

The The Adventure Zone Zone: MaxFunDrive 2022

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[theme music plays]

Griffin: Splash! Blub-blub-blub-blub-blub-blub-blub. That's the sound of the ocean, and you're going deep down in it like Nemo, the mariner and the fish. Hey, welcome to *The The Adventure Zone Zone*, America's favorite talk show about the show done by the people who do the show.

Justin: And the captain?

Griffin: What's that?

Justin: Captain Nemo? I mean, is he—

Travis: I thought that was the mariner, I assumed.

Griffin: The mariner. So I did definitely reference him. And we're off—

Justin: The mariner and also the fish and also—

Griffin: [simultaneously] — to a really good start.

Justin: Well, when you said the mariner I thought you meant Nemo the Sub-Mariner.

Griffin: Okay. Okay.

Justin: The—

Clint: That's Namor. Namor.

Justin: Namor, okay. See, you can see—

Travis: What about the boy? There was a sleepy boy, right?

Justin: Little Nemo, the sleepy boy?

Clint: Oh, in *Slumberland*.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, sure! We can talk about t—

Travis: No, a different one. I was thinking of a different sleepy Nemo boy.

Justin: What about *Captain EO*, the defunct 3D film starring Michael Jackson at Epcot?

Travis: More like de-funky.

Griffin: What a— what about that? So, this is—

Clint: Yeah, you wanna be starting something?

Griffin: This is a show where we talk about your questions about this season of *The Adventure Zone*, which is *Ethersea*, which we've been doing for, uh... God, when did we start— honestly, I don't think it's—

Travis: We've been doing it forever.

Griffin: No, I don't think it's actually been as long as we think it is, just because we've been going weekly now for a while, and so we've really been— I don't know. It feels like we've been really moving at a— at a clip through this season. I was surprised to see that we are at just about as many episodes as, like, *Amnesty* had and *Graduation* had.

Travis: Yeah, *Amnesty* and *Graduation* I think were tied. I wanna say six months, I think.

Griffin: Yeah. That feels about— that feels about right. Um... yeah, so we have a ton of questions here that people sent in, and we're gonna answer them, and we're gonna talk to you about the *MaxFunDrive*, and we're actually gonna do that last thing right now.

Travis: Here it is. Let me give you the quick rundown, and then we'll get to the questions. Okay, you ready?

Justin: Yes!

Travis: Here's how it works. Once a year we ask you to consider supporting our show and any other shows on the network that you might enjoy, by going to Maximumfun.org/join. There, you will choose a support level that works for you. It starts as low as \$5 a month. Uh, and goes up to other levels, whichever one you want to do. Uh, and at each level you will receive a new reward for becoming a supporter.

Uh, but I tell you, here's the secret thing, folks. The best one's right there at \$5 a month. 'Cause for just \$5 a month, you get access to hundreds and hundreds of hours of bonus content from each show on the network, including stuff from past MaxFunDrives that you won't hear anywhere else.

There's video stuff, there's audio stuff, it's great. Um, and so that starts at just \$5. There's a bunch of other ones that we'll tell you about. But right now, if you love our shows and you want to support them, go to Maximumfun.org/join. Do it while you're thinking about it. Don't wait. It'll only last for two weeks. Do the thing.

Griffin: Do the thing!

Justin: Come on.

Griffin: Please help us!

Clint: [whiny] Please?

Griffin: Pwease? Uh, okay! Let's— let's kick things off. We got a question list here that was compiled by our own Sarah Davis. Thank you, Sarah.

Justin: Thank you, Sarah!

Griffin: Uh, and—

Travis: One of the many people who helps us out that we wouldn't be able to do without your MaxFun support.

Justin: There you go.

Griffin: Yes, of course. I'm going to actually answer a couple of questions in here, 'cause we've, you know, talked about her contributions, uh, a lot this season. But I think there's still a lot of folks who don't realize Rachel Jacobs is responsible for all of the foley work that has been going on this season, and the post-production and editing. Literally all we're doing these days is... recording us rollin' virtual dice and makin' butt jokes, and—

Travis: We're able to focus on the art, is what Griffin means.

Griffin: Right, exactly.

Clint: The art of butt jokes.

Travis: Thank you!

Griffin: Right, so—

Travis: The art of fart.

Griffin: And enormous thanks to Rachel. She only just started with us in... December I wanna say? What month is it?

Travis: Yeah, I mean, she started, like, just as we were wrapping up Graduation. Which is one of the main reasons— and we'll talk about this more, uh, there's a question about it— but one of the main reasons we were able to go weekly... is because Rachel Jacobs is here.

Griffin: Yes.

Justin: Yes, absolutely.

Griffin: Um, let's start with this one from Ellen Weatherford, cohost of fellow MaxFun show *Just the Zoo of Us*.

"What did the research and creative process look like for incorporating marine biology into a fantasy setting?"

I want to give a big shout out to Dad, because we— I started talking about doing this undersea season last... I wanna say, like, spring or so? Um, and Dad, like,

went hardcore on it, as he always does, I feel like, whenever we start sort of workshopping things, and started reading a bunch of books. And, uh—

Travis: I remember when I told him I was doing Graduation and he enrolled in community college—

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: — and he made friends with five other kind of, like, very different people from different backgrounds, but they formed a steady group, and they became, like, best friends, but then eventually they did cut Dad out of it.

Clint: Oh God, I wasn't the Chevy Chase, was I?

Travis: Oooh...

Justin: Oooh...

Griffin: Of course you were. Um, I read a couple sort of very dry and boring books about marine biology that didn't grab me, and then Dad bought me a book called *The Eternal Darkness*, which is a fucking radical name for a book, and one of my favorite Gamecube-era horror titles, but this is— uh, it's *The Eternal Darkness: A Personal History of Deep-Sea Exploration* by Robert Ballard, who is a deep-sea marine biologist.

Justin: One of my faves.

Griffin: Uh, and it—

Justin: Top 20 for me, easy.

Travis: Oh, really?

Griffin: It's— it's just—

Justin: Easy.

Griffin: [laughs] It's— it's a fantastic read. It's a cool book about— about, I mean, the invention of deep-sea exploration, which is still, like, you know, generally-speaking, in its nascent form. Like, there's still so much ocean to

explore. And, uh, the extreme risk that goes into, you know, putting yourself under the immeasurable pressure of the ocean to take a picture of a fucked-up fish. That, more than anything else, I think inspired a lot of those sort of, you know.

Travis: Yeah, you gotta be a real fish pervert to go down and go to all those lengths. That's what I've always said.

Griffin: Yeah, 'cause you get squished pretty— pretty bad. Um, and so a lot of that— like, I don't know. A lot of the drier books I read inspired things like the Cambria Arc, which is, you know, a very fantastical interpretation of, like, the Cambrian Explosion, which was a big— a big moment for Earth. Um... and yeah.

I've had a lot of fun learning about the ocean and stuff, in doing this season. Not that a lot of that has made it in sort of... you know, one-for-one scientifically. But it's— it's been very inspiring when it comes time to, like, figure out a, you know— an encounter you're gonna do, or a mission that you can go on, or just, like, an event that is taking place in this world that we sort of whipped up.

Clint: And Arthur C. Clarke wrote a lot of, uh, marine books. A lot of exploration of the sea. The best, I think, was *The Coast of Coral*, where he and a guy named Mike Wilson went down to Australia, and this was in the 50's. [laughs] I mean, where they were, you know, practicing with aqualungs, and trying out all this new underwater technology.

Travis: [simultaneously] Hey, aqualung!

Clint: Uh, and so yeah, that was a big inspiration too. Because it— he— of course Arthur C. Clarke's such an amazing writer, and it was nonfiction. He also wrote a bunch of fiction stuff about marine biology.

Travis: But we're not here to talk about him.

Griffin: No, we are not.

Travis: We're here to talk about us.

Justin: I turn to the work, when I'm thinking about marine works, I turn to the work of Dr. John Cena. Uh, I think that his work in the marine actually taught me the most.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Absolutely.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: There's a question here from Megan.

Griffin: Go.

Travis: "Do you have any particular inspiration for the characters in Ethersea outside of what was shared in the worldbuilding episodes?"

And with that, I can also answer Tiger's question. "Travis, why French specifically?"

The answer is Jacques Cousteau. Uh, who for—

Griffin: That's it? It was just that?

Travis: Not entirely that. But it was a combination of that, and I wanted him to feel, uh... like, audibly isolated—

Griffin: Fancy.

Travis: Well, no. Different. Right? I wanted him to sound different from the— separated from everyone else. Um, because that is how he feels, and he was separated and cloistered, and so that was, like, part of it. But it also is just for a long time, this is not a joke, whenever I— like, when we were, like, on the JoCo Cruise or wherever, looking at the ocean, I would be like "[French accent] Ah, the sea. How deep and beautiful she is!"

And it's just what I think of when I think of, like, deep sea exploration. And that's when it first occurred to me. And so then, you know, we— I don't know if everyone knows this, but for the last two years, had a lot of extra time on our hands. Um, and so I started, like, doing, you know, French lesson apps on my— you know, my various smart devices, and that is how it developed.

Griffin: Um, and Dad, you've talked a lot about sort of— I mean, literally that Arthur C. Clarke book inspired a lot about Zoox, right?

Clint: Yeah, because, uh, the coral reef... and this was, like I said, you know— keeping in mind that this was written, like, 70 years ago, they were just starting to worry about coral reefs. Um...

Travis: Luckily we fixed it! So...

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Yeah, everything's okay now! Not.

Travis: Aw, Dad! Great use of the "Not" joke.

Griffin: That was a *really* good "Not," Dad.

Justin: Yeah, it was good, dude.

Travis: It was so good, my dude.

Clint: Uh, I pride myself on, you know—

Justin: You never see it coming.

Clint: — my— my comedy shtick. But another, um... another big inspiration for the character for Zoox was Mr. Data. From *The Next Generation*. I kind of wanted—

Justin: [simultaneously] Ahh, yeah.

Travis: [simultaneously] Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: Thank you for putting some respect on his name. Uh—

Justin: Yeah, Mr.

Clint: Putting Mr. on there, yeah.

Justin: He's a— he's a person.

Travis: Isn't he, like, a Captain at this point?

Clint: Uh, no. He's— spoilers. Uh, he's dead.

Travis: Oh, wow. That's a pretty big spoiler, Dad!

Griffin: [spluttering laughter] Okay, cool!

Justin: [cawing laughter]

Griffin: Yeah! Um, and Juice. Amber Gris. Was it just the name was funny? 'Cause it's like, um...

Justin: The name was derived from... [sighs] it's funny that Richard Stink and Amber Gris have the same genesis.

Griffin: [simultaneously] Parents? Oh.

Justin: Like, I became interested in, like, fragrances for a little bit during the pandemic, and I just thought it was an interesting world. Mainly through YouTube. I think fragrance YouTube is fascinating, because it's people trying to communicate something that is impossible to communicate via the medium they have chosen, which I think is amazing. Um, and I think it's a fascinating world.

And when I started reading about— ambroxan is a very popular synthetic sort of smell that is, um, in a lot of fragrances, and the organic version of that is derived from something called ambergris. And depending on— what you decide ambergris is... kind of depends on how you wanna sort of interpret it. They don't have the same holes as us, so you could think of it as a lot of different things. Like, it— it's not vomit. It's more like poop. [beat] But only a small percentage of sperm whales make it.

Travis: It's sperm whale leavin's.

Justin: It's sperm whale drippin's.

Travis: Yeah!

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Yeah, basically.

Griffin: The good— the good stuff.

Justin: But it smells... uh, good! [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: I bet it does.

Justin: It's a nice musky smell. But I just thought it was funny. I thought it was a funny pun. Um, because it's the oceans, and I knew we were doing an ocean one, so that's the name. Um, the character is just, like, I... wanted to do a type of woman that you see in Appalachia a lot.

I'm really— the work I— most of my characters, like, with the exception of probably Taako, um, most of the other ones are informed by West Virginia and Appalachia in some way. Um, and so I wanted— Amber Gris's just, like, the kind of woman you see at West Virginia who's just, like, thin and wiry and indomitable. Like, you could— like, this is the sort of woman that you see walking past CVS and you know that a truck could hit her and it would just split around her—

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Right.

Justin: — as she continued to go pick up, you know, whatever she had to do that day.

Travis: Her scratchers.

Justin: Her scratchers or whatever, yeah. And I grew up around this kind of woman a lot in— in Appalachia and, um, I— that was just kind of the vibe that I wanted to capture. Like, I think the working class is always, like, the most interesting part of a... of a fantasy world, so yeah. That's Amber Gris.

Travis: Oh! I— there was a third reason for the French, too. So, as I was then thinking about Devo, um, and I started, like, looking— with those two things in mind, I started looking for, like, references for, like, that's what I think, you know,

he would be like? The fuck— the dude, the boyfriend from *West Wing*. The, like— the guy who dates Zoe after Charlie, who's a real piece of shit.

Griffin: Oh.

Travis: Like, a lot of my—

Griffin: What a very specific pull.

Travis: I know, right? Isn't it?

Justin: I've watched *West Wing* twice in its entirety. I don't know who the fuck you're talking about.

Travis: But he's— he's, like, this French dilettante, like... I don't know, duke or something. And he's just a real piece of shit. And I was like, "Oh yeah, like that." [laughs] He's gonna kind of be like that.

Justin: Great, perfect, yes, good.

Griffin: Maxwell asks:

"How much did you anticipate the random encounters table would influence the adventure? The crit fail obviously changed the course of the arc, but are many of the elements on that table, like the gold ship with ancient runes, designed to add to the story in such a fundamental way? Also, can you release what's on the table after the story ends? Crossed fingers that Clint rolls a crit 00 as redemption."

Uhh... I mean, it's changed the story a whole lot. Like, obviously the one, like— what I had— I forget exactly what I had in there for the one— actually, let me pull it up.

Basically the one was, like, the sallow returns to Founder's Wake. Like, the sallow becomes a big bad thing. And I envisioned that as being, like, a pretty big story arc. But I did not envision it as being, like, the third story arc. Um...

Travis: Are they all pretty specific? Or are they like, they encounter a weird creature?

Griffin: No, they are all— they— most of them are, like, very broad. Uh, the gold ship one was interesting because that was— you know, you find wreckage from a— a ship that is, you know, laden with gold. And when you rolled that, like, I also have this sort of vision board for Hominine in mind as being sort of, like, you know, gilded and arcane and all this stuff. The Whisp and all that shit, like, that was just jazz, baby.

Travis: Hell yeah.

Griffin: And is going on to be, like, sort of a— a *huge* thing for, like, the big plot kind of moving forward. Like, the idea of finding this, like, you know, map to a lost city, is not something that I anticipated being... I don't know, a thing. When I included it in this chart I just thought, like, "Oh, and they'll get some, like, weird magic stuff and some gold outta this salvage."

But then it just kinda ended up being a much, much bigger thing.

Travis: Do you feel, Griff— I've been wondering this, Ditto. Do you feel... like that you put yourself to maybe an unreasonable challenge with the combination of us picking the jobs, and the random encounter table? Like, that— how much you have to, like, just be on— like, on the ready, like, basically the entire time we're recording? Or is it—

Griffin: No, 'cause I— it is— I mean, it is a challenge, right? But it's also, like, what I think we're all trying to do this season, or at least I hope we're all trying to do, which is, um... I saw this— this really great... I've been watching a lot of, like, storytelling seminars, because it's, uh, you know, it staves off the lonely times to just have people's voices in your ears?

I'm sure that listeners at home know all about this. Um, but funnily enough, of all the ones that I have found to be, like, the most helpful, is one from Trey Parker and Matt Stone, talking about the structure of, like, any given *South Park* episode, and the way that— and I am not— you know I love that fucking twisted *South Park* humor.

Travis: So twisted. Oh man its so twisted.

Justin: [simultaneously] Fuck yeah, dude. Obviously.

Griffin: I am not, like— I'm not a huge fan of their work. I'm not, like, a big *South Park* guy at all, but I feel like—

Justin: Why are you dragging it? What is your problem with the *South Park* twisted, skewed view?

Travis: Too twisted for you?

Griffin: Uh, it's a little too twisted for me, yeah.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: Hmm.

Griffin: The way that they talk about storytelling is that between each beat in the story, if you have to use the words "and then," it's... it's bad. Like, that's not going to be a good story. Like, "And then this happens, and then something else happens, and then this happens." But if you use "therefore" and "but" between each beat, it— and therefore the story kind of evolves out of itself, that is— that is what makes—

Travis: [simultaneously] And they do use a lot of butts on *South Park*.

Griffin: — a good story, especially a good sort of self-contained story, which I think we try to do with each of our sort of campaign arcs. And so I've really just kind of been trying to let that take the lead. Like, I have a whiteboard with some... like, kind of ideas on it for, like, shit.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: So the other team that works for the Bluespan Brokerage, like your guys' sort of rivals, are— are doing some stuff that, like, I kind of, uh, started to spin out of the missions you all didn't take, right? And— so, like, there's some stuff that's true about the world there. Uh, I know something about Hominine, like where it is, whether or not, like, that ever comes to fruition or not.

Like, I don't know what the big story of this season is gonna be, and that's kind of exciting to— to me. It's really just gonna sort of land on what— what you all kind of want to do with the information that you are, uh, you know, receiving in real time.

I think what you all are in right now, what we recorded sort of the first episode of, and then are going to continue recording moving on, this sort of, like— sort of murder mystery thing, is going to inform the next part of the season. And it could be the big story or whatever, but I'm also fine with it not, you know, having some big, grand arc.

I'm also okay with, like, us reaching a point where we've done some cool stuff in the world and we walk away from it for a little while. Like, I feel like more than anything we've done in the past, Ethersea is something that we could come back to with, like, a different team of characters in, like, a season 2 and, like, do different stuff. Like, I feel— that is what— the thing I am happiest about with this season is I feel like it is a— a very cool world.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: With very cool rules, and—

Travis: I mean, that's a benefit, right? Of— of, uh, Avery Alder's *Quiet Year*, right? Of, like, we built the world first.

Griffin: Right. Um, and, like, you know, I wanted it to be this story of just these rough and tumble freelancers, just taking on jobs. But, like, I feel like you all are en— entrenched in the world in a meaningful way. Like, you all are, uh— you all are making big moves, and you are involved in sort of big things. And, um, you know, I don't— I— I don't know how to get around that.

There is a way to tell a story that is less sort of, you know, grand heroism, etc, um, but that's— I guess I just don't really know how to tell that kind of story. But yeah, that's— when it comes to— we have a lot of questions here about, like, "What do you envision as being, like, the big story of the season, and how much longer does the season have to go?"

Like, I swear to God, I don't know. And that's— that's pretty cool! Uh, and, you know, a little bit— a little bit scary. But honestly, doing it this way is kind of easier in some ways. It's— and messier. Uh, I have— I harbor no illusions about that. But, um, I'm enjoying doing it this way. Which is to say, I think especially as far as D&D as concerned, like, the correct way? [laughs] A lot more than I have in the past.

Travis: Alright, we've only gotten three questions done, so let's pick up the pace a little bit.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Uh, this is from Richie, for Justin. It's a box of chocolates.

"Whenever there's a— "

Justin: Aww!

Travis: "Whenever there's a flashback, do you have most of Amber Gris's backstory already decided, or is it a making it up along the way kind of thing?"

Justin: [extended laughter] Are you sure you want the answer?

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: No. Um, no, I love— flashbacks are great. Because especially, like, I— in the exact moment, 'cause I don't know what Griffin's gonna come at me with. Like, I don't know where it's gonna open up. So when you hear a flashback especially, because it's picking up a random place, and the... calculus of it has to end at the— like, we know where the c— like, we know the terminus of it. You know what I mean?

It's usually not hugely impactful on where the narrative is at that point. But you know, like, Amber Gris's not gonna, like, lose a foot or something. You know what I mean? Like, we know— we know at least that much.

So when you hear a flashback it's just, like, pure invention. And that's, like, really... my characters start in the way that Ethersea has, with, like, a very— a pretty rough sketch. And most of it is, like, discovery, and just, like, what I think is interesting.

Like, uh, early on I was using a lot of, like, slang with Amber Gris's. And I realized, like, it just didn't move things along that well. Like, it didn't communicate enough, and it just sort of, like, seemed self-serving, because she wasn't encountering people who would use some of the same terminology. So I kind of, like, eased away from that. But it's just, like, that's discovery. That's like chipping away at

the character to find out who she is. And, like, the, um... the backstories are great— or flashbacks, rather, are great times to do that.

So I just kind of, like... it's basically like free association. Like, I imagine it and just sort of let it... if you believe in, like... the way people like Elizabeth Gilbert or David Lynch view creativity where you're sort of, like, going down into the depths and seeing what you come up with, like, especially for me, flashbacks are just like fishing. I'm, like, trying to open it up and just see what sort of pops into my head.

Travis: I love that that is exactly the polar opposite of me. Where, like, the way I... I, like— basically every time now, uh, I've created a character for one of Griffin's campaigns, I have said, like, "Okay. Here is— this is it, and this is what happened, and this is why, and this is who!"

And then Griffin's like "Okay, great. Forget all of that, and then if a moment comes up to apply it, so be it."

And so it's just like, I've told him, like, if it ends up being this, that would be great! And then, like, occasionally it perfectly fits what we're going for. So, like, that little door gets opened a little bit more.

Griffin: But full trans— full transparency, most of the time it doesn't. And I feel like that is— is a point of contention that comes up a lot. And it is, like... this season especially, I have become completely disinterested in backstories. Genuinely don't— genuinely do not care about them. Beside the impact that they have on the story that is happening in the episodes that we are all hearing right now.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: 'Cause I feel like it is a huge fault of— that we have fallen prey to in— in every past season. All of them, right? Uh, is— is this, like, reliance on "Oh, well, oh man, if y'all could've been there, you would know why— "

Travis: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: "— this person is like this."

Travis: That's why I'm trying to stay away from it. Like, even though my every fiber of my being wants to. Because it is kind of inherently manipulative, right?

Because it's just, like, I don't have to roll for this. I don't have to, like, roleplay it. I don't have to, like, make a decision with anyone else. It's just me telling you how cool, or sad, or important my character is.

Griffin: It's honestly like— if we did do another season in Ethersea, or another whatever you want to call it with, like, different characters, I would go even harder on insisting that there are no backstories whatsoever. Like, be— not whatsoever, but beyond, like, you know, "I have a character who has this kind of personality, and this is where they got their, you know, the skills that they have."

Like, that's about it. Because it's— I don't know. It's becoming— it is inherently not collaborative to say, like, "Well, you see... so-and-so has... " what? Do you disagree?

Clint: Well, just a little. Because I think knowing a backstory for your character, uh, informs that character, creates that character, and allows you to live in that character, whether or not that information ever comes to the fore. I think that the backstory— it's like doing a character analysis in a play or something. I mean, you— to know how your character is going to decide or know how your character is going to react to something—

Griffin: Sure.

Clint: — I think you have to have some backstory.

Justin: Okay, we're really getting in the weeds, but I do wanna say, I think, though— while I fundamentally agree with you, I don't go in for much, like, scene study type stuff. But I do— I do— from an acting perspective, I understand that. What I think is interesting about this specific form of storytelling is that to me, normally when you're doing a character study like that, you're starting with a text, and then you're bringing— as an actor, you're bringing the stuff to it, right?

I feel like... what we're doing is functioning in the immediate, and then that's the text. Like, we're making the text as we go, right? So it is— we're writing the text, and then we are also doing the work of figuring out the backstory. But we're doing it afterwards. Like, coming up with a backstory without a text is kind of impossible, 'cause you don't know what the text is, yet. Right?

Travis: I bet that there are TV actors who, like, do episodic television listening to this like, "You dumb shits! You do it like this!"

Justin: But that's also, like, what we're talking about is just, like, different approaches which I think is really interesting.

Travis: [simultaneously] That's absolutely true.

Justin: Like, it's— I think it's— I just can't do that. Like, I can't work that way.

Travis: Speaking of different approaches, did you know there's many different ways that you can become a MaxFun supporter? Yes—

Justin: Bullshit!

Griffin: Oh.

Travis: Yeah, no.

Justin: You fuckin' shill!

Travis: Oh, okay.

Justin: Come on!

Griffin: Let's get Dad on the ones and twos, because this is where he excels.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Oh, he's the master of this. Let him go. Let him go! Wind him up!

Clint: Well, that's very nice of you, Justin. Uh, well, I think Travis has already covered the \$5 tier.

Travis: Sure.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: Uh, the 350 hours of bonus content. Uh, at the \$10 tier, you get a— you get all that stuff, plus a letterpress MaxFun membership card.

Travis: Oooh!

Justin: Whoa.

Clint: One of 35 embroidered patches, designed by...

Justin: They should've made more! We're fucked!

Clint: ... Maret Bondorew? Bondorew?

Travis: Maret Bondorew, yes.

Clint: From Frog and Toad Press.

Travis: Yeah, yeah.

Clint: Uh, \$20, all that that we just mentioned, plus your choice of either the MaxFun creativity pack— that includes an inspiration deck with 54 cards, illustrated by Ellen VanderMyde, featuring activity suggestions from MaxFun hosts and staff, three postcards— a piece of non-hardening, colorful modeling clay? And a custom Blackwing pencil. *Or* an embroidered rocket hat. And the \$35 tier? Well, everything above, plus a MaxFun messenger mag. It's a cotton canvas bag with the MaxFun rocket logo embroidered on the front.

Travis: And as we mentioned earlier, between Sarah Davis, Rachel Jacobs, and many other people behind the scenes that you don't always hear on the microphones, we could not make these shows without them at that point, and we wouldn't have them without your support. Not to mention way, way back when, we were able to make making these shows our full-time job, so that they became the priority, so that we would miss less episodes, so we would be able to tour more. So, like, with TAZ we would be able to go weekly. All of these things.

Griffin: More than any other year, I feel like the proof is in the pudding [laughs quietly] in that we are able to go weekly because we hired someone who is incredibly talented to handle post production. Like, that's— like, if you want to know—

Justin: That's a direct connection.

Griffin: — exactly how it works. And that happened because you all came out to support us last year, in a year where, you know, we weren't touring, and we, you know, needed— needed help. Uh...

Justin: But, let's— let's— let's, like, let's not— I mean, let's not sugarcoat it. Last year, we didn't hit our goal, and you all failed us. For the first time ever—

Griffin: [laughs loudly]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: — you let us down. And we'll— are you gonna make that— like, I'm willing to forgive and forget. I can be the bigger Justin. You know what I mean? But, like... not— you know, fool me once, etc. You know? I really need you all to prove to me [holding back laughter] that that was a fluke. And you're—

Travis: And you can do that by either becoming a new member, by upgrading your membership— you can boost your membership— or you can buy a gift membership for a friend or an anonymous MaxFunster who wants to join, but isn't able to. Right? And you can do all three of those at Maximumfun.org/join. You can see all the stuff there. Maximumfun.org/join. Think about joining now. If you want to, do it now while you're thinking about it. Don't let this opportunity pass you by. There is not a lot of time left. Go now. Maximumfun.org/join.

Griffin: Uh, let's see.

Clint: I got one.

Griffin: Yeah, please.

Clint: Could I do one? Uh, and this is very important to me. It's from John, and I'm bringing this up because I took a lot of shit from my costars about this.

Justin: [sarcastically] Costars.

Travis: Okay.

Clint: And I'm telling you... my underlings, I took a lot of shit from you underlings—

Travis: Thank you, Dad.

Clint: — about this.

"I really enjoy TAZ. I want to send a question regarding table environment, house rules. Uh, are there major moments? Do players try to ask about the outcomes? I'll frame this through episode 34, 35 of Ethersea. Clint has Zoon activate the self-destruct on the Dreams of Deborah during episode 34, but at the onset of 35, we hear Clint express a desire to undo this, for lack of a better term. We know that in TAZ history, event that the players do not feel are right can be modified to fit the overall story, but that did not seem to be necessary here. I am seeing this— "

Travis: This is so weird. I'm watching Dad type this into the document as we're doing it. This is so weird.

Clint: [laughs] No, Dad is not! Listen, this is honest-to-god the truth. I was trying to be a good player by using the ship worksheet for combat about the ships. And so there is a self-destruct. So my intention was to try to overbluff the bluff.

Griffin: And you did! I would say spectacularly!

Travis: Yeah, right?

Justin: Yeah, you bluffed the fuck out of it.

Clint: 'Cause it said—

Travis: You bluffed it up.

Justin: [simultaneously] You bluffed it right to hell!

Travis: Yeah, bluffed it up, man!

Justin: Bluffed it to Davy Jones's Locker!

Clint: "At the start of the user's next turn, the ship explodes, but can be canceled as an action with a DC 15 repair check."

And with my hand up, my intention was to start the countdown of the self-destruct, hoping they would back off, and then to cancel it. And that is the truth. The way it worked out? I... was very happy about it.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: But that, really and truly, was my— my— my plan.

Griffin: I understand that.

Clint: I didn't think it—

Griffin: You did—

Clint: I didn't think it would wreak the havoc that it did, which pleased Travis.

Griffin: You did leave. You did leave the ship.

Travis: Yes, correct.

Clint: I said "Jumped into the moon pool."

Travis: And then you were going to, like, Stretch Armstrong—

Justin: [simultaneously] Are we doing this again? Are we doing this again?

Griffin: We are doing— it feels like we're doing this again.

Travis: Okay. Here's the real thing, though. You asked about the table environment.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: And the short answer is, like, we— like, there's the story— I like to think of the show that we make more of, like, the writers' room, right? Of, like, it's more than just, like, recording a show to me, right? We're telling the story. But then we're also, like—

Griffin: It's real to me, dammit!

Travis: It's real! But the four people are also— like, me, Justin, Griffin, and Dad are also, like, our own characters in making the show. It's one of the ways, like, the graphic novel for example is different from the podcast, right? And so there are character choices that the characters make that it's like, "Yeah, I love that, that's great."

And then there are also, like, us doing it where it's like, "Wow, okay! That's wild, let's do it! Sure!" Right? Where we are commenting and, like, maybe giving each other a hard time from time to time, but that doesn't mean we don't think it's a good story decision. It's just, like, a big, bold swing that, like, must be commented on.

Griffin: And in terms of, like, table rules, it's very... very free form, very rule of cool. Like, I— I— I have— I say that. I think that also this season there have been more moments of me not, uh... allowing sort of— allowing you all to tap into godlike superpowers. Because I think that, um... I think that danger is something that has never really existed in *The Adventure Zone*. Uh, really. And I really want to be careful that we don't just, like, keep answering the same questions every T-TAZ-S, but, like, it makes— it makes things more cool when there's a chance they won't happen.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: And this season, like, we have— we have not fudged rolls, really. And we haven't—

Clint: Baaad rolls. Bad rolls.

Travis: We've had such bad rolls.

Griffin: Yeah, obviously. Like, there have been really bad rolls, and some really bad shit has happened to the team. Um, but I— I don't know. I hope we've been more consistent about that, because I really want there to be lots of cases where things don't go the way that you guys want 'em to go. Um... let's see.

"Griffin, have the boys ever thrown such a curve ball into your story that you have had to pause the recording to figure out what to do next?"

Uh, I mean, yes. We've talked about this a lot with past seasons. In terms of Ethersea, um... I had some sort of, like, general routing ideas for this last mission,

right? The menagerie mission, that when Dad blew up the station, were completely thrown on the window.

Like, uh, but that wasn't so much "Pause the recording" moment. That was a "Go back to what I had prepared for this mission after the episode," 'cause that was sort of the end of that episode. And then just, like, trying to figure out where things kind of go from there. Um... but yeah. I mean, that's sort of been more or less it.

When Dad rolled the one it was like, "How do I introduce this complication in a way that doesn't completely, like, derail the mission that they were going on?" And so that was kind of the delayed time bomb of, you know, scraping on the bottom of the thing, and then bringing the— the virus or whatever, um, back to the city.

Travis: I want to ask a question from K.D., because I have also wondered this from its inception.

"The Biggest Baby. Does it sit on the surface of the sea, or does it sit below the— " is it a submarine, Griffin? Or is it like...

Griffin: The surface of the sea is sort of occupied by a— like, an extremely thick, dense, like, field of debris, that I imagine is, like, sort of gnashing... like, unnavigable.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Like, people don't— people don't go to the surface. Because it's... like, you can't— you cannot get there without your ship getting, like, crunched— crunched up. So no, The Biggest Baby is, you know, I imagine floats offshore— or not offshore, but like, uh, you know, in the distance, I think visible from Founder's Wake.

Travis: But is it... you say "floats." Okay, that didn't answer it. Is it in the wa— is it underwater?

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: Yeah— yes!

Travis: You said "floats"!

Justin: He just answered that.

Griffin: Things float underwater!

Justin: [simultaneously] Things float underwater!

Griffin: Why— why are you being semantic about it?

Justin: Fish float.

Travis: No, I was honestly confused. And if I'm confused, there's at least one other person out there who is confused.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Does it look like a submarine? 'Cause I've always picture it like a battleship that was underwater.

Griffin: Um... I mean, it's— it probably—

Justin: It doesn't look like anything, 'cause this is a podcast.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: No, it is, uh... I don't know. I think of it as sort of boxy and monolithic and, like, not aerodynamic, 'cause that's not its thing. It's like a— it's like a big... gun. That, like, if its power is incredible and, you know— I like the idea of there being this, like, uh... narrative justification for why Founder's Wake isn't just, like, under attack all the time. Which I feel like would be stymieing. Um, but yeah, it's a— it's like a submarine. It's underwater.

Travis: Uh, Matthew asks:

"I was wondering how the party feels broadly about roleplaying their characters this season, and the classes each character is?"

Griffin: We've talked about roleplaying their characters this season.

Travis: [simultaneously] Yeah, I wanna know about the classes.

Griffin: I wanna hear what you all think about your classes.

Travis: I will say this. Um, I... I think I chose a very specific kind of bard that has a focus on, like, control and, like, psychic stuff. Um, and it's definitely a different caster experience than playing, like, a wizard or, you know, somebody with a broad range of either attack or healing or whatever, right? Like, I basically built him specifically to be good at one kind of one kind of magic.

Griffin: Right.

Travis: Um, and it has forced me a little bit to try to think more, and I think it works for the character too, but to think more in, like, growing in his ability to actually use words to persuade. Um, but I enjoy playing a bard, man. It's— it's fun to have somebody who's really good at, like, one thing.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: Uh, I think I overdid it with the monk. This is my second time playing a monk. Um, and I just don't— I don't— I think that— okay. I think the monk is a little weird for us. One, it's like... weirdly cultural in a way that I don't love. You know what I mean? Like, monk has a lot of, like, religious and sociological baggage that I don't love.

And I think it's a little bit... like, I feel like the tactical advantages of the monk would be more obvious in a game that was played a little, like, less loose than ours. Um, I think that, uh... so I'm not, like, down— I'm sp— I'm speaking specifically to *the Adventure Zone* experience of playing a monk versus, like, the overall experience, 'cause I know that there's, like, lots of benefits.

It's also less flashy, which is— uh, than, like, the wizard or the druid. And so that's tricky, too. Because it's like, when you're doing a show for entertainment, you don't just want, like... okay. It's fun in *Dungeons & Dragons* when you're playing with friends, it can be fun to do an encounter, because at that point you're playing a game and you can turn off the sort of, like, character part of your brain and just, like, think about tactics and strategy and all that stuff.

And with what we do, like, it kind of— there's sort of the impetus to still make it fun. Like, we can't just say, like, well, it's not gonna be entertaining to listen to for a little bit [through laughter] because we have to do a fight. Like—

Travis: "I punch again."

Justin: Yes, "I punch again." And I feel self-conscious about that a lot with Amber Gris. Like, you can tell in my voice when I'm like, "I don't— I punch. I mean, I punch again." And it's not saying there's not other things I can do. It's just like—

Travis: I used to feel that same way with Magnus, man. Where it's just like, "I swing the sword a sixth time." Like, yeah. I get it.

Griffin: Um, you g— but you all also have access to, uh— and you know, it's funny. We just did a live show, like, two days ago. And that is where y'all's, like, lateral thinking skills, like, really shine. I know I give Dad a hard time for it, but I feel like Dad is the best at this. Where he's like, "I wrap a chain around a chandelier on the ceiling, and then— " and sometimes that gets a little too fantastical where it's like, "And I wrap it around his head and he dies."

Uh, but that's— I mean, that is something that I feel like especially Amber is, like, fully equipped to do. And also, like, another thing to keep in mind is you all are level five.

Travis: Yeah, that's true.

Griffin: Like, you all are not— I think you guys are used to a certain level of, like, Swiss Army Knife-ness. Uh, because of the characters that you have played in the past sort of D&D campaigns. But, uh... you know. You'll— you'll— you'll get there. Uhh..

Travis: Dad, what about you?

Clint: I love— I love playing a ranger. I mean, um— I originally kind of envisioned Zoon would be the point man. Um, and, you know, then I realized he was also... sort of the tank. Um, this is— this is what I found interesting, is the fact that, um, the ranger aspect provided what I think is the defining— the defining characteristic about Zoon, and that's the Swarm.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Because very early on we decided all of Zoox's quote, unquote "spells" would be Swarm-based. And trying to adapt that, um, to the play has been fun. I enjoy that a lot. One of the first things I thought that Zoox would do, a lot of coral is— stings. And when I talk about coral, I don't mean necessarily—

Travis: [simultaneously] Stinks?!

Clint: — the— the— stings

Justin: Stinks.

Griffin: It smells super—

Clint: It does stink.

Griffin: — super bad.

Clint: Uh, it stings, and so that's how a lot of the polyps and things in the coral protect themselves. I thought, "Oh, it'd be really cool if he had a burning touch." Well, that— it— that didn't function out very well. But I loved having—

Travis: No, how would you high five? Come on, man!

Clint: Yeah, that's true. Uh, with my non-stinging hand? Um, so I really liked having Swarm. And it's kind of limited some of the things that— that Zoox can do. But it's been fun. I really enjoy that aspect of it. I think that really defines him.

Travis: I will also say, without talking about specific character roleplay but like, just, as a team, one of the things that I really like is that we all went into it so, like, Zoox and Devo are very new to this world— Zoox literally, and Devo through lack of exposure to anything, and Amber has kind of, like— is coming out of retirement.

So we kind of establish from the beginning, like, one, they have not worked together, and two, they're all not great at it? And so that was kind of— like, early days, I kind of decided for Devo, like, he's gonna fuck up a lot of, like, negotiations and interactions. He's gonna push too hard, and he's gonna do this shit, 'cause he doesn't know how it works.

Griffin: The journey Devo is on is— is interesting to me, because as a... as a— a— as the DM for this season, and therefore, like, trying to be in the headspace of, like, the characters that Devo talks to, Devo's kind of detestable.

Travis: Oh yeah!

Griffin: Like, he's kind of— he is— he is... old school self-righteous heroism in a way that, like, has died in this— like, that this world has no use for, right? I see this world as being, like, fully pragmatic all the time. And shit is— shit is really bad, and there are compromises that have to be made, and, uh, everybody is out here doing their best, and Devo is this cloistered twenty-something who thinks he knows the best way to do it. And gets on— and gets on fu—

Travis: Who is— who is, like, the definition of piss and vinegar, yeah.

Griffin: And gets on— but it's not piss and vinegar. It is, like, upstart— like, young upstart self-righteousness.

Travis: Yeah!

Griffin: When, like, the fact of the matter is, like, uh... it's— it's, like... uh, it's not that black and white for most of the characters that he talks to. Um, and so I don't know how much of that is, like... it's fascinating, because now we get into this meta narrative thing of, like, that part of it I think is how we used to play D&D, right? Like, that feels very Magnus to me. This, like, "We are on the side of justice and right." But that's not, like, inherently true all of the time.

Travis: Absolutely.

Griffin: Amber— Amber— Amber did it too, right? With— obviously there's some, like, backstory beef there with her and Shret. Uh, but, like, that too was, like, "You're wrong, you piece of shit!"

Uh, in a place where I don't know 100% that that's— that is— that is the truth. Um, and so, like, I don't know. It's— it's interesting, because I think the characters have justifications for feeling that way, but I also think a reason that that comes up so much is because it is sort of how our characters have talked and interacted and thought about the world in the past.

Travis: Well, it's also— not to... I know we can't get off of points. But Devo is wrong.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Like, that's the thing, is I— I— I— there is a reason I made him young and, like, the cloistered thing, and the fact that he was born after they had come to Founder's Wake. That, like, he... he does not understand what his feelings mean. So, like, his anger and righteousness make him feel right.

Like, he's wrong— like, he is— he does not know how to think about other people's feelings. He does not know how to, like, process that just because he wants it and it feels right and all that stuff, that that is... you know what I mean? So, like... it's something I'm really trying to play, is that he is not... by, you know, my own now-38-year-old standards, a good person.

Griffin: Yeah. Um—

Travis: That he's kind of a piece of shit. [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Thomas asks:

"What inspired the Crescendo?"

That was sort of the— the, uh, faction that— honestly it was, I had an idea for it to be, like, a bigger faction, and then you all kind of blew up the ship and then I realized, like, eh, maybe it's more interesting if it just doesn't happen. Of just, like, you know, I like... I mean, I don't like, but sort of narratively speaking, just rich asshole cults. Uh, who are, like—

Travis: Yeah. You mean like Muffy and Winthrop?

Griffin: Yeah, like Muffy and Winthrop. But this one's even more, like, not even nihilistic— well, I guess kind of nihilistic where it's just like, "I wanna be the one to make polar bears go extinct."

Uh, and then you all just, like, put the, like, only two characters that you ever really interacted with, like, completely in the toilet in that fight? And I was kind of okay with them just being, like, sort of pushover jokes, because they're— you

know, they're probably not the most, uh... powerful of characters, living in this world.

Clint: Juice, you got one you want to answer?

Justin: Uhh, no. I like you guys asking me questions.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: It makes me feel like I'm your teacher.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: And you've come to the foot of the master to learn.

Griffin: I want to say, sort of— this is— there's a couple questions about, like, asking us about deciding to do an underwater campaign, and asking about the different sort of source books. I just want to say, one just came out called *Spelljammer* that's apparently, like, a space-themed D&D 5E, like, expansion book set in the astral plane. Uh, that sounds pretty sick! Sounds pretty cool! I wanna read that one and see if it is cool. It's called *Spelljammer*, and that alone is, like, a good name for a book.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: It is a good name for a book.

Travis: Um, let's see. Caitlin asks:

"Have you found that your contribution to the construction of this world gives you a deeper understand of it?"

And the answer is 1000% yes.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Like, literally if you look at it— I thought about this around, like, episode 5. Where I realized, like, I was the one who introduced based on, like, a card, the Parish. And so my character— I didn't make that decision—

Griffin: But you all did that. We've talked about that.

Travis: Yeah, right?

Griffin: You all did that shit.

Travis: Right, that's what I'm saying! And then Dad, the coral body was his idea, yeah.

Griffin: Came up with coral robots.

Travis: And the, uh— blink sharks.

Griffin: Justin came up with Uncle Joshy's blink sharks, yeah. Uh...

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, it's made things— honestly, it's made things, uh... it makes things so much easier for me from, like, a broader narrative perspective, because I have tried very hard to just focus all of the big story beats on that stuff. Like, I had some— I had some things about the world when we started doing *Quiet Year*, like, about Hominine and all that jazz, uh, that I kind of had in mind. But so far I have tried to just focus on things that you all sort of, uh— you all kind of established about the world. Um... and I wanna— I wanna keep doing that.

"What does the ethersea taste like?" K.D. asks.

Probably not... probably not great.

Justin: Um, we haven't— nobody— nobo— I— [sighs] nobody's tasted it, right?'

Griffin: Hmm.

Travis: But what does it taste like to you?

Griffin: No, there are characters who have tastes the ethersea.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: Imagine if you accidentally sprayed Axe body spray in your mouth. That's what I imagine.

Griffin: No, I think it has a good taste.

Travis: You think so?!

Griffin: You know, I—

Justin: Yeah, I think it has, like, a good taste.

Griffin: You know how saltwater is like— has salt, and it's salty in it?

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: And we've talked about the salt, you know, as, like, a magic, um... reagent in this world. But maybe instead it tastes good and it's sugary. Mmm!

Travis: I mean, listen. Devo sprays it into his mouth.

Griffin: Yeah, that's probably true. Maybe it's like Binaca then.

Travis: See, that— honest-to-god—

Clint: That's what it tastes like.

Travis: — Binaca is how I've always pictured the atomizer. That it is not, like, one of those, like, spray—

Griffin: [simultaneously] Just a fresh spray?

Travis: — with a bulb on it that's just like—

Griffin: I don't think they make Binaca anymore.

Travis: Really?! Oh my God. Finish the show. Um—

Justin: Finish the show!

Travis: No, I wanna talk! Hey!

Justin: Travis can't go on.

Travis: Speaking of the show... it's this show, MaxFunDrive. It's going on now, folks.

Justin: Oh my gosh. No way.

Travis: Yeah! Maximu—

Justin: Why haven't you said anything about this before?!

Travis: I should've mentioned it sooner, Justin. You're absolutely correct. We got lots of different levels that you can choose to support, or upgrade your support, too. This is going out the second week, and we're recording it day one of the first week, so I assume at this point we've blown past our goal. We're well on our way to triple digits. Mmm? I don't know! We'll see!

But we can only do that with your help, when you join, upgrade, or boost your membership, or buy a gift membership for a friend.

What is boosting your membership, Travis? You threw that right there in the middle. Well, I'll tell you. Maybe you've already reached a level, you're already a supporter. And you think, "Man, I'd love to give more, but the next level... that's a little too much for me. I can't afford to give that much."

We totally understand that. You can boost by giving a little bit more every month. You won't qualify for the next level gifts, but you will contribute to the goal. You will support the art and artists you love, and we will appreciate it.

So, there. There you go. Uh, you know what, Griffin?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: What has MaxFun supporters' support meant to you personally?

Griffin: It— it's meant the world. Like, I don't think— *The Adventure Zone* is a difficult show to make. Uh, and it always has been. From a, like, pre-production, post production standpoint, it is tough, right?

It's not hard to get the— well, I mean, as we have more kids and the world kind of... becomes more challenging, I would say it is getting harder to get the four of us together in a single call at the same time. Um, but it's— you know, it is a much harder show to make than anything else that we do, right?

And so if we weren't... if we didn't have a large audience of people coming out to directly support it, uh, and had been doing so for, you know, a decade now, we wouldn't be making it. And we certainly wouldn't be making it weekly. We certainly wouldn't be making it with, like, a big team of people that we've been able to hire. Like, and all of that means that, like, I have gotten to spend my working days on the most sort of satisfying and life affirming sort of creative endeavor that I've ever come across. And so, like, it— it is— it means everything to me.

Travis: Well, there you go, folks. For just pennies a day, you could support waifs like Griffin. To help us make this show.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Uh, your support means the world to us obviously, as Griffin has said. Um, and I think Justin, Dad, and I, I'll speak for us to say, ditto to what Griffin said. The sa— no, sorry, the same. Um, but we can—

Clint: Ditto.

Travis: We can only do this with your support, by going to Maximumfun.org/join. I was thinking before we wrapped up, because we've covered most of the questions, is there any, like, last things you guys wanted to say about Ethersea?

Griffin: I actually had an idea for how we could wrap up.

Justin: Uh-oh!

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Um... I wanna know, before we, uh, reach our conclusion here, what about the— either the world or the characters— even if it's not something that currently is sort of in the scope of the story we've been telling, even if it's not, like, a plot beat that we've introduced that, you know, we could return to in the future. Like, I want to know what you all want to explore more in this world. Keeping in mind, like, all the shit that we established in the setup episodes, and the stuff that has kind of even just popped up on the periphery. Like, what's interesting to you guys about the world, and what do you want to— what do you want to know more about?

Justin: I— Justin McElroy, here. Uh, I would like a storyline that is... similar to— that explores leisure. Um, I feel like we have done a couple now that have explored, like, how the upper classes entertain themselves, right? We had, like, a sort of zhuzhy, uh, cha-cha auction, and then we had the obviously, like, hunting animals for sport is, like, definitely, like, an upper crust. I would like something kind of like *Petals to the Metal* where it's, like, what are— what are the lower classes doing for recreation? I think that that's pretty— I think that that's, um, kind of an interesting— like, is there sports? Is there... like, what are we doing in that regard? 'Cause people have to pass the time somehow.

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: Um, and I'd be interested in that.

Travis: Um, I— I think one of the things that we have not really touched on at all is, like, how this world of Ethersea and stuff has affected, like, family structure and affected, like, education. Like, basically, the day-to-day life of people living there. Like, do we send kids to school for eight hours a day? Or is it, like, all hands on deck, we need to work? Is it like, yeah, you get married, and yeah, if you don't wanna have kids, that's fine. Or is it like, listen, we need to repopulate? Or is it the other way around of, like, we only have so many resources and so we have to be careful about stuff like that? Like, what day-to-day mechanics. I mean, Justin touched on it with, like, recreation, but what are the, like, restrictions and limitations that have been imposed because of limited resources, and stuff like that?

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Um... I think I'd like to know more about what happened to the Einarr. And I don't know how we can do that. But, I mean, the fact that... [laughs] a whole civilization was—

Griffin: A nation, yeah.

Clint: — was wiped out! And— and their ghosts still hung around. I— I still find that... a very compelling question. I like the really big questions like that, and what caused the storm? Is it ever gonna go away?

Travis: What does the ethersea taste like? Yeah, basic stuff.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Clint: Yeah. Why is Zoox so darn cool? That was one of the questions.

Travis: I'd like Devo to meet some sexy singles, if we could figure that out.

Justin: Whoa, yes! Romance! We've been short on that this season.

Travis: Yeah, get Devo to meet some sexy singles in his area. I think that would be really cool. Um... and just to have him smooch a bunch of people.

Griffin: [unenthusiastically] Okay.

Justin: [chanting] More smooching! More smooching!

Travis: More smooching! I wanna smooch my brother!

Clint: Well, along those lines, let me say this. Along those lines, they do still make Binaca.

Travis: Thank you!

Griffin: Okay!

Justin: Okay, good.

Griffin: Thank you.

Travis: God. Oh, God. What a relief.

Griffin: Thank you. Thank you for confirming that.

Justin: What a huge relief.

Travis: Oh my God. And you know what else is a relief? You knowing that you're gonna support us at Maximumfun.org/join.

Griffin: I think, Travis, [holding back laughter] actually you've done enough transitions to the pledge breaks.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Yeah. Hey, listen. We really, really need your support. Um, after last year's abject failure, we gotta come back from it. And I think this is the exact moment that you, insert your name here, should go to Maximumfun.org/join and do the right thing! We make this show for you to delight you. We do it for free, but we don't. And we probably wouldn't, now that I say it out loud!

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: 'Cause it's so hard. Uh, we really, really appreciate your support, and it means the world to us, and it— it— it allows us to make the stuff we make. If you like this stuff you want there to be more of it, this is your moment. I've been waiting for you. Get on my back. I'm walking over to the website anyway. That, where there's one set of footprints is where I carried you to the URL Maximumfun.org/join. For just \$5 a month you're gonna get a, honestly, nauseating amount of bonus content, BoCo, in the parlance of the network. Years of really, honestly, wild stuff. You want to hear us play Adventure Zone with Lin Manuel Miranda? Well, it's in there.

Travis: Matt Mercer.

Justin: I mean, there's lots— there's lots of, uh, incredible, incredible stuff. Um—

Travis: I just, by the way, did the quick math. If you hit play on the 350 hours, that's about 15 days straight of bonus content.

Justin: Oh my God.

Griffin: Get a poop sock ready!

Travis: Yeah, man.

Justin: Get ready.

Travis: I wish that's how we ended the episode. I wish we had the guts.

Justin: [through laughter] Get a poop sock ready!

Travis: I wish we had the guts.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Audio stinger.

Travis: To end the episode on that.

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: [singing] Poop sock.

Justin: We actually have no way to end these. We've never come up with one.

Travis: [speaking quickly] Thanks everybody so much for supporting us and listening to Adventure Zone and Ethersea, and we'll be back with more episodes next week!

Griffin: Bye-ee!

Travis and Justin: Bye-ee!

Clint: [high pitched] Goodbye!

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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