

## The Adventure Zone: Ethersea – Episode 15

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**Griffin:** Previously, on The Adventure Zone Ethersea:

[“The Adventure Zone: Ethersea Theme” begins playing]

**Ravi:** Sign of good faith— these jobs, if they’re still available, are yours for sure.

**Griffin:** Uncle Joshy, of course, who has an invitation to an exclusive auction, where he hopes to purchase an undisclosed surface relic, and he needs representatives to attend the auction.

**Joshy:** I’ll bankroll ya. You get what I ask for, and then... you come on home. It’s a— it’s a journal. It’s a journal from an old Delmer architect. I have zero need for it. But I know plenty of folks who would. It is twenty Lux, I’m gonna give ya. Whatever else you have left, uh, you can keep. Nobody there can see anybody else’s faces. If you don’t succeed the fair way, you could try and come about it another way.

**Griffin:** Roll that beautiful d100 footage!

**Justin:** Dad, out of a hundred, you got a... a 1?

**Griffin:** It’s a squid, about the size of your ship. And it attaches one of its tentacles to the front of the ship, and then blasts out an enormous, all-encompassing, black cloud of ink. And then you feel the Coriolis move.

**Justin:** Fuck! A 1!?

**Travis:** So what happens on a 1?

**Justin:** “I’m sorry” would be a good start.

[Theme song plays]

**Clint:** I have taken a great deal of duress, and criticism, for rolling a 1 on my hundred-sided die thing, that I...

**Travis:** Uh huh.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** I would like to point out.

**Travis:** Oh boy.

**Clint:** That, if it had been any other number, any number you roll is a one in a hundred chance.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Clint:** If it was a 7! It'd be a one in a hundred chance— if it was a 99, it would be a one in a hundred chance. So to criticize me!

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** No.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** For rolling something that was exactly the same odds...

**Justin:** Who— who is this for?

**Travis:** You are misunderstanding. This is a misread of the situation, Dad. The criticism is not how you rolled the die— I mean, you rolled the dice and it came up. The criticism is rather, how often... Lady Luck likes to take a shit on our Dad.

**Griffin:** A big dumparooni.

**Justin:** Mmhmm.

**Travis:** Just a—

**Griffin:** Yeah, it's—

**Travis:** Just a big old...

**Clint:** Ahh...

**Travis:** Shit...

**Clint:** So I shouldn't take it personally?

**Travis:** Well, I mean...

**Griffin:** No.

**Travis:** You should, because you've done something to anger the fates, clearly—

**Clint:** Oh.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** I don't know what choice you made at some point. But the criticism isn't like, oh, you got a number. It's that you got the worst number!

**Griffin:** The worst one of them.

**Clint:** I understand.

**Griffin:** And I— if we're using statistics, also, Dad, I'd like to say that there was a 99 percent chance that you would roll any other number.

**Justin:** That's true.

**Travis:** Correct.

**Griffin:** That would not prove catastrophic.

**Justin:** Can I make— I would say though, in a sense, I... Isn't one better than two?

**Travis:** I mean—

**Griffin:** No—

**Justin:** Can I posit that? 'Cause it's like...

**Travis:** You mean interest level wise.

**Justin:** Y— well, it's just like, that's almost the funniest thing that could happen. You know what I mean?

**Travis:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Justin:** And one is the funniest thing that could happen, while still being bad. Okay! We're ready. Go ahead, Griffin, shit on our heads!

[Ambient music plays softly]

**Griffin:** So, you all are in the Coriolis. And it is covered in this pitch black cloud of ink, that you saw this... you know, armored squid, shoot out at you, before it stuck one of its tendrils to you. There's the TAZ drinking game, I said "tendrils."

**Travis:** Oh, yeah, that is nice.

**Griffin:** Take a sip. Uh, and started to pull your ship slowly downward. Yeah, it's just pitch black, and silent outside. It's like this cloud is, y'know, sucking up everything outside. Um—

**Devo:** Uh, Amber! Zoox? You may want to, uh... come on to the bridge and... well, I would say "and see this," but, um. Well, yes. Come... come? Please?

**Justin:** Yeah, Amber heads over to where she can see.

**Devo:** There was a giant, um, octopus? And it squirted ink onto us, and now everything is darkness outside? And we are being pulled into it? And I didn't— I cannot stress this enough— I did not do anything. This just happened?

**Amber:** I feel like someone must be responsible, though.

**Devo:** Yes, somebody must be responsible, but it is not me.

**Amber:** Well, I wasn't even here.

**Zoox:** Mm, and I was... you know, busy sulking around about my terrible rolls.

**Amber:** How could this happen— [crosstalk]

**Devo:** Hey, you are a good baker, Zoox!

**Zoox:** [crosstalk] ...was responsible.

**Devo:** No, Zoox, don't—

**Amber:** I actually like those, actually.

**Devo:** Yes.

**Amber:** I like a little bit of... y'know what I call it? I don't say burnt, I have this thing, I call it caramelization.

**Devo:** Oh, this is good, yes.

**Amber:** You know what I mean?

**Devo:** A mired effect.

**Amber:** Oooh, boy!

**Devo:** Um, I want to tell you both of you something. Occurred to me, as I was piloting here. We're about to go to an auction, yes? That has... one would assume, several old artifacts. We have, twice now, come up against uh... y'know... villains, Guthrie and then Orlene, that like to collect these old things. And I think there might be a pretty good chance that one of them... might be here? And we won't know it, because everybody is in some sort of... disguise.

**Zoox:** [gasps] Oh, I believe I see where you're headed! All they'll be able to do to identify us is by our voice. So you're saying that you're going to speak with some kind of accent, to disguise your voice?

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Devo:** Yes, actually. This... I think we should all do this. Um. Adopt different characters. So, also, if we do end up stealing anything, that... it cannot be traced back to us.

**Amber:** Alright.

**Zoox:** [in a French accent] That is a great idea.

**Griffin:** [cracks up]

**Devo:** You know what, I was about to say that I find this offensive, but this is very good!

**Zoox:** Ah, I think that this is something that we will, uh, how you say... be incognito?

**Devo:** My only worry is that if you do this accent, that people will assume that it is me? Because I am the only person... that I know, that has this accent.

**Zoox:** It is very odd, how similar our voices are. Mais oui?

**Griffin:** [squeaks while laughing]

**Devo:** Hmm. I do not know how I feel about this. I feel like a big part of my identity is... being taken.

**Zoox:** No, no, no, no, no. Not— I would never take on—

**Devo:** [in a rough country accent] And I'll be a Brinarr! I'm a Brinarr, bah be bah!! [back to his normal French accent] You don't like it? Eh?

**Griffin:** [laughing softly]

**Zoox:** Oh, uh... if I need...

**Amber:** I will say, it's unconvincing... [laughs] 'cause of the way your whole face and head.

**Devo:** This is true, yes, it is hard to transform one's physicality with one's voice. Um.

**Zoox:** And I will say, once you start with this accent, it is hard to stop.

**Travis:** [in Devo's voice] Oh, it's so hard! Sometimes you are playing with your children, and you just slip into the accent, and your daughter's like, "No, Daddy!"

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [cracks up]

**Justin:** I didn't... I didn't think I could respect you less than I already did, but here it goes.

**Travis:** [in Devo's voice] No, Papa!

**Griffin:** Um, everybody make a constitution saving throw.

**Justin:** Gah, if only Trolls 2 had been theatrically released. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah...

**Justin:** [laughing] I feel like that would have really turned things around for us.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** [laughing] Yeah.

[sound of dice rolling]

**Travis:** Ugh!

**Justin:** What check— what check are we rolling?

**Griffin:** Uh, constitution save.

[sound of dice rolling]

**Justin:** Dang!

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** That's that box up in the left...

**Travis:** Yeah, cha boy got himself a 4 plus 1, a 5. And the worst part is, in D&DBeyond, when it teeters on the edge, it will half light up the other number, and then it rolls back?

**Griffin:** Yeah, it's delicious. It's so good.

**Travis:** Wuh...

**Griffin:** Um, okay—

**Justin:** 15.

**Griffin:** Uh—

**Clint:** [still in a French accent] I rolled a 14.

**Griffin:** Right. You can speak normal, I think.

**Clint:** [still with French accent] I do not think I can anymore.

**Griffin:** Okay, yeah, I guess you have to... you're on full Daniel Day Lewis shit right now. You all feel your ears pop.

**Travis:** Oh.

**Griffin:** And it is like... you know, maybe it's happened a little bit once or twice since you all have been on these undersea missions, as you sort of pass through the different, you know, layers, of ocean. But this is, this is really brutal. Amber, you are— it hurts, but you're fine. Uh, Zoox, you take two points of... I don't know, inner ear damage?

**Travis:** Oh yep!

**Clint:** Ehhh...

**Griffin:** Uhh, and—

**Travis:** Sinus? Sinus damage?

**Griffin:** Right. Devo, you take twice that, you take four points. But, after that happens, the ship slows, or rather the squid hauling your ship slows down. And then you all hear a clicking noise, next to the airlock. And the— your ship is completely still now. And...

**Travis:** Is it like a knocking?

**Griffin:** No, like something locking into place.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Griffin:** On the other side of the airlock. Yeah. That's where you are. Through the, through the... y'know, viewport and all of the different viewports like around the ship, like, it's still complete black. Like, not "it's really dark down here" but... [laughs] "magical darkness is surrounding our ship so we can't see anything." Yeah, that's the situation.

**Devo:** Uh, Zoox? You should open the door.

**Zoox:** But... um. Uh, oh... I would be glad to. Explain your logic?

**Devo:** Uh—

**Zoox:** I'm the tank! I'm the tank.

**Devo:** This, and also if... if there's water on the other side, um. You can breathe it.

**Zoox:** Oh, right! I forgot I could— yeah! I need— a matter of fact, it's good for me! It's healthy.

**Devo:** Yes, this is true, yes.

**Zoox:** Okay.

**Clint:** So Zoox strides proudly up to the... boop boop. That was me—

**Travis:** Uh, Zoox just made those noises, there's no buttons or anything, he just walked up to the like the big— it's a turn handle.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But he just went, "Boop boop boop boop!"

**Clint:** I was trying to talk to it. Yeah, I'm the tank, but...

**Travis:** Oh, I see!

**Griffin:** He was trying to mind meld with the...

**Clint:** Oh, yeah, let me put my hand on this great big wheel... Nah, nothing.

**Travis:** We talked about this, Zoot.

**Griffin:** [silly voice] The roundness... oh god, the roundness! [Regular voice] Um. I don't know what I've done this season to breed the kind of... uh... timidity, that you all possess. You open the door, it's—

**Travis:** There's water outside!

**Clint:** Zoot opens the door!

**Griffin:** There's water everywhere, I'll grant you that, sure. But there's not water outside of this door. As you open it up, you see... a fairly long hallway. It is... your characters wouldn't know this; it looks like a jet bridge, basically. With a staircase at the end of it. And it is just... pure white, illumination. Like the... it is a featureless hallway, except for the fact that everything appears to be made of like, white... white light. And, yeah, there's a stairway at the end of it.

**Travis:** Alright, let's go.

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** I feel like we ought to be... I'm... okay, Zoot is gonna hold onto his weapon until he's told to put his weapon away.

**Griffin:** Sure.

**Travis:** Oh yeah, absolutely.

**Griffin:** Alright, you all make your way down this hallway, and up the staircase. At the top of it is a... is a door, that is open. And you all make

your way through it, into another one of these, like, plain white featureless rooms. This one, you can tell, is sort of a long triangular room? And at the far side of it, opposite where you all have entered, is another closed door. This one is pretty huge. And in the middle of the room is a... a box, about waist high... y'know, long rectangular box. Um. And as you make your way into this room, actually, the door behind you closes. And a speaker activates, and from it you hear a voice, that says,

**Speaker:** Hello, honored guests. Thank you for particip—

**Devo:** Hello.

**Speaker:** Hello. Thank you for participating in today's auction. Preserv—

**Devo:** You're welcome.

**Speaker:** Yes. Preserving your anonymity during this event is our paramount concern. Please ans—

**Devo:** Okay.

**Speaker:** Yes. Please answer the following questions to ensure our success in this pursuit. [pause] Sorry, I thought you were gonna say another—

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Devo:** I was waiting for the question.

**Speaker:** We have detected three participants present in this chamber. Is that correct?

**Devo:** Yes?

**Speaker:** You should be pretty sure of how many people are in the room right now.

**Devo:** [confidently] Yes.

**Speaker:** That's more like it. Atta boy.

**Griffin:** Uh, three vapor suit collars come up from holes that appear in this box in front of you, and are now just sitting on the surface. And this table stops being like this plain white featureless table, and the surface of it kind of turns into... like a color wheel? Like in photoshop, like choosing the color of the paint? This voice says,

**Speaker:** Please select a color to represent your group while on the premises.

**Devo:** Uh... Amber, do you have a preference?

**Zoox:** Um, speaking tactically, why don't we go with black?

**Devo:** Oh, I worry that that will make us look too cool, and be like a target? And people are like, "oh..."

**Zoox:** Oh— oh. Okay. Yeah.

**Devo:** What about aquamarine?

**Zoox:** It's a little on the nose, but... I don't have any problem with it.

**Devo:** Uh... we could do puce?

**Zoox:** Aquamarine is good, I think that's... that's apt.

**Devo:** [with a low, deliberate Midwestern American accent] We choose aquamarine.

**Speaker:** Did your voice just change?

[Someone snorts with laughter]

**Devo:** No.

**Speaker:** Okay.

**Griffin:** These collars have these sort of, uh, strings of small lights, that run the distance around them, and they all now turn aquamarine. And then the voice comes back, and says,

**Speaker:** This shall be the color for your group. Now each of you must select an avatar to represent yourself while on the premises. You may select simple shapes or complex designs, though requests for vulgar images may be denied.

**Zoox:** I'd like a seahorsie.

**Griffin:** One of the vapor suits vibrates, and then a hologram of a seahorse head is now kinda floating above it.

**Zoox:** [audibly grinning] Neat!

**Devo:** I choose the Scales of Benevolence.

**Griffin:** Okay. Yeah. Another one shakes, for just a moment, and then hovering above it you see a hand holding a set of scales.

**Amber:** Can I get a picture of my own face?

[Someone snorts with laughter]

**Speaker:** That is... so counterintuitive.

**Amber:** Huh. Alright.

**Zoox:** How 'bout mine? Go with mine!

**Amber:** ...Can I?

**Speaker:** Can you get a picture of your own face?

**Amber:** Yeah! For... what is this?

**Travis:** Uh, Devo at this point by the way, is just like, so big-eyed, [laughs] staring at Amber, like [grunts] Uh-uh!

**Amber:** What— ohhh! I got it. We're— like sneaky. [pause] Alright. Alright. I think I gotcha now. Do me, but like, with a mustache.

**Speaker:** [sighs]

**Amber:** No! No. I got it. A blink shark. That'd be cool. Yeah, do that.

**Griffin:** [laughs] You hear the voice say,

**Speaker:** Uh... blink shark, blink shark, blink shark, hold on. Oh! Gosh! Are you sure?

**Amber:** Yeah. Absolutely.

**Speaker:** Oh-kay.

**Griffin:** And then the third collar vibrates, and above it is the horrifying visage of a blink shark.

**Amber:** Ah ha ha...

**Griffin:** With its... mouths? Question mark? Half open, and its eyes sort of squinting with malice. And this voice says,

**Speaker:** Please, put on your collars.

**Travis:** Uh, Devo does.

**Justin:** Sah... same, obviously.

**Griffin:** Alright.

**Clint:** Zoox does.

**Justin:** I do that.

**Travis:** I do that.

**Griffin:** As you all slip it on...

**Travis:** Can you say slip it on, in like a slower, a little huskier voice?

**Griffin:** Sure. As you all... [strained, silly] slip it on...

**Justin:** [cracks up]

**Travis:** Okay, yep. Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah.

**Griffin:** A vapor suit forms around each of you, and you can see each other's heads are the shapes that you requested. But, Amber— Devo, have you worn the vapor suit aboard the ship yet? I don't know that you have, have you?

**Travis:** Uh, no.

**Griffin:** No, okay, then Amber you're the only one that notices this. It's different. It feels different from the one aboard your ship. The pressure inside of the suit doesn't change. There's no airflow whatsoever. And in fact, your feet... you know, usual vapor suits only work in the water because they sort of need that power to form the... the tangible hologram. You can actually tell that your feet are standing on the floor, and kind of passing through it a little bit. And so you intuit first, and I think the other two do eventually, that nothing physically is interacting with the suit. It's just a sort of like, aesthetic illusory projection. And the voice says,

**Speaker:** These will be your identities during today's auction. Please resist sharing personal details about yourselves to the other participants. Have you attended one of our auctions in the past?

**Devo:** [his Midwestern American accent] No.

**Speaker:** Well, allow me to inform you of the rules that you must follow while aboard this station.

[Ambient music begins to play]

**Speaker:** First, our personnel for this auction can be identified by their white pyramid avatars. Please do not accost them, or follow them into any staff only spaces. I'll—

**Zoos:** I almost went with a white pyramid! Almost!

**Devo:** Yes, is it too late to change? ...Our avatars?

**Speaker:** It— you could not be a white pyramid, that would get very confusing.

**Devo:** Ah.

**Speaker:** Second. You may not return to this hangar until the final settlements for today's auction have concluded. Third. Any acts of violence or unauthorized magic usage witnessed by an attendant will lead to the offending participant's immediate expulsion, and permanent banning from all future events.

**Devo:** Is there any magic usage that is authorized?

**Speaker:** Not by participants during the auction. Fourth, failure to settle up after purchasing an item during today's auction will result in severe punishment for the offending party. Finally, you must surrender your weapons before you can be admitted to the auction.

**Griffin:** And the—

**Devo:** Yes, of course.

**Griffin:** The box now opens up on the top, like a chest. And the voice says,

**Speaker:** Do you agree to these terms?

**Amber:** Absolutely.

**Zoox:** Mmhmm.

**Devo:** Yes, but only if I can get this boomerang back, it's a sacred relic.

**Speaker:** We don't want your boomerang, dude.

**Justin:** [snickers]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Devo:** Ugh.

**Justin:** You see Amber is like pulling on her arms.

**Amber:** Aw, no. They won't come off. Dang. Hey, I'm having trouble surrendering my... my weapons. Awww, no.

**Travis:** Yeah, it takes Devo a long time too, 'cause he just keeps pulling knives out of different locations.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Just, like— Oh wait, sorry, I still have one! I don't know... I can't seem to not have a knife!

**Clint:** And Zoox also has trouble, 'cause he... he says,

**Zoox:** I'm having trouble handing over my devastating wit!

**Devo:** Oooh.

**Amber:** So cool. [laughs]

**Devo:** We are...

**Clint:** [cracks up]

**Devo:** We are all three very good... we're all very cool.

**Amber:** Yeah. Everybody likes us.

**Clint:** And then he puts his crossbow, he puts his crossbow in the box.

**Amber:** Yeah. Alright.

**Griffin:** Is anybody trying to smuggle— let's say this right now, so you don't, two episodes in, go "and then I pull out my secret katana." Like... is anybody actually trying to smuggle stuff in?

**Justin:** No. I mean, I'm not.

**Travis:** Yeah, the only thing I have is a boomerang, and I think it's pretty... Listen, I don't know how big Devo's butt crack is, but I don't think he's getting a boomerang...

**Justin:** You can try...

**Griffin:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Justin:** Do you want this— hey do you want this child's toy?

**Griffin:** Uh. What are you being honest about?

**Clint:** I— uh.

**Justin:** [under his breath] For a change.

**Clint:** I had kicked around the idea of trying to find a loophole on this, by at some point producing a knife, following the first rule of Ethersea, which is: everybody has a knife.

**Griffin:** Right—

**Justin:** That's a good question...

**Griffin:** That rule will be suspended, during today's adventure.

**Travis:** Ah, so this is the exception. That proves the rule!

**Griffin:** Exactly.

**Clint:** Then no. Then no, [laughing] I'm not trying to sneak a knife.

**Griffin:** Okay! As you place all of your weaponry in the box, it closes, and the voice says,

**Speaker:** This hangar will be kept absolutely secure, until you are ready to depart after the final settlement.

**Griffin:** And then there's a loud sound of machinery, grinding machinery, beyond the door at the end of the room. And finally the door opens. And it presents you with a small chamber, made of the same featureless white light. There's a panel on the back of this small chamber, with a glowing red "up" arrow.

**Devo:** [Midwestern accent] Yes.

**Griffin:** And the voice says,

**Speaker:** Remember the rules, and good luck on today's auctions.

**Griffin:** And you hear, "bzzt!" And the voice is gone.

**Zoox:** ...Well, they were nice!

**Devo:** I mean, sort of.

**Zoox:** Well I mean, they could have used a harsher tone. I mean...

**Devo:** Should we... do we push the arrow?

[pause]

**Devo:** [Quietly, in his normal French accent] Just a quick read. Do you think that people are listening all the time? If they have this communication device? Do you think that they can hear us?

**Amber:** I think that you should... I think that you should assume that, yeah.

**Devo:** [Loudly, Midwestern American accent] Yes, I think that we should continue on this very... uh, very important secret mission.

**Zoox:** [imitating the low purposeful Midwestern American accent] I agree. Let's continue on our sacred—

**Travis:** Oh shit, Optimus Prime is here?

**Justin:** [cracks up]

**Clint:** [with the same voice] Auto-bots! Transform!

**Travis:** [in a low Transformer voice] "Sam Witwicky!"

**Griffin:** [giggles]

**Clint:** [giggles]

**Justin:** [also imitating a Transformer] "Sam Witwicky."

**Travis:** "Sam Witwicky."

**Justin:** [cracks up]

**Griffin:** Are you all going to use that voice?

**Justin:** No.

**Griffin:** Okay. Um.

**Justin:** I'm going to use my Sam Witwicky voice.

**Travis:** [laughing] Yeah!

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs] And I'll speak like Bumblebee, and only use snips from songs.

**Griffin:** Aw, God.

**Travis:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:** Please, don't...

**Travis:** Awesome.

**Justin:** Hope you guys like Steely Dan.

**Travis:** [laughs] Steely Dan would have been a great name for a Transformer!

**Griffin:** Damn, you're right about that!

**Clint:** Ahh! Or a Warforged—

**Justin:** [bursts into laughter]

**Travis:** No, sorry, wait, stop, stop, stop. Steely Van.

**Justin:** [laughing] The police call me Steely Dan...

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughing] Steely Van the robot man!

**Justin:** I'm kind of a chill— they always want me to go fight the big dinosaurs, and I'm like, "I'm good!"

**Travis:** "Nah, I'm cool!"

**Griffin:** "I'm just hanging."

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** Reelin' in the east.

**Travis:** [Panicked] "Look out, it's Starscream!"  
[Laid-back, chill] "Eh, it's fine."

**Griffin:** It's fine.

**Justin:** It's fine, just Steely Dan. [laughs] Are you gonna— he's an autobot! "Yeah, but he doesn't, like... start any shit." [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [cackles]

**Justin:** "He's cool."

**Travis:** Even the Decepticons are kinda okay with him. Y'know what I mean?

**Justin:** He sells weed. [laughs]

**Travis:** [cracks up]

**Justin:** [imitating a Transformer] "Robot weed!"

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Justin:** "Sam Witwicky! Did you bring robot weed!?"

**Travis:** [laughing] It's a van, with like a painting of blizzards on the side.  
[laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** [cracks up] Oh my god! Steely Dan the Weed Van! It's very...

**Travis:** [wheezes with laughter]

**Clint:** I'm writing it down! I'm writing it down.

**Justin:** Hey, I actually—

**Clint:** Next live show, that's who I'll be.

**Justin:** I wanna see... do you think Transformers would let me write a comic about Steely Van? [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs heartily]

**Justin:** [through laughter] The one...

**Travis:** [imitating a Transformer] "There's a mattress in the back."

**Justin:** "I'm a conscientious objector."

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Do you wanna all spark this up or what?"

**Justin:** [cracks up]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

[Ambient music plays]

[Ad break]

[Soft ambient music plays]

**Griffin:** You're aboard this elevator, and the door closes. And you start to go up. And just after a few moments of you all, y'know, ascending, this all-white light... just clicks off. And now you are going upward in total darkness. For just a short, a short while.

**Travis:** How— how long?

**Griffin:** A few seconds.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Not long at all. I— is that— that's not Devo's jam, I'm assuming?

**Travis:** Yeah, Devo does not care for this.

**Griffin:** Right. Of course. Um. And then, it's like you... have passed through a cloud, and come out the other side. Because as you move upward, your elevator changes, and now is completely made out of transparent glass. And through it, you can finally see outside, you can see sort of your location and get your bearings. You realize, all of you are without a doubt, the deepest you have ever been in the Ethersea.

**Justin:** Hmm.

**Travis:** Mmm.

**Griffin:** The waters are...

**Justin:** Do we have any sort of physical reaction to that?

**Griffin:** Uh, I mean, your ears popped, a little while ago. This elevator's not taking you apparently high enough to... un-pop them? Re-pop them? Whatever.

**Travis:** Stop them?

**Griffin:** Stop them, maybe?

**Travis:** [amused] Yeah, 'cause once you pop...

**Griffin:** [amused] Yeah, sure.

[Music begins]

**Griffin:** The water outside of this Wonkavator is completely still. That's like the first weird thing that you notice? In any of the places that you've been before, there are soft currents, you know... pushing... plant life, around. Giving just everything a sense of movement. That's not happening here. Except for a handful of schools of bioluminescent fish, that are just—

**Travis:** Oooh!

**Griffin:** They're not even like swimming as much as they're drifting through the water. And their light is quite bright; as you look upward where the elevator's going, you can see the pristine metal base of a wide circular deep-sea station, that you are lifting up toward. When you look down, you can no longer see the base of the elevator shaft that you are traversing. And you realize that it, and the entire hangar, that you just entered through, are also swallowed up in this gargantuan cloud of, y'know, magical darkness that engulfed the Coriolis just moments ago. And then you all enter the base of this station, and the elevator comes to a stop, lights up again, and the door slides open. And when it does, you all witness the single fanciest room you've ever stepped into.

[Ambient music transitions into lush piano]

**Travis:** Oh!

**Griffin:** It is... a semicircular chamber. That is... decadent. Like, there's wood everywhere, which is not a thing...

**Justin:** Mmm. Mmhmm.

**Griffin:** In the under, under the sea. Wooden— a big wooden bar with golden accents. Walls of intricate wood paneling. There are these—

**Travis:** What's it smell like?

**Griffin:** It smell— I mean, it smells like money.

**Travis:** Ohh yeah.

**Griffin:** It smells like money in this place.

**Justin:** Mm.

**Griffin:** It smells like Lux, I guess. You... you see these big shining brass sconces that are sort of... casting a pleasant dreamy glow, that fills the room. You also see, because it's hard not to primarily focus on them, a lot of people, dressed in these vapor suits. With a bunch of different colors and designs.

**Travis:** Right off the bat, Ditto, do we see any kind of, like, avatars, that might be symbols we would recognize? Like, "oh, that seems like that might be blank."

**Griffin:** Um... chkchkchkchk... let me think. Why don't you roll a... perception— or an investigation check real quick. Just to see.

[sound of dice rolling]

**Travis:** That is a 17 plus 3, a 20!

**Clint:** Good lord!

**Griffin:** Um... eh, yeah—

**Travis:** Yeah, that's what it looks like when a grown-up rolls, Dad.

**Clint:** [bursts into laughter]

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughing] Sure. Not really. Not really. You see— there's a trio of people, seated at the bar, and they are dressed as golden wolves.

**Travis:** Mm.

**Griffin:** And it is by— by a country mile, the most ostentatious outfit, like, in the room.

**Justin:** Mmm.

**Griffin:** They're also all being really douchey, about, like, smelling their glasses of red wine that they're swirling around.

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

**Justin:** Love these guys. I love these guys.

**Griffin:** So it's not like, an iconic emblem or anything like that, but I think you... you—

**Travis:** Those— they stand out.

**Griffin:** Yes, they stand out, absolutely. Also seated at the bar is just one person, in a deep blue suit with a star-shaped head who's just kind of scanning the room. They definitely look at the elevator as you all enter in. A few other sort of figures that stand out here: there is a yellow smiley face figure, that is leaning, like, really precariously, against one of those long windows overlooking the deep sea outside. You see... these two silvery stags, that are standing near a wall, and their arms are kinda folded behind

them in a militaristic pose. And the— y’know, most of the parties that you see here are individual people or maybe two or three, y’know, folks, here for the same, y’know, prize or whatever, you can tell just because they’re the same color like you guys are. But the biggest group: there is a gaggle of red cubes. Five of them. And they are all sort of seated in a circle, just kind of like, looking at each other. And then of course there are a bunch of custodians and servers and staff, all dressed in these white pyramid suits. And they are offering drinks and snacks, and preparing for the auction. And finally, as you all step out of the elevator, there is a chime.

[Chime sound effect]

**Griffin:** And you hear that voice again, say,

**Speaker:** With the arrival of our final participants, we are now ready to begin our preparations. The auction will begin in one hour. Please enjoy our complimentary food and beverage service while you wait to be ushered into the auction hall.

**Griffin:** You all have an hour, to like... investigate...

**Travis:** Oh, got it, got it, got it.

**Griffin:** The room, or the building, talk to whoever you want to, get whatever kind of... y’know, intel, or... understanding of this place, that can potentially assist you in winning the auction for the journal.

**Justin:** I wanna go talk to the guys in the wolf masks.

**Devo:** [French accent] Amber? I’m— [switches to low Midwestern accent] I mean— I’m gonna go with, to support. I think we should all stay together?

**Amber:** I’m good. I’m good. Alright. I’ll see y’all later.

**Justin:** And I walk over towards the wolf guys.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Zoox:** Goodbye, guppy.

**Amber:** I see very little— okay, we can talk. I see very little benefits to us staying together.

**Devo:** [quietly, with his usual French voice] Well, the, uh, we have different skill sets. Uh.

**Amber:** Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, that's why we can— we should all do our own thing. But like, we're not gonna learn... y'know— we'll learn three times as much, being separate.

**Zoox:** She has a good point.

**Amber:** There it is! Come on.

**Devo:** Okay. Amber?

**Amber:** Yeah.

**Devo:** This is, uh... use, uh... use caution? Um. Approach this very carefully. Um. Get more information from them than you give. Yes?

**Amber:** You have whittled me down to 58 minutes and 30 seconds of complimentary drinks and snacks.

**Devo:** Just be— be—

**Amber:** So I am actually gonna walk away before I get any more fucking pissed at you.

**Devo:** [sighs heavily] Okay. Just be cool—

**Justin:** I walk over to the wolf guys.

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure. You two, figure out what you want to do. Amber, you walk over to the bar. It is a long long long long bar. The blue star

person is fairly far out of earshot from you, as you approach these golden wolves, um, who appear to be a little... a little tipsy? Um...

**Amber:** [howling] Heeeyyaaaaaawwwooooo! Hey buds. What's goin' on!? Dap— pound it!

**Griffin:** They all turn to look at you, and then all three of them simultaneously recoil, like, "Ahh!" as they see a blink shark sort of in their faces.

**Amber:** It's not real. [chuckles] I know... I just think they're fucking cool. You guys— you guys into blink sharks? You seem like you would be, like, you're kinda... the wolves made me think you guys would be into blink sharks. How do y'all even know about wolves?

**Griffin:** They all start laughing. At you.

**Amber:** Aw, yeah?

**Griffin:** And one of them, who... his wolf mask seems like fairly docile, and wise, and the other two definitely look more sort of aggressive. And so this docile wolf person says,

**Wolf:** [slurring words as if drunk] Uh, we are no stranger to the history of the world above. And we admire a lot of traits about the wolf. Number one: looks... cool. Number two: ...believe in each other, strong. Believe in each other strong! You know? And, uh... it's a cool animal. And not like a scary weird one, like a... bad shark guy.

**Griffin:** And he takes another sip of wine.

**Amber:** You got— what are you sippin' on?

**Wolf:** [scoffs]

**Amber:** Looks good.

**Wolf:** I wouldn't... uh. I wouldn't guess that you are much of a... a wine drinker. Not too knowledgeable about the good red and white stuff.

**Amber:** [laughing] Let me get— let me get a sip real quick!

**Justin:** And she tries to take it, to take a sip.

**Griffin:** Uh, make a sleight of hand check.

[sound of dice rolling]

**Griffin:** Holy fucking shit! Yes!

**Justin:** [cracks up] A critical failure! [laughs deeply] Ah, shit!

**Clint:** [snarky] Doesn't feel so good, does it!?

**Justin:** I mean, at least I didn't fucking ruin my whole family in the podcast—

**Griffin:** [cracks up]

**Travis:** Yeah, Justin failed grabbing a glass of wine—

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** You summoned an old god or something.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Both of the sort of violent-faced wolves, like, in the blink of an eye, they both have their hands grasping your forearm that you are reaching forward with. Like, you didn't get close to the glass. And the other wolf, the calm wolf, looks at them, and gestures down to where their hands are touching you, and it's glowing red a little bit. And they quickly take their hands off of you. And the wise wolf says,

**Wolf:** There are rules against violent acts in this place. But if you try that again... w... there will be trouble.

**Amber:** That's— I hear, I feel it. I love my brew too, ya know? That— you don't have to explain to me about that. Hey, listen. I'm gonna be straight with you, we're supposed to hide our identities... my name's Crump Ruggit.

**Griffin:** [stifles laughter]

**Amber:** And I'm like, a rich person, like you. Basically. And like... I really would like to score big here, but I feel like I'm just gonna lose a bunch of money and get outbid. But you got any tips? For how I can not make a fuckin' fool of myself here? You know what I mean? Like, I'm kinda... uh... new. Newer, to being rich. But I am very, very... like, wealthy. But I never been to this before. So, if you could just kinda walk me through... how to... like, do a good job? With it?

**Wolf:** Just out of curiosity...

**Amber:** Yeah.

**Wolf:** What is the source of your tremendous wealth?

**Amber:** Lotto, baby. Played the lotto, won, hit big. They say everybody— they say, "there's a winner every minute," well, my minute came up, y'know what I mean? I hit it big in the lotto.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Uh—

**Amber:** Lotto winnings.

**Griffin:** Sure, yeah, why don't you roll a persuasion check, Amber. Or wait, no, deception! Fuck, yeah, of course, you're lying.

**Travis:** Now, they are drunk, Griffin.

**Griffin:** I'm not gonna grant you that. I feel like...

**Justin:** [sighs] It's a 7.

**Griffin:** 7. Okay. They all look at each other, and... the wolf looks back at you, and says,

**Wolf:** Well, um. How much, how much you got on hand to play with?

**Amber:** I brought five hundred Lux.

**Wolf:** [gasps]

**Griffin:** They all gasp. And, without missing a beat, the wolf says,

**Wolf:** Well, that's quite an impressive pot. But if you don't know how to use it...

**Amber:** I don't! That's what I'm saying! Like... I— listen! I'll make you a deal. I won't bid against you and bid you up, if you just give me a little bit of insight. Like a little bit of... you know. Give me something to work with! As a newbie! And then if you ever need... something that my business does. We're getting into publicity.

**Wolf:** Hmm.

**Amber:** I guess I can tell you that now. We're gettin'... my business. I'm using some of my winnings to go in business for myself. And it's like, a public, like a publicity, but also sort of like... like marketing. You know what I mean? Like a business sort of thing?

**Wolf:** Absolutely, I know all about that stuff.

**Amber:** You seemed like the type.

**Wolf:** Um... I do not mean to brag, but we are... quite proficient at the art of auctioning.

**Amber:** I know it! I could spot it a mile away! You look like a professional rich guy!

**Wolf:** Why don't you tell me the item or items you're interested in, and allow me to be your proxy, and temporarily of course, hand over your bank and we will secure the items and hand you the remainder? Perhaps we will take a small cut, for our efforts.

**Amber:** Damn, that's a really good deal. What was I gonna bid on? Um. What's that thing that everybody wants? Oh... [snaps fingers] I forget the name of it even, that's how bad I am at being rich. It's like... everybody wanted it? [vocalizes thinking sounds] Damn it, Crump, come on! No, it's escaping me.

**Griffin:** I almost made— I— I like to let rolls... roll. But this, I feel like this is another opportunity for another deception check right now.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** You're sort of trying to get a different thing—

**Travis:** It is a different lie, yeah.

**Griffin:** Right.

[sound of dice rolling]

**Justin:** [yelling] Fuck!

**Griffin:** Wowzers bowsers!

**Justin:** It's a 3 minus 1, a 2!

**Griffin:** Uh. Hmm. They say,

**Wolf:** That was a test of course. None of us know the items that will be up for auction today. Uhhh... so... you could—

**Travis:** I know what Devo wants to do now. [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs] Uh... they say,

**Wolf:** We cannot help you then, without that information.

**Amber:** Alright. No, I get it.

**Wolf:** But I wish you the best of luck out there—

**Amber:** Hey, can I say something to you before I walk away right now?

**Wolf:** Yes?

**Amber:** It's lonely. Out here. In rich person city.

**Wolf:** Ohh, tell me about it.

**Amber:** I just wanted to let you guys know something. [sighs] You guys are my best friends.

**Travis:** Amber feels a hand on her shoulder.

**Amber:** I'm under arrest, I gotta go.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Devo:** [low Midwestern accent] Excuse me. Sirs. Is my... assistant bothering you?

**Amber:** My name's Crump Ruggit!

**Devo:** Yes, Crump—

**Amber:** And I'm no one's assistant!

**Wolf:** Now wait a minute, she's quite the— quite wealthy, from what we understand—

**Devo:** No, she is— and I'm sorry, she's quite inebriated. Yes, she—

**Amber:** No I'm not! I brought five hundred— hey listen. I got five hundred ducks that I brought with me, say otherwise.

**Devo:** Ugh.

**Amber:** I'm ready to barter, make some deals.

**Devo:** Crump. Please excuse Crump's behavior. The next round of drinks is on me.

**Wolf:** They're complimentary to everyone.

**Justin:** [cracks up]

**Clint:** [cracks up]

**Justin:** [through laughter] Make him roll something. [laughs]

**Devo:** I didn't— excuse me—

**Griffin:** Yeah...

**Justin:** [wheezing with laughter] Make him roll something for showing his ass.

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Devo:** I didn't mean here.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** [cracks up]

**Wolf:** Oh, a second party location after the big— auction. Awesome. No, we—

**Devo:** Yes, on my luxury yacht.

**Wolf:** Okay. So... we all have— I've got a lux—

**Justin:** I walk over to the bartender.

**Amber:** Hey, give me one of what the big wolf's drinking?

**Bartender:** Mmm, I don't believe you're ready for what the big wolves are drinking.

**Travis:** Wait, hold on! Is that Dante the Flirtle?

**Bartender:** [unintelligible crosstalk under Travis]

**Travis:** Is Dante the Flirtle here??

**Justin:** [giggling]

**Griffin:** It's not Dante. They say,

**Bartender:** Um, we did not actually provide what those people are drinking. Um. They brought, actually, their own bottle. Which is unconventional, but we allowed it.

**Travis:** Oh, they BYOB'd.

**Griffin:** They BYOB'd.

**Amber:** Oh.

**Griffin:** Um—

**Amber:** That seems so classy. I do need something though. Give me a bad version of what they got, or the worst wine you have, I do not care, clasper, hook me up.

**Bartender:** Uhhh... as you wish.

**Griffin:** They reach down and get out a... a wine glass. And they set it on the table. Then they go back to a wine rack, back behind the... back behind the bar. And they open it. And hand you the cork, to sniff. And you don't necessarily know what that means! And then they pour you a glass—

**Travis:** But I bet it's funny to watch a blink shark do.

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure. They hand you just a sniff of this dark red wine. And gesture for you to sample it.

**Justin:** 'Kay. [vocalizes slurping] She shoots it back.

[Someone snorts]

**Amber:** Sublime.

**Bartender:** Mm.

**Amber:** Give me three, please?

**Bartender:** Three of the... ah, I apologize—

**Amber:** Drinks?

**Bartender:** Yes, of course.

**Amber:** Yes, thank you.

**Bartender:** Uh... three... I will need more glasses.

**Amber:** For me— for me and my fr—my compatriots.

**Griffin:** This—

**Amber:** They're fellow rich people.

**Bartender:** Right.

**Amber:** Not unlike myself.

**Griffin:** This bartender, who is dressed again in this white pyramid outfit, turns to a door behind the bar, and says,

**Bartender:** Ah, yes, uh, can you prepare from the chiller... three glasses from the Skunknuts Vintage?

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Amber:** Fuck, thank God— thank God it's complimentary, I didn't know I was drinking Skunknuts!

**Griffin:** Yeah. Uh, he—

**Amber:** I could never afford that back home!

**Griffin:** They— he— this bartender hands you three glasses. Um.

**Justin:** Alright, Amber walks away.

**Amber:** [calling out] Hey, sorry Zoo— sorry Devo, I tried!

**Griffin:** [laughing] Wait, you're not giving them to the— wolves? That you were—?

**Justin:** No, no! [laughs] They're for me!

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** [wheezing with laughter] I tried!

**Griffin:** Right.

**Justin:** [laughing] I tried to get information, it didn't work out! Now it's someone else's turn!

**Griffin:** Okay. As you walk away, you actually notice that the wise wolf... kinda sad. And has been, honestly, since you first said something about how lonely it is, being at the top. Um. Obviously, you can't pick up a lot of facial expressions or anything, but their body language seems to suggest that they're... they are not super stoked. Devo, are you still around the wolf guys?

**Travis:** Oh yes, I've walked over to the wolves now.

**Wolf:** What's the source of your great wealth, then, to have a... assistant with five hundred Lux?

**Justin:** I— Amber did clarify that she said "ducks."

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Oh, right.

**Devo:** Well, I'm not supposed to give any personal information, but I believe simply by observing, you might glean that I have a powerful backer.

**Griffin:** Uh, why don't you make a deception check. Something you are... good at!

**Travis:** [sound of dice rolling] Uh, 13 total?

**Griffin:** Um. With a 13 total, they laugh at you, and they say,

**Wolf:** Ohh, so... you need a, you require a backer? Ha ha. That's too bad. You're building your house on shifting sands, don't you think?

**Devo:** Well, I have taken certain vows. In which my great wealth is shared with my backer.

**Griffin:** One of the angry wolves whispers something in the main wolf's ear, and then they look up and say,

**Wolf:** Yes, traditionally you don't see too many people of the cloth, with large sums. Uh, seems to go against the teachings, but, uh... Don't you think that's kinda strange?

**Devo:** Well, as I said, I am not... supposed to share personal information, but—

**Wolf:** You made your head look like a religious emblem.

**Devo:** Let's just say that I have, uh... some... rich benefactors.

**Wolf:** Right, you said that.

**Devo:** No, bene— Benefactors.

**Wolf:** Right, you said that twice now. Cool.

**Devo:** No, like, a capital B. Like, a—

**Wolf:** Capital B?

**Devo:** Like it's a position, perhaps, in a powerful organization.

**Wolf:** Cool...

**Devo:** Like it's a code, that I'm using—

**Wolf:** I'm actually— I'm actually a capital B bored, talking with you.

**Devo:** Well then let me try a different tact. If you know this symbol that I'm using, then you know how powerful my backer is. And... just a friendly word of warning against bidding against my backer's intentions.

**Griffin:** Uh, make an intimidation check.

**Travis:** Damn it!!

**Griffin:** Ohh, yes baby!

**Justin:** God...

**Travis:** That's a natural one-y!

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** God, the... rolls this time...

**Travis:** Yes!

**Clint:** How the mighty have fallen!

**Griffin:** Alright—

**Travis:** It's because we talked about fate shitting on Dad!

**Griffin:** Yeah, exactly—

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** That's a— that's a crit failure. Uh. Yeah... this... even with the costume, right, you can feel a chilling steely gaze from this person. And they say,

**Wolf:** Yes, we will definitely keep that in mind.

**Griffin:** And then he just turns away from you. And starts talking to his compatriots.

**Travis:** Uh, Devo crosses back to Amber, and Zoox.

**Griffin:** 'Kay.

**Devo:** [his normal French accent] Okay, so I think we have fucked up? And, um... they are definitely going to bid on whatever we bid on, so this is bad. Uh... I'm going to go talk to Star-head Blue-suit? And see if, I don't know, I can... make him not pissed at me, at the very least. [pause] Zoox, what about you?

**Zoox:** Um. I have... my own cunning plan.

**Devo:** Okay—

**Zoox:** I'm going to go over...

**Devo:** I, yes, I asked what it was.

**Zoox:** Oh! I'm going to go over and speak to one of the serving staff.

**Devo:** Oh, I like this.

**Zoox:** Get the... get the, y'know. You be Mister Outside, I'll be Mister Inside.

**Devo:** Amber? I have...

**Amber:** Yeah.

**Devo:** A suspicion, the way that the silver stags over there, the way that they stand? I think that they might be Chaperones. They seem military? Eh?

**Amber:** Mmm... Possible.

**Devo:** You—

**Amber:** But... what could I do about that?

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Devo:** You... the... you are sort of the military, ish? Right? You fight? You do this thing—

**Amber:** Nah, that's... almost like a merc, mercenary kinda. We didn't really fuck with those dudes too much. I'm more of a... anti-shark weapon. Y'know what I mean? I didn't really get into like, the comings and goings of the Chaperones. Oh, they'll— they'll mess you up, man. They could put you in jail or worse.

**Devo:** Well... yes.

**Amber:** [burps loudly]

**Devo:** Okay.

**Amber:** Damn!

**Devo:** Oh.

**Amber:** Did you try this?

**Devo:** Well, no, you— you drank—

**Amber:** It's— hey, no, shhh— listen. Shh. It's Skunknuts.

**Devo:** This is very exciting, even—

**Amber:** You gotta get you some—

**Devo:** Even—

**Amber:** You gotta get you some.

**Justin:** She's done with one, so she's got three in one hand, so she's done with one, and she just sets in on the floor and walks three feet away from it.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Justin:** [laughing] So now she's working on her second.

**Amber:** Here, here, here, here here here. Now I'm being greedy. Here.

**Justin:** And she slides one to Devo.

**Amber:** Are you allowed to do this?

**Devo:** What, drink?

**Amber:** With your religion, and stuff?

**Devo:** I'm not in the religion anymore, so.

**Amber:** Nice. Nice. Nice. Way— find your own way, man! [laughs]

**Justin:** [struggling through laughing] Amber walks away.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Do you— do you sip it, Devo?

**Travis:** Yeah! Fuck yeah.

**Griffin:** Okay— it... it's the grossest, most putrid...

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Most vile... toilet juice. That... you've ever, ever imbibed. It's the worst thing—

**Travis:** Now to be clear... Devo's never had wine before, so...

**Griffin:** Okay, then, you've ruined— you're ruined, for wine now.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** 'Cause you just assume—

**Travis:** He's like, "oh this is how wine is, all the time."

**Griffin:** Yeah. It's... it is... it's... it's old? It's like, old in not a fun way? It's like, there's chunks... of cork, like, floating in it. Almost like it's a cork stew, at this point. It's really bad.

**Amber:** Hey! You like? You like it?

**Devo:** Uh, you know what—

**Amber:** You like it? It's good, right?

**Devo:** Uh... is... uhhhhhh... is—

**Amber:** It's that— just like the slogan goes! [singing] Rip it up, with Skunknuts Wine! It's where grapes! Go to hell!

**Griffin:** [cracking up in the distance]

**Devo:** You know what? I've decided to—

**Amber:** Love Skunknuts!

**Devo:** Okay...

**Amber:** God, I gotta go. Listen, I gotta piss so bad.

**Devo:** Then go pee! Yes?

**Amber:** Pound it!

**Devo:** Okay.

**Justin:** She walks away.

**Griffin:** Okay! Uh—

**Travis:** Now I have a very important question, Justin. When Amber says "pound it," is she offering any kind of pound, [laughing] or is she just saying—

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** [laughing] No, no no no no, she just walks away.

**Travis:** [laughing] Okay.

**Clint:** [laughs heartily]

**Travis:** Excellent. Uh, yeah, so... We don't have to go directly to this scene, but Devo is going to talk to the blue suit fellow.

**Griffin:** Okay. Yeah, actually, let's do Zoox first. Uh, I would love to know more about your cunning plan.

[Lush piano music plays]

**Clint:** Okay, well Zoox walks over to... there's like a bar, and one of the... serving staff's working as a bartender, and... Zoox kinda leans back against the bar, with his coral elbows resting on the bar. And, kinda you know, leans back, very casual looking, and... says,

**Zoox:** [exhales] Man! Look at all those... bougie rich creeps. Swilling their Skunknuts. They drop more canapés than I've eaten. Well, all the parties... I've worked at before... shoooo. Man. I hate 'em.

**Justin:** I love this guy.

**Griffin:** [laughs] I love this guy—

**Travis:** I like this guy too! He's a very down to earth fellow.

**Justin:** Love this guy.

**Griffin:** He's—

**Travis:** A guy you could really have a beer with!

**Justin:** This is— now this is relatable!

**Travis:** Yeah!

**Justin:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** Let's say that this is a different bar than the one that the wolves and the blue star are sitting at—

**Travis:** No no, let Dad have his chance to talk to the wolves! [laughs]

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Is that okay, Father?

**Clint:** Yeah, I—

**Griffin:** Okay, fine.

**Clint:** Yeah. I hadn't realized they were standing at a bar, or I would have said a catering table.

**Griffin:** Uh, it's not too late to say the catering table.

**Clint:** It's the catering table.

**Griffin:** Okay, cool.

**Travis:** Ah, excellent. The bar of food, they call it.

**Griffin:** Right. So you're talking to this person, who seems quite busy? Like, tending to the burners and... the... cloche— what are they called? Clossh? Clssh? The thing you put over the thing! The big—

**Clint:** Cholesterols?

**Griffin:** No—

**Travis:** No, I know what you're talking about—

**Justin:** What are you talking about?

**Travis:** The big, the, like, a tureen, but it's not a tureen.

**Griffin:** Is it called a cloche...?

**Travis:** It's the metal thing!

**Griffin:** It is! It's called a cloche! Why didn't I just trust myself? Like, what's that— what's that say about me?

**Travis:** It's kinda like you rolled a one.

**Justin:** That's a great point. Wow.

**Griffin:** On like, self-assured— like, I've watched so much fucking Chopped. Of course it's called a cloche. Anyway. They seem very busy, but they kinda nervously laugh, and you hear a voice say,

**Server:** Haha. Yeah. Yes sir. Indeed. Um. Can— do you— would you like a... tasty morsel?

**Travis:** [snorts]

**Zoox:** Uh. Maybe. You know, I— to be honest with you, I don't wanna add to your work. Looks like you're really busy, dealing with these A-holes.

**Server:** Uh...

**Zoox:** [whispering] Rich people...

**Server:** It's... it's a job. Um. It's a job—it's a job, ya know? You gotta do a job. That's what I always say.

**Zoox:** Yeah, I know! But do you think these people know anything about having a job? [laughs] They've never worked a day in their life. I bet they

inherited all of their mummy and daddy's money. And leaving it to poor slobs like you and me, to... y'know, keep the world going. You know. Bring out the— bring out the food, bring out the drinks, yeah, I'm... I'm... I can buy and sell you— God. I don't even know why I'm here.

**Server:** Um. Probably to do... to take part in the auction? Like—

**Zoox:** Oh, no, no...

**Server:** We're way, way, under water, you wouldn't— you didn't just get lost and stumble in here, you know, sir?

**Zoox:** No no. I'm part of their... I'm part of their crew. I... I do... I do hair. I... I do their hair. Pshaw. You think I'm one of these Richie Riches? Naw, uh uh. Just part of the... part of the posse, I guess.

**Griffin:** Uh... I'll give you the choice. Do you wanna roll... deception, or persuas— you're not really persuading them right now, yeah, you're just lying. Roll a deception check for me.

**Travis:** I mean, he's trying to persuade them that Dad doesn't like rich people.

**Griffin:** I'm— I'm gonna tell you— I'm also gonna say, this is a good line. This is a good tact for you to use. So I'm gonna grant you advantage on this roll.

**Clint:** On...

**Griffin:** Deception.

**Clint:** Performance, or...?

**Griffin:** Uh... I mean, it's— take your pick, you got the same modifier for either of them.

**Clint:** Okay, I'll do performance.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** So...

**Travis:** I believe in you.

**Clint:** Not his strong suit. [sound of dice rolling] It's leaning up against the side. It's a 10? For the first one.

**Griffin:** Minus one. A 9.

**Clint:** Nine. Come on, baby, give me a good roll for a change! [sound of dice rolling]

**Griffin:** There you go!

**Clint:** 18!

**Griffin:** 18, 19 minus one, 18. Alright. Um... they set one of the cloches down, kinda hard? A couple people look over, 'cause it's quite a loud resonant sound. And they sigh, and they say,

**Server:** I'll tell you sir, I've been working at these things for a few years and you're absolutely right. Every one of these... [whispering] jack. Jack-offs. [Normal volume] Is all the same, and always talking about how much money they have, and how cool it is to be rich, and they laugh at me a lot. One time I was doing a little fried lasagna bites? And one— somebody walked up, slapped it right to the floor! And I— I would have eaten that lasagna bite!

**Zoox:** Shh... ugh. [chuckles humorlessly] Man. You know what I call these people?

**Server:** What?

**Zoox:** Show business kids.

**Server:** Yeah, man! Yeah, man!

**Zoox:** Show business kids!

**Server:** Yes!

**Travis:** Hey Dad?

**Server:** Yes!

**Zoox:** Yeah!

**Travis:** Go on? [laughs] Remember you're playing this game with your sons, who you taught to act. Go on?

**Zoox:** Show business kids, making movies of themselves... you know, they don't give a fuck about anybody else.

**Server:** Whoa!!!

**Zoox:** Yeah. Yeah. Ironically, my... my background has taken me extensively into this whole world.

**Server:** Oh, sure. Seedy, seedy.

**Zoox:** Dude, listen! So— what kind of shit do they buy? What— what do the golden hound dogs... usually buy?

**Server:** Oh.

**Zoox:** I mean, what could— what could be so great, that keeps bringing 'em back, over and over?

**Griffin:** Um, he looks around, and leans in, and he says,

**Server:** Are you gonna be cool about this? Can't tell anybody.

**Zoox:** Oh, you know I am.

**Server:** They buy a lot of wine. But I've been watching them, actually, pretty close. What they mostly buy... is like... the rare stuff. The... almost extinct stuff. They buy a lot of surface stuff, that's like the last one of the surface stuff? Um. That's sort of their jam. And, again, not to divulge too much, but there's something like that here today. So.

**Zoox:** Oh, are you kidding me?

**Server:** No, not kidding at all.

**Zoox:** So you think they'll go for it?

**Server:** Absolutely they will.

**Zoox:** Wh— what is it? Do you have any idea?

**Griffin:** Uh... he taps his fingers and then kinda gestures you, toward a staff only door, where there's nobody really around. Uh. And he whispers,

**Server:** It's a... bottle of wine? Called the... it's called a Hartfield Bordeaux. And... now, don't get your hopes up that you'll outbid them, they have a pretty big, pretty deep pocket. But, um... yeah, that's what they're gonna be going for today.

**Zoox:** Have you seen it?

**Server:** I mean... Uhh... Last time I was in the vault, they hadn't received all of the... the lots, um, so no, I haven't seen it, but I bet it looks, y'know, like a purple bottle? Like all wine does.

**Zoox:** You know what I—

[Someone snorts with laughter]

**Zoox:** You know what I'm gonna do?

**Server:** What?

**Zoox:** Wh— if you could tell me the lot number that it is—

**Server:** Yes?

**Zoox:** When it comes up for bids, I'm gonna bid it, to bid them up. Even though I have, y'know, I haven't got a Lux to my name. [laughs] I'm gonna bid, and drive the price up! For those— those d-bags. [laughs]

**Griffin:** He kinda chuckles, and he says,

**Server:** Alright, just make sure you don't accidentally buy it for a bunch of money that you don't have. 'Cause then you'll be punished terribly.

**Zoox:** Oh! No! Shh!

**Travis:** By your sons.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Zoox:** I'm cool.

**Griffin:** He says,

**Server:** Yeah, it's... it's actually the first lot up today. So, uh. Y'know.

**Zoox:** Lot number one.

**Server:** Yep. Easy to remember. Good— good luck, man, really bone 'em. Really fuck those guys up. Bunch of—

**Zoox:** I am...

**Server:** Bunch of...

**Zoox:** I'm gonna... shhh—

**Server:** Bunch of real bastard asses.

**Clint:** And then at that point, Zoox looks down at the table, and sees a tray of clams.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Clint:** And just... in a...

**Zoox:** Uhhh. Uh. Hey— uh— hey, thanks for— what's your, what's your name, by the way?

**Server:** My name is, uh... well, it's Jeremy? But— no, it's a— private!

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Zoox:** Jeremy Private. Alright. I'm Deacon Blue. So, if you... if you're looking for me later, just find me.

**Jeremy:** Cool, man.

**Zoox:** Cool. Ooh. Oh, God. Can you take those away? [makes a retching noise]

**Jeremy:** Yeah, sure.

**Griffin:** He dumps them in the trash.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Zoox:** Thanks, Jeremy.

**Jeremy:** Yeah... oh, shit, why did I do that? That's gonna get me in trouble! Whatever, man, I'll just lie about it. Have fun, man! Fuck work.

**Zoox:** Okay, thanks.

**Justin:** [cracks up]

**Travis:** [bursts into laughter] Oh man, Jeremy's great!

**Justin:** He's just a cool...

**Griffin:** Uh, okay—

**Travis:** Jeremy would hang out with Steely Dan!

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Justin:** Yeah, there— yeah, they'd absolutely be buds.

**Griffin:** Let's go around the horn one more time. Amber, what are you— what are you doing?

[Piano music fades in]

**Justin:** Just kinda hanging. I feel like she tried to do this negotiating thing, it didn't work out, so she's more just kinda getting her chill going.

**Griffin:** Getting— getting a good chill going? Where? Whereabouts?

**Justin:** Uh. I think she's hanging out at the bar.

**Griffin:** Okay. The bar where you miserably failed?

**Justin:** Yeah. [laughs heartily] The failure bar!

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** Let me do a perception check.

**Griffin:** Okay!

**Justin:** What's... what do I— what do I see in the room? Give me a better, a clearer picture.

**Griffin:** Absolutely. That's a great... a great prompt.

**Justin:** Ah, perception check... she's good at it... she's got a 19 plus three!

**Griffin:** Holy shit!

**Travis:** Oooh!

**Justin:** Oooh. Do I see anything unusual, with that roll?

**Griffin:** Wow... Yes, you— I'll give you a lot for that. That's a huge, that's a huge one.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Um. With a 22—

**Justin:** Especially with the night we're having, right?

**Griffin:** Yeah, especially that. In terms of like, who all is there? You do not see any other person that's kinda out of the ordinary. You— you confirm Devo's suspicions, that those two, the way they're standing, the... the silver stags, they definitely look like Chaperones. You are a hundred percent sure that's what that is.

Yeah, the other people in the room you don't really make much out of. The crimson cube people, the five of them, are sitting, like kinda just silent. Almost like they're staring at each other. That's pretty weird. Um.

What I will give you with a 22, is... the exits that are visible through the crew quarters, or the crew-only doors. You see... a door, leading to access tunnels. Like each door has a small window, that when you look through them you can kinda see, or intuit, what's going on on the other side. One of them has Crew Access Tunnels, and there's a sign pointing downward, to a ladder, that says Hangar Bay over it. So there's like a, y'know, crew only access tunnel there. There is a... through one window, you can see like a hallway leading to a security station. And... yeah you can't see much more else through that.

And then finally, through another door, it's actually the one behind the bar, you can see the— this enormous vault door, in that room. That one is like, heavily populated by a lot of these white pyramid stewards. Just because, y'know, it's also the kitchen, and... where things are getting done for the party. There's nobody in the security station hallway that you can see right now. And the same for the crew access tunnels.

**Justin:** I'm gonna walk toward the security station.

**Griffin:** Okay. Yeah, I mean you get close enough to the door that you can look around inside. You see the door at the end of the hallway leading into the security station. You can't make much out, because you're very far away, but there's a window in that door, and you see some movement beyond there. But you also see, um, lights flashing and different sort of monitor read-outs in there.

**Justin:** Yeah I'll just keep walking towards the security station. I'm gonna try to open the door and walk in.

**Griffin:** Uh, into the hallway? Or—?

**Justin:** Into the security station.

**Griffin:** Um, okay. How— I will... I think getting into the door of the security station's easy enough, but like, you are in this big room with dozens of people in it? So the real trick is going to be going through this exterior door. So, um, I'm gonna need you to make a stealth check, to pull that off.

**Justin:** One of my great strengths! You've chosen well. Hey, a 12 plus two.

**Griffin:** 14?

**Justin:** Count it.

**Griffin:** Uh... hmm. Let me make a... just a luck check.

**Justin:** A prayer.

**Griffin:** A prayer, also. [pause] You slip in, and... you are in the hallway. And you wait a few seconds, and don't hear any alarms or hear anybody else coming. So you made it in that door.

**Amber:** Huh. I'll be damned.

**Justin:** Alright I'll keep walking towards the security station.

**Griffin:** Okay. You walk right up, and you actually can see through the window now, and you can see there are two white pyramid figures in here. They're both seated at desks... that are... neither of them is facing the door that you are standing in front of. And sure enough, you can see... you can actually see different maps, on these read-outs, of different rooms? And one of the maps is a room that... A map that looks sort of identical to the room you were just in, just this big semi-circular room. And on it, you can see different pinpricks of different colored light, that are moving and tracking everybody in this station in real time.

**Justin:** Mmm. Okay. So the vapor suit collars are...

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Justin:** Are bugged.

**Griffin:** Yes, exactly. And... through all of these things, I think... I'll give you that you can sort of like, put together a mental map, of the facility. And... there are also— there's a rack, that is again behind those two desks, like neither person is facing it. But on the wall nearest you, about ten feet away, there is a rack and hanging from them are goggles, with these lit-up green lenses. Yeah. That's it. That's what you see.

**Justin:** Ah. I'll take those goggles.

**Griffin:** Okay. This would require you to go into the room.

**Justin:** Mm, yeah, that's fine.

**Griffin:** Ohhhhhkay.

**Travis:** I love Amber's confidence.

**Griffin:** What's your— what— are you trying to sneak in there to get them, or?

**Justin:** Uh. I am trying to sneak in there to get them.

**Griffin:** Okay. Then I'm gonna need another stealth roll from you.

**Justin:** This time... that's another 12.

**Griffin:** Uh...

**Justin:** Right? For some reason the thing doesn't pop up...

**Griffin:** It's 11, 11 plus two, it's a 13.

**Travis:** There we go.

**Justin:** Ah, 11 plus two, a 13.

**Griffin:** What I'll give you for that is... you creep against the, y'know, the rear wall of the room, and the white pyramid people seem to be lost in thought looking at their different read-outs. And you grab a pair of these green goggles, and through like just by holding them in your hand, those lenses light up a bit, and through the green lenses, you realize, like, this room, which is kinda darkened because it has all of these different holographic read-outs, it lights up like a pinball machine. So much so that actually you can't really see the read-outs anymore, because that... they're just too bright. Um. But also, while you grab one pair of these goggles, it knocks another one to the floor. And both of these white pyramid people stand up from their desks, and turn around.

**Justin:** Uh, I fall to the ground, while I put the goggles in my pack.

**Griffin:** Um. Okay. Why don't you make a sleight of hand check?

**Justin:** [sound of dice rolling] Eurgh. 10.

**Travis:** Man.

**Justin:** Good. Got it.

**Travis:** Really wish I would have given you guys some bardic inspiration. No— you know what? I'll remember that for next time.

**Griffin:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Justin:** Woulda coulda shoulda.

**Griffin:** Okay. One of these white pyramid figures walks up toward you, and says,

**Guard:** Freeze! What are you doing here?

**Amber:** I gotta piss so bad! I'm so sorry, did I go the wrong way!?

**Guard:** Of course you went the wrong way, you're in the security—

**Amber:** I just stumbled in here! Nobody fucking said anything! Where is the pisser?!

**Guard:** The— it— it—

**Amber:** [pained] Oh no!

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Amber:** [even more panicked] Ohh noo!

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Amber:** Quick, quick, quick!

**Griffin:** Uh, one of them says,

**Guard:** The first rule! Of this auction! Means you cannot go into staff-only spaces!

**Amber:** I didn't know it was staff only! I'm fucking sauced—

**Guard:** There's a big sign on the door that says it!

**Amber:** [yelling desperately] I'm— I'm gonna pee my pants!!

**Griffin:** This is definitely a performance check.

**Justin:** I mean...

**Clint:** [laughing] Maybe she really does...

**Justin:** It's actually not. [laughs] But okay, I'll grant you—

**Griffin:** I'll give you— I'll give you an advantage on the performance check, then.

**Justin:** She is drunk.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Justin:** And she is about to pee her pants.

**Griffin:** Alright, that's a 14 minus one, 13.

**Travis:** Here it goes.

**Justin:** 16! Minus one, 15!

**Griffin:** Alright—

**Clint:** Yeah, Amber!

**Griffin:** Uh. They say— one of them looks at the other one and says,

**Guard 2:** It's— it's fine, she's wasted, it's not like she's gonna figure out, y'know, our protocols. Just take her to the bathroom before she... y'know. Reeks up the place.

**Griffin:** And the first white pyramid that approached you says,

**Guard 1:** Okay, fine, Jesus, okay.

**Griffin:** And lifts you up—

**Travis:** They know about Jesus here?

**Griffin:** Yeah they do, they love him and his great works.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Uh, he takes you by the arm, and lifts you up, and says,

**Guard 1:** What were you doing over by the... the light goggles?

**Amber:** I was checking them out, they're fucking sweet! But then I was like, I forgot I had to piss for— you ever see something so cool that you forget you gotta piss?

**Guard:** No.

**Amber:** Me neither! [yelling] Shut up!

**Justin:** And I walk out. To the bathroom. [laughing]

**Griffin:** Um. The figure, as you open the door, this white pyramid figure says,

**Guard:** You didn't take anything, did you?

**Amber:** Yeah. My time! Goodbye!

**Griffin:** Uh, make a deception check. They definitely clocked you by the goggles.

**Justin:** I accidentally got a 4.

**Griffin:** Okay. Uh. This...

**Travis:** Fuck!

**Clint:** [laughs nervously]

**Griffin:** This white pyramid figure starts walking towards you, and says,

**Guard:** Let me check your pockets, please.

**Amber:** Naw, no, no, you don't have to do that. I tried to steal these fucking cool goggles. I am sorry.

**Guard:** Why don't you come with us, ma'am?

**Amber:** Yeah, cool.

**Griffin:** And... this one figure nods and sits back down at his desk, and the one that you've been talking to takes you by the arm, and walks you out of the staff-only hallway.

**Amber:** I'm so embarrassed.

**Griffin:** Uh...

**Amber:** This isn't like me. I have money to buy... so many goggles if I want them.

**Guard:** Well, ma'am...

**Amber:** You know what? I'll buy them from you, fair enough. How much you want?

**Guard:** They're not for sale, ma'am. You should have thought about all this before you tried to—

**Amber:** Do you take a check?

**Guard:** No, we— what? No.

**Amber:** Do you take a purpenel check?

**Guard:** A purpenel check?

**Amber:** Please don't make fun of me, I still need to pee!

**Guard:** Yeah...

**Amber:** [yelling] Can I please pee before we go to wherever we're going!?

**Guard:** Fine! Fine.

**Griffin:** Uh—

**Amber:** Thank God! Fuck.

**Griffin:** He, uh, drops you off, in front of a bathroom, and opens the door—

**Justin:** Stupid son of a bitch.

**Griffin:** [laughs] And lets you inside. And shuts the door, and says,

**Guard:** Don't— no funny business, I'll be waiting for you out here when you're finished.

**Griffin:** Who's the final— oh, Devo.

**Travis:** Um, so before I walk over there, I wanna see if I can like, scope this person's body language at all. Do like an insight, see how they're standing?

**Griffin:** I don't even think you need to do that.

**Travis:** Yeah?

**Griffin:** They are... they're chill. Like, they are— they have one elbow— they're facing the room, they have an elbow back on the bar, and they're just kinda like, leaning back, and just kind of nodding their head, looking around.

**Devo:** [Midwestern American accent] Hey, I just wanted to say, great suit.

**Cobalt Star:** The... this holographic...?

**Devo:** Yeah, it was a great choice.

**Cobalt Star:** Ah, thanks, it's not like it was... y'know, made by a tailor or anything.

**Devo:** Yeah, but I mean, you picked it out, right? You asked for...

**Cobalt Star:** I did.

**Devo:** The star, it's a good option.

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah. I said "cobalt," as the color, and I don't think they knew what that meant, but.

**Devo:** Ah.

**Cobalt Star:** This is what— this is what I got. So, uh. What's up, is this your first time?

**Devo:** Yeah. I'm— I'm a little bit, ha, no pun intended, I'm a little bit all at sea. Um—

**Cobalt Star:** Nice.

**Devo:** Not really sure the procedure... here? I mean, do we wave our hands? Do we... how do we even bid, you know what I mean? I don't know...

**Cobalt Star:** Your body's a big glowing, um, suit, so mostly yeah you just lift up your big glowing colorful hand. And they'll know what that means.

**Devo:** Obviously. What— what are you drinking?

**Cobalt Star:** Uh.

**Griffin:** He gestures back, he says,

**Cobalt Star:** It's a rose, sparkling. It's like, I know. These guys over here are drinking like, thousand Lux wine, but, um.

**Devo:** They— well. They're... uh. [laughs] You know. Maybe they need to, to feel important. You know what I mean?

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah. [laughs] Sure. Yeah. Um. Yeah. Well, it's nice to meet you. Sorry, I don't usually like talking to folks at these things, 'cause, uh... we're competitors or whatever? Although I'm not bidding, today.

**Devo:** I mean, yeah. Oh you're not?

**Cobalt Star:** No, I'm selling. Just wanted to keep an eye on things. They let you come in, if you... y'know, give one of the lots. So.

**Devo:** I'm... like I said, I'm new, so I don't know the procedure—

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah, yeah yeah yeah, sure.

**Devo:** Can you tell me what you're selling, or is that weird?

**Cobalt Star:** Um. It's... it's... yeah, I'll tell you not— right now— you don't have to worry about it. 'Cause you're not gonna win, win it. It's a...

**Devo:** Oh, why is that?

**Cobalt Star:** There's gonna be some high rollers. Let's just say that. And I might be sitting at the same bar as them. They're gonna win this one. So. Y'know.

**Devo:** Oh, the... the wolves.

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah. Yeah, them.

**Devo:** Ohhh. I see. So... let me see... uh, maybe you're... ah! It's a slab of raw meat, right?

**Cobalt Star:** ...No. That would be kinda gross...

**Devo:** Yeah.

**Cobalt Star:** To have that in your ship?

**Devo:** Well— they're wolves. That— I'm sorry—

**Cobalt Star:** Oh that's funny!

**Devo:** I was trying to make a joke—

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah, that's good!

**Devo:** I'm just a little nervous.

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah. Are you here— do you— here looking for something?

**Devo:** Uh, I mean. [sighs] You know, I... it's more of, I'm trying to find a gift.

**Cobalt Star:** Oh! That's a weird place to come to for that. You should go to like, a store, that sells gifts.

**Devo:** Well, I'm trying to impress... I... [sighs] I can't give her name. But...

**Cobalt Star:** Ohhh, one of those, huh?

**Devo:** Yeah, and she's a pretty big deal—

**Cobalt Star:** Okay.

**Devo:** Back in Founders' Wake, and... I think we need something... y'know. If I'm gonna get her attention, it has to be pretty special.

**Cobalt Star:** Cool. Yeah. Um. Well, best of luck, for ya. Uh—

**Devo:** You wouldn't happen to be selling anything romantic, would you?

**Griffin:** [sighs] Make a, uh... make a... persuas— wait, no, you're lying. Make a deception check. No, you're not! No, yes you are! [cracks up] Roll a—

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs] Roll a— sorry, we're so... like...

**Travis:** Deep!

**Justin:** The onion—

**Griffin:** The onion of lies—

**Travis:** [yelling] Shit!

**Justin:** Thick—

**Griffin:** Is very thick.

**Justin:** I got a thick onion!

**Griffin:** Uh...

**Travis:** Are you fucking kidding me!

**Griffin:** Devo gets another crit fail— now Travis, listen, it's better to get these now, instead of, like...

**Travis:** [sadly] I know.

**Griffin:** When a demon is throwing a... hell ball...

**Justin:** I'd rather get it when the demon's doing it!

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Justin:** Than like in a story— fun story time!

**Griffin:** Yep. This cobalt star says,

**Cobalt Star:** You're lying.

**Devo:** Yeah, you got me.

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah.

**Devo:** I'm on assignment.

**Cobalt Star:** It's, uh... on assignment, huh?

**Devo:** Yeah.

**Cobalt Star:** Cool. Cool. What, from the secret—

**Devo:** A friend of ours asked me to come here and buy something for him. And I'm trying to get information about it, because this is my first time here, and I don't want to fuck it up.

**Cobalt Star:** They are gonna eat you alive, dude.

**Devo:** Yeah, I mean, that's probably true. Y'know? But I'm just gonna try to do my best.

**Cobalt Star:** Um, okay. I'm not bidding. Um. How much are you working with?

**Devo:** [sighs] This is one of those things, man, where I don't even know if the number I'm about to say is a good number. [sighs]

**Cobalt Star:** Alright—

**Devo:** 20?

**Cobalt Star:** It's not a great number!

**Devo:** Yeah. I thought so.

**Cobalt Star:** There's a lot of numbers that are much bigger than that.

**Devo:** Yeah.

**Cobalt Star:** Uh... [sighs]

**Devo:** And only 19 that are smaller—

**Clint:** 21, for instance.

**Justin:** Mm. 22—

**Griffin:** Yes, of course.

**Travis:** That's a—

**Griffin:** You actually have 24 Lux, if you... add in your pool, that you had already. Um. This guy says,

**Cobalt Star:** I mean, you— you may be able to get it, depends on what you're bidding on. It's not gonna be my thing! [laughs] 'Cause that's certainly gonna be a little bit higher than 24.

**Devo:** You know what, I'm just gonna throw it out. Because...

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah?

**Devo:** You seem like a straight shooter, and I want to reply the same way. Some kind of book, or something?

**Cobalt Star:** Ah. Books can be tricky. Sometimes they have like, a big spell in them or whatever, people go crazy for that shit.

**Devo:** No, this isn't like that.

**Cobalt Star:** Okay. Well if it's not like that, then... I... you know. It's within the realm of possibilities. I've been to a few of these things, and there's stuff that does sell for less than that, but. Are you telling me the truth now?

**Devo:** Yeah. Absolutely am.

**Cobalt Star:** Okay. I want this to be a fun day to watch, for me personally. And so I am going to say... the best thing you can do, with the amount of money that you have now, is drive up the price on every other thing... that is for sale today. So that your opponents don't have...

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Cobalt Star:** Don't have the money. Okay? You know to be careful with that, yes?

**Devo:** I... I think I can... maybe we can do a little, uh, do you know the phrase quid pro quo?

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah.

**Devo:** Well, see those wolves down there?

**Cobalt Star:** Mmhmm.

**Devo:** They're pretty fucking mad at me?

**Cobalt Star:** Oh, alright.

**Devo:** And anything I bid on, they're gonna try to outbid me on. So if they want what you're selling...

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah.

**Devo:** I can drive up the price on that. But I need something from you.

**Griffin:** He looks around, and he says,

**Cobalt Star:** Um. What is that?

**Devo:** I need you... to help spread the word that you heard there was some kinda bullshit book on the auction. Worthless, as far as you can tell.

**Cobalt Star:** Hmm. And... what do I get out of this?

**Devo:** I'm gonna drive up the price of whatever you're selling.

**Griffin:** Um. Make a... hmm.

**Justin:** Cool...?

**Griffin:** A cool guy check. Yeah. [laughs]

**Justin:** A cool deal?

**Clint:** Cool? [laughs]

**Griffin:** A cool deal roll. Um, I'll give you advantage on this. Make a persuasion check.

**Travis:** [sound of dice rolling] Well, okay. That's a 5, plus seven. And a 2 plus—! Are you fucking kidding me?

**Griffin:** Uh, he says,

**Cobalt Star:** Alright...

**Travis:** Yes, I have a 12.

**Griffin:** He says,

**Cobalt Star:** I'll be straight with you dude, I feel like I've given you a lot of information here? And that my side of whatever trade we got going is... upheld, at this point. Also, what you are suggesting is a kind of collusion that will very quickly get you banned from these things. And—

**Devo:** Okay, yeah, then we definitely won't do it—

**Cobalt Star:** No offense, but I kind of need...

**Devo:** Wink.

**Cobalt Star:** I kind of need this— nope, not a wink, I won't do that. But...

**Devo:** You got it, man. Wink.

**Cobalt Star:** But you should drive up the prices wherever you can...

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Devo:** You got it. Wink.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Cobalt Star:** I can't see... your face...

**Devo:** I know, that's why I'm saying it. Because...

**Cobalt Star:** Okay.

**Devo:** I have scales for a head.

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah.

**Clint:** [laughs] He's— "I'm winking right now..."

**Travis:** Yes—

**Griffin:** Alright.

**Devo:** Saying "wink," so that you can hear me. I really appreciate your help. Wink.

**Cobalt Star:** Yeah, sure. Yeah. It's... I...

**Clint:** [snorts with laughter]

**Cobalt Star:** It's my pleasure.

**Devo:** Wink. Sorry, now I just have something in my eye.

**Cobalt Star:** You— you'll— you'll beat this thing.

**Griffin:** Um. Do we have time to do one more thing with Zoox?

**Clint:** When Jeremy turns to dump the clams, I'm gonna make a Sleight of Hand check—

**Travis:** I love that sentence out of context, by the way; go on.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [silly stuffy voice] "When Jeremy turns to dump the clams..." When a young man's fancy turns to romance...

**Griffin:** Turns to clams... Uh...

**Clint:** Before I do that, let me ask you something.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** We... we are under surveillance from the audio in the, in the collars, right?

**Griffin:** Right.

**Clint:** Are we under any other kind of video surveillance?

**Griffin:** You would not— you would not know that. You have not been...

**Clint:** Alright.

**Griffin:** Nobody has communicated that to you, because Amber—

**Clint:** Then I'm gonna take a chance.

**Griffin:** Okay!

**Clint:** I'm gonna take a chance. When Jeremy turns to dump the clams in the garbage, um... Zoox does a sleight of hand check, and tries to snatch the carving knife, from the catering table, and secrete it inside his body armor.

**Griffin:** Uh... cool. Um... I was gonna make this check very high, 'cause I thought you were going to try and steal something from Jeremy. But if this is what you're doing, then... that is a horse of a different color.

**Clint:** It just seemed like that's something Zoox would do—

**Griffin:** Yeah for sure!

**Travis:** Oh yeah, absolutely!

**Clint:** I mean, he is the tank...

**Griffin:** Uh, it's absolutely in character for Zoox. Just, since you've been in here, you have not seen... y'know, any sort of camera— like, fantasy camera or whatever. Um. But there are, y'know, lots of people in this room, so that is kinda what you are contesting with this sleight of hand check. Um. I'm going to tell you that this is going to be... a... fairly low, I'm gonna set it at a... DC 10.

**Clint:** I can get under that!

**Griffin:** Over! Over, you want to be over—

**Travis:** Oh!! Duh— yeah, now I understand what the problem's been all these years here—

**Clint:** I know, I know what I want to do, but I can get under that—

**Griffin:** Get under that? Yeah, for sure.

**Clint:** Alright, so sleight of hand check, right?

**Griffin:** Yep.

**Clint:** [whispering] Please...

**Travis:** This is where...

**Clint:** Pleeeeeease... [sound of dice rolling]

**Griffin:** [shouting] Oh my god!

**Clint:** Nat...

**Travis:** Yes!

**Clint:** 20. 23.

**Travis:** Yes!

**Griffin:** That's a nat 20—

**Travis:** Dad, you steal all the knives!

**Griffin:** Um— yeah—

**Travis:** They turn around, the whole table's gone! [laughs]

**Griffin:** Yeah, uh, you know what? I'll give you this. You— you get that knife in your body, easy. Nobody even looked at you. While your hand is like, on the table, is there something else, on here? That you get greedy to get?

[Ethersea theme music fades in]

**Griffin:** With a nat 20, I'll give that— I'll give you that for free.

**Clint:** Uh... tongs.

**Griffin:** Okay!

**Clint:** A... set of tongs.

**Griffin:** A nice set of tongs, great. Add it to the—

**Travis:** Yeah, you just need those—

**Griffin:** Add it to the character sheet.

**Travis:** Everybody needs tongs. Good to grab...

**Griffin:** Absolutely.

**Justin:** It's a nice set...

**Griffin:** Um—

**Clint:** Tongs...

**Griffin:** And then—

**Clint:** Big ass carving knife...

**Griffin:** Yes. And then from above you, Zoox, and from above the bar, Devo, and in a speaker in the bathroom, Amber, you all hear another chime. And a voice says,

**Speaker:** Please make your way to the auction hall. We are ready to begin.

[Theme music plays out]

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