of you are loaded on on top of the uh, the departure gate. Rolls forward into the tube, and a hatch behind you slams shut. Uh—

Travis: And then we sit in the tube for 30 minutes while they check something on the sphere.

Griffin: Yeah, they de-ice the tube. Uh, for a long time. It's completely pitch black. There's—there's no light whatsoever. Um, until, uh, you feel this—this tube that you are in start to—

Travis: [still giggling]

Griffin: --descend. Why—what is it about the word 'tube', Travis? Because it doesn't even seem like, remotely like—

Travis: It's a funny word!

Griffin: Like fallopian tubes? Is that what you're having a rofl about?

Travis: No, it's just a funny word, Griffin.

Griffin: Uh, descends. You feel it descend. And then you see a small, uh, like, uh, pinpoint of light in front of you.

Travis: Like an aperture?

Griffin: And you hear a voice say, uh...

Voice: Please put your head flush with the back of the chair, so you don't break... any of your neck bones. I'm the flight... safety... person, and good luck.

Travis: [laughs] This is a prerecorded message, and the best take we could get.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: I heard him say flush.

Voice: Departure in three... two... one...

Justin: What?

Voice: Oh, sorry, did you—sorry. The audio quality's not great, 'cause it's like, fantasy. But um, I said, depar—

Merle: I want a large fries...

Voice: Nope. It's not—three two one byeee!

Griffin: Uh, and the three of you are flung forward at, uh, a velocity that you previously may have considered unsurvivable.

Travis: Magnus' neck breaks and he dies.

Griffin: Um... Magnus, are you actually laying between two chairs, or are you—

Travis: No, I'm sitting up like a big boy.

Griffin: M'kay. Uh, that's—yes. Uh, and this is—this experience is especially exhilarating for you. It's basically the ending of 2001: A Space Odyssey, because you guys are basically flying. But you're actually just falling very, very quickly in a very specific direction.

Travis: Would you say this is a sobering experience?

Griffin: Uh, yeah, I would say so. If only you could open up a window and get some fresh air on your face. Uh, yeah, I would say that the effects of this potion, while potent, are not especially long-lasting. It's basically salvia. The salvia of, uh...

Travis: Got it.

Griffin: Of potions. Dad, salvia was a legal drug that you were allowed to take for a long time that would make you basically teleport. But for like, 15 minutes. I read about it in Rolling Stone.

Clint: I was gonna say, yeah, this is you telling my character, not telling your father.

Griffin: No, yeah, and again, I'm saying... I read about it in Rolling Stone.

Clint: Sure.

Justin: Even 'drug' is a stretch. It was from the earth.

Griffin: Yeah. It was a—

Travis: It was like a blueberry. Or a potato.

Griffin: It was a kind—a kind, kind bud.

Clint: But you three all have this knowledge from your reading.

Griffin: From the Rolling Stone.

Travis: From Rolling Stone. Yes.

Clint: From Rolling Stone.

Justin: Like Travis said, it's like a blueberry, or like a heroin plant.

Griffin: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

Justin: Hey folks, just want to step in here—

Travis: [laughs] We've been in the rest of the episode, Justin.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: I know, I know, but like, this is Justin.

Travis: Sorry to interrupt. This is Travis, out of character.

Justin: I want to step out of my character, Justin.

Griffin: You may know me from my work in the podcast you just listened to.

Travis: [laughs] We just cut to Justin in the podcast dressing room, a towel around his neck. "Oh, hello. Didn't see you come in there."

Justin: Tough morning of podcasting.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: When I'm ready to unwind after a long morning of podcasting—

Travis: I have an Orbitz.

Justin: I have an Orbitz gum, and also soda. An Orbitz—no.

Travis: And I buy plane tickets.

Justin: Why do we have an episode this week? That's a fine question. Well, it's uhh... it's MaxFunDrive time. What's the MaxFunDrive? Well, Maximum Fun is a podcast network that we're a part of, along with other shows that we do like My Brother, My Brother, and Me, Sawbones, Bunker Buddies, and there's a ton of other podcasts on the network that people love, like Jordan, Jesse, Go!, and Stop Podcasting Yourself, and Lady to Lady, Oh No Ross and Carrie... so many others.

Um, and this podcast network is funded by people like you who love our shows. So, every year, once a year, we come to you, hat in hand, and say, hey, if you've enjoyed the uh, the podcasting that you've heard from us over the past year, we would really appreciate a monthly donation to our organization, and to the shows you listen to specifically. Because once you sign up to pledge a monthly gift, you'll say what shows you want your money to go to, and uh, it's actually split between the network and those specific shows. So you are directly supporting the shows that, uh, you love on Maximum Fun.

Griffin: So, I would imagine that we have like, a lot of listeners who, maybe this was the first show on Maximum Fun that they got down on. Um, we're tapping into that... that uh, rich vein of D&D podcast listeners.

Justin: Sure.

Griffin: Can you explain, like, what we have used that money for, other than just bundles and bundles of salvia?

Justin: Well, we've used it to purchase the equipment that makes, uh, this show possible. We purchased some new microphones so Dad and I can uh, record here. We've helped to set up live shows and stuff like that across the

country. We pay our hosting fees. We pay for the art that uh, that this podcast, y'know, the podcast art for this podcast. All kinds of stuff like that. It goes to—goes to help support the show, and help make the show what it is.

Griffin: And also—

Travis: It also—it also goes to the network, so the network can continue to grow and add new shows like Adventure Zone and Bunker Buddies.

Griffin: Straight up, bar none, no holds barred, The Adventure Zone like, just wouldn't exist. If it was not for the donations that we have uh, gotten, 'cause we've been a part of the network now for like, what, five years? I don't know.

Justin: Four.

Griffin: So yeah, stuff like The Adventure Zone, and Bunker Buddies, and Sawbones. All the shows that we've, y'know, expanded and added just wouldn't be possible without the support that you guys have given us.

Travis: And here's the thing – you can become a Max Fun donor for just five dollars a month.

Clint: Whaaat?

Travis: I know. As low as five dollars a month. And for five dollars a month, here's the thing – not only do you get the wonderful feeling of knowing you're supporting an awesome network, you also actually get shit. Which is pretty cool.

Justin: And Dad, uh, Dad... I want my daddy to tell me what I get for gifts.

Clint: Ohh.

Griffin: Come on, radio professional.

Justin: Come on, radio professional.

Clint: Alright, for five bucks a month, you get an exclusive bonus content. You get exclusive bonus content you can't get any other way.

Justin: There's tons. Like, there's literally years of material. I think I like, added it up, and it's literally like, days' worth of stuff to listen to that goes back for years.

Griffin: Including... including...

Justin: Including...

Griffin: A bonus Adventure Zone episode. We know that you get—you get uh, lonely in those weeks off. Not during MaxFunDrive, because we're doin' two—two consecutive weeks of episodes. Which don't get used to, because it's still killing us to make that. Uh, but, if you want even more, we have a 45 minute long prequel to The Adventure Zone that tells the story of how Merle, Taako, and Magnus met and became adventuring buddies, and it's really great, and some of my favorite characters I've ever devised are in it, and now I'm never gonna get to use them again.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, but if you want to be—if you want to hear that, it's—uh, you gotta—you gotta become a monthly Maximum Fun donor member.

Justin: Dad, what about ten dollars a month?

Clint: Yeah, if you want more, ten dollars, you get the Drive exclusive tohtay bag. That's French for tote bag.

Justin: Yep. Now, do I still get the bonus content?

Clint: Oh, yeah! That's the beauty of it!

Justin: You really took a shot in the dark there.

Clint: I really had no idea.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: You got it in one.

Clint: Well, it's—[laughs] I have a lot of knowledge. I am, y'know, I'm new at this.

Griffin: Daddy? Hey, Daddy?

Clint: Yes, son?

Griffin: You have been a—I don't know how much our listeners know about you and your style.

Travis: About you, the mysterious Clint McElroy.

Griffin: Because they know about us, right? If they've been listening to My Brother, My Brother, and Me, they know our deepest, darkest secrets. They know every angle of us. They may not know, you have been working in radio for 60 years?

Clint: 40 years?

Griffin: Is it really 40 goddamn years?

Travis: Man, you're old as shit.

Clint: It's 40 goddamn years. Trust me.

Griffin: Um, and have you ever done a pledge drive before?

Clint: No. I have participated in bonus episodes here. But I've never—I've never been the person that made the plea.

Justin: Haven't you done like a PBS—

Griffin: I'm talking about—

Clint: I've done PBS. Actually, I did do a PBS fundraiser with uh, with uh, the—John Pertwee. Doctor Who number three.

Griffin: Ooh. So you should be—

Clint: Yeah, I wore my—I wore a Doctor Who number four scarf, and he made great fun of me.

Travis: As well he should.

Griffin: I can't imagine why. So you should be like, super dope at this, and you should really bring in the big bucks.

Clint: Well, let me see how I do with this one.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: \$20 per month, you get the in-flight power pack! I'm talkin' the mobile device charger, the collapsible water bottle, antibacterial wipes... you get the pilot wings, too!

Justin: Those all have the Maximum Fun rocket ship logo on them, right?

Clint: Yeah, they do. And maybe you're wondering, do you still get the exclusive bonus content? Do you still get the exclusive tote bag? I don't know!

Griffin: Yes, you do.

Travis: You do. You do.

Clint: Yes!

Travis: Confirmed.

Clint: You do! Now, let's say you want \$35 a month to go to us. How about a pair of rocket-engraved shot glasses? In case you're a two-fisted drinker, you can just wham `em back, wham 'em back, and get all the other stuff.

Justin: We are not responsible for anything that happens to you after whamming them back.

Clint: \$100 per month membership in... the inner circle!

Justin: Now, Dad, what's that?

Clint: That is where we sacrifice animals on an altar of blood!

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: The altar's made of blood? How does that even work? Is it frozen?

Clint: It's very—you add a lot of like, gel to it.

Griffin: Frozen blood ice altar!

Travis: Congealed—it's like a Jell-O mold of blood.

Justin: Let me step in here before we make any more goofs. MaximumFun.org/Donate is the place to go do this. You're certainly already, uh, feverishly Googling to figure out how you give us money. Uh, MaximumFun.org/Donate. The inner circle is a secret club where Maximum Fun hosts, every month, will send you... one of the hosts of Maximum Fun will send you something special. Something that they love that's important

to them. And if you're part of the inner circle, you're gonna get that gift in the mail every month.

Griffin: True or false – did we not send people a digital copy of the movie, Meet the Deedles? Or did we try to?

Justin: No. Incorrect. We tried to do that. That was unavailable. We sent them—

Griffin: That one's locked away soundly in the Disney vault.

Justin: We sent... [laughs] We sent them the Buckshot LeFonque CD.

Griffin: Oh yeah!

Justin: Bradford Marsalis. Jazz pop funk rap, uh, experimentation of Buckshot LeFonque.

Travis: Now, say I want to go—I want to go all out. Big money, cash money, \$200 per month.

Clint: Nope, can't do it. Not possible.

Justin: It can't be done.

Clint: It can't be done.

Travis: Wait, we're hearing from our boss upstairs that, for a limited time, you can do \$200.

Clint: God? God is talking to us.

Travis: Oh god!

Griffin: [deep voice] Get that money, son!

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [deep voice] How about free registration for MaxFunCon 2016?

Justin: [deep voice] Paper chase, homies!

Griffin: \$200 a month, you get everything that we've described so far, and registration for MaxFunCon 2016. MaxFunCon is wonderful, by the way.

Justin: Yeah. If you're already a donor to the network, uh, you can still get these gifts. You just need to step up your pledge drive amount. If you're at 20 bucks right now, go to 35. You get the whole kit and caboodle. You're at \$10? Go to 20, do a little bit more.

Have you started listening to new shows over the past year? You've started listening to Adventure Zone, or uh, some of the other shows on the Maximum Fun network? Please, uh, we just—we can only do this because you support it. So don't wait. Go right now while you're thinking about it. Go to MaximumFun.org/Donate. I want to someday make enough money that we can do this every week.

Clint: We're lookin' for a cure.

Justin: We're looking for a cure.

Travis: Let me say this—

Justin: For podcast fever.

Travis: If you're already a donor, and like, you're giving at the level that, y'know, that you can comfortably do, but maybe because of new shows like Adventure Zone, you've shared 'em with other people. Like, you have friends that you know have become fans of Max Fun, because you said, "Hey, listen to this show. I know you like Dungeons & Dragons. This is really funny." Now they started listening. Encourage them. Say like, "Hey, are you a donor? This is the time to give. You're gonna get extra stuff." Y'know, start 'em at five or ten.

Griffin: And if you're not a donor, keep in mind that every new donor we get, we have challenge donors that are kicking in a set amount for every new donor that we get, and there's a lot of challenge donors. So even if you kick in at the five dollars a month level, we are going to get like, a pretty big donation, just because you joined up from all the challenge donors. So keep that in mind, too. It's basically doubling up on your donation.

Justin: If you can't donate, I understand that sometimes, times are really tight. You can't kick in that five dollars a month. We totally understand. If you would, though, if you can't do that, please help us spread the word about the drive. You can use the MaxFunDrive hash tag, and use that link, MaximumFun.org/Donate. Just help us get the word out about the drive going on, and help bully other people into donating.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Peer pressure is huge.

Travis: And let me say, this is also a chance for us to say, thank you so much. Whenever you start a new show like Adventure Zone, you start a new thing, it's always kind of like, "Man, I really hope people like this, 'cause we like doing it."

Griffin: I literally thought ten people were gonna listen to it. Just...

Travis: And—and you guys have been so amazing. It's really wonderful to launch a new show and get such a response to it right away. So whether you donate or not, just thank you very much for listening. Thank you for enjoying our show and other shows like this on MaximumFun.org. You guys are really, really wonderful. Thank you so much.

Clint: That was really sincere.

Griffin: Yep. That's how we do it. Uh, should we get back to the adventure?

Travis: Let's get back to the show.

Justin: MaximumFun.org/Donate. MaximumFun.org/Donate!

Travis: Oh, if you donate, tweet at us so we can thank you!

Griffin: Yes!

Justin: Oh yes! Yes!

[theme music plays]

Griffin: The three of you aren't falling, so much as you are... you weren't shot out of this cannon straight down. Um, rather, you were shot at kind of a... a steep angle. You're almost going forwards more than you're going down. Um, and it's kind of beautiful.

The sun is rising over the Teeth, uh, which is a towering mountain range that runs over a long isthmus. I am incapable of saying that word. Is isth... is isthmus the one that's like a strip of land connecting two bigger pieces of land?

Clint: Yes.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Like the [with an exaggerated lisp] Isthmus of Panama.

Griffin: Right.

Travis: You can say Christmas. Why is this hard?

Justin: Or "land bridge."

Griffin: [laughing] It's the ongoing war on Isthmus. You're flying over the Teeth. It's beautiful. It's, uh... it is the scariest imaginable way to travel, but it is not, uh, without its benefits, because you get a full 360 degree panoramic view of the, uh, of the world around you.

And so, you're flying over the... over the Teeth, when you reach the end of the range, when you finally start to descend. Um, again, it's just so beautiful. You are flying over a flock pegasuses. Pegasii.

Clint: Aww.

Griffin: And you're actually getting really close to them as you're descending, and you're just—

Justin: I pull the handle.

Griffin: You're just going so fast.

Justin: I pull the handle.

Griffin: Uh, you pull the handle.

Justin: That was intoxicating, though. For a second, I was just, like, staring at it like, "Let's just let it end."

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, you pull the handle. You're still about, um...

Justin: Got a good nine episodes.

Griffin: You're still about, uhh...

Travis: It's been a good run. We all hold hands.

Griffin: You're still about a mile off the ground. Um, and you pull the handle right, actually, right before you were about to collide with this flock of, uh, of pegasii.

Clint: Seagulls.

Griffin: Uh, no, pegasuses. And uh, you pull the handle, and your, uh, sphere is encased in a silvery light, and your descent starts to slow down, uh, right, actually, as you get into this flock of pegasii. Uh, you haven't, uh... you didn't obliterate any of them with your trajectory.

Travis: Aww.

Griffin: You have slowed down. However, you are now spending a lot of time being caught in this flock, and they are panicked. A few of them run into the, uh, the glass chamber, and by the time you get out of this swarm of beautiful, winged horses, your trajectory—

Travis: They're just pooping everywhere.

Clint: We are covered in pega-shit.

Griffin: Uh, you are covered in pega-shit, and your trajectory has changed pretty wildly.

Travis: [sarcastically] Well, super cool, DM!

Griffin: What?

Travis: Well, we're supposed to get on a train! You've ruined it with your storytelling!

Griffin: I didn't tell you to pull the handle! Your uh, your trajectory is changed pretty wildly. You are... you've basically turned about 90 degrees to the left in the direction that you were originally headed, away from a lush, soft, green pasture outside of the town of Rockport, which you can see the

lights of below. You are moving away from that destination and into a thickly wooded area.

Travis: Super cool.

Griffin: Um, just by triangulating, you're guessing it's a few miles outside of Rockport. And as you pierce through the top layer, the canopy of these woods, and look down, you realize, just as you land, that you are in a swamp.

Travis: You've realized just as you land that you've never truly loved anyone.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, no, it's not a crash landing. It is a soft landing, but you have landed in the mucky mire of a swamp. You are strapped in. You're actually kind of face down, you're facing down, so you're strapped in, sort of hanging from the chairs, looking down at this swamp. And uh, that is where you are.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Do we see—is there anything we can see other than swamp?

Clint: Muck. Just muck.

Justin: Landmarks or anything?

Griffin: No. It is, uh... there are a lot of trees around that are sort of blocking your vision. The only thing you can see is the mucky water below, which your sphere is kinda starting to sink into.

Clint: Okay.

Justin: Okay.

Clint: Now, where's the door? Is it in front of us, on the muck side? Do we need to roll the sphere backwards or something?

Griffin: The door is face down, in the muck. The door is, uh, submerged. It's still closed. The muck water's not getting in.

Clint: I would like to take a "throw ourselves backwards so it rolls out the muck and the door is free" roll.

Griffin: That's a—that was a lot of things. That was a lot of concepts, uh, that you have—

Clint: Alright, then just give it to us.

Travis: How mad would they be—how mad would the Bureau be if I just smashed this thing? Do they have more of them? Is this the only sphere they've got?

Clint: Smash, smash, smash.

Griffin: Uh, you saw several of these spheres in the hanger, so yes. They have more of them.

Clint: I like my "roll it backwards and free the door" idea, but...

Travis: Sure, go for that.

Griffin: M'kay.

Justin: Yeah, try it.

Clint: [strained grunt]

Griffin: Are you going to try and do it while you're still strapped into these chairs hanging from the ceiling? 'Cause it might be hard to get leverage.

Clint: Well, I think that would... [defeated] Well, alright. Let's unstrap, and then push against the sides so that we begin the sphere rolling until the door is free.

Griffin: M'kay.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: By the time that the three of you get unstrapped without, y'know, landing on each other comically, the sphere is about one-third submerged in the—in the goo.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: What's your approach gonna be? Are you trying to just basically hamster ball this?

Clint: Yeah! Yeah, that's what I was thinking.

Griffin: M'kay.

Justin: It's like sinking though, right? There's nothing solid below us. Are we sinking?

Griffin: Uh, yeah.

Justin: Okay, we're not going to be able to roll it without sinking.

Clint: Oh, sure! Yeah.

Taako: I'm getting out. I climb out of the door and leave.

Travis: Uh, the door—

Griffin: The door is underwater.

Travis: Okay.

Taako: What?

Merle: You're gonna kill us!

Griffin: The door is under goo.

Travis: Wait, I saw this on Mythbusters. We have to wait until it's completely submerged, and then the pressure equalizes, we can open the door, swim out.

Griffin: Uh, the swamp that you are sinking into is not water. It is—it is a viscous sort of, uh, almost quicksand-like goo.

Justin: How heavy would you say the orb is?

Griffin: It is the dimensions and weight of a Volkswagen Golf.

Clint: Hmm.

Travis: Okay, I smash through the side of it.

Griffin: Okay. Goddamn it.

Travis: What?

Griffin: Somebody's, like, mowing their lawn, like, right outside my door.

Travis: [laughing] Oh, I thought I'd made a choice and you were like, "Well, fuck. You really backed me into a corner, Travis."

Griffin: Okay! Uh, with uh, your axe?

Travis: With my Phantom Fist. I'm gonna punch through.

Griffin: Okay. Using your, uh, heavy plate gauntlet Phantom Fist, which you purchased in the last episode, you rear back and punch forward. As you do, a larger, spectral hand sort of wraps itself around your own and helps you in this endeavor, and you smash through the glass a couple feet above the waterline of the uh, goo.

And you have successfully made a hole that is big enough for the three of you to fit through. Not all at once. That would be hilarious. Uh, but the three of you can get through this hole that you've created.

Travis: We do that.

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: Fully.

Griffin: Uh, okay, the three of you fully get through the door. Uh... well, by "door," I mean, "makeshift hole that you have just blasted in the side of this thing," and have made it out onto the swamp. It is very, very tricky terrain. Um, one might even call it difficult terrain. It's hard to keep your footing, and it's hard to sort of keep yourself moving so you don't also, uh, get glorped down.

Travis: Don't my magic jumping boots, like, help me in difficult terrain? Am I making that up?

Griffin: Yeah, I think you're making it up.

Travis: Mm...

Griffin: Mm. I guess it's open to debate, but I think—

Travis: If only this game were made of everyone making stuff up, huh? Anyways.

Griffin: Uh, you uh... yeah. So, the three of you have made it out. The sphere is almost totally submerged.

Travis: Oh, I left my wallet in there!

Taako: Would—what if I were to do like, um... if I were to use the *ray of frost*, could I freeze the swamp around it? Would that work?

Griffin: Yeah, it's worth a shot.

Taako: We got a thing going here?

Griffin: Yeah, yeah, let's see what happens.

Merle: Maybe the blue ring would help him, too.

Taako: That's a frost resistance ring.

Merle: Well, yeah, but it ices beverages.

Taako: It helps me, uh—

Griffin: A swamp is not a beverage. I'm just going to go ahead and cut you off at the pass there, Dad. Swamps aren't drinkable.

Taako: Swamps aren't beverages.

Clint: Well, don't force your—[laughing] Your choices on me!

Taako: My daddy can—

Travis: Hey, old man!

Justin: My daddy can drink any swamp he wants.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Uh, okay, I'll cast, uh, *ray of frost* to try to, um... to try—sorry, I like, morphed back into Justin, because I'm not saying out loud what I'm doing. I'm gonna cast ring of frost. *Ray of frost*, uh, on the—sort of like, swamp around the ball to try to halt its sinkage.

Griffin: Uh, okay, yeah. You do that. You sort of do a quick circle of *ray of frost* around the sphere, and you have managed to freeze at least the top part of the swamp, which has managed to halt the descent of your, uh, of your sphere.

Justin: Okay, okay, listen, listen. We need to get busy here. I don't have—I don't have any magic that can help point us in the direction that we need to go. We're trying to catch a train, right?

Griffin: Yes. Um, yeah.

Justin: Okay.

Taako: I don't have a—none of my spells sort of leap to mind that would be, uh, helpful to us. *Tasha's hideous laughter*, nothing. You guys have any, like, spells or abilities? Can I do a perception check to see if I can sense any, like, train-like activities?

Griffin: Uh, can you do—sorry? A perception check to see if you sense any train-like abilities...?

Justin: [laughing] I mean, like, a distant flood lamp, or perhaps, a place where tracks used to be but aren't right now.

Travis: This is a solid, solid plan.

Griffin: Yeah, that is some solid dungeoneering is what that is.

Justin: Good news, I got a one. [laughs] I got a critical failure!

Griffin: So you failed on your— you critically failed, on your, uh—

Travis: So you just go, "What's a train?" But we—we know the direction. We could—

Justin: I fall over and start shoveling swamp into my mouth. [laughs]

Clint: Do we have a map or anything?

Travis: We could see Rockport when when we landed. Like, we have a general idea—

Griffin: The three of you—I'm gonna set the scene. The three of you are standing in swamp water, just sort of stomping around to keep yourself from sinking. Uh, you have frozen the swamp around the sphere. Um, as the three of you are debating furiously about what trains could possibly be close to you, uh, you hear kind of a goopy sound coming from above you, in the uh, the canopy of the trees above. And, uh... you hear a goopy sound.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: A goopy sound?

Griffin: Yeah, kind of like a... [makes 'goopy' sounds that mostly just sound like farts]

Travis: Oh, great.

Justin: [laughing] Okay, can I do a, uh... can I do a perception check to see if I, like—

Travis: Let's all do a perception check. I got a 16.

Justin: I got a... 13.

Travis: Oh, I got 15, 'cause I have a minus one perception.

Clint: 14.

Griffin: Okay. Magnus, you, uh, you see, just for a flash of a second, uh, a, uh, green, slimy eyestalk, popping out of the canopy of the largest tree above. Um, and as soon as you sort of make eye contact with it, it zips back up into the tree.

Magnus: Hello! Do you know where the train is?

Griffin: Magnus, actually, as you yell at it to try and um, negotiate or get some information, um, the eyestalk pops back out. And then, further down the branch, another eyestalk pops out. And then, from a hole in the tree, another eyestalk pops out.

Magnus: What up?

Griffin: Um, and slowly from those three positions, you see begin to climb out, these dark green... uh, leeches begin to come out of the tree. The ones on the branches are descending towards you on strings of goo, and plop down on the surface of the swamp next to you.

The one coming out of the tree has made it down to the base of the tree. And the one that just came down off the tree, the biggest one, rears back and opens a mouth lined with three rows of razor-sharp teeth, and it begins hissing at you.

Magnus: Hello!

Griffin: Uh, and it's, uh—

Magnus: So, I was asking about a train?

Griffin: [laughs] Uh, and it is, uh, it's initiative time. Do you guys remember battles?

Travis: I've heard of them.

Justin: Five.

Travis: Uh, 10.

Clint: 20.

Griffin: Wow. Top of the order is Merle! Uh you are on difficult terrain, which means that your movement speed is going to be halved. The leeches are basically lined up in a row in front of you, they all came down off the same tree. Uh, and they are... they're close. They're about ten feet away.

Clint: Alright, I want to cast *thorn whip* at them.

Griffin: What is that? I have no idea what you're talking about.

Clint: Alright. "You create a long, vine-like whip covered in thorns that lashes out at your command towards a creature in range. You make a melee spell attack against the target. If the attack hits, the creature takes 1d6 piercing damage, and if the creature is large or smaller, you pull the creature up to ten feet closer to you."

Griffin: Okay. Is this a spell, what—is this a second level spell?

Clint: This is one of the cantrips that was granted to me when I switched over.

Griffin: Oh, oh, oh! I see, cool. Okay. Alright, sweet! Whip away.

Clint: 15.

Griffin: 15, is that just what you rolled?

Clint: That's what I rolled.

Griffin: And then you have your spellcasting modifier, and you have plus one because you have your Extreme Teen Bible now.

Clint: Uh, so... plus five!

Griffin: I think it was plus five before, so it should be plus six with your Teen Bible, so 21.

Clint: So, 21.

Griffin: Uh, yeah, that's a hit.

Clint: Right, and then I roll a d6?

Griffin: Mm-hmm.

Clint: It's a six! Perfect.

Travis: Magnus yells...

Magnus: Don't move `em!

Griffin: Okay. Um... Wait, do you have to move `em?

Clint: Doesn't have to, uh-uh.

Griffin: M'kay. Cool. Yeah, you, uh, you have whipped him. You whipped him good.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, are you done?

Justin: How many, like, little things are poking out? Like—

Griffin: There are three leeches.

Justin: Okay. So which one did he just whip?

Clint: The one in the middle.

Griffin: The one in the middle? The one that came down off the branch?

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. Um, are you done with your turn?

Clint: Um, I think so.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, you sink into the swamp to about your waist.

Travis: Good luck.

Griffin: Next in the order is Magnus.

Clint: Do we know how much damage we did to him?

Griffin: Uh, six damage. You said it out loud with your mouth.

Clint: Oh, okay.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: Um... I'm going to run over to the tree, or move to the tree they came down off of.

Griffin: M'kay.

Travis: And I'm going to use Railsplitter to fell it so it falls over on top of all three of them.

Griffin: Okay, awesome. Uh... yeah, you, uh, distribute a devastating chop to the base of the tree that the three of them came down on, angled in a

manner to make it sort of slide off in their direction. You give it the ol' Bushido Blade. It's almost like—

Justin: I think it's pronounced "Buscemi Blade."

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: You give the ol' Buscemi Blade. It's like you didn't— it's like you felt nothing as you went through. It was almost like you were, uh, chopping through a curtain or something.

Justin: Sorry, I need to mute our mic. Dad has decided to take this opportunity to enjoy a popcorn snack.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [quietly] Sorry.

Griffin: Oh, wow! So, literally, the worst possible audible thing.

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: I put it down.

Griffin: Please don't eat a popcorn snack. You—

Justin: I was actually looking forward to enjoying the popcorn snack with you, so I'm a little sad about pointing it out.

Griffin: Well, maybe like, during a break. Um, you—no, it's not like we couldn't tell that you weren't eating a goddamn popcorn snack. It was like you were breakdancing on—

Clint: Really? How do you know this was my first bag?

Griffin: Travis is doing some dope shit, if you guys would allow him.

Travis: Thank you!

Clint: Yeah, yeah...

Griffin: The Railsplitter passes through the tree like a, like a baseball bat passing through a ghost.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, and the tree slides off of the base and begins to fall in a straight line towards the leeches. And they are going to make dexterity saving throws to try and get out of the way. The first one, the one at the base, closest to the tree, rolled a two, which is a five. That's not gonna do it.

The one in the middle that just got attacked got a 19, that will do it. He uh, darts forward towards you. Um, I'm assuming, Travis, that you ran over to the base of the tree to make this happen?

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: I stated that.

Griffin: M'kay. Um, and the third one rolls an 18, which is sufficient. He darts forward, too. But the tree falls to the side, and just completely obliterates the, uh, the leech that was closest to the base. The one that was actually right next to you, Magnus.

[crunching sound]

Griffin: Did someone eat popcorn?

Clint: Dang, he's good!

Griffin: Yeah, I'm really good. Uh, so you have destroyed one of these leeches. Uh, there's two left.

Travis: Uh, and I'm going—

Justin: I just wanna say, like, this is the first D&— I appreciate that this is a podcast. This is the first D&D in history where someone has not been able to enjoy a salty snack.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: Yeah, really.

Justin: Like, never—like, the two shouldn't even—it should be in the fuckin' player's handbook. Like, "Be sure to get your salty snack to enjoy as you play D&D."

Clint: Realism is just blown all to hell right now.

Justin: Yeah!

Clint: Sorry, but I feel that way.

Justin: I feel like I'm working—I feel like I'm preparing my taxes. That's what D&D is without salty snacks.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: There. I got that off of my chest.

Griffin: Well, we'll need to come up with some sort of a, like one of those booths that they have at carnivals, where the money blows around?

[crunching noise]

Justin: Listen to Rosa Crunch over here!

Griffin: Listen to who?

Justin: Rosa Crunch! He's not going to the back of the snack bus!

Travis: Well, you know she wasn't called Rosa Van, right, Justin?

Griffin: She wasn't called Rosa Bus. What are you talking about?

Justin: [laughing] He just is gonna keep crunching.

Clint: Go ahead, move me! [still crunching]

Travis: I'm gonna step up on—I'm gonna step up onto the stump.

Griffin: M'kay, you're stumping.

Justin: Well, that's a good idea.

Griffin: This podcast is an auditory nightmare hellscape.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Thanks for the money, though.

[theme music plays]

Justin: Hey, just one more time before we let you all go. First, thanks for hanging out with us for an hour. Uh, if you are able to help support The Adventure Zone, if you like what you're listening to here, and you would like us to keep making it and keep supporting us and making new stuff, and all the other hosts at the Maximum Fun network, please take a moment right now. Go to MaximumFun.org/Donate and help us make more great content.

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There's a ton of stuff.

Travis: But above all that, what you really get is our gratitude.

Justin: You really get our thanks.

Griffin: And our love. You won't get that love. No, I'm just kidding. You'll get it no matter what.

Travis: We love you no matter what.

Clint: And we're talking emotional love, right? Not a—not a physical...

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Whatever it takes. To get that money.

Clint: Good point.

Travis: So go to MaximumFun.org/Donate now.

Griffin: [sings] Working on my night moves.

Travis: And then tweet at us. Let us know so we can thank you, and then tweet at your friends and tell them to go.

Justin: All our Twitters are just our names. Daddy, what's your Twitter?

Clint: Uh, DocCurm.

Justin: MaximumFun.org/Donate.

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