

## The Adventure Zone: Ethersea – Prologue II: The Cost of Opportunity

Published on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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**Griffin:** Hey, folks. Quick pre-programming announcement. Thanks for listening into our setup episodes for The Ethersea. We're playing The Quiet Year, a game by Avery Alder that's all about map making, and making wild choices to help build a community. You can find a link to where you can find and purchase and learn more about the game on the episode description.

And also, if you want to follow along visually, we are uploading all the maps at the end of each of these sessions at [bit.ly/EtherseaMaps](https://bit.ly/EtherseaMaps). And I think you need to capitalize Ethersea and Maps in order for that link to work, 'cause that's how bit.ly works. We heard some folks say they were having some trouble following along sort of visually, and uh, if you, y'know, need a little help with that, go to that link.

I also think that, if you go to our Twitter page, we will be uploading those maps alongside the episodes there as well. That's it. Here's the episode!

[music plays]

**Brother Seldom:** Today's lesson: the intolerable cost of opportunity.

The divine invitation that brought together our rag-tag group from the four corners of the world... it provided comfort and hope, but regrettably, it provided few specifics beyond its two simple couplets. Indeed, those early days of spring gave rise to more questions than logistical solutions; more mysteries than actionable intelligence. And yes, our frustration mounted with each unexplained anomaly. The treacherous cavern, the staircase in the sea, the vanishing of the highlands above our heads, and subsequent arrival of the Einarr Spirits.

The time we spent learning the truth behind these phenomena was time we'd rather have spent developing the methods behind our prophesied exodus. By summer, though, we would mourn the loss of that innocence.

As those truths were discovered, so, too, were the opportunities they enabled. As spring drew to a close, the backbone of our modern society began to coalesce around those opportunities, and those bold enough to seize them.

And so begins the entrance of our founders' names into the annals of history. Names like the cartographer, Fineas Cawl. The rebellious architect, the Boyar Hermine. And of course, the ruggedly handsome, intrepid creator of the educational apparatus to which you are currently attuned.

And yet, those opportunities were sadly not only capitalized upon by the best of us. One cannot help but envision the utopia we might've built, were it not for the unavoidable division that was sown from within and without our ranks.

In those times of regret, I lean upon the wisdom of the benevolent teachings. The past cannot be changed. But with steadfast determination, it can be harnessed.

[music plays]

**Griffin:** This map, y'all. This map is a... this map's a hoot.

**Travis:** Can you remind me, Griffin, which projects we have ongoing?

**Griffin:** Um, yes. Just from a—this is probably a good catch up, because due to scheduling issues, it's been like a month since the first episode.

**Justin:** It happens.

**Griffin:** It happens, y'know? Um, we have a few projects still on the map. I guess, big things on the map right now... uh, the trash geyser is—everybody's talkin' about the trash geyser. Everybody's psyched about that. Uh, we have, uh, the shithouses, which, Dad created a project to kind of run inventory on the components making it up to maybe create some weapons

that we can use in the water, specifically against the blink sharks that are out there.

**Clint:** Okay. Okay.

**Griffin:** I mean, is that not what that project was?

**Clint:** I didn't intend for it to be specific to make weapons.

**Griffin:** Oh, okay.

**Clint:** I thought it was like—to like, for construction, or barriers, or... I mean, defense, obviously, weapons would be part of it, but...

**Griffin:** Sure. Um, we got the shipyard is a big one. Juice drew that. A very impressive looking shipyard, might I say.

**Justin:** Thank you. I felt good about it, y'know? Thanks for recognizing that.

**Travis:** It's very good.

**Griffin:** We got five weeks left on that one, though. And then there's a project to investigate the cave down here at the bottom that nobody can seem to go into.

**Travis:** And a friendly little ghost on there!

**Griffin:** And at the end of last week's episode, the big sort of world event, of which I have several planned for this game, uh, was the disappearance of the Einarr Plateau, and some of the sort of residual consciousness energy has started to cross back over into our side. And the camp is sort of haunted by these spirits. So that is a new thing to kind of thing about and contend with.

Um, let's keep going! We're still in spring, and it's back to the top of the order, so I'm gonna draw a card and see what we get. Uh, ace of spring.

**Justin:** [sings] The ace of spring...

**Griffin:** You can do that every—we will get to ace of spades eventually. And then you could just sing the song.

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Just sit on that. Uh, what group has the highest status in the community? What must people do to gain inclusion in this group? Or, are there distinct family units in the community? If so, what family structures are common?

I don't even know how to begin answering that second one. Uhh...

**Travis:** So answer the first one.

**Griffin:** Yeah, I think I'm gonna have to answer the first one. What group has the highest status in the community? What must people do to—

**Travis:** Big dogs!

**Griffin:** There's the big dog society... I think the people who have the highest status in the community right now are the sort of resource collectors. Like, the people whose job it is to, um, to actually go out there and get the things that we all need to make this city. Specifically, this magic ore. I think like, the people who go down there, like, can do favors for other people. You got the hookup on that good magic ore. Let me get at that, and I'll make sure that your kids get into the good preschool or whatever.

Um, I think those people are probably the most highly sought after. The fact that there's—what you have to do to gain entry into that, I think you have to be sort of chosen, or else everybody's gonna go out and collect stuff, and that'll be bad for the sort of unity of the entire project, if everybody's just hoarding their own stuff.

**Travis:** As an extension of that, does that mean that the resources are being guarded so that people can't just go out and start picking stuff up?

**Griffin:** Um, yeah. That's probably a good way of thinking about it. Guarded is sort of, uh... I don't know. I don't think there's anything necessarily sinister about how they're being guarded, but it's more, uh... we have so much work to do, and we can't like, get distracted by vanity projects.

**Travis:** Okay. So it's being managed in a somewhat restrictive way.

**Griffin:** Yeah. So I'll draw a little person collecting this ore, and that person's gonna look like, super cool.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** And... we'll do that real quick. This is just a quick little, uh, magenta person. And they're getting this ore.

**Justin:** I know that Quiet Year discourages labeling, but I also bet Quiet Year discourages you taking a month off in between drawing the thing. Because this is utterly inscrutable. [laughing]

**Griffin:** I know everything that's on this map.

**Travis:** What are you talking about, Justin? There's a jungle gym up by the river, there's a gaping asshole that's shooting out diarrhea...

**Griffin:** There's a huge... [laughing]

**Clint:** There's a giant pube down in the bottom left-hand corner...

**Travis:** Giant pube.

**Justin:** What appears to be a—okay, near the pier. Is that a big donut? What is that?

**Griffin:** That's the bathysphere that washed up on shore.

**Travis:** Oh, right right right.

**Justin:** Got it. Okay.

**Travis:** I also was thinking big inner tube. That we're gonna do some tubin' later.

**Griffin:** Not a big inner tube. Uh, just so you all, I guess, know, these are the tide pools with the magic stuff up here. That's the bathysphere. The, uh, magical spring. This is the ore. This is the calm patch of water, and that's the spiral staircase. I moved those over from the waters.

**Justin:** Ohh, okay.

**Griffin:** Alright. Okay. Dad, your project to run inventory on the shithouses has completed. What is, uh... what do—I believe it was the Delmer that were doing said cataloguing. What sort of meaningful conclusion did they come to?

**Clint:** Um, that um, material—not the outside of the buildings, not the outside of them, but some things like the framing, and uh, the basic structures, could be used and would hold up well underwater. They could be used for things like dwellings, or at least, the framework of dwellings. To be used in like, whatever the basics of it. The skeleton on which to put the rest of the body.

But for the most part, none of the other stuff is gonna last. This stuff, crappy old driftwood shingles, and y'know, the planks and everything else... none of that is gonna serve in good stead. Maybe to be used in things like ship construction, maybe.

**Griffin:** Okay. I think maybe then, the practical thing for us, then, is when it comes time to tear down this project, maybe we give another project, like, a turbo boost. To like, represent that this work that was done was

meaningful. That when we don't need this house anymore, we can, y'know, cash it in to have all of these resources that we know how to spend.

**Justin:** Yeah, that makes sense.

**Griffin:** Okay. Um, and I get to either discover something, start a project, or hold a discussion. I'm gonna start a project to figure out how to sort of communicate with the Einarr spirits. And... I don't know—I mean, this world is very sort of... magicky, so I don't know how long that would take. I don't know that like, divination like this is something that folks are like, particularly experienced in.

**Travis:** Yeah, is this the first time any kind of like, spirit has ever been present in this world?

**Griffin:** Um, I'm gonna say yes. I think this is weird shit. I don't think that this would be, uh... I don't think that this is something that the—well, I drew a speech bubble next to my ghost, but the speech bubble just kind of looks like a big ghost. Considering that's what the other one looks like.

Anyway, uh, I'm gonna say this takes... this is gonna take a whole month.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Griffin:** Uhh... and that is it for my turn. Next up is Travis.

**Travis:** Okay. Can you flip a card for me? The nine of spring. A charismatic young girl convinces many to help her with an elaborate scheme. What is it? Who joins the endeavors? Start a project to reflect. Or, a charismatic young girl tries to tempt many into sinful or dangerous activity. Why does she do this? How does the community respond?

Um, yeah, y'know what? I'm going to say a charismatic young girl convinces, uhh, some young Delmers to attempt to take some resources.

**Griffin:** Uh-oh!

**Travis:** For their own project. Uhh, because uh, her justification is that this is moving too slowly. The Delmers know how to get stuff done. They don't need the approval of the rest of the council. So, they are going to, uh, under the cover of night, take some of the resources to fix the bathysphere.

**Griffin:** Okay. Um, take the resources from where? Like, where are they—what are they taking the resources, like...

**Travis:** Uh, from the shipyard.

**Griffin:** Okay. Then I don't think the shipyard clocks down this week. I think it's gonna stay at four. And then... I mean, do you want to make this a project? Oh, that's what you do. Okay, you start a project.

**Travis:** Yeah yeah, start a project to reflect. So I'm gonna say that that is a, uhh... what do you think? Two week project? I mean, it's just fixing the bathysphere.

**Griffin:** Yeah, but we kind of talked about how like, nobody alive today really knows how to use this thing.

**Travis:** Okay. I'm gonna say three, then, because I think that that incorporates the time to take the—to squirrel the resources away, so that's one week. And then, two weeks to like, figure it out and patch it up.

**Griffin:** Cool! No, I like it. I like having lots of juicy projects. So the shipyard's not gonna count down this week. Nor does the project that Travis just started. Uhh... the world clock...

**Travis:** The cave does, though.

**Griffin:** Yeah, the cave is finished. Uh, I had an idea, actually, for what the cave is. Uh, that I'm kind of excited about. Uh, they finally—the cave, the project there was that, uh, some Hominine sort of scholars were trying to get inside. And they finally do, once they realize sort of the nature of what was keeping them out was just like, a taboo that was just built into their, like, DNA.



And when they go inside the cave and explore, they realize exactly what it was. This cave is not a cave – it is a skull.

**Travis:** [gasps]

**Griffin:** And what they realize is, there is an old sort of Einarr fable, like an ancient underdog story about this one vestige that just went around, just killing other vestiges. That was its whole lot in life, was it was just this war vestige. And in this fable, a little girl tricks this warring vestige to fall off of the Einarr plateau and shatter when it hits the ground below. And what they discover is that that is not a fictional story at all, and in fact, this skull, and the pieces of magic ore spread all around the beach, are the body of this dead vestige.

**Travis:** Okay!

**Griffin:** That is why it is so sort of susceptible to magic, and so sort of... the ore is so good because it is like, god body, essentially.

**Travis:** Mm. Stan Godbody.

**Griffin:** Yeah. What that also means, though, uh... I'm gonna move magic ore over to scarcity, right? 'Cause like, now we know what it is. And we found some by digging into the pebbles. But like, it's the body of a vestige, so there's not—

**Travis:** It's not like, naturally occurring. We're not gonna find more of it.

**Griffin:** No, no. And I think that the demand for this magic ore is gonna get even hotter, now, because people know that there's a limit to it, and yeah. Uh, that is what—I'll try to think of a name for this dead vestige, 'cause I think that'd probably be good to have. Uh... okay!

**Justin:** So this is the—when you're talking about the ore, that's the—

**Griffin:** The little chunks on the...

**Clint:** The prestige salt?

**Griffin:** No, prestige salt is its own thing. That's like, salt that has dried out of the saltwater that is just concentrated magic.

**Justin:** Okay, got it. That is what I was trying to figure out.

**Travis:** Yeah. The ore is what we found that is like, easily susceptible to magic. And like, when it's heated, it's very flexible, and when it cools, is like, very formidable. It's, one might say, the ideal, if you were trying to build something underwater.

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Travis:** Um, I am going to start a project... to send a small expedition – like three people – to go check out this magical pool that we've sighted from the shipyard and everything. Y'know, the Hominine folks are like, "That seems magic to me." So we're gonna go check it out.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Oh no, too big. [unintelligible] people gonna study it. Uh, one of them has a gigantic head. And I'm gonna say... eh, it's not—it's just observation. Just two weeks.

**Griffin:** Okay. Uh, I can add the number.

**Justin:** So what's happening over there?

**Griffin:** Those people are—

**Justin:** This is the light blue?

**Griffin:** Yeah, those are big boys, Trav. I hope you realize.

**Travis:** I don't know how to—[sighs]

**Griffin:** I know we don't have to do things to scale, but your boys are bigger than the shipyard, and that seems fuckin' wild.

**Travis:** I'm sorry! We can erase them! I can redo them!

**Justin:** You can't erase them. They should—are they helping with the shipyard? 'Cause they're so big.

**Travis:** [laughs] I'm sorry!

**Griffin:** They should be helping with the shipyard.

**Justin:** Make it in an afternoon.

**Travis:** I don't know how to erase them, either. I'm so sorry.

**Justin:** You can try making them bigger? I don't know. [laughs]

**Griffin:** Yeah. [laughs] Oh, here's what I can do, Trav. We can manually shrink them down.

**Travis:** Yeah, do that.

**Justin:** And what are they doing, besides hulking over the environment?

**Travis:** No. They're going to investigate that pool of water.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Uh, and that is it for Travis' turn. Uh, Dad.

**Clint:** Uh, three of spring. Someone new arrives. Who? Or, two of the communities' younger members get into a fight. What provoked them?

Um, I think somebody new arrives, from the uh... [pronounced incorrectly] Archipelago. I know it's Archipelago.

**Griffin:** That's funny.

**Travis:** Okay, I was gonna say something, Dad. That's not like a word we made up for this game. I was gonna see something like that, y'know?

**Clint:** They are an oceanographer who studies, like, not necessarily marine biology or anything like that, but like, the oceans themselves. The ocean floor.

**Justin:** An oceanographer? Is that a thing?

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** Okay. An oceanographer.

**Justin:** I don't know if that's a thing.

**Travis:** That's a thing! That's what Jacques Cousteau was! I think.

**Justin:** That feel right, Dad?

**Clint:** It's Jacques Cousteau. Yeah.

**Travis:** It can't—hold on. It can't be—

**Clint:** We'll spell it different.

**Travis:** Oh, okay, yeah. Jack Coosty.

**Clint:** It's an oceanographer. And being from the Southern Archipelago, they are more familiar... I mean, they have had more exposure to the water, and life in the water, and so, he's—he arrives at the build site, ready to

contribute whatever he can. And I think, uh—and is this where I come up with a project?

**Griffin:** Uh, no. It doesn't—it's specific—it doesn't ask you to start a project here. So you would start the project later on. You would just draw on the map, probably this person's shape.

**Travis:** Did he come here purposefully looking to help these people?

**Griffin:** Yeah, I have a lot of questions, actually, before maybe we move on from anything else. Because I think a person who is braving these oceans right now, and is dedicated to like, studying the ocean floor, is going to be a fairly, like, bonkers individual, who like—

**Justin:** What's his name, Dad? Who is he?

**Clint:** His name is, uh, Fineas. Except it's spelled with an F.

**Travis:** That's how you know it's weird.

**Clint:** Uh, Fineas Cawl.

**Justin:** Fineas Cawl.

**Griffin:** Call, C-A-L-L?

**Clint:** C-A-W-L.

**Travis:** Hey, Dad? I was ready for you to give like, a silly name, but that's a really cool name.

**Griffin:** That is. In fact, we're not supposed to make characters in *The Quiet Year*, but that one's so good, I think he's gotta be there.

**Justin:** Cawl of the—hey, listen, check this out. Cawl of the sea.

**Travis:** Oooh!

**Griffin:** Well, there kind of already was a call from the sea, so the—

**Travis:** Hey, Griffin? Shut up!

**Justin:** Yeah, it's called parallelism!

**Griffin:** It's called what?

**Justin:** Parallelelism!

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** Parallelelism!

**Justin:** It's paralelelism!

**Travis:** Read a book!

**Clint:** Wait a minute, wait a minute. I've gotta do my...

**Justin:** He's gotta draw a bad picture of him.

**Griffin:** Yeah, I'm curious...

**Travis:** Don't make him too big, or you'll never hear the end of it.

**Griffin:** I'll just shrink him down again.

**Justin:** And remember, iconography is idolatry, and therefore sinful. So don't make him too human-like. And don't make him a giant.

**Travis:** Ugh.

**Justin:** I see one stubby arm, looking good so far.

**Travis:** That could be a leg. That could be a leg. Oh!

**Justin:** Ahh, okay, now it's two legs!

**Griffin:** Got two.

**Travis:** Or that could be torso and one arm.

**Justin:** Fineas Cawl, that great hero of the Atari 2600.

**Travis:** Oh, what is that?

**Clint:** It's a fin. It's just a logo, just to represent Fineas Cawl.

**Justin:** [laughing] He's just a logo!

**Griffin:** It's a circle with a fin.

**Clint:** I'm already looking ahead to branding, boys.

**Justin:** Yeah. Yeah. Pin of the month.

**Clint:** [laughing]

**Travis:** He kind of looks like a fortune cookie. Is that what you were going for?

**Clint:** No, I'm thinking—well, wait. Here. I can...

**Justin:** It looks like a circle with a fin in the middle.

**Clint:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Griffin:** I have named the dead vestige. It's Koda, and all of the ore, people start calling Kodite.

**Justin:** Kodite. Okay.

**Clint:** Alright, do I need to put a—I don't put a number, right? Next to Fineas? He's just there.

**Travis:** Yep.

**Griffin:** Yep. Uh, and project clocks. The expiration of the spring goes to one. Shipyard's at three, bathysphere is at two, talking to ghosts is at two. World clock drops to five.

**Travis:** This is Talking to Ghosts with Griffin McElroy.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Alright, Dad, now you can discover something, start a project, or hold a discussion.

**Clint:** I think I want to start a project. I think I want Fineas to map out the area at the bottom of the ocean to try to give them some kind of reference as to where to at least begin this community that they're going to build.

**Griffin:** Uh, okay. Two quick questions, then. Did Fineas hear the, like – no pun of his last name intended – that voice, that call from the ocean? Is that what brought Fineas here? 'Cause otherwise, I—I worry about the sort of, uh, coincidental nature of, here's the oceanographer that can show you where to build your city underwater, unless this person is on a sort of divine fate.

**Clint:** Well, are there not people at the build site from the Southern Archipelago?

**Griffin:** Oh, absolutely there are. But this person just showed up, so I guess why are they—

**Travis:** Griffin, can I ask you a clarification question, then, for the world?



**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Right? So it's been a couple weeks. We're like, at this point, ten weeks into this, right?

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** So do people throughout the world know that there was this section of people that was called to this area? Like, don't people notice like...

**Griffin:** Oh yeah, for sure.

**Travis:** Where did Joe go?

**Griffin:** Yeah, that's fair. Okay, yeah, then yeah. I guess word has gotten out about this settlement.

**Travis:** Right. I mean, it's been almost three months now.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Clint:** Have we established that the whole population is dead set on moving into living in the ocean? Or could that be a—could that be something that Fineas brings to the table? A suggestion?

**Griffin:** I think every—I mean, it was in the call. The call was, uh, a home for all beneath the tides. Everybody here knows which direction they're going.

**Travis:** But I think it would make sense if this oceanographer, who has studied like, ocean geography hears, like, "Wait, there's a bunch of people who are like, attempting to like, move underwater? I gotta be there."

**Clint:** That's kind of what I was thinking, was that he, y'know, is coming to volunteer his services.

**Griffin:** Alright, let's, uh—I—I think this is going to take a while, yes?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Clint:** Yeah, because I mean, we haven't established levels of technology or anything, but I would have to think that, uh, they don't—I mean, he's gonna have to snorkel to do this. [laughs]

**Griffin:** Yeah, I know, like, we—I don't know what kind of tech he's using. I think for, just to keep things consistent, I don't—I don't think he has a bathysphere. I don't think he has a thing to actually get down low. Maybe it's some sort of weird sounding tech, where y'know, they used to just drop a rope off the boat and see how deep it went. Because if he has like, super—if he has a submarine, then a lot of the projects on the board right now are fucking meaningless.

**Clint:** I don't think—yeah, but there's a method. I'll think about it. I'll come up with something.

**Griffin:** How long?

**Clint:** I think it's gonna take a while. I mean, he's got all that area.

**Griffin:** It can go up to six weeks.

**Clint:** Well, okay, to be realistic, four or five. Um...

**Griffin:** Probably five.

**Justin:** What's he trying to do?

**Griffin:** Map out the ocean.

**Justin:** Map the ocean. That's good. We haven't done that in all of human history, but he should be able to bang it out in a month.

**Clint:** Well, no, I never intended him to do the entire ocean. [laughs] But the area off the shore would seem to make the most sense, without going too far afield. At least to start the community.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** `Cause you're gonna have to get materials there, everybody's gonna have to get there... so obviously, he doesn't want to go too far.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Just to keep building on things, though, I think also, if he is checking out the calm patch of ocean, just to see what the fuck is up there, that's—

**Clint:** That's where I think he would—that would be his starting point. Yeah, I love that idea.

**Griffin:** Cool. Uh, then, that's it for your turn. Juice.

**Justin:** Yes sir. Ready.

**Griffin:** Okay. Oh boy.

**Justin:** "There's a large body of water on the map. Where is it? What does it look like?" Y'know, in lots of games, this wouldn't be that big of a question, but I think with this map, y'know, who knows?

**Griffin:** Eat shit. Before the next session, I'm gonna switch these two fuckin' panels so Justin will stop complaining about it.

**Justin:** Or, "There's a giant man-made structure on the map. Where is it? Why is it abandoned?" This is definitely new?

**Griffin:** Yeah, this is new.

**Justin:** We haven't done this?

**Griffin:** No, we haven't done this one.

**Clint:** Yeah, I swear to God I thought we did...

**Travis:** No. Neither one of these.

**Clint:** Then why the river?

**Travis:** 'Cause that was—

**Griffin:** That was one of the topographical features that you added to the map at the very beginning.

**Clint:** Oh, okay, I see. Alright, I see.

**Justin:** Okay. A giant—I think it's gonna need—I feel like we're pretty well covered with bodies of water.

**Griffin:** Yeah, we have a lot.

**Justin:** I can't introduce another one of those. There's a giant man-made structure on the map. Um... just so I have an idea, when I'm looking at the land that we're sort of cataloging here... how big are you guys envisioning this area that we are sort of cataloging? Our scale is beyond fucked, so I'm trying to get an idea.

**Griffin:** Yeah, it's rough. I would say maybe like, from, y'know, the beach into the water, like... maybe a half mile? So that—

**Travis:** From the beach to the lake?

**Clint:** May I suggest you make that a little bigger?

**Travis:** Yeah. Like two square miles.

**Griffin:** Two square miles.

**Clint:** Here's the only—the only reason I say that is because – and again, I know it's not to scale – but if you think about building a great big shipyard and building all these buildings for people to be housed in... that would be a lot to take up a half mile.

**Griffin:** Yeah, that's fair. Okay.

**Justin:** And we are in Hominine?

**Griffin:** No, we—oh. Yeah, technically, we are. Although, we are so far from the capital city that it is not, um... we are not under the watchful eye of like, benevolence and the, y'know, whoever rules that kingdom. This is—this is so far away, in fact, that like, y'all haven't heard anything from them yet, because it would take them a while to get here.

**Justin:** What is it when you have a, uh... a little—a country in a different country has a little building?

**Travis:** Uh, embassy.

**Justin:** Embassy! Yeah. What about like an Einarr embassy in Hominine? Because we're so close to the border there of the Einarr Plateau, there had to be some collaboration between the two.

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Justin:** And I feel like we've abandoned that idea now. So there's this embassy that was operating in Hominine that—Hominine?

**Griffin:** Yeah, Hominine.

**Travis:** You say it different ways depending on where you're from.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Like potato.

**Justin:** Right. Like hurricane [her-a-kin]. And it's an Einarr embassy in Hominine.

**Griffin:** Can it be like, a lift? Like some sort of—do you know what I mean? If it's a bridge between the Einarr and Hominine...

**Travis:** Oh, 'cause Einarr Plateau.

**Griffin:** Einarr is like, way up there. So like, there would have to be...

**Justin:** Yeah, I love that idea! It's like, when you come down, it's like a, um... almost like kind of an outpost of Einarr, where people like, are—and there's like a flow of people, and people in this area were like, uh, using this as a way to get back and forth between the two. But we don't need this anymore. The time for this—and it's a feat of engineering. People just call it the Crystal Ascendance. And we don't need it anymore.

**Griffin:** Ooh! Okay.

**Justin:** But we have—there's tons of like, uh, really old engineering that went into it from a time—we don't even have those skills anymore. No one quite knows how it works.

**Griffin:** Okay. I think probably I would draw it somewhere close to the edge of the map. We haven't really said where Einarr is in relation to this, but...

**Justin:** Yeah, kind of in there. And I'll make kind of a beautiful representation of...

**Travis:** Oh boy, I can't wait.

**Griffin:** Okay, I want to start counting down the clocks, because we have a lot of them now. World clock's at four. Travis, the pond expedition.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Griffin:** The Hominine magic folk were going to figure out the magic properties of that water.

**Travis:** Uh, so, what they find in this water is a species of fish, uh, that, as far as they can tell, is new, is undocumented. And they're fairly small, about the size of like, a half dollar. But their life cycles, like, from egg to fully grown, is rapid. Like 48 hours. And uh, they seem, um, to be like, rampant in this pond, and from the study, it's... okay, oh boy, Justin.

**Griffin:** No, it's not a penis yet. Let him finish.

**Justin:** It's just an elevator! [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay. And they uh, they collect some of them into like a glass container to study. And within 48 hours, they've comfortably, but like, filled the vessel.

**Griffin:** Okay. Because of breeding, or because of growing?

**Travis:** Because of breeding. Yeah. So like, it is a fishy, uh, like... what am I looking for? When you farm? It's sustainable. Like, sustainable fish.

**Griffin:** Okay. Can you come up with a name for those fish? I mean, it sounds like—based on what I think what need I believe you're trying to fill with them, you may as well just call them munchers, or snack'ems, or yum pops, or...

**Travis:** Uh, they're called, uh...

**Griffin:** Tasty boys.

**Travis:** Munchos.

**Griffin:** Muncho—no.

**Travis:** No. Uh, they're, uh... I wanted to call them speed daters, but that's not it. Um...

**Griffin:** We'll come back to that.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Uh, I've counted down all the other clocks, and uh, nothing else hit zero. So! Juice, now you get to—

**Travis:** Oh, they call them filler fish, because they'll fill the space that they're in.

**Griffin:** Fillers. Yeah, that's good. Uhh, I'm gonna add that, then, to the list of resources, since it sounds like they are wildly abundant.

**Travis:** Yep.

**Griffin:** Uhh... Justin, now you get to actually take an action.

**Justin:** I want to hold a discussion.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** Remind me—I know there's a format on the discussion.

**Griffin:** Uh, you can either start with a statement, or you can start with a question. If you start with a statement, it's the only thing you say during the thing.

**Justin:** Okay. But if I start with a question, what?

**Griffin:** Then you get the last word in.

**Travis:** What would you guys think if I said...



**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** [laughs] Okay, here's the question. No, statement. If we dismantle the Ascendance, these two lands will be cut off from each other. Are we ready to do that?

**Travis:** These two lands have already been cut off from each other. They chopped the top off of that plateau, and we need those resources!

**Clint:** Are there people still up there?

**Griffin:** Uh, to answer, outside of the conversation, I think the Einarr that like, maybe a few Einarr have showed up to camp, but they weren't there. Everybody who was on top of that plateau got spirited away. There was some Einarr, y'know, out and about, doing other shit, y'know, out on supply runs or trade missions, or whatever. They are the only ones who... not survived, right? 'Cause you got ghosts coming back and whatever, but they're the only ones who are still in their bodies or whatever.

**Clint:** Is this the point where I could ask you, Griffin, for a clarification in something?

**Griffin:** Uh, can we finish the discussion first, or is it sort of...

**Clint:** It's kind of connected, but that's fine. In what order did things happen? Did the—so the top of the plateau vanished.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Clint:** And we do not know what caused it, correct?

**Griffin:** Uh, just that there were some sort of zealot, like, fanatics about, who were so close to the vestiges that they wanted to... they thought, in order to evade the destruction of this world, let's just take our people to a completely different world.

**Clint:** Sure. Okay. Did that cause—but we don't know if that caused the vanishing, or...

**Griffin:** Oh, it did. Yeah, that's absolutely what caused the vanishing.

**Clint:** Okay, that's fine. I was just wondering about that, because yeah, it's gone. Right? There aren't any mortals up there. But does that mean there are no materials, or ores, or... items up there?

**Travis:** I think that that is a good statement to make, and that we have no idea of knowing.

**Griffin:** Um, the engineering used in this structure is unlike anything we have seen in the modern age, and we should be studying this, not dismantling it.

**Justin:** I think that we need to take more time before we take it apart, because it's... there's no going back.

[music plays]

[ad break]

**Griffin:** Uh, I believe this is the final card for spring. Uh, which is the six of spring. "Are there children in the community? If there are, what is their role in the community?" Or, "How old are the eldest members of the community? What special needs do they have?" Hmm.

Uh, I mean, there are... I think there's both, right? I'll just answer one of the questions, but I wager there were, when the call went out, like, people brought their families to this. If it's the Ark, y'know, that they're going to escape apocalypse in, they're not gonna leave their kids behind.

**Travis:** I don't know, Griffin. Kids can get pretty tiresome.

**Griffin:** Yeah. Uh...

**Justin:** Great point.

**Griffin:** I'll say there are children in the community. And their role in the community is... I think they—ooh, y'know what I bet they do?

**Travis:** What's that?

**Griffin:** I bet they...

**Clint:** Frolic?

**Griffin:** They frolic, yeah. They definitely frolic and scamper, for sure for sure.

**Travis:** [in a high pitched voice] Do they play tiddlywinks and push a hoop with a stick?

**Griffin:** Uh, I think the kids mostly hang out in the tide pools. Uh, and I think that the role they serve is like, in wanting to be helpful, in wanting to like, contribute in some way, like, they are collecting salt. They're picking up sea glass on the beach, like, helping out in that way. I don't think the kids would just like, sit back while everybody else is trying to, uh, do the work required to avert the apocaly—or, escape the apocalypse.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** So I think the kids are like... I think they kick it up in the tide pools, mostly. Uh, maybe like, y'know, uh, domesticating some of the weird, y'know, mutant magic fish creatures. The little micro-organisms and what have you of the tide pools. But yeah, I think that that's—I think—we haven't really assigned that area any kind of purpose or anything, so I think... I don't know why I drew a square. Uhh...

**Travis:** Well, in this world, children are squares. It's our magical world, we can do whatever we want.

**Griffin:** I'm gonna draw a baby. That's his belly button.

**Travis:** That's a big baby.

**Clint:** Biiig baby!

**Griffin:** This, and he wears a—he wear a diaper.

**Travis:** That a baby that represents many—oh boy! [laughing]

**Clint:** [laughing] That's a soggy one right there.

**Travis:** Yeah, that's a full diapey.

**Griffin:** That's a full load. Alright, yeah, that's a huge baby, huh? We love that.

**Travis:** He represents many babies.

**Griffin:** That's good. Uh, okay! We're gonna count down some clocks. We got a lot of stuff that's about to finish up. World clock drops to three. Uh, shipyard is at one. That's very exciting. Uh, bathysphere is at zero. What happens with the bathysphere, Travis?

**Travis:** Uh, so, the charismatic young woman and her compatriots finish the repairs, and then, present it to the council, thinking that they will be heroes. They will be lauded. And while the bathysphere being completed is a boon, and the council is glad that that happened... the fact that it happened at the cost of the shipyard and without specific approval, uh, they are punished.

**Griffin:** Oh no!

**Travis:** They are, uh... their sentence is like, community service, where they have to clean up or sort through trash that has spewed from the trash hole.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay. I like that. You want to draw, uh... I don't know what that looks like. While you draw that... that's great, though. We all did kind of forget that there is a trash hole there.

**Travis:** I never forgot, Griffin.

**Clint:** I didn't forget.

**Griffin:** Uh, the uh... probably—I think it was probably a sort of, uh, coming from multiple kingdoms, and like, multiple sort of areas of scientific and engineering expertise were, y'know, sort of banging their heads against how to talk to these spirits that had come back. That was the other project that finished. And no one can like, give them a voice. No one can figure out how to like, converse with them using voices.

Uh, but because the spirits are able to move things is like, the only evidence we've gotten of them so far, like, fully kind of Stranger Things-like, there is a physical... almost like an abacus that they can maneuver, so that we can talk to them. Maybe it's not an abacus – maybe it's a, um... ooh, okay, I got it, I got it.

It's armor that started to use, like, sign language. Like a language that people in this world are familiar with. Like, one, or maybe multiple spirits, or whatever, is able to move this gauntlet to uh, to have a conversation with whoever is speaking to it. And folks are able to basically confirm what the other Einarr living here assumed happened with the Einarr Plateau.

**Travis:** Oh, y'know what, Griffin? Can I say one more thing about the bathysphere?

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Now that it is complete, and the people know about it, I motion that it should speed up Fineas Cawl's project by a week, because now there is a usable way to go under the water.

**Griffin:** Motion granted. We'll bump that up to two. Okay. Uh, whose turn was it? Oh, it was my turn, right? Discover something new... um... I am going to... discover something new.

**Travis:** [gasps] Love.

**Griffin:** It's love. No, it's going to be a...

**Justin:** Respect?

**Griffin:** It's gonna be respect. In the tide pools, there *was* a baby who got away from whoever was watching it, and started to crawl toward the water, and it was stopped by a creature that nobody had ever really seen before, that was kind of a... horseshoe crab terrier. That sort of stopped this baby. And then, was very protective of this baby, and people find a few more of them. Maybe they find a nest or whatever, and these horseshoe crab terriers become sort of, uh, beloved friends of the children here.

I should've maybe known how to draw a horseshoe crab before I started to say all that shit.

**Travis:** It's too late now. We can't edit.

**Griffin:** Yeah, that's true. Uh, and we're gonna move on. I think I messed up the order last time, but let's just stick with it. Uh, Travis.

**Travis:** Okay. I believe we're into summer now.

**Griffin:** Yeah, let's see. Yep, no more cards. So we're gonna hide spring... and bring out the bad boys of summer. Let me give them a good shuffle, shuffle, shuffle. Okay. And the first card of summer.

Now, summer gets a little bit—every season gets a little bit more harsh, uh, moving forward. So let's see what summer's got in store for us.

**Travis:** Uh, summer is a time – the three of summer. "Summer is a time for production and tending to the earth. Start a project related to food

production." Or, "Summer is a time for conquest and the gathering of might. Start a project related to military readiness and conquest."

So, uh, with the fish that were brought back—I'm going to do the first one, time for production. With the fish that were brought back to study, they set up like a fishery. Like, fish farm, uh, wooden pool. So that's what they're setting up to build. Basically, fish farms, uh, to manufacture these filler fish as a food source, 'cause they reproduce so very quickly, and they're so sustainable, that we think we could use them as a food source under the water.

**Griffin:** Okay. Uh, so I guess start a project, probably by those springs.

**Travis:** Well, so, they were able to transport back the container full of them.

**Griffin:** Ohh, I see. Jesus.

**Travis:** And so, they're attempting to build boxes of them down here.

**Griffin:** Are you gonna get us into some tribble shit?

**Travis:** I mean, that's up to you. You're the DM, buddy.

**Griffin:** I was curious what a project related to military readiness and conquest would look like in our... weird, weaponless sort of diarrhea hole.

**Travis:** What do you guys think about rocks tied to sticks?

**Griffin:** We would be on a Ewok sort of level.

**Travis:** That's what I came up with, there.

**Clint:** Hey, it worked out alright for the Ewoks.

**Griffin:** It did work out for the Ewoks.

**Clint:** Logray...

**Justin:** Most of them were killed.

**Clint:** Oh, they were?

**Travis:** Yeah, but there was already too many of them.

**Justin:** Georgie didn't have the guts to show it, but there were mass burials after that.

**Travis:** Um, so, the fisheries, I think, isn't gonna take that long. Really, it's just like, making sure they're sustainable beds. I'm gonna say two weeks.

**Justin:** [laughs] So our... [laughing] Sorry. Our society that's about to relocate into the sea is working on fisheries?

**Travis:** Well, so these are sustainable fresh water fish that we could—

**Justin:** I mean, that's about to be in short fucking supply, I will say.  
[laughing]

**Travis:** That's why they have to fuckin' study it, dawg!

**Griffin:** I would say, Trav—I would say this is gonna take a lot longer. To create a sustainable food source that can survive...

**Travis:** Okay, yeah. Sustainable food source...

**Griffin:** ... underwater is more than two weeks.

**Justin:** When we're in the—sorry, I'm calling for a discussion amongst the elders. When we're in the ocean, we will literally be able to stick our head out a window and grab lunch!



**Griffin:** Oh no, that's all poison.

**Justin:** You're wasting time on this! [laughing]

**Travis:** That's all poison. The fish are poisoned, dawg.

**Griffin:** We talked about that.

**Travis:** And hey – it's not your turn to start a discussion, friendo.

**Griffin:** Oooh.

**Justin:** But there is—you know how Reggie be.

**Travis:** I do know how Reggie be.

**Griffin:** [laughing]

**Justin:** You know how Reggie gets.

**Travis:** I know how Reggie the Einarr is.

**Clint:** [laughing]

**Griffin:** So how long, Trav?

**Travis:** I'm gonna say, uhh... y'know what? Let's say five weeks. To make it like, sustainable, at what rate can we replenish? How do we make sure—what do they eat? How much water do we need to feed enough people? All that stuff. Like, basically, figuring out the sustainable farming nature of these fish is gonna take five weeks.

**Griffin:** Okay. I'll give you five. Uh, and... all the other clocks count down. Let me do that real quick. World clock is at one. Uhh, the expedition clock is at one, and the shipyard clock is finished! Justin, what happens with the shipyard when it gets finished?

**Justin:** Uh, it is incredible to behold, but in sort of a sad way, because we know that it's the last sort of structure of this sort that we'll ever build on land, at least for the foreseeable future. Uh, but it is the last great hope of our society, and the birthplace of a new one, so people take to calling it The Cradle.

**Griffin:** Ooooh.

**Justin:** So that is where, uh, our last hope will take root.

**Griffin:** That's good. I like that. That's good stuff. Uh, okay! I think that's the only project clock that just finished, so, Travis. Take an action.

**Clint:** Did we not knock an extra—

**Griffin:** I did. We—yeah, I knocked an extra week off the uh, expedition.

**Clint:** Oh, okay.

**Travis:** Okay. Um, I am going to start a project. Now that the bathysphere is fixed, there are enterprising minds who, looking at the bathysphere, and looking at the Crystal Ascendance, are like... can we design—can we combine these two ideas and design a system that, rather than raising us up to a plateau, could safely lower us down in a bathysphere-like elevator up and down?

**Griffin:** That's like a thing we haven't talked about. We've talked about like, food, and water, and air underwater, but like... there's gonna be a lot of people to get down, once the migration begins, so...

**Travis:** This is not building it. This is just like, we're going to look at these two structures and attempt to figure out a design that we could like, build something like it. And I'm gonna say this is a huge project, and it's six weeks.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** Could you restate the project, Trav?

**Travis:** Yes. Uh, Delmer engineers are going to be blue sky engineering, uh, a potential design for a safe way to transport people to the bottom of the ocean using what is established in the Crystal Ascendance and the bathysphere.

**Griffin:** Okay, I've moved the bathysphere over to the Crystal Ascendance, since that's sort of... what that is, and put a six by it. Okay! Uh, that is it for your turn, and we are onto Justin, I belie—or, Dad. Dad, there's your card.

**Clint:** Four of summer. [laughs]

**Griffin:** [bursts into laughter]

**Travis:** Oh boy.

**Clint:** "The oldest among you dies."

**Griffin:** Uh oh!

**Clint:** That's funny. "What caused the death?" Or, number four... "The eldest among you is very sick." Wait a minute!

**Griffin:** What?!

**Clint:** Okay. "Caring for them and searching for a cure requires the help of the entire community. Do not reduce project dice this week."

**Griffin:** Take one for the team, Dad. Beef it. Take one for the team! The big wheel keeps turnin'! Beef it, Daddy!

**Clint:** The eldest—

**Travis:** I like that they go ahead and include in this card, "The eldest amongst you dies. What caused the death?" Like, uh, it was a parasailing accident. I don't know, he's wicked old!

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** Uh, the eldest among us has died, and he was assisting Fineas Cawl. He was kind of the uh... they've been using the bathysphere, right? You gotta have a way to lower the bathysphere, so he had a very large—and not like a raft or anything, but a craft. Like a boat that would lower the bathysphere, and then draw it back up, and um... there was an accident, and this old man, who we're gonna call Mint Clackleroy...

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Clint:** ... fell—was killed by blink sharks.

**Travis:** Aw, man.

**Clint:** In the course of this investigation...

**Griffin:** You just set up a fucking Final Destination, like... they were lowering the cable with the bathysphere, down into the water on a rickety ship, and the storm was rocking and rolling, and then a shark blinked up and ate him! It's like, whoa!

**Clint:** Well, because of the bad weather, he fell off that platform, and the blink shark showed up out of nowhere – as they do, by definition. And killed poor Mint.

**Griffin:** Okay. Well, RIP. I guess blink sharks are still, uh... still real jerks. Uh, okay. Do you want to draw that? [laughing] Do you want to draw your own dead, shark-eaten body somewhere on the map?

**Clint:** Yes I do.

**Griffin:** Okay. I... just to give this kind of ramifications, Dad... [laughing] I imagine that is a man who has been bifurcated, it seems.

**Clint:** Bit in half.

**Griffin:** Right. That's a shame. I think maybe, then, uh, the clock does not go down on, uh, on the expedition this week, then.

**Travis:** But still goes down on the other ones?

**Griffin:** I think on the other ones, yeah, those clocks still go down. But I don't think we would reduce it.

**Clint:** Okay, that's fine.

**Griffin:** Y'know, we gotta have some sort of consequences for it. Uh, okay! So... the tower goes down to five. The fishery goes to four. Uh, that clock doesn't go down. The world clock drops to zero.

Uh, this time...

**Travis:** It's a pizza party!

**Griffin:** Actually, I will handle that after Dad takes his action. That's kind of how I did it last time. Oh, y'know what? I'll go ahead and do it now, so that in case you want to do something related to it. Um, so... whoever your folks are in this little enclave who live closer to the outskirts of town, they intercept a convoy of wagons that are these huge... basically tanks. Um, and they are manned by armored warriors, and they're on the march from the north.

And at first, there are folks who worry like, "Uh oh, Hominine's here, and they don't like that we're doing this!" Uh, but then, an emissary comes out from that convoy, and explains that they are the last expedition of the Delmer. And they are there because they heard about what it is we're doing down here, and heard that we were sort of developing, specifically, like, self-sustaining techniques, that they are very interested in.

Because after this convoy gets back to the sort of mountains of the Delmer wilds, they are going to seal themselves up in the subterranean city they have built into the heart of those mountains, and nobody's ever leaving again.

That is how they are going to survive this, y'know, this apocalypse, is they are moving their acropolis from on top of the mountain to within the mountain, and then they're just gonna seal the whole thing up. So this will be sort of their last time to trade with them. But, they are only going to stay here for one month before they return, so this is our last sort of chance to deal with the Delmer. That is what happens.

**Travis:** Make a deal with the Delmer!

**Justin:** So all the Delmer are gonna live in the skull?

**Griffin:** No no no, that's not here. Not on this beach. All the Delmer are going back to the world map, uh... we are down—we are all the way down here. We're on the other side of the continent, and this convoy has come all the way down through Hominine to our build site to trade with us. And then they are going back up to the Delmer Wilds, and they're gonna seal themselves into the mountain.

**Justin:** Aren't there people among us who are from the Delmer?

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Clint:** Yeah. So are they being forced to go back?

**Griffin:** No. I mean, they're not here to—they are not here to say, "Hey, other Delmer, you better come back with us." They are here to say like, "We are about to move inside of a mountain, and it would maybe benefit both of us, since we are all doing our own sort of sustainable escape thing, to like, share information and trade for whatever resources we need."

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** That is what's happening.

**Clint:** Okay, so when you said—I thought the same thing, Juice. When you said all the Delmer were going to go into this...

**Griffin:** No no no. Yeah, no. The people who moved here of their own vol—I don't think the Delmer fuck like that. I feel like the Hominine probably do. I think there's probably a sort of sense of, um, nationalism, maybe, that goes along with that. But I think the Delmer are like, yeah, you go ahead and go live in the ocean, and that'll leave more resources for us, y'know, sane folks who are gonna move into the mountain.

**Travis:** Very practical, the Delmer.

**Griffin:** Right. Uh, these are the things that are—I just shared the resources with you again. Okay, now, Dad... now that that's out of the way, what is your action? You can start a project, discover something, or hold a discussion.

**Clint:** I'm going to, uh... start a project.

**Griffin:** `Kay.

**Clint:** I think a coalition of magic users from Hominine, uh, naturalists from Einarr Plateau, and technologists from Delmer Wilds are going to work together to try and create something that can house... all the ghosts from the Einarr Plateau.

**Griffin:** Okay. When you say `house,' is there any—

**Clint:** I mean like, provide some kind of um... construct.

**Travis:** Oh!

**Griffin:** Oh, okay.

**Clint:** To put the souls in.

**Travis:** Cool cool cool!

**Griffin:** Alright, I dig it. Yeah, I think that work is, uh—we can talk about how long that takes, but I think that some of that has already been done with the, like, how are we talking with these things?

**Clint:** Exactly. And I was kind of trying to play off of that.

**Griffin:** Okay. Um...

**Clint:** You have all these unhappy souls. Because I have to assume that, when the Einarr Plateau was wiped out, not everybody was on board with this idea.

**Griffin:** I mean, that's what these souls are. These spirits that come back are the ones who, y'know, without their consent, got spirited away to this realm where they no longer have physical form, and said, "Fuck that." And like, their disdain for that was so strong that they are able to, y'know, pierce the veil back into our world. They just have... nothing to...

**Clint:** So this coalition is going to try to build automatons or golems or whatever it's going to be...

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** ... that would provide bodies for these wrongly destroyed people to be in.

**Griffin:** Uhh... how long do you think this takes?

**Clint:** Well, I hadn't really thought that far ahead. That's why it's a coalition. A coalition of magic users, naturalists, and technicians. So... I think that I'm gonna need six weeks for this.

**Griffin:** Okay. So, that is the end of Dad's turn. Justin?



**Justin:** Yes.

**Griffin:** Flip that card to... this!

**Justin:** You discover—

**Griffin:** Wait.

**Clint:** Don't I need to draw something?

**Griffin:** Yes, Dad, you do need to draw something. I added a six near the sort of discussion with the ghosts thing, but you need to draw a, y'know, something to represent.

**Justin:** And Dad's building ghost prisons.

**Travis:** Ghost bodies.

**Griffin:** Well, he's building ghost bodies.

**Clint:** Not prisons.

**Griffin:** Is what it sounds like.

**Justin:** Okay. Sort of elaborating on their ability to do sign language with gauntlets.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Travis:** Right. Right right right.

**Justin:** Okay. Tenth of summer. "You discover a cache of supplies or resources. Add a new abundance." Or, "A scarcity has gone unaddressed for too long. Start a project that will alleviate that scarcity."

**Griffin:** I like that. There's—I've shared you the setup notes that you should be able to see.

**Travis:** For those of you at home, right now listed under scarcity is culture, food, shelter, unity, defense weapons, and Kodite.

**Griffin:** And culture was what... I think Justin added to the list at the beginning, of like, works of art and, y'know, artifacts that, y'know, may want to go down below.

**Justin:** I am going to set up, uhh... okay. I want to work on unity, and the way I want to do it is, I am going to set up a um... a school. For children. They're just playing in tide pools all day, and I think that there's no reason... me and the other educators feel like there's no reason that we should spend a year with their brains idling. And we need to start to develop a common language and a common culture, and a way that we can all sort of communicate after being drawn together like this.

**Travis:** Drawn together.

**Justin:** Yeah. I want to create, um, an institute to educate our children, in a very sort of like, one room schoolhouse, uh, y'know, scrappy sort of way. But an education for our children, uh, to help to bring us together as a people.

**Griffin:** You know they're just gonna bring their horseshoe dogs into class, though. Cause a big fuckin' mess.

**Travis:** Oh yeah. Very, Mary, had a little lamb.

**Justin:** I mean, they can try, but that's gonna be one of our top rules.

**Travis:** You got cubbies to put your horseshoe crab dogs in.

**Justin:** There's no—during lunch time, you can trade horseshoe dogs with your friends. You gotta collect all the horseshoe dogs. But uh, that's not during class.

**Griffin:** Okay, so draw a, uh...

**Justin:** Kickass school? You got it.

**Griffin:** And then, how long is this going to take?

**Justin:** Umm, I think it's gonna take...

**Griffin:** Keep in mind that, at this point, we don't really have in abundance any kind of building material.

**Justin:** It's not gonna be a building. It's like, very open air, sort of like...

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** It's mainly about like, the educational purposes. And I feel like survival is going to be a top priority. We're raising a generation that's gonna have to fight for every scrap it gets, and I feel like that's gonna be important for educating kids. Because honestly, like, these are the kids that are going to be... like, that could be shaping the world that we end up playing in.

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure.

**Justin:** Uh, down the road. So, someone's drawing a robot?

**Griffin:** Dad has been working on a robot body for... the last... well, since his turn ended.

**Justin:** Okay. I'm gonna make a school.

**Travis:** Dad, it looks great. Don't listen to them.

**Griffin:** It does! It looks fuckin' awesome. I get why you're redrawing it. Uh, how long, Juice, do you think this is gonna take?

**Justin:** Probably three weeks.

**Griffin:** Oh, wow, so this is going to be fairly ramshackle, as uh...

**Justin:** Hey, listen, bud. West Virginia came up with like, COVID protocols in a quicker time than that.

**Griffin:** [laughs] That's true. Yeah.

**Justin:** Like, we have precedents.

**Griffin:** I'm going to leave this three next to the children, uh, until you have plopped the school down somewhere. Unless I'm not seeing it, and you've already started drawing.

**Justin:** No, I wanna put the school right here.

**Griffin:** Okay. Uh, I'm gonna start going down clocks, then. World clock's at three. The tower clock is at four. The robot clock is at five. The fishery clock is at three. This is a lot of clocks. And finally... there were probably some people who thought this day would never come. The expedition has completed, and... uh, Dad.

**Travis:** Now Dad, did you give the robot little nipples?

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Those are lights, I think.

**Clint:** Well, it's not canon.

**Travis:** They're not cannons?

**Justin:** They're non-canonical nipples.

**Griffin:** They're not laser cannon nipples. They might be. Uh, okay! Dad. This is kind of a—probably a big one for map-making purposes. What does Fineas and his intrepid crew of sort of primitive ocean floor explorers... what do they discover?

**Clint:** That the place with the calm sea would be a great place to start. The water is, um, more heavily oxygenated, for some reason, in that general area.

**Justin:** Hmm.

**Clint:** There's also much less concentration of the prestige salts. So they really kind of have staked out that that area right there would be a good place to start, where at least maybe they... whatever their preliminary efforts are in building a community underwater, at least maybe it'll be a little easier there, and they can work out some of the kinks.

**Griffin:** Yeah. So, that—just to sort of condense down what you're saying, this patch of calm sea maybe isn't the best place to build the city, but... we can set up a ship there, or a, y'know, a flotilla of construction ships there, and they will be safe. And it will make construction of that city, like, possible.

**Clint:** And not only that, but it would be like a staging area.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** But you've also got this gigantic spiral staircase right next to it.

**Griffin:** Yeah, do they go deep enough to figure out what that is?

**Clint:** Uh, I don't know if they figured out what it is, but it's obviously something that is constructed and manmade. It's not something that just grew in a spiral out of nature.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** But also, has a number of workable materials to use.

**Griffin:** Yeah, okay.

**Clint:** And see, I feel weird about this, because the spiral staircase was Justin's...

**Griffin:** No, I mean, that's the nature of the game, is we're gonna build on each other's things.

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** So basically, what you were saying is that these two weird anomalies that have been here since the start are, essentially, good grounds for a construction site. Not the city itself, but a launch pad to actually get this stuff done.

**Clint:** But maybe even a temporary community that will, like I said, would be a staging area to build.

**Griffin:** I like that. Yeah, no, for sure. I think that that is a lot cleaner than... we live on the land, we take our boats out to sea, we go down underwater with our hammers and nails for a little bit, and then, y'know, come on back for a nice campfire party by the trash geyser before I go back to bed. Like, that doesn't seem as feasible as, "Here's the construction site, and now there's people who live there, and we just don't really see those people as much anymore."

**Clint:** That's what I was thinking.

**Griffin:** Okay. Uhh, and...

**Clint:** Do I need to draw anything?

**Griffin:** Uhh... I don't think so? Unless you want to draw some sort of...

**Clint:** [laughs] Okay, I know what I can draw.

**Griffin:** Okay. I was gonna say, you could also just move the logo down to the... down to here.

**Clint:** Oh! How do I do that?

**Griffin:** Uh, I can do it. Do they hang out there? Does, uh—does Fineas and his like, crew of ocean explorers, do they kind of post up in that area? I imagine exploring—

**Clint:** I think there'll be side preparation.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** And it's not just him. I think that he was so impressed with the young woman and her crew, and he needed help after Mint got eaten, and also could probably use some protection...

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** ... that he kind of made them his team.

**Griffin:** Rad. Okay, that's good. Um, Justin... now, I think you get to take an action.

**Justin:** I don't like it when my card makes me take an action, and then I have to take another action right after that.

**Griffin:** Right. Well, then, you could discover something fairly benign. Y'know what I mean? It doesn't always have to be... y'know, some uh...

**Travis:** I just took a contempt, in case anyone was wondering.

**Griffin:** Oh, why?

**Travis:** Do I have to tell you? I—

**Griffin:** Guess not.

**Travis:** I'm not wild about these ruffians who stole from the shipyard getting to help build the new place.

**Griffin:** Oh yeah.

**Travis:** I don't trust them.

**Griffin:** Fair. Fair.

**Justin:** In the morning, uh, we wake in the shithouse to find several beds empty.

**Travis:** [gasps]

**Justin:** And there's a note from a group, calling themselves The Vanguard, that says that they have gone ahead, and they will be the first to go under.

**Griffin:** Whoa!

**Justin:** They haven't waited for everybody else to be ready. They haven't waited for a ship. As far as we know, we don't know how they're doing it. All we know is that they are gone, and they say that they will be, uh... they basically want to be the first to set up, uh, a life under the sea. They want to beat everybody else to the punch, and they think that they've got a way to do it.

**Griffin:** Do they take anything?

**Justin:** They've uh, looted. I mean, from the shipyard, there are small things. It's not enough to impede work, because work has not begun in the shipyard. Something we should probably have a name for...

**Griffin:** Yeah. [laughs]



**Justin:** [laughs] But uh, they've looted some supplies—

**Travis:** I thought it was The Cradle. Didn't you name it?

**Griffin:** Yeah, The Cradle.

**Justin:** They've looted supplies from The Cradle. They've taken some of the like, food stocks. Um, and the bathysphere is missing.

**Griffin:** Oh! Well, that's going to make this project... uhh...

**Travis:** Well, they already have the designs.

**Justin:** It should be noted, by the way – it seems to be a large cross section of the community.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** And there is not a consensus on whether or not these people will live to see fall.

**Griffin:** Right. Sure, fuckin' of course.

**Justin:** So that is a question.

**Griffin:** Is it... I'm sort of curious about this cross section of people, like, where they came from. The only thing we know about, uh, like, subgroups of this community are the political leaders, the children up here, and then the gatherers with the cool haircuts are sort of like, king shit.

**Justin:** What we find out is that it's mainly gatherers. They feel like they've been doing the work, uh, to ready us, and they feel like they... and maybe they've been pocketing—they haven't been bringing all of their discoveries to the community.

**Griffin:** Yeahhh.

**Justin:** And they decide that they're going to be the first to, uh... first to set up, and basically, establish, y'know—

**Travis:** It's like a land rush.

**Justin:** Exactly. Exactly.

**Griffin:** Okay. Then I'm gonna move them...

**Travis:** They're the Sooners of this.

**Griffin:** I'm gonna move the cool collectors down here. I'm gonna rotate him so he's like, swimming into the water. Cool.

I love that he's there, swimming into the water, and meanwhile, Dad's torn in half Samuel L. Jackson from Deep Blue Sea is, uh... [laughing]

**Clint:** Yeah. I hope he watches out for blink sharks...

**Griffin:** Yeah, that's a good—yep, we don't know how they're gonna solve for that, but... good luck, everybody.

[music plays]

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