

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

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Griffin: Previously, on the Adventure Zone...

He takes this rod, he points it at the doorframe, and it opens up to a greenhouse. It's the most gorgeous collection of plants that any of you have ever seen.

Jenkins: Remember – don't leave anything behind, and you cannot take anything with you.

Magnus: Except memories.

Taako: Jenkins killed the engineer, switched clothes with him...

Merle: And then burnt up the body to prevent further investigation.

Taako: Burned the body to prevent further investigations.

Griffin: Jenkins... he's holding a shitty, metallic compass in his hand, and sort of pouring over all of the items on the ground.

Jenkins: This meat monster, if he is destroyed like the other one you just killed, then the hand will be lost, and we will have no way of getting back into the engine car to slow down the train before it arrives in Neverwinter.

Travis: Magnus turns to Taako and says...

Magnus: Hey, do you think you could figure out that port wand thing?

Taako: Absolutely. Uh, probably.

Magnus: Okay, cool.

Taako: Probably.

Griffin: The meat monster trudges over to Jenkins and throws him off the—
out of the uh, open caboose door.

Jenkins: Smell ya laterrr...

Travis: [laughs]

Announcer: If our heroes can't stop this runaway train, then I'm going to
have to find a new podcast to introduce! Is Serial hiring? It's The Adventure
Zone!

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Jess and Angus and Graham all barge into the cargo car where you
have just destroyed these meat monsters, and one of the meat monsters
just destroyed Jenkins. And Jess yells...

Jess: Let's get busy!!

Griffin: And her axe appears in her hand.

Justin: So she just appeared in the car?

Griffin: Yeah, they all came into the car.

Taako: And that's the—my entire plan for how we stop the train!

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: They missed it. I guess they missed it, but it's really good.

Angus: Can you uh, can you start over from the beginning?

Griffin: Angus says...

Taako: Uhh... [laughs] Hatchi matchi.

Merle: Well, why don't you tell us *your* plan and how it competes with his?

Taako: We'll compare. Contrast and compare. They're bored, they don't want to hear my plan again.

Griffin: Uh, Angus leans over to you, Taako, and says...

Angus: [quietly] I think we should probably find that item you guys were looking for first, before anybody else can get their hands on it.

Magnus: [quietly] Okay.

Angus: That was just—not for you. That was Taako. That was in Taako's ear.

Taako: Okay.

Angus: But I guess I'll put—I'll whisper to you, too. We should find the item.

Justin: I bend down and pick up the compass that he was using.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Um, and I will cast an arcane knowledge check to see how much I know about the... the thing.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Five. 14.

Griffin: Okay. Using your uh, arcane knowledge, you uh, pick up that this is not telling you sort of which direction you're facing. It's not a uh, it is not a traditional compass. Uh, as you sort of move around with it around the room, though, the needle is moving. And it almost appears to be a sort of a dowsing rod, if you will.

Justin: Right. Is there any arc—do I get anything from the arcane knowledge check that I couldn't have put together with context clues?

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh...

Justin: My own damn self?

Griffin: Uh, no, you don't. And Angus says, uh...

Angus: What is that? What do you got there?

Taako: I think it's a compass, but not pointing motion. I thought I'd know more about it, but I don't, and it's trying—

Angus: What is it—what is it pointing—

Travis: On the back is carved in, "Captain Jack Sparrow."

Angus: What is it pointing towards?

Taako: It's a dowsing thing.

Angus: A dowsing rod. Interesting. What if the killer was—the killer's victims were all extremely wealthy. What if that dowsing rod was able to point at like, the most valuable thing? It would explain how we could find your object that nobody knew about. Because if it's as powerful as you say, I imagine it's incredibly valuable.

Taako: Well, that's a good point.

Clint: Why don't we examine the stuff in the—I almost did Taako. [laughs]
Why don't we examine the stuff in the cryptsafe?

Justin: Yeah, like, what do we see?

Travis: What do we see?

Griffin: Uh, you see everybody's weapons that have been pulled out and placed on the floor. Merle, you can collect your warhammer, if you want.

Clint: Thanks.

Griffin: And your shield, if you want it.

Travis: Yaaay!

Justin: Say that you're doing it.

Griffin: Uh... I can just assume that you have re-equipped yourself with all of the objects in the room. Uh, and then there are some other sort of valuables laying around. There's a set of silverware. A fine silverware that has been splayed open, and some of the forks and knives are sort of laying all around the room. There is a briefcase that is, uh, locked up, laying on the floor. There's just sort of a bunch of valuable debris laying all around. It's a pretty big pile. It is all of the valuable cargo that everybody in the car was bringing with them.

And you have this compass that seems to be sort of reacting to something in the room.

Merle: Could we not walk around the room and be able to use that to triangulate? 'Cause if it keeps pointing to that most valuable item, and we walk around the room, eventually, won't it lead us right to the item?

Taako: Yeah, that sounds like good thinkin'.

Justin: And I toss him the compass.

Griffin: Okay. You toss Merle the compass, and uh—

Travis: Meanwhile, I'm keeping an eye on Jess and Graham, and just kind of doing like a, "Nothing to see here, folks, nothing to see. Move it on back, move it on back."

Clint: Keep movin'.

Magnus: Nothin' to see here.

Griffin: Uh, okay. Uh, yeah. Merle, the compass seems to be pointing you at something on the left side of the cargo car. Uh, there's uh, a few items scattered around there. And as you move around, it seems to be pointing to a certain location. And as you look down at basically where the compass zeroes out, it's sort of spinning, you are standing directly over a small monacle with a silvery trim around it, and a uh, a long, silver chain.

Merle: 'Cause we do not know exactly what it is we were sent to recover, right?

Magnus: Correct.

Taako: Also, be cautious.

Justin: I notice him doing this.

Taako: Be careful, because you remember the thrall that the... the previous item cast.

Merle: And the big ass fire.

Taako: Yeah.

Merle: Yeah.

Taako: This conversation probably sounds crazy to the people in the train, eh?

Merle: Probably.

Jess: What is going on over there?!

Merle: We are rewarding faithful listeners!

Magnus: Nothing to see here, folks. Nothing to see. Move it along, now. Move it along.

Griffin: So yeah, you firmly believe that this monocle is the, uh, at the very least, the most valuable item in the room.

Travis: Is it powerful?

Taako: I guess I should be the one to try to pick it up, right? 'Cause I resisted the thrall before.

Magnus: Yeah, sure. Sounds solid.

Merle: Are our bracers of no use in this instance?

Taako: Yeah, can we like, scan it or shoot a laser out of it?

Griffin: I don't know how to tell you guys this. These—

Magnus: Did we bring any kind of centrifuge?

Griffin: These bracers are not fucking Tricorders. You're not gonna set these motherfuckers to stun.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: They have one thing that they do.

Travis: Remind me what that one thing is. Just—

Griffin: It summons the transport.

Travis: Cool.

Griffin: If you do that now, you're just gonna waste a glass ball, 'cause it's gonna crash into a mountain, 'cause you're in a mountain.

Travis: Okay. [laughing] So when I poked it earlier, I wasted a glass ball.

Griffin: No, you didn't get any signal.

Travis: Okay. Well, y'know, you gotta check your carrier at that point.

Clint: [laughs] No bars.

Griffin: Yeah, no bars.

Justin: Okay, I uh, I get—I start reaching my hand towards it, but not touching. But just start reaching my hand towards it to see if I'm getting any vibes.

Griffin: Okay. As you begin to reach your hand towards it, you get a vibe. The monocle starts to sort of shake and rattle on the floor, and you hear a voice in your mind saying, uh...

Voice: Hey. Heyyy buddy. Heyyy buddy.

Travis: You want to see some DVD movies?

Voice: Buddy. Heyyy, buddy. Put me on.

Travis: I got all the latest releases.

Voice: I've got all—I've got—I've got Jack and Jill 2, starring Adam Sandler. It's too hot for TV.

Clint: [laughs]

Voice: Heyyy, buddy. Put me on. I can make anything—anything you can imagine turn real. Heyyy, buddy, come on.

Justin: Okay, I pick up the monocle—

Voice: Ohh yeah buddy, put me on. Put me on.

Justin: With—with the handle of my umbrella.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay. You scoop it up with the handle of your umbrella. Uh, you're still gonna make a will saving throw, but that's such a good idea, I'll give you advantage on it. Um, so make a wisdom saving throw. And you're gonna contest this thing's wisdom.

Justin: Natural 20.

Clint: Natural 20.

Griffin: [defeated] It's a three. Yeah, you—

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: You beat the shit out of the thrall. Okay, you have resisted the thrall of this monocle, and you hear him go...

Voice: Aww, come onnn. Come on, buddy. Aww, buddy. Come on. Come on, buddy. Buddy, I can—anything in the woorld. Anything! Anything! What

do you want? Just imagine it and I can make it real, buddy!

Taako: Jokes on you. I can't think very good.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs] He has no imagination.

Justin: No imagination to tempt, my friend.

Griffin: Uh, okay. You have beaten the thrall of this thing. What are you gonna do with it?

Justin: Uh, I'm gonna throw it into my backpack. My satchel.

Travis: [laughs] Maybe wrap it up in something first.

Griffin: No, toss it in loose into your—toss this incredibly valuable, powerful item into your fucking JanSport.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Put it in the headphones chamber.

Justin: No, I can't—I can't, um... I don't want to touch it. So like...

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, that makes sense. Uh, okay, so you lower the uh, the uh, thing into the—the monocle into your bag, and sort of unscoop it from your umbrella handle and close it up, and you have contained another relic.

Magnus: Kudos all around!

Griffin: Something weird happens. Your—as you are holding your umbrella, it also seems to like, almost like a dowsing rod, point towards the back of

the chamber, right near the caboose door. And there, you see the uh, Jenkins' wand. Not the port rod, but his wand he used for his magicks. And the umbrella starts to almost like, pull you—

Justin: Aww, yeah!

Griffin: Pull you towards it. And this—

Justin: I—I—I eat the wand with the Umbrastaff.

Griffin: Yeah. The Umbrastaff deploys. It opens up like an umbrella, and then it sort of turns inside out, like an umbrella in the rain—in the wind. And uh, the wand flies into the mouth, basically, of your umbrella, which rattles and sort of opens and closes like it's chewing it up.

And then, uh, when it closes again, the wand is gone, and uh, you look down, and your umbrella actually has a uh, a marking on the handle. Like a sigil that is actually in the shape of an umbrella. Uh, on it. So your Umbrastaff just ate the wand of this wizard that you have bested.

Justin: Great!

Travis: And what happens to my Railsplitter, Griffin? Something magical like that?

Griffin: Your Railsplitter... disintegrates.

Travis: [laughs] Oh no!

Justin: Nooo, it turned to ash!

Griffin: Uh, Angus says...

Angus: I'm really glad that uh, everything's working out for you. A wand got eaten by another staff, it was really cool, and you did a thing with a monocle, and all of that's great—

Magnus: We solved this one, guys.

Merle: But we're still hurdling towards our death.

Angus: But Graham, what are we uh, what are we lookin' at now?

Griffin: And Graham says, uh... Graham looks at his pocket watch, and he says...

Graham: We got about, uh—we got about, uh...

Griffin: Nope, that's...

Graham: We've got about, uh, seven minutes before we arrive at Neverwinter, and if we don't start slowing down now, it's gonna be real bad!

Justin: No, he had sort of like a hippie.

Griffin: You're right, you're right, you're right. Hold on.

Graham: [adjusting his voice slightly] Uh... we've got about seven minutes before we arrive in Neverwinter. If we don't slow down now, it's gonna be really bad.

Clint: That's better. And I think he had better motivation there, too. That was good.

Justin: Yeah, I felt the energy from that one.

Clint: Yeah, that was good.

Travis: That was good. Let's do one more, just in case. Just for coverage.

Griffin: I have no voice. Please, let's just keep playing the game.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Um...

Taako: Okay, so—

Merle: We gotta find the—yeah.

Taako: Give—

Justin: I pick up the port wand.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: And I... let's do... let's do an arcane check on—well, I feel like I've already done an arcane check on the wand. Like, I know everything I'm gonna know about the wand. I'm not gonna learn anything else from an arcane check, right?

Griffin: Yeah, certainly not in the next seven minutes.

Justin: I...

Travis: Is there a button on it?

Justin: I focus on the engineer's, uh, room.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: And point it... well, hold on.

Taako: Everybody out.

Justin: And as people are leaving, I kind of hang back, and I'm like...

Taako: Okay, now, everybody face the forward of the train, and really focus on the engineer. What the engine—like, what the engineer's room looks like.

Griffin: Are you using everybody else's imagination?

Taako: Yeah, I need everybody to go into the adjacent car and just turn towards the engineer's car and really focus on it. Okay?

Clint: And then clap if you believe in fairies.

Justin: Alright, is everybody—is everybody doing that?

Griffin: Yeah, everybody moves in there. So, you've moved everybody into the dining car.

Justin: Right.

Griffin: You're still in the cargo car?

Taako: Right, and then, everybody face towards the front of the train and really focus on it, okay?

Magnus: Okay.

Merle: Uhhh...

Justin: Now, while they're doing that, I scoop the remaining valuables into my bag.

Clint: [bursts into laughter]

Griffin: [bursts into laughter] Okay, you pick up a golden tiara. You pick up the silverware set.

Justin: Nice. Nice.

Griffin: You pick up the briefcase.

Justin: Nice!

Griffin: Okay.

Taako: Okay, keep focusing! You're doing great!

Clint: [laughing]

Travis: [laughing]

Justin: I leave, and I go into the adjacent car with them, and I uh, focus on the engineer's room, and I cast the transportational magic on the door to the uh, the cargo—

Griffin: Back to the cargo car?

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, you're gonna have to make some sort of check.

Justin: Yeah, right.

Clint: I didn't think he'd be able to pull that one off.

Justin: Didn't think so. Considering I don't even know the word for what I'm doing...

Clint: Expelliarmus!

Travis: And I... do it!

Justin: Do a magic. I just did a magic there.

Travis: And let me check my sheet here... yeah, it says I have a plus five just doing it.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, let's just do a spellcasting, uh, modifier check. Uh... you're not—you're not casting a spell; you are sort of channeling the spell that is imbued in this rod, which explains how you're like, capable of doing it. Um, but yeah. Why don't you go ahead and uh, roll just a basic intellect check?

Justin: Oh, intellect. Okay. Two.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: Okay. My first try... fizzles.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: No, it doesn't fizzle, actually. You see a figure start to take shape through the cargo car door, and you can see into the engineer's car, but it kind of looks like a cartoon.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Like, everything is like, really squiggly, and uh—

Clint: Oh, like the a-ha video!

Justin: Yeah, like the a-ha video.

Griffin: Yeah, you have basically created the a-ha video.

Clint: [sings] Taaake ooon meee...

Griffin: But it's in the engineer's car.

Justin: Okay. Okay, I try again.

Griffin: Okay.

Taako: Let me take another pass at this. This time, for sure.

Griffin: Okay, but as—before you cast your second spell, through the windows of the dining car, light starts to pour in as you have moved out of another mountain. And Graham says, uh...

Graham: We're in the final—we're in the final stretch! We've got about four minutes before we hit Neverwinter! You gotta do something quick!

Justin: Okay, I got a 19.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, this time, you do it, and the rod, uh... a silvery web of light shoots out, and fills the door, and you can see with perfect clarity, the engineer's car. It's kind of disorienting, because you're facing backwards, but through the front windshield of the train, you see the train moving forwards. And yeah, you can see into the engineer's car.

Travis: Okay. Let's go in there. We go in there.

Justin: We all go in there.

Griffin: Okay. Uh—

Clint: We're in there.

Taako: Does anybody—listen. Does anybody know how to stop a train?

Magnus: I have vehicle proficiency!

Griffin: Graham says, uh—

Taako: Of course you do.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Graham says, uh...

Graham: I've been training my entire life for this, so I could give it a shot!

Magnus: Wait, you've been training your entire life for this?

Graham: To be a train engineer! Yeah, absolutely!

Taako: Yeah, remember in his backstory?

Magnus: Oh yeahhh.

Merle: Yeahhh.

Taako: Yeahhh.

Magnus: Yeahhh.

Taako: So you've done this in like, video games before.

Graham: Yeah, basically. Well, dream vision fantasies.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs] Still don't want to acknowledge video games exist. Okay.

Taako: Okay, go ahead.

Graham: No, tell me about these video James!

Clint: [laughs]

Graham: We're gonna collide with Neverwinter in about three minutes, but tell me about video James!

Merle: Should we—

Magnus: [laughing] Video James is a cool dude!

Merle: You know Video James!

Taako: Ladies love cool Video James.

Griffin: Uh, he says, uh...

Graham: Everybody, hold on tight!

Griffin: And he grabs the brake lever of the train.

Travis: I pop the bean in my mouth.

Griffin: You pop the bean in your mouth. Uh, that thing's gonna run out of magic pretty soon. You don't have infinite heavy—

Travis: Infinite bean!

Griffin: Infinite heavy bean!

Clint: Griffin, he ain't heavy. He's your brother.

Travis: Boom.

Griffin: And he rears back, full strength, on the brake lever... and it doesn't move. And Graham says...

Graham: Oh, shit. Hold on.

Griffin: And he tries it again.

Travis: Now, Griffin, just to clarify before we move forward – Graham's been training his whole life... to pull a lever.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: There's not like an intricate button-pushing process. He doesn't need to know how to work the computer. He's been training his whole life to pull a lever.

Griffin: Well, as the brake refuses to move, Graham actually starts furiously punching buttons in the console, and uh, twisting knobs, and moving other levers. And uh, he looks over at a panel on the left side of the console and says, uh...

Graham: Oh, god, no. Guys, this one is also locked to the engineer's handprint! Did anybody save one of those meat monster's hands?

Magnus: ... No.

Merle: We burned `em up, pretty much.

Justin: Yeah, I thought they were disintegrated, is what you said.

Merle: Is it possible we can disconnect the locomotive from the rest of the train?

Graham: Yeah, but the locomotive's still gonna hit Neverwinter, and it's gonna cause a lot of damage.

Merle: Have you met us?

Justin: Some other D&D game's problem.

Griffin: [laughs] Wait a minute, wait a minute. "You have safely brought the princess back to her chambers in Neverwinter, after besting the 19 dragons of the Horadrim, and—oh fuck, a train! Oh my god, no, a train just ran in—oh god, no! Oh Jesus!"

Clint: [laughing] Well, we'd be safe!

Justin: I'm just—I—I'm just living out my lifelong dream of reenacting the end of Silver Streak. That's all I've ever wanted.

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: Uh, Graham is punching in other buttons, and Angus is—

Angus: I'm—I'm too young to die! Oh god, no, this is gonna be terrible! What can we do?

Griffin: Graham says...

Graham: We're not gonna be able to stop this train! We have to destroy it somehow!

Magnus: Uhhhhh...

Taako: Okay, just a second. Just give me a second to think.

Merle: I say we disconnect the loc—we blow up the locomotive and then disconnect it. And we stay in the back part.

Taako: We have no... we have no like... I don't know that we have anything with that much power.

Magnus: We need to access an area that has that much power.

Taako: Nothing can come through the door, though.

Magnus: To port the locomotive to somewhere else.

Taako: Do—okay—

Graham: There's—there's an entry gate into Neverwinter that you have to go through before you arrive at the platform.

Taako: Wait a minute! I got it, I got it, I got it! Okay, listen! This is stupid.

Merle: [laughs]

Magnus: [laughs]

Taako: Are you ready to do something really stupid?

Graham: I'm willing to do anything! We have about two and a half minutes!

Merle: Again, have you just met us?

Justin: I take the port wand, and I go into the engineer's car. Okay?

Griffin: Uh, okay.

Justin: Okay. And I—is there access to the roof, or to the front of it? Somewhere where I can go stand?

Griffin: Well, you wouldn't be able to, because you are in the illusory... you are in the port version of the engine car. So you can't leave it, except through any way that you went out.

Justin: [sighs]

Griffin: Yeah. There are other ways out of the train, though. There's a door that you came through when you first boarded the train, right in front of the passenger car, which is right behind the engine car.

Justin: Okay, I'll go do that.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: and I just need to get outside.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You are... okay, so you have popped open the door that you boarded the train through, in front, uh, between sort of the engine car and the passenger car, between the first and second cars in the train. And you have opened it, and uh, are hanging out.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Where is everybody else? I'm assuming they've left the engine car. [pause] Because they'll be destroyed if not. [laughs]

Justin: That's kind of up to them.

Clint: Well, we're not sure what he's thinking about. Are you thinking about creating a port and having the train go through it, but in the opposite direction?

Taako: What I'm thinking about is, I'm going to use this wand to change the gate into Neverwinter into a gate to Phandalin. Because it's the only place I know of that's completely empty and made of glass.

Griffin: Well, it would have to be a room with one entrance. But I like where your head's at a lot.

Magnus: Open it to Jenkins' garden! Fuck that dude!

Taako: How big is Jenkins' garden?

Griffin: Uh, big enough for a train to crash into, probably.

Clint: How about Tom Bodett's house? [laughs]

Justin: Tom Bodett, we're comin' for you!

Travis: Can we get both of 'em?

Taako: No, that's good. I've seen Jenkins' garden, I've watched him open the door, I know how to do it. I can change the gate at the last second into a door into Jenkins' garden.

Griffin: Okay.

Taako: Okay.

Magnus: Cast *levitate* on all of us.

Taako: No, no, listen. I—we've got this. You just have to trust me.

Merle: No, wait a minute!

Magnus: Well...

Merle: He's got a backpack full of stolen shit!

Griffin: You don't know that.

Magnus: Okay. Done. Fuck it. Y'know what? I trust you, Taako.

Travis: I lay my hand on his shoulder.

Magnus: I trust you.

Taako: Oh, excellent.

Clint: I lay my hand on his hip and say...

Merle: That's as high as I can reach.

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: And then you dip, he dip, we dip. We dip.

Travis: [laughs]

Angus: These are all really great goofs! We're gonna hit the gate in one minute!

Magnus: Be cool, Angus, for one second! This is a team building moment!

Merle: What's the range of the port wand?

Griffin: You have no way of knowing that.

Magnus: Make us all lighter. Anchor so we're floating out the back.

Taako: Yeah! Wait, what?

Magnus: So, tie it off to the cryptsafe. We go out the back door so we're, like, separate from the train.

Taako: But we don't—I don't—I don't have enough *levitates* to do that. I can't levitate all of us. Ah shit, y'know what?

Magnus: Then *levitate* an object.

Taako: Y'know what? Let's just jump. How about that?

Merle: Yeah!

Taako: Let's just jump off a moving train!

Griffin: Yep. I mean, this is not a suspended bridge.

Taako: Yeah. It's a stupid garden. I'll fall on some daffodils or something.

Magnus: Okay.

Griffin: So wait, you're gonna wait until you're inside the garden to jump out?

Magnus: No.

Taako: No. No.

Merle: Cast the portal, jump out.

Taako: Cast the portal, jump off.

Griffin: This, uh—as you lean out, you are overlooking just sort of a plain type area, with some other tracks running through it, sort of like a rail yard.

Clint: Not saying it wouldn't hurt.

Griffin: I'm not—yeah, I'm saying if you jumped out, you wouldn't fall 150 feet to your death.

Justin: Okay, great. How close are we to the gate, though?

Griffin: Uh, I mean, you're 50 yards.

Justin: Perfect. Okay. I mean, am I close enough that I could cast the spell, or do I need to wait longer?

Griffin: Uh, I mean, you can give it the ol' college try.

Justin: Oh, great. Okay. I'll wait until—

Taako: Everybody off! Everybody jump!

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: I'll wait 'til I'm at 25 yards.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: 'Cause I don't want to risk it.

Griffin: Uh, Angus says...

Angus: Are you sure about this? It seems like it's gonna hurt a lot, sir.

Clint: God, hit him.

Justin: I push Angus off the train.

Taako: You're fine!

Angus: Oh gosh, oh gosh!

Clint: He falls under the wheels!

Justin: [laughing] No.

Clint: Tom Bodett style! You got Bodetted!

Griffin: Uh, no, he—you throw this canary in the mineshaft off the train. You see him roll... a good distance.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: And uh, he's—he sits up and gives you a thumbs up, but he's missing two teeth.

Justin: Great. Okay. Can everybody else hop off?

Travis: I jump. But I tuck and roll, so as to incur no damage.

Griffin: Acrobatics check!

Travis: I rolled a 45!

Griffin: Nope! [laughs] It's not a number.

Travis: Uhh, uhh... let—no, that's not good. I'm gonna die.

Griffin: You won't die. You won't *die* die.

Travis: Won't I? I only have one hit point, Griffin.

Griffin: I mean, that's not death.

Travis: Uh, I rolled a 12.

Griffin: Okay, yeah, that's gonna hurt. It's two hit points, which, in any other circumstance, I think would be a really good number to get.

Travis: Ugh.

Griffin: Uh, you see Magnus go off the train. He does not sit up and give a thumbs up.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, next... who's jumpin' off?

Clint: I'm not jumpin' off yet. Let Jess and Juicy jump off.

Griffin: Uh, Jess and, uh... Jess leaps off effortlessly. She actually like, jumps off and then manages to like, land on her feet running, and just sort of stops moving. Perfect, like a cat.

Travis: Why didn't I do that?!

Griffin: 'Cause she's way cooler than you are. Like, way way way cooler. And just sort of way better at everything.

Travis: Fine. Fine.

Taako: Graham, once you're off, do you have any magicks that could tend to his wounds?

Graham: Uh, I can give it a try! I got a—

Taako: Great. That's good enough for me. Bye.

Graham: Okay. Well, I just want to say, I'm really proud of you.

Taako: Okay, good.

Travis: [laughs] Okay, good.

Graham: And I just want to—I just want you to know that...

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: I push him off the train too.

Graham: I just want you to know—[falling] That I want to be like you somedaaay!

Griffin: And uh, he is now off the train.

Travis: [laughing]

Griffin: Uh, I think that's everyone.

Justin: Well, uh, Merle and I are still...

Griffin: Okay, yeah. You and Merle are still on the train.

Taako: Alright, let's jump, 'cause this looks—we're close. We're real close.

Merle: Alright. You gonna cast the thing?

Taako: Uhh, I probably need to jump and cast it afterwards so I can keep my concentration.

Griffin: Okay.

Merle: Yeah, it'll be real easy to concentrate when you're rolling across those railroad ties.

Taako: No, I mean, I'll hop up at the last second. It's gonna be sweet.

Merle: That would be really cool.

Justin: Well, let me get an acrobat—what is it? What kind of—do I need to do an acrobatics check, or I'm—

Griffin: Yeah, both of you are making acrobatics checks.

Clint: Oh, we do? Okay.

Justin: Uh, 16 plus two, 18.

Clint: Uhh, 14 minus one. 13. Oh no no, I leveled that out—it's zero. It's just 14.

Griffin: 14, and what did you get Taako?

Justin: 18.

Griffin: 18. Okay, Merle takes a little bit of damage.

Merle: Ow.

Griffin: Uh, five damage. Uh, but Taako, you do not. You land almost as gracefully as Jess did, which is pretty impressive.

Justin: Great. And then I cast the—I focus on Jenkins' garden, and I cast, uh, I use the transport wand on the gate to Neverwinter.

Griffin: Okay. Seconds before the train goes through the gate, you point the port wand at the gate, and make a spellcasting check.

Clint: [laughing]

Justin: 19. Plus five. 24.

Griffin: 24. Okay. You see, in a flash, the train platform of Neverwinter disappear, uh, and in its place, you see a lush garden. The train goes into it. You hear a cacophonous smash as the glass container of the greenhouse comes smashing down. You see greenery just sort of go flying, colliding with the back of the gate, and just sort of stopping in midair and falling to the ground. And the train goes through, and as the container of the greenhouse is destroyed, the spell shuts off, and with a loud pop, the spell is interrupted, and the train has vanished.

Magnus: Can I just say, you guys... way more successful than our last one! We didn't destroy a city or anything!

Merle: [laughing] Except for the damn garden.

Taako: Yeah, the garden's—

Magnus: Fuck Wankins' garden! I don't care about that dude!

Taako: Oh, everybody, I just remembered something terrible!

Magnus: What's that?

Taako: We forgot to get the valuables off before we did that out of the safe!

Travis: And Merle and Magnus just kind of glare at Taako.

Angus: Oh no!

Griffin: Angus says...

Angus: Oh no, I was transporting my grandpa's favorite silverware! I was gonna give it to him as a death day present!

Justin: [laughs]

Merle: Oh well!

Magnus: He'll be happy you're alive, Angus. That's present enough.

Angus: No, he said specifically, "Bring me my silverware. I'd like to see it one more time on my death bed."

Magnus: Well, maybe you'll get lucky, and he'll be dead before you get there!

Angus: We can only hope.

Magnus: [laughs]

Justin: Um, Griffin, can you say something about how we solved your train mystery?

Griffin: Oh, I mean, you actually did solve my murder puzzle. You have literally, for once, solved my puzzle of...

Clint: Murder! [laughs]

Griffin: Of... you solved my train puzzle.

Clint: Yeah!

Justin: Yay!

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Hey, everyone. This is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master and best friend. Thank you for listening to The Adventure Zone, episode 16, which is the last part of our Murder on the Rockport Limited arc. I hope you enjoyed it. Uh, I really, really liked doing a mystery for my family, and I was really proud of them for solving it, and then killing some people along the way and making treasured memories and friendships, also, along the way.

This week, The Adventure Zone is sponsored in part by Nature Box. Nature Box is where you go to get snacks that are all made with zero artificial flavors, colors, or sweeteners, zero grams trans fats, and no high fructose corn syrup, and so much better for you than all the other snack options out there. Beef jerky? No way, get that out of your mouth! Spit that out! Put some Nature Box in there!

Next time you're hungry, you can grab jalapeno white cheddar popcorn, pistachio power clusters, and big island pineapple. They got so many others, uh, all super super tasty. I'm a big Nature Box fan, and you will be too if you go to NatureBox.com/Adventure. You go to that website, you can get a free trial box of their favorite snacks. So go do it, and put these great snacks in your mouth and your body, and they'll make you very strong. They'll make you twice as strong as you are right now.

The Adventure Zone is also supported again this week by Plaid Hat Games, who are the producers of fun and engaging board games like *Dead of Winter*, which is a psychological survivor game where players are forced to work together to survive, but there might be a betrayer in their midst. There probably is gonna go ahead and be a betrayer up in their midst.

They also make cool games like *Mice and Mystics*, which is like sort of a mini D&D roleplaying game where you play as adorable mice. And mystics. They're all really, really great. You can find all of them and more at PlaidHatGames.com.

We have some personal messages. If you want to send something into the ether for a loved one, or for your small business, you can do that by going to MaximumFun.org/Jumbotron. This message is for Foley, and it's from Annie. And Annie says to Foley, "Little bear, the last eight years have been an amazing adventure. Thank you for marrying me, and here's to the rest of our lives together. I declare my love the best way I can – publically, through a McElroy."

Yes. Yes! Allow me to be your vessel! Allow your love to live through me and sustain me! I have taken your love! Thank you, Annie and Foley. Y'all sound perfect for each other.

One more personal message here in the ol' mail sack, and it's for Lizzie Lincoln, and it's from Mateo Irvin. That is a dope name. Sorry, Lizzie. Your name's dope too, but Mateo? Come on. Dude sounds like he's channeling the most powerful spell.

Mateo says to Lizzie, "Happy belated birthday! I am overjoyed to have you in my life. You are an amazing actress, a wonderful cook, and my best friend. You make me laugh more than anything in life, and seeing as how you first showed me The Adventure Zone, that makes you responsible for about 98% of my happiness. I can't wait to listen to this episode with you! I love you!"

Oh my gosh. So much love in this episode. I'm drowning in it. I'm drowning in y'all's love. Happy belated birthday, Lizzie, and happy coolname, Mateo!

If you haven't listened to the other shows on the Maximum Fun network, I guarantee you're gonna find something on there that you like in addition to The Adventure Zone. All of us have other podcasts. Justin and Travis and I do a show called My Brother, My Brother, and Me where we give out advice. Justin does a show with his wife, Sydnee, called Sawbones, where they talk about medical history.

Travis has a show with his buddy Andy called Bunker Buddies. Travis has another show that he just launched with his other friend, Brent, that's not on the Max Fun network, but it's really great. It's called Trends Like These. I guarantee you're gonna like that one. I've been listening to it, and it's super funny.

But there's other shows on the network not hosted by McElroys too, like Jordan, Jesse, Go and Throwing Shade and Rendered and so many other terrific programs. So go to MaximumFun.org and go listen to some other free shows. They're free, and they're great.

One last plug – if you live in Portland, Seattle, or Vancouver, me and Justin and Travis are gonna be doing My Brother, My Brother, and Me live in those three cities at the end of August. You can find more information at bit.ly/MBMBaMSeattle, and bit.ly/VanMBMBaM. The Portland show is sold out, but you can always drive up to Seattle if you want to come see us. There's lots of tickets available for that show.

Okay, that's it for the sales portion of this episode. Like I said, this is the last part of the Murder on the Rockport Limited arc, so the next episode will

probably be like an interlude where we do a little bit of character management, some shopping, some hanging out on the moon before we jump into the next campaign chapter.

Uh, thank you all so much for listening and for sharing the show. Uh, when we start the new arc, we'll have new characters, and we name those after people who tweet about the show using the #TheZoneCast hash tag, so tweet using the hash tag, #TheZoneCast, and you might end up as a character in the next campaign chapter.

Oh, and also, if you have a second, if you can go write a review and leave a rating for us on iTunes, that really, really helps us out a lot. Thank you all so much to the people who have already done that. It's been overwhelmingly positive, and we love you so much.

Okay, that's it! Let's get back to the episode. The next episode will go up, god willing and creek don't rise, on June 18th. So we will see you then.

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Is somebody going to keep Magnus from dying?

Magnus: That would be great.

Justin: I asked Graham to check on him.

Clint: Don't we have healing potions?

Justin: Will that work?

Griffin: Graham runs over to him and says, uh...

Graham: Yeah, this guy's like, dying, and I don't have any healing—I'm like, a wizard.

Justin: Will potions work on him if he's past that point?

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Travis: Well, what's your stabilize patient thing do, Dad?

Justin: Oh, yeah. Can't you use that?

Griffin: Yeah, you've been trying to use it all day.

Clint: Yeah, I can use it.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: Well, I mean, what kept me from doing it before?

Travis: I wasn't actually at zero.

Griffin: Nobody was dead. He hadn't jumped out of a train bad yet.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Two points of damage isn't that bad! I would challenge anyone to jump out of a train, and that's like stubbing a toe, but that had just happened to be enough that I died of toe stubbage.

Clint: Okay, *spare the dying*. You touch a living creature that has zero hit points. The creature becomes stable.

Griffin: Okay. You run back towards, uh, towards Magnus and touch him lovingly upon the hip.

Clint: Can I do the brushing the lock of hair off his forehead thing? 'Cause that—

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yes you may.

Clint: That's so sweet.

Griffin: Yeah. You do that, and uh, he is stable. Which means he's basically at zero hit points and he's not gonna die, but he does need to be... he does need to get some HPs back. So a healing potion would probably go down real smooth right now.

Justin: Well... isn't there probably an inn or something that we could just walk to?

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: Let's just walk. Wouldn't that be better?

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: We could carry him.

Justin: Yeah, let's carry him.

Travis: I'm very light. I got levitating boots.

Griffin: Okay. I like that. So—

Justin: He's got levitating boots. Let's just carry him.

Griffin: Okay, so you uh, put an arm around each of your guys' shoulders and carry him back in to the train platform. You've got uh, Angus and Jess and Graham in tow. Little battered, little bruised. Not Jess, 'cause she did a great job.

Travis: 'Cause she's the best.

Griffin: She's just super, super good at fighting and acrobatics and stuff. Uh, but yeah, you walk into the station, and standing on the platform are a bunch of very well-dressed people with luggage who are just looking at you, mouth-agape, because they just watched a fucking train disappear. And uh, the authorities run up. The Neverwinter militia run up, and Angus produces a uh, a small badge from inside his jacket and goes...

Angus: It's okay, they're with me!

Griffin: And goes and starts to talk to them. And the uh, the chaos of this scene eventually subsides a little bit, and you are inside the platform. Jess turns to you and goes...

Jess: Well, that was weird. There's a lot of static talk. Train disappeared. Lot of really weird stuff just happened, but uh, I gotta say, that was pretty exciting. I thought that was gonna be a pretty boring hype tour, but uh, you guys sure livened it up. So if you're ever, uh... if you ever want to come to one of my matches, I can get you in for free, on the house. Just say the word.

Magnus: Quick question, Jess.

Jess: Yeah?

Magnus: Is that soul bound axe thing something you can teach me?

Jess: Uh, no, it's just—you gotta find it, you gotta love it, you gotta nurture it. It's a relationship.

Merle: Will you give it to him?

Jess: I can't.

Magnus: We already tried that.

Merle: I thought that was gonna be the next question. Okay.

Magnus: No, we tried that like two episodes ago.

Jess: The problem is that it's probably gonna be way too heavy for him to even hold, so...

Magnus: Y'know what, Jess? Thanks so much. We'll see you later.

Merle: [laughs]

Jess: It was super nice to meet you guys, though.

Magnus: You can piss right off.

Taako: Jess, could I ask you one favor?

Jess: Yeah, hit me.

Taako: When you tell people the story of what happened, and they ask if I said anything cool when Jenkins got knocked off the train, can you tell them I smiled and said, "Ha. No ticket?"

Merle: Ohh, that's good!

Taako: That's good, right? Tell them I said that when you tell the story, okay?

Jess: Yeah. And this technically came out before Indiana Jones, in like, the timeline of this fantasy history.

Taako: So I guess I made that up.

Jess: Yeah.

Taako: I invented that. Tell them I invented that. If you go past like a trademark place...

Jess: Just have them trademark your dope catchphrase?

Taako: Trademark that catchphrase, yeah.

Magnus: Are we in—is Neverwinter in a world that exists, like, thousands of years before Indiana Jones? Like, are we—are we in the past? Are there dinosaurs?

Griffin: It's up to you, man.

Merle: Or are we in the future?

Griffin: Uh yeah, Jess takes off, and uh, Graham walks up to you guys and says, uh...

Graham: I've gotta go write a report! This is gonna be how I get my job for the Rockport Express! I'm gonna tell them everything that happened, and uh... yeah! I think this might be a way to get my foot in the door!

Merle: One suggestion, Graham – don't bring up the whole 'destroying an entire train' part.

Taako: Right, you may want to edit the story.

Merle: Yeah, you don't want to include that in your dissertation.

Graham: I'll leave that part out. I'll say that you guys, using your wits... you guys are so great. Managed to slow the train down, and there—well, no, they're probably gonna see past that, because there's no train. Like, there's just no train anymore.

Taako: Yeah...

Graham: There used to be a—where there once was a train, there is now no train, is what I'm saying.

Taako: Right, exactly.

Graham: Anyways, super cool to meet you guys. Can I get like your uh, your contact information? 'Cause I'd love to—

Travis: I hug Graham and whisper in his ear...

Magnus: Let us be as two ships passing.

Clint: [laughs]

Graham: I guess you're right. I guess the best friendships that you make in this world are the ones that just come to an end. Just come to an abrupt—

Magnus: We'll always remember you 'til three episodes from now when we can't remember anything but Juicy Wizard.

Graham: That's fine. That's my name.

Merle: And we'll always have Letterman's Gap.

Graham: Do you guys know, by the way, the story of why my robes say 'juicy' on the butt?

Magnus: Okay, time to go. [laughs] Bye.

Clint: [laughs]

Graham: It was a great story, but I guess you'll never know.

Magnus: Tell it to the bees.

Griffin: [laughs] What? Tell it to the bees?

Magnus: Tell it to the bees.

Graham: Okay, I'm gonna go find some bees. Later, guys!

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: Hey, check me on LinkedIn!

Travis: [laughs]

Taako: I'll endorse you for train stuff if you endorse me for magic stuff!
Alright, bye!

Graham: That sounds very equitable! Bye!

Griffin: And he walks off into the crowd. Uh, and Angus walks away from the uh, the militia who have started to disperse off the platform, and he walks up to you and says, uh...

Angus: I gotta say, you guys. I'm really proud of you! I—this was one of the toughest mysteries that I've ever solved by myself, and—

Magnus: Well, wait, hold on. I would say we solved this one together.

Angus: Of course, yeah. No, it was a joint effort, like—

Merle: Weeell, I'd say we solved it alone, without you.

Angus: Well, that seems mean. I'm trying to like, do a heartfelt goodbye speech.

Travis: [laughing]

Merle: But this is the moment—this is the moment when they carry Jenkins' body by on a gurney, and he pops up from under a sheet? Is that—

Griffin: And then fucking Reginald Veljohnson shoots him?

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: And then Reginald Veljohnson's like, "No ticket." And we're like—

Clint: [laughing] That's his!

Justin: First off, that's a trademark violation. Second, it doesn't even make any sense.

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: [laughing]

Travis: But it is nice to know that Reginald Veljohnson has learned to kill again.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: And it's nice that he's a fan of the show, apparently.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Uh, Angus looks at you and goes...

Angus: I shot a kid!

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: That's the best—that's the best line reading of anything in the world. I know we're going completely off the rails right now, but... "I shot a

kid!" is the best any line has ever been delivered in the world. Uh, Angus does—

Travis: His name was Urkle! That dude. [laughing]

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: Angus says, uh...

Angus: I want you guys to have something, 'cause I was gonna take it back to the station, because it shouldn't fall into unsafe hands, but... you guys seem like you'll be able to take care of it, and maybe you'll get a lot of use out of it.

Griffin: And he uh, pulls out the rusted compass out of his pocket, and uh—

Clint: I take it!

Griffin: Okay, and he hands it to Merle. And Merle, you pop it open, and it seems to be pointing toward Taako's bag, which is weird, but you don't—

Merle: Oh, okay.

Taako: No, I have the monocle in there.

Griffin: Oh.

Magnus: Ohh.

Travis: Quick OOC moment – um, how good was the OC? We're walking away from this with the monocle, the compass, and the port wine, right? Port wine. The port wand.

Griffin: Yes.

Clint: Aha.

Travis: Oh shit, we forgot to get Pringles for our roommate!

Griffin: Yeah, no—

Clint: Well, we haven't left yet.

Travis: Is there like a news stand on the train station or something where I could pick up, like, that and maybe like, some Sour Patch Kids?

Griffin: Angus says...

Angus: And I have one other gift from you.

Griffin: And he retrieves... it's a miniature—it's like, one of those snack size canisters. And it's sour cream and onion, which is not the best kind of Pringle.

Clint: No.

Justin: [laughing]

Griffin: But he says...

Angus: They're yours if you want them. I was gonna have them as a train time snack, but I forgot to eat them in the train times.

Taako: And I have something for you. I managed to get one piece of the treasure out of the crypt, and it's...

Angus: You got my grandpa's silverware? You got the whole set?

Taako: Uh, well, sadly, I was only able to preserve a few pieces of it, but something's better than nothing, I guess.

Justin: And I hand him three forks.

Clint: [laughs]

Angus: Thanks. I was really—I was really—you got me really excited that you rescued the whole set, 'cause I think—honestly, I think if I just showed these three forks to my grandpa, he's just gonna get angry.

Taako: Listen, kid, I'm not a magic worker, okay?

Clint: [snorts]

Magnus: Wait...

Taako: Well, I am, but...

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: Technically speaking, I am, in fact, a magic worker. But uh, I'm lazy.

Griffin: He says—

Magnus: Hey, I'm still dying.

Griffin: Uh, yeah, that's true. He says...

Angus: If you guys ever run into any mysteries that you can't solve, just drop me a line, and uh, I'll be there in a flash!

Griffin: And he hands you a card that just says Angus McDonald on it. But there's no phone number or anything, 'cause phones don't exist, so it's not the best business card. But he gives it to you anyway.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: We'll use the port wand to find him.

Justin: Does it have his LinkedIn address? I can find him on LinkedIn. Just do that.

Clint: [laughing]

Griffin: Yeah. Uh, okay.

Travis: Chain—ChainLinkedIn.

Griffin: Oh, I get it.

Clint: That was good! Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: Uh, so, yeah. You stop by the Neverwinter clinic, I'm guessing, to keep your...

Travis: [laughs] To get the bumps on our genitals checked out.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: This guy's almost dead, and you guys all have syphilis. What happened?

Travis: [laughing]

Griffin: How could this be? And uh, yeah, you have... that's all of the content that I've created. So what do you want to do now? Let's just fuckin' freestyle it.

Justin: Well, we got 15 minutes. I actually had a suggestion that I wanted to suggest to you guys before we get too much further.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: I think it would be worth... we have 15 minutes. I think it would be really a good use of our time to develop some character voices. Because I think that this nonsense of saying, "I'm saying this character, I'm not saying in character," I think it's getting confusing. For me, it's very easy to tell, 'cause I have the distinguishing factor.

Travis: Do you think—okay, what about this for Magnus?

Griffin: But a few requests. Don't make them so terrible and unlistenable. No Scottish acc—no Spanish accents, no Scottish accents...

Travis: This is my suggestion for Magnus. If Magnus talked like this.

Griffin: Just tweak it.

Justin: Alright, Dad and I will listen, and just kind of like, see what we got. See how it grabs us.

Clint: Okay.

Travis: [gruff and enunciated] Let's rush into adventure!

Griffin: See, I like that.

Travis: Yeah?

Griffin: It's simple, it's gruff, it's just a slightly modified—

Travis: [kind of like a pirate] I think that what we should do...

Griffin: Well, you're getting—

Clint: Now you're going all Sean Connery.

Travis: No, what we should—here's what we should do.

Justin: Kind of Sean Connery.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: [gruff] This is—okay, I'm just gonna stick with this. This is Magnus' voice.

Justin: Gruff. Gruff.

Griffin: See, it's fucking hard, isn't it? Doing one voice. Try doing eight, and they're all on the same train.

Clint: Yeah, I've done it for 40 years, so go ahead.

Justin: Buuurn.

Griffin: Well, this is—next time, you can DM, and all the NPCs will be Ducky Crabtree or something.

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Dad, I think that Merle should sound like Ducky Crabtree. Could you do a little Ducky for us now?

Griffin: Ducky Crabtree is our dad's famous radio personality that he created.

Justin: One of many. Don't forget like, Spud Rimshot.

Griffin: Spud Rimshot. Yeah. But for me, I'm a Ducky Crabtree man at heart.

Justin: Well, okay. Everybody's got their own...

Clint: Gosh, really? Ducky as the uh... well, okay.

Travis: Do it. Do it, coward.

Clint: Um... alright, I will.

Griffin: How long has it been since we've dusted off ol' Ducky? Pulled him off a shelf?

Clint: It's been a long time. [laughing] About two and a half years, I guess.

Travis: Alright, let's hear him.

Clint: Okay. [high pitched, in a funny southern accent] What do you mean I can't cast sanctuary?! What do you mean I'm out of spell slots?!

Travis: Pretty good.

Clint: I think that might be a little bit distracting.

Griffin: That's pretty good, because it's also things that you would do, which is try to cast spells when you can't.

Clint: Well, that was the... that was my ironic joke, there.

Griffin: It was good! Uh, I don't—let's keep workshopping Merle.

Clint: Alright.

Griffin: Because that's gonna be—that's gonna be rough to listen to a lot of.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Ducky Crabtree is good in short bursts.

Clint: Now, are we set on Magnus, on that kind of deep and gruff?

Travis: Is that because that's what you wanted for Merle?

Clint: Well, I was thinking, if Merle were short...

Justin: Well why don't you lean into sort of like, your Pan roots, y'know what I mean? Like, some of your more nature...

Griffin: I gotta say, you just destroyed a beautiful garden, and that seems like a non-crunchy thing to do.

Clint: Oh, it hurt. It hurt.

Justin: Maybe something in that crunchy range. Is there something in that sort of like, granola hippie place that you could go?

Clint: Let's see...

Travis: You know what I'm picturing? I'm picturing if Danny Devito, were like, a devout crunchy dude.

Justin: What is that from?

Griffin: And he might be.

Justin: He may be. I don't know him that well, personally.

Clint: Devout crunchy. So...

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Clint: [in a relaxed, breathy voice] So maybe if it was a little more natural? Maybe a little husky?

Griffin: Less Gary—I want you to take the Gary Sinise knob, and I want you to turn it to fucking zero.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: But that's close. I like that direction.

Justin: Yeah, I like the direction too.

Clint: [raspy] Alright, so a little raspy. Maybe raspy? That would hurt. I don't know if I could—okay. Um... yeah, maybe that would work. That goes away from Magnus.

Griffin: There we go. There we go, there we go.

Justin: Yeah!

Travis: I really think that's it.

Clint: [raspy] It's almost a Clint Eastwood feel.

Justin: Yeah, like and a feat. Sam Elliott.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [raspy, lower] Oh. Okay, maybe even a little lower. Where you goin' with that? Or do you want it up a little higher?

Travis: Well, don't get too gruff, or you're getting into Magnus territory.

Griffin: Yeah, and you're getting into a weirdly sexual territory.

Clint: [raspy, not as low] So let's go with raspy, and high.

Justin: Yeah!

Clint: And kind of an earthy, uh... yeah!

Justin: Kind of a Bob Ross vibe.

Travis: I want you to say, "Have you heard the good news about Pan?"

Clint: [raspy] Have you heard the good news about Pan today?

Justin: Yeah, I like that!

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, I think you got it.

Clint: [raspy] Let me open up this uh, Teen Extreme Bible, and read a few passages.

Travis: What I like is that you've got a good combination of like, crunchy granola, and also kind of creepy youth minister.

Justin: [imitating Merle] You guys want to see some really realistic unicorn paintings?

Clint: [raspy] Hey, that almost sounds like a late FM disk jockey, too.

Justin: [imitating Merle] Check out the side of my van.

Clint: [raspy] Alright, we got Peter Cetera now, comin' up.

Griffin: Definitely, definitely—[laughs] Nobody likes Bit-O-Honey. Uh, are you—so, anybody want to go back to the moon?

Travis: Oh yeah! Let's activate our bracers!

Clint: What's the response time on calling the crystal balls?

Griffin: Uh, depends on how—

Travis: About ten minutes.

Griffin: Depends on how far away you are from the headquarters.

Clint: Alright. It really doesn't make any sense for us to go shopping in town, 'cause there's nothing we're not gonna be able to find.

Griffin: Oh baby, Fantasy Costco's got everything!

Clint: Yeah.

Travis: And in bulk.

Clint: Mmm.

Taako: Let's—listen. I think the most important thing we can do is get these Pringles back to our roommate. Pringles? Was that his name? I don't remember—

Magnus: Apl.de.ap.

Merle: Actually, don't you think we ought to heal up poor Magnus first?

Magnus: No, we went to the clinic.

Taako: We went to the clinic, remember?

Merle: Oh yeah!

Taako: We had sexually transmitted diseases.

Merle: Oh, I thought that was *that* kind of clinic.

Magnus: It was both!

Taako: No, no. It's all kinds.

Griffin: Unfortunately, you owe the clinic 15 thousand gold pieces.

Magnus: Time to go!

Clint: [laughs]

Merle: Good luck collecting that, suckers!

Griffin: Uh, okay. Uh, you're gonna have to find a safe spot. I'm guessing maybe you want to head out of town so that nobody sees your uh...

Clint: Balls?

Griffin: Your balls.

Travis: Yeah, we do that. That thing you just said.

Griffin: Uh, alright. Yeah, you are able to summon a ball from the southeast, over the mountains. You see one of these crystal spheres shoot down, and is rocketing towards you in the plains, just outside of the Neverwinter city limits. It slows down very slightly before it hits the ground—

Travis: Oh, I forgot to ask. What band is on this episode of Neverwinter City Limits?

Griffin: That's pretty good.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: It's, uh... it's the... it's uhh... what's a funny band?

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: Bananarama?

Griffin: It's Morris Day and the Time. So you may not want to leave. You may want to catch The Time. Uh, yeah, this sphere collides with the ground, leaves a little skid mark on entry, and uh, the door pops open.

Travis: We get in.

Merle: Let's get in!

Griffin: Okay. You are uh, floating back toward the moon, back over the mountains. You can see the teeth below you. You see the Letterman's Basin below you. It's another beautiful scene. You're floating up. It's mid-day as you're moving up, up, up, up over the clouds. And as you penetrate the cloud layer, uh—

Clint: The credits start to roll.

Griffin: The credits start to roll. A soft accordion music is playing.

Clint: [sings] Que Seraaa, Seraaa...

Griffin: And you see the moon above you getting closer, much closer, and then a small hole opens up in it, and then you fly up into the moon. And uh, are received in the uh, the launch room by... oh fuck, what's his name? Avi. You are received by Avi, who says, uh...

Avi: Hey, guys. How'd it go?

Travis: Well, hold on. Avi's great and all, but we did just collect another article. I thought maybe we'd get some kind of hero's welcome, like, end of like, uh... what is it? End of New Hope.

Griffin: Uh, nope. Nothing like that.

Travis: [laughs] Okay.

Clint: Griffin, I want to know something. Do you have a wall, like the homicide detectives, y'know, with it's just covered with pictures of all these people like Avi and...

Griffin: And Johann, and...

Clint: How do you keep it straight?

Griffin: Uh, all in my dome piece, brother. I got a murder wall in my brain.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: That's... that's weird.

Taako: Avi, listen. We need to get to the administrator as soon as possible.

Avi: Did you recover—did you recover a Relic?

Taako: Uh, yeah, for sure.

Magnus: Yeah.

Avi: You guys are unstoppable! You guys are fuckin' legends!

Taako: We're like a runaway train, never comin' back.

Merle: Whoaaa!

Avi: Oh, I get it!

Justin: And then I jump, and then we all three jump in the air and fuckin' freeze frame.

Travis: For six minutes.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Says Miller-Boyett Productions. End of the episode.

Clint: Sit, Ubu, sit.

Justin: Good dog.

Clint: [laughing]

Travis: [sings the Quantum Leap theme]

Griffin: Uh, the entire Quantum Leap theme plays, and you unfreeze, and uh, Avi leads you back to the director's chamber, and she says, uh...

Director: I can't believe you've done it again. I can't believe you've done this.

Griffin: Uh, and uh, wheels out another one of those heavy, lead balls, led by a heavily armed guard, who wheels it up to you on a tray and pops the uh, pops a hole open in the lead ball. Points towards it and says, uh...

Guard: Put it right in there, brother!

Clint: Where's Davenport?

Justin: I have a question. If I um, if I've already resisted the thrall of it, am I cool to—

Griffin: Yeah, you're cool.

Justin: Okay. I take out the monocle and I put it in the ball.

Griffin: Okay. As he shuts the, uh, the window pane door of this lead ball, you hear a voice from inside go...

Voice: Aww, come on, maaan. Aww, come oon. [muffled] Oh, come on. Come on, maaan.

Clint: [laughs]

Voice: [muffled] Aww, man. Maaan.

Griffin: Uh, and uh, the guard wheels the lead ball out of the room.

Magnus: Man, we didn't even get to play with the monocle.

Clint: And we don't even know what it does!

Griffin: Uhh, and uh, wheels it into the Cerebro chamber, and the director pulls the curtain, so you can see into the chamber. Same things happens. The lead ball floats up, columns of light shoot through it, uhh, and then the ball descends. The guard comes into the chamber, wheels the ball out back into the room and opens it up, and it is empty.

Merle: It's beautifu—what?

Griffin: Uh, and the director says, uh...

Director: You have just destroyed another incredibly powerful Relic. That Relic was imbued with impossible illusion magic. It's called The Oculus... Rift. No.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Director: It's just called The Oculus, and it is able to turn anything you create with illusion magic into something real; into something tangible.

Magnus: But that sounds great!

Director: It's very great, unless you use it to conjure an illusory army, or some sort of illusory dragon, or an illusory black hole—

Taako: Sounds very great. Okay, very great.

Director: —that then destroys the world.

Merle: Not seeing a downside.

Magnus: But we could've used that for so much good!

Director: You cannot use the Grand Relics for good. Their power overwhelms, and inevitably leads only to evil.

Travis: Uh, Griffin, in case you were wondering, this is the scene at which we start to plant the seed of like, "Oh, 20 episodes from now when Magnus like, splinters off, and is like, "We can use these for good!" This is the beginning of it.

Griffin: Oh, I see, I see, I see.

Clint: Yeah, this is the endgame. We're setting the scene for the endgame.

Travis: Yeah. This all begins now.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: We could've used it for good, the power, as long as it was wielded responsibly!

Griffin: The director says, uh...

Director: You better keep that shit in check.

Clint: [laughs]

Director: 'Cause that sort of thinking will consume you, and tear you apart from your friends and lead you to create a rival Bureau faction.

Magnus: You're probably right. This will probably never come up again.

Merle: Led by Dark Magnus.

Taako: Sorry, but... once Magnus gets started thinking about something, it's hard to stop. He's like a runaway train, never coming back.

Merle: Oho! [crosstalk] How much longer?

Director: I take it your adventure involved the train.

Magnus: Well, yeah. You knew that. You sent us down there to get on the train. Come on.

Director: I just would've thought that you would've used your powers of persuasion to get the Relic off the train before it even departed, but the... the way you did it was certainly interesting.

Magnus: Well, that's what we're here for.

Taako: Ours had murder.

Director: Had what?

Taako: Murther. Most foul.

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: The modern bee sting!

Magnus: We made some good friends, and we grew closer as a group along the way. I would say it was very satisfying, as far as storytelling goes.

Director: Well, friendship, I would say, is the greatest reward that you can receive in this life, or any other life.

Magnus: That said, it is important that when we erase this from everyone's memories, uh, we also erase it from like, Angus and Graham. I don't want those people calling us.

Director: Uh, that won't be necessary. We won't need to erase anyone's memory on this job, because you didn't destroy a city this time.

Magnus: Yay! Is this our quarterly review?

Director: This is your quarterly review. Compared to last time, 100% year over year improvement.

Magnus: Yaaay!

Clint: [laughs]

Director: Do y'all want to get paid, or nah?

Merle: Yeah!

Magnus: Yeah!

Taako: Yeah!

Director: [yells] Davenport!

Griffin: And Davenport comes out.

Davenport: Davenport!

Griffin: And uh, walks up to you with a silver tray with three more fantasy gachapon tokens on it, and a sack containing 2,100 gold pieces.

Taako: Woohoo!

Magnus: And how much is the stuff in Taako's bag worth?

Director: What, uh... sorry, what?

Magnus: The stuff clanking around as we walked around town?

Taako: That's my CPAP machine.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Taako: Thanks for bringing it up, though. That's really nice.

Travis: [laughing uncontrollably]

Taako: Wow, what scumbags you are, huh? Guy's got one fallibility, gotta rub in his face.

Clint: And here's the bad thing – only one of actually uses a CPAP machine. Why am I laughing?!

Taako: It's not funny.

Travis: [still laughing]

Griffin: It's pretty funny.

Clint: Then, in that case, no perception check. Let him keep it.

Justin: I don't mean to pick on you, Dad. Once we get started, it's hard to stop. It's like a runaway train!

Clint: Haaa!

Justin: High five! Freeze frame!

Griffin: We're done.

Clint: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

Griffin: One more thing before we let you go – I just wanted to thank Nature Box one more time. Nature Box is where you can order hundreds of great tasting, healthy snacks. Go to NatureBox.com/Adventure, and you can sign up for a free sampler box of great tasting, healthy snacks!

Next episode's up on June 18th. We will see you then.

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[music plays]

Guy: Oh, hey there, everybody. I'm Guy Branum, and welcome to Pop Rocket, a new weekly show picking over the pop culture we all love to love. We're here to talk TV, film, music, and anything else entertaining. Our

journalist, Margaret Wappler, academic writer and DJ, Oliver Wang, digital strategist, Wynter Mitchell, and comedian, Santana Muha.

Speaker 1: It's an intellectual and incredibly snark-filled discussion about pop culture by five cranky Hollywood 30-somethings. No name calling, no rudeness, just straight talk and a lot of roleplay.

Guy: I'm only 30-something for another year.

Speaker 2: Me too. And I don't... tell anybody I'm 30-something.

Speaker 3: [laughing]

Guy: Pop Rocket comes out every week from MaximumFun.org.