

The Adventure Zone: Ethersea – Episode 16

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Griffin: Previously on The Adventure Zone Ethersea:

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

Speaker: Please enjoy our complimentary food and beverage service while you wait to be ushered into the auction hall.

Amber: Give me a bad version of what they got, or the worst wine you have, I do not care, clasper, hook me up.

Bartender: Three glasses from the... Skunknuts Vintage.

Devo: The way that the Silver Stags over there? The way that they stand? I think that they might be Chaperones.

Zoox: The golden hound dogs... what could be so great that keeps bringing them back over and over?

Jeremy the caterer: What they mostly buy? Is like, almost extinct stuff.

Cobalt Star: The best thing you can do, with the amount of money that you have now, is drive up the price on every other thing.

Devo: So if they want what you’re selling...

Cobalt Star: Yeah.

Devo: I can drive up the price on that.

Griffin: You get that knife in your body, easy. Is there something else that you get greedy to get?

Clint: Tongs!

Guard: What are you doing here?

Amber: [stifling a laugh] I gotta piss so bad! I'm so sorry, did I go the wrong way?

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

Speaker: Please make your way to the auction hall. We are ready to begin.

[Ethersea theme music plays out]

Griffin: Devo and Zoox! You all see the crowd... shuffle in, to these— basically a—

Travis: [singing Billy Joel's "Piano Man"] The regular crowd shuffles in...

Griffin: Yes, Billy Joel's there—

Clint: [also singing] There's an old man...

Travis: [still singing] There's an old man...

Justin: Oh, no, I— nope—

Travis and Clint: [singing almost in unison] Sitting next to me...

Justin: Oh, he— his lawyers are here. How are they here?

Travis: [singing] Having sex with his tonic and gin.

Justin: Why are the lawyers here...

Griffin: I don't think that's what he does.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Basically, a wall of doors opens up, slides open, revealing the other half of this sort of big circular chamber.

[Ambient music plays softly]

And the other half of the room is just... hardwood floors, with aisles of chairs, almost like a... almost like a wedding. And at the very front of the room, I guess furthest from where you all are standing, there is a podium, set up on a stage. And in front of that podium there are five pedestals. Each one is covered, by a black cloth. And behind that podium is, yet again, another one of these stewards, in the white holographic vapor-suit, y'know, outfit, with a big pyramid for a head. And he is sort of nodding at everyone as they walk in and take their seats. What do you two do?

Travis: Uh, Griffin? I would like to... and I don't know if its arcana, or investigation...

Griffin: Oh.

Travis: But I know that, in the beginning, right, when we first got there, the voice said like, not to do any magic— if any magic was like, detected, right? I would get in trouble.

Griffin: The exact wording was “witnessed by one of the staff, here.”

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: That would get you in a lot of trouble.

Travis: When the things open, right? When the doors open?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: I wanna see if I can observe, like... the participants, close enough to see if I can notice any note— interest, or intention, from them, towards any particular lots. Or any particular pedestals.

Griffin: [sighs] I... I... I don't think that there's anything that they can give through just sort of like, body language, walking into a room?

Travis: Mm.

Griffin: Just because everybody's dressed up like a big, you know, "Among Us" character.

Travis: Fair, fair, fair, fair, fair.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: So, what are y'all doing?

Travis: Um, I'm... I want to... do I see the person in the Cobalt Suit?

Griffin: Yeah. They're walking in, too.

Travis: I want to sit behind wherever they sit.

Griffin: Okay. Zoox?

Clint: Um. Zoox is going to sit... directly behind the three Golden Wolves.

Griffin: Uh, okay. We'll say that all of those are sort of on the left cluster of seats. You know. You all are sitting... fair, fairly close together. And then the doors behind you all shut, as the final participants walk into the room and take their seats. And the emcee—

Travis: There is— a thought passes through Devo's mind, of...

Griffin: Yes?

Travis: "I wonder where Amber is." [laughs]

Griffin: [laughing] Yeah. Uh. The emcee bangs a gavel, on the podium, and says,

Emcee: Welcome, honored guests. Welcome, to our Abyssal Auction. We are very happy to have you. Please keep in mind the rules, as we move forward, particularly the final rule, where... don't buy anything you don't

have money for! We will have one hour, after the event, to settle up, for the winning participants, after which point you will of course be dismissed from the station, and free to go. In order. We don't want all of you leaving at the same time, seeing each other's ships, and ruining the many steps we take to ensure your anonymity. Um.

Travis: It's Hollywood.

Griffin: It's Hollywood, I've made it.

Emcee: Today, as you can see, we have five lots up for auction. We're very excited for some of the items we've got on sale today. I anticipate a... rambunctious... buy—

Travis: Devo raises his hand.

Emcee: Uh, we have not started yet...?

Devo: [his disguise Midwestern accent] No, I was just wondering. Are any of the lots a gem, that you can kiss, and become friends with a dinosaur?

Emcee: Oh ho ho ho ho. You're talking about... the Emerald of Smoochasaurus Rex.

Devo: Yes.

Emcee: I... [amused] no spoilers.

Devo: Oh boy.

Emcee: Yeah. Um. Thank you. We don't usually do that. Like, a question-and-answer thing, before we get started. And, so everyone's aware, once we do get started with the auctions, raising your hand represents that you are placing a bid on an item, so, do be careful about that. Uh. Any other— I guess as long as we're doing this, it's unorthodox, but, any, any other questions?

Clint: Zoox raises his hand.

Emcee: Uh, yes, there, Seahorse?

Zoxx: Oh— no, I was only trying out the whole bidding thing, I wanted to make sure that was what you're supposed to—

Emcee: Okay, why don't we do this, we'll go around the room and everyone get a few practice bids in. Just raise your... yep. That's good. That's good. Yes, like that. Yellow smiley face, are you going to...? No, not right now, okay. Um. Awesome. Was that it?

Zoxx: Oh, that was— mmhmm!

Emcee: Okay, fantastic.

Griffin: The silver stags, one of them raises their hand, and the emcee says,

Emcee: Yes.

Griffin: And the stag actually stands up, and walks up to the podium, and whispers something. In the emcee's ear. And... he just kind of turns and looks, and says,

Emcee: That's not going to be possible.

Griffin: And the stag turns and walks back to their seat. And the emcee says,

Emcee: Well, with that out of the way. Let's begin!

Griffin: And he bangs his gavel down on the podium. Amber! [amused] How are you!?

Justin: You tell me, bud. I dunno. You tell me!

Griffin: Uh, okay, I told you at the end of the last episode, and you also made this come true: you are— you're in a bathroom. And you've been in

here for a minute or so, and guarding the door outside, waiting for you to finish... that nasty business...

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Is one of the security detail, that... caught you taking those, taking those goggles.

Justin: [clapping] This is where! I! Thrive!

Griffin: Okay!

Justin: Alright. Let's see. Um... [vocalizes a thinking noise] ckchkchkchk... Go ahead and let me do... investigation. To see my exits. [cracks up with laughter] From the bathroom.

Griffin: Alright. Sure.

Justin: [sound of dice rolling] Huh, m— 17!

Griffin: Hmmm...

Justin: Now that doesn't mean that will make exits.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, I mean you can't—

Justin: But it does mean that I won't miss any!

Griffin: [laughing] You— you can't bore tunnels into the wall with your mind.

Travis: Well now hold on! [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Are you sure?

Griffin: I want— I'll give you something with this. Maybe not something... incredibly useful, but, there are... there's a stall in here, a single stall, with a... deadbolt lock on the inside of it. That is... you know, tall enough that it would, y'know, hide you, if that is the route you wanted to take. Um.

[Pensive light music plays softly]

There are also... two cupboards, like on ground level, that you think if you... y'know, maybe took some of the stuff out of them, you could squirrel away in there. There is like a vent, in the ceiling? But it is... like... not big enough for you to fit in, you assume. You could— you also, like, there's a toilet. You could flush yourself down there.

Justin: [laughs heartily]

Griffin: But that would be... that would be pretty, uh, that would be pretty wild. Um. There's... there's no lock on the door into this restroom. Only on the inside of the stall. So. You have, you assume, until this guard's patience runs out to figure something out. Um, so yes. No... no exits, a few hiding spots. Maybe not the news you were looking for, but that's... that's what you got going on in here.

Justin: Cupboards... are... attached to the wall, or no?

Griffin: They are attached to— they're like underneath the sink. There's like, two sinks here, and there's, yeah.

Justin: I'm gonna lie on the ground and piss my pants.

[Pensive music fades out]

Travis: ...Huh!

Griffin: Yeah, let me think, hold on, give me one second, I'm gonna open up the D&D... Dungeon Master rulebook real quick. Let me... [imitates sound of pages flipping]

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh... hold on— no, it's not in this part. Hold on. [makes page-turning sound again] I remember seeing something about pissing your— pissing your pants, in like...

Justin: [cracks up] I don't have to roll to piss my pants!

Clint: Uhhh—

Griffin: Well, okay—

Clint: If I remember, in Balance, Merle had to take damage for pissing his pants once!

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Well...

Justin: Okay, here's the thing! I have definitely established...

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Concretely, that I've not only drank, but I've drank a solid amount, of alcohol.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And of Skunknuts, which we know goes right through you.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Right— directly through you.

Justin: [laughing] And that's what their slogan goes— [singing] Skunknuts Wine! It's made of grapes! And it's running through ya like a wild ape! You're gonna love this tannin!

Clint: [laughing throughout]

Griffin: [laughs] Um... Okay, so—

Justin: [singing] This is the wine that you're stannin'! Skunknuts!

Griffin: Here's— here's how it—

Justin: [vocalizes a guitar riff]

Griffin: [laughs] Here's how I'm gonna do this, Justin. Uh—

Justin: Here's how I'm gonna do it! I lie on the floor and piss my pants.

Griffin: And you piss your pants. It's hard to piss your own pants, on command. Even—

Justin: [giggles]

Griffin: So I'll give you advantage on this—

Travis: Oh is it, Griff?!

Justin: Is it?

Travis: Give me— give me a second...

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] You— I will give you this: you have, you have said that you've had a lot of beverages. And you did need to use the bathroom. So I'll give you advantage on this roll. But this is you battling your own reflexes to NOT piss your pants? I'm gonna make this a wisdom saving throw against your own sort of, your own sort of... desire to have clean dry clothes.

Justin: [sighs] Amber also came from a world where she was at sea a lot? She was in wetsuits, being forced to piss her own pants to... to keep her body warmer—

Griffin: Now THIS seems like revisionist history! You're telling me as a fisherperson—

Justin: It never came up.

Griffin: That you wore wetsuits??

Travis: But it was part of the job, on the job training??

Justin: I mean, I had to battle the blink sharks in the water! Right?

Griffin: I'm not giving you double advantage.

Justin: Double advantage?

Griffin: You have advantage on this roll. It's a DC 10, you're fine. It's a DC 10 wisdom saving throw.

Justin: Okay. Okay. [whispering] Okay. Shhh, everybody calm down.

Griffin: This would be the funniest result ever, by the way, if you fail this, and you get busted—

Justin: [bursts into wheezy laughter]

Travis: [crosstalk]

Griffin: [imitating a gruff guard voice] "Well if your pants had been pissed in..."

Justin: What's it— a wisdom saving throw?

Griffin: Uh, yeah, your wisdom saving throw, it's a plus three for you.

Justin: It's a 19 plus three. 22.

Griffin: I mean—!! It— you start to lay down, and you realize you've been peeing your pants for... like 15 seconds.

Justin: [cackling]

Clint: [guffaws]

Justin: Next time I have a bad roll, when I need it, I'm gonna remember— [wheezing with laughter] this one time I rolled a 19 to piss my own pants!

Clint: [continues cracking up]

Griffin: Alright! Uh.

Travis: Now, did you roll the advantage? 'Cause you could get a 20. And REALLY...

Justin: Oh that's a great point, yeah, let me see what the advantage would be.

Travis: You could REALLY piss your pants.

Griffin: What even— wh—I don't know what a critical piss is.

Travis: I think... I think he...

Justin: It's an 18—

Travis: Somehow floats—

Justin: It's an 18, plus three, 21—

Griffin: [cracks up]

Clint: [amazement] Sheeez—!

Justin: I was always gonna piss the pants—

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: In every— [imitating Dr. Strange] “In every reality I’ve checked, you piss the pants! In every dimension. In every permutation. Of our own reality—”

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: “You piss the pants!”

Griffin: Um.

Justin: Doctor Strange! In the multiverse of madness!

Griffin: Right. That was...

Justin: ...three.

Griffin: Those were two good rolls, so I will say that—

Justin: [mumbles]

Griffin: There was— so, such volume, that it has... passed beyond your pants and through the sort of holographic barrier. And so there is a visible, a visible mess now. And there’s a knock at the door, saying,

Guard: Uh. Are— are you... are you almost finished? The auction’s started, I really need to get you squared away before I can go take my post back.

Justin: Silence.

Guard: Hello?

Griffin: There’s a knock at the door.

[long pause]

Guard: Okay, I'm gonna— I'm— I am going to come in there now. And it's important for me to know that you know I've said that out loud. For, like, many, many legal reasons. So it's— do I— is that okay?

[pause]

Guard: [sighing] Okay. I'm just gonna open the door really slow, then.

Griffin: And he starts opening the door really slow. And... it's only like a few inches open when he says,

Guard: Oh that smells quite— oh, oh G— ohh! Oh! Go— OH! God!!

Clint: [giggles]

Guard: Uhhhh...

Travis: Now, to be fair, Griffin. It's a well-known fact that Skunknuts smells the same going out—

Griffin: No, stop it— [laughs] Stop—

Travis: As it did going in!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughing] Yeah. Uh. He creeps toward you. And looks down. And... he is going to... he wants to like, check your vitals and stuff, but he's also very very wary. What I want you to do, is... with advantage, because again there's so much piss. Make a persuasion roll, please.

[Someone snorts]

Travis: A piss-suasion!

Justin: Piss-suasion roll... of... that's... 5?

[Pensive light music plays again]

Griffin: A 6 minus one, a 5.

Justin: And a... 14 minus one, 13!

Griffin: Uh. Okay. Good, not great. Uh. He... here's what he does. He is going to approach you, but also he reaches behind his back, and he pulls out... like a baton. Like a white baton, with a blue sort of stripe of light running up the length of it. And so he's got that in one hand, and his left hand sort of outstretched, like, approaching your... well, the holograph of your neck, to try and like... make sure you're alive! Uh. And so he does that, he reaches forward, and... puts his hand on your... on the side of your neck, to feel your pulse.

Justin: And he's got his little... like, hurting staff, out?

Griffin: It's— it's— I mean, it's small, it's like a baton. Than a big staff.

Justin: It's like a cattle prod kind of thing? With like, electricity at the end? Or is it just like a... bludgeoning...?

Griffin: You can't see the electricity, at the end, but like, there's something going on with this thing. Because it looks magical.

Justin: But he's approaching me with his weapon out?

Griffin: Yeah, in one hand, his hand on your, your, y'know, your—

Justin: Oh, he's pretty close, huh?

Griffin: I mean, he's got his hand on you.

Justin: Um... Great... I'm not gonna move.

Griffin: Oh, wow! Okay. He pulls back. And says,

Guard: [sighs] Well, you're... you're breathing. Uh... ugh, God, I really— I really don't... okay...

Justin: I'm—

Guard: I'm gonna—

Justin: I start coughing— I— I start coughing.

Guard: Oh! Jeez— oh my God. [stutters] Are you okay? What's—

Amber: [begins coughing, retching]

Guard: Oh what do you—

Justin: Choking! She's choking!

Amber: [strained retching]

Guard: Oh, God. Okay. Uh. Uh, gross gross gross gross!! Okay!

Griffin: He reaches over to the, like... uh, paper towel dispenser, and grabs some, to try and line his hands with them? And then he reaches down, and like, scoops an arm under your shoulder and an arm under your thigh, to try and roll you on your side, away from—

Justin: Great, now I grab his weapon, and jam it into his neck.

[Music intensifies]

Griffin: Ooh, boy! Uh... okay.

Justin: He's deffo not expecting it now!

Griffin: He's not, he is not—

Justin: He was expecting it before.

Griffin: This is gonna— okay, this— to make this fair, it's just gonna be a straight up dex contest. But again, for this elaborate thing you've set up, you're— you will have advantage for it. Uh, so...

Justin: That is a... 13 plus four, 17! Or a...

Griffin: Oooh.

Justin: 6 plus four, 10. So I will go with the 17.

Griffin: We tied...

Justin: Hoooh!

Griffin: Uh... we— you tied! You know what it is? You get your hand on the baton, and he holds on firm to it. Uh. And... he— you see— well no, you can't see his face. But he rears back, and gasps. And now you all are both kind of having a, a little tug-of-war, happening here in the restroom.

Justin: She's pull— they're both fighting, right?

Griffin: Yeah!

Amber: Bad news... [whispering] I got four hands.

Justin: And then she uses a ki point to use her psychic fists...

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: To push even harder.

Griffin: Uh... you're just pushing? You're trying to grab this out of his hands? You're not...?

Justin: I'm just trying to... I'm trying to... attack him... What— you know what? Okay, real quick. [laughs] I think I can do this in the heat of the moment. Um. I want to do a... [vocalizes thinking] chchchchchoooo... To see if I know anything about the nature of this weapon.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Arcana, or history?

Griffin: It would be arcana.

Justin: [sound of dice rolling] 18!

Griffin: Wow, okay! I don't know how you know st— I guess you know stuff about weapons, right? You don't necessarily know stuff about magic shit. Oh, you know what it is!? You have some familiarity with the... with the Chaperones. Like, you've been in the city your whole life, and, you know. You were there when the Chaperones were founded, on the shoreside. This is a... this is similar to something that the Chaperones carry around, as a peacekeeping... you know... weapon. It is a, essentially, a stun... baton.

Justin: Great.

Griffin: You also know... uh, that... they are a one-time thing, before they need to recharge.

Justin: Perfect.

Griffin: So, yes. You know that about the weapon.

Justin: Okay. Um. Then I am using the— my extra fists, four arms, to push the— to, to attempt to stun him.

Griffin: With his own baton?

Justin: Yep.

Griffin: Uh...

Justin: No, with my wit. [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] Uh— okay, again... because you are using double the arms, I will give you advantage on this, but now it's a strength contest.

Justin: [sound of dice rolling] A 14 plus four, 18.

Griffin: Oh, fuck me...

Justin: A 5 plus four.

Griffin: Yeah, I mean—

Justin: It's an 18.

Griffin: You got it. This dude skipped arm day at the gym, for many consecutive gym days!

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Uh, he rolled a 2.

Justin: Is he out?

Griffin: Uh. I— yeah, I'm not gonna make you roll an attack roll on this, 'cause you just made so many rolls to make this maneuver happen. But you push it into his neck, and that blue line, it like shoots up toward the tip of the baton? I'm gonna make him do just a con save. It would be a very high one, but... no, that's a critical failure! There's more— there's extra piss on the floor now!

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: But— but he is out. And actually, where did you... where did you jab him, with it?

Justin: The neck.

Griffin: In the neck? Okay. Uh... then... he goes down like a sack of bricks. And! Turns into... just a regular... just brown-haired dude, in like a black jumpsuit, as his hologram fades. His collar snaps off, from the back, and falls to the floor. And you can see now that there is like, a clasp, that you have, y'know, somehow deactivated, by zapping this thing right the fuck on it.

[Music fades out]

Justin: Hm!

Griffin: So yeah. This— this dude is... is outskies.

Justin: Great. Um. I am going to... swap our clothes.

Griffin: Yeah, that's... I mean... at this— it's six of one, half dozen of the other, they're very— there's piss in both.

[someone snorts]

Justin: [laughing] Oh, 'cause he pissed his pants, too!

Griffin: Yeah— sure, yeah.

Justin: Well then nevermind, I'll just steal his collar.

Griffin: Okay! You've got his collar now.

Justin: Do I look like him?

Griffin: Are you putting it on?

Justin: Yeah!

Griffin: You don't really have any way to get— sorry, I just established this. But you, y'know, it would take something, to get your collar off. Because it was— it took the electronic force of this stun baton, to get his.

Justin: Huh! Interesting. Okay.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Um... I mean.

Clint: What would happen if you wore both?

Travis: Good question.

Griffin: No way of knowing!

Justin: [chuckles] I don't think I want to risk that. Ummmm... uh. Does he have anything else on him?

Griffin: That's a good question! Uh, why don't you... uh... you know what, he's unconscious, you would not have to roll this—

Travis: [laughing] Just it's a letter from his dad that says "I'm so proud of the fact that you've never pissed your pants before."

Justin: [cracks up]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: "It's like that one— that one thing you've got, son, that you can always hold onto."

Clint: [guffaws]

Travis: "Even as a child, you wouldn't use diapers!"

Griffin: Well, you already got the baton off of him. And I can roll up a... y'know, stat sheet for it, uh, here in a second. Um. I'm not sure if it would be any better than your fists, but— probably, it probably would! So yes, you have that. Uh... there is... there's an earpiece. In his head. Not in his head, in his ear. It is kinda like the ones that you saw Desdemona wearing, when you went to her shop? Almost like, like headphone-style thing, but it's just

one, one earpiece. With like, almost clock-work wheels, spinning around on the outside of it. And... yeah, I think that's it.

Justin: Chchchchch... he doesn't have like a key card, or any sort of like, keys? At all?

Griffin: Not that you can see, no.

Justin: Dang. Okay. Well, I'll put the earpiece in.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: What— uh, I wanna investigate the... the prod. To see if I can figure out how it charges.

Griffin: Um. You look at it, and you can actually see that the blue line on it is already starting to... sort of... grow back?

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Um. Yeah. You get the sense that... I mean, quick math? There's not a math check. I would say, y'know, maybe ten minutes?

Justin: Oh! Okay.

Griffin: You would be... charged up again.

Justin: Mmm. How does the door open and close?

Griffin: The... to the bathroom?

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: It just swings in toward you.

Justin: Mmm... does it lock?

Griffin: No, there is no lock on the door.

Justin: Okay. I'm just gonna, um... prop him and me up against the, uh, the door, and wait.

Griffin: Okay! Cool! Uh. Then let's jump back to the auction.

Clint: Before we do, just in honor of how important the pants pissing was. I have taken upon myself to set the fourth rule of Ethersea, as "Skunknuts wine goes through you like an ape."

Griffin: Okay! [laughs]

Justin: Okay! That's fair! That's more of a slogan. But... I think that that's—

Griffin: But, but I like it, I think it's fun!

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I think it's fun to see that, on our... on our... you know. Bill of Rights, on our old, Old Testament covenant.

Clint: Right.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: With the listeners. I like that.

[Polite piano music begins playing softly]

Griffin: So this emcee gestures to another one of these pyramid folks, who walks over, and removes the first cloth from the first pedestal. And the emcee says,

Emcee: This is a... I've been doing this for many years now. This is one of the more... exotic items that we've had for sale. It is... a bottle... not just a bottle... the last known bottle of the Hartfield Bordeaux. This is... from an—to us— ancient surface vintage. It is... one of the most highly sought after bottles of... any liquid that exists, in the world. And as such, I expect we will

have a... a very competitive auction for it. I will open up the bidding at... fifty Lux.

Griffin: And... there's a silence over the crowd, as everybody kinda starts looking around at each other, waiting for the first person to bid. [pause] And nobody does, so the Golden Wolves raise their hand, and they say,

Golden Wolf: Fifty Lux.

Travis: Devo raises his hand and says,

Devo: [Midwestern accent] Sixty.

Griffin: Cobalt Star looks around behind you and sees you, and kinda gives you a little nod. Without missing a beat, the Golden Wolves, y'know, the main one, the not-angry-looking wolf, raises his hand, and says,

Golden Wolf: One hundred Lux.

Travis: Uh, Devo turns around and looks at them, and says,

Devo: Oh, something to prove? [laughs] A hundred and twenty-five Lux!

Justin: [whispering] He's really pushing it.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Without missing a beat, as if they have been pushed by your... your statement. They say,

Golden Wolf: Two hundred.

Travis: I want... okay. I want to try to read their tone of voice, when they say two hundred.

Griffin: Shooo, I mean, okay. High— I will tell you now, high DC. You're not— you do not have much info to work on. But. Okay.

Travis: Yes, but, but— counterpoint, as an Orator, it is literally my line of study.

Griffin: That's true, that's true. Okay. Not as high a DC. But still a decent one.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Go ahead and... go ahead and roll.

Travis: 15 plus six, 21.

Griffin: Um... they are... simultaneously annoyed and excited. This is a— as you have been told in the past, this is a money fight? And you get the sense that these Golden Wolves have never really had anybody stand up to them before.

Devo: [sighs] Fine! Two-fifty.

Griffin: Let's have a charisma contest. That's a plus three for you.

[sound of multiple dice rolling]

Griffin: Aw, fuck!!

Clint: [groans] Mm!

Travis: [aghast] Oh!

Griffin: I mean, you beat me, son.

Justin: We're all doing vocal naps.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Oorf!

Griffin: That was a 3 for the Golden Wolves, and an 8 for Devo. Uh, the Golden Wolf that has been speaking turns and looks at you... for a long time. And then... the emcee says,

Emcee: Two hundred and fifty Lux? Going once?

Griffin: And then the Wolf says,

Golden Wolf: Three hundred!

Clint: Zoox leans forward and speaks to the Wolves, and says,

Zoox: Man, I am so glad you did that. If you coulda heard... the shit he was talking about you guys, a few minutes ago?

Travis: Er—?

Zoox: About how he was gonna kick your ass, in this auction? I don't know what his beef is with you, but... [laughs incredulously] oh man. He said he will not lose this auction! [laughs] Jeez!

Griffin: Uh. Zoox, make an intimidation check!

Clint: Intimidation...?

Griffin: Yeah!

Clint: M'kay... [sound of dice rolling] 12.

Griffin: 12? Okay. Uh... the Golden Wolf just seems to ignore you. Just seems to like, brush you off. And the emcee says,

Emcee: Three hundred? To the Golden Wolf? Going once? ...Going twice? ...Sold! To the Golden Wolves, for three hundred Lux.

[A gavel bangs twice]

Griffin: And someone comes up from the white pyramid contingent, and wheels the pedestal away with the bottle of wine. And the Golden Wolf stands up, and looks at you, square in your... square in your scale-head. And, uh...

Travis: Devo is going to do... a... uh... sincere bow of deference.

Griffin: Huh. Okay! Uh...

Travis: And the— and say,

Devo: Ah. I know when I've been beat.

Griffin: He...

Clint: [laughs] Oh, he's good...

Griffin: You— you can hear him chuckle. As he sees you, y'know, genuflect. And he... says,

Golden Wolf: You were beaten before you even walked into the room.

Clint: Ooooooh, burn!

Griffin: And turns back around, and sits back down. Uh, the emcee then says,

Emcee: Okay—

Travis: Under— under the— under the mask, under the scale mask, Devo rolls his eyes, real fucking hard.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh. The emcee says,

Emcee: And now onto our next lot, up for auction...

Griffin: And... the, y'know, assistant, walks up and pulls the cloth off of the second pedestal. And you almost have to stand up to be able to see what is on this pedestal. It is a... small... almost like... plain, like a deck of playing cards sized... black rectangular... lump of metal. And the emcee says,

Emcee: This is... I know I said this about the last item, but this is... well, it is the rarest metal known to mortalkind. It is an authentic fragment of the body of Koda, whose material was harvested to create the Biggest Baby. Only the most skilled artisan can utilize it, to create anything that could be a bit more practical than just a lump of metal. But it is still an incredible find. And today we will be starting the auction at ten Lux.

Travis: Devo raises his hand.

Devo: Ten Lux.

Griffin: One of the... Silver Stags, confers with the other one, and raises his hand, and says,

Silver Stag: Fifteen Lux.

Devo: Twenty Lux.

Griffin: The emcee waits for a moment. And looks at the Silver Stags. And they turn and look at each other, and then they turn and look back at you. And then they stand up. And they turn to start walking out of the room. And the emcee says,

Emcee: Twenty Lux! Um. Going once?

Devo: It'll be nice to have my own competition for the Biggest Baby.

Griffin: Uh... make a... what would you say you're trying to do right now?

Travis: I'm trying to make—

Griffin: Just coax?

Travis: Like a persuasion roll?

Griffin: I think that's what it is, you're trying to persuade them into, um...

Travis: To right— raise to the bait.

Griffin: Right, exactly. Okay! Make a... a... shit, I know you're only saying that because your persuasion roll's insane.

Travis: Yes! A 10 plus seven, 17.

Griffin: Hmmmmm. They... stop. And one of them turns around without conferring with the other one, and says,

Silver Stag: Twenty... two, Lux.

Griffin: And the auctioneer looks... like, his head cocks quizzically, and he says,

Emcee: Um, okay. A strange number, but the bidding is at 22 Lux. Going once? ...Going twice? Sold! To the Silver Stags.

[Gavel bangs twice]

Griffin: And one of them looks really pissed off, at the one that just did that. That just took it up to 22. And... the one who did the bidding, just like, nods him off, and walks up to try and take it, until the assistant wheels it away really quickly. The emcee says,

Emcee: Uh uh uh uh uh! Settlement will happen after the— after the proceedings. Please take your seats.

[Polite piano music fades in again]

Griffin: And... they don't do that. They turn and walk out of the room. And the emcee says,

Emcee: Well then. Sort of a strange way of doing things, but I suppose we shouldn't let it hold us up. Um. Let's... let's move on.

[Piano music plays out]

[Advertisement break]

[Pensive light music fades in]

Griffin: Amber! We'll say it's been ten minutes. The rod has... the— the baton has now charged back up.

Justin: Cool. I'm gonna try to use the baton to disengage my, um... my necklace.

Griffin: I'm gonna give you the choice. You did this same thing to the person who is now completely unconscious, in the terlet. So I don't know how you guarantee that you do this, to do the thing that you don't— you want to do, without doing the thing you don't want to do, which is knock yourself unconscious. Um. So maybe a sleight of hand check? Um... [laughing] I'm willing to negotiate this with you, because... it's a...

Justin: Hmm...

Griffin: It is a... it is an attack on yourself, essentially.

Justin: Hmm. Yeah. Ummm...

[Music fades out]

Travis: Could you insulate?

Justin: Um. [sighs] I can't imagine that it— how loose is it? Like could I get some fabric in there, or something?

Griffin: Um...

Justin: Like if I were to take his shirt, could I...?

Griffin: Yeah, sure! Yeah, you could— you could—

Justin: Yeah, I'm gonna try that, just to give myself a little bit of padding. I have no idea if that'll work. I won't use his pants, for obvious reasons. They're wet.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: More conductive. Bad.

Clint: And I would move out of the puddle of piss...

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: Just to be safe.

Griffin: Damn, I actually—

Justin: I'm out of the puddle.

Griffin: I actually thought about that, Dad. I— you— you solved my puzzle. Um. Okay!

Justin: Yeah. I will— I'll step out of the puddle of piss.

Clint: [snorts]

Griffin: Right. And you're taking like a... you know... a... some of his shirt cloth, tucking it in there?

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, cool. Okay. Now make a... uh... you know what? Just make an attack roll against yourself.

Justin: [cackles] What, an unarmed strike?

Griffin: Oh, oh, oh! Here it is! Because it is, because it is padded, make a disadvantaged attack roll on yourself.

Justin: Oh-kay. Unarmed strike?

Griffin: Mmmm... yes. I would say, yeah, it's a... uh, plus four.

Justin: If you give me the stats on the thing, I can... plus four?

Griffin: Uh, yeah.

Justin: Okay, that's my unarmed strike too, so... [takes a breath] That's a 15 plus four, 19...

Travis: Oh boy!

Clint: [winces audibly] Mm!

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And a... 9 plus four, 13. [small laugh]

Griffin: What's your armor class?

Justin: 15!

Griffin: Aw then you're—

Justin: [triumphantly] Hey hey!!

Griffin: Yeah, you're okay!

Justin: [laughs jubilantly]

Clint: Wooooo!!

Justin: Woo!

Griffin: Definitely— it definitely— you feel it! It's— it's weird and bad, it's like when you touch an exposed... you know, or an ungrounded like piece of metal, and you feel that, that bad feeling? But very quickly, the... the aquamarine choker that you had on sort of unsnaps and also falls to the... well, you probably catch it, 'cause you're who you are. And you got it off!

Justin: Great. I'm gonna snap mine onto him, and his onto me.

Griffin: Fun! Uh, okay! Yeah. You do that. And now you see... an aquamarine blink shark, now, laying in the floor, in some pee.

Justin: I'm gonna jam that blink shark right into the commode.

Griffin: Uh— ok— okay?

Justin: Not like into the toilet! But like...

Travis: [laughs] Give him a swirlie!

Justin: [laughing] Jesus Christ! Yeah, when I get out— [wheezing] fucking chainsaw— [laughing] grind him up—

Griffin: I mean, are you swirlie-ing him? Because you must remember this gentleman is unconscious.

Justin: No! I'm just putting him into the— so I can close the— I— is there not a stall?

Griffin: There is a stall, yeah.

Justin: Okay, I'm putting him in the stall, that's the word for it.

Griffin: Yeah, it's, yeah— you understand— just, so we're clear, you understand why that did confuse me? I thought you were gonna drown this dude—

Travis: Yeah, you thought he was saying like a commode, which...

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Also, he's the— if anyone detects it, it would be so fucking wild, because you know what? Ac— so, what kind of clothing is this thing... like what is it making me look like now?

Griffin: You are looking— you now look like one of those, like, plain white pyramid-headed... like, stewards.

Justin: Okay. And it's making like, what is it, robes? Or what, what it is appearing to be?

Griffin: Nah, I mean, it's— it is literally just a, almost featureless... like, holographic...

Travis: Like the shields from 1984 Dune.

Griffin: ...Sure? I don't know. No, it just— it looks— you look... vaguely like a streamlined stay-puff marshmallow person. But with a pyramid for a head. Like it's not— it's not—

Justin: Okay, I gotta— I got— I gotta ditch my pants.

Griffin: Okay!

Justin: They're soaked in piss.

Griffin: Sure, yeah. Alright. So you're—

Justin: I gotta ditch my pants.

Travis: [giggles]

Griffin: [laughing] So now you are... you are bottomless, except you have a hologram around you.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: [snorts]

Griffin: Awesome.

Justin: That's the deal. That's the deal.

Griffin: That's cool.

Justin: Next thing is gotta get pants. [giggles]

Griffin: Hey, pal? Make sure your neck doesn't get zapped. Or else it's going to lead to... a pretty buck wild, uh, turn, for this story that we're telling right now. Uh, okay! As you get all that squared away, and you throw your pants in the garbage...

Justin: [snorts]

Clint: No no no no! Throw 'em around the feet of the guy in the stall—

Justin: [laughs] No, he doesn't— they're going with him—

Griffin: Okay, yeah, that's fine.

Justin: I want double the piss mistake. [laughing]

Griffin: Right, sure, good.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh... you hear a voice, in that, that earpiece. And it says,

Voice: [grainy as if heard through a phone line] Uh... Osmund? Is... is everything taken care of? Did you get— did you get that, uh, that blink shark to the main office?

[long pause]

Voice: Osmund? Are you— come in?

Amber: [tersely] She's dead.

Justin: [trying to stifle laughter]

Travis: [cracks up] Now hold on!

Griffin: [bursts into laughter]

Travis: You took a long pause!

Clint: [laughs]

Voice: Uh... uh?

Amber: [impersonating guard] I had to be sure, but she's dead.

Voice: Uh... you k...?

Amber: No... I think it's... I think we've got a poisoning on our hands.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Voice: Did you remove her collar? How do you know that... the...

Amber: Hm?

Voice: The— how did you know that she's a, she's a she? Did you take off her collar?

Amber: You ever see that movie, "Son of a Woman?"

Voice: Alright—

Amber: I just experienced the inverse.

Griffin: [cracks up] He says...

Voice: Uh— uh— uh— uh— uh— [sighs] Okay. We— you— [sighs] I don't know what to tell you, Osmund! This is not... why did you— what happened??

Amber: [takes a deep breath] I don't know, but... don't come in here, it's a crime scene.

Clint: [bursts into laughter]

Justin: [explodes into laughter]

Travis: Ohhhkay!

Griffin: I am— I'm gonna see into the future, and say, by the end of this episode, there will be six to seven unconscious or dead security guards in this bathroom.

Justin: [laughs wheezily]

Griffin: It's gonna be like in Hit Man—

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Where you just hide all the bodies in one closet. Uh... I mean, fuck, Juice, make a— make a performance check. And I'm really sorry that I'm making you do that again. 'Cause I know you don't— you're not good at it.

Travis: But you're just— you're trying—

Justin: 4 minus one, 3! [bursts into laughter again]

Griffin: Uh—

Justin: Fair!

Voice: Okay, uh, I'm— are you still in the bathroom?

Justin: No, I'm out. I'm— are you— who's asking?

Griffin: This is the security guard asking.

Justin: Okay!

Amber: Uh. Yeah, but don't come in. [failing to stifle laughter] My fingerprints are everywhere...?

Travis: [blows raspberry]

Voice: I— I'm—

Justin: Alright, Amber's walking out. She's walking out.

Griffin: Okay—

Amber: I'm just— hey listen. I'm just fucking with you.

Griffin: There's no way!!

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: There's no way!

Amber: I'm just fucking with you— no, I was wrong.

Voice: You're—!?! You were wrong about her being dead?!?

Amber: [wheezing with laughter] She's just passed out really bad! From booze! [cracks up]

Clint: [laughs] [crosstalk]

Amber: It's a booze thing...

Griffin: By the way, this laughing is happening in character, for sure—

Justin: No it's not!!

Griffin: Okay, okay, okay.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, he says,

Voice: Uh uh— uh— uh— uh— I... [sighs] I'm going to come and— I'm gonna come help. You— I— this— I'm worried that you might have some sort of shock happening right now, because of... what you've done, the terrible crime?

Amber: Here's all I ask. [pause] Just give me... ten... maybe nine and a half minutes, to collect myself. [stifling laughter]

Griffin: [cracks up]

Amber: Before you come in.

Voice: Um— I'm— I'm— I'm on my way.

Griffin: He says.

Justin: [high-pitched and breathless with laughter] Okay! I mean... fucking fine...

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: Okay, so what are you doing— what are—

Justin: I get so good— I mean, I get so far with this stuff...

Griffin: I know, I know, until it— only it comes—

Justin: Come so close—

Griffin: Collapsing down around your ears at the very end. Well—

Justin: It's— I get so close! One bad roll, you know?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And the whole thing—

Travis: Well, now— now, Justin! Let's not blame this all on the dice, because your response to "how's it going in there" was, "she's dead!"

Griffin: She's dead!

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [laughing] And—

Griffin: Is that better— Just to, for post-game, not to be a Monday morning quarterback, but... "She's fine..."

Travis: Yeah, "I took care of it—"

Griffin: Would have been a much better answer!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Woulda raised much less suspicion!

Travis: "All taken care of!"

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah...

Clint: Oh, but then he has to present her!

Justin: Yeah—

Travis: Wait, why??

Justin: Not fine, bring her in for questioning!

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Like, I don't have a good— I'm just stop— I'll like— Here's the thing about Amber.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Amber is thinking... no steps ahead.

Griffin: Right, yeah, of course.

Travis: Mmm.

Justin: Amber's thinking about the exact next five seconds.

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: Right now, I think... yes. She's going to leave the bathroom.

Griffin: Okay, cool! Um—

Justin: And walk away from it.

Griffin: Toward... what?

Justin: The... um...

Griffin: Do you need some reminders of the... the map? The visual—

Justin: No, 'cause I've got the security room, she could walk towards.

Griffin: Yes. Which the other security guard would be walking out of.

Justin: [exhales] Right. Right. What's the other direction?

Griffin: There is the access tunnel, down to the... down to the, um, you know, the docks, down below. There is the... kitchen slash vault, that you saw behind the bar. Um. I will tell you, just because now you are back in the main room, it is... it's like, totally cleared out in here. There's— the bartender is still there, working the bar. And there is a— now a very— you know what? There's like, three or four white pyramid folks, near the catering table. And you hear one of them say,

Jeremy the caterer: Yeah, man! Like, it's— like... they call it the "cost of living." Doesn't— isn't that bullshit? That you have to pay money? To live?? And it's— it's like— we are— we made up these numbers, you know? And some people have bigger numbers and so they get to treat us like garbage, and make us work, long hours? I think that's garbage!

Griffin: And all of them start chanting,

White Pyramids: Fuck work! Fuck work! Fuck work!

Justin: [giggles]

Clint: Wow! Is that Jeremy, by the way?

Griffin: It was absolutely Jeremy—

Clint: Is Jeremy the one leading this—

Griffin: Yeah, for sure—

Clint: Ah, I knew it! I knew it!

Griffin: This, this revolution. Uh, yeah. So that's... that's... and then of course there is the wall of doors that you did not see open, where— but you can definitely hear the auction taking place behind it.

Clint: May I ask a question?

Griffin: Yeah?

Clint: All of the white pyramid people look exactly the same, right?

Griffin: Mmm... I mean, there is— there is height differences? But that is—

Clint: Oh, well, height differences, but I mean—

Griffin: But that's like— other than that, yeah, they are all— they are all identical.

Clint: Okay.

Justin: I'm gonna make my way into the auction.

Griffin: Okay! Just slipping in through a door?

Justin: Yeah!

Griffin: M'kay.

Justin: Just walking in through the door.

Griffin: Okay! One of the doors slides open, actually, as you get close to it, without you even having to touch it. And you actually hear a very quiet, low, beep, from your collar. As you— as you go through.

Justin: Mm!

Griffin: And... there are a couple of white pyramids, guarding like that wall as you enter. But they just look at you, and give you a little nod, and turn back to the auction. Which we are also going to turn back to!

Justin: Guarding what?

Griffin: Uh, the wall of doors—

Justin: Like guarding the entrance—

Griffin: That you just came in through—

Justin: That I just came through?

Griffin: Yes, yes.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Now let's also return to the auction.

[Piano music begins to play]

Griffin: The third cloth comes off the third item, and you all see... a...

Justin: Where are the items coming from?

Griffin: They're— they are all lined up in front of the stage.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: To— they are being taken... back, to somewhere, right? Once the bidding on that item is done?

Griffin: Yes. You— I'll give you this, you see them wheel out, and through the door, in the sliding wall of doors, through a door there, and back out into the... back out, somewhere, that you can't quite see. The third cloth comes off! And the emcee says,

Emcee: This one is, um... maybe not the most exotic. I feel like I should start rating these, by their exoticity. Um. This is actually an item that was left here, by one of our former, um... buyers. Uh. It is... a... lantern. But not just any lantern, oh, no. It's magical. Can you even imagine. It is a... a lantern that sheds... a lot— here, hit it, hit it Tony.

Griffin: And the assistant turns the lantern on. And it is: so frickin' bright in here. Just like it fills— it fills the room, and some people recoil. Make a perception check... uh... everyone.

Travis: Aw, fuck! A 2 plus three, a 5!

Griffin: Okay! Uh.

Clint: Zoox is 16 plus one, 17.

Griffin: Yep, yep. Then Zoox, you notice this.

Justin: I have a 16.

Griffin: Okay, Amber, you notice this too. Uh. Your eyes, I guess, you know... once they turn the light off, your eyes clear up a little bit, and you notice that those five red cubes... they did not flinch when that light went up. He says, the emcee says,

Emcee: It doesn't just shed light though. If someone's trying to do a sneaky... a sneaky bad one to you, it will also reveal invisible creatures, and objects, as long as they are contained within the lantern's light.

Griffin: And he lowers the hood. And the auctioneer says,

Emcee: Okay, we'll start the bidding at, uh... let's say, five Lux.

Clint: Kinda under his breath, to himself, Zoox says— but loud enough for the Golden Wolves to hear, he says,

Zoox: Oh, there it is... that's the one he wants! [giggles]

Griffin: [cracks up] Ah— Zoox, you keep teeing these up, baby! That's a— that's gonna be a deception-nay! A big deception check.

Clint: [sound of dice rolling] 16.

Griffin: Ffuck me! Damn, that's pretty good, though. Uh. Okay. They shrug, and the wolf just raises his hand and says,

Golden Wolf: We'll... we'll do five Lux. What is five Lux? I don't even know that number! [snooty laugh] It's so small.

Travis: Does this get any reaction from the red cubes?

Griffin: Make a... make a... [small raspberry] investigation check. If you are keeping your eye on them. Which you wouldn't be, because you did fail that check.

Travis: Uh—

Griffin: No. Yeah, with a 20— I mean, that's a very, very good roll, to find out that no—

Clint: 22?

Griffin: Yeah. It's a 22, but they don't... they don't... they don't react to anything, as far as you can tell.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Uh. The auctioneer says,

Emcee: Um, oh... okay. Uh. G—

Travis: Devo—

Emcee: Five Lux?

Travis: Devo raises his hand, and says,

Devo: Eight Lux.

Griffin: They look back at you, now, like, kind of annoyed. That you... they say,

Golden Wolf: Ugh. T— nine Lux. Nine Lux!

Griffin: The Golden Wolf says.

Devo: [sighs] I obviously... I obviously can't compete with you! [polite laughter]

Griffin: Uh... Cobalt Star raises his hand, and he says,

Cobalt Star: I'll... I'll do fifteen.

Griffin: And the auctioneer looks surprised, and says,

Emcee: Oh! Um. Okay. This is... not your lot, so I suppose you can bid on it! Fifteen Lux? Uh... going once? Going twice?

Clint: Zoox says,

Zoox: Eighteen!

Emcee: Oh! Uh, oh, wow. Eighteen— why are you two not sitting together? Okay, it's not my— it's not my thing. Eighteen Lux, I suppose, going once? ...Going twice?

Griffin: The Golden Wolf raises his hand, and says,

Golden Wolf: Twenty-five Lux.

Emcee: Twenty-five. Going once? ...Going twice? ...Sold, to the Golden Wolves, making out like bandits.

[Gavel bangs]

Griffin: And... [laughing] The Golden Wolf stands up, and looks around, as if to... look and see if anybody's proud of him. And that doesn't work, and he sits back down.

Travis: Ah, no— hey! Devo gives him another little genuflect.

Griffin: He... [sighs] he just kinda, like, "Yeah yeah yeah yeah." And sits back down. And the auctioneer says,

Emcee: Okay. Um. Little anti-climactic, but, uh, now let's move on to the fourth item.

Griffin: And he throws it open. And you all see, sort of stood up on a tiny little display case...

[Mysterious angelic music begins to play]

Is a... very weary looking... very, kinda small? Journal. It is leather-bound, but like, not in any kind of fancy way. And in fact, the leather looks like it has been through a, y'know, a meat grinder. But the pages look intact, as far as you can tell from this far away. And the auctioneer says,

Emcee: This is, for a certain type of collector, quite a find. This is the journal of Heretic Nob. He was, of course, the, one of the engineers and architects of the Acropolis of the Delmer Wilds. A bit of... a brief history lesson. Despite his honored position as one of the chief architects, his designs began incorporating... unusual... and vestigial, principles. And when those were discovered, he was swiftly exiled from the city, never to be heard from again. This is one of, as far as I can tell, several recreations, of his journal. He had a devout following, who were also lost in exile. But this is, of course, a very rare tome. And whoever takes it home will have a new shining star in their collection. And—

Devo: Just a— question. I know you said that was— So you're saying it's just a copy?

[Music fades out]

Emcee: One of... a handful. Yes.

Devo: Ah, but not the original.

Griffin: Uh... hmm. He says,

Emcee: We actually have no way of, um... telling. Which version is the—

Devo: Oh, so no way to authenticate it?

Emcee: We can authenticate that it is... a version, of the journal of Heretic Nob.

Clint: [laughs]

Emcee: Um. Let's begin, the bidding. We will start—

Devo: Ugh!

Emcee: At ten Lux.

Devo: Five!

[pause]

Clint: [exhales]

Griffin: Uhh... he leans over and whispers something to the assistant. And the assistant walks up to you, and says,

Assistant: Sir, we need you to, um... follow the rules of this auction, or we will have to remove you.

Devo: Oh, I thought I was doing you a favor. I'm so sorry.

Griffin: Make a— what— what are you trying to do here? Because you are pissing them off. Actively.

Travis: This is not a show for them, this is a show for... everyone around.

Griffin: Oh, for the— okay! Well, I'm still gonna need you to roll performance, I think? If that is what you are trying to do. And this is... I

would say, because you're being kind of an ass to these people, as part of your performance, a bit of a high stakes check.

Travis: [sound of dice rolling] [disappointedly] Mmm! So a 14 probably won't do it.

Griffin: No. But... it's also not too low. So, the attendant— the assistant says,

Assistant: Sir, if you have one more sort of outburst like that, you will be removed from the auction.

Devo: Of course. Sorry. Yes. Of course, of course.

Griffin: He turns—

Devo: [loudly] Ten, ten Lux.

Griffin: The... red cubes. One of them... who is sitting on the aisle, raises his hand, and says,

Red Cube: Eleven Lux.

Griffin: He—

Devo: Twelve Lux! [laughs]

Griffin: The Golden Wolves, the wise quiet one, shakes his head, and says,

Golden Wolf: Uhh... how 'bout twenty Lux?

[Low dramatic music fades in softly]

Griffin: He looks back at you, to see if that gets your motor going.

Devo: [sighs] Oh. Please. You've beaten me so many times already today! Let me have this one win, to rebuild some kind of confidence.

Griffin: Uhhhh... persuasion is definitely what that was.

Travis: [sound of dice rolling] Okay, there we go! 19 plus seven, a 26!

Griffin: He... stands up, and looks at you, and then he lets out a big roaring bear laugh. Just a big one, right from the belly. And he... he genuflects, to you, and sits back down.

Clint: [laughs]

Devo: Twenty-two Lux.

Griffin: Uh... the red cubes look at each other, don't say anything, you don't hear them say anything, but they look at each other. And... the one who has been speaking says,

Red Cube: T... twenty... three? Lux?

Justin: There's gotta be half-Lux, right? [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Devo: Twenty-four Lux!

Griffin: I'm gonna make a luck roll, here. To see if they have one more Lux than you.

Justin: Luck— it's Lux, Griffin.

Griffin: Oh yeah, sorry. They... they sit back down. Um. And... you don't hear them speaking, now, but you do hear them... sort of... making sounds, that are not necessarily speech, to one another. Which also kind of... the Golden Wolves are sitting nearby, they turn and look back at them, sort of quizzically.

Justin: Amidst the tension, I'm going to move closer to the... to the front, where the object is.

Griffin: Uh...

Justin: Not suspicious in any way. Just kind of, you know. Moving around the room.

Griffin: Okay...

Justin: Very cool.

Griffin: Very, very cool.

Justin: Like— a little Fonzi.

Griffin: M'kay. Um...

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: You do that. And... you... hear the chittering very, very loudly, now. And it is not any kind of language you have heard before. And... then they quiet down. And they sit still. And sort of... you see their body language kind of deflate a bit. Um. And... the emcee says,

Emcee: Twenty-four Lux? Going once? ...Going twice? ...Sold! To the, uh, the Aquamarine Scales.

[Gavel bangs]

Griffin: And they walk, walk the journal out, back outside.

Justin: I'll follow them.

Griffin: Alright! Then let's do this. You follow him outside, through the doors, and they don't make any, y'know, fuss about it. Because what's another security guard walking around? And they start to wheel it back behind the bar, toward the vault room. As they are doing that, back in the auction, they remove the last cloth, and you all see... um... a... glowing... like, light blue orb that is housed within a, like, much larger shiny metal orb.

And you actually hear a gasping sound, as the cloth is removed. And the emcee says,

Emcee: This is another strange one, but incredibly exciting. I would say, experimental. This is a first-of-its-kind piece of shipboard technology. It is an artificial mind core. This imbues any ship that it is sufficiently adhered to with something resembling sentience. Whatever you use that for, aboard the ship, I suppose is up to you. Maybe you just get lonely, there's no shame there, we all get to those, those peaks and valleys, you know? But. I... let's delay no longer! We are going to start the bidding at twenty Lux.

Travis: Oh, I don't have any money left, Griffin, I don't know why the auction's still going!

Griffin: [amused] Okay. Um—

Travis: We only had, if I remember correctly—

Justin: Twenty-four exactly—

Travis: Twenty-four exactly.

Justin: On the nugget!

Griffin: Right, sure. Then, uh... the Yellow Smiley Face... y'know, raises their hand. And the emcee says,

Emcee: Uh, is there a...? You have to also say, like, the amount that you are... that you are going to... to bid.

Griffin: And the Yellow Smiley Face just raises his hand over and over again. And the emcee says,

Emcee: Do you want to just do... the starting bid? Twenty Lux?

Griffin: And the Yellow Smiley Face gives a thumbs up. And he says,

Emcee: Okay, um, to the Yellow... Happy... Person. Uh, twenty Lux.

Travis: Devo... now that... they've secured the package, right, hypothetically, right? They—

Griffin: Yeah?

Travis: He won the auction fair and square. He has a suspicion growing in his mind, and he is going to lean forward, to the Cobalt suit person.

Griffin: Mmhmm?

Travis: And say,

Devo: [his usual French accent] I am surprised you are not bidding on this one, Guthrie.

Griffin: Um... hmmm. Would this be a... What are you trying to do?

Travis: I... I'm... wanna see if it's Guthrie!

Griffin: Uh. He says,

Cobalt Star: I... that's not... that's not my name?

Devo: Oh, it's—

Cobalt Star: Who do you think I am?

Devo: This is not your— you're not Guthrie, the seller, you bring the bottle of wine, that you probably stole from some sort of wreckage, to sell here?

Cobalt Star: I didn't st... I didn't steal a bottle of wine from— What are you talking about?

Travis: Uh, I wanna... do I believe him?

Griffin: I mean. Make an insight check.

Travis: Ugh! 3 plus six, a 9.

Griffin: Yeah, you believe him.

Justin: [snorts and then bursts into laughter]

Griffin: Uh... you hear the emcee say,

Emcee: Uh, okay, twenty Lux... um. Going once? ...Going... twice? Uh... Sold! To the, uh, Yellow Happy Man. Um. This concludes our auction today...

Griffin: As he is like wrapping up, all five of the Cube people stand up at the same time. And they start to walk out of the room, toward the back. And the auctioneer says,

Emcee: Okay? Usually people wait until we are... done, with the auction. But, uh, I suppose if— maybe you all have to go to the bathroom at the same time.

Griffin: As they walk out, or towards the exit, one of them... in a flash, raises his hand, and from it, an incredibly searing bright light emits from their hand. And everybody in the room just shrieks. Some of them dive to the floor. Devo and Zoox, make a, make a constitution saving throw.

Travis: Oh my God... an 11 plus 12.

Griffin: 11 plus one, for a 12.

Travis: Oh, thank you, yes.

Clint: 19 plus three, 22!

Griffin: Okay! Zoox, it doesn't faze you, at all. This bright flashing light does not faze you at all. Devo, it hurts a lot, and you are also blinded.

Travis: I see.

Griffin: And... everybody in this room starts shrieking. Amber, you hear that shrieking, as you are approaching the door back into the vault room, slash kitchen, with the leather journal— that is what you walked out with, right? When the leather journal got bought? You followed them?

Justin: Mmhmm.

Griffin: The two stewards ahead of you roll the pedestal into the, into the room, into the vault. Do you follow?

Justin: Hm... yeah.

Griffin: Okay. They walk up to the vault, and one of them turns to look at you, and kind of gestures a “turn around” motion, so you are not looking at the vault.

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

Justin: Okay, I give a thumbs up and turn around.

Griffin: Okay. That’s actually when you hear the— hear the shrieks, coming from outside, back toward the auction room. And then you hear... two more shrieks. From behind you. And you turn around, to see the open vault, the two White Pyramids laying on the floor, and the two Silver Stags, each holding their own batons in hand, who now look at you, and start walking toward you.

[Ethersea Theme music plays out]

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