

The Adventure Zone: Steeplechase - Episode 22

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Krystal: Hey, Steepies! Krystal with a K here. And we are thrilled to report that an old classic is returning to the nightly annual Feast of the Seven, powered by Westminster Oyster Crackers. The classic fireworks spectacular, Dream it to Now, will be returning next month, which we have all been demanding since it was replaced last April by Bedazzlement, a Fireworks Experience. Ugh! Lastly, if you're headed out to do battle with Geltfrimpen, the savior and redeemer god lizard of Ephemera, you might wanna take a pain check. [chuckles] Sadly, Geltfrimpen is down for maintenance for the first time in... well, at least as long as we can remember! Sadly, if you were hoping to cap off an upcoming visit by losing a limb to Gelty, we hope you never know when to stop dreaming.

[Steeplechase theme song plays]

Weaver: [groans] I believe I went as far as I could. I don't know if it was far enough... I... I'm terrified to push it further... I believe this is the limit... Yes... no, that's true... It's true... The greater danger is hesitation... yes... I will add one more half teaspoon of cumin, Shookles. Thank you, Shookles, I... should listen to your culinary acumen more.

Justin: Hello, everybody, and welcome to The Adventure Zone: Steeplechase.

Clint: I have really missed Shookles.

Travis: I have too, man.

Justin: Yeah, Shookles is back.

Griffin: Me too! I thought Shookles died?

Clint: Mm-mm, no, no, no.

Griffin: Mm-hm?

Travis: And I always forget that he's a Michelin Starred chef?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: You also don't know if Shookles is a he or a she, Travis?

Justin: That's true...

Travis: Oh my god, you're right, dad. Thank you.

Justin: We actually don't know if Shookles exists?

Griffin: Wow.

Clint: Oh?

Travis: I just assumed that Shookles was Ratatouilling the Creaky Man.

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: Racocooning, you mean?

Justin: Racocooning. [chuckles]

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Justin: It's so good that the best movie of the year has the word 'Raccacoonie' in it. [chuckles]

Griffin: Has the world's the best joke, has filled—

Justin: Yeah, is the best joke!

Griffin: The best joke in the history of humans.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Yeah, so let's make—

Griffin: Sometimes, I just think about Raccacoonie while I'm doing other stuff. And it picks— it lifts me up when I need it.

Justin: It's the best. So, to catch you up, 'cause it's honestly— it's been a little while since we recorded. We had to preload a lot of these due to travel and cruising and what not. We have just taken the Heart Scale from Geltfrimpen.

Travis: Yeah!

Justin: And we're about to return it to Dave Baulista, who is the weapons designer who asked for it in the first place. I'm assuming, unless you all have other business to attend to, we can start there.

Griffin: Is this payoff?

Justin: This is payoff, in addition to the like helping you to score some big firepower.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: It was all left a little general.

Clint: Mm-hm?

Justin: He was also offering four coin—

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: To you for this. So—

Travis: We need to start spending our coin more. We've got—

Griffin: I have zero coin, Travis.

Justin: You did just again—

Griffin: I've been spending mine left and right.

Travis: Oh.

Justin: Well, you did also just spend eight, if you'll remember, to—

Griffin: Increase our tier.

Justin: Increase your tier.

Travis: Oh, right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, we're actually—

Clint: Was that a group decision?

Griffin: We're a little low—

Travis: Yeah, man!

Justin: It was.

Griffin: We're not exactly liquid at the moment.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: Right.

Griffin: It's a big, big issue.

Justin: So, the actual— the opposite of what you said, Trav—

Travis: Oh, okay?

Justin: ... Is actually the case. [chuckles]

Travis: Oh, okay. Well—

Justin: You need to start scrimping saving for a rainy day!

Travis: I have— now, listen, I have four coin in my bag. And there's four coin—

Griffin: What the fuck?

Travis: Well, there's four coin—

Griffin: I'm accusing Travis of embezzling from the— let's do this in character, if this is how it's gonna be!

Montrose: Wait a minute...

Travis: No, wait, sorry, this is me making sure that we removed coin when we spent it.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Yes, our crew sheet is completely empty.

Justin: Yeah. You're broke.

Travis: Is it? 'Cause I'm looking at it, and we have four coin.

Justin: Well, this is fun. Hold on, let's sort this out.

Travis: Yeah, this is—

Clint: Emerich has four?

Travis: Okay...

Justin: So, I see four on the crew sheet, Griff.

Griffin: Oh, well now you—

Travis: I thought we spent the money when they gave it to us, and we said instead of giving us that money—

Justin: Yes, that's what happened. You already had some in the bank.

Griffin: Right, okay.

Justin: And you got a big payday.

Griffin: We didn't spend eight of our coin, we just basically took the eight coin we got from that last job and—

Justin: I do think we need to— I don't think we actually physically increased your tier, right?

Griffin: No, I don't think we did either?

Justin: So, you need to increase the tier and lower the rep.

Griffin: No, no, no, we did, we did, we're tier one now. We were tier zero.

Clint: Yeah, we were—

Justin: Tier 1, I just bubbled in one—

Griffin: Oh, okay, okay, okay. I didn't see you did.

Justin: Wait a minute, hold on. I know what's happened here... no, this is right.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, this is right.

Travis: We got it.

Justin: But tier one wasn't bubbled in, this is what I'm saying.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, so—

Justin: And then you should have no rep, right? You used all the rep to... level up?

Griffin: No, we had one rollover.

Justin: Okay, perfect. Then we're all set.

Griffin: I don't— I can't think of anything I need to do after slaying Geltfrimpen other than getting paid for it.

Travis: I need to go to the bathroom.

Justin: Okay, you need to go— wait, does human being Travis McElroy need to go to the bathroom?

Travis: No, no, no, I went, I did that before we started. But Beef—

Justin: Congratulations!

Travis: Thank you. Beef had a big...

Griffin: We don't need to actually... we don't... you can just say Beef... Beef needs the restroom—

Travis: No, I'm just trying to— I'm thinking of— trying to think of a fun drink that they would have in Ephemera.

Griffin: Oh, okay, I thought it was going the other way.

Travis: You know what I mean? Like, it would be... let's see... like sparkle berry soda, right? He had a big sparkle berry soda. Which is just— by the way, it's just cherry Sprite.

Justin: Did you guys listen to the intro that had a bunch of menu items at Bumpershoots?

Clint: Yes.

Griffin: No? [chuckles]

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Thank you, Dad. We had— I just want— just in case you— this is for you guys, 'cause presumably, everybody else listened to it. But we had Onion Petals to the Metal, Hurley Fries...

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: Oh, yeah?

Justin: Jeff Angel Food Cake.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Amazing.

Justin: Paloma's Pavlova.

Griffin: Oh, Justin!

Justin: Void Fish and Chips.

Travis: Ah, yes!

Griffin: Oh, man!

Justin: Beef Roswellington. [chuckles]

Travis: Oh my god!

Griffin: Wow!

Justin: Oh, they just added— you can add to... you can add to your Onion Petals to the Metal, Barry Blue Jeans Crumbles. [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: These are great jokes, listen—

Justin: It's really good jokes! It's been 14 days since I wrote these jokes, so I can laugh at 'em, you know?

Griffin: Yeah, that's it. That's the statute.

Clint: Don't forget Gaya Sashimi?

Griffin: Oh?

Justin: It's not a... Dad, this is... this is a safe space.

Griffin: That would be a wild thing for them to have. That would be like—

that would be... I don't even think The Cheesecake Factory is bold and brave enough to have sashimi on the menu.

Justin: Yeah. I almost asked dad for help on these, and I couldn't. My email, I was worried, would come back full.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Like I'd just come back and my email would be steaming from— [panting] "Okay, I'm on book six, Justin. I'm at 700 food puns!" [chuckles] The thing that's tricky about this that always trips me out is like payoff is usually kind of tied to entanglement?

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: And like... So, I don't know... but we'll get there. You know what? Let's just take it one step at a time. You are getting four coin from this job. You're going to earn two rep by default, and the target was a higher tier than you.

Travis: Hell yeah!

Justin: So, we're gonna give you three rep.

Griffin: Hell yeah, that's awesome.

Travis: Are you doing that, J-man?

Justin: Yeah, I'm doing it right now.

Griffin: Our bank is full for our little outfit here. So, why don't you guys each take one and I'll take two?

Travis: Well, my pockets are full!

Griffin: Your pockets are full?

Travis: Yeah, man.

Griffin: Jesus Christ. Our pants jingle-jingle around as we walk around Ephemera!

Justin: To be fair, Griff, you're walking around buying imaginary dire wolves. [chuckles] So like—

Griffin: It's only imaginary to us, it's very, very real to Montrose.

Justin: Yeah, that's true.

Griffin: Okay, dad, do you have room in your pockets?

Clint: Now, is that on the crew sheet or on my personal sheet?

Griffin: On your personal sheet, our crew bank is full.

Travis: Check your personal pants?

Clint: Oh, I got... If that's... is that stash or coin?

Travis: Now, you can stash `em, right?

Griffin: Ooh... That's a great— I think you have to like upgrade?

Justin: "Upon crew advance, each—" Okay, listen, "Upon crew advance, each PC gets stash which equals your tier plus two."

Clint: So, three?

Griffin: Does that mean we get money or we get the capacity to hold the money?

Justin: It's gotta be like—

Clint: Do you have the— can you text John?

Justin: I can't text him.

Griffin: Oh, no, yeah, "You can put coins in your character's stash to improve their lifestyle and circumstances when they retire." So, you can stash money, but then you can't spend it again.

Clint: It's not like a savings account.

Griffin: It's not like a savings account.

Clint: All right, I've got four—

Griffin: Oh, wait, "If you wanna pull coin out of your stash, you may do so at a cost. Your character sells some of their assets and investments in order to get some quick cash. For every two stash removed, you get one coin in cash."

Travis: Okay, I'm gonna stash two, then.

Clint: I'm gonna stash two as well.

Griffin: That's cool. That's a fun mechanic.

Travis: So, then I have room to take one more, from the four.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Perfect.

Griffin: So, y'all take one.

Clint: Okay.

Justin: And start getting a little spendier, you know?

Travis: Hey, man!

Justin: Can't take it with you. Not even real to begin with. [chuckles]

Travis: Okay!

Griffin: Can't even have it!

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Can't even have it!

Travis: You can't even have it!

Justin: Don't have it, you know what I mean? In a sense.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: You cannot obtain it.

Justin: Like unobtainium.

Travis: Exactly!

Justin: So, you got... you got that. Heat? You are going to take... some heat from this.

Griffin: Yeah, we fucked that dragon up.

Justin: You fucked that dragon up and everybody saw.

Clint: Everybody does, though? It's designed to be fucked up?

Justin: I was pretty clear in my description that you guys had fucked it in a way that it is not intended to be fucked.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah. How should you fuck a dragon? That's one of my favorite movies, by the way. How to Fuck Your—

Justin: How to Fuck Your Dragon?

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles] I'm gonna call it— you know what, though, I will say... it's not— It's not that bad, I'll only give you two heat. Not a big deal.

Travis: Okay, do you want me to add it?

Justin: No, I got it, just added it. Two heat. You have wanted level of one right now. Okay, here's the deal, I'm gonna— this is just me talking to you guys. This is just us—

Travis: Oh, just friends?

Justin: Just us talking.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Before we go back—

Clint: [in Weaver voice] "This is Justin talking."

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: When you guys go back, you— the structure thus far has usually been minor quest unlocks major quest.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: I was thinking about it, I've been thinking about it since the last time we recorded. I don't know that you guys have... a clear path right now to what you need to do. So, you are going to— don't look— in this next bit with Dave Baulista, don't look for like him to—

Griffin: I think we just get a voucher that we can spend on a bodacious flashback in the future, right? Like, we don't—

Justin: That's a really— yeah, that's a... maybe it's like we McGuffin it, right.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: But I don't— but the reason I'm saying this is, I don't know what comes next for you all.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: So, we're gonna do this scene, but don't be looking for it to culminate in like, "And here's the bazooka."

Travis: Yeah, yeah, okay.

Griffin: No, I think after this— I think after this scene, I think we gotta go do some more leg work.

Travis: Yeah, I agree.

Clint: Yup. So, just get a gift card from Dave.

Travis: There you go.

Griffin: Or just a—

Clint: And Buster. [chuckles]

Griffin: ... A golden— a briefcase that shines a golden light.

Clint: And Buster... [chuckles]

Justin: That's really good, Dad. God, it's good. He's so good!

Clint: I am on.

Justin: Okay...

Dave: All right, fellas, did you... did you get it?

Beef: Yeah—

Dave: Let me take a look. Oh yeah...

Montrose: It's... it came at a great and terrible cost. My friend here broke his electricity stick.

Beef: And I'm winded. I'm winded. So...

Montrose: This guy really got the wind knocked out of him pretty bad.

Dave: Would you like me to take a look at your... your stick there, see what I can do?

Emerich: Oh, no, I'm... these are a dime a dozen. [chuckles]

Dave: Oh? Weird, okay. That seems narratively less interesting.

Montrose: Yeah, he could've done— he could've put some sort of gun on your thing, or something?

Beef: Yeah, and it seemed like he was gonna fix it, Emerich? And you were real torn up about it?

Emerich: What would it cost? But what would it cost?

Dave: I'd do it for a suite.

Beef: All right, you know what? I broke it, so, I bought it.

Montrose: You bought it.

Beef: Yeah, I'll give you a—

Dave: You break it, you bought it.

Beef: Yeah, I just said that, guys. I'll give you a suite to fix my friend's—

Montrose: You break it, you buy it. That's what I always say.

Beef: Oh boy. Okay, I'll give you a suite, you fix my friend's stick.

Dave: Let me roll a die and see how it goes.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Emerich: Wait, wait, wait, wait—

Beef: No, wait, hold on, I paid for it!

Dave: Now, hold on—

Emerich: Wait, wait, wait, but no— I know, but Dave, what would it cost to improve it, as well as fix it?

Dave: What does improving it look like to you? What do you want me to try to do?

Emerich: Have more of a capacity to absorb electricity?

Dave: Oh... Ooh, yeah. Oh, I can see that.

Emerich: Maybe put some capacitors on it?

Dave: Capacitors, that's— yeah. For sure.

Emerich: Maybe a flux capacitor, perhaps?

Dave: What did you just say? Are you telling me that you have seen the movie Back to the Future?

Emerich: No. No, I know a gentleman named Ernest Fluck, and he invented a capacitor that—

Justin: [laughs] Okay.

Dave: This is a lot of fun. You know, for two... for two suites, I'll... I'll improve it. Or I will make an attempt to improve it.

Emerich: I will kick in an extra suite, then, Beef.

Dave: Oh, that's a good choice, okay.

Beef: Hey, Dave, if you fail to improve it on your roll, do we get our suites back?

Dave: Oh, that would be... you'll get half your suites back. Is that a deal?

Montrose: Oh, that's fun.

Beef: Okay!

Emerich: My half.

Beef: All right...

Dave: All right, we're gonna roll... I think I'm really good at this, so I'm gonna roll three D6. Feels good.

[sound of dice thrown]

Montrose: Ah, oh my god! Oh my god, David! David?

Beef: Oh my god, David!

Dave: I rolled a 1, and a 2, and a 3.

Beef: So, altogether?

Justin: So—[chuckles]

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: So, a 6!

Justin: Dad, he—[laughs] Dave Baulista hands you a sack and it—[laughs] it's kind of jangling.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs] And he's like:

Dave: This is— you know what? I'm only gonna charge you one suite for this.

Griffin: [laughs]

Beef: You know what's fun there, Dave, if I may? You offered to fix it. You clearly didn't know how to! Got yourself a suite for doing fuck all!

Dave: I would say it was unclear. I think it was unclear whether I knew how to fix it, 'cause there was a good chance that I did—

Beef: Then why did you offer?!

Dave: There was a good chance I did know how to fix it. I'm just trying to—

Montrose: He is a proud man. Too proud!

Clint: [chuckles]

Dave: I can... I can try to fix it again. [chuckles]

Montrose: How much will that cost us?

Dave: And I will get— well, I'll you what, I can try to fix it again for another suite.

Clint: [chuckles]

Dave: I won't— now, listen, I gave you one suite back. So, you won't be worse for it. And I'll have one extra die, 'cause I understand it better now.

Beef: So, Dave, just to be clear, I paid you a suite to not fix it. And now you're like, "Ah, but I got some good practice!"

Dave: You paid me two suites to fix and improve it. I did neither, and you lost one of those suites—

Beef: Okay, but Dave, I think you can see what the problem with that exchange is then!

Dave: It's fortune! It's fortune, it's not up to me. So, do you want me to try again?

Beef: That is not— If I took my cellphone, Dave, to a shop and they were like, "Yeah, couldn't fix it, man. I still charge you, because whew, bad luck." [chuckles]

Montrose: I'll tell you what—

Dave: Okay, so I am gonna—

Justin: Okay, hi, Justin here. I explained exactly what would happen.

Griffin: Yeah, sure. This—

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs] Explained this is out for you in excruciating detail! I said, “If it didn’t work, I will give you one suite back.” I was very clear about it.

Travis: Yeah, yeah, I guess I just didn’t expect you to roll a 1, a 2 and a 3! [chuckles]

Justin: And neither did Dave, but that’s fortune.

Travis: That’s fortune for you, man.

Montrose: This may be the sunk cost fallacy talking, but I wanna see this thing pay off.

Emerich: I agree.

Montrose: So, I will chip in that last suite.

Dave: So, for one, I’ll try to get it back to its usual state.

Montrose: Sounds good. Oh wait, to its usual state?

Dave: Yeah. Well, okay. So, you’ve already— yeah.

Montrose: Oh, well then no. I take my suite— I thought you were gonna put some sort of cool—

Dave: Oh, so you were gonna kick in— if you give me two—

Montrose: No, we’ve played this game before. This is your racket, isn’t it?

Dave: But I’m better at it now!

Montrose: And it’s a good one! It’s a good racket. But you gotta wake up—

Dave: Okay, one suite, I’ll try to fix it.

Justin: That roll didn’t count.

Dave: One suite, I'll try to fix it.

Griffin: I don't wanna pay— Dad just said he has a million of these things.

Justin: Okay, I mean, I thought we decided narratively, that wasn't very— okay. I'll tell you what:

Dave: Give me one suite, I'll put the capacitor on it. I feel like I've wasted a lot of your guys' time. And I have this weird feeling that I've wasted a lot of other people's time, too.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: I slap a suite down on the counter.

Dave: [chuckles] Do you guys ever get that sense like you've just wasted tens of thousands of people's times?

Montrose: [chuckles] Almost never!

Dave: No, just me? Okay. [chuckles] Okay. All right, give me that suite.

Griffin: I slap it down on the table.

Justin: And he bites it.

Dave: Ah, good! Good suite! Here it comes.

[sound of dice thrown]

Dave: Damn!

Montrose: You are kidding me, David!

Clint: 4, 2, 3, 2.

Justin: [chuckles]

Dave: Okay, then here's the deal...

Montrose: That one's— you know what? Shh! Fool me twice, shame on me.

Justin: Okay, here's the deal, it's not improved. But it is back to how it looked before.

Griffin: Great.

Justin: But he had to use— he had to use a bunch of pieces that have a really embarrassing dessert camo print on it.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Mm-hm! I love that!

Justin: So, it's back to its usual state, but it's got a really, really embarrassing like kind of scuffed up, messed up dessert eagle— sorry, dessert camouflage print all over it.

Griffin: Oh my god, that's so fucking good.

Montrose: Well worth it!

Emerich: I like it.

Dave: Well, I did my best, guys. Looking good. Looking good.

Beef: Perfect.

Emerich: And I think you should—

Dave: I can't believe I just made back two of the suites that I gave you.
[chuckles]

Montrose: Unbelievable!

Emerich: And I also think you should include the capacitor.

Montrose: Let's not.

Dave: You want me to take another crack at it?

Montrose: I don't—

Emerich: No, you should give me the capacitor for what we've invested in this.

Dave: Hm... no, that's not the way dice works, I'm sorry. So, what— can I ask you guys, before— I mean, I told you I could get you access to some pretty high-level stuff.

Beef: Yeah.

Dave: Out of curiosity, what are you... what are you guys trying to do?

Montrose: Well... you see, they are—

Justin: Why don't you guys huddle for a sec?

Montrose: May we huddle?

Dave: Huddle away, that's why they call it Dave Baulista's Baulista's and Huddles.

Beef: That seems sarcastic, Dave. Now, you— when this started, you did some like wink-wink nod-nod secret handshaky business with Dave.

Montrose: Yeah?

Beef: Is he cool?

Montrose: Oh, he's cool in a sort of fictional sense.

Beef: Got it.

Montrose: He's not... Butter Cream cool.

Beef: Okay, then how about we go with like, we're planning a coup on the ruler of the thing and we're gonna—

Montrose: Yeah, no, I was gonna make up a fantastical story. I thought I—

Beef: Oh, you... you weren't gonna say like we're stealing the spire?

Montrose: No... Hey, Beef?

Beef: Yeah?

Montrose: We may need to have a second aside later on—

Beef: Should we huddle within this huddle?

Montrose: Let's do a private— okay, Emerich, you stay right there. We have to have a side huddle. I am deeply insulted, my friend.

Beef: Oh, okay.

Montrose: Okay, back to the main huddle.

Beef: Okay.

Travis: [laughs]

Montrose: All right, no, we're— we got this. Huddle over. They are... there's rumors in the wind... breezes of rumors that they are going to be beta testing a new Geltfrimpen. It's going to have... like these crystals that you've gotta blow up. Or else his health just keeps on coming back.

Dave: That's weird, they just redid Geltfrimpen with all the... the different—

Montrose: This is Geltfrimpen's brother, and he's gonna live next door to Geltfrimpen. And his cave—

Beef: Frelgimpen.

Montrose: That's not it.

Beef: I think it was?

Dave: No, I don't think so.

Montrose: No, they wouldn't—

Beef: Hm, okay.

Montrose: They wouldn't—

Dave: Even hearing this information for the first time, I'm pretty sure that's not it.

Beef: Are you sure?

Montrose: They wouldn't make a joke of Geltfrimpen's awesome name? It's sacrilege.

Beef: The twins?

Montrose: Yes. Anyway, they got these crystals, but then also, we're gonna fuck up the dragon, too. So... We also gotta sneak in there. Honestly, it's gonna be a... sort of multi-disciplinarian adventure.

Dave: Hm, okay. Well, that's sounds... that sounds wild, honestly.

Beef: It might be?

Clint: Is there gonna be spanking?

Dave: Spanking is part of this? Or what is—

Montrose: Possibly. There's rumors in the wind.

Dave: Okay. Huh... all right. So, heavy artillery. Okay, well, I'll... I'll start tinkering around. And you all kind of just check back in, and I'll see what I can cook up for you.

Beef: Thanks, Dave!

Emerich: Dave?

Dave: Yeah?

Emerich: Do you see my wristband here? This... my Give a Ghost Projector?

Dave: Yeah, it's cool.

Emerich: Could... what would it cost for you to do the whole desert eagle camo thing on that?

Beef: Oh boy. Okay, so—

Montrose: Listen...

Dave: Okay, you wanna— yeah. Negative two—[chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Dave: Negative two suits.

Justin: That was a bad outcome Dad, we don't want—[chuckles]

Griffin: I don't— yeah, this is a wild thing to ask Dave Baulista. This will be—

Travis: Although it does sound like Dave just said he'll pay you two suites if you let him put desert eagle shit on your—[chuckles]

Dave: I'll tell you what, you let me put my logo and phone number on there—[chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: All right, guys, what do you—

Travis: So, it seems to me the two things we need information on, right, is about—

Griffin: Anything about the job.

Travis: Okay. Well, specifically though, like the fireworks big, special display thing, right. And how we—

Justin: Let's move you guys to the— let's move you guys to... a room in the Butter Cream.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Let's take a second down there.

Clint: Yeah, are we doing downtime?

Griffin: Can we go to the... The Future is You?

Justin: Yeah, let's take you to The Future is You. They're installing— and based on what you guys have done and seen and know so far, you roll out onto a table, a map.

Travis: Oh, I love this.

Justin: Did that work, what I just did?

Clint: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, man.

Griffin: Yeah, it worked. It worked on a few levels, man.

Justin: Cool.

Travis: It got me, bud! I am, creatively, rock hard.

Justin: Yeah, I'm sort of figuring this out. So, what you're look— what the boys are looking at— and dear listener, I'm about to describe to you, is a blueprint of Gallspire, an overhead shot. In the center, we see the tower itself, as it spirals into the sky. It's surrounded in a moat that is unbroken, except for on its right side, kind of making a large C. That right side has a stone bridge across it. In the upper lefthand corner, we see the fireworks barge. And to the right is the right lower corner, that's the fairy shack with the line, the wire that goes from the fairy shack down to— or over to Gallspire.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: That is really good, Justin.

Travis: Hey, Justin, you're doing a great job.

Justin: Thanks, I spent all morning on it.

Travis: Yeah, it shows. It really works.

Beef: Now, here— so, it seems to me, right— and feel free to disagree, but we need to do something with the fireworks to create a big distraction. And then we can use the vantage point of the fairy shack to launch whatever heavy artillery we have, to try to destroy the crystals that are projecting the Gallspire.

Montrose: Right. We are at an information deficit right now. This map kicks ass!

Justin: Wait, real quick, to— real quick, just to clarify something, we don't... we don't just... you have learned up to this point, so I'm not revealing anything. You don't destroy prisms, you damage the projection enough that the prism shuts down. That's what happened with the... that's what happened with the van, the... the Clean—

Travis: Oh, okay. Well then, let me answer that in character.

Justin: ... The Clean Sweep.

Beef: 'Cause we could try to just shut down— but then we would have to get in there and get the crystals, right?

Emerich: Yes, yes.

Beef: So that they can't relaunch it. But then, we're on site. If we can destroy them completely, from a distance? That's clean getaway, man.

Emerich: No, no! No, no, no, no... You can't— these are works of art. These are... these are not only works of art, but these are resources that we could use to further the development of our plans... You're talking about... a Leonardo DaVinci level accomplishment here! You... you... please, Beef, we can't destroy these?

Justin: I would also mention that part of your deal with Kenchal is that you would steal it.

Griffin: We would get them, yeah.

Travis: Oh.

Montrose: Okay, let's... let's get to brass tacks. 'Cause frankly, fellas, I think that is where we are at on this mission.

Justin: Real quick, sorry, again, to keep interrupting. Not that it's me shutting you down, Trav. I mean, I'm— if you wanna destroy—

Travis: No, no, no, no, no, if that is information— like, I don't feel shut down. I feel discuss... discussion. Right? This is a discussion about—

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: Okay.

Travis: I don't feel disgust.

Griffin: "I feel disgust!"

Travis: [chuckles] I feel disgust—

Justin: Here is— the only other thing I wanna say as you're having this conversation, is I have left— there are many leads for you in Ephemera. There could be other leads that you would like to explore that could be generated by Montrose's knowledge of the layer, or whatever. I don't think you have— I don't think you're gonna be able to stare at these pieces enough to where it's like, "Oh, there's our answer."

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: So—

Travis: "Oh! There's our answer!"

Justin: Other leads that you want— might wanna explore within Ephemera.

Clint: And what is our timetable? This is... this event happens every night, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: Okay.

Justin: Yes.

Beef: Okay, all right then. I have an idea. Let me pitch something... What if we encouraged an uprising in Ephemera, to the point where there would be some kind of big... you know, like push on the Gallspire and, 'Ah, we're gonna take it and free ourselves from the rule of these people who are, you know, embezzling money and fake rulers and all this stuff.' And we use that as cover to do everything?

Montrose: Are you out of your fucking mind?

Clint: [chuckles]

Beef: No, I don't think so?

Griffin: I take a few steps away from Beef, like:

Montrose: I do not wanna be standing near you when The Seven strike you down, for the terrible things you have said here today.

Beef: Okay, Montrose, you know like— it's not— oh, bud, okay. So, I love your commitment to character and to the role-playing, and all that stuff. But like, we're here to do a job, bud? Like, we need to use everything we can...

Montrose: Believe me, I know. But I also do know that the Grand Duke DuBrook has a long memory. And we do not wanna get on his bad side, so terrible is his might.

Beef: Oh, bud, once we are seen— like, if we steal the Gallspire, I don't know if we'll be able to like come back here for a while.

Montrose: Well, if we steal the Gallspire and our identities are compromised, we're not going to be stepping foot anywhere that's not a jail cell, for a long while.

Beef: Yeah.

Montrose: This... let me say this, fellas. This one here, this is not going to be our traditional smash and grab whilst coated in chocolate sort of caper. This—

Beef: That was once. That was once.

Montrose: This is gonna have to be a real smooth one. Or we will be jailed or murdered.

Beef: All right, well, let me ask you, Emerich. You're the projection expert, the Hard Light expert. Is there a way to shut all this down, right, shut down the projection without... 'cause up to this point, I think most of our projection shutting down expertise has been shooting it with a big gun, or destroying it in some way, right? Can you bring down this tower without... that?

Emerich: Well, in theory, there should be way to contain the prism. We're talking light. So, in theory, there should be a way to put the prism in some kind of container that would prevent it from... broadcasting, from creating the Hard Light projection. But to do what you're talking about, it would take all three of us. Because these... these prisms that they're using are the size of a soccer ball, correct?

Montrose: Yeah.

Emerich: It would have to be spaced out equally within the structure itself. So, they're not going to be right next to each other.

Montrose: This is an excellent point! We gotta do all three of these at the same time, 'cause I do not know if it will have the dramatic effect if like one side of the Gallspire just starts flickering or whatever.

Beef: So, what we need to do, right, what— the information that we need to gather right now is see if we can figure out where in the Gallspire they are projecting from.

Montrose: I propose this... This plan, no matter what shape it takes, is going to require a means of entry, a means of stealing, and a means of exit. Let's split up today and let's go do a little leg work. I'll go see if I can nose around in the underworkings of the Gallspire, see if I can find a way up to that fairy shack. Emerich, you can go look for the projectors, see if you can

find anything there. And then Beef, you can— I don't know, find us a way out. Carrying three, probably heavy, soccer ball-sized crystals.

Beef: Okay, yeah. As long as we stay in communication with our earpieces and stuff, and try not to get in trouble... which, you know, big ask, but I think we can do it. Try not to punch any, you know, people working, like hotel clerks or whatever.

Montrose: Are you saying that—who are you saying that to?

Beef: Myself.

Montrose: Just checking.

Beef: Yeah, I love this plan.

[music plays]

[ad break]

[music plays]

Justin: So... Montrose, what are you attempting to do? Let's start with you, Montrose.

Griffin: So, it seems like things that would be helpful for us is... like either doing a little social engineering or something to get— to like figure out the... underground sort of system, under the Gallspire, right? We mentioned— you mentioned that there seems to be some sort of way up to the fairy shack that was not climbing up the hill. Which, to me, suggests like access tunnels and things like that.

Travis: Yeah, we found a door, right? But we couldn't—

Griffin: We couldn't get into it. Right, didn't have the right clearance. So, I would like options for how we like, get in and around this job, that would be as covert as possible. So, that's what I'm looking to accomplish.

Justin: Okay. And then what about you, Beef?

Travis: I'm going to go, I think, scout the grounds around the Gallspire itself. Specifically, I think, to gather information about the feast or the fireworks. Or both.

Justin: Okay. And you, Emerich?

Clint: I would assume that there are people, technicians, scientists— this would take quite a commitment of manpower, to not only create this, but maintain it. So, I think he's going to look into the local scientists and inventors' union, and see if perhaps he can talk to people and find out more about the creation.

Justin: Okay.

Clint: It would be the International Brotherhood of Scientists and Technicians. So, IBOST.

Travis: IBS?

Clint: He's gonna find—

Justin: IBOST.

Clint: He's gonna find the local 26-26. And he's going to go talk to, you know... nose around a little bit.

Justin: Sure, sure.

Clint: And see if he can make some connections.

Justin: Okay, perfect. Let's start with you, Montrose. You realize that the best way for you to— by the way, if you guys can— I'm gonna— I have a good idea for Montrose first. If you can think about other down— like, there's other— I'm trying to accomplish these in downtime. So, if you can fold it into some sort of vice or any other of your usual— acquiring an asset is another downtime activity, whatever, training.

Travis: Oh, yeah! Well, I'm stressed as shit. So yeah, that's a good one.

Justin: Yeah, yeah. So, we wanna try to accomplish all these at once. But Montrose, you're exploring the Butter Cream directly below Ephemera, 'cause you realize that's probably your best place to start.

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: And you are wandering through the inner workings. You've strayed a little bit far from where people have inhabited in this particular iteration of the Butter Cream. You find yourself in a long, long hallway, that's lit just by a single bulb hanging from a cord. And all of a sudden you hear a [whooshing sounds] Bzzzt! The bulb shatters and you're left in the darkness. And you feel yourself briskly pressed up against the wall.

Deep Dark: I didn't think I'd run into you again so soon!

Montrose: Oh my god...

Deep Dark: It's Deep Dark!

Montrose: No, I know. No one else sounds like that. 'Cause why would they, 'cause it hurts.

Deep Dark: How's your training going?

Montrose: I'll be honest with you... well, you know, I was gonna say, I've been slacking. But I did use a big gun to blow up a dragon. So, actually, probably pretty good.

Justin: You see him... well, you don't see him, it's very dark.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: You hear him rear back and attempt to punch you in the stomach.

Griffin: Oh? No, I won't— I don't want him to do that.

Justin: Okay?

Travis: Yeah, you tell him!

Justin: Give me a finesse roll.

Griffin: Is this desperate?

Justin: No, it's not desperate. But it is risky.

Griffin: Okay. Boop!

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: 2, 1, 5, mixed success.

Justin: Hm, 5, yeah. His hand smashes into the wall behind you, as you dart out of the way.

Deep Dark: Really good. That's really good, actually—

Montrose: Hey, don't do— hey, don't do that.

Deep Dark: I was trying to—

Montrose: No, I know what you were trying to do. But don't do that.

Deep Dark: Ah, it was really good, though.

Montrose: That's not the kind of dynamic I want with us, Deep Dark, okay?

Deep Dark: So, I hear you're exploring the underground, trying to find a way in?

Montrose: Who... who did you hear that from?

Deep Dark: I was outside the room.

Montrose: Deep Dark...

Deep Dark: Where you all were talking. [chuckles]

Montrose: Don't do that! That...

Deep Dark: I have... I have ears everywhere!

Montrose: I'm deeply uncomfortable— okay, Deep Dark, yes, I'm looking for... you know, secrets.

Deep Dark: You wanna clean way in?

Montrose: Jesus Christ...

Deep Dark: Have you considered using a skyhook? It's where you fly in on a plane and then parachute out. And then a different plane picks up your— do you know about Skyhook?

Montrose: That doesn't sound physically possible... you would break your spine instantly when that hook grabs you. There is no way that would be survivable.

Deep Dark: I was hoping you had one, 'cause I've always wanted to try it.

Montrose: Okay. No, we need to be much, much quieter than, Deep Dark.

Deep Dark: Hm... the cover of night is my greatest friend!

Montrose: Yeah, we weren't gonna do this one in the daytime, Deep Dark!

Justin: Okay, so, Deep Dark understands the...

Travis: [chuckles]

Justin: The underworld, the inner workings.

Travis: Mm-hm?

Justin: Deep Dark can help you to find the entrances that you're looking for. What you would need to do if you're interested in this path, is acquire him as an asset, I think is what we would—

Griffin: Okay, that's interesting?

Justin: He would be an asset for you, to help you figure out a way in and a way out.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: So, you would wanna— if you want this—

Griffin: I do.

Justin: ... You would roll the tier. And this is how much— you're gonna roll your tier, so you'll roll one...

Griffin: To see his quality?

Justin: Exactly.

Griffin: Okay... I know there's a way to... do this actually—

Justin: You can spend coin to raise the result of this roll.

Griffin: Sure. But I won't need to, 'cause this is gonna be a fucking slam dunk.

Justin: And it looks like this is a case where you can spend coin... afterwards.

Griffin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: I believe.

Griffin: Okay, here we go, 6.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Right now... Look at the, baby! That's a 6!

Justin: Oh my god!

Griffin: It just happened! It's The Secret, gang!

Justin: You said you would do it?

Travis: You've just gotta say it!

Griffin: You've just gotta say it!

Justin: And then you did do it?

Griffin: And then there's like a—

Travis: That's amazing. I had no idea.

Griffin: Like a 15% chance that it's gonna come true for you. That's the secret!

Justin: That's amazing!

Travis: I had no idea you could do that.

Justin: That's the secret, guys.

Travis: That's incredible.

Griffin: Cool, yeah, he's good! Unsurprisingly, Deep Dark— let me say this, I have a contentious relationship with Deep Dark. I don't like somebody out there who knows more than I do. But I'm a fan of his expertise here, and I will leverage it.

Deep Dark: So, here's the deal. Me and Infinite Jesse, the Spectrafairy, used to be a thing. So, I know the door that she uses to access her—

Travis: Can I just say, I knew it.

Griffin: Yeah. Called it. For sure.

Justin: What?

Travis: That they used to be a thing. We've talked about it. We've talked about it in all the like forums and chatrooms and stuff.

Justin: For 6, I also think Deep Dark knows... an access tunnel, up into the... Let's call it an access tunnel to the public main like foyer into... Gallspire. So like, it will get you in, but not into where you need to be for the prisms.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: So, you have at your behest now—

Griffin: That sounds like a more useful exit than like— like, we could get into this public celebration at the Gallspire, but we need quick ways out. And that seems like that would be pretty helpful for that.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Cool. I still have one action, right?

Justin: Mm-hm.

Griffin: I need to reduce some fucking stress. `Cause I'm one away from full. So, I would like to do that.

Justin: Wow. Okay.

Griffin: Can we just be back at The Future is You?

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: And I'm installing... I'm installing the dog?

Justin: Maybe you did it in a different order? Maybe it's happened before.

Griffin: Maybe this happened before.

Montrose: Boy, I hope I don't see Deep Dark today.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, I'm having Girth, the dire hound robot installed. `Cause the family needs a dog.

Montrose: Well, Timothy, it's like you always wanted. A puppy of your own to throw a frisbee disk around with or... go digging around for worms.

Timothy: Gee, thanks, Montrose! I really appreciate it!

Travis: Is that how he sounds?

Montrose: Are you all right, Timothy?

Justin: Uh-huh, 'cause we fixed him. Remember?

Griffin: Oh, right.

Justin: You all fixed him up.

Travis: And that was how he sounds fixed?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: That's like—

Justin: That's how he sounds fixed! You haven't heard him since he's been fixed—

Montrose: Timothy, it is good to hear you back to your old self, my friend.

Timothy: Thanks! I really appreciate being able to think!

Montrose: I hope you don't mind that we've made some changes around the place, a little modernization?

Timothy: I can't believe you got me a dog!

Montrose: Yes. Now, this dog is a wild one—

Girth: I'm no dog. I am the dire wolf! Girth! One of the four horny guys!

Clint: [chuckles]

Montrose: This is a child. This is a child, Girth.

Girth: That's just the name of it? I didn't pick it!

Montrose: All right. Timothy, I apologize. I did not know he would speak like a human tongue. Is that still okay?

Timothy: Yeah! I think it's... you know, it'll be nice to have a friend! Sometimes Dad closes his eyes for days, weeks at a time.

Griffin: [laughs]

Montrose: Well, you got— your dad works very hard. You gotta let him rest when he needs it.

Timothy: That's what he says!

Montrose: Yeah.

Timothy: And Mom's just a top half! Sticking out of the kitchen counter!

Montrose: Yes, that is... it is... there is exactly one angle through which— one very specific lens through which your family is not a sort of cruel joke of humanity.

Mom: Did you guys want some carrot slices?

Montrose: No, mom, we're good! Thank you.

Timothy: They still haven't fixed your voice quite right?

Montrose: I like it better this way.

Mom: Me too!

Montrose: More assertive.

Mom: People are fucking listening!

Montrose: Ah, the curse—[chuckles] okay, I wanna just go back to the gears and gizmos, maybe push a few levers in a few directions. This is supposed to be a family-friendly attraction.

Mom: People are flipping listening!

Travis: Better.

Griffin: Okay, I'm going to roll... my— is it lowest stat? Well, they're all two now. So, doesn't matter... No bonus dice...

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: 3 and a 4... So, it's minus 4. Can I— and how does it— I can pay one to roll again? I'm gonna use my last coin here to roll again.

Justin: Wow, pretty good.

Griffin: 'Cause I still have four stress, that's... that's a lot. Hopefully I don't overindulge!

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: I did not, I got the exact same result 3, 4. So, I am zero stress!

Justin: Nice job!

Griffin: We love to see it.

Justin: We love to see it! Let's— Mac or Trav, do you have some idea what you wanna... what you wanna do?

Clint: Yes, I do. Trav, unless you wanna go?

Travis: No, go ahead, go ahead.

Clint: Okay, here's my plan. Emerich is... is going to go to one of the meeting rooms at Bumbershoots, 'cause he had noticed a sign that said you know, like, 'Meeting at the Koana's,' you know, 'This is where the rotary meets.' Those kinds of things. And he goes to the meeting room, to where the local 26-26, the International Brotherhood of Scientists and Technicians hang out.

Justin: Mm-hm?

Clint: And he goes to this... this room. It's the... it's the Star Blaster room, because there's no place to sit, except on Davenport.

Justin: Hah! All right, sure.

Griffin: Oh, wow!

Justin: Why not?

Clint: So, he kind of goes in. And here's the— here's his purpose. He's hoping to solicit some extra work, because as you remember, his vice is overworking. Right? That's where he gets his pleasure, is working.

Justin: Yeah, he loses himself in his work.

Clint: So, he's hoping that he can pick up some extra work, on— which he figures, since there is very little Hard Light in Ephemera, that if he picks up some Hard Light work, it would be on the Spire.

Griffin: Okay!

Justin: Okay.

Clint: All right?

Justin: Okay...

Host: Okay fellas, okay fellas, settle down, settle down. Take a seat there. All right. Welcome to the— what is this, the... 773rd meeting of IBOST 26-26. So, thank you guys for showing up, thanks for being on time, I really appreciate it. I wanna say a huge welcome to some new members. Over there is— y'all aren't gonna believe this, but we are graced today by carnival legend... a little bit of a disgraced legend, Emerich Dreadway. Everybody just say a big hi to Emerich.

Travis: [in silly voice] "Hi! Hey, Emerich! What's going on?"

Griffin: [in silly voice] "Hey, Emerich!"

Host: That's great, that's great.

Travis: [in silly voice] "Hey there, Emerich!"

Host: And I wanna say a huge welcome to another new hire, he's gonna be filming... doing a series, a docu-series on the festival, the feasts. You know, what is it they got up there? You know, they do it once in a while... The Feast of the Seven!

Griffin: [in silly voice] "Oh, the feast of the Seven, boss!"

Travis: [in silly voice] "The feast of the Seven!"

Host: The annual Feast of the Seven takes place every night, right. Welcome to the crew Douglas Manzetti.

Douglas Manzetti: Hey! It's... it's great to be here! I'm thrilled to be here, Douglas Manzetti, a different person.

Host: Welcome. Welcome aboard, Douglas. Now, Emerich, you... you're wanting to pick up some extra hours, which is a relief. Because we have some... you know, there's a lot going on with Gallspire, the... Emerich, has anybody told you... you probably guessed, but Gallspire's all Hard Light now. Kind of an open secret, but...

Emerich: Oh, yeah.

Host: It's all Hard Light, they tore down the old one.

Emerich: Oh, really? Oh?

Host: Yeah, believe it or not. You probably saw, though. You would know, pro.

Emerich: I must tell you, I was very doubtful when I realized I really need some work. And I am— that is kind of my area of expertise, the... the Hard Light constructs. So, I'm glad to hear that. It looks amazing! I don't know who is in charge, but it's... it's beautiful.

Justin: Dad, here's what I want for you to do. I want you to roll a sway. And this sway roll is going to be convincing this unnamed gentleman... who I'm going to call...

Travis: Oh, I can't wait.

Griffin: This is gonna be good!

Travis: Brace your asses, everybody!

Justin: Justin.

Travis: Nice.

Griffin: God damn it.

Justin: And—[chuckles] I want you to try to convince Justin for the tier of work that you are ready for. Better work, higher responsibility, more information. Fair?

Clint: Certainly.

Justin: All right.

Clint: All right, so... roll sway, correct?

Justin: Correct.

Clint: What is this, controlled, desperate, risky?

Justin: Hm... Let's call it controlled.

Justin (Host): What do you— hey, I know you've been out of the game for a while.

Emerich: Yes?

Justin (Host): Where are you at right now, skills wise, Emerich?

Emerich: I am really at the top of my game, to be honest with you. Because while I have, as you say, been out of the game for a long time, I have been focusing on... on refining projections, Hard Light projections. To the point where I have even developed an incredibly complex, believable, realistic human avatar, when it comes to Hard Light.

Justin (Host): Wow. Wow. Huge stuff, huge stuff. We can all agree, right? Huge stuff.

Griffin: [in silly voice] "Huge stuff, boss!"

Emerich: And if I'm able to sway you, I will demonstrate this projection to you, so you can see.

Justin (Host): You know, it's so rare people just openly say that they're attempting to sway you. I appreciate your forthrightness.

Emerich: Well... convince you, then.

Clint: So, standard? And... I can't afford a bonus die, 'cause I haven't stressed... stressed... okay... [shudders]

Travis: You can do it.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: 6, 1, 4!

Justin: Wow.

Clint: Whoo!

Justin: Great job, dad. Great job.

Clint: Now wait, is that Justin or Justin telling me great job?

Travis: Woah...

Justin: That was Justin.

Griffin: Yeah, this guy's not your dad in game.

Justin (Host): Hey, you did a great job.

Emerich: Thank you.

Justin (Host): I'm really proud of you.

Travis: Now, that was Justin.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: That was Justin.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: [chuckles]

Justin (Host): Okay...

Emerich: May I show you my projection?

Justin (Host): No, I've already been swayed.

Emerich: Oh?

Justin: [chuckles] So...

Justin (Host): Yeah, go ahead. You know what? Now I'm curious. Now you've peaked my curiosity.

Emerich: Well, I mean, if only to convince you that I can work at the highest level.

Clint: And he flips open the Give a Ghost and projects... Scott Boldflex.

Emerich: Well, Scott, I would like you to meet Justin, who is not my son.

Travis: It's weird, people don't often clarify that as much as they should.

Griffin: Yeah, I appreciate it.

Travis: When I'm introduced to people all the time, I'm not told whether or not they're their son.

Griffin: Yeah.

Scott: Hey, I'm Scott Boldflex, and I'm just realizing I only have one voice for real guys-guys.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Scott: You know, it's just this one. One voice for guys-guys. Guys that are more guys than me. And I just have this one voice for guys. You know, guys—

Clint: And I recall Scott. I recall Scott into the Give a Ghost Projector.

Justin: Thank fuck. [chuckles]

Justin (Host): That is really impressive!

Clint: No, I said I recalled Scott.

Justin: [chuckles] Fuck off, Dad.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: Eat shit forever. [chuckles]

Justin (Host): All right, listen, gotta... can I... can I draw you in over here for a second?

Travis: Another huddle?

Justin: This is just Emerich.

Justin (Host): You're kind of a legend. And so, I think that I can... I can trust you with this... [sighs] We've actually been having a little bit of a problem with the new Gallspire. The egg heads call it a foci sync loss.

Emerich: Mm-hm, yes.

Justin (Host): Where these are project— you know, we have redundancies in the projections. So, one goes down, the others can cover it. But what we've been having is every once in a while— nobody quite understands why, they're losing sync. Just for like a millisecond, you know, a half second, I'm exaggerating. No one's noticed yet, 'cause it tends to happen during the fireworks, right? So, I'm thinking that there's some sort of sync issue... I don't know if it's the sound, the energy displacement or what, but it's causing these foci to step out of sync for like a half second, during the show. So, I'm hoping that maybe you can... you can go over some of these schematics and try to... to work that out.

Emerich: Oh, that is... that is right in my wheelhouse.

Justin (Host): You keep it between us, though, right? This is highly sensitive stuff.

Emerich: Oh no, absolutely. And may I just say that if I were to have a son, I would want him to be just like you. Just...

Travis: Wow!

Emerich: I just feel a close bond to you.

Justin (Host): I didn't see that... wow, okay... okay... It's gonna be that kind of day. All right. Wow, thank you so— from you? A disgraced legend like you? That really means something.

Emerich: I don't know about disgraced. I mean, I stepped away on my own accord. So...

Justin (Host): Well, agree to disagree.

Justin: Okay, so, let's do a vice roll, dad.

Clint: Yeah, yeah.

Justin: You gotta do— to see how effective this— he's given you some schematics and a lot of information to study about it. 'Cause you did a really good sway roll. So, let's see if you can get—

Griffin: You can— by the way, I have just learned, there's a button that says 'indulge vice' on your sheet. You can click that. It's where your—

Clint: Oh?

Griffin: It's at the top where like all your information is?

Clint: Okay?

Griffin: Underneath... just above your stress tracker, there's a little button—

Clint: I see it, yes.

Griffin: And if you just click it—

Clint: So, I can just click that to do the roll?

Griffin: Yup.

Clint: Okay. It's asking me if I wanna do bonus die?

Griffin: No.

Clint: Dice?

Griffin: No.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: So, clear three stress.

Clint: Three?

Griffin: Yes. You can also roll again, for one coin.

Travis: If you pay a coin.

Griffin: For one suite.

Clint: To remove more?

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Yeah. This is gonna be a big job!

Clint: I got a suite back from Dave?

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Okay, yeah. I'll do it again. To get rid of more of my stress.

Griffin: Just don't overindulge!

Travis: Well, he has seven stress. So, he can't.

Griffin: Well, he had seven stress, now he has four.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Uh-oh...

Clint: Can I take the lower one?

Travis: No.

Griffin: No. So, that's a—

Travis: He got 6

Griffin: That's a 6. That's 6. He had five stress and now— but now, he... now, he has a bad thing.

Travis: And this hasn't happened just yet.

Justin: Yeah...

Travis: Okay. So, "When you overindulge and make a bad call because of your vice, select an overindulgence from this list; Attract trouble."

Justin: [chuckles]

Travis: "Brag, lost, or tapped."

Clint: Brag?

Travis: Yeah, "If you brag, you gain two heat. If you're lost, your character vanishes for a few weeks. Play a different character until this one returns from the bender. Attract trouble, you roll an additional entanglement. Tapped, your current purveyor cuts you off, find a new source for your vice."

Justin: Dad, I'm gonna say either brag or tapped. I'm gonna have you choose one of those.

Clint: Tell me again about tapped?

Justin: Tact just means that you can't use these guys for any more stuff. The... IBOST 26-26.

Travis: Yeah, so, in future jobs, you can't say, "I'm going to the IBOST again for more work."

Clint: Oh... I... oh, okay, can we take a little—

Griffin: Or we take on some more heat? Who gives a shit?

Clint: I don't wanna take— no, no, no, no. I have a contingency plan. Well, I've already got the gig, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: Ah, I hate to cut myself off from 26-26, I worked so—

Justin: Then take a little heat?

Travis: Just take a little heat!

Griffin: What's a little heat between friends?

Clint: All right, I'll brag about it.

Justin: All right. Almost as soon as he asked you to keep it between the two of you, you start telling some of the other guys around the table who you wanted to impress, who also think you're disgraced, about this work that you're taking on. And one little squirrely-looking lady, who seems like she's playing both sides—

Clint: Oh, can I do the brag first?

Justin: Yeah, go ahead and do the brag first, I guess. We'll do that in character.

Emerich: Well... disgraced my ass! [chuckles] I guess now we know who's king of the hill and who is the disgraced... guy! [chuckles]

Justin: Great, great bragging.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: So, I'm gonna add two heat.

Travis: You've bragged before.

Justin: And—

Travis: Wait, you do clear your stress.

Justin: Yeah, clear that fuck'n stress, Emerich.

Clint: It's out.

Justin: Trav, we pivot over to you.

Travis: Yeah, I'm gonna approach the barge!

Justin: Approach the barge.

Travis: The fireworks barge. Two reasons. One, I wanna see if there is a... like egress via the waterway, whatever waterway that barge is on. Is it a closed circuit or is it something we can potentially use to escape? I also want to investigate the barge itself, and I wanna find like the person in charge of the barge. Are they large?

Justin: Okay, so you wanna go—

Clint: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, I just realized, I interrupted you doing a squirrely woman thing, Juice? Did you wanna finish that?

Justin: She just nodded, you just watched her nodding knowingly.

Clint: Oh, okay, I'm sorry.

Travis: But in a squirrely way.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: It was nuts.

Griffin: Stop it. Travis...

Travis: Yeah?

Griffin: I need... I need someone on this show that— I need a constant... on this Earth.

Travis: [chuckles]

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: No, you're rolling up to the barge.

Travis: Yup.

Randy: Hey, how's it going? Can I help you with something? This isn't really part of the... you know?

Beef: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, I'm actually... I'm not just like a guest here. I'm Beef Punchly! And I... you know, I've— at this point, been taking a pretty passive role. But I'll tell you, I'm big into like explosions and fireworks and all that stuff. And I just, honestly, just wanted to see what was kind of happening here. Maybe this is... maybe I can put in for a transfer to Ephemera and see if I can be part of this explosive lifestyle?

Randy: Wow. Okay, let me get the guys over.

Justin: And you see this guy rise to his full height. He's thin, he's got a short-cropped hairstyle, and his— the rest of his family joins him.

Travis: Oh, it's a family business?

Justin: Yeah.

Randy: My name is Randy DeBarge. That's Mark DeBarge, James DeBarge.

Griffin: [laughs]

Randy: El DeBarge, and Bunny DeBarge.

Clint: [chuckles]

Travis: Who's the in charge DeBarge?

Randy: I'm the in charge DeBarge.

Griffin: Oh fuck...

Clint: Have you met large Marge DeBarge?

Randy: No, Randy DeBarge is— I'm sort of the one who's running the show. We let El be the front man, 'cause he's kind of the... it seems weird to say about your brother, but the sexy one.

Beef: Yeah.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Randy: So... but we all run DeBarge.

Beef: You know, if I had brothers, I bet everyone would know who the sexy one was right off the bat. Like, we wouldn't even have to discuss it.

Randy: Yeah, I have no— yeah, I don't have any doubt about that. So... We don't really do like tours or anything, I mean... what is it that you're wanting, exactly?

Beef: Oh, just like, how... how does it all work? Are you guys still running around, you know, with Zippos, lighting all the... all the fuses yourselves?

James: These days? It's all computers!

Justin: That's James DeBarge. He's got glasses on.

Griffin: Woah.

James: These days, it's all run by computers.

Beef: Oh, so, the computers are running around, lighting all the fuses?

James: There's no fuses, it's all electrically charged.

Beef: Oh?

James: A simple—

Justin: And Bunny gives him a withering look. [chuckles]

James: Oh, I guess I shouldn't be talking here, I just get really excited when I hear anybody bring up computers.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Beef: No, listen, I understand, you know? You know, there's a fighting game, like an arm-wrestling game based on me, it's all programmed with computers. It was very exciting. I was very involved in the testing of it.

James: Oh, so, you know a little bit about computers coming in already?

Griffin: [laughs]

Beef: I'm sorry, what was the last thing you said?

James: I'm just— I love when I meet somebody else who already cares a lot about computers.

Beef: I care deeply about computers! Did you design the computer that runs all this?

Justin: Bunny is like:

Bunny: Ha! Ha!

Travis: Hopping mad?

Justin: Like clearing her throat. Like— yeah, bunny's hopping mad and James DeBarge is like:

James: Listen, I don't think Bunny wants me to tell you any more about the computers.

Justin: And you see the rest of the DeBarge family kind of go back to working on other parts of the barge, and—

Beef: I'll tell you what, how about— how about— how about we make it a little fair, right? I'm a big, strong dude. It looks like you guys got a lot of work here. I will have an arm-wrestling competition, it's kind of what I'm known for. If I win, I would love to just learn everything about it, just 'cause I'm fascinated both by computers and by fireworks. And knowing that they're related? Oh my god. Get out of here. And If I lose, I'll carry stuff around for you, and I'll do like heavy lifting for you all for a while. And nobody will have to lift a finger.

James: I mean, that all sounds good to me, but I'm not gonna be the one arm wrestling you?

Beef: Oh, no, that's fine, I can arm wrestle anybody.

James: Can you arm wrestle Chico DeBarge?

Justin: And then a bar— a door of the barge slams open.

Travis: Oh boy.

Justin: And you see the biggest, least handsome, most intimidating member of the DeBarge family, Chico DeBarge.

Travis: Mm-hm, yeah.

Justin: Who sits down at a table and says:

Chico: I hear that we're doing arm wrestling!

Griffin: [chuckles]

Beef: Uh-huh?

Griffin: How often does Chico barge into the room saying that incorrectly?

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles] Why didn't I think of—

Griffin: "Did I hear someone say arm wrestling?"

Justin: [chuckles] Why did I make them a family? This is so hard.

Griffin: It's so good.

Justin: And I'm sorry to Jupiter who's like tracking the voices. I promise...

Clint: No, but this is a perfect excuse for you to use the same voice! They're on the same family!

Justin: Yeah, but they're different people, dad. You know DeBarge.

Clint: Well, just slow down. Change the pace of the delivery, not—

Travis: The pitch.

James: This is my silent brother, Chico DeBarge.

Clint: [laughs]

James: And he's great at arm wrestling. And so, you're gonna have to arm wrestle him.

Beef: Okay!

James: This is so cool. To think you can do arm wrestling and you love computers as much as me... I don't know what it's like to have a best friend, but I think I finally get it.

Justin: Okay, so, Trav, you're gonna give me a skirmish, right?

Travis: I sure am.

Justin: Or is this just— for your— okay. Chico DeBarge... ah! Flexes, stretches, and he puts his elbows— meaty, thick elbow up on the table of DeBarge.

Travis: Okay, what's the position here, my man?

Justin: We're gonna call it risky, 'cause it's like in the middle of the— it could go either way.

Travis: Okay?

Justin: So, it's— I'm gonna say it's risky. And... you're— I will say it's like standard effect. 'Cause like you're both beefy people, you're both strong.

Travis: Okay, let's do it. Oh my lord... 3, 2, 1, loser!

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: Blast off!

Travis: No? Not this time.

Justin: Nope, not this time. Chico is struggling for a bit... but then slams your hand down on the table.

Beef: Woah! Been a while, Chico, nice!

Justin: And Chico nods at you, and gives you a thumbs up. And walks back in to where he was. [chuckles]

Griffin: God, Chico's fucking cool!

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: [chuckles] Yeah, man.

James: I'm sorry, I... I mean, I guess I can't tell you anything else about—

Beef: No, that's okay. You know, you win some, you lose some. I totally get it.

James: You can— but you said you'd work, right?

Beef: Oh, yeah!

James: Okay. Well...

Travis: I'm gonna go ahead, while we're at it, J-man, and indulge my vice for betting.

Justin: Uh-huh, yeah. Good, perfect, Trav. I love that.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Ah, yeah!

Travis: That's 5. Five stress cleared, beautiful! So, that brings me to three. Perfect. Okay, great.

James: But I mean... I can't tell you a lot about how any of the computers work. But if you come back tonight, you could do some— you'll do some work, do some of the lifting, right? Give Chico a break?

Beef: Yeah! Absolutely. And listen, I just want you to know, I know you're feeling it too. I'm feeling a lot of friendship with you, James. And I'd like to solidify it right here with developing some kind of like a— maybe a friend handshake or something?

Travis: And J-man, I would like to acquire an asset of James.

Justin: Okay. You wanna acquire James?

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: "I would like to have one asset of James, please."

Travis: I would like to have... and with a side of friendship, please. No, you know what? If I get friendship—

Griffin: "How is your James?"

Travis: If I get friendship, will you guys share it? Like, if get some friendship, will you guys eat it? I don't wanna have all the friendship myself?

Griffin: I don't want... I don't— I'm good.

Travis: Okay, just a side of friendship I think will be fine. And I would like my friendship to be rare.

Justin: Okay. So, I guess roll for friendship?

Travis: Yeah! I don't remember— this was me trying to look up how to acquire an asset while I was talking. [chuckles]

Griffin: Roll your crew's—

Justin: Griffin just did this, he should be able to help you.

Griffin: Roll your crew's tier, and then the result— so, just roll one dice. Or you can click the button that says 'tier' on it. On our crew sheet.

Travis: Okay...

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: So, then he's—

Justin: Fuck'n great, man. Fantastic. With a 5... he's like tier...

Travis: So, that means it's our tier, right? So, he's a tier one.

Justin: Yeah, tier one.

Clint: They have good employees.

James: This is... wow, I didn't expect today to go like this. But... yeah, I guess you got yourself a friend in James DeBarge.

Beef: Hell yeah.

Griffin: [sings] You've got a friend in James.

Travis: [chuckles]

James: Hey. Can I just say something?

Beef: Yes, please?

James: This is the best day of my life.

Beef: Ah, James, me too, man! I'm just gonna write you down here in my little notebook as an asset, James. If you don't—

Griffin: [chuckles]

Clint: Asset. [chuckles]

Griffin: It's where he keeps track of his friends.

Travis: Yeah, my friend notebook. That's why I wrote 'friends' on it.

Beef: Hey, James?

James: Yeah?

Beef: Let's do our best friend handshake. You ready?

James: Yeah.

Beef: Engage.

Travis: [clapping sounds] [hands rubbing sounds] [clapping sounds]

James: This is so long...

Travis: [clapping and rubbing sounds continue]

James: Hold on, I'm trying to—

Beef: You've got it! You're doing it! James! We're doing it!

Travis: [clapping and rubbing sounds continue]

Justin: I'm trying to remember the whole thing—

Beef: [exclaims] Woah!

James: Just a few more minutes, right?

Beef: Ah! Best friends.

Justin: All right, let's stop there.

Clint: [laughs]

[Steeplechase theme song plays]

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