

The Adventure Zone Balance: Live at Emerald City Comic Con!

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[Adventure Zone: Balance intro music plays]

[Audience cheers]

Travis: Okay, right off the bat, I want to tell you what just happened.

Griffin: Hold on. Give it time to settle.

Travis: Well, just before we walked out, Justin said “Make sure they have time to take pictures”? And then we didn’t discuss what that meant.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Right.

Travis: And then we all started doing poses. [chuckles]

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Griffin: I— I definitely forgot what I do with my body during that part of the show.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Hi everybody, welcome to *The Adventure Zone*. A live—

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: A live and interactive, for us, experience.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Uh, speaking of, if you enjoyed this costuming and or, uh, makeup, that is by Juli and Alex Abene.

Griffin: Thank you very very much.

Justin: Thank you.

[Audience cheers]

Justin: They flew all the way here, just to do this.

Travis: Yeah, they're back there right now, listening. So cheer louder.

[Audience cheers loudly]

Griffin: Let's do all of our thank yous and announcements sort of at the top, 'cause once, once this, once this ball starts rollin', it will... Roll until it comes to a stop.

[mic audio doubles briefly]

Griffin: Woah. That was fun.

[Audience chuckles]

Griffin: Uh—

Travis: Let's thank Paul Sabourin.

Griffin & Justin: Thank you Paul Sabourin.

Clint: Paul Sabourin.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Thank you to, to Amanda, our business manager. Thank you to Rachel, our editor and audio guru. Thank you to Rachel and Teresa and all of our wonderful children. Uh—

Travis: And, you know what, thank you to Sydnee too. She's not here, but she's great.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah, hooray.

[Audience cheers]

Travis: Uh, thank you to all of you, um...

Clint: I also...

Justin: Here he goes.

Travis: Okay.

Clint: ... would like to thank... my sons.

Travis: Oh my god.

[Audience awws]

Clint: For not yelling at me for forgetting to bring my dice out.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: That's actually Paul's job, and Paul failed you.

Travis: Paul!

Justin: Paul failed you, Dad.

Clint: No. No, I didn't give them to Paul to bring out. I forgot.

Justin: Okay, it's back on us.

Griffin: No, you knew that from the start.

Justin: No no no.

Travis: Wait, how far back— How many steps back did you forget your dice, Dad? Are they in Ironton right now?

Griffin: Uh, and we're starting.

[Audience cheers]

Clint: [chuckles quietly]

Griffin: Uh, I take it— Let's not waste time on introductions. You all know what's going on here, I assume. Um... And so let's just get this ball—

Travis: There's one person for whom this is their first experience of *The Adventure Zone* who just went "Wait, no, wha— Ugh!"

Justin: "Aw, no! Catch me up."

Griffin: Okay, I'm Griffin. I DM it. That's Clint, Travis, and Justin. They play Merle, Magnus, and Taako. Respectively.

[Audience cheers]

Justin: I am not Jocasta Nightstrider tonight. Tonight, canonically, it's at a point where I'm still Taako Taako.

Griffin: You're not Jocasta Nightstrider yet.

Justin: Not Jocasta Nightstrider yet.

Griffin: Okay. Hey, you all should probably watch the *Imbalance* miniseries that Aabria DMed for us.

Justin: Yeah. It's on YouTube. Just watch it.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: One day, Justin will show up to a live show as Jocasta Nightstrider, and there will be some people who will be confused. You ready? You ready? You ready?

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. Let's go.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Tucked away, in a cozy cavern, just a stone's throw from Phandalin, a community of large, loud, and furry revelers are absolutely

tearing shit completely up. They slam their bodies together in rhythm, with songs bellowed loud enough to loose stalactites from the ceiling above. Spiced, dripping meats from indiscernible animals hang on spits over roaring fires. Dire wolves howl over hulking bones, gifted to them by their generous masters.

It is a scene that would strike terror into the hearts of an unwitting adventurer who might stumble upon it, but for the three of you, who find yourself in the midst of this fracas, it is a familiar sight. You stand in Klarg's domain, answering—

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Answering a summons to the Bugbears' Candlesnights Jamboree.

[Audience cheers]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Several dozen bugbears have crammed themselves into Klarg's cavern.

Travis: [shocked] Several dozen?!

Griffin: It's a big cavern. Slam-dancing around a large band of like eight drummers.

Travis: Just say skanking.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Several dozen bugbears have crammed themselves into Klarg's cavern, slam-dancing around a large band of like eight drummers.

[festive Candlesnights music plays]

Griffin: Drinking beverages that smell like they might kill you—

Travis: This is not the music I expected.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: "Slam-dancing". [imitates cute jingling music]

Justin: No, I could get down to this. Yeah!

Travis: I could get down to this.

Griffin: Drinking beverages that smell like they might kill you if you got any on your skin or eyes, giving one and other those bone-evaporating hugs underneath large boughs of thistletoe. And at the center of it all, a large Candlenights bush adorned with lanterns and bloody skull ornaments alight the celebration.

So Taako, Merle, and Magnus. How are you enjoying yourselves at the Bugbear Candlenights Jamboree?

Clint: [quietly chuckles]

Magnus: 100%!

Clint: You said fracas! [cackles]

Travis: Now, to be fair, he said "frahcas".

Clint: Oh.

Griffin: Which is how we say it [in a Cockney accent] in London town!

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Uh, I think Magnus is doing as the Romans do, and trying to go like toe-to-toe with the bugbears in drink and the dancing of slam.

Griffin: Uh, make a Constitution saving throw.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: We'll actually have to do two here, because you said two different things.

Travis: Uh, that's a 15 plus nine? 24.

Griffin: Yeah, you're throwing them back, baby. It's no big deal. And now a Strength saving throw for the slamming.

Travis: That is a 12 plus 10, 22.

Griffin: I was gonna make you do it disadvantage because you've had so many of these uh, uh... potent, deadly drinks, but uh—

Travis: With a 24.

Griffin: You're fine. Yeah, you crushed it. You're doing great. Okay, Magnus is—

Magnus: Hell yeah.

Griffin: Magnus is making himself at home. Uh, Merle? Taako?

Clint: Merle is the designated sled driver.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: So he's just having mineral water and uh...

Griffin: Just from the walls of the cave.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Just lapping it off.

Clint: Yeah.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: I was gonna say that doesn't sound like Merle, but then Griffin said "licking walls" and I went "Okay."

Griffin: "Oh, yeah, actually."

[Audience laughs]

Clint: And there's so many hallucinogens just in—

Griffin: Built in, yeah.

Travis: That's all— [wheezes]

Griffin: You're gonna be reeeel safe driving tonight!

Clint: He's, he's—

[Audience laughs]

Clint: He's half in the bag.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: "I'm gonna ramp it!"
"We're not even in the wagon yet, Merle."

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: "Nothing's moving the wagon." Uh, Taako.

Justin: Uh, Taako's at that point of drunk where he is meeting lots of different people and telling them that they're gonna be best friends forever.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: He's like...

Taako: I love it, I lov— You like grapes to? Me too. I'm obsessed. You have to come over.

Justin: And he'll never remember them. You know what I mean?

Griffin: Absolutely not.

Taako: Come over for Christmas.

Griffin: Like a bugbear will show up at your house like two weeks later, and you'll be like "What? Are you selling something?"

Taako: Ha, yeah.

Griffin: Um, while you all are—

Justin: Did Kravitz come?

Griffin: Did Kravitz come? Uh... I don't know that Klarg and Kravitz were acq— Kravitz had a way cooler party to go to tonight.

Travis: Woah.

Justin: Tracks. That tracks.

Griffin: And you all didn't go to that party because you're here, mostly out of guilt. For the many—

Travis: Were we planning on leaving early and the night got away from us?

Griffin: Yeah, definitely that.

Justin: Yeah. They played the Electric Slide, and it's like "Well, I gotta stay now."

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Travis: As Taako literally shoots off lightning bolts.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Uh... A familiar face comes up to you all, while you all are deep, deep in your revelry. It is Klarg himself, who comes up to scoop all of you into a giant bugbear hug.

Magnus: Aww, it's G'nash! Wait, sorry. I'm drunk.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: It's royalty-free Klarg!

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: It's fair-use Klarg!

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Please! Fair-use Klarg is my father. Call me— [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: He sets you all down and says...

Klarg: I gotta be honest, I sent the invite, but I didn't actually think the three of you would show up. I'm surprised you haven't been crushed to death. By the many big bodies slamming around.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: To be fair, you didn't say that on the invite. If you had said "I'm inviting you, I don't expect you—" I mean, happy to be here!

Klarg: I assumed you would... think there would be much slam-dancing happening.

Magnus: That's why I came!

[Audience laughs]

Clint: And you didn't ask me to roll anything, so I— I figure I'm okay.

Griffin: To lick cave walls?

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Do you want—

Clint: What kind of check—

Griffin: Well, now if you want to roll...

Clint: What kind of check would that be?

Griffin: Roll a Constitution saving throw. It's a cave wall, it ain't clean!

Clint: Seven.

Griffin: Seven, okay.

[Audience cheers]

Travis: Well, now, here's the question. Does that mean he's not stoned, but thinks he is, or thinks he's not but is?

Griffin: It's definitely the placebo effect. Like, you wet your whistle and you're like "Oho, party boy! Oh, my pants are on my head! Ah!" But everyone's like "This fucking asshole..."

[Audience laughs]

Clint: To be fair...

Travis: Oh please.

Clint: ...they say that anyway.

Griffin: Yeah.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: That's not that fair, Dad.

Clint: [chuckles]

Taako: Klarg, of course we would come. You... You're my best friend.

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Taako: I've never told you that, but you mean so much to me.

Griffin: Klarg— Klarg starts tearing up.

Taako: Yes!

[Audience awws]

Taako: This is real.

Klarg: Do you me— Do you really mean that?

Taako: Absolutely, I mean it now!

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Right now! While I'm saying it!

Klarg: Have you had too much of our uh-oh juice?

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Too much is like... That's subjective.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: You're my best friend.

Griffin: He says...

Klarg: It's really good to see the three of you all, but I've— I'll be honest, I do have a bit of an ulterior motive for inviting you three here.

Taako: Fucking—

Magnus: Traitor!

Taako: Every time.

Griffin: And he points to the corner, where there is a somewhat withered looking bugbear with matted gray hair, uh sitting alone. And he is—

Magnus: Father?

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Wouldn't that be a weird twist, though?

Griffin: It'd be pretty wild.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: If Mag— It actually wouldn't be that big a twist if Magnus was just a shaved bugbear.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: This elderly bugbear is sitting in the corner, um... wearing this little pince-nez, and he's balancing what appears to be a cheque book made out of like slate. And Klarg points at him.

Taako: I get— No. You don't need to say anything. You want us to take this guy out to the ice flow, right?

Klarg: No. Oh, no no.

Taako: He's had a good run. Come on, partner. Come on! One last ride! Here we go!

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Just look at the rabbits.

Taako: Just look at the rabbits, bud.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Can I do his voice?

Griffin: Can you do the NPC's voice?

Justin: No. Absolutely not, you can't do an NPC's voice.

Travis: You don't know what he's there for!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: [laughs] Yeah! Instigated fuckin' mad libs *Adventure Zone*.

Griffin: [cackles]

[Audience laughs]

Travis: And cle— Hey, Dad. Just to take it outside the bit, clearly this is setting it up to be the beginning of the adventure. Do you think Griffin would be like "Yeah, you take it from here, Clint"?

[Audience laughs]

Clint: If he loved me.

Justin: [cackles]

Travis: Oh, hey...

Griffin: Alright. Alright.

Travis: Touché.

Griffin: Klarg says...

Klarg: That's actually my, um, that's my uncle.

Taako: I didn't realize he was your uncle. I would have been more sensitive about it.

Klarg: It's my—

Taako: Must be hard letting go.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Do you want us to... take care of him?

Klarg: You're not gonna kill my uncle! What's wro—

Magnus: No! No no no! Of course not.

Taako: Not killing!

Magnus: We're gonna set him free. Take him to a farm.

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: Let nature— [chuckles] Let nature do the work, I get it. But listen.

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: That's my uncle. Whose name is Scroog, and—

[Audience laughs, groans]

Klarg: Scroog made some really good investments in meatgetables.

Magnus: In what?

Klarg: It's vegetables that they make out of meat.

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: So you have a healthy butt diet. But if you don't eat vege— Like they do a carrot that's like... Uh, cow, for the most part.

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: You haven't heard of meatgetables?

Taako: Yeah. Fantasy Arbies tried that once.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Clint: [in a booming voice] "They have... the meatgetables."

Klarg: Scroog's got so much money, but not much Candlenights cheer. So I was hoping maybe the three of you would teach him the true meaning of Candlenights?

Taako: I don't understand.

[Audience cheers]

Taako: How is he— How is he going to learn the true meaning of Candlenights by us taking him out to an ice flow to die?

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: I was hoping you would find maybe a different way of do— Look, you all—

Magnus: You mean like smothering?

Justin: [laughs quietly]

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: I'd like to remind you all of the time where you made me jump off a fucking motorcycle into a laser.

Magnus: No-one made you do that!

Klarg: Yeah. Kinda.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Yeah, he's got a point.

Justin: Yeah.

Taako: Okay. Yeah, that's fair.

Klarg: Just go over, talk to him, try to cheer him up, and you know, teach him the true meaning of Candlesnights. It's about as clear a quest objective as you could possibly be given.

Taako: Okay, you know what? Let me try.

Klarg: Okay.

Taako: Can I try?

Griffin: Sure. You walk over to Scroog.

Justin: Saunter.

Griffin: Okay. He doesn't look up from his uh stony chequebook as you come forth.

Taako: Hey there. Hey there, tough guy. Look, it's your TV hero, Taako from TV. Hellooo? I'm up here.

Griffin: He looks up at you and—

Taako: Here he is!

Griffin: — takes a beat, and he says...

Scroog: [in a grumpy, Cockney accent] What the fuck do you want?!

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Taako: Well. Okay. Uh, weird vibe. Would— Uh, I wanted to kinda make this a special Candlesnights for you. Would you like to see some *Prestibidigitation*?

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Damnit! Wait. *Prestidigi*— [muffled] Damnit!

[Audience laughs]

Taako: [over-annunciating] *Prestidigititation*.

Magnus: Nailed it!

Taako: Oof.

Griffin: He says um...

Taako: Too late!

Justin: And then I shoot sparkles out of my fingertips.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Just your fingertips?

Justin: It's a cantrip.

Griffin: He says, uh...

Justin: If you wanted it to come out my ass, I'm not gonna spend a slot on it.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: He, uh—

Justin: For fingertips, you get cantrip.

Travis: [chuckles] That's a slot, alright. [chuckles]

Griffin: He just—

Travis: Buttcrack!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Yeah, I gotcha. I gotcha.

Griffin: He just nods his head. And then he says.

Scroog: Oi, that's— That's pretty good. Uh... Can I show you mine?

Griffin: And he lifts up his chequebook, and kind of wiggles it around in the air, and he goes...

Scroog: Oooooohhhh!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: If you're listening to the audio of this later, Griffin's just flipped up off while he's pretending to be a bugbear.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Okay, well, hey. Win some, lose some. [blows a quick raspberry]

Magnus: Hey, wanna watch me bench-press this dwarf.

Travis: And I pick up Merle and start doing, uh, curls.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Excuse me. Merles.

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: Did my nephew send you over here?

Magnus: What?

Scroog: To try and... teach me the true meaning of Candenights?

Taako: No, we're do—

Magnus: Yeeeah.

Taako: We're doing this for everybody.

Travis: [laughs]

Scroog: Alright, well, whatever you're sellin', I'm not interested in buyin'.

Taako: Okay, just let— Let Merle try. He once taught like non-existence into cheering up a little bit. Like, he certainly—

Magnus: To be fair, it was just a little bit.

Taako: Just a little bit.

Scroog: Alright, Grandpa. What you got goin'?

Justin: I can't believe I set up my Dad for this.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Damn, I'm gonna regret this in a second.

[Audience laughs]

Merle: Aren't you tired of it all?

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Woah! Woah! A weird direction to take! Wow!

Merle: Wouldn't it be a lot easier... just to give up?

Magnus: Oh, Merle! No, we're not gonna kill him! We're not gonna kill him! Sorry.

Merle: Oh. Happy Candenights!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Merle: See, I didn't know.

Magnus: Yeah, I mean, we didn't circle back.

Merle: There's no communication anymore.

Magnus: We need to circle back on it.

Griffin: As you holler "Happy Candlesnights", the sound of celebration in this room is replaced, instantly, by confused murmuring. And then, shortly after uh... panicked bugbear bellowing. And they're—

Travis: What's that sound like?

Griffin: [imitates panicked bugbear bellowing]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: There's a loud bang and seconds later the whole cavern is filled with an impenetrable black smoke.

Travis: Who's vaping?

Clint: [chuckles playfully]

Griffin: When it clears... [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: You can see that the vibe of this room has changed dramatically. Several bugbears are lying on the floor, nursing their gnarly bumps and bruises. There's, there's no music, in fact all of the instruments the band were playing moments ago are gone. Uh, so are the cauldrons of bubbling no-no juice. Uh, the spits of roast beast, the sprigs of thistletoe, and most notably, the meticulously adorned Candlesnights bush in the center of the festivities.

The bugbears look around at the scene of the crime, and then slowly they begin muttering a word. A name, that echoes around the chamber.

[whispers] "It's the Grunch."

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Griffin: And Klarg approaches the three of you and he's nursing his head, and he says...

Klarg: Are you all okay? Were you crushed by our enormous strong bodies? In the smoke?

Magnus: No.

Taako: No, weirdly not.

Magnus: Yeah, we're fine.

Klarg: Good.

Griffin: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: Good.

Magnus: You know, actually, I just saw the time. We're gonna go. [chuckles] We have this other, I'm not gonna say cooler, but different party to go to.

Griffin: He nods his head and he says...

Klarg: I get it. All our good stuff got stolen. I'm afraid a party foul most foul has been committed this evening.

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: The Grunch has stolen Candlesnights.

Taako: Oh god. You know what, I would love to leave.

[pause]

Griffin: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Goodnight, everybody!

Taako: But! But. I can't let someone harsh a vibe and let it go unanswered.

Klarg: And also you'd do anything for your best friend.

Taako: My best friend in the who— I'm actually starting to sober a little bit, so yeah. You're so... so cool.

Griffin: He says, uh...

Klarg: I know it is a lot to ask, but I'm— I really need the three of you to go get it back.

Magnus: Get what?

Klarg: Candlesnights.

Magnus: Get the concept of Candlesnights back?

Justin: No, he stole all the stuff, Travis.

Magnus: But the stuff isn't Candlesnights. Read a book.

Taako: Good, you ski—

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Scroog, Scroog looks up and he says...

Scroog: It's absolutely fuckin' Candlesnights! I spent like half a million... stone pebbles!

Justin: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: That is a lot of stone pebbles.

Clint: [in a narrator voice] The part of Scroog is being played by Eddie Izzard.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: He says...

Klarg: Listen, the Grunch makes his lair within the snow-capped peak of Mount Chronos. It's actually just over there. That-a-way, a bit. It's weird that you've never seen it before.

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: It's the big scary mountain. You can't miss it.

Taako: Oh, shit! Okay, yeah.

Merle: The one behind Mount Crumpet.

Klarg: Right.

Merle: Okay.

Klarg: It's kinda behind and to the right a bit, but yeah. Uh... you know, just go up there and get Candelights back. Take Scroog with yah, while you're at it.

Magnus: No!

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: You promised.

Taako: I don't think we did...

Magnus: Did we?

Klarg: Yes.

Merle: Nooo... We didn't— We said we'd cheer him up.

Magnus: Alright, but if one of us has to die, he's going first.

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: That makes a lot of sense to me.

Magnus: Okay.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Then it's a deal.

Klarg: Okay. He's reached the ripe old age of 17 years old. [chuckles]

Travis: Oh, no!

Klarg: That's right, our life span is very short. [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Travis: He's like a Great Dane!

Klarg: I'm eight!

[Audience laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: You guys always want us to return, but you never know what we're gonna fuck up when we do.

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Klarg: I know it's a dangerous mission, but I do still need you to teach my uncle the true meaning of Candlenights, okay?

Magnus: I'm sure we'll find the time.

Taako: We'll do, we'll do both. Let's head on over that way. Come on, Scroog.

Scroog: [sighs heavily]

Taako: You can ride on Magnus's shoulders.

Magnus: What?

Scroog: I was gonna ask that exact question.

Magnus: Actually, yeah.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: But only if you— [chuckles] If you talk about how you hope the people at church will see you, so they'll know that God healed the lame on Christmas.

Scroog: Okay.

Magnus: It's fr— Okay.

Griffin: Is it from Chri— some sort of Christmas story?

Travis: It's from *Christmas Carol*. Tiny Tim's like "I hope that they check out my whole deal".

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [chuckles] Alright.

Travis: "I hope that the people at church see my whole deal and it makes 'em happy!"

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: What a wild story we're retelling in a way cooler way tonight.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Maybe that will be the new *Christmas Carol*.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And we'll forget about the old one.

Griffin: You all make your way toward Mount Chronos, which is really close to Klarg's cavern. Like really really really close. It takes you like three and a half minutes to get there.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: During your trip, Scroog uh—

Travis: Learns the true meaning of— [laughs]

Griffin: Learns the true meaning of Christmas. Uh, he speaks up, he says...

Scroog: So, what's the plan then? We gonna... drop off some dollies at the kiddy clinic?

Magnus: What?

Scroog: Are we gonna... put on a Candlenights talent show to save the rec centre?

Magnus: That's actually not a bad one.

Taako: You can't, you can't force a lesson, Scroog. You go— We're gonna get Candlenights back, and I just have to assume that you'll learn something by the end of it.

Magnus: Yeah, most likely, I mean it sounds like there's somebody called the Grunge that we're gonna stab a bunch or set on fire.

Justin: No, it's the Grudge.

Travis: The Grunge?

Justin: The Grudge.

Travis: The Gooch.

Griffin: The Grunch!

[Audience laughs]

Travis: I was close.

[festive music fades in]

[ad break]

[festive music plays]

Griffin: You all wander into [chuckles] a small cleft at the base of Mount Chronos and wander through a narrow cavern for a short while until, in the distance, you see a sliver of bright light. You press on into a large and perplexing chamber. All around you is a snowy winter wonderland. There are large—

Travis: But inside?

Griffin: Inside.

Travis: Woah. That's mysterious.

Griffin: Thank you.

[Audience chuckles]

Travis: It's almost like there's magic in this world.

Griffin: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Now do you believe?

Travis: No. It's still a show.

Taako: Look, it's a miracle! A Candenights miracle, Scroog! Are you stoked?

Clint: No.

Scroog: Ugh. It's a little cold. Why couldn't it 'ave been a beach miracle?

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Sorry, are you supposed to be Scrooge? Or are you Sweeney Todd? [chuckles]

Clint: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: It's Scroog!

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: With a hard "g".

[Audience laughs]

Travis: [imitating Scroog] "Totally unsueable!"

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: When you look around you inside of this inside winter wonderland, you realize that the entrance that you came in through has disappeared. You are now just standing out in a snow field. Deeper in this chamber, there's a huge, crystalline box, and through it you see a silhouette. It looks like a towering, 15-foot-tall snowman. And this silhouette is just sort of, panting and heaving, up and down, like an idle animation of a snowman awaiting a battle.

And Scroog looks around, and he gets a little uh... gets a little glassy-eyed, and he says...

Scroog: Oh, this takes me back.

Taako: [reluctantly] Okay, tell me all about it.

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: Oh, me and the lads, we used to play snow warriors when we was tots.

[Audience chuckles]

Scroog: You know snow warriors?

Magnus: Sure.

Taako: I'm afraid I don't.

Scroog: You build up the ultimate snowman killing machine and you pretend like they were smashing up into each other. Tryin' to kill wa— Snow warriors! Life was a lot simpler back then...

Taako: [sighs]

Magnus: Tell me about it!

Taako: Well, maybe we could play snow warriors now, with you.

Griffin: He's not listening anymore, he's just thinking about snow warriors.

Taako: Great!

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: No, but Scroog, tell me about how life used to be simpler—

Scroog: Now, maybe money—

Magnus: And you could do whatever—

Scroog: Hold on.

Justin: [wheezes]

Scroog: Hold on! Maybe money isn't...

[Audience laughs]

Justin: [wheezes]

Scroog: Maybe it's not all about havin' a bunch of stone pebbles...

Magnus: Wait, hold on. You just got that from snow warriors?

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: We didn't say anything to inspire this!

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: I thought—

Merle: Wait, hold on. He's in a reverie.

Magnus: Yeah, but it kinda feels like we're not important to this narrative.

Scroog: Life was lot simpler before meatgetables.

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: Sorry, what were you sayin'?

Justin: [snorts]

Magnus: I can't even remember now.

Clint: [chuckles]

Scroog: I was finkin' about Candlenights past. [chuckles]

Travis: [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: I get that, but it's kind of our story, Scroog, so if you could stay with us.

Griffin: You hear a—

Magnus: They didn't come here to see Scroog, okay?

Griffin: Right. There's a roar that comes from the crystalline box and he says...

Scroog: Uh-oh. You three better hurry up. Just build a big, nasty warrior snowman. You put whatever you want on 'im. Put on a big, you know, Vulcan cannon. It's all— It's all in the rules.

Magnus: We can put anything on him.

Griffin: Anything you can make out of snow.

Travis: Oh.

Clint: Like... snow balls?

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Oh my god, Dad! This is a grown-up show!

[Audience claps]

Travis: For grownups!

Griffin: I've added snow balls to the list. I love that it's the first thing that you made.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Nothing to append it to, they're just sitting on the ground.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Okay, no wait. I build a snowman with big snow abs.

Griffin: Okay, again, we're talking about balls and abs just laying on—

Travis: No no no! I built a snowman with snow abs.

Griffin: Okay, so you've built a snowman...

Travis: With snow abs.

Griffin: With snow abs. What are the dimensions of this snowman?

Travis: 30 feet tall.

Justin: Yeah, say it's big.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Giant. And 30 feet wide. [chuckles] A real chode.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: [wheezes] Can I— Can I make his nose out of the Umbra Staff? I think that'd be cute.

Griffin: Oh sure.

Justin: Cool. And now I lost it forever.

Travis: Can I give him the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom?

Griffin: What's that?

Travis: I give him the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom. Made of snow.

Griffin: This is not going to be balanced at all.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: And all I give him is the— are the snow balls.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: And I give him a white man's confidence.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Well, he's made of snow! That's fair!

Travis: He's unstoppable!

[Audience claps]

Justin: I, can I— Did we already do the heart of a child?

Travis: [chuckles] No we haven't— In his hand is the heart of a child.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Still beating!

Justin: A still-beating heart of a child.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: And Scroog goes "I get it now!".

Justin: "This is the meaning of Candenights!"

Clint: "Murder!"

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Alright, uh...

Justin: Hey, did you—

Travis: Oh wait, we forgot a soul. Damnit.

Justin: [chuckles]

Clint: Wait.

Justin: No conscience. Oh no!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Alright.

Clint: And a laser! A laser.

Griffin: And a laser. Okay, so—

Clint: One laser, and a laser.

Justin: And an unslakable thirst for death. Paul, I can see you—

Travis: And a great 401K!

Justin: I see you wondering, Paul, if I need another white wine, and the answer is yes I do.

Travis: I also need— Yes, Paul.

Justin: Paul.

Griffin: Alright.

Justin: We gotta keep the story coming, Paul.

Travis: And the snowman has a small snow Paul.

Justin: Did you say that he had a big snow ass?

Travis: Oh, a big snow ass.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: A real snow dumper.

Justin: Write it, write it down, Griff.

Griffin: Yeah I wrote it all down, baby!

Travis: Did you write down a real snow dumper?

Griffin: Are you done?

Clint: Um...

Griffin: Is this a sufficient snow warrior?

Travis: Oh, and a happy home life!

Justin: Thank you, Paul.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: A sharp wind blows through the cavern.

Travis: A shart wind.

Griffin: A— no.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Sending a cloud of flurries swirling into the sky and surrounding your creation completely, and when the snowflakes fade, your snowman has... disappeared.

Travis: Aw.

Griffin: And then there's a rumbling and this large crystal cracks open, and inside it you see your snowman. And his eyes turn red and he stares down at you and... eats the heart of the child in his hand.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles] He bellows...

Snow Warrior: I've got some thoughts about white privilege myself! Who wants to hear 'em?!

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Travis: I've never loved a choice I've made more than—

Griffin: And then a flame-thrower shoots out of his Umbra Staff nose, and he draws the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom. And also there's a laser. Roll for initiative.

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Travis: Oh no, wait!

Justin: Fuck!

Travis: Oh I see.

Griffin: I can't fucking believe how hard you all fell for that.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Have you just met us?

Travis: It's almost like Scrook isn't a reliable narrator. Uh, I had a 17 total. 15 plus two.

Griffin: Got you. Merle.

Clint: I'm... [distant] What number is that?

Griffin: You can use your—

Travis: [irritated] Oh my god, it's a 16.

Griffin: Okay. 16 plus?

Clint: God...

Travis: Zero.

Griffin: Take the— Take the— Thank you.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: 16 plus zero.

Griffin: 16 plus zero. Okay, Taako.

Justin: Uh, seven.

Griffin: Seven, okay. Uh, Magnus, you are at the top of the order.

Clint: 16 plus zero!

Griffin: Thank you.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Okay, uh...

Griffin: Go for Magnus.

Travis: First things first...

Griffin: Go faster.

Travis: Uh, I'm going to use uh my tinderbox to light my torch on fire.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Travis: And then I am going to, uh... Two weapon fighting, torch in one hand, and uh my Chance Lance in the other.

Griffin: Okay. Roll two d20 for me. There you go.

Travis: Mmm, that ain't it. Actually, I have pretty good. Seven plus 10, 17?

Griffin: Yeah. It's a snowman.

Travis: Well, that's a 13 total.

Griffin: Sure. You didn't give him any armor, I will grant that. It's a fucking— It's made of fucking snow.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Okay great. So I'm going to throw the Chance Lance uh at the laser eye.

Griffin: Okay. You didn't say it was an eye, but I like that. That's cool.

Travis: I mean, it is.

Griffin: Where else would it go?

Travis: Yeah, come on.

Griffin: It's not a laser belly button.

Travis: Come on.

Clint: Wait wait wait. I'm the one that came up with lasers—

Griffin: Where's the laser at?

Clint: — So I oughta say what it is.

Griffin: Yeah, what is it?

Clint: It's a laser eye!

Griffin: Thank you.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Were you not listening?

Travis: And I'm gonna shove the torch right in the balls.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Sure.

Clint: Oh.

Griffin: Uh, I won't make you roll for damage on that. You do that and he looks down and he's like...

Snow Warrior: I'm a snowman.

Travis: Oh, he has no central nervous system! We forgot to give him a central nervous system!

Griffin: No, you forgot to give him a central nervous system.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Uh, okay. You have knocked out the eye and his— the testicles that you did.

Travis: Woah! They're testicles?!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Thank you. Next in the order is Merle.

Clint: Um... So we destroyed the testicles. Right?

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Step one.

Griffin: Okay, and wait. There it is! We say that every live show! So. If you're playing the drinking game, we've said "We've destroyed the testicles".

[Audience cheers]

Clint: Merle casts *Destroy Water* and destroys the...

[Audience cheers]

Travis: Snowman.

Clint: Head.

Griffin: What, what are the dimensions of water you can destroy?

Clint: I'm glad you asked that.

Travis: "Destroy up to 10 gallons of water".

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Alternatively...

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Oh no, that's not...

Travis: You destroy fog. You have to read more words than the first one.

Griffin: Yeah, this is a— I'm not the best at sort of spatial math.

Travis: Now, hold on.

Clint: Wait wait wait!

Travis: It does say, "At higher levels"...

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: “You can cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher—”

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: “And you create or destroy 10 additional gallons of water—”

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: “Or the size of the cube increases by 5 feet.” So.

Griffin: Okay, this is a 30-foot tall, 30-foot-wide snowman.

Travis: Now, he did say just a hand.

Griffin: Just the hand?

Clint: I did say head, actually.

Griffin: He did say head. Yeah. Um, you can take out a chunk of head wi— I mean, it’s a ni— What? 30 by 30 is a—

Clint: Okay, I’ll take out the chunk that has the laser eye!

Griffin: He already destroyed the laser eye, but that— You can— [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Man, I thought that was good...

Griffin: Okay, I’ll remind what all the snowman is working with. Uh, this 900... square foot... snowman? Uh, has a nose that is the Umbra Staff, the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom, not the snow balls, a white man’s confidence, thank you Travis, the heart of a child has been consumed, laser has been turned off. Uh, a 401K.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: There’s a—

Travis: The worst part! Because even when you destroy him, he has something to fall back on.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: There's— There is a little Snow Paul, who is working, I would say futilely to repair the laser eye and testicles.

Clint: That's wha— I destroy the Snow Paul.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: [cackles]

Griffin: The Snow Paul— The Snow Paul—

Travis: God, this is the best show on Earth.

Griffin: The Snow Paul disintegrates.

[Audience groans]

Justin: Yes!

Clint: What?!

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Because he can open a can?!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: The— The snow monster looks down at dead-ass snow Paul, and screams with unimaginable fury.

Travis: Now, to be fair, we didn't give him vocal chords. Or... snow-cal chords.

Griffin: Okay, then he [imitates Snow Warrior screaming without vocal chords]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Okay. Is that all for your turn? I think so.

Clint: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Uh, Travis can you—

Clint: And then I drunk the Paul that I melted.

Griffin: Oh, that's fun! Yeah, that's fun, man.

Clint: Mmm.

Griffin: Make a Constitution saving throw for me.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: This is a lot of fun.

Justin: Roll the die, mac.

Clint: 18 plus two, it's a dirty 20!

Griffin: Alright.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: You feel a clawing at your insides. But then, I don't know, it goes wherever the pee goes to be made. [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Okay, give me a second.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Okay. You have... You have thoroughly enraged the snow monster, who looks down at you, Merle, and rears back the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Made out of snow.

Griffin: Uh... Does a— What's the stats on the Flaming Ra— What's the "to hit"? It's gonna hit you. It was a, it was an 11 plus whatever the addition is, which is—

Travis: Uh, I'm going to use uh my uh... shield proficiency to force you to...

Griffin: Take disadvantage.

Travis: You get disadvantage.

Griffin: Okay, very— very nice. Uh... okay five plus, what does it add for Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom?

Travis: I mean my plu— My attack is plus 10, but there's no way—

Griffin: Plus 10. Does a 15 hit your AC, Merle Highchurch?

Clint: Negatory!

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Alright. That would've been a lot of fun, but it misses and cleaves a large chunk uh out of the snow as it disintegrates under the heat of this mighty blade. Next up is Taako.

Taako: In the words of my boss at Fantasy TJ Max, after I... stole a lot of really nice placemats.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: You're fired!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: And I cast *Wall of Fire*.

Griffin: Yeah.

[Audience cheers]

Justin: That creates a wall of fire and it's on a surface within range, which I'll do on his dick.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Uh, and you make the wall up to 60 feet long, that sounds good. 20 feet high, perfect.

Griffin: Um! You'll get a couple of his strata, but he is a 30-foot-tall snowman.

Justin: Okay, so—

Travis: [chuckles] I made him a real chode.

Justin: Not a big physics guy, but if I melt the bottom of him...

Griffin: [cackles]

[Audience laughs]

Justin: You were all envisioning it too, right? Like it's a 20-foot-high wall of flame.

Griffin: Alright, what's the save? What's the save?

Justin: Uh... Each creature within its area must make a Dexterity saving throw. I'm certain it's a very dexterous snowman.

Griffin: Well, you gave it feet!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: But no— [distant] Damnit!

Travis: Wait! But not legs.

Griffin: There's no way.

Travis: How dexterous is a penguin?

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: You gave this snowman feet, I'm gamifying it. I'll give him a plus four Dexterity.

Travis: What?!

[Audience moans]

Griffin: Plus four Dexterity. Let's see. Uh, Dad can you come look at this real quick, for me?

[Audience moans]

Griffin: If you wouldn't mind just looking at it for me.

Justin: It's old bones.

Griffin: What number— What's on there?

Justin: Hobble over.

Griffin: It's a 20! Fuck!

Clint: [distant] 20.

[Audience cheers]

Justin: No, that's actually bad. You don't want him to have a 20, you want him to have a one. That's what you want. You're on my side.

Griffin: You do damage—

Justin: Or at least you were, until I started drinking white wine.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Which is wine mixed with White Claw.

Griffin: Is there a half damage effect?

Justin: What? Yes, my friend. Um... A creature takes the same damage when it enters the wall. No, wait, that ends a turn...

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: It's, uh, half as much.

Griffin: Okay. So roll damage.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: And then it'll take half. But wait a minute. But wait—

Justin: I will actually do this on the app because it is, uh... 5d8, so.

Griffin: Okay. He is actually going to take full damage, because he is weak against this. So it is half and then times two.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Touch that d8.

Justin: Five.

Clint: Touch the d8. Wow.

Justin: 25.

Griffin: Yeah, the— weirdly that's exactly as much as it needed to melt completely, and be—

Justin: Perfect!

Travis & Justin: Yay!

[Audience cheers]

Travis: Uh, I pick back up the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom, but the frozen ice has uh momentarily distin— uh. Distinguished. Extinguished it.

Griffin: Thank you. The façade fades, and now you're just standing in a dark, featureless cavern, with a long staircase carved into the wall. This illusory projection of a snow field has disappeared.

Travis: Magnus rushes in.

Griffin: To what?

Travis: The staircase or whatever.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Okay, you run, face first, into the staircase.

Travis: Yeah.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: It hurts.

Travis: Damn!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Quite a tapestry we've woven here.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Your party proceeds. Scroog is lagging behind. He's still thinkin' about how cool snow warriors was.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Did that make you feel anything? Did you get like a little spark of the old days?

Scroog: Yeah, I guess so, but... Havin' all that meatgetables money definitely makes things pretty easy, so uh...

Travis: Now, tell me about that—

Scroog: So fuck Candenights! Wa-oooh!

Travis: Now, could you tell me real quick about why we fall down, Master Wade?

Scroog: I don't, I don't get the reference.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Your party proceeds up the staircase, until you pass through another dark tunnel. This one...

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: ... Opens into another, much smaller, illusory scene. The four of you are standing in a charming, fire-lit den.

Travis: Hell yeah.

Griffin: There's a fireplace on the far wall with enormous stockings hanging around it, gentle holiday music seems to be emanating out of nowhere, and once again, there's a modest Candenights bush in the center of the room, with a handful of unlabeled presents sitting under it.

Travis: Is it a well-trimmed bush?

Griffin: Fuck, that sucks, dude.

Justin: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Um, the so— The soul inhabitants of this room are three bugbears, who appear to be living wooden puppets.

Travis: Sick.

Griffin: And all three of them turn their heads 180 degrees to face you all.

[Audience groans]

Griffin: And they shout in unison...

Puppets: Happy Candenights!

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Let me take care of this, guys. I've been a wooden puppet.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Clickity-clackity!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: They all stand up, and they bow and they introduce themselves in order.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Uh, the biggest of these three puppets says...

Ignorance: [in a deep, gruff voice] Hello! My name is Ignorance!

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Ignorance. I've met you before.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: The middle-sized one says...

Want: [in a higher, gruff voice] Hello! My name is Want.

Griffin: And the smallest of the three stands up and says.

Derek: [in a regular voice] Uh, yeah. I'm Derek.

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Griffin: And Scroog looks around and he gets all glassy eyed again, and he says...

Scroog: Woah. Every year Klarg invites me to one of these little shindigs. They play this ridiculous game, White Elephant? Everyone grabs a gift and they open it, and then the next guy can steal another, or they can open a new one and steal yours. You— Do you know this game?

Magnus: Yeah.

Scroog: Okay.

Taako: Yeah!

Scroog: Saves me a lot of explainin'. I ju— Even for me, I've always thought it was a bit cut-throat. But boy, makes me fink though, doesn't it?

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Oh, god, not again.

Magnus: And, can I just say, Scroog? At this point, I am growing less and less interested in your whole deal.

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: [quietly] Um, alright then.

[Audience awws]

Griffin: And he goes and he just sorta sits sullenly in front of the fireplace.

[Audience awws]

Clint: Nice job.

Justin: Now you have to fix that.

Clint: Yeah.

Justin: Go have to fix that.

Travis: I give him a back rub.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Uh, as you approach him, he actually disappears from this little illusory scene. Now it's—

Clint: Wait a minute, I thought it was his illusion!

Griffin: Well, you've insulted him out of it.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Been there.

Griffin: And the automatons gesture for the three you to join them for a lovely game of White Elephant.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Alright. You sit around the Candlenights bush.

Taako: Do we have to?

Travis: I pick the present that looks like booze.

Taako: Okay, hey, do we have to?

Travis: Oh, good question.

Griffin: Okay, what do you wanna do?

Taako: I'm not— We— I mean, can we just leave?

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: Oh yeah, we start feelin' around for stairs that are hidden by the illusion.

Taako: Yeah yeah yeah! Let's do that.

Griffin: Um... Okay, as you all are walking around, you go to push your hand through these illusory walls and you can't, 'cause the illusion's so good.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: [growls in frustration]

Taako: Okay, alright. Yeah, let's play White Elephant. Fuck.

Clint: Yeah!

Griffin: Alright, I've got the presents right here. One second.

Travis: This is why we had to do this, 'cause Griffin wrote stuff down.

Clint: Don't look.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Don't look.

Travis: Got it.

Griffin: Here's how this is gonna work.

Travis: No, Dad. Don't do it.

Justin: Don't do it.

Travis: Griffin'll cry.

Griffin: Uh, I will get very upset if you don't listen to this next part.

Travis: I said cry.

Griffin: Everyone in order, we'll just use the same initiative order that we used last time, uh will take turns grabbing a present underneath the tree, as represented by those six notecards. Uh, when you draw a present, you and you alone look at it. You do not show anybody else. You react to the contents of the present that you have seen, and that's all you do. You don't reveal it to the audience or your other players.

And then the next player can either grab another present from the pile, or, based on their reaction, steal the present of the previous player. Once a present has been stolen once, it cannot be stolen again, sticking the person who has stolen it with that present forever. Uh, and once either that has happened, or we've finished drawing all the presents from the pile, we reveal them and resolve their sometimes terrible contents.

Magnus, you're up first!

Clint: Thank god.

Griffin: Again, you will draw a present from the pile. You will react to it in the way you choose fitting. Do not peek, no peeksies. You can peek, but nobody else can.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: I cannot— I cannot see Travis's face. That gives me very—
[cackles]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: He's crossed his legs and is holding it very tight to his chest. I figured this would be a verbal sort of— no, okay. Travis is shaking his head no.

Travis: I have a small sliver of power to wield here.

Griffin: Yeah, okay. Uh, Ignorance is up next. He's gonna steal that present. Dad, would you hand it to me, face-down. Do not look.

Travis: No, I'll bring it to you.

Griffin: Oh, we'll bring it to me. Actually, we have a special elf. Paul? Would you help out with this process so that we won't have to uh cross the stage a hundred times.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Thank you. The Snow Paul hops, fully formed, out of Clint's bo— out of Merle's body.

Taako: He's back!

Merle: Woah.

Taako: He's back!

Griffin: Okay, alright. That has been stolen. Thank you very much. This— Oh, and since it can't be stolen again, I'll just reveal it. Uh, I have stolen a Lucky Gerblin's Foot, which will [chuckles] give Ignorance advantage on every ability check for the rest of the episode.

[Audience groans]

Travis: So, I get to pick a new one now?

Griffin: You get to pick a new one, yes. Again, no peeksies, and like a more entertaining sort of response would—

Clint: Well, how can we look at him and see—

Travis: You want me to be like "Oooohhhooo! Ha ha ha!".

Justin: Just say— Just say something. Just say something.

Travis: Oh I see.

Justin: Just please don't scream anymore. Please.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Ah.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Did you leave— Paul you can just stay on stage, little Snow Paul. You're not gonna melt under these studio lights.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Next up is— Merle is up, Merle is up next.

Clint: I'm sorry about the whole ingesting you thing.

Travis: No, you're not.

Clint: Uh, Justin, would you hand me that far one there, without looking at it.

Griffin: Again, you can draw a new present, or steal Magnus's.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: I saw his face.

Travis: Yeah, draw.

Griffin: Alright, keep it quiet. Don't show anyone else. Don't reveal the contents of your present. I just need to look at your face and know what you've done.

[pause]

Griffin: [cackles]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Merle has grimaced.

Travis: Or passed a kidney stone.

Griffin: Or passed a kidney stone.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Or both!

Clint: Along with the melted Paul.

Griffin: Okay. Next up is Want, who is...

Justin: Keenly felt.

Griffin: Uh...

Justin: This— This time of year.

Griffin: Want is going to... steal Merle's present. Thank you very much.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Do we have beef?

Griffin: Y'all, I know what is on these presents. I have just— Want has just stolen a Slap-Chop from Merle.

[Audience laughs, claps]

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: In my—

Griffin: It's just a Slap-Chop. [wheezes]

Clint: I don't know what a Slap-Chop is.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: What?! Read a book!

Griffin: Okay. Well.

Justin: About Slap-Chop.

Griffin: Let's see what— how you feel about the next present you're going to draw right now, because your present has just been stolen.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Okay. Taako is up. Keep in mind that that is also how he responded to... a Slap-Chop.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: But I know what this one is.

Griffin: So again, Taako. Oh, you already drew it. Okay.

Taako: Oh yeah, nice. Nice nice. Niiice nice nice nice nice...

[Audience laughs]

Clint: I steal that present.

Taako: Oh yeah.

Griffin: It's not your turn.

Travis: That's not how it works.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Wooooo! Nice.

Griffin: Derek says...

Derek: Oh, yeah! Let me get some of that!

Griffin: And steals Taako's present.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Enjoy, stupid!

Griffin: [wheezes]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Are you laughing at what you, yourself wrote?

Griffin: I'm laughing because...

Travis: We're bad at this game?

Griffin: Some of these presents were fine, and some of them were whammies. Derek has just stolen an enchanted ruby.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: So go ahead and take that last present, Taako. And we'll resolve all of our amazing presents.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: We got all whammies over here, didn't we?

Griffin: Yeah, you sure did.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: It's fine— [wheezes]

Griffin: [chuckles] Why don't we start— Okay, so again. Ignorance, Want, and Derek.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: The not important, non-playable characters of this adventure, have stolen a Slap-Chop, a Lucky Gerblin's Foot, and an enchanted ruby. Merle, what did you end up with?

Clint: A haunted picture frame that shows you the exact moment of your death.

[Audience laughs, screams]

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: And it's in 24 minutes.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: Man, he really died out there.

Griffin: What about you, Magnus? What'd you end up with?

Clint: What are you looking up on your phone?!

Travis: I seem to have gotten a box of asps.

Griffin: Yeah, you got a big box of asps.

Travis: Which appears to be application service providers. I have no idea...

[Audience laughs]

Travis: How that applies.

Griffin: They all spring out at you, and bite you so many times. You are going to take 6d10 damage.

[Audience winces]

Griffin: Yeah, well! Alright, that is 34 points of poison damage.

Travis: That's actually not that bad, all things considered.

Griffin: That's not that bad. Yeah, that's probably the worst one in there, huh Juice?

Taako: Yeah, that's the uh... worst. The worst one in here.

Griffin: What did you end up getting, Taako?

Taako: What did I get? Well, wouldn't you like to know.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Oh, hey Juice? I know. [chuckles] I wrote the cards, and I know which one hasn't been read yet.

Taako: Yeah. Uh, okay. Yeah, for sure.

Travis: Stalling, stalling, stalling.

Taako: Just a regular—

Justin: There's gotta be some spell...

Griffin: [wheezes]

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Um... I use the Wand of Switcheroo on Want.

Griffin: [laughs]

[Audience cheers]

Justin: Oh, I forgot, that was the one with the Slap-Chop. Fuck!

Travis: [laughs]

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Justin: Hey, listen, trust me. It's uh... It's still an upgrade.

Griffin: What did you end up getting, Taako?

Justin: Well, I got a Slap-Chop.

Griffin: You got a Slap-Chop?

Taako: Yeah, it's cool.

Griffin: Okay, Want—

Taako: What'd you get— What'd you get, Want?

Griffin: Want looks at where he is, next to the two of you now, and then looks in his box and opens it. Uh, and he realizes that he got a terrible cursed mummy claw that will kill you instantly.

[Audience laughs, groans, cheers]

Taako: Bummer!

Griffin: And he— And he looks up and he says...

Want: I thought that this was go—

Taako: Instantly!

Griffin: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: As Want falls down dead, this illusion disappears also, and now you just see Scroog sort of sitting by the cave wall.

Travis: Wait, how's Derek?

Griffin: Huh?

Travis: How's Derek?

Griffin: They disappeared with the illusion.

Travis: Oh, no.

Griffin: Yeah, they weren't real.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: But my feelings for them were!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Okay, I will say this. Derek, with his enchanted ruby, you see him look at it before he disappears and he nods, and then uh the ruby flies up into his nose and replaces his nose and starts flashing red. Uh...

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: But then he disappears and so does the enchanted ruby.

Travis: No...

Griffin: Yeah, that would've been fun, I bet.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Merle casts *Cure Wounds* on Magnus.

Griffin: Oh, cool! For how much?

Clint: I don't know.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Oh, 2d8 plus five.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Roll.

Travis: It's 16 points.

Griffin: Okay. Refresh yourself.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Uh, Scroog stands up in this now featureless cavern, and he says...

Scroog: Oh, did you guys finish... Uh, you finish up with that last one?

Magnus: I'm sorry.

Taako: Did you feel something with that last one? Did that spark something within you? A little appreciation?

Scroog: Well, it was starting to, yeah. But then there was some... unkind words being said.

Justin: [wheezes]

Magnus: Yeah, I snapped— I snapped at you and I'm really sorry. You know, sometimes the holidays can be really tense between family members and people you love.

Scroog: Yeah.

Merle: We did do away with Impotence, though.

Travis: That wasn't it.

Justin: I don't think that's right.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Did you?

Scroog: That's um, that's actually, that's actually excellent news, and um...

[Audience laughs]

Merle: Us old guys gotta stick together. [chuckles]

Griffin: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: And he says um...

Scroog: Uh, I don't know that I feel much closer to knowing the meaning of Candlenights, but—

Magnus: You want a hug?

Scroog: Yeah, that'd be nice.

[Audience awws]

Griffin: And you give him a little hug. He says...

Scroog: Oh, alright, let's— Let's—

Magnus: Nope. We're not done.

Scroog: Oh.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Be in the moment, my man.

Scroog: Alright.

Magnus: Breathe it in.

Scroog: Okay, I will—

Magnus: You like the musk?

Scroog: Alright.

Magnus: I don't bathe.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: He says...

Scroog: Listen, I spent a pretty penny on that, uh, Candenights party, so—

Magnus: Kiss on the cheek?

Scroog: Yeah.

Magnus: Thank you for your consent. Mwah!

Scroog: Thank you.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: As you approach the next chamber, you realize this one's not quite like the others. There's no illusory projection to speak of, uh as far as you can tell. It's just a big, circular cavern. Uh, you are on a low platform, on the south side of the room, and these long sort of twisted staircases wrap up the outside walls, up to a much higher platform on the opposite end of the room.

They form sort of a ring though, and at the center of this room is a howling maw of a terrible black portal to an inky black other world. From within, deep screams reverberate upwards.

Travis: In a bad way?

Griffin: Yup.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: [snorts]

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Worth asking, I think.

Griffin: Yeah, sure. These screams are making—

Travis: 'Cause they could've been like "Weeeee!"

Griffin: "Yaaaaay! Hell!"

[Audience laughs]

Justin: "Yeeeeeah! Love it!"

Griffin: These deep screams are making the sort of tar-like surface of this pit quake violently, but on the top level, on the higher platform, you see a gnarly looking bugbear. His fur—

Travis: Woooh! [chuckles] "Hey dude! So cool!"

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: His fur is a sickly green, his teeth are a sicklier yellow, his Santa suit is faded and filthy. In his hand, he holds a jagged blade that he flips between his fingers, playfully.

Travis: It's the Gooch!

[festive caper music plays]

Griffin: Tied to the balcony's banister is a thin cable, that runs up to a winch on the ceiling, and is connected at the end to an enormous, hastily wrapped bundle of Candlenights party décor, catering, and of course, the bugbears' beautiful Candlenights bush, all of which dangles a few dozen feet above the portal.

And... The Grunch—

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: — smiles a wicked smile and says...

Grunch: You're here for your trappings.

Griffin: The Grunch snarled and enquired.

Grunch: But there so necessary for a plot so inspired.

[Audience laughs]

Grunch: I will summon an imp that will make you all suffer. Lord of humbuggery, the great Candlesnuffer! I will make out a feast from your Candlesnights joy, and breathe life into Krampus, the nastiest boy!

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Magnus: Okay.

Griffin: We're back in initiative. Magnus, you are up first.

Travis: [blows a raspberry] Um... High— How high off the ground is—

Griffin: It's about a 20-foot staircase that wraps around both sides of the room up to the higher platform.

Travis: Mm-kay. Um... I have a thing of *Spider Climb*, right?

Griffin: Sure! What?!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Wait, what?!

Travis: I do, it's an item that I bought that I can't remember, but I definitely have.

Griffin: [laughs] Okay, whatever. That voice hurt my throat a little bit.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: You have a thing of— I'm afraid I'm going to need at least like the slightest bit—

Travis: Okay, let's ask the audience. Do I have a thing that lets me spider climb?

[Audience cheers in agreement]

Griffin: Alright.

Travis: Uh, I'm gonna spider climb and jump on to the uh bagging, the thing of baggage. The— The... big bundle of stuff.

Griffin: Okay, you would need to— I think you're gonna have to spend both of your actions, because to run up to a place where you could hop to this thing—

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: — That's a couple dozen feet off of the surface of this portal.

Travis: Okay, I'm going to do that.

Griffin: Okay, make an... uh, Acrobatics check for me.

Travis: Hoo. Uuummm! So 12 plus two, a 14?

Griffin: Uh, yeah. You got, you got the tools necessary, you spent your whole turn doing it, I will allow it.

Travis: Okay. And I'm gonna use my bonus action, or my, excuse me. Oh, what's it—

Griffin: Second wind, or—

Travis: Second wind, thank you very much.

Griffin: I don't think that's what it's called. What's it— Action Surge.

Travis: Action Surge. Now that the, uh, I've hit the bundle so it's clearly swinging.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: I'm going to chop the rope when it's swinging away from the portal.

Griffin: Okay, this is going to be a tough one. Because you are trying to—

Travis: Is it?

Griffin: Yeah, because you are trying to time this out, having moved this giant sack with just the momentum of your jump.

Travis: Yes, my big, beautiful body.

Griffin: Your enormous, wonderful body. Uh, I'm s— I'm gonna say this is gonna be like a timing check.

Travis: Oh, you know what. Actually, I take it back. I'm not going to do that. I'm going to use my grappling hook.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: To pull it away from the portal.

Griffin: From the portal.

Travis: And lock it away from the portal.

Griffin: Towards the...

Travis: Wall.

Griffin: High platform or the lower platform?

Travis: Lower platform, where we are. So I'm on it.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: And I'm going to use my grappling hook to pull it towards—

Griffin: Towards that way.

Travis: Away from the portal.

Griffin: Sure, okay. Uh, this is going to be, I will say, a difficult check. Uh, you are attempt— You are attempting to disarm the stakes of the entire encounter in a single action.

Travis: Yes, I am.

Griffin: So, that's going to be a difficult check. Uh, let's make this a, maybe a ranged attack roll? I don't know what the stats for that would be. Let's just make this a straight-up Dexterity check.

Travis: Uh, 12 plus two, 14?

Griffin: That's not gonna cut it. You, you manage to secure it to a sponce, let's say, on the wall of the lower platform, but you haven't quite been able to pull yourself and the sack to safety.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: But you have—

Travis: I have the chance to.

Griffin: Sure, yeah. Some day.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Uh, next in the order is... Merle!

Clint: Um... Merle casts... *Guardian of Faith*.

Griffin: Alright.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Now you tell me what that means. I know what *Guardian of Faith* means. To what ends?

Travis: What does it mean to you?

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Well, I think it's somebody to protect us, just in case something—

Griffin: From...?

Clint: From if something were to attack us.

Griffin: Okay, cool.

Clint: [exhales heavily] Okay. Um...

Merle: Guardianus of Faithdicus!

Clint: I don— I don't—

Griffin: Yeah. Are you sure— Now we've talked about it for a little while, are you sure this is the action you want to take right now? I just wanna make sure you're certain.

Clint: I am positive this is what I want to do.

Griffin: Alright, where are you— Where are you plopping this Guardian down?

Clint: Right in front of us.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Between us in like a gap, you know, so if there's a photo session or something, they're not blocking somebody else.

Griffin: Sure, okay. In the interest of time, because we are running a bit behind.

Travis: Right!

Griffin: I will say next in the order is actually the Grunch, who uh puts his fingers together and whistles in a way that I am not capable of doing.

And down the staircases, both of them, start to march four little clockwork soldiermen.

Travis: Aww.

Griffin: Who your Guardian of Faith uh starts to fend off, nullifying that threat. Again, we're playing Calvinball rules, a little bit, but those clockwork men have been, tied up, let's say, by the Guardian of Faith. Next in the order is Taako.

Taako: What happened to you, man?

Griffin: [snorts]

Taako: Grunch, what happened to you, bud?

Griffin: He stops for a second, and he... he gets glassy-eyed. And so does Scroog.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: And the Grunch really looks at the three of you, and he says...

Grunch: I remember your faces from long, long ago.

Taako: [sighs]

Grunch: You came to a party, my nephew did throw. He charged you with teaching me Candlenights reasons. To fully appreciate holiday seasons. You did not take it serious, and then you departed. And year after year, I grew more shrunken-hearted.

Clint: Oh, that's—

Travis: And then I sharted!

Clint: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Wait.

Grunch: Time passed me by, my vibe grew more crunchy. All told, I would say, I became pretty Grunchy.

[Audience laughs]

Grunch: But now you are here, and so ends my fugue. The Grunch stands before you, but my true name... is Scroog.

[Audience ooos]

Magnus: Wait, just a quick question. Is this a time travel thing?

Griffin: Scroog looks up and says...

Scroog: It's like he's me from *Candlenights future*.

[Audience laughs, groans]

Justin: Wow, you've really layered a lot in here.

Clint: [chuckles]

Magnus: Yeah, but like how?

[Audience laughs]

Merle: Oh! Oh! I know this one. We kill him in this time, and then—

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Aw, hell yeah!

Merle: And then there's no Grunch.

Magnus: Yeah, we fuckin' kill Scroog! This is what we wanted to do from the beginning!

[Audience laughs]

Justin: No. Actually. I will say this. Although Travis, yes how great, your instinct to kill Scroog was apparently dead-on, and that's why Griffin wouldn't let us do it, because it would have broken his little game.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: So—

Travis: What would happen if we had killed Scroog?

Taako: Grunch? Grunch? What happened to that heart of yours? It seems like it's turned to stone.

Griffin: He doesn't say anything and Scroog says...

Scroog: I think he did his one rhyme.

Travis: Oh, I see.

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: And the Grunch nods.

Clint: And it was about time.

Griffin: The Grunch nods like.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: He nods and he Todds. It's a rhyme.

Clint: And it's like Sweeney?

Griffin: Scroog takes two steps toward the pit.

Scroog: [somberly] Um, if it's really what you all think is right...

Magnus: What?

[Audience awws]

Scroog: I don't... I don't wanna turn into th— the Grunch, and if it's too late for me to change, I suppose this is the only option.

Taako: Goddamnit, okay wait. No, we'll fix it. Give me a sec.

[Audience laughs]

Merle: What?!

Taako: No, no, no. I'd love to kill this guy too and get outta here. I gotta pee so bad, my back teeth are floatin', but we do have to— We gotta figure it out. Hold on. Wait, let's start with this.

Justin: And I uh... throw the anti-gravity sphere at the bag.

Griffin: Oh, okay. Yeah, that's fun. Uh, I don't think you need to roll for that. It's a big, big bag that has been sort of secured in place.

Justin: I don't— I don't have to roll for it.

Griffin: Uh, okay. It begins floating off the ground, and so does Mer— Magnus. You're having some fun up there now.

Magnus: Weeeee!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: That's it? That's your whole action. Okay.

Justin: You tell me. Do you want me to cast a spell on him, or...?

Griffin: Uh, no. I think throwing the anti-gravity sphere will, will— sphere will count as an action. We're back up to Magnus now. Uh, seeing this happen, and seeing, uh, that nothing has fallen into the pit, the Grunch looks down and he looks very worried now, because there is more screaming and howling coming from the— coming from the inky black pit. Magnus.

Travis: Fuck it! Magnus dives in the pit!

[Audience groans in shock]

Justin: What? Why?

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Alright.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: Okay, wait, first.

Griffin: No.

Travis: No, wait first.

Griffin: No.

Travis: First.

Griffin: No.

Travis: Magnus ties a rope to the bag and dives in the pit.

Griffin: I mean you're holding onto the grappling hook, so I'll, I guess I'll allow it.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: I've lost sort of the plot, a little bit.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Alright man, yeah. You dive into the pit.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: What i— What is... What is Magnus wearing?

Travis: A smile and nothing else.

[Audience laughs]

Travis: No, uh... What would Magnus wear to a party? Magnus is wearing normal armor, plus a... funny hat.

Griffin: Yeah, alright. What kind of funny hat?

Travis: Just like a funny hat. Picture a funny hat, that's it. Maybe it's got like antlers on it? What!

Griffin: Okay. You hop into the pit with your holiday themed hat.

Travis: I didn't say that, but sure.

Griffin: And it has antlers on it, and so as you enter, you see a face looking back up at you, and it's uh not a goo— It's-a not a good face.
[cackles]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: [imitating an Italian accent] It's-a bad face. It's Maaario!

Travis: Is it Mario?

Griffin: It is not. It is a enormous, skull-like face.

Travis: Sure.

Griffin: Uh, with its own antlers on its head.

Travis: Yeah.

Magnus: Hey, same. Same— yeah yeah.

Griffin: [in a squawky voice] Same hat!

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: And as the festive hat enters the pit with you, this figure smiles a horrific smile. And then you two see Magnus riding on top of Krampus as

he emerges from the pit, having been summoned by this single piece of festive sacrifice.

Travis: Well, damnit.

[Audience laughs, gasps]

Griffin: An ink geyser shoots up from the mouth of the pit, blowing the top of the mountain off. And in fact, the Grunch gets caught in the stream, flying way up into the air and blasting off, like fucking Team Rocket.

[Audience laughs, cheers]

Griffin: You all are exposed to this crisp night air, especially you, Magnus, who is riding on top of this 40-foot-tall demon.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Uh, that has this short, wiry hair all over. He smells like brimstone. He's got these creepy little like—

Travis: Oh. Is it like hot air?

Griffin: Uh... It's like stinky— brim— brimstone. You know hot air doesn't always smell like this.

Travis: Yeah. The Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom ignites.

Griffin: Oh, okay. The Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom ignites. That's fine.

Travis: And I'm going to attack.

Griffin: Well, let me finish my fucking description.

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: [coughs, laughs] There is a long red tongue dangling from its open jaw, and once this figure finishes composing itself, it takes a beat and then takes off in a lumbering sprint down the mountainside, toward Phandalin and the bugbear celebration.

You technically did just use your move jumping into the pit, so I will allow you an action here.

Travis: Okay. I'm going to attack. Twice.

Griffin: 'Kay.

Travis: As is my want. Uh... that is a 19.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Uh, and a... 17?

Griffin: Ye— What the fuck's going on over there?

Travis: Oh, we have magical die.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, those are both hits.

Travis: Okay great. Oh, what the fuck do I get to roll?

Griffin: It's plus 20 damage for each attack.

Travis: Yes, it's—

Griffin: So we'll just add plus 40 to whatever you roll.

Travis: It's plus 20 damage, and then it is... Oh my god, 6d10 total.

Griffin: Fuck off. Fuck completely off.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: What's the status of the bag?

Griffin: Of the bag? It's floating up into the air. Very slowly, it's anti-gravity. It was not caught up in the geyser burst.

Justin: Okay. Okay. So we can still get to it.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: Uh, 44 points of damage.

Griffin: Plus 40? Yeah. So 84 points of damage is what you're telling me.

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Okay. In a single cleave, you take off the top of this thing's entire skull.

Taako: Fuck!

[Audience gasps in surprise]

Griffin: And orange sort of lava is now dripping out of the top of his head.

Justin: Taako retches.

Griffin: Taako retches. Excellent. Cool.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: Free action.

Griffin: Uh, and that—

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: "Now—!" [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Travis: "This Christmas at Taco Bell, enjoy some Taco Wretches."

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: Uh, it is leaving a trail of like obsidian in its wake as it runs down this snowy mountain face with you holdin' on for dear life. And now we move back—

Travis: Oh sorry, wait. That was just the damage for one attack.

Griffin: Wait wait wait. 44 was just your dama— Fuck! Okay.

[Audience laughs]

Clint: Yeah, it's about to get real here now, folks.

Griffin: Alright.

Travis: Uh, that was an additional 28, so not as much.

Griffin: 28 plus— Okay. And we'll keep the plus twenty from before.

Travis: 72.

Griffin: Okay. Okay, with this it's just the jawbone dangling open, with the tongue just now just sort of bouncing around.

Justin: Gross.

Griffin: All fun like. Uh, but it is still lumbering down the hill. Uh, we jump back to Merle. Now you and Taako are in, basically, an open room. Now that the top of this mountain has been blasted open. You have the bag, sort of floating, you know, 10 feet overhead, and you have... You have Scroog, who is looking upward at where the Grunch got blasted away, and is just kind of looking up at him. Or where he was. And he says...

Scroog: I turn into a... I turn into a right bastard, don't I?

Taako: Wait! I'm gonna fix all of it.

Scroog: Okay. It's not your turn in the action.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: You started fuckin' talking.

Scroog: Yeah, I suppose. You'd have to ask Merle.

Taako: Merle, get to the bag.

Merle: Right!

[Audience laughs]

Clint: I yell the words "hang ten", he jumps on the Vroom Broom, he jets over to the bag, jumps on it, and as a bonus action has the uh... the Guardian go over and wrap its angel-like wings around Scroog.

Griffin: Awww.

Clint: In a loving embrace.

Griffin: To bring him also back up to the, uh, the floating bag?

Clint: Oh, god no. No no no.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Should I do that?

Taako: No.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: Alright. And he's like...

Scroog: Wow. This angel's embrace really takes me back.

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: I got a— I got a angel hug once.

[Audience laughs]

Scroog: It was last Candenights. Sorry, that's not really pertaining to anything we're doing here.

Merle: Okay, I was hoping maybe—

Griffin: Alright. Uh, Taako.

Justin: I, uh... I run and I grab the dangling end of the rope.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: 'Kay. And then I cast *Phantom Steed*.

Griffin: [gasps]

[Audience cheers loudly]

Justin: Garyl. Garyl materializes, and I tie the other end of the rope to Garyl. And I say...

Taako: Scroog. Santa is real.

[Audience laughs]

Justin: And then I gesture to Merle, hanging atop the bag of presents, as he is dragged along by a soaring Garyl.

[Audience cheers]

Justin: Flying through the air. Literally! Flying through the air with a huge sack of presents, and looking like... he does.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: We see Scroog looking up at this miraculous sight. Uh, a single tear rolls down his cheek.

Garyl: What is happening?

Taako: Sorry, Garyl. Okay.

Griffin: [chuckles]

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Just, can you pretend to be—

Garyl: No.

Taako: Can you pretend to be—

Garyl: No.

Taako: Listen.

[Audience laughs]

Garyl: No.

Taako: What? I'll give you some oats.

Garyl: Okay, I'm listening.

[Audience laughs]

Taako: Can you just... drag this floating sack?

Garyl: It seems a little demean—

Taako: Just, come on. Oats!

Garyl: Alright then.

Justin: And Garyl takes off down the hill, headed towards uh... uh uh uh.

Travis: Phandalin.

Justin: Yeah, Phandalin.

Griffin: And the bugbear enclave.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Scroog sees this. Again, the tear. And he smiles. And then the Guardian of Faith wraps her wings around him and launches into the sky.

Travis: Killing him instantly.

Griffin: Killing him in a moment.

Clint: [cackles]

[Audience laughs]

Clint: On reentry.

Griffin: Back down, in front of Klarg's cavern, all of the bugbear partygoers are standing, looking very nervous, in front of the cave entrance, looking up toward Mount Chronos. And... they see a few things happen in order.

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: They see... Magnus, riding a bobsled, made out of a butchered Krampus.

[Audience laughs]

Magnus: Bumble's boughs!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: All the way down the side of the mountain, sliding to a gory stop just metres away from where the party is standing. They see...

[Audience cheers, claps]

Griffin: They see Scroog being set down gently by a beautiful angel, who waves to the party and then lifts up into the night sky.

Travis: "I gotta get to Kravitz's party!"

Griffin: [laughs]

[Audience laughs]

Griffin: And then they see real ass Santa Claus, flying on a sack of their stolen possessions, with a beautiful spectral horse, ridden by an even more beautiful wizard, who rides overhead and cuts loose the uh the bag of things, dropping them right in front of the cave into another beautiful party atmosphere.

Travis: And that wizard shouts out...

Taako: Merry Christmas to all! I'm going to a cooler party!

Griffin: [chuckles]

Clint: [laughs]

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: That's it. That's it everybody. Thank you so much for coming.

Travis: Goodnight everybody.

Justin: Good night!

[Audience cheers]

Griffin: Have a merry Candenights! One and all!

[chill music plays as the live show audio fades out]

[ukulele chord]

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