

The Adventure Zone: Ethersea – Episode 39

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

Devo: Somebody controlled Guidance via the tone wheel to make her... drink... the poison. And there are not a lot of people that are strong enough... uh to make the Hand of Guidance do this.

Griffin: You see a message appear in faint, glowing script on the street between you. "Meet me at Nermal's Pile at lights out. - The Beholder".

The Beholder: [muffled] And can you all like... get it the fuck together?

Griffin: And he throws down a— a big stack of papers, held together with clips.

The Beholder: [muffled] That's the journal of heretic Naav. You secured it at the Abyssal Auction and you returned it to Joshy for payment, and then he turned it around and sold it to his client, and that client was Benefactor Orlene.

Devo: I'll take the tracer spike, please. So I can find Orlene and probably kill him, if I'm being honest.

Amber: We'll bring him to...

Amber & Zoox: [simultaneously] Justice.

Amber: Alright, thank you. What was your name again?

Chauncey: [muffled] Oh, Chauncey. [panicked] I mean The— The Beholder!

Clint: And I would like to say that I am very proud of the decision we made to payoff the debt, because you know, when you live underwater, it's good to achieve li— liqui— liquidity.

[intro music plays]

Griffin: So you all are in sort of final... uh preparations before you disembark from your— your parking spot in Founder's Wake, and as the ship worms are loading up the last of the supplies that you purchased, Kodira is— is there uh Amber, and— She's come basically to check up on y'all's progress on the investigation so far. And... It's up to y'all how much— how much you want to actually, you know, reveal to her, but she is standing at the side of the ship, by the airlock, and she says um...

Kodira: Are y'all goin' somewhere? Is— Is... Is this part of the... Is this part of the investigation?

Devo: Um... You know what, I— Amber, stop me if you disagree, but um... Ballasters seem to be dropping like flies, and so I think we should give you the information we have. It's not much, but uh, there is a guy named Benefactor Orlene who is, to my mind, just a real piece of shit. And we... think he might have some information regarding what is going on with uh, you know, the Hand of Guidance and the Whisp and all of these things. So we are going to go find him and see if we can get that information from him. Or... I don't know, kill him? If we have to, to stop him from doing something, uh, bad. We won't kill him just for fun, let me be clear, because you are uh law enforcement. We will not just be killing him to get our jollies, uh we will kill him—

Griffin: Roll a Deception check— No, I'm just kidding.

Justin: [chuckles]

Amber: We would also try to, you know, bring him in peaceful. We got—

Zoox: Awww...

Amber: We don't wanna murder some, but we're not like judge [chuckles] Judge Judy and executioner.

Clint: [wheezes]

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: [chuckles] She nods and then she looks around, just to make sure nobody else is kinda close by and she walks up to you, Amber, and she says...

Kodira: Listen, I can't... For something like this, I can't bring the full brunt of the Biggest Baby... down with— with y'all, but um... If— If it's alright, I— I could— I could come with, just to help out, if I can. Um... If there's anything I can do to... [sighs] Like you said, stop the [chuckles] execution of the Ballasters, um I— I would like to take part, so to— May I... join you all?

Amber: Let us huddle.

Kodira: I— I understand. Take your time.

Griffin: And she gives y'all some space.

Amber: [quietly] Anybody have a strong feeling?

Zoox: [whispers] Yeah, I wanna— What does "full brunt" mean? Is there such a thing as "half brunt" or like "quarter brunt"?

Amber: It's— It's a good point, but not relevant.

Zoox: Okay, okay.

Devo: I—

Zoox: I haven't got a problem, Kodira's kinda fun.

Devo: Listen, as much as I would love to have um, you know, the Ballaster of Defense watching our backs, I do think we are running out of allies here at home, and there is a lot of shit happening here. I think she would be way more useful, you know, uh protecting, you know, like Hermine and... y— you know, the Church and all of these things, in case anybody feels froggy here at home.

Amber: That's a good point, but I feel like— I— I've always had this sneaking suspicion that when people aren't with us, they're not really doing much of anything. Have you guys felt that ever?

Griffin: [laughs loudly]

Clint: [snorts]

Devo: Oh, like when—

Amber: Like—

Devo: We are not around, they cease to exist?

Amber: Not cease to exist, that's so firm, but like they don't really do anything if— Unless we're watchin' `em.

Devo: Mm.

Amber: And we're near `em. So I feel like... she should probably just come.

Zoox: Um... I don't know about metaphysical.

Devo: Um—

Amber: I—

Devo: Okay, but let me also throw this out there, she is uh, very lawful, and the way that we handle situations is not always that.

Amber: Yeah, but if we have to go in hard.

Devo: Yeah.

Amber: Then havin' somebody there who could say "Hey, they had to go in hard".

Devo: Oh...

Amber: Wouldn't that be helpful?

Zoox: Mm-hmm. Even—

Devo: Would she be cool?

Amber: Sh— Well, she— I feel like she can party.

Devo: You ask her if she can party, and then—

Amber: Hey. Hey, Kodira?

Kodira: Yeah.

Amber: Can you party?

Kodira: I think you already know the answer to that.

Amber: That's a no, right?

Justin & Clint: [wheezes]

Kodira: I mean, I— I did have, um. I did have—

Amber: No-one who can party.

Kodira: Yeah.

Amber: Doesn't respond to that—

Clint: Mm-hmm.

Amber: — with "Hell yeah, I could party".

Kodira: Well, I did have that um mixer. At the—

Devo: [quietly] Oh, boy.

Kodira: At the headquarters and I invited you. You did not come, but I—

Amber: I thought we attended, if memory serves.

Kodira: But I made a— a dip. I made a dip there—

Amber: [exhales heavily]

Kodira: — that people talked about for a couple days afterwards.

Clint: [makes interested sounds]

Amber: You got any of that dip on you?

Kodira: I— The dip will take me weeks to prepare.

Amber: Alright, well maybe when we get back. Come on. Let's go. It's good. It'll be good!

Devo: Okay.

Kodira: Alright, road trip! I mean— s— sea—

Devo: Wa— Kodira, will you put some people, I assume you already have but just in case, like on Ballaster Hermine and on, you know, everybody?

Kodira: Um, naw. I told them actually they could have the week off. I said that there were— there have been— there was a murder of a high-profile figure here and a lot of unknowns happening, and then I was like "But you know what?"...

Zoox: [chuckles]

Kodira: "Labor Day's coming up, and—"

Devo: I—

Amber: See, that's party. You party.

Zoox: Oh, that's partyin'!

Amber: Okay.

Zoox: She is goin'— She is goin' full brunt with the sarcasm, isn't she!

Devo: I was not trying to be offensive, I'm sorry, it's just there's been a lot of sh—

Kodira: No, I've been briefed on sort of the way that [chuckles] you conduct yourself.

Amber: Yeah.

Kodira: With people.

Amber: Damn, Devo said he's sorry. Did you have a stroke? You okay?

Devo: [quietly] Oh, boy.

Kodira: Let's... Let's get— Let's get goin'. I'm ready if y'all are.

Zoox: Hope she doesn't snore.

Griffin: You all board the Coriolis and— and Urchin is there to greet you as you walk in through the airlock, and he looks at f— he looks—

Travis: Is he wearin' a little uniform?

Griffin: Uh...

Clint: Please. Please!

Griffin: Yeah, okay. Fine, yeah. He's wearing a little uniform. And he's got—

Clint: [chuckles delightedly]

Griffin: And he's got a little toolbelt on.

Clint: Oh!

Griffin: And he's a cute little guy pie. And he looks up at the four of you and he looks at Kodira, and then he says...

Urchin: Who's the cop?

Clint: [laughs from a distance]

Devo: Yes. She's a—

Urchin: I don't know— I don't know about all this.

Devo: Okay, well then you can get off the ship. I don't—

Urchin: I just realized I was—

Amber: Okay, you are cordially invited to leave.

Urchin: I was— I feel like I wasn't really part of the decision-making process, and I feel like I've at least earned that, don't you think?

Zoox: Hmm.

Devo: Okay, we'll— we'll take a vote. The four of us, who wants to have Kodira onboard?

Travis: And Devo raises his hand.

Clint: Zoox raises his hand.

Justin: Yeah, Amber raises her hand.

Urchin: [skeptical] Alright... Just don't come cryin' to me whenever she starts doin' cop stuff.

Devo: Okay.

Zoox: You know, we really should start CCing... Urchin on stuff.

Urchin: I don't think that's too much to ask!

Zoox: Just a CC. I mean—

Travis: Is that "S-E-A S-E-A"?

Justin: [laughs quietly]

Urchin: Listen, I got— I got big ideas. I've got idea— Nachos machine!

Devo: A nachos—

Zoox: So, have— have you proven out the theory? Ha— Have you been doin' anything while we weren't talking about you or seeing you?

Urchin: Nah, it's weird. It's like whenever you guys aren't around...

Justin: [wheezes]

Urchin: There's a voi—

Justin: [laughs quietly]

Urchin: I feel like I sink into an inky black void! Anyway, I'm gonna climb up on the pipes! And be— And not exist for a little while.

Clint: [cackles]

Griffin: And he turns into a little hedgehog ball and rolls up the walls into a vent, and disappears.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay.

[boat engine revs]

Griffin: The Coriolis disembarks and uh you all begin the journey, following the tracer spike, which basically sits on the dashboard like a— like a little hula—

Travis: Like a hula dancer.

Griffin: Hula dancer figurine.

Travis: Yup.

Griffin: And points in the direction of Benefactor Orlene's ship.

Travis: Uh whenever there is downtime.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Or like autopilot or whatever.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: I— Devo wants to spend some time looking through the book uh the— Guidance's book that he took from her office.

Griffin: Um, okay. It is definitely written in like a cipher.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Why don't you... roll... Let me see. What kinda check would that be to try and... Maybe just a— an Intelligence check, to try and figure out what the cipher is.

Travis: [whispers] Intelligence. Hm... Not too bad at that.

[sound of dice rolling]

Travis: I mean, this time wasn't great.

Griffin: Noooooo. Uh—

Travis: Now, wait. Hold on. The cipher is what she has written, right?

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Okay, so this book is two parts, right? So the— every hand is given— It's basically like a combination of like a bible and a journal.

Griffin: Right.

Travis: And this is like what the specific— each hand is given the like the magic they learn.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Or what their focus is. So he's not able to read her notes, right? But the rest of it he would be able to read it.

Griffin: Okay, sure. Okay.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Here's what I will give you with— But you filled a fuckin' six.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: So I'm not gonna give you a lot. The— the bible part of it has a... uh a very well-known parable. I think it's one of those things that like even people who are not of the Church—

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: — have at least heard of before. And it is... basically the parable of the prodigal son.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: It is a parable about Benevolence's sort of solitude after he betrays the rest of the... Vestiges after giving magic to the world of man. And the— the, you know, the desolation that comes along with that. But then how they desolation becomes joy whenever, you know, people begin to join— join his flock in appreciation. And it is just a— it's just a parable about, you know, forgiveness and reunification and reunion. She has like recently marked up this— this— this page. That is— that is all I'm gonna give you with a six.

Travis: Okay, that's fair.

Griffin: Um.

Travis: He wants to keep working on it, so like whenever you think like "Enough time has passed, you can do another check". This is not like "Well, didn't work that one time, I'm not interested in it anymore", you know?

Griffin: I mean I get that, but you failed the check to—

Travis: Absolutely.

Griffin: — interpret it, so I don't know what— what is going to change, but I will— I will keep your request in mind.

Travis: Thank you very much.

Griffin: Why don't we... ro-o-o-o-oooll that readiness check? Who— Who hasn't done it in a while? Da— I know Dad— I think Dad's done two, because he wanted to... redeem himself.

Clint: Mm-hmm.

Justin: Yes. I can do one.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Uh—

Travis: Go for it, Amber. I think you did the first one.

Justin: Do I roll a dice 20?

Griffin: No, you roll a dice 100, and right now your Readiness rating—
Let's see, you got Zoox's expertise, you got the Astral Sextant.

Travis: [very quietly] [snorts] Nice.

Griffin: You got some intel and some generous rations. You do have the
minus four Urchin penalty, as you gave him a raise, uh...

Travis: Did we?

Griffin: On a recent mission. [chuckles] You did, yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: So—

Justin: [begrudgingly] Yeah.

Griffin: That is a total of ten! That is your I think highest Readiness
bonus so far, so let's see what you got.

Justin: At least I'm not gonna get a one.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Well, you could get a— on a l— If you remember, the one just
sort of didn't factor in any of the Readiness bonuses, it was just a crit—
crit fail.

Justin: Oh, that's a good point. Alright, so.

Griffin: Let's see.

Justin: Here we go. [takes a deep breath] Roll that beautiful bean footage.

Clint: [imitating Mr Bean] Hello, it's my flexible friend.

Travis: Damn, that's a good Bean.

Griffin: That is pretty good.

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: It's 62.

Griffin: 62...

Travis: Right, total 52, plus ten?

Griffin: Yeah yeah yeah. Okay...

Travis: That was really good, Dad.

Clint: [imitating Mr Bean] Thank you.

Travis: You could do sound effects.

Griffin: Um...

Justin: [imitating Mr Bean] My flexible friend.

Travis: Now Justin, you sound a little bit like Bean if he was under great stress or weight.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [imitating Mr Bean in an elongated croak] Myyyyyy fleeeexiiiiibleeee frieeeeeeend.

Clint: [wheezes]

Griffin: Do you guys appreciate the fact that there's probably, I would say 98% of the people who listen to the show do not maybe understand that incredibly specific Mr Bean pull?

Travis: You mean where he use—

Justin: Okay, here's the problem, right? Here's the problem. Here's the problem.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: It's not my job to decide if something is worth making it to the audience's ears or not.

Travis: That's true.

Justin: It's Rachel's.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: [cackles]

Justin: So, if she doesn't— [wheezes] I just go. I'm a comet, you know.

Clint: [imitating Mr Bean] Please.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: [imitating Mr Bean] Please leave me in.

Griffin: If you search YouTube for "my flexible friend.mp4", it's gonna get you where you need to go, folks.

Justin: [cackles] I'm just sayin' that like... I'm a comet. And Rachel just scoops me up in her net and flies me off-planet.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: If that comet—

Travis: Wait.

Justin: — isn't worth scoopin' up in the net.

Travis: What is that reference?! Wait, hold on. Is that— Is that like— Who does that?

Griffin: Maybe like the *Little Prince*?

Justin: *The Little Prince*.

Travis: *The Little Prince* scoops up a comet in a net and flies off the planet?!

Justin: [sings] Little Prince.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Justin: [sings] Outer space. He'll catch a shooting star and sail away.
[speaking] 'Member?

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: [imitating Mr Bean] No.

Griffin: That's another—

Justin: [wheezes]

Travis: Bean, get out of here!

Griffin: We are—

Justin: Out of the ship!

Griffin: We've— Bean, get out of here.

Travis: You've been riding our coattails for too long!

Griffin: You got the launch of *Man vs Bee* to look forward to, you need to get ready, psychologically.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: No, that's Rowan Atkinson.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Not Mr Bean.

Griffin: Oh, that's a different thing. Okay!

Justin: Mr Bean, you do need to stop hanging out with Rowan Atkinson though.

Clint: [imitating Mr Bean] Alright.

Griffin: So, a— a 62. You all have... travelled for maybe half a day or so, and you've entered into like pretty— pretty dark, deep water. And it's getting tough to kind of, you know, see where you're going outside of the, you know, floodlights on the front of the ship guiding you. But your peripheral is just sort of not useful to you right now.

And so you're in sort of a slow-going mode, slowly idling through this dark water, when something floats in front of the viewport on the bridge. It is a— a large spherical shape. It is like roughly half the size of the Coriolis, you would estimate, and most of its form is just this like translucent jelly. But at the center of it, there is a small bright orange shape. The shape kind of resembles an atom. There's like smaller lights sort of rapidly orbiting around a center light, pulsating in a sort of heartbeat-like rhythm.

And so it— it floats up and across your— your field of view, and after it passes, you can see that this is merely one of... maybe hundreds of these huge spheres? And the rest of them are tethered to the ocean floor with these sort of white, fleshy strands. And so they're all— they're all stationary, kind of pulling at their strands. And at the center of this enormous field of glowing spheres, you can see... another light, and this one is much more faint. It is a gentle green light, radiating from... what appears to be a statue of a four-armed figure.

And there's one last thing that catches your eye. That first sphere that floated by your ship has drifted upward toward the surface a ways, and against the sort of orange light that it is casting off, you can see the shadow of some hapless fish swimming toward it. And you see the fish stop, and then quickly swim toward the center of this sphere to kind of like sniff it out. And as soon as it touches the sphere, it explodes violently.

[dull explosion sound effect plays]

Travis: Mm.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: The— the sphere does. The fish does too, but only because the sphere does.

Travis: As a reaction. As reac— Yeah.

Griffin: As a reaction to the sphere exploding.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: And it sends like a shock wave through the ship, and all the other spheres down, sort of tethered to the ocean floor, kind of very gently drift back and forth, but none of them are sort of caught in the chain reaction. That is what you all... see.

Travis: Are they all like tethered so that they're floating at the same level? Or is this like a literal like... obstacle course minefield thing?

Griffin: It is a literal obstacle course minefield, is— is a good way of thinkin' about it.

Travis: Then it's too big to go around.

Griffin: No, you could go around it.

Clint: Mm...

Griffin: That is— that is the option I will give you on a— on a good 62.

Travis: Okay, one more question. The statue at the center. Is it like gigantic, or is it like, you know, 6-foot statue?

Griffin: It's maybe— It's maybe like um... ten, 15 feet tall. So not gigantic, but pretty big. Big enough for you to be able to make out that it is a four-armed, glowing green person. Statue.

Clint: Is it— Obviously the ship would have difficulty going— How much space between the— the spheres?

Griffin: I mean, doin' just some quick back of the napkin math, you— you do not think it would be possible for the Coriolis to get through here without touching some of them.

Clint: But an individual could.

Griffin: But an individual—

Clint: An individual co—

Griffin: Absolutely could.

Clint: Zoox would really like to go check out the statue.

Justin: Hell yeah.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: And—

Justin: Get out there, bud.

Travis: I actually have just one more question.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: The tracer spike? Is it like... bing bing bing, he's in there? Or are like—

Griffin: No no no, this is— this is— It is still pointing— It is pointing you past the...

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Past this— this minefield.

Travis: Alright, Zoox. Go, man.

Clint: Okay.

Amber: Go for it.

Travis: And Dad, have you rolled up a second character, just in case? I just—

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: I thought I'd use the second character from the other night.

Travis: Yeah. Okay great, yeah.

Justin: It's 62, it can't be that bad. [wheezes]

Travis: Well, but it's also not that good. Like if— if—

Justin: Yeah, that's true.

Travis: If you got a 62 on a test, you wouldn't be like "Yes!". [chuckles]
"I did it!"

Justin: A 62 is the one where at the end of the day you're like "Well, I don't know".

Clint: [snorts]

Justin: "Can't really call it good or bad, but we all got through it, I guess."

Travis: Hey—

Clint: "We put our eight hours in, and that was good."

Travis: "Hey, I'm supposed to have surgery tomorrow. What do you know about the surgeon?"

"Oh, I'd say he's like 62% good."

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: "I'm not wild about that."

Griffin: Okay Zoox, you hop on out the... the sort of launch bay moon pool for the bathysphere and you are— you are in the water. What's your— What's your plan here?

Clint: To move very, very carefully.

Griffin: M-kay.

Clint: Between— through the— the— the mine spheres.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Right.

Clint: And investigate...

Griffin: The statue.

Clint: The statue.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Before he goes.

Griffin: Yes?

Travis: Devo says—

Devo: Hey. Do not die.

Travis: And gives him Bardic Inspiration.

Griffin: Good call. Okay, Zoox... You dive downward into— into the deep, toward this minefield. And as you approach the sort of outer perimeter, like the outer-most spheres, you notice that as you get closer to them, the atom at the center of these things? They— they start to glow a little bit faster, and it almost seems like the spheres are... like magnetically attracted toward you. So a few of them start to kind of like pull at their strands and begin to move in your direction, as you get close.

Clint: Um... So these are obviously some kind of... creature.

Justin: [snorts]

Travis & Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: Right?

Travis: Some sort of hugging spheres.

Griffin: It's a delicacy, actually. Why don't you roll a Nature check for me?

[sounds of dice rolling]

Griffin: Jeez Louise! It's a six.

Griffin: Um... hmm.

Clint: That's with a plus three! I rolled a three.

Griffin: Yeah. You— You cannot tell. You can't tell. I mean, there is a flashing light inside of this thing, right? So at the very least it is not... inert. It's not a rock. It is alive in some sense, right? You don't know about the... intelligence of— of whatever these things are, but there is— there is life there.

Clint: [chuckles] Alright, um... Zoox casts *Summon Beast*.

Griffin: Oh, shit. Okay.

Clint: And uh... Summons a uh... Let's see. [mutters] Who did he—

Travis: Devo scoots the ship back.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah, right? [chuckles]

Clint: Well, I think— I think what I'm gonna do is do *Summon Beast*.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: And.. bring up— What was the name of the— the— the seal? The giant—

Travis: The elephant seal?

Clint: [thoughtfully] Yeah, what was his name?

Travis: Are elephant seals known for their maneuverability and dexterity amongst mines?

Clint: Mm-mm. No, you're missing my point.

Travis: Dad, you have this taste—

Griffin: Trav—

Clint: You're missing my point altogether!

Travis: Uh-huh.

Griffin: What twisted scientist Travis would— would— would challenge that hypothesis? Of just like "You know"—

Clint: I'm gonna s—

Travis: They got some weird shit in the 60s, Griffin.

Griffin: Yeah, I guess that's fair.

Clint: And they're in— And they're in, you know, they— pretty naturally aquatic. No, I'm gonna send this... um... Gosh, I can't remember what the hell it's called.

Griffin: It's a— It's a different elephant seal. It looks a lot like the first one.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: But this one has its own name.

Clint: Well in that case, I'm gonna send a narwhal. I'm gonna make a narwhal.

Travis: Okay.

Clint: And send that into the—

Griffin: A baby narwhal? `Cause a narwhal's big.

Justin: Is this gonna be the episode— Is this gonna be the episode of *The Adventure Zone* where Dad blows up a narwhal for no reason?

Griffin: [laughs] Startin' to feel like it.

Travis: If so, I win the pool, so.

Griffin & Justin: [laughs]

Clint: No, I'm goin' b— No no, I'm goin' back. I'm gonna make it just a seal.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: [snorts]

Griffin: A regular old seal, not an elephant seal.

Justin: Not great.

Clint: And I'm gonna s— I'm gonna s—

Justin: [singing *The Rose* by Seal] "Did you know. That when it blows."

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [continues singing] "A beat on a Sunday."

Clint: I'm gonna use that seal and send it towards a certain section of where these uh sphere mines are hanging.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: And— And try to d— have them be attracted to the seal.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Which would clear a path for Zoox to swim through.

Griffin: I'll give you that.

Clint: To get to the statue.

Griffin: I'll give you that for sure. Okay, that's—

Travis: I also just wanna say, Dad has this really great tell where an idea will occur to him and he'll go [imitates Clint laughing to himself], and like have this like chuckle, and that chuckle means like "I'm gonna do something wild here".

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And I love it.

Griffin: In the mid— In the middle— In the middle of a live show that I am DMing, that is the scariest sound.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: That does exist.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, so I'm gonna give you advantage on... an Acrobatics check to try to weave your way through. Because you have sort of gotten these things to drift away, you know— you know, at least partially.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: From you, and are able to kind of—

Travis: And—

Griffin: —clear a path.

Travis: And you still have a Bardic Inspiration.

Griffin: You do still have that.

Travis: Just remember that.

Clint: Well, I won't need it, 'cause that's a dirty 20.

Griffin: That is a dirty 20. Go ahead and roll the second one, we'll see if you can crit.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: A clean 20.

[sound of dice rolling]

Clint: Nah, 15.

Griffin: Okay! Yeah, I mean with a 20, it takes some time and some very careful sort of co-ordination to make sure that the seal is just always pulling these things away from you, but you are able to sneak your way through the minefield, toward the statue.

You are not a— I don't think Zoox would be able to, like, identify any kind of symbology here. This thing has been here for a while, and so this was obviously crafted by somebody, and it appears like there was an inscription at some point, but it is completely weathered away.

And you are— you are now in front of this statue. The rest of the spheres are kind of giving this clearing like a bit of a berth, so you— you are not in any immediate danger from the spheres here.

Clint: Make an Investigation check.

Griffin: Okay. Roll that.

Clint: That's a 13.

Travis: Do— Wait, before Griffin gives you the answer, do you wanna use that 1d8? For Bardic Inspiration?

Clint: Yeah, why not.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: No, no no no no! Let's save it, 'cause—

Griffin: [laughs evilly]

Clint: No no. I know how Griffin works.

Griffin: [laughs] Uh—

Clint: And I'll save the Bardic Inspiration.

Griffin: Okay, what you notice with a 13, and it's less noticing and more of just in a like mental observation, you sort of connect the dots a little bit. This particular shade of green that this four-armed statue is giving off is familiar to you. It is the same color of the... spectral arms that Amber is able to summon up.

Clint: Can I tell anything else? About the uh—

Griffin: [sighs] Um—

Clint: About the statue. I mean, just looking at it, without investigating?

Travis: Four arms were better for huggin' my man.

Griffin: I can tell you that the s— It doesn't look like the light is... like irradiating from the stone. This is not like a glowing stone. It almost seems like it is encased in this— in this green light. Like it is forming a— a— a layer around the stone.

Clint: Okay. He whips out his shell phone.

Griffin: `Kay.

Clint: And communicates back to the ship, and says um...

Zoox: Woah, hey. Thi— It's like— This statue? Is like— like a tribute to— to Amber. It's like it's— You know how your arms, Amber?

Amber: Yeah.

Zoox: When you do your magic arms?

Amber: Yup.

Zoox: It's like— like— it's like that, and it's got that same kind of green glow, and it's got four arms! So I mean like, when you do your magic stuff, your magic arms, that's what it looks like. And... I... I'm not sure it's a statue. I think it's something inside.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Zoox: What— What do you want?

Amber: What do you mean?

Zoox: I mean it's like— It's like it's— It's... There's somethin' inside the statue. It's— It's like it's encased in something.

Amber: Can I f— I can— I vote like, I feel real bad about this, guys. I feel like we should go.

Devo: No, listen. This is what I think, is if you— Okay, so what we've got here, right? A minefield. That requires dexterity to get through to prove that you are worthy to collect whatever monk power is in that statue. You gotta go like hug that statue, or give it like a... a high 20? You know what I mean? So— And I bet if you do, you get some kind of like kickass monk ability.

Zoox: Oh ho ho ho!

Amber: What is wrong with you that you think that's the way the world works?

Zoox: [excitedly] Oh, I think it does too!

Devo: Now, hold on.

Zoox: I'm with him!

Devo: Now hold on, Amber. I have studied magic! I spray magic sea salt into my mouth to make people do things. This is how the world works! There is magic here, and this statue is glowing.

Amber: That's magic. It's not on a— It's not a— It's not a vending machine. You don't do a good job and then get a special treat.

Devo: I have never heard anyone else, right? That can do what you do with your magic arms, right? There is a statue with magic arms just like you, and you're like "This probably isn't connected to me".

Zoox: Hey! I have— I have another idea! Do you think you could— we could pick it up with the uh... with the arm? Our grappling arm? With the ship arm?

Amber: Yeah, I think it's too big.

Zoox: Is it?

Amber: Just so— let me pr— [chuckles] Let me pray on it for a second, hold on.

Griffin: Is it too bi— I— I don't think that there's— It would take a miracle, I think, for you to get this— Get the claw in there, pull this thi— rip this thing from the sea floor, and extract it, without blowing up the entire minefield.

Amber: It's a me— Listen, y'all. I prayed on it, and I think it would take a miracle.

Devo: Yeah.

Clint: [chuckles]

Amber: To get in there and extract this thing from the sea floor without blowin' it up. Alright, you know what? Fuck it. Fine. You know what? Fine. You only go around once. Let's go. Let me vape.

Zoox: There's a— There's a gap in—

Griffin: Let you what?

Zoox: — here where my—

Amber: Let me vape!

Zoox: Okay.

Amber: Vape on!

Griffin: Okay. You throw on your vape—

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: I'm assuming that means put on your vapor suit, or are you ripping... Okay.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I—

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: I don't know how Amber does it, if she needs to... rip some choice clouds before she does something dangerous.

Justin: Vaping is illegal in the Ethersea.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: You're right, I forgot about that.

Travis: They call it "huffing".

Griffin: Okay, you throw on your vape suit and jump— jump into the water as well, and...

Justin: Wait, do you mean my vaping jacket? [wheezes] My—

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Sorry. No, you mean Amber.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Yes.

Justin: Not me. Not my special vaping ja—

Griffin: Correct.

Justin: Alright. I through my vape suit on and I ha— head on out there.

Griffin: Okay. You sink down to the bottom of the— the— the ocean.

Travis: Oh, hey. Wait!

Clint: There's still a gap.

Griffin: Oh wait.

Travis: Don't fuck up.

Justin: That's nothing.

Griffin: Oh you're giving Amber the uh the—

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Can't you only do that for one person at a time?

Travis: Uh, let me see. [mumbles thoughtful noises]

Griffin: I'm pretty sure.

Travis: Mmmmmmmmmmm... No— I mean, it doesn't say that in the description in my character sheet.

Griffin: I guess that's true. Okay. Alright, you also have Bardic Inspiration now as you approach the— the minefield.

Justin: Okay.

Clint: And Zoos is like pointing at it excitedly.

Zoos: Come on! Come on!

Justin: Yeah, okay. I'm— I'm very gingerly.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Uh making my way—

Travis: [sings quietly] "Makin' my way downtown."

Griffin: Are you using your seal still, Zoox?

Clint: Yeah, my seal is still like swimmin' around, makin' that gap wider.

Griffin: Why don't you— I'm gonna make you roll for that, because it— I think it was very easy and natural for you to do that for yourself, but in order for you to do that for somebody else, it is—

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: It is a bit more of a challenge.

Clint: 'Kay.

Griffin: Why don't you roll and— roll a d20 and we will add your spellcasting modifier, which is plus four, to that.

[sound of dice rolling]

Clint: Okay. That is an 18 plus 4, 22!

Griffin: 22 easily— Yeah, okay. You see this little seal swim around you uh playfully, Amber, and then start to try and make a path for you through the minefield. So, you can roll Acrobatics plus— with advantage.

Justin: Plus seal.

Griffin: Plus seal.

Travis: Yup.

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: Aw, 22.

Griffin: God-dang.

Justin: Thank you, dice.

Griffin: These are some—

Justin: Thank you, bud.

Griffin: — choice, beefy rolls, boys.

Justin: Right when I need yah.

Griffin: Roll with advantage.

Justin: Roll with advantage, alright.

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: Well that's a 15, but.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, with a 22 you are able to uh...

Justin: This is weird. Hold on one second. I'm not seeing my... totals on—

Travis: Uh try refreshing the page, if it's been open a while.

Griffin: Yeah, because you— One thing we should mention, you all levelled up to level 7.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: And I'm sure we will—

Justin: Huzzah.

Griffin: — talk about the repercussions of that— in a bit, but it may be messing with the math if you are...

Justin: Alright, I've refreshed.

Griffin: Yeah, with a 22 you are able to swim around the spheres through this path that the seal has uh made for you, and now you and Zoox are both floating in front of this statue. What do you do, Amber?

Justin: Uh is there a ent— Is it like of a scale where I would like go into it? Or like—

Griffin: No, it's— there's no um... There's no entryway that you can see.

Justin: But there's like a light in th— in there?

Griffin: There's a light that ha— is like coating it and it's the same green light as— as the color of your arms.

Travis: [chanting softly] Touch it. Touch it.

Justin: Yeah. Yeah. Well, no you know what? I'm gonna pop out one of my arms. No, let's go two arms. [wheezes]

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: And I don't think I could just do one, I might— I might— [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Not without some weird clenching.

Justin: Weird—

Griffin: Right.

Justin: Yeah. [makes a straining noise] I wanna touch it with one of my— with one of my spectral arms.

Griffin: Okay, as— as you summon your ar—

Justin: My astral arms, excuse me. It's different planes.

Griffin: Okay, as you conjure your astral arms, there is that wave of force that comes out. And it does send a shockwave through the minefield, and it like upsets the mines. They are sort of now bouncing back and forth. They are bouncing off of each other.

[sound effects play, similar to balloons hitting each other]

Griffin: And they have made your egress from this place— it would be much more challenging to try and get through here. As those—

Travis: [whispers] Devo scoots the ship back a little bit more.

Griffin: Yeah, sure. Uh... Do y'all have a tontine that Devo might be the sole sort of uh recipient of, should this mission go south?

Travis: We can— We can figure that out later.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Well, you can figure it out.

Travis: It's always better to figure out a tontine later. [chuckles]

Griffin: Right. Um.

Clint: [laughs quietly]

Justin: I'm going to... In this moment... I've never done this before.

Griffin: Oh, boy.

Justin: But I'm going to... don the visage of the astral self.

Travis: Ooo!

Griffin: Wh— What— This is—

Clint: What?

Griffin: This is new.

Justin: Yes, this is a new— this is a new ability. Um I'm uh... A— As part of activating my arms, I'm going to spend a point. And she's never done this before, so I think it kinda freaks for out a little bit, but I'm gonna summon the visage of my astral self for ten minutes.

Griffin: Okay. So you can spend one ki point, aaaaaand you gain the following benefits. Astral sight: you can see normally in darkness. You already got them fish eyes, so like you already have like a bit of an advantage on everybody else here.

Justin: Right.

Griffin: But now it is like you are standing in a well-lit ballroom, uh... You have wisdom of the spirit; you have advantage on Insight and Intimidation checks, and you can speak so that only one creature can hear you in its— in its brain. You have telepathy, essentially. You can also amplify your voice, so that all creatures within 600 feet can hear you. That's fun.

Justin: And that's what I'm— That's what I'm going to do.

Griffin: Okay.

Amber: [calls out with mystical reverb] My name is Amber Gris! What is your deal?

Zoox: Holy crap, a little warning maybe!

Amber: Sorry, I'm so sorry.

Zoox: Jeez!

Amber: I'm so sorry.

Zoox: You hurt my earholes!

Griffin: The atoms inside of all of those spheres, they start to go hog-wild as you shout in this magically amplified way. And then... you see... four spectral arms sort of tear away from the four arms of the statue, and they swoop downward toward you to try to basically just grab you. But you have, you have a moment of reaction here. What do you do?

Justin: Um... I'm going to... Ar— I guess I could use Deflect Missiles, right? Would that count? They're missile— missile— missiled hands?

Griffin: Um.

Justin: They're hands that are coming for me?

Griffin: I w— I will, only because Deflect Missiles is my favorite ability that a monk has, uh so.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: You can... Well this lets you reduce the damage of an attack you take by 1d10 plus nine. Why don't you roll that. We'll say that if you can deflect we'll say 14 points. So if you can roll a five or above on this, I will let you avoid any repercussions of this,

[sound of dice rolling]

Griffin: Ooo...

Travis: [whispers] You have Bardic Inspiration.

Clint: [whispers] Bardic Inspiration.

Justin: Okay, I'll— Yeah, this seems like a good moment to use it. So I roll a d8 and just add that?

Griffin: Um yes, I will allow it. I think Bardic Inspiration is pretty limited in what it— it can allow you to, uh... Ability check, attack roll, or saving throw. This isn't any of those, but I will— I will be—

Justin: I'm already rolling.

Griffin: Yeah.

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: Motherfucker.

Griffin: Ooo, that's a one.

Clint: Oh!

Justin: Jesus.

Griffin: Uh you— hold up—

Justin: Your words have failed me, De— [wheezes]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: This is resemblin— It's resembling the tension.

Travis: Yeah. They—

Justin: It's symbolic of the tension in our relationship.

Travis: Yeah. [laughs]

Griffin: Alright.

Travis: I gave you a weak [chuckles] Bardic In— Meeeeeh.

Griffin: Yeah, it's—

Justin: That's fair.

Griffin: That's true, it wasn't a very inspiring speech that—

Travis: "Don't fuck up".

Griffin: Yeah. You hold up your two spectral arms to kinda try to, you know, block whatever this thing is trying to do, but its arms are... way more jacked than your own.

Justin: Mm.

Griffin: And yours just kind of crumble under the force of these four arms that reach down and all grab your body at the same time. And...

Travis: And tickle away.

Griffin: When— When that happens, your... incredible astral vision goes dark, and then you awaken, and you are somewhere else. You are... standing... on... a cliff-side, atop the Einarr Plateau.

[sound of waves on the shore]

Griffin: And behind you, the— the ocean is sort of roiling. There is no storm in the sky, this is— Whatever you are seeing now is from a very long time ago. You can actually see the beach below you, that the shoreside community first sort of came to, you know 25 years ago when they started to build Founder's Wake.

But the main thing that catches your attention... is... Koda. Koda is standing atop the plateau with you, maybe a couple—

Travis: That's one of them gods, right?

Griffin: That is— That is the god whose body was repurposed into the Biggest Baby, essentially. It was one of the last surviving sort of vestiges that went around killing all of the other vestiges, essentially, as soon as... as soon as he was able to. He is unfathomably big. He is blocking out the sun, even though he is a— a great distance away from you. And he is panting. And he pauses for a moment, and then he begins to charge towards you. What do you do?

[tense music fades in]

Justin: I mean he's charging at me, but is it— How long do I have? I mean is it like— I don't think she would do any— Like, I don't know.

Griffin: His gait is enormous, so he— it will not take long, yeah.

Justin: Yeah, so he'll be on me in— Is there anything nearby that I could like hide under or behind or anything? I mean he's just gonna destroy anything that I'm—

Griffin: It does not— It doesn't appear that way. Make a— You can make a check to like get a sorta better—

Justin: Nah, she's just gonna stand her ground.

Griffin: Stand her ground?

Justin: I mean like what the fuck? If you— If this— It's Koda; if he wants to crush me, he can crush me.

Griffin: Okay. It takes... maybe five footsteps to clear this huge distance, as he runs right at you. And... just as he is about to reach you, and obliterate you, you feel the earth beneath you shake. And you have felt that as his gigantic footsteps have, you know, approached you, but this is different. As he gets close to you... the edge of this cliff-side just shears off.

[tense music cuts discordantly]

Griffin: And... you... immediately are— are falling, down into the ocean below. But you also see... with a— a satisfaction that maybe is alien to you, is not your own? You see that Koda is falling too. And he... almost catches a glimpse of you. Your eyes meet as you both are falling off of this cliffside, and he... in his enormous sort of obsidian face, you can see... what appears to be like a... a proud smile. And then you see his body shatter as it hits the beach below, and then you... hit the water. Make a Wisdom saving throw for me.

Justin: Okay, well...

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: Eight. But. I have advantage.

Griffin: You do?

Justin: Because of the Visage of the Astral Self.

Griffin: Fuck yes!

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: That's a one.

Travis: A-ha! Thank you!

Justin: Ah, thank you! It was almost a 19 and then it, you'll never believe this, but it's a one now. So that's like a f— What was the first one?

Travis: That's an 11 total.

Griffin: An 11.

Justin: Ele— 11.

Griffin: Um, okay. With an 11... you snap back to reality. Oop! There goes gravity. Oop! There goes Rabbit he— Um.

Justin: [laughs quietly]

Griffin: You— You snap back to reality, and that green light that was coming from the statue is... yours now. And you still have your astral arms extended, only now they look... way bigger. They look much stronger. They look like the arms that this statue was projecting.

Clint: [chuckles in awe]

Griffin: Um...

Clint: It's like *Ashes of War*! [laughs]

Griffin: The—

Travis: *Asses of War*?

Griffin: Dad— Dad lives inside of— *Elden Ring* is Dad's new address, so it's—

Travis: Oh no, *Elden Ring* got Dad.

Griffin: It got Dad. Um—

Justin: That's where he lives.

Clint: [in a deep, fanatical voice] It has me. It has me good.

Griffin: Um—

Travis: Oh, gross.

Griffin: Mechanical— Creepy. The mechanical benefit of that, Amber, is your astral arms, when you attack with them, your— the damage dice has increased to a d8.

Clint: Ho ho!

Griffin: Now.

Justin: Nice.

Griffin: With that saving throw though, the statue... has exploded. And now large chunks of debris are starting to float around, toward the mines all over. Zook and Amber, what do you do?

Travis: Can I see them?

Griffin: Um, yeah. You see all of this.

Travis: Okay, I'm gonna use the blink bay to get 'em outta there.

Justin: Mm!

Griffin: They did not blink out with the blink bay.

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: So you cannot recall them with the blink bay.

Travis: Okay, I'm going to blink to them and pull them back.

Griffin: You're—

Justin: Who would reblink you?

Travis: Kodira.

Clint: Urchin. Oh, Kodira! We brought Kodira!

Justin: You're welcome.

Clint: [laughs triumphantly]

Griffin: Uh, okay. Uh... you're throwin' on the vapor suit then, I'm assuming?

Travis: Yup.

Griffin: Okay, you have—

Justin: Oh, come on, coward. Have some strength of your conviction.

Clint & Justin: [laughs]

Justin: If you're just gonna blink in and out, who cares?

Travis: Nope! [laughs] I— Remember when I almost turned translucent because I was in the water for a second?

Griffin: Yeah, he don't wanna risk it.

Travis: Not doing that again.

Griffin: Uh, okay. You sprint to uh the— the blink bay, throw on a vapor suit, and in the next instant— What d— What do you shout to Kodira in the literal seconds that you have to try and attempt this?

Travis: Uh. "Count to two". [chuckles]

Devo: Count to two, and then recall.

Griffin: She... She has been meditating, as you— But she definitely is snapped out of it by the sound of maybe the statue exploding and you sprinting and shouting. And she likes snaps to and she's like—

Kodira: What?

Griffin: [chuckles] As you vanish from the blink bay, and appear next to Zoon and Amber.

Travis: I'm gonna grab their hands.

Griffin: 'Kay.

Travis: And say—

Devo: Hold on.

Griffin: And... as he takes your hands, a chunk of statue touches one of the spheres, and... you all feel, just for a moment, this incredible heat and force as the entire minefield goes up. Only...

Clint: Hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo!

Griffin: You see it from the blink bay, as you are teleported back into the Coriolis. The Coriolis is, like, flung. The Coriolis, like, is thrown upwards and you all struggle to kind of keep your footing as the ship is basically tilted on its— on its axis, pointing like straight up. Only the ship corrects itself after a few moments, and... the ocean is quiet. And when you return to the bridge, you see Urchin at the wheel. And he looks back at you and he— he says um...

Urchin: I told you, I'm a valuable member of the team! You—!

Devo: Did you move the—

Urchin: Use me!

Devo: Did you move the seat?

Urchin: What?

Devo: Did you move any of the seat?

Justin: [wheezes]

Zoox: You readjusted the seat, didn't yah?

Devo: Did you move my seat? I had it perfect.

Urchin: Nah, I didn't— I didn't do any of that.

Griffin: And he hops down and you can see that his quills have like poked a bunch of holes in the seat.

Devo: [sighs]

Clint: [chuckles]

Amber: Hey, hey. Y'all, thank you. Thank you. Devo. Urchin, I guess? Thank you.

Zoox: Thank— f— for savin' us.

Amber: I'm not used to people kinda lookin' out for me like that, so uh... Thanks.

Devo: It is what friends are supposed to do.

Zoox: I'd like point out that my seal kinda cleared a way for you to cling through initially.

Amber: Oh, yeah. Your seal is— Your seal is stink, bud. I love that guy, [chuckles] but he is— he is uh—

Zoox: Yeah.

Amber: He is blink shark food.

Griffin: Um.

Amber: I'm glad you didn't name it.

Devo: Oh, but he was a good chum.

Justin: [wheezes]

Zoox: I almost did!

Devo: Wait, hold on, stop!

Zoox: Ohhh!

Devo: He was a good—

Zoox & Amber: [laugh loudly]

Devo: He was a good chum. Eh?

Zoox: [claps]

Amber: That is— That's good. That's good.

Clint: I got one too! I got one too! Please! Please please please!

Griffin: Yeah, go ahead. Go ahead.

Justin: Go ahead.

Clint: It's a little late. I would just like to point out... that Amber just used Visage to have a vestige vision.

Griffin: That is a lot.

Devo: Oh, this is pretty good. Hey, I'm sorry that your seal is dead, but you don't have to blubber about it.

Griffin: Alright.

Zoox: [laughs]

Devo: Eh?

Amber: Oh wait, let me—

Zoox: That gets a seal of approval!

Devo: Okay, yes.

Amber: Let me do a seal one. [sings to the tune of Crazy by Seal] "And we're never gonna survi-i-ive."

Zoox: [laughs loudly]

Devo: Yes.

Amber: That's it. That's the whole— whole—

Devo: Okay.

Zoox: [claps]

Devo: This is very good.

Amber: That's the [chuckles] whole thing.

Zoox: [continues laughing] Oh...

Justin: That seal probably knows our shit well enough to be like "Please name it".

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, "Please, please bring me back".

Justin: "If you need— Give me a name and I'll come back, at some point."

Clint: [chuckles]

[ad break]

[calm, muffled piano music plays]

Griffin: You all are... still following this spike, and it's been— it's been nearly a day now, maybe a little bit more. This is the furthest, I think, that a mission has taken you all from Founder's Wake. And you are... navigating a— this ravine, Devo. And as you are going, Amber, Kodira approaches you. And she says um...

Kodira: So, uh... I was a bit out of it when all the excitement happened. Can you catch me up? What— What— What did y'all see down there?

Amber: Uh, hmm... Alright, well I'll just tell it to— I'm gonna tell it to you straight, and you— you just don't judge or anything, 'cause it's just what I saw, but I... I touched that thing and it grabbed me. And... I saw Koda. And... He tried to squish me. I think. He's so big, it's hard— And then the ground fell out from underneath us, and he like... exploded. And he seemed like— He seemed like proud of me or somethin', or like pleased with exploding, which is weird. And then I woke up.

Griffin: Roll an Insight check.

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: Eight.

Griffin: Um, plus three, 11.

Travis: Plus three.

Justin: But uh... I should get another one 'cause I... have my ma— my visage.

Griffin: Mm... I think that only lasts for ten minutes, and it's been hal—

Justin: How long's it been?

Griffin: Half a day.

Justin: Okay...

Griffin: Um.

Justin: I turned it back on.

[sound of dice rolling]

Justin: 19 plus three, 22.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay, you turned it back on. You're burn extra ki?

Travis: How many times can you fire that off?

Griffin: Yeah, right? You're gonna do an extra...?

Justin: It's one ki point.

Griffin: Okay, so do an— burn another ki point. I will give this to you, but you're gonna have to use—

Justin: I did, I've burned two.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: And I— with my new level, I have more ki.

Griffin: Ooo.

Justin: Sorry. Vibe.

Griffin: Um, I mean with that level of Insight check I will give you this, you...

Justin: Can I say something? Actually, don't. It's— that's— that's rowdy.

Griffin & Justin: [simultaneously] We don't do it like that.

Griffin: Here anymore.

Justin: We don't do it like that, that's not fair.

Griffin: If you— I mean, here's the thing, your ki points are limited, so if you really, really wanna spend a ki point to get more information—

Justin: They are, but— Okay. This is ge— This is getting like way too rulesy, but like I— I wouldn't know... I wouldn't know...

Griffin: Yes, you're right.

Travis: That you were missing it, yeah.

Justin: You kn— I wouldn't know that I was missing it.

Griffin: Yes, right, okay.

Justin: To turn it on, right? Like—

Griffin: So— So we'll go with the 11. You can have that ki point back. Um with an 11, she seems... she is visibly shaken when you say this to her. She says—

Kodira: Uh, and this— This was in a statue, that you had this vision?

Amber: I mean, I don't know if I was in a statue but like, yeah I guess it was. Yeah, I was in a statue, ain't that weird?

Kodira: Do you— Did anything else— You— I need you to tell me the whole truth now, `kay. Did— Did anything else happen?

Amber: Well I can do this. [makes a straining noise]

Justin: And then I make my mega arms.

Griffin: Okay. If you're just doing this for show, I— I will not make you spend a ki point. Just to fle— Just to flex on `em.

Justin: Thank you.

Griffin: Uh... She sees— She has seen you do this before, right? I think that she has very often tried to recruit you to the Chaperones, probably because she knows what you are capable of. When she see this, she... clasps her hands over her mouth.

Justin: They're bigger, right?

Griffin: They are way bigger. Yeah.

Justin: Nice.

Griffin: And she says—

Kodira: I s— I see. I... I will...

Amber: Check this out! Actually, I've been— Wait, hold on.

Justin: And I put `em on the ground and lift myself up.

Kodira: Okay. Alright. I'm— Yeah, I—

Amber: Look at this.

Kodira: Yeah, I can see it.

Amber: [growls to show off her prowess]

Kodira: Okay. I'm—

Amber: I'm the tallest person on our crew now, right?

Kodira: Yeah, um...

Amber: [growls again]

Justin: And Amber's walking rou— [wheezes] Walking round the deck on her—

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: — massive hands.

Griffin: She takes a— She takes a couple steps away from you.

Amber: [growls with less enthusiasm]

Griffin: And she says uh—

Kodira: I— I need— I need to—

Amber: [jokingly] Bow before me, commoners.

Kodira: Okay. I need to meditate on this. I'll um—

Amber: [growls again]

Kodira: I'll check in with you later.

Amber: Oh, dang. I broke something.

Griffin: And she— she uh— She like... very quickly walks, almost runs, away from you, to retreat back further— further in the ship. And... When that happens, you realize that the ship is filling with light from outside. And from the bridge, Zoon and Devo, you can see why.

You all have come out of this ravine and on the other side, you are met with this brilliant and massive white light that is just covering the ocean floor. And it actually takes a minute for your eyes to adjust, and when they do, you can see the source of this light. It is a— a huge, half-mile wide dome, made of bleached coral.

Travis: Huh.

Griffin: And it looks familiar, and— and pretty much right away— And Amber, I'm assuming you have joined them just to sort of investigate where this light is coming from.

Justin: Sure.

Griffin: It looks familiar and right away you realize why. Floating around sort of the perimeter of this— of this dome are... nearly a dozen of those enormous battleships that are made of bleached coral. The— And they are the same kind of ship that assaulted the Abyssal Auction. And another thing you notice is that this whole structure, this— this glowing white dome, is giving off a tremendous amount of energy. The lights on your— your control board here on the bridge are— are sort of flashing erratically as you approach, as are the just like regular lights that are, you know, strewn throughout the— the rest of the ship.

And... as— as you enter this clearing, the tracer spike begins to kind of dip downward and is pointing right at the center of this coral dome, right at the heart of it. None of these, you know, dozen huge coral battleships appear to have noticed your ship's approach.

Travis: Uh Griffin, just for clarity's sake, this is a different place than where the Cambria Dome was, right? Like this is a—

Griffin: Oh, this is a completely— This is a completely different place, yes.

Travis: Okay, great.

Griffin: This is a— Almost in the exact opposite like direction.

Travis: Okay, great.

Griffin: Of where that was. This is a, you know, completely random find today.

Travis: You know, you just find some glowing domes under the water.

Griffin: Sure sure sure.

Travis: Wanna make sure they're—

Griffin: I mean, listen, people. Here's the thing about domes. 'Cause I know I get a lot of shit for my many domes.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Domes are really good at covering things.

Travis: This is true, and keeping things out too.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Like water.

Griffin: A great— It's—

Clint: Yeah, you're finer restaurants use 'em all the time, like to bring out the really fancy meals.

Travis: Absolutely.

Griffin: Yes, this is a magic— This is an arcane, coral cloche, is what it is.

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: So that's what you all see.

Devo: Uh... So we have to get in there, yes?

Justin: They could also, in this environment, it probably makes more sense to use a dome, 'cause the— they can— the... it can withstand greater loads.

Griffin: That's the other thing. Thank you, Justin.

Travis: Oh, yeah. Absolutely, yes.

Griffin: I forgot about that, the— the— the pressures.

Justin: The pressures. Read a book.

Travis: We're talking about literal pressures here, not like the pressures that we're under every day to perform in our everyday lives.

Griffin: Wow.

Travis: But rather the pressure of the ocean.

Griffin: That's good.

Travis: But when you think about it, what's the difference?

Griffin: It's a big metaphor, isn't it? The whole season.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: [exhales heavily] Yeah.

Travis: If people were domes, maybe things would be a little better.

Griffin: Wow.

Justin: Woah.

Travis: Yeah, think about that, guys.

Justin: Woah!

Griffin: "I'm Travis McElroy—"

Clint: [singing to the tune of "We Are the World"] "We are the domes."

Griffin: "I'm Travis McElroy, and I approve this message."

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: I'm just saying—

Griffin: "My platform is—"

Travis: We could all be a little more domeish.

Griffin: "If I'm President, people are gonna be domes."

Travis: People are gonna be domes, whether they like it or not!

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay. What do you do?

Travis: Are there like openings? Are there places to enter? Or is like a see— All we can see is coral.

Griffin: You can see noth— You can see nothing. It is like so tightly woven, you cannot see through it.

Clint: Okay, Zoox turns to Kodira and says—

Zoox: Have you ever seen anything like this?

Griffin: I'm— I'm gonna say Kodira is not here. Kodira is like... Kodira, I don't know if Amber catches you all up, but Kodira is— was visibly shaken by what she heard, from— from what happened, in the um... with the— with the statue, and she is— she does not wanna be... She is not around right now, she is deep in meditation.

Clint: So she's like in her cabin?!

Griffin: Uh, I don't know if she has a cabin, but she's, you know, somewhere in the ship and is— is uh...

Travis: Well, she could be in Amber's Place, 'cause it's just no boys allowed.

Griffin: That's— okay. That's possible.

Travis: So Griffin, since we cannot actually see with our human eyes, when you say tightly woven, is it like the bathysphere could maybe make it through? Or like if we wanted to try to make our way through, that's like vapor suits?

Griffin: Make— Make an Investigation check.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Griffin: All of you can, if you'd like.

Travis: Uh, please do, 'cause I got a nine total.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Clint: And I got a seven total.

Travis: Come on, Amber.

[sound of dice rolling]

Clint: Amber.

Justin: 17.

Clint: Yeah!

Griffin: Okay, with a 17. You know what, it makes sense Amber, 'cause you— you have the fish eyes. I should've given you uh advantage on that anyway, so if you wanna roll with advantage. All of your sort of like—

Justin: Sure.

Griffin: Uh all of your Investigation and Perception checks in ocean water you should have uh advantage on.

[quiet sound of dice rolling]

Justin: Wow, that's two 17s.

Griffin: Okay. Uh with a seven—

Clint: That's gotta be worth somethin'!

Travis: It's worth 34, Dad.

Griffin: Uh— [wheezes] Okay, with a 34.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: There— There are no gaps. You cannot— You— You— You see uh, well hold on.

Justin: You can't just make stuff— Hey, Griffin. Either there are gaps or aren't, you can't just make stuff up.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Okay?

Clint: Well, he can.

Travis: No.

Justin: No, he can't.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Either there's gaps of there ain't.

Griffin: You cannot see a way of getting through with— with the... with the Coriolis. You do not think you could also get a bathysphere in there. If there are gaps in here, it seems like it's layers upon layers upon layers of coral. And so maybe there is a way that you can sort of push your way through the thicket of it, but like you do not see easy access for... like any— anything. For you, for the ship, for the bathysphere, for— for any of it.

Devo: Listen, I—

Clint: Okay, huddle.

Devo: Hu— Yes.

Zoos: Can I call a huddle?

Devo: Yes, of course. Anyone can call a huddle. This is—

Zoos: Okay—

Urchin: I wanna call— Wait wait wait!

Zoos: Hold up.

Urchin: You specifically told me I can't call huddles!

Devo: Anyone of the three of us, we are senior crew.

Urchin: This is bullshit.

Devo: Any member of senior crew.

Urchin: Okay. I'll do a huddle by myself, self-huddle.

Justin: [wheezes]

Devo: Well, don't do it where God can see.

Clint: [laughs]

Urchin: "Great idea, Urchin. I think that's one of your best ideas yet."
"Thanks, Urchin."

Devo: Um, I'm thinking more and more we just blow our way in.

Zoox: We— Bu— W— This is the same stuff. I— I communicated with these people. Remember?

Devo: Did it go well? I honestly don't remember.

Zoox: It never has!

Devo: Okay.

Zoox: It has never gone well.

Devo: But maybe this time. [chuckles]

Zoox: But Orlene is in there, right? We have to figure out Orlene is in there.

Amber: Has to be.

Devo: I mean, yes. The tracer spike says that Orlene is here. Now, whether he is here voluntarily and like this is all his doing, or if he is here under duress, I don't know and I don't know if I care. [pause] No, I don't. No.

Zoox: Hmm. Well we could blow it up, but I— Trust me, that— You don't feel good afterwards. [chuckles]

Devo: Well now, hold on. Here's the difference, right? Uh we could target like an area to make an entrance, but in doing so, we will most likely flood the place, right? This is not good. Uh...

Amber: Yeah.

Zoox: What if you wanna blow a hole right where the orphanage is?

Griffin: [chuckles]

Devo: I do—

Zoox: Okay?

Devo: Okay, but these creature— Listen. Here's one thing I don't wanna get twisted, okay? They attacked the— the auction, they attacked us. They killed people, they wanted to kill us, they tried to kill us. Right? This is not like a "Maybe they're good", like they have demonstrated uh... being, you know, assholes in the past, so I don't—

Amber: It doesn't mean we can just blew 'em up though.

Zoox: Yeah.

Devo: It doesn't?!

Zoox: No.

Amber: No.

Zoox: Now, does Orlene know we're after him?

Devo: [sighs]

Zoox: He doesn't, right?

Devo: Uhhh... I mean... Maybe.

Zoox: Could we try... subter— Sub-terfuge.

Devo: Why yes, absolutely.

Griffin: That's fuckin' good stuff, Dad.

Justin: So funny.

Devo: But we can't get in! How do we subterfuge from out here?

Zoox: I— I say why don't I try to communicate with 'em.

Devo: Mmm...

Zoox: And we make Orlene think we're on his side. And we need to talk to him about all these plots and machinations against him. And that'll get us close enough to him to stab him with the spike.

Devo: But this is— Okay—

Amber: What? No.

Zoox: Okay, that was— that was an ad— That was an ad lib, that last part was kind of like.

Devo: Okay.

Griffin: [snorts]

Zoox: You know, we don't have to do that.

Devo: If we're going to do this, right? The only way that I can see us communicating with Orlene in a way that he is not suspicious is if it is that you all have decided to join him over me. Because the— him assuming that— Like trying to convince him that I'm like "You know what, Orlene is okay" is not going to fly. So this is going to have to be like—

Amber: Yeah.

Zoox: Mm-hmm.

Devo: "We're going to give you... Devo."

Zoox: [gasps]

Devo: "And now we're on your side, and we work with you, 'cause— "

Amber: He's not gonna fuckin' buy that.

Devo: Well, I mean—

Zoox: Oh, he might.

Amber: Right? I mean, I know what you're sayin', there's no way.

Devo: I'm a pretty big asshole.

Zoox: We— We—

Devo: He might buy that you've gotten sick of my shit.

Zoox: Y— Yeah! And yeah, that's wha— Yeah, I think I agree! I think if we are convincing enough. He knows he's an asshole, and he knows that we know he's an asshole.

Devo: Who are we talking about? 'Cause you—

Zoox: De— Devo.

Devo: Okay.

Zoox: De— You. We're talking about you.

Devo: It's just you—

Zoox: And so—

Devo: You started talking in pronouns, and this got a little confusing.

Zoox: Oh, right, right.

Devo: 'Cause we're both—

Zoox: Well, here's—

Devo: We're both assholes.

Zoox: Orlene doesn't know that now we like Devo.

Amber: Well, that's... I don't know that now I like Devo.

Devo: Okay.

Amber: Uh... Ta— Jus— I'm just funning with yah. Um... Oh man, yeah. Alright, let's try— [wheezes] Let's try it.

Griffin: Okay.

Amber: Let's— Devo?

Devo: Yes.

Amber: Starting from this moment, you are now our prisoner.

Devo: Okay.

Griffin: Alright. Uh... so you're going to attempt to call out to him?

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Yeah, this will be fun.

Griffin: How are you— How are you—

Clint: Okay. Should we use the shell phone? Should we...

Justin: Hail— Hailing—

Griffin: Yeah sure, use that.

Clint: Hailing frequencies?

Griffin: Sure.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: You all... flip on the tone wheel to attempt to... begin this, this subterfuge. And as soon as you click on the tone wheel... I need all of you to roll Constitution saving throws.

Justin: Shit.

Travis: Huh.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Justin: Well, for me that's a f— [sighs] Five.

Clint: For um... Zoox it's an 18.

Travis: For me it's a nine.

Griffin: Okay. An impossibly loud hum tears through the ship.

[a single tone plays]

Griffin: As the tone wheel activates. All of the— the speakers through which the— the, you know, you all communicate to each other while aboard the ship, all— all of this sort of, you know, remote broadcast technology is overwhelmed by a— the loudest thing you've ever heard. And... Amber and Devo, you both go out like a light.

[tone abruptly stops]

Griffin: And fall to the ground. And Zoox, it doesn't— it definitely— you feel it and it sucks, but you are able to stay conscious. And after a few moments, the tone wheel just fizzles. You see like sparks shoot out of it.

[sparkling sound effects play]

Griffin: And the Comms system aboard this ship is just fried, and it goes silent again. And... right after that happens, you know you're surveying the damage, of what just— this— this strange event that just happened, and then you look up and you see, floating just outside of the Coriolis viewport... a half dozen of those battleships are... now staring directly in your direction with their weapons aimed at you.

[outro music plays]

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