

## **The Adventure Zone: Graduation – Ep. 24, With Frenemies Like This**

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**Gary:** Heyyy everybody! It's me, Gary! Previously, on The Adventure Zone: Graduation...

[theme music plays]

**Gary:** Three fellows enrolled at Hieronymous Wigenstaff's School for Heroism and Villainy. Specifically, in the henchperson and sidekick annex. Their names are Fitzroy, Argo, and a Firbolg to be named later. They've gone on some whimsical adventures, and grown closer as friends.

Oh! Also, they're deep in preparation for an upcoming war with a powerful demon prince, and they're doing their best to recruit folks to their side. So far, they've got the support of a secret society called The Unbroken Chain, they've got Sabour the turtle librarian researching the demon, Gray, and... that's about it.

Still, they've got a lot of irons in the fire, and I'm sure they'll have an army in no time!

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** It has been two weeks since the tribunal, and you have been training. So, uh, that is going to mean we've leveled up. But first, I want to hear like... what specific areas do you think the three of you have been training in?

**Griffin:** I've been learning French.

**Travis:** Huh. Okay.

**Justin:** Poor use of time.

**Griffin:** Uhh... yeah, I don't know who speaks French in this uh, fantastical world. And it's not in the like, D&D book as a proficiency that you can take. So I'm doing a little bit of homebrew, and I hope that's okay with Travis.

**Travis:** It's actually—Celestial is French.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** It's one to one.

**Griffin:** I mean, I think I'm—here's what's interesting, is that I am multiclassing. So like, I can choose to either get stronger with my now eight inches taller body. Um, but I went ahead and just sort of kept working on my... on my magic. So... that's probably a little bit of work with uh... little bit of work with Festo. But also, a little bit of—

**Travis:** I miss Festo.

**Griffin:** I miss Festo too. Let's do some Festo work. So yeah. Been doing some work with Festo. Coming to a deeper understanding of my chaotic powers.

**Travis:** Does that come with—and I mean, we can find new spells and stuff as we move forward. But does that, uh, translate to anything specific you want to touch on in the level up?

**Griffin:** Um, so I have this ability now that... I don't know how to sort of like, reconcile it with the sort of chaotic... uh, nature of my powers. But I have an ability called Bend Luck.

**Travis:** Ooh!

**Griffin:** And it's—whenever anybody, ally or enemy alike, makes a roll, uh, I can spend sorcery points to adjust that roll, either positive or negative, by 1d4.

**Travis:** Oh!

**Griffin:** So like, if one of you guys just misses, uh... and I use this as a reaction. So it's after the roll happens. So like, if you guys like, miss a—

**Travis:** That's sick, dude.

**Griffin:** —very important saving throw, I can bend luck to change the result.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Which is fuckin' cool.

**Justin:** That's cool.

**Griffin:** And I got some new spells. Some like, pretty wild spells. I'm up to third level spells now. So...

**Travis:** Ooh. What about you, J-Man?

**Justin:** Yeah, I uh... not a lot. My Wild Shape got a little better.

**Travis:** Little wilder.

**Justin:** Little wilder shape. So I take on the appearance of Gene Wilder.

**Travis:** Ooh, nice!

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** And... yeah. And all his great—

**Clint:** Which Gene Wilder, though?

**Travis:** Good question.

**Griffin:** I don't think there's that much different between Gene in his many roles.

**Justin:** It's actually Something Wilder Gene Wilder. So a little bit... twilight years, not great material. As I continue to level up, I'll eventually reach like, Blazing Saddles and other Gene Wilder performances. But I uh... I took, uh... [laughs] I took, um, a new feat, instead of leveling up an ability. I took Savage Attacker.

**Travis:** Ooh!

**Justin:** Once per turn, when you roll damage for a melee weapon attack, you can reroll the weapon's damage dice and use either total.

**Griffin:** Whoa.

**Justin:** So, my theory is that like, the Firbolg knows what's coming. I mean, like... the... his altruism is obviously untouched, but like, he understands having to fight for... y'know, his people. And I think he is prepared for... basically, for battle.

**Travis:** Uh, what about you, Argonaut?

**Clint:** Dang it. I didn't know about the feats.

**Travis:** You don't need 'em! You are an invisible stabby genius! You don't need no feats!

**Clint:** Okay, well, here's what, uh...

**Justin:** You're a strong, independent rogue.

**Travis:** Yeah. You don't need no feats.

**Justin:** You don't need no feats.

**Clint:** He... [laughs] Argo has been uh, taking acting classes.

**Travis:** Okay. Sure.

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

**Griffin:** In every campaign, Dad has to also be involved in musical theater to some extent. Whether he is playing a large beetle, or... a half, uh, aquatic genie man. He must be an actor.

**Clint:** He joined the drama club. Argo joined the drama club, and has been learning about...

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Well, let's be honest, Dad. Argo started the drama club.

**Clint:** Okay. So... and it's just him so far. But...

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Clint:** He's been doing—y'know, working on one man shows. But what this has done is, this has uh, increased his uh... um, charisma.

**Travis:** Ooh.

**Clint:** To the point where uh, he now has an action called Panache.

**Travis:** Sure he does.

**Clint:** Where he can make a charisma check against an enemy's wisdom check. And uh, if they—if he overcomes that, if the enemy is hostile, and he wins the check, then the enemy is at disadvantage on attacks against everybody.

**Travis:** Ooh!

**Griffin:** Oh! Wow. That's pretty big.

**Clint:** Yeah! So let's make fun of acting class now!

**Griffin:** No, we still will.

**Travis:** We didn't make fun of acting class.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** We made fun of you. [laughs] Hey, Dad. Let's be clear.

**Clint:** Right, right.

**Travis:** Uh, we all enjoy acting class.

**Clint:** And instead of a feat, which I wish I had known about... I just added more to my dexterity. [laughs] Because I've never had, um... a bonus of 12 on anything, so...

**Travis:** Jesus!

**Clint:** So he's 12 on sleight of hand, 12 on stealth, and 12 on acrobatics.

**Travis:** I might have to cap it there, just for future... 'cause at that point, if you roll like, a three or more, you're gonna pass pretty much every check. [laughs] So like, I think we'll cap it at plus 12.

**Griffin:** You let Dad be rogue, mister fuckin' Magnus Five Attack Burnsides.

**Clint:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** I don't think you get to cap anything.

**Travis:** I—12 is so much, you guys!

**Griffin:** Mm-hmm!

**Clint:** You can go up to 20!

**Griffin:** Well, now he can jump higher. A 15 check is for fuckin' babies.

**Travis:** I don't—hey, Dad? I'm—I don't know—yeah. Okay, from now on, all of Dad's checks are 35.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay, so. After another hard day of training, the three of you return to your dorms, and drift off to sleep, slash half trance. And you find yourselves back in the hell dimension.

[chaotic music plays]

**Travis:** It is exactly as you remember it, save for the absence of the physical discomfort you felt during your visit. The mental discomfort is missing, too – except for you, Argo. The memory of madness picks away at the edges of your mind.

Fitzroy, the landscape you took in from atop the rock formation is just as you remember it. The onyx palace, the portal, the silhouette. Everything is the same... except for the table set for tea. There are several three-tiered trays of sandwiches and cakes, as well as a crystal blue tea set. Seated at the head of the table is Chaos.

**Chaos:** Come, gentlemen. Sit.

**Fitzroy:** I mean, what are we workin' with? Is this a Earl Gray situation, or a sort of... um, wow, I can't think of another type of tea.

**Chaos:** Oolong. Darjeeling.

**Fitzroy:** Yes. Those. Is it one of them?

**Chaos:** It's whatever you want.

**Fitzroy:** I mean, it's all hot leaves to me. Master Firbolg, do you have a certain affinity for leaf water?

**Firbolg:** Well, yes. But normally... just leaves and water. This is very, eh... fancy for me.

**Fitzroy:** I mean, this is a dream, right? I want it to taste like the um... when I got a bicycle for, uh, my birthday.

**Travis:** You take a sip, and it tastes exactly like when you got a bicycle for your birthday.

**Fitzroy:** Whoa, okay. Y'all gotta try this.

**Argo:** I'd like a caramel cider with whipped cream.

**Chaos:** Oh, we can't do that. No, I'm just kidding. Try your tea. Please, sit. Sit.

**Firbolg:** Berries?

**Chaos:** You want your tea to taste like berries?

**Firbolg:** Mm... fresh berries?

**Travis:** You take a sip, and it tastes like the freshest berries you've ever tasted.

**Firbolg:** Blah! Is too fresh.



**Clint:** [laughs]

**Firbolg:** I kid.

**Chaos:** Now, gentlemen, I have to tell you... I am not happy with you.

**Fitzroy:** Why not? Why nooot?

**Chaos:** Because I have heard this talk of secret assassination, and I promised Gray a war. I will not let you break my promise.

**Fitzroy:** Who blabbed?

**Chaos:** I know what you know.

**Fitzroy:** Yeah, that makes sense, actually?

**Argo:** But do you know what I know?

**Fitzroy:** Ooh.

**Argo:** Do you know what Firbolg knows... ?

**Firbolg:** Everybody knows what Firbolg knows.

**Argo:** That's true.

**Fitzroy:** Um, listen. We can get into a semantics argument as much as you want, but... assassination is part of war. Subterfuge is part of war. I made this point to Gray. I can't believe I have to make it to the, y'know, sentient origin of my arcane abilities.

**Chaos:** For things to be on track, this war must be public, and you must win it.

**Fitzroy:** I gotta say something, Chaos. For an entity that embodies pure chaos, you sure seem to make a lot of plans.

**Chaos:** Chaos is what I am called. Now, listen...

**Firbolg:** Is coincidence?

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Chaos:** I have been known by many names. I do not care how you defeat Gray. But there must be a war... and the public must see you win it.

**Travis:** And with that, you wake back in your beds. And it's time for breakfast.

[chaotic music fades]

**Argo:** Fellas, I had the weirdest dream.

**Fitzroy:** Yeah, we all did. We all were in it.

**Argo:** I was goin' out on stage to be in a play, and I didn't have any pant—oh. You had that dream?

**Fitzroy:** Oh, no. No, we didn't do that one. Ours was more hell-based.

**Argo:** Oh, I had that one too. Okay.

**Firbolg:** The barriers between the dreams have been... weakened. It is, perhaps, a vortex.

**Travis:** You reach the cafeteria, and Fitzroy... you are once again disappointed. Because for the last two weeks, the crepe machine has disappeared.

**Fitzroy:** He followed through. That—that frickin' jerk.

**Travis:** No more crepes for sir Fitzroy.

**Griffin:** I'll make my own. What do we got? Where's the omelet station?

**Travis:** It's gone too. [laughs] No.

**Fitzroy:** No! What?! I will starve!

**Argo:** Just have a waffle. It's right over here where the waffle—whaaaat?!

**Fitzroy:** Nooo!

**Griffin:** No, that's fine. I'll eat—

**Argo:** I just don't think the student body should have to suffer because of us.

**Griffin:** My new eight inches of pure muscle requires nothing but protein. I barely feel the loss of this crepe machine. I am eating fuckin' cod and other white fish like it's my—like it is my job.

**Travis:** Uh, so, you sit down at your table to eat, I assume, berries, citrus, and apparently, a plate laden with fish.

**Griffin:** Just a bowl. I eat it like ice cream, this cod.

**Travis:** Now, are these like, whole fish? Are you doing it like a cartoon cat, where you put the whole fish in, and then you pull out the skellington?

**Griffin:** Travis, my class—only my *class* is barbarian.

**Travis:** Oh, I see. I see.

**Griffin:** I don't adhere to that, in terms of civility.

**Travis:** I'm sorry.

**Clint:** So you have one pinky kind of crooked as you eat your fish.

**Griffin:** As I slam jam this cod right into my food hole.

**Travis:** Rainer joins you, very excited, practically bouncing in her chair. And she says...

**Rainer:** Great news, Fitzroy! My father has agreed to meet with you!

**Fitzroy:** Oh, cool. Can everyone come? Field trip?

**Rainer:** Um... it would probably be best if it was just you? That was kind of the arrangement.

**Fitzroy:** Uh-huh. But I can't roll anywhere without my road... uh, my road... dogs.

**Rainer:** Well, he said he would come here!

**Fitzroy:** Oh, that's even better!

**Rainer:** Yeah! He gave me the directions for a summoning circle, so he'll come for a visit. Um, and...

**Fitzroy:** But we'll need more people for the summoning circle, right? Or else it'll be more of a sort of summoning line.

**Rainer:** Well, the circle is on the ground. And I just need to get some ingredients.

**Fitzroy:** Ohh. Okay.

**Rainer:** Uh, but I can get them by tonight! Do you wanna meet me out by the big tree tonight, and we'll summon my dad?

**Fitzroy:** Uh, weird sentence. Weird sentence. But uh, yes. I think that that would be very prudent.

**Rainer:** Excellent! It's a date.

**Travis:** And she floats off.

**Fitzroy:** It's—it's a—okay. It's a...

**Argo:** Fiiitz has got a giiirlfrieend!

**Fitzroy:** Okay. So this is—I'm—this is a—I'm... this is why we don't hang out more. [laughs] Um...

**Argo:** Meetin' with the parents! That's a pretty big step!

**Fitzroy:** Well, the parent is an extremely powerful evil sort of master of the arcane. So that's mostly what I'm trying to tap into? Um, that's kind of what—that's what I'm mostly sort of arranging this meeting for?

**Firbolg:** Um... ah, let me tell you something.

**Fitzroy:** Okay.

**Firbolg:** Or, uh... no. No, Argonaut.

**Argo:** Yes? Mm-hmm?

**Firbolg:** You must approach these things like... a boat maker. You cannot rush the ship.

**Griffin:** [snorts]

[pause]

**Fitzroy:** Yeah, what he said.

**Griffin:** Oh, Justin loves that one.

**Travis:** Yeah, Justin cracked up at Firbolg's joke!

**Justin:** [laughing]

**Griffin:** Justin looves that good joke Firbolg told.

**Travis:** This is a level of meta we've never reached before.

**Justin:** Characters come to me, and they just tell me what's on their mind!

**Clint:** [laughing]

**Justin:** And that's what he said, is you can't rush the ship!

**Travis:** Uh-huh. It's amazing, though, 'cause you might not realize this, Justin... that actually has a deeper meaning here in our universe!

**Justin:** Yeah. I'm kind of—no, yeah. It's—he stumbled into it, but I, as an outside observer to his intellect, was like, "Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, good one, bud."

**Fitzroy:** So that's what I'm doing for uh—to further our secret demon war effort. What are the two of you up to?

**Travis:** Well, it's funny you should ask! It's time...

**Justin:** Who is—

**Travis:** ... for some training!

**Gary:** It's me, Gary! It's time for some training!

**Travis:** Is that better, Justin?

**Justin:** I just don't know—I mean, I don't—I didn't know who you—a lot—some of the characters in this game sound like you, so I didn't know if it was one of them. [laughs]

**Travis:** That's fair. That's absolutely fair. Uh, I represent the force of time, moving ever onwards!

**Justin:** Nice.

[jazzy music plays]

**Justin:** Hey, where have you been for the past six months?

**Travis:** That's a great question. So, uh, today, you're scheduled to train with Dakota. So you have been routinely meeting with members of The Unbroken Chain to try to uh, y'know, gather whatever experience you can from their expertise. And today, you're going to meet Dakota in the tavern.

**Argo:** We're doin' some drinkin'! [laughs]

**Travis:** Well, what you're gonna work on is lying.

**Clint:** [gasps]

**Travis:** So Dakota meets you there in the tavern and says...

**Dakota:** Ah, hello, boys! Come on in! Now, uh, let's get right into it. We don't got a ton of time. So, uh, Fitzroy and Argo... you're gonna work on findin' out lies, right? Detecting lies. We need a little more insight from the two of you, if we're gonna find out who these moles are.

So, we're gonna play a little game. The two of you are gonna take turns telling each other two facts about yourself. One true, one false. The other will try to figure out which is which, and to make it interesting, whoever has the most correct answers at the end gets a ten gold credit at the bar.

**Fitzroy:** Um, I'm afraid I'll have to sit this lesson out. I have a terrible stomach ache, and I have a doctor's note. And uh, I'm afraid I must mark myself absent because of my terrible tummy ache.

**Firbolg:** Why have you not mentioned this previously? We would have cared for you!

**Fitzroy:** No, it was a—that was me doing a lie.

**Travis:** Uh, so here's how that's going to work. When—after you tell the two lies, or the two statements. One is a lie, one is the truth. Uh, you will make contested checks, where the person telling the facts will make a deception check, and the person receiving the facts will make an insight check. And if your insight check is high enough, you will figure out which is the lie and which is the truth.

**Griffin:** Can we not just do that with our fuckin' mind's eye? I guess we're playing Dungeons & Dragons.

**Travis:** We're playing Dungeons & Dragons.

**Griffin:** That's fair.

**Dakota:** Now, Firbolg. You are going to practice lying to me.

**Fitzroy:** [laughs] Can me and Argo not do this thing, and just watch the other thing?

**Dakota:** Alright, you two boys go ahead and start your thing. And then I'll work with the Firbolg.

**Fitzroy:** So two truths and a lie?

**Dakota:** Well, just one truth and one lie.



**Fitzroy:** Oh, okay.

**Griffin:** This is like the part of—there's like, a Jackbox game that I play with my friends in our weekly Zoom call, and this is the ending round of it, and I'm so dogshit at it. I can never think of true things.

**Travis:** Well, this is—you can make them up!

**Griffin:** I guess so. We're talking about—

**Travis:** This is fantasy made up bullshit!

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Clint:** So how do we do this? Who goes first?

**Dakota:** Uh, Argonaut, why don't you go first? Because alphabetically, Argo is first.

**Argo:** Okay! Uh, well, alright. The true statements. Two statements. Uh... I have webbed toes... and... when I pee, it smells like tangerines.

**Fitzroy:** No rolls necessary. Both are true.

**Clint:** So what do I roll?

**Travis:** Uh, you're going to roll a deception check. And Fitzroy, you are going to make an insight check.

**Griffin:** Okay. Three plus zero. Three.

**Clint:** Nat 20.

**Griffin:** Jesus Christ.

**Clint:** Plus six for deception. 26.

**Griffin:** I die. I take psychic damage and die.

**Travis:** Yeah. You have no idea what a lie even is. You're just so taken in by both of these facts that you are totally distracted.

**Fitzroy:** I wasn't paying attention. Point, Argonaut Keene.

**Travis:** Now, Argo, are you going to tell him which is which, or just keep that to yourself?

**Clint:** No, I'll tell him.

**Argo:** Uh, I do have webbed toes.

**Fitzroy:** Ah! That's great. I'm not surprised by that. You are—

**Argo:** My pee smells like kiwis.

**Travis:** Ahh.

**Fitzroy:** Ahh! That's how they getcha!

**Argo:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Alright, Fitzroy. Your turn.

**Fitzroy:** Um, let's see. I... spend my winters at a lovely cottage, uh, owned by my family. Well, it's part of our estate. The actual chain of ownership is complicated, but I winter there, and uh, spend my days skiing with private instructors. And the other statement is that... I have... a lot of cavities. Like, a lot. Like, four of them unaddressed, 'cause I'm scared of the dentist.

**Argo:** Okay.

**Travis:** Now roll.

**Griffin:** That's an 18 plus eight. 26. [laughs]

**Clint:** Hm. Alright. And... alright, so uh, I'm rolling. And by the way, I have placed the Monocle of Misdirection in my eye, which gives me an advantage on insight checks.

**Griffin:** Oh. Okay.

**Clint:** That is a 16 minus one! That's 15!

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Can I just posit that if your modifier is minus one, it's literally impossible for you to beat my roll.

**Travis:** Unless he gets a crit.

**Griffin:** Ah, that's fair. That's fair.

**Clint:** So... not gonna get a crit.

**Travis:** Noo. Oh, see, after Fitzroy said the thing about the cavities, he smiled at you, and man, his teeth look so good! You're pretty sure his family is very poor, what with you knowing his dad is a long haul caravaner... but his teeth also look nice! So it's kind of hard to tell! So you whiff that one.

**Clint:** I missed it.

**Argo:** Yeah, nice job. You are such a liar!

**Fitzroy:** Yeah, here's—I feel like I can condense this game down pretty good. I'm really, really good at lying. I'm really, really, really good at lying. I am absolute dog dookie when it comes to figuring out if somebody else is lying.

**Dakota:** Yes, this is why we train. You're both good at lyin', so you don't need to practice that part. We're practicing the insight part.

**Fitzroy:** Ohh, yeah. Okay.

**Dakota:** Yeah?

**Fitzroy:** We do need some work on that.

**Dakota:** So here's what we'll do for round two. If you see any like, holes in the lie, then you will have an advantage there, and make it easier to figure it out.

**Travis:** Which means you'll actually have advantage!

**Griffin:** Yeah, we figured it out. You literally said the word.

**Dakota:** Now, Firbolg, I want you to tell me what you had for breakfast. And I want—

**Firbolg:** Berries.

**Dakota:** Okay. And I want you to lie.

**Firbolg:** [sighs] [inhales]

**Dakota:** You can do it.

**Firbolg:** [makes a horrible strained breathing sound] Or...an...ges.

**Fitzroy:** [gasps]

**Dakota:** Oh, that was so good!

**Firbolg:** [gags violently]

**Dakota:** Oh, Jesus.

**Argo:** [laughing]

**Fitzroy:** [laughing]

**Dakota:** Okay.

**Firbolg:** [vomiting loudly]

**Dakota:** Okay. Alright. Do you need a cold wash cloth?

**Firbolg:** [gags]

**Dakota:** Okay.

**Fitzroy:** I mean, it is berries.

**Dakota:** It is berries. Yes, I do see the berries.

**Firbolg:** The evidence is before you.

**Argo:** Firbolg... may I offer up a word of advice from an experienced liar?

**Firbolg:** Yes.

**Argo:** Okay. You can still say something that is the truth... in the long run. But is a lie in the short run. Like, for instance, they asked you to tell what you had for breakfast. They didn't say *when*. You could've given them something you had for breakfast... two weeks ago, and they would've assumed it meant today! So you're not really *lying*, you're just kind of playing in gray area!

**Firbolg:** This is... what... no. You are playing with forces that are millennia old. This is a lie of omission. This is also extremely difficult for me.

**Argo:** Well, since you got puke on my leg, I was trying to hope to avoid that.

**Firbolg:** Appreciate the effort.

**Dakota:** Okay. Let me think for a minute. You two, round two. Go.

**Argo:** Uh, you go first this time, Fitz.

**Fitzroy:** Um, okay. Uhh... the stylish spectacles that I wear on my face are... prescription. I have a prescription from a doctor for them. And the other statement... is that I um, the other statement is that I was on the jazz dance team at Clyde Nite's Night Knight School. And was, in fact, the captain.

Now, was there competitive jazz dance? I'm here to tell you... maybe. It depends on if that's true or not.

**Argo:** Alright.

**Clint:** Now, does he roll?

**Travis:** Yep.

**Clint:** I mean...

**Griffin:** That's a 16 plus eight. That's a 24.

**Travis:** Now, you tell me, Argo. Based off of what he said, do you have any insight – on your own, without rolling – that makes you think that this is not true?

**Griffin:** [laughing] Can I answer for him?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** I don't think my glasses have lenses in them. [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay, so let's say this. Uh, Argonaut, make a perception check for me?

**Griffin:** [laughing]

**Clint:** Perception check?

**Travis:** Yes, perception check.

**Clint:** Alright. 18 plus three. 21.

**Travis:** Okay, so with that, you can see just by looking at him that he does not have lenses in his glasses, right? Now, because you have the monocle, so you already have advantage, I'm going to give you plus five to your highest roll.

**Clint:** Okay. This is insight?

**Travis:** Correct.

**Clint:** 15... shit. Minus one.

**Griffin:** Plus five.

**Clint:** Plus five. So that's 19. But do I have advantage?

**Travis:** Yes, because of the monocle, right?

**Clint:** Do I get to roll again? Okay. Right. Ah, that's not gonna do it either. So 19. I did not do it.

**Travis:** Well, you didn't beat it. And so, Fitz, very good lie. Who would ever believe that you were on the jazz team? So even though, Argo, you know that those are fake glasses...

**Griffin:** [laughs] Well, hold on. They may not be a prescription for my eyes.

**Travis:** Exactly.

**Griffin:** Maybe they're doin' something to the tops of my ears.

**Travis:** They're holding his ears down. They're keeping his head from expanding out the side.

**Griffin:** Exactly.

**Dakota:** Now, you're up, Argonaut.

**Argo:** Okay. Um... Uh, I have, um, a vestigial tail. A vestigial fish tail that uh, is... is a real pain when I uh, have to use the restroom, because it's... it's not up and down. It's across.

**Fitzroy:** Please let this be the true one.

**Argo:** Um... and, um, I uh... have... at times, considered a career in the dance. I'm talking, uh... I'm talking about traditional folk dancing.

**Fitzroy:** Oh, well if that one's true, we have a lot to talk about.

**Argo:** Of which I have a lot of taste.

**Fitzroy:** Yeah. Did—have you ever done any jazz dance? Are you interested in—

**Dakota:** He doesn't have to answer you yet!

**Fitzroy:** Ugh, god.



**Clint:** 16 plus six. That's 22.

**Griffin:** [mumbling] Jesus.

**Travis:** A good roll. Now, Fitzroy. Can you figure out any other skill that you might use to try to give yourself advantage on this?

**Clint:** Wait, hold on a second. Hold on. I have advantage on deception rolls as well with the monocle.

**Travis:** Oh boy.

**Clint:** Yeah. So 16 plus six, 22, or... oh, that was 15, so I'll stick with the 22.

**Travis:** That's a good call. It is the higher one.

**Clint:** It's math. Yeah.

**Griffin:** I'm gonna roll performance to see if I recognize the heart of a dancer.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Do you know what I mean?

**Travis:** Oh, absolutely! You've seen him move.

**Griffin:** You can look in a dancer's eyes... yeah.

**Travis:** Yeah. You've seen him in the hallway when someone's not looking where they're going and they're about to bump into them, and he's moved out of the way.

**Griffin:** He's lithe. He's lithe, but that doesn't necessarily mean that you can channel that into a rhythmic...

**Travis:** Right. Does he have the heart of a dancer? I totally get it.

**Griffin:** [laughing] 19 plus four. 23.

**Travis:** Well, so you tell me, Argonaut. Do you have the heart of a dancer?

**Griffin:** I hope the answer's no. 'Cause I want that tail to be there.

**Clint:** The answer's no. I do not have the heart of a dancer.

**Travis:** Okay! So, you are going to have—

**Clint:** And let me tell you something – it was awful, last episode, when I shit my pants.

**Griffin:** Yeah, I bet.

**Travis:** Oh boysee.

**Griffin:** Yikes yikes. Okay. Lot to unpack. Lot to unpack.

**Travis:** Yeah. Okay, so, uh, Fitzroy, you're going to roll insight with advantage.

**Griffin:** Okay. I got a four.

**Travis:** That's not it.

**Griffin:** Uh, and I got an 18 plus zero. 18.

**Travis:** Okay. That's—man, you guys are both so good at lying. But you're getting good at using your other skills to buff your insight, which is a good lesson to take away from here.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Dakota:** Okay, Firbolg. I have an idea, right? What kind of berries did you have for breakfast?

**Firbolg:** Uh... [clears throat] Red berries.

**Dakota:** Okay, great. I want you to tell me that you had reddish pink berries.

**Firbolg:** [takes a deep breath]

**Fitzroy:** I mean, if you had seen these berries... they were pretty red.

**Dakota:** Right. Right right right. So—

**Firbolg:** Reddish... pink. Berries.

**Dakota:** Okay. How's that make you feel?

**Firbolg:** Bad.

**Dakota:** How bad? Scale of one to ten.

**Firbolg:** Six.

**Dakota:** Okay, now say it again.

**Firbolg:** Stabbed with axe is seven.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Dakota:** Okay. Say—what did you have for breakfast, Firbolg?

**Firbolg:** Pinkish red berries.

**Dakota:** Okay. How's that make you feel? Is it the same level, or less?

**Firbolg:** Same.

**Dakota:** Okay. I want you to just keep sayin' it.

**Firbolg:** [quietly] Reddish... pink. Reddish pink. Reddish pink. Bad. All lies.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Dakota:** But each one of them's the same level?

**Firbolg:** It's getting worse.

**Dakota:** Oh.

**Argo:** Is it the same for pinkish red as it was for reddish pink?

**Firbolg:** This is equivalent.

**Fitzroy:** I'm gonna break out a color wheel, and you can tell me at what point, on the wheel, you start getting uncomfortable.

**Firbolg:** Mm.

**Fitzroy:** So here we are in red.

**Firbolg:** Good.

**Fitzroy:** We're gonna move the brightness slider up just a little bit. Sort of a bright red.

**Firbolg:** Extremely painful.

**Fitzroy:** Okay.

**Argo:** Crimson. Crimson.

**Fitzroy:** There's very little wiggle room here!

**Firbolg:** This is not a trick! I do not need immersion therapy!

**Fitzroy:** No, I would say not.

**Firbolg:** I don't lie!

**Dakota:** Okay, okay. I'm formulatin' a plan. Uh, you two, final round.

**Fitzroy:** I think we're tied, 'cause we keep lying and not getting it.

**Dakota:** Correct.

**Argo:** Uh... I have never met my Genasi father. My true dad. Never met him, never laid eyes on him. And that's... [mumbles] Sad, I know. But I have never once seen him. And... um... I actually... find... the breath of cats to be... kind of pleasant, and not all that nauseating.

**Fitzroy:** Gross.

**Travis:** Okay, so. Go ahead and roll, Argo.

**Clint:** 18... phew. Plus six. That's 24. Wait, I have advantage... 12. Okay, so, 18 plus six. 24.

**Travis:** Okay, now, Fitzroy, can you think of a skill that you could use to determine whether or not you might have insight into this?

**Griffin:** Not really. I mean, animal handling? Do I see his—but I don't—I am not trained in animal handling at all, so I don't think that that would be it.

**Travis:** Okay. Then just give me an absolutely baller insight check.

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure. 11.

**Travis:** Nope!

**Griffin:** Ballin'! A ballin' 11. Sorry, I should've spoken more clearly. A ballin' 11.

**Travis:** Balleven, if you will.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** So Argo, you win that round, too. Are you gonna tell him which one's which?

**Argo:** I... hate... cat breath. It makes me barf.

**Fitzroy:** Okay.

**Travis:** Alright, Fitzroy. It's currently three to two, with Argo slightly ahead. But you could tie it up.

**Fitzroy:** I have a deathly pine nut allergy. One of them gets near me, pfft. Like a blowfish. Deadskis. And as for the other one... I am beginning... to worry... that I may not actually be a knight in absentia in the realm of Goodcastle. And am, in fact, beginning to worry that there is no place, because I've looked at a lot of maps. And it's not on `em.

**Travis:** So you roll, Fitzroy.

**Clint:** Yeah. Well, wait a minute, now.

**Travis:** Hold on, Fitzroy rolls first.

**Griffin:** Uh, that's an 18. Jesus, these rolls. 18 plus eight, 26.

**Travis:** Yeah, Jesus, guys.

**Griffin:** Why are we so good at lying and so bad at virtually everything else?

**Travis:** Okay, now, Argonaut. Do you have any skills that you think would give you insight into this?

**Clint:** Um... oh wait! Wait wait wait wait wait. How about if I made a history check to try to remember if I've ever seen him eating pine nuts?

**Travis:** Go for it.

**Justin:** History.

**Griffin:** [laughing] That's not history!

**Travis:** It is history! Everything before this second is history! I'll allow it.

**Griffin:** M'kay.

**Clint:** 12 plus... three is 15.

**Travis:** You can remember him eating nuts. But to what degree? What kind of nuts? You do not know. You cannot recall.

**Griffin:** Could've been sunflower seeds.

**Travis:** Could've been sunflower seeds!

**Griffin:** Could've fallen prey to that particular illusion before.

**Clint:** Alright. So I don't get any bonus or anything?

**Travis:** No.

**Clint:** Okay. Alright. I don't see how this is possibly going to work. That's a five... I have advantage... that is a 19. Minus one!

**Travis:** Nope!

**Clint:** 18.

**Dakota:** So that one's gonna end. All tied up. And in the case of a tie, I win, so I'm gonna keep that bar tab. Okay, now!

**Argo:** Wait, we could split it!

**Fitzroy:** We could split it. That seems more fair.

**Dakota:** Mm, I'm sorry, them's not the rules, y'know what I mean? Like, ooh, I wish that was it! But... my hands are tied. Now, Firbolg.

**Firbolg:** Yes.

**Dakota:** So far, the mistake I've made is, I have asked you about facts. Right? So I'm gonna ask you about opinion.

**Firbolg:** Yes.

**Dakota:** What did you think of the berries?

**Firbolg:** Mm... they were... fine. Not the best season for berries. But not too fresh. This is important.

**Dakota:** Were they... better than fine?

**Firbolg:** No... ?

**Dakota:** Okay, this is where you're supposed to lie.



**Firbolg:** Oh.

**Dakota:** Right.

**Firbolg:** [pause] Yes.

**Dakota:** How does that make you feel?

**Firbolg:** N... bad...

**Dakota:** Scale of one to ten?

**Firbolg:** ... three. Is very, uh... subjective.

**Dakota:** Okay.

**Firbolg:** Berries... sometimes fine. Is also um... memory, eh? I eat lots of berries every day. The same berries. Maybe I am... confused. Or... remember poorly.

**Dakota:** Huh. Okay, well... you might be onto something there.

**Firbolg:** Mm.

**Dakota:** Because if you're asked about a memory... maybe—okay, let's try this. When I ask you what you had for breakfast, I want you to say, "I can't recall exactly."

**Firbolg:** Mm. I—

**Dakota:** What did you have for breakfast?

**Firbolg:** I can't recall exactly. Which is true. I do not know the number of berries, which would be very exact.

**Dakota:** There you go. So maybe if you just leave off that second part, and just stick with "I don't recall exactly"...

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Argo:** And how does that make you feel?

**Justin:** So basically, you want him to be like a fuckin' oil executive at a deposition, is what you're going with.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** That is correct.

**Justin:** Depends on your definition of exploitation! I don't remember exactly the different meetings that, uh... Mr.Stone and I had, or the different subjects that were discussed at said meetings precisely.

**Travis:** I am trying to teach the Firbolg to plead the fifth.

**Justin:** Okay. That may be as good as you're gonna do with this guy.

**Dakota:** Alright, well, good progress. Uh, all around. Keep practicin'. Uh, and I'll see you guys next week for another session.

**Fitzroy:** Clearly, we don't—no offense, but we're on some...

**Griffin:** Wait, uh, they are in The Unbroken Chain, yes?

**Travis:** Correct.

**Fitzroy:** Yeah, no offense, but like, we are trying to plan a war effort against the demon prince. I feel like lying is already something that two out of the three of us are pretty good at, and I think the third one of us is not going to get much better.

**Dakota:** Sure.

**Firbolg:** I have peaked.

**Dakota:** Uh, yeah. That's kind of—you're kind of missin' the point of the lesson today. See, y'all go around, kind of just anybody who seems nice, you tell them kind of everything that's going on in the whole war effort, and what you're plannin', and kind of what you have in your back pocket, and... you seem to have no idea who to trust, and who not to. So I'm kind of tryin' to help *you two* develop the ability to tell when, *maybe*, someone is not actually as nice as they seem, and might be – get this – lying to you.

**Argo:** Fitzroy, let me handle this one, 'cause you and I are on the same page here.

**Fitzroy:** Please.

**Argo:** To be honest with ya, all of that is a sham. We just pretend to accept people. We know in our hearts, uh, who really sucks.

**Dakota:** Uh-huh.

**Argo:** Because it's, um... I know, because it's a trait of the Genasi to know when someone is evil.

**Clint:** I just rolled a 20 with a six, so—

**Travis:** For what?

**Clint:** 26 deception.

**Fitzroy:** And also, I ate a magic apple when I was a boy that let me know when everybody is lying.

[music plays]

**Dakota:** Okay. This is fun, but... you can't pretend to tell everyone exactly what you're plannin'. That is what you're doin'.

**Fitzroy:** Okay, fine.

**Dakota:** And you asked for a way to try to find the moles before, y'know, they kind of fuck you over.

**Fitzroy:** Yep.

**Clint:** Rolled a nat 20...

**Dakota:** That's what I'm trying to help you do.

**Clint:** I rolled a nat 20...

**Fitzroy:** Okay. We'll be more careful in the future.

**Argo:** [laughs] Oh, good one. Good one.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** So you return to your dorm room. And when you do, you find a note has been slipped under your door, and it reads, "I have finished my research. You are going to want to hear this right away. Come to my office. Sabour."

**Fitzroy:** How could his writing be slow? Like, how could—we are reading it with our eyes, and yet, it takes very long to read!

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Fitzroy:** How is this possible?!

**Travis:** However... pinned to Sabour's door when you arrive is another note, in swooping handwriting that reads, "Change of plans. Took Sabour to the

practice dungeon. Better hurry before I kill him. Yours, Gray. P.S. Yes, this is a trap. Let's not be coy."

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Fitzroy:** See, that's what I'm talkin' about. Expedient handwriting.

[music plays]

[ad break]

[tense music plays]

**Travis:** When you enter the practice dungeon, you see that it is in a different arrangement than the last time you were here. The left side of the room is dominated by a chunk of faux lake, with two stepping stones in it. The right has two large rock formations, half sticking out of the walls.

Opposite the entrance you came through are two large gates. In the middle of the room is a large campfire. Next to the fire, sitting on a stump, is Gray, with Sabour close behind. Sabour does not look up when you enter.

Gray smiles at you and says...

**Gray:** Hello, blundermen! Is that anything? Is it? I thought of it, and I didn't know. I wanted to test it out.

**Fitzroy:** [sighs] It's... it's so cutting. Oh... it's so savage! Must you? Such cruelty?

**Gray:** Well, 'cause it sounds like Thundermen, right? But it's like, blundermen. Is that—is that—I don't know. Is that too arch?

**Fitzroy:** Sure thing, *Grape*. 'Cause it's, um...

**Gray:** Mm...

**Firbolg:** Oh.

**Gray:** But grapes are juicy and beloved. I don't think that works.

**Fitzroy:** Yeah, I love grapes. It doesn't work.

**Gray:** Yeah. How's training going?

**Fitzroy:** Pretty... pretty goooood. Pretty good.

**Gray:** Oh!

**Fitzroy:** How's your whole war effort? Y'know, you're so concerned with our war effort... how's yours going? Whatcha cookin' up over there?

**Gray:** Oh, it's ready. It's been ready for a while now. Just ready and waitin'.

**Fitzroy:** Oh. You're telling me you don't need six mo—in six months, you couldn't, y'know, find a dragon or something?

**Gray:** Oh, I've got dragons!

**Fitzroy:** How many?

**Firbolg:** Oh.

**Gray:** I'm not going to *tell* you!

**Clint:** Insight check to see if he's telling the truth.

**Griffin:** Ooh.

**Clint:** 15 minus one. 14.

**Travis:** You have no idea.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Firbolg:** How many dragons do you possess?

**Gray:** More than you.

**Firbolg:** Ah. [laughs] Well.

**Fitzroy:** You don't know—but you—we got dra—we got lots of them. Dragons.

**Gray:** Hey Firbolg, how many dragons do you have?

**Firbolg:** We have a different number of dragons than you!

**Gray:** Okay.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Fitzroy:** It's not the same, I bet.

**Gray:** So! Like I told you back in the cavern, not gonna stop your war preparations. I'm glad to see you workin' out there. But, I am going to slow you down when I can, and also... I'm very bored! So... before you can find out what your little turtle friend knows... let's play a game! I call it, try not to kill your friends. Let's meet our contestants, shall we? Of course, there are you three, so let's make it three on three.

**Travis:** And he does a little clap, and the two large gates open. And you hear heavy footsteps. On the left, enters a giant mass of bones. And it appears to be the practice skeletons, but formed together to make one monster. And from the right gate emerges Susan, the magical bear, and she, too, is looking bigger and meaner than your remember.

**Griffin:** Does the skeleton rat king... do they look, uh... this is maybe a strange question, but like... conscious and jovial as usual?

**Travis:** No, they do not.

**Griffin:** Or are they being manipulated?

**Travis:** Uh, roll a perception check for me.

**Griffin:** Uh, 16... uhh... plus four! 20!

**Travis:** Yeah, so, their body language is, uh, very... let's say, aggressive.

**Griffin:** `Kay.

**Travis:** And they do not have the same light in their eyes, literally, that you have seen before.

**Griffin:** And this is, I guess, the same is true for the bear.

**Travis:** Correct.

**Griffin:** Okay. Cool.

**Travis:** And Gray says...

**Gray:** Oh! And to keep it interesting... I disabled the magic that heals them after the battle! So... play nice!

**Travis:** And with that, Gray disappears, and Susan, the skeleton, and Sabour charge you with rage in their eyes. Roll initiative.

**Clint:** Wait, Sabour too?!

**Travis:** Yep!



**Justin:** Heel turn. 15 plus two. 17.

**Griffin:** Uh, ten plus two, 12.

**Clint:** Three plus six. Nine.

**Travis:** The skeleton comes in, and is going to take a swing at you, Argonaut. Um, and so, they are going to uh, swing their scimitar at you... and that is—oh, that's probably not gonna hit. Uh, an 11. An 11 to hit?

**Clint:** No.

**Travis:** Okay. And then they swing again... uh, and that is a critical miss. And this one is a 20 to hit.

**Clint:** A 20 to hit?

**Travis:** Yeah. They get three attacks, because they have six arms.

**Griffin:** Makes sense to me.

**Travis:** So a 20 versus AC.

**Clint:** Uh, 15.

**Travis:** Okay. And they are going to hit you for 15 damage.

**Griffin:** Wow, that ain't nothin'. I assume we were at... I mean, it's been two weeks. We're at full.

**Travis:** Yeah, you were fully healed.

**Griffin:** Okay, thank you.

**Travis:** And up next is Firbolg.

**Justin:** I am going to... pull out my tiny Gary, and... ask him to tell Hieronymous what's happening.

**Tiny Gary:** [squeaky] Hey, it's me, Tiny Gary!

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Firbolg:** You are small and so adorable.

**Tiny Gary:** [squeaky] Thank you!

**Firbolg:** Ah, is disgusting.

**Tiny Gary:** [squeaky] Okay! What is it you need?

**Firbolg:** I need you to tell Hieronymous. Tell him we need him.

**Tiny Gary:** [squeaky] Okay! Give me a minute, I'll tell him!

**Travis:** Is that your turn?

**Justin:** It is an action, so...

**Travis:** Okay, there you go. You can move if you want.

**Justin:** Uh, what's my relation to all the bad stuff?

**Travis:** Um, so if you look on that map I sent you, you have just entered. And the skeleton is on your left, and Susan is on your right, and Sabour is in the middle, coming towards you.

**Justin:** Uh, okay. I'll clamber up the rock formation a little bit, try to get a little elevation.

**Travis:** Okay. Give me an athletics check?

**Justin:** Well, I... [laughs] I don't know if that's necessary between friends, but... um, that's a 16. Plus... six!

**Travis:** Okay, yeah. You make it to the top of the rock formation, uh, pretty quickly. So you're able to like, stay on your feet atop the rock formation, but it is going to be hard, if not impossible, for them to reach you. Up next is Fitzroy.

**Griffin:** Um, can I tell... the nature of the possession? Like, there are—there are... this is where like, codified D&D kind of bumps up against the fiction, because like, I don't know if it's fair to say, "Can I tell what spell has been cast on them?" 'Cause I don't know if, in this world, there are a list of spells like there are in D&D.

**Travis:** Um, yeah. Give me an arcana check.

**Griffin:** But is that something I can—yeah, okay. Uh, that's 13 plus three. 16?

**Travis:** Okay, uh, with that... it seems like, uh, you are able to tell it's some form of Dominate Monster and Dominate Person combination on the three of them.

**Griffin:** M'kay. Uh, I am going to...

**Travis:** And I will also say... right? Because we don't touch on that a lot. With Dominate, um, any time the target takes damage, they make a new wisdom saving throw to see if they stay dominated.

**Griffin:** Um, okay. Well, but the problem is, if I start hitting these people, they're gonna get pretty hurt. I don't want to brag. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah. This is the catch, isn't it?

**Griffin:** Yes, it's hard for me to not come correct. Um... okay. Uh, I want to... I gotta be very careful here. Uh... is... is Sabour... oh, it's 120 feet. Okay.

One of my new spells is Dispel Magic. I want to try to Dispel Magic on Sabour, 'cause I'm worried if I do it to either of the other two, it may like, disable them permanently. It may like, suspend whatever magic is like, y'know, keeping them alive or whatever.

**Travis:** Tell me about Dispel Magic.

**Griffin:** Well, this is a problem. For every spell, third level or lower, uh... oh, it automatically ends. For each spell of fourth level or higher on the target, make an ability check using your spellcasting ability. The DC equal ten plus the spell's level. On a successful check, the spell ends. So, I have to do, basically, this uh... Dominate Person is a fifth level spell, so I have to make two consecutive checks.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** So... here's hopin'. So I have to beat a 15.

**Travis:** Well, tell me what it looks like, as you channel this magic.

**Griffin:** Sure! Uh, I... mmm... I think I have to sort of tap into the chaos to like, figure out what Gray is using, because it's the same—it's the same thing. Like, it's like, you have to find the snake that bit you to make the anti-venom. So that's—I like—I think I'm doing it with my eyes closed. Not as bragging, but because I'm like, in the... y'know, in the chaos zone.

Uh, okay. That is an 11 plus four, 15. That barely succeeds. And a 13 plus four, 17. That succeeds.

**Travis:** And go ahead and roll against the magic table for me?

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay...

**Travis:** That ol' chaos magic.

**Griffin:** I figure if I'm doing a spell that's this beefy, I was gonna get... I was gonna get dinged.

**Travis:** Oh yeah!

**Griffin:** Uhh... okay. I have to roll a 1d100, which takes a second. Fuck me.

**Travis:** What happened, Griffin?

**Griffin:** Uh, okay. So I rolled a 41. [clears throat]

**Travis:** Uh-huh?

**Griffin:** And... [laughs] I'm sure I look all like, sagacious and shit, as people are like, watching me like, really harness my arcane energies to do this like, pretty phenomenal magical feat. Like, cancelling out the domination magic of a demon prince, I imagine it's like, robes billowing around me. Some real fuckin' Gandalf the White comin' over the hill shit. And then I turn right into a potted plant.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** [laughs] Cosplay that!

**Travis:** What does that mean?!

**Griffin:** Uh, when you are a plant, you are incapacitated and have vulnerability to all damage. If you drop to zero hit points, your pot breaks, and your form reverts.

**Travis:** Okay, wait. So the only way you turn back...

**Griffin:** This is only until the start of my next turn.

**Travis:** Ho boy. Okay. Well...

**Griffin:** Yeah. [laughing]

**Justin:** Yeah. This is gonna be a great toy variant when we finally get there with merchandising.

**Travis:** Uh-huh. Okay, so... huh.

**Griffin:** I'm gonna say I turn into a... a monstera. Something very, y'know, something with broad leaves. Something noble.

**Travis:** Okay. Um, so just, uh, to paint the picture... you cast the spell. The spell breaks, as Sabour is free from the spell. Uh, and then, you turn into a potted plant, and everybody, just for like, a breath, even the dominated monsters are like, "Buhh?" And then, back to the fight!

Uh, so, up next is—

**Griffin:** I'm gonna—I'm gonna take five. 'Cause I literally can't do anything.

**Travis:** Yeah, you're a plant, buddy.

**Griffin:** I'm wicked a plant.

**Travis:** Now, Griffin, I do have this question.

**Griffin:** Yeah?

**Travis:** As a plant, do you still have the same number of hit points as Fitzroy?

**Griffin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Justin:** Powerful plant.

**Griffin:** It's just—but—I—but all damage against me is doubled.

**Travis:** Okay, great! Uh, Susan, the magical bear, uh, is gonna take a swing at this potted plant. Because she is confused by what just happened, and in general, big angry bears don't like to be confused by things.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** So she is going to swipe at it with her claw. Uh, and let's see... that is a 12 plus ten, 22.

**Griffin:** Here's the thing, Trav – I'm incapacitated. So I don't think you can fail at hitting me. I'm looking it up.

**Travis:** Okay, great. Um, so she hits you for 19 damage.

**Griffin:** Okay, no no no. I still do have like, AC and shit. I just can't take actions or reactions.

**Travis:** Okay. Yeah, but it's still 22 versus your AC.

**Griffin:** Oh, that hits my AC very badly.

**Travis:** Yeah. Uh, so she's gonna hit you for 19, which is doubled. 38.

**Griffin:** Can I go into rage mode as a plant? A very angry plant?

**Travis:** Sure. Whatever—your leaves just start quivering.

**Griffin:** I have to do that on my turn. It's a full action.

**Travis:** And y'know what? Because you're a potted plant... she goes ahead and knocks you flying. And you go flying into the faux lake. Now, luckily, it's only a foot deep, so...

**Griffin:** Yeah. Also, I'm a plant. I don't breathe. I like water.

**Travis:** There you go. Uh, up next is Argonaut!

**Clint:** Um... tell me about the fake lake over to the left.

**Travis:** I misspoke. It is three feet deep. Um, it is, uh... at its widest point, near the entrance you came in, it's about six foot of lake, narrowing as it travels up the wall. So you're only getting like, one corner of the room is lake. In about a six foot by 12 foot on one side triangle, if that makes sense.

**Clint:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** With kind of two stepping stones in it. Definitely large enough to stand on with two feet. Um... yeah. That is the lake we're lookin' at.

**Clint:** But it's real water.

**Travis:** It is real water. Correct.

**Clint:** Just fake lake. Okay. Um... uh, Argo is going to... jump up on the farthest stepping stone.

**Travis:** Okay. Give me an acrobatics check.

**Clint:** I'll do that. Gosh. That is an eight plus 12.

**Travis:** Damn, dude.

**Clint:** It's a dirty 20.

**Travis:** Okay, yeah. So with that, you uh, leap from the ground. Uh, it's about six feet from where you were standing to the uh, the stepping stone. But you do it deftly. Maybe there's even like, a handspring in there. And you land – even though the stone is a little slippery from water that's just been splashed on it as a plant landed in the water – you hold your footing. You look great. You do super good on floor is lava. Y'know what I mean? Like, it was beautiful. It was wonderful.



**Clint:** So can I still take an action, or is that it?

**Travis:** Well, that was your movement.

**Clint:** Okay. Uh...

**Griffin:** You can take an action.

**Clint:** Then I'm gonna use the uh, slingshot. Uh, not the slingshot – the sling to uh, whack a ball bearing off the head off the uh... mass of bones.

**Travis:** Okay, great. Which head?

**Griffin:** There's several heads.

**Clint:** Uh, the middle one.

**Travis:** Okay! That is Victoria. So go ahead and make that attack for me.

**Clint:** Okay, let's see. That is a four... plus eight...

**Travis:** Ooh. Mmm.

**Clint:** That's a 12.

**Travis:** Uh, so. You let fly with the ball bearing. And when you do, you make kind of an 'oof' sound, and it's just enough of a heads up that they are able to see it coming and lean their head out of the way, and you miss by a mile.

And up next is Sabour the turtle, now back aware. And he turns to the... giant bear... and... he casts Animal Friendship. The bear is going to make a wisdom saving throw, which he is going to have to beat, and the bear has advantage because of Dominate Person... so here we go!

So, he makes eye contact with the bear, and you see like, his eyes begin to glow as he like, holds his hands up. And you see, like, the bear... the bear's eyes kind of take on the same kind of glow, but just barely. It kind of seems like maybe Sabour is *just* barely holding the bear's attention.

And up next is the skeleton, who is going to, uh, let's see... take a swing at Argonaut, who just tried to strike them. The skeleton lumbers over, for while it has six arms, it has just got like, uh, two pretty big sets of like, legs. Y'know what I mean? So it just takes a couple steps, and it's right there at the edge, down on its knees, reaching for you with its arms. And it's gonna swing at you, Argonaut.

And y'know what? It takes a step into the water to be able to reach you better. Um... and that is a 27 versus AC total.

**Clint:** Which is 15.

**Travis:** Yeah, so it hits you for 15 points of dam—y'know what? I'll just roll all of them, and I'll tell you the damage. Uh, that is a... 20 versus AC, which hits. And a 23 versus AC, which hits. So that's gonna be 45 points of damage.

**Clint:** `Kay.

**Justin:** Damn!

**Griffin:** Are you—are you okay?

**Clint:** Argo uses Uncanny Dodge, which allows you to use your reaction to halve the attack's damage.

**Travis:** Okay! Tell me what that looks like.

**Clint:** Um, as these arms reach for him, he uh... he does this amazing Neo bullet time bend over backwards at the knees, and the arms... sort of still hit him.

**Travis:** Yeah. Uh-huh.

**Clint:** But not as bad.

**Travis:** In less chunky places, y'know what I mean?

**Clint:** In less chunky places.

**Travis:** Yeah. So you're gonna take, let's say, 23 points of damage instead. Now, up next is the Firbolg. Now, Firbolg, you're the one who sent the—the message to Hieronymous. And Gary pops back in and says...

**Tiny Gary:** [squeaky] Hey, yeah! So, I spoke to Hieronymous. He's workin' on it! He just needs a little more time!

**Firbolg:** Yes. I will stall.

**Justin:** And I transform into a giant eagle!

**Griffin:** Cool.

**Justin:** That's cool.

**Griffin:** Love that eagle.

**Travis:** And I guess that's your turn, huh?

**Griffin:** No, isn't that a bonus action?

**Justin:** It—no. Wild Shape is an action action. Let's just—I mean, let's say, go ahead. I'll soar into the air. Amazing. Just 'cause it's amazing to see it.

**Travis:** It's really cool. Fitzroy, you are up.

**Griffin:** I'm looking at my options, and it's like I am... reflexively trying to find the bad boy 5d8 shit. But that's not what we want here. Um... I'm a— I'm a real boy again.

**Travis:** Oh, yes. Poop! You're back to being Fitzroy.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But now you're just like, sitting in the water.

**Fitzroy:** [bubbling noise] That was... banana cakes! That was absolutely wild! I had chlorophyll! I had sap! I had sap, everybody!

**Travis:** I'm going to say you're prone. So like, your movement is going to be standing up, if that's what you wish to do.

**Griffin:** Yeah, I'm gonna stand up. But the skeleton came into the water, right?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Griffin:** So he's within striking distance?

**Travis:** Correct.

**Griffin:** Okay, yeah. Uh, I hold my maul high and mighty into the air. And I don't say I have the power, but I make it known. I cast Booming Blade.

**Travis:** Ooh!

**Griffin:** As part of the action used to cast this spell, you must make a melee attack with a weapon against one creature within the spell's range. So I'll go ahead and make that melee weapon attack, versus the skellington. That is a nasty, nasty, sexual 19, plus eight.

**Travis:** Oh, yes.

**Griffin:** So that's a 27.

**Travis:** Yes, that hits for sure.

**Griffin:** So, I have to do damage with my maul... but um... on a hit, the target suffers the attack's normal effects. And because I'm above fifth level, it deals an extra 1d8 thunder damage. Oops, this may be a little too nasty. Uh, but, the big, important thing is that it becomes sheathed in booming energy until the start of my next turn, and if the target willingly moves before then, it takes another 1d8 thunder damage.

Because of my level, it's gonna take an extra 1d8 right now. And then if it moves, it takes 2d8.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Uh, oops. Oopsa doopsa. So... um... okay. Yeah. So that's a 14. Just with the damage of my maul.

**Travis:** Just 14 damage. Okay, great.

**Griffin:** That's 14 damage just with my maul attack. Uh, and then, I have to roll... a d8 on top of that for thunder damage. That's just a one. So 15. And then it becomes sheathed in booming energy, and it can't move. It's loud as fuck. It's loud as fuck in here.

**Travis:** Okay, so 15 total.

**Griffin:** I don't know how big this room is. I assume not loud. It's very, very fuckin' loud.

**Travis:** It's pretty—it's pretty loud, y'know? It's a cave, right? There's some reverberation.

**Griffin:** `Kay.

**Travis:** Uh, let's see... hmm, okay. This is going to be difficult. No, okay. That failed the wisdom modifier, so it is still, uh, the wisdom saving roll. So, you hit it with this booming energy, and tell me, is this... you said it's what kind of energy? What kind of attack is this?

**Griffin:** Uh, thunder. My bread and butter. This is just a cantrip, though. This is not one of my big boy spells.

**Travis:** But no lightning, right? Just thunder?

**Griffin:** No, no. Nice try.

**Travis:** Okay. Um, and so, uh, the skellington is still dominated. But, it is, uh, contained now within this booming energy. Now it's Sus—

**Griffin:** Oh, and y'know what? For my bonus action, I'm gonna rage.

**Travis:** Oh, okay! Uh, rage against the dying of the light.

**Griffin:** I think there's a thing I do. I want that, just for the defense of it. But uh, I have to do a quick roll. Sorry. I don't mean to... take up the whole fuckin' show with all my garbage. Uh, I *Wild Surge*... get outta there. Oh, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ. Fuck. Okay. Fuck. I rolled an eight.

**Travis:** [laughs] What happened?

**Griffin:** I rolled an eight, which on the *Wild Surge* table is, a beam of brilliant light lances from my chest like I'm Tony fuckin' Stark in a five foot wide, 60 foot long line. Every creature in the line must succeed on a constitution saving throw, or take 2d8 radiant damage and be blinded until the start of the next turn.

If this hits the skeleton... that's quite bad!

**Travis:** Well, okay. I'm going to give you an option as to which way it goes. Does this go towards the skeleton, which will hurt the skeleton and also

Argo... or, does this go towards the bear, which will hurt the bear, and also Sabour?

**Griffin:** I have to... like, I think it is... I would rather hit the bear and Sabour, but I feel like it is... uhh, I feel like it is impossible to assume that this thing I just attacked, I'm not facing it when this happens.

**Travis:** That's fair! Alright!

**Griffin:** So uh...

**Justin:** It's also wild magic. So it's like, hard to argue that you were controlling it.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Bad things happen all the time. Right.

**Clint:** So who are you aiming it at? [laughs]

**Griffin:** Argo and the skeleton.

**Travis:** The beam lances forth!

**Clint:** The guy with 19 health points?

**Travis:** Yep! Towards Argonaut...

**Griffin:** Sorry, pal.

**Travis:** And the bear! Or no, Argonaut and the skellington.

**Griffin:** It's constitution.

**Travis:** So tell me, what is it? It's a saving throw for Argo?

**Griffin:** Yeah, constitution saving throw. The number to beat is 16.

**Clint:** That is a 15... plus one.

**Griffin:** Come on... yes! Okay, you save.

**Justin:** Nice.

**Travis:** The skeleton did not save.

**Griffin:** Fuck me.

**Travis:** How much damage is that?

**Griffin:** 2d8 radiant. I'll roll it. Thank you very much. Two, and... uh, six.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** So that's 16...

**Travis:** Eight points of damage.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Um... but it is radiant damage. I hate to do this.

**Travis:** Oh, right right right!

**Griffin:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Travis:** Uh, okay.

**Griffin:** So that's doubled.

**Justin:** Griffin seems really upset about hurting the skeleton. [laughs]

**Griffin:** Well, I don't—I mean to just sort of graze it. But I kind of fucked it all up.



**Travis:** Um... it's still doing okay. This is a giant skeleton. It's beefier than a regular skeleton.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** But it once again failed its wisdom saving throw, so it is still contained.

Now, up next is Susan the bear. Sabour and Susan are still, uh, locked into this staring contest, as Sabour continues to try to hold it. And so, uh, Susan is going to make another wisdom saving throw to see if she can break this control of Sabour's. She rolled a crit one. So now, she is completely under Sabour's thrall.

**Griffin:** Cool!

**Travis:** Her eyes have gone back to pretty docile. Uh, so now—

**Fitzroy:** Make her apologize for smashing me when I was in plant form! I was goin' on a whole sort of arboreal trip there, and she really harshed it!

**Travis:** Argo, you are up. And the only, uh, thing left to worry about is the skeleton.

**Clint:** Um... Argo casts *Shape Water* on the water that the skeleton's foot is in. Although, did it—did it go farther into the water when it got hit with the beam?

**Travis:** No.

**Clint:** Convenient. Um...

**Travis:** The beam doesn't have any push or pull mechanics, Clint! It's a beam!

**Griffin:** It's just light. It's beautiful, divine light.

**Clint:** I would just think it would stumble back a little bit, getting hit by something that painful! But that's alright. Uh, create—he uses *Shape Water* to freeze the water in the lake. Um, and then, um... that's his action, right?

**Travis:** Correct. Well, I believe—yeah. Yeah yeah yeah.

**Fitzroy:** Uh, cool.

**Clint:** Okay, wait! Wait a minute! I wanted to say my own... cool thing.

**Fitzroy:** Oh, no, but I'm in it.

**Clint:** Oh, you're in it too?

**Griffin:** Yeah! [laughs]

**Clint:** Eh... well, I wouldn't—you weren't that concerned about blastin' him.

**Griffin:** Fine.

**Justin:** Very fair.

**Clint:** Freezes the water, and then... leaps out of the way. Yeah, jumps off the stone, onto the uh... onto the floor. Away from the skeleton. I'll take that move, and then I still get a bonus action, and I hide.

**Travis:** Okay. So, if you're going to jump back, once again, I need another acrobatics check.

**Clint:** 19 pluuus... 12! So, a 31. Wait! This is the highest roll I've ever made! A 31!

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** You make the jump, but this time, let's say just as a little showy, you kind of grab one of the skeleton's ribs, and you use it like an uneven

bar, and you do some like, amazing flips around, and you land, y'know, perfectly on your tip toes, hands raised in the air, and then you take a little bow.

**Clint:** Very Mary Lou Retton.

**Travis:** It is very Mary Lou Retton. Uh, and uh, now you also hide. You have some cover from the rock formations. Up next is Sabour, but he is still locked in this kind of mind control with the bear, so he's gonna stay there for now. And then it's the skeleton.

**Justin:** So wait, I'm confused. He's locked in whose mind control? Oh no no no, Sabour is mind controlling the bear.

**Griffin:** Sabour is trying—

**Travis:** Correct. He's holding the bear in check.

**Justin:** Got it. 'Kay.

**Travis:** So up next is the skeleton, who is now going to take some swings at ol' Fitzroy! That is a 25 against AC.

**Griffin:** Just barely got me, Odell!

**Travis:** Another 25 versus AC.

**Griffin:** Juuuust barely!

**Travis:** And a 28 versus AC.

**Griffin:** That misses.

**Travis:** Amazing. So that's, uh... 45 points of damage for you!

**Griffin:** It is half that. 'Cause I am in rage mode.

**Travis:** Okay! Yeah, so 23 points of damage. At this point, y'know, the uh... the skeleton has taken thunder damage, and radiant damage, and y'know, its foot is frozen into the ice, and it is pissed. So now it is just swinging wildly at the thing it can reach, which is you.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Travis:** The scimitars are coming down in this wide arcs. Um, and it has, uh, y'know... it clearly is out for blood.

**Griffin:** Oh, and it got some! I am bloodied and sapped. I think a little bit of like, latex is coming out of my body, which is strange. A strange feeling.

**Travis:** Up next, it would be Firbolg's turn. But at long last, y'know, slower than he maybe could've been in the past, Hieronymous makes his way—

**Justin:** In 12 seconds, by my math.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs] Cut the guy some slack!

**Justin:** Initiative's a hell of a thing. I mean...

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** It's been 12 seconds!

**Travis:** I mean, listen, do you guys want to fight 19 more turns before he can make it down the steps, or what?

**Griffin:** No, I want some hustle in his giddy up.

**Travis:** Yeah. Hieronymous makes his way in, and um, he uh, moves away a stone panel that you never would have seen, and is able to light the correct runes in order to deactivate what is going on, and reactivate the healing procedures. At which point, the bear kind of curls up to take a little nap. The skeleton separates into its individual parts, and is back to Germane and Victoria and Rattles, and they are very disconcerted. And they kind of return back to their home, dazed, but healing even before your eyes.

**Griffin:** Does the healing work on us?

**Travis:** No it does not.

**Griffin:** Then I need to go... to the hospital.

**Travis:** So you and Sabour, the four of you, make your way to Marie's. And you're becoming pretty familiar with Marie's office at this point for some patching up. And while Marie works, Sabour shares with you the dossier that he was able to gather on Gray.

Um, there's a lot there. We can unpack more of it in the future. But the three kind of big takeaways are, one, Gray can only be permanently killed in his domain. So, in the hell dimension.

**Griffin:** Perfect. We love this.

**Travis:** Two, he should not be able to travel between dimensions at will. Only certain spots between our dimensions should be connected. It's the reason that they chose the cave for, um, for the headquarters, was there was only one entrance that Higglemas was able to connect. There shouldn't have been another entrance to that cave. So, something is going on with the barrier between our plane and the demon plane.

Uh, and one more thing – and this is kind of the big takeaway – only sacred weapons can kill Gray. And that is going to be tricky, because sacred weapons are heavily controlled by the Heroic Oversight Guild.

**Justin:** [makes a weird noise] That's giant eagle for 'thank you for that information.'

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** That's very illuminating, and I'm sure we'll be able to act on it soon.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Justin:** Thank you so much for your aid.

[music plays]

**Travis:** You get all patched up, and you get a nice rest in. And then, Fitzroy, you go to meet Rainer, so that you can discuss the war plans with her father, and see if you can get him on board. Under a half full moon, you find Rainer by the big tree, and she already has everything set up.

**Rainer:** Uh, yeah! All you need to do is light the candle, and speak the word! Devocho!

**Fitzroy:** Okay. Uh, your dad, um... is he—is he gonna be nice, or...

**Rainer:** Oh yeah, Dad's really nice!

**Fitzroy:** Okay. Uh, then... okay, let's do it then. Uhh... devoch... o. Sorry, I forgot it.

**Rainer:** Devocho.

**Fitzroy:** Devo—okay. And I have to stand in the circle and say it?

**Rainer:** You have to light the can—yeah.

**Fitzroy:** Okay. My bones aren't gonna come out or anything, right?

**Rainer:** No?

**Fitzroy:** Do you blame me for asking? You?

**Rainer:** No, I just—I've never done this spell before.

**Fitzroy:** Perfect! Well... I already turned into a plant today, so...

**Rainer:** What?

**Fitzroy:** Yeah, long story. Devocho.

**Travis:** There's a cloud of acrid green smoke, and Rainer waves it away, coughing. And then realizes... that she is all alone, and Fitzroy is nowhere to be seen. And says...

**Rainer:** Oh shit.

**Travis:** Fitzroy, you are plunged into darkness. The air is stagnant and rotten, and there is not a speck of light.

**Fitzroy:** Gotta stop doin' spells. I think I've just gotta become a punching man. Hello?

**Travis:** Do you have any way to create light?

**Griffin:** Yes, I have a torch. It's in my inventory.

**Travis:** You light your torch, and you see that you are in a crypt-like room, surrounded by piles of bone. And before your eyes, the bones begin to move. And somewhere in the darkness, you can hear dry, rasping laughter.

[eerie music plays]

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