

The Adventure Zone: Steeplechase - Episode 26

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Krystal: Well, Steepies, the Dentonic creationeering wizards have done it again! After just a couple of days of retooling, the new Hard Light Gallspire is back in Ephemera! Some of you have noticed some subtle changes in the recreated castle since its abrupt disappearance. Windows that are out of scale, doors that scrape the ground when they open, and overall, just a lot of... static? But we are sure that the kinks will be worked out soon, if we know Dentonic. Oh, small note, meet and greets with Sticky Fingers Paul Pantry were canceled last minute this morning. A Dentonic spokesperson said a few too many treats left Paul with a tummy ache. [chuckles] Isn't that so cute? We're told Paul will be back taking photos and signing autograph books by tomorrow afternoon. But if you're hoping to shake those sticky fingers before then, we hope you never know when to stop dreaming!

[Steeplechase theme music plays]

Weaver: Yes, but I'd assumed it was... consigned to legend... I never would've expected, I guess... My understanding is not what I thought it was... Terrifying, the way it was so... quite wonderful.

Justin: Hello, everybody, and welcome to The Adventure Zone: Steeplechase, episode... I don't know, 26?

Travis: Yeah, that feels right. That's what I was gonna say.

Justin: Something like that.

Clint: Our lucky number, 26.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: Is it?

Justin: Classic.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: How did you determine that, dad?

Justin: It's dad's soft—

Clint: I took 13 x 2 and figured that two bad lucks would make a good luck. And besides, it was my—

Travis: Oh, I like that.

Clint: And it was my softball number.

Travis: Now, was it your lucky number before it was your softball number?

Clint: Hm...

Travis: Ooh.

Clint: No.

Justin: None of this is germane. I would like to—

Travis: It's all Tito! [chuckles]

Justin: Oh my God...

Clint: Can I be Marlon?!

Justin: Okay...

Griffin: 69 is my lucky number.

Justin: Ah, here he goes.

Clint: [chuckles] Nice!

Griffin: This is— these have always brought me luck!

Travis: My lucky number is the US of A.

Justin: The Sam Kinison of D&D here, Griffin McElroy.

Clint: [chuckles]

Travis: Griffin is kind of the bad boy of D&D, I've always said.

Griffin: Sure. Fuck you.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [chuckles]

Justin: Sam Kinison died in '92? That can't be right?

Griffin: Yeah, that feels right to me, actually.

Justin: Whew!

Griffin: I remember being five and being pretty torn up by it.

Justin: Okay, so I—

Travis: Justin, I have a—

Griffin: Whoa, fuck.

Travis: I have a question to start off with.

Justin: Oh, you charged ahead. You knew that I was starting and you were starting, but you were, "Priority, right here."

Travis: Well, mine is more a vibe question than like an action question.

Justin: Okay? Good. A vibe check.

Travis: Yeah. I wanted to do a vibe check 'cause like I watched a lot of like you know, procedurals and stuff. Is the vibe of what we're seeing of like Gravel in custody, is this like a... wheels are in motion, things are moving very quickly? Or is this like a, all right, we've got the scene on lockdown and now it's like time to take witness statements and no one's going anywhere for a while?

Justin: The scene is being... let's see... The vibe in the— where did we leave off, where were we physically?

Griffin: We were at the Whittle... the Whittle...

Justin: Right, where there was a company meeting Whittle... Whittle...

Griffin: Whittle Around.

Justin: Whittle Around.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Justin: The vibe there is a little freaked out. Pretty freaked out, very freaked out, because this doesn't happen. Right? This doesn't happen. But the vibe from the Dentonic end is not business as usual, but definitely wanting to exude confidence.

Griffin: I just wanna— I just wanna point out this is the second slaying that has taken place at the Prize Pantry this campaign. [chuckles] So, I would push back against there not being a precedent for this—

Justin: Technically, technically, Dad's murder... technically, he didn't die 'til later.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay!

Justin: He died in a hospital—

Travis: And he was— he was a member—

Griffin: Surrounded by loved ones.

Travis: He was a member of the Butter Cream and like the underworld. This is—

Justin: Right, he was not in the cast.

Travis: Yeah, this is Sticky Fingers Paul Pantry.

Justin: Yeah. This is an icon. That is the deal. And it seems to be moving with a— like, you— you see Gravel is not putting up an argument, Gravel's not fighting. Gravel, I... I see, has a sort of... consigned to her fate? Is that the word, consigned?

Travis: Yeah, resigned, yeah.

Justin: Resigned to her fate, thank you. And that— and that's the— that's the vibe in the meeting. But you have just been told this information. You're in the meeting. I'm gonna start there. If you don't want to be in the meeting anymore, just say. But that is where we ended and that is where we shall start. This is a very— this is a very open-ended thing... and you are gonna have to figure some stuff out.

Griffin: Sure!

Justin: And I don't even mean like a mystery, really, but you are gonna have to get a better grip of the situation before you can move forward in any meaningful way. So, I'm here to facilitate that.

Griffin: I step forward, towards the security guards that are holding Gravel by the shoulders.

Justin: Okay?

Griffin: And I say—

Security Guard: Please step back, sir.

Montrose: My apologies, I am going to have to—

Security Guard: Sir, please step back!

Montrose: I— I— this is my client and I have a—

Justin: He grabs you by the back of the neck and shoves you to the ground.

Montrose: Whoa, okay! This is— my rights are being infringed upon here! I am getting— my rights are being stepped upon, as are the rights—

Gravel: Guys, guys, guys, guys, it's fine. Guys, it's fine.

Justin: And Kenchal comes over and helps you up, Montrose.

Kenchal: Listen, I understand tensions are running really high right now. We're all very sad about what happened with Paul. But again, everybody, we have this situation under control. If everybody could just kind of stick together, go about your business and understand that this is a one-off, alright? This is not— this is not the way we do things here. I know that management lately has started to let things get a little bit loose, and I am— here's what I can say... I'm working on it. But I got— I gotta ask for all of your patience.

Beef: I got— I got a question here. What was the— what was the— the motivation here, the motive behind this? Is this something the rest of us are gonna have to worry about? Like, are we gonna have to start locking our doors in Ustaben?

Kenchal: Again, we're not drilling down that deep into this right now, everybody. We're still figuring this out, too. And I don't wanna put out a false statement, a false narrative, that's just gonna muddy the waters. And— and again, you know, the show's the show. Never Know When to Stop Dreaming, I think that— that— that Karmine, you know, would've wanted us

to keep moving forward and keep creating the same brand of magic that our— our guests have come to expect. So, thank you everybody for your— for your time and your— and your consideration. And let's— let's have fun out there.

Travis: Beef is gonna say this loud enough for the rest of like the Ustaben crowd to hear, and say:

Beef: Yeah, I guess what I'm worried about is without answers and without specifics, there's just so much room to start speculating as to why. I mean, it could've been any one of us, it could've been any like location for any reason. Any one of us could be next. I mean, how can we focus when around every corner, over our shoulders, right, there's gonna be somebody like sneak— like sneaking up on us?

Kenchal: Let me stop you there. Okay, I know that this is really— this can be frightening. This is, again, this... person— not exactly sure how she had entry into the park, we are looking into that to figure out how she was in Steeplechase in the first place. But it is something that we are working on. But again, this is a one-off. This— she did not seem to be working with anybody else, that I can— that I can tell. And with her in custody, I think everybody can just go back about their business. Thank you all so much for taking the time to— to come by. Really, really appreciate it. And let's... let's get back out there.

Travis: Beef doesn't move.

Justin: That's fine. The cast— some of the— you know, it's not an instant stand up and walk out. It is... you know, people are starting to file out. Kenchal I think is talking to some of his subordinates who are already starting to shepherd Gravel out of the room.

Clint: Emerich is gonna move over to one of the rocking chairs, where Eustace Siobhan is sitting, the old grandpa Hard Light.

Justin: Eustace was your... unless I miss my guess, I think Eustace was your guy at the Prize Pantry, correct? Yeah, Eustace worked at the Prize Panty, going back and forth into the back, remember?

Clint: Okay?

Travis: I mean, you can still sit next to whoever the old dude is.

Griffin: Yeah, there's definitely gonna be an old dude whittling here.

Justin: Yeah, there are some old dudes whittling, it's just not— Eustace is a character that you made up, who lives at Prize Pantry.

Clint: Right. A Hard Light he created.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: I think he's going to sit down in one of the rocking chairs and... and try to speak to one of the other— one of the old men whittling.

Justin: Oh, that's fantastic news, Dad.

Grampy: Well, hello, little old partner! Are you looking to get a bit of whittling in?

Emerich: Yes! Oh, yes. But what I'd like to whittle away at is the truth.

Grampy: Okay, well, we have—

Clint: Wait, I meant to take off sunglasses at that point.

Grampy: We have—

Travis: Yeah, wait, try saying it again, dad.

Emerich: What I'd like to whittle away at—

Travis: And then give me a beat afterwards.

Clint: Yeah, okay.

Emerich: What I'd like to whittle away at is the truth.

Travis: Bum-bum! [screeches] Yaaaw!

Grampy: Well...

Travis: Either one works, we'll just fix—

Grampy: We've got... we've got walnut and basswood up there at the front.

Emerich: Oh?

Grampy: You just have pay seven... per bag!

Clint: I'm going to use attune. I'd like to roll attune.

Justin: Okay?

Clint: To see if I can get this Hard Light to tell me if they saw anything regarding the recent slaying that occurred in—

Justin: Sure! Yeah. Go for it.

Clint: Okay, so, attune... I would say this is controlled. And I would say it's standard, wouldn't you?

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: And we...

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: 4, 5, 3.

Griffin: So, 12 total.

Clint: So, a mixed success.

Griffin: Oh.

Justin: Okay, he starts to cut back on the character a bit, as this attune takes place. He seems to dial in a little bit more to who you are and what is happening.

Grampy: Yeah, I didn't... I didn't see anything happen over at... Prize Palace, is what he was saying. We don't... we don't roam. So, no, I wasn't even up yet. Mammy and I slept in.

Emerich: Who?

Grampy: My wife. Your grandma.

Emerich: Maymie?

Grampy: Maymie.

Emerich: Oh! [chuckles] Oh... How is she? No, I'm sorry, I'm getting distracted. So... you hadn't heard anything? Did you actually— did you actually see the person that they arrested, that they took away?

Grampy: Oh, the woman there? Yeah, she... That was interesting, she seemed to... not— not— maybe not be as upset as you might imagine.

Emerich: Did you notice if she had any weapons on her? Did they seize any weapons, like knives? She usually— from what I understand, she usually carried a lot of... bladed weapons.

Grampy: Sure, yeah. I mean... not that I could see, certainly... Yeah, not that I noticed, she didn't seem to be armed. Honestly, pretty wild, I guess, to see somebody in custody, still with a bunch of knives.

Emerich: Well, I... I appreciate you, thank you so—

Justin: [blows raspberry]

Emerich: And your name— oh?

Grampy: Hold on, one sec.

Justin: [blows raspberry]

Emerich: Mm-hm.

Justin: [mouths sound effect] P-ting!

Emerich: Yeah, right in the spittoon! That was excellent.

Grampy: Ah, thanks.

Emerich: And your name is?

Grampy: Grampy.

Emerich: Grampy... Grampy and Maymie.

Grampy: Yeah, you can call me Grampy Gramps!

Emerich: Grampy Gramps.

Travis: That's his DJ name.

Justin: [chuckles]

Clint: DJ Grampy Gramps.

Emerich: Well, thank you. And if you think of anything else, that will be a miracle.

Justin: Real quick, guys, do you guys know Idris Elba's DJ name?

Griffin: No?

Travis: No, what?

Justin: Hey, guys, Idris Elba's been a DJ for a very long time and his DJ name is DJ Big Dris.

Griffin: Good.

Travis: Hell fucking yes.

Justin: Good, right?

Griffin: Wow!

Justin: Things are better now, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Yeah!

Griffin: Nature is healing.

Justin: Things are better now that you know that he's DJ who goes by DJ Big Dris.

Clint: I can finish the show now.

Justin: Yes.

Travis: I wanna make my way— what's Kenchal doing currently? As everything is dispersing.

Justin: He is... talking to one of his subordinates with sort of half attention, while he is swiping through a pad in his hand. It's probably a phone, let's call it a phone. It's not a phone, but you—

Travis: Yeah, I get it.

Justin: You get it.

Beef: Yeah, Mr. Denton, I'm so sorry to bother you. If I may— may I speak to you for—

Kenchal: Sorry, who— you're...

Beef: Beef?

Kenchal: Oh, Beef! Of course, yeah, sorry.

Beef: Beef Punchly, yes.

Kenchal: Didn't recognize you, Beef. [thinking clicks] Let's... you know, you could just run up whatever you're thinking to your manager. Obviously, I got a lot— a lot cooking today. So, if we could, you know, circle back with your manager. If there's anything that needs to be kicked up, you know, to my level, it will eventually get there, for sure.

Beef: Well, I'm sure you understand, our— our... manager is technically Poppy. And I think you understand—

Kenchal: Right.

Beef: We don't wanna go through him...

Kenchal: Yeah, well, I mean, whoever Poppy rules up to.

Beef: Yeah, I just kind of—

Kenchal: You know what? We actually have a form, you know, for different folks in the cast. If they wanna run up ideas or you know, you have complaints, workplace safety, whatever it is, there's a form on the website you can go fill out.

Beef: Yeah, no, I think it's pretty important that I talk to you.

Kenchal: I know, I'm sure it feels that way, right? [chuckles] Especially with tempers running as high as they are and tensions and everything. But hang in there, pal.

Justin: And he kind of pats you on the shoulder and starts to make his way out. So, if you want to talk to him, especially here and now, it's not gonna be something that you— it doesn't seem like something that you'll be able to just sort of, you know, rope him into. That's the vibe you're getting.

Travis: Okay—

Justin: Or it doesn't seem like something you'll just be able to do. Does that make sense?

Travis: Yeah, before he walks away.

Beef: Yeah, it just... I don't know, it's just we have a lot of notoriety here. We have a lot of people that tend to look to us for leadership. And I actually recognize her and we were friends with Paul and I just feel like we'd have a lot to discuss and contribute. But you're right, we should head back to Poppy's Place. I just really think if you change your mind, that's where we'll be. And I think we could really help and offer any importance. But yeah, you're right, we should head back to Poppy's Place. Never mind.

Kenchal: Okay. Great. Thank you.

Travis: I wanna try to make eye contact with him and see if I can read his reaction to that.

Justin: He's... he seems to be thinking.

Travis: Okay?

Justin: He seems to be... thinking things through.

Travis: Okay, so... it register— he— it registered in some way—

Justin: He got— he got what you were laying down.

Travis: Okay, great.

Justin: Seamed to.

Griffin: Have they taken Gravel away?

Justin: They are put— they are heading that way. There's a backdoor in Whittle About, or Whittle Around, that they seem to be—

Travis: Whittle underneath!

Justin: [in silly voice] Whittle all about. [chuckles]

Travis: [chuckles]

Justin: It seems to be that they are pushing her out the door.

Griffin: I wanna run that way.

Justin: Mm-hm?

Griffin: And just shout:

Montrose: Gravel! Gravel!

Justin: She doesn't turn around, I don't think.

Griffin: I run even— I run right up even closer.

Justin: Oh, yeah, that was the problem. 'Cause I hadn't imagined you being close enough, but now that I can imagine you closer, she— no, she's not— [chuckles] she's ignoring you intentionally.

Griffin: Hm...

Montrose: Gravel, we got one shot here, look at me!

Justin: The security guard now pushes— pushes... you away, Montrose. It's the same guy that was a little bit rough with you earlier and he looks like he would love to get rough with you again.

Griffin: I'd like to see him—

Travis: Can I see that?

Griffin: I'd like to see him fuckin' try. Yeah, I—

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: I'd like to see him try so that my big brother can come and stop him.

Justin: Yeah, you— yeah, I assume you can see that, Beef.

Travis: Okay, then I'm gonna— I'm gonna step over.

Beef: Is there a problem here? What's happening? What's going on? I'm Beef Punchly, you might recognize me from my mostly successful arm-wrestling career. What's your name, son?

Travis: Talking to the security guard.

Justin: Trav, give me— tell you what, Trav... there's— there's— are you addressing this to the one that was rough or are you addressing this to like one of his compatriots?

Travis: The one who was rough.

Justin: Okay, tell you what, give me a... We're kind of dealing with fortune, but give me a sway roll to see if he is won over by your charms and all.

Travis: Now, to be fair, what I was going for is I'm trying to take command of the situation.

Justin: Okay, that's fair. Yeah, go ahead. I'll grant that.

Travis: What the position here?

Justin: I would say that it is... risky and the difficulty is great. Or sorry, your effect would be limited, rather. I don't know why difficulty— your effect would be limited.

Travis: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Oh my God, Travis.

Travis: Oh boy...

Griffin: Wow!

Travis: There's not a... there's not a critical fail in this game, but if there was, I rolled a 1 and a 1.

Griffin: That's snake eyes, baby.

Justin: Wow... Okay, give me one hot second here.

Travis: Are you looking to make sure there's not a critical fail?

Justin: Well...

Clint: [chuckles]

Travis: You can't just take my word for it?

Justin: Okay, this is actually, thematically, wonderful. I mean like, story wise, it works great. I'm trying to think if he would...

Travis: I laid a hand on him to get his attention.

Justin: Okay. When you were grab— you put an arm on him and the way he— and speed with which he removes that hand, actually, he pulls a tendon in your shoulder for a level one harm.

Griffin: Jesus.

Justin: But it is very— but you— but it's so fast and discreet that you don't even like— no one would even register except for your yelp of pain. It's not clear exactly what happened here, just that you probably shouldn't touch this guy. Everyone else has— by the way, when that happened, everyone who was a cast member has made their way out. Like, their— they have— they have— they were already filtering out but now it's like [mouths tune] Oh-bop-bop-bop-bop. "Go. Yeah, let's go, let's go, let's go."

Griffin: Have I at least, with this kerfuffle, garnered Gravel's attention?

Justin: I'll tell you what, just 'cause it's more fun this way, the yelp of pain that Beef emitted pulled everyone's attention in your all's direction.

Griffin: Okay, I try to just lock eyes with Gravel and in my most serious voice, I just say:

Montrose: Gravel, did you kill Paul Pantry?

Gravel: That's what they say I did...

Montrose: Yes or no.

Travis: Ooh.

Justin: And they pull her away.

Griffin: Oh, God damn it! Okay, cool...

Kenchal: Guys, we... we had a... we've brought in like a lot of help on this. I can understand that—

Justin: This is Kenchal.

Kenchal: I can understand this is jarring. We did bring in, you know, experts. This... this is not something we're taking lightly. Especially something like this, one of our... our cast mate, you know, our family, the

Dentonic family. But trust me when I say that you are— you are safe. There's never been a better time to work here. Especially the future is looking really good for Dentonic and I thank you all for... for this.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay, so, I'm gonna need to go beat-by-beat here. Because maybe I can accomplish with what he just said, with what I was trying to do with... with Gravel. Just sort of line by line, which of the things he just said was lies?

Travis: Mm-hm.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Oh god, okay—

Griffin: I guess starting with did he bring in— did they actually bring in experts?

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: Okay...

Justin: Yes.

Travis: Is it a good time to work for Dentonic industries?

Justin: Depends on who you are!

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah. Okay, so, there is no... okay... I'm trying to, I guess, check if there is any sort of bullshit in what— in how Kenchal is sort of addressing the situation.

Justin: Kenchal— hey, if you're— if you can know when people are lying—

Griffin: Yeah?

Justin: People that are really powerful can know you know. [chuckles]
Okay?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: So, Kenchal's being careful about his word choice with you.

Griffin: Okay. All right.

Emerich: Mr. Denton, you don't seem to be the kind of person that puts all of his eggs in one basket. And seeing as how we have somewhat of a reputation of getting things done, and also that we had a personal relationship with not only the accused, but the... the victim. Why don't you consider... us investigating—

Kenchal: Sorry, I—

Emerich: Emerich? Emerich Dreadway?

Kenchal: Oh my gosh, the creationeer, yeah.

Emerich: Yeah.

Justin: You were talking in a hushed voice, so he didn't— and nobody else quite made out what you were saying. So, he moves in closer to you.

Kenchal: Emerich Dreadway. Well, a real creationeer legend here, folks. I don't know if you know, he was... he was instrumental, really, in working with my family to develop a lot of the Hard Light tech. Thank you, Emerich, for all of your... you know, your work and your devotion to the company. It means so much to us. Thank you so much.

Justin: And he gives you like a nice pat on the shoulder and starts walking away.

Emerich: Thank you! Thank you, Mr. Denton. I will continue to... sally forth and make you proud of me. Did you fellas hear that? [chuckles] Oh... what a nice man.

Justin: Okay, he's gone.

Griffin: Cool.

Justin: And they've left with Kenchal and— sorry, and Gravel. They're gone and now you are standing in an empty Whittle About. Except for Grampy Gramps, who looks at you and says:

Grampy: So, did anybody wanna whittle or—

Montrose: Can we have the room, Grampy Gramps?

Grampy: Sure! Argh.

Justin: [chuckles]

Grampy: Let me die, one second.

Justin: [mouths dying sound]

Montrose: Whatever it takes. It seems excessive to me, but all right.

Beef: Hey, boys... did I ever tell you that I grew up on a farm?

Montrose: No, but it doesn't surprise me.

Beef: Yeah. And with all my experience from there, I can recognize a goat when I see one. Especially when it's a scapegoat.

Emerich: Oh, that's very good.

Montrose: So, that whole—

Beef: [screeches] Yeah!

Montrose: No, no, no, no, we...

Beef: Oh, no, okay, sorry.

Montrose: First of all, that's... that's done.

Beef: Okay.

Montrose: Second of all, was that whole thing— were you actually from a farm or—

Beef: I was— yeah, no, I did grow— I did grow up on a farm.

Montrose: Okay, cool.

Beef: But I... yeah, I... it was a bit of a long walk to get there. But my point stands that like... okay—

Emerich: Well, we need to talk more, anyway. So—

Montrose: Yeah.

Beef: We know... like, listen. Yeah, Gravel's a criminal. We know Gravel. Would Gravel hurt somebody to get what she wants? Yes.

Emerich: Yeah, she carries knives.

Beef: But this doesn't feel like that, right? Like, why would she attack Paul Pantry... just like go for— I...

Emerich: And then let herself be captured and not resist in any way, shape or form? That doesn't seem like the Gravel we had acquaintance with.

Montrose: Yes, none of this is really... affects us in any kind of significant way. Obviously, I think we're all under the suspicion that a miscarriage of justice has taken place here, but that is not our gig, so to speak. What does concern me is that Mr. Paul Pantry had some, let's say, incriminating...

evidence about us and our exploits. Is it possible he had blackmail on other, perhaps more stabby individuals than ourselves? Yes, that is entirely likely. I get... I get the feeling that this... something... foul play is afoot. And I worry if we don't get to the bottom of it, certain truths about our enterprise may come to light that I am not stoked about.

Beef: I'm also just gonna say, Montrose, I think it's a little bit shortsighted to say that this might not directly affect us. 'Cause what we've just seen, right, is a gentleman that we have done criminal activates for, trying to make a good show of himself arresting a criminal for doing something? And we know that Kenchal is hoping to move up the ranks and impress people and be seen as the competent one in the Denton family, right?

Montrose: Yes.

Beef: And speaking of scapegoats, we got three ready for slaughter, right here, if ever he needs them. So, the way he handled that and like this whole like, "Yeah, it was her," thing, doesn't make me feel super secure in our relationship with him.

Emerich: Well, but he had some very nice things to say about me. I thought that was—

Beef: That's called flattery, Emerich.

Emerich: Yes! Yes!

Montrose: And you can do that to anyone at any— Beef, I love that shirt!

Beef: Oh, thank you. And did you get a haircut, Montrose? It's really, really fetching.

Montrose: Thank you.

Emerich: Oh, well, that's from the electric shock, remember my hair?

Beef: I was talking to Montrose. That's not you.

Emerich: Oh, right, sorry.

Justin: Hey, Dad, I actually thought that moment with Kenchal you did was really well performed. I really— I thought it was good world building and really well-acted.

Travis: We're still acting, Justin. That wasn't Travis speaking, that was Beef.

Griffin: No, Travis, Justin is doing the thing to Dad.

Travis: Oh, I see.

Griffin: Yeah, the world's are colliding.

Clint: Oh! Okay!

Travis: Wheels within wheels!

Clint: Wow, levels upon levels!

Montrose: All right, well, let's, I guess, go on our way into the Prize Pantry so we can either investigate the crime or destroy the video evidence of us being ne'er-do-wells.

Travis: Now, the sun was just coming up, right? This was like early dawn when this all happened?

Justin: Yeah, it's early dawn.

Beef: I think that maybe we need to hole up back at Poppy's Place until the evening and maybe do that more undercover of night.

Griffin: Is the body still— well, wait... we have no reason to believe the body is still there, right?

Justin: Oh, yeah... yeah.

Griffin: Yeah, the body is—

Justin: It's like— no, it's like... I mean, they clean puke up within the minute, you know? [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, so a corpse—

Justin: Like, it's definitely like—

Griffin: Yeah, sure, okay.

Justin: You know, I don't think that they're— they're make— they're— you know, this is— this is as swept under the rug as things possibly could be. I mean... yeah. Let me say this, if you are... there are things you could learn— let me say... There are things you could learn about the situation, but there's not a lot— you're— like you— do not think you're going to be able to like lift prints and check a splatter pattern, you know what I'm saying?

Griffin: No, sure, yeah.

Justin: Like, that any usable, quote-unquote, "evidence", besides being like not particularly interesting to listen to, is also like not— it is not something that you all would have available to you. If it's like specifically related to this crime that occurred, you know what I'm saying?

Griffin: Right.

Justin: It's not to say it's blind out, it's just not necessarily—

Travis: So, they probably would've cleared out Paul's personal effects as well at this point?

Justin: Yeah. I mean, Paul's personal— yeah, I mean... hm, good question. That, I don't know, Trav. Maybe not. Maybe not that yet.

Clint: And he would've hidden things, I would assume?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, I think that's a safe bet.

Beef: I think that we lay low for a little while, right. Let things calm down.

Montrose: We already know how to break into this fuckin' place, so—

Beef: Exactly. And then we go under cover of night to dig through his shit.

Montrose: I love it. Hey, Beef, remember like two days ago when you were like, "I don't know if this is the life for me."

Beef: Well, I don't wanna get caught and I don't wanna get in trouble, which is motivating me right now in this moment. I don't want to do this.

Montrose: Love it. Sunk cost fallacy is the motivator of some of the greatest heists in the history of crime, so... let's take a breather.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

[theme music plays]

Justin: Okay, so, you guys are— so I understand, you are holing up at Poppy's Place until the evening, so you can hopefully like poke around the Prize Pantry under cover of night. Is that fair?

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Correct.

Clint: Yes.

Justin: Okay... Okay, I'm not gonna call this like a score or any of that sort of like typical structure. I think we're in a pretty open-ended scenario right now. So, why don't you guys just tell me what you're doing, what you wanna do and I'll try to figure out how much resistance there is to you doing it. I will say that— so, the things that you would know... You being in Prize

Pantry would not be— after hours, would not be so weird, right. Because you are employees and it's a business. It would not be so strange, but people would be curious, they would wanna know what's going on. So, if they saw you in Prize Pantry, that like... it's not like a shoot on sight type deal, but it would be a little odd. That's what you know, I think, before you would head over there.

Travis: Now, Justin—

Justin: On a normal day.

Griffin: Right. This is not that, though, since—

Travis: I don't know!

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: I just said a normal day, that's how—

Travis: Yeah, but you kind of said it like it was in all caps and like italicized.

Justin: That's the only way I know how to say that, Trav! I take offence!

Travis: That's fair. Justin, let me ask you this. Since we just kind of laid low and chilled all day, and I'm gonna leave this as a GM question, I'll take your answer no matter what it is. I got two first level harms, and if I'm resting up, would that help either my shot leg or my pulled tendon? I'm just kind of laying in bed all day, you know?

Justin: Yeah, I'm gonna say your first one— I'm gonna leave that tendon pain as reminder of your terrible double 1s that you got.

Travis: Yeah, that's fair, that's fair.

Justin: But I'll... you know what? We're playing a little bit fast and loose, I think a day of resting up, you've... you know, you sacrificed that whole day that you could've been doing something to help anybody or anything. And so, I think in exchange for that, it feels a little better. How nice.

Clint: Oh, well then can we all— can I also do that? 'Cause I still have a level one shock.

Justin: Yeah, yeah, you got rid of your level one shock, too. You thought long and hard about whether or not you wanted to try to help people you cared about or advance the plot or anything, and you said, "No, I'm gonna let me shock heal up today." This seems like an opportune moment to do that. So, you let that happen.

Clint: What's weird is my hair is still messed up.

Griffin: Good.

Justin: Yeah, man, but it's looks like cool.

Clint: Yeah!

Griffin: And we'll just say that I've recovered... we'll just say that I've recovered from my first surgery, at this point. But my second surgery is still...

Justin: What was your first surgery?

Griffin: Getting the pin out.

Justin: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: That was forever ago, you know?

Justin: That was forever ago, that's a good point, Griff. And let's just say that you have done that.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: In exchange for, you know, being proactive—

Griffin: Right. Right, right, right.

Justin: In any way about the narrative.

Travis: Do you think in like Ocarina of Time there was ever like villagers in Hyrule who are like getting attacked by like a skeleton or something at night. And they're like, "But the hero of Hyrule, Link, will come save us." And meanwhile, Link just like plays a song to jump forward to the next day and it's like, "Well, shit."

Griffin: "Well, shoot." Yeah, I think that—

Travis: "I thought— I guess I kind of thought—"

Griffin: Let's crime! Can I try and case the joint, just sort of casually, from... I guess from outside. We know the means of entrance into this place, the back... the back channels, so to speak. How heavy is the... you know, presence of security here? Does it seem bolstered or does it seem like things have calmed down at this point?

Justin: It seems bolstered.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: In a showy way.

Travis: Mm-hm! Is it local, Ustaben security? Or has this been brought in?

Justin: Right, good. Good question, Trav. They look like old-timey, old-timey Pinkertons. So, these are Ustaben security, members of the customer experience team.

Travis: Do you know any of them?

Justin: Do you know any of them?

Travis: And I'll remind you, Ustaben is our territory.

Justin: Yeah. Yeah, you know a couple of `em. One of `em, you know one of `em. You know most of `em.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: And now we need to know everything about the one that we do know.

Travis: Well, I'm confused. I think Justin's saying we know of `em, but we know most of him.

Griffin: Oh, I see.

Justin: No, no, no. [chuckles] You know one of `em.

Travis: Oh.

Justin: And probably some others. You know one pretty good and then the others—

Travis: We know one— one's on a first name basis.

Justin: Yeah, and the other ones you've like seen around. Like, you would probably nod. Like, you would be like... like one of `em is like, you'd go— like, go see a movie or something. And the others are like if you needed someone to fill out your fantasy football team, you might be like, "Hey, did you— are into that?"

Travis: Cool. Okay, great, great, great. Like, if we were at a party where we didn't know anybody, right, and we saw one of these guys, we would probably talk to them because there's nobody else that we know. But we wouldn't—

Justin: It would be— honestly, Trav, it would be right on the line.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: It might—

Travis: Got it, got it, got it.

Justin: You might try to play like you did not see them.

Travis: Okay. But these aren't the kind of guy we would check with to say, "Are you gonna be at that party?"

Justin: Exactly, right. Exactly, right. But if you got a little bit loose...

Travis: Uh-huh?

Justin: Towards the end of the party, you might be like, "I should talk— why haven't I ever talked to you?"

Travis: Right.

Justin: "You are cool. You are a cool guy!"

Travis: We would make like ephemeral plans that would be like, "We should go to a movie together some time. We should like hang out more." And never really lock that in.

Justin: Yeah!

Travis: Okay, got it. Okay, that clears it all up, thank you.

Justin: Good, good, good, good.

Clint: Does it?

Travis: So, we're— yeah, I wanna talk to the one that we do know.

Justin: Okay?

Travis: And his name...

Justin: His name?

Travis: His name.

Justin: Oh, his name, yes.

Travis: Do you want me to pick or are you gonna pick?

Justin: No, I'll tell you what his name— well, I know about the character—

Travis: Of course, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to—

Justin: I know about the— I know about the character... His name is Garret!
[chuckles]

Travis: Garret...

Justin: Long... Long Johns.

Travis: Garret Long Johns!

Griffin: Cool! Cool name, Juice.

Justin: [chuckles] That's not right!

Travis: No, that's not at all.

Justin: You say— you say Garret— Garret Long John's—[laughs]

Travis: No, we know him.

Justin: He looks— he looks at you blankly like, "That's not me." [laughs]

Travis: Now, hold on, Justin, I'm confused. Did you trick me just now or what happened?

Griffin: Yeah, that was a wild GM move, I didn't know that we had that kind of power to just—

Justin: What?

Griffin: To just trick—

Travis: That you would be like, “Yeah, you know him, his name is Garret Long Johns. No it’s not, ha-ha-ha.”

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: “Got you, idiot.”

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [laughs] No, no, you’re right. You’re right. It is Garret Long Johns.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Damn it! [chuckles]

Griffin: This is a good time to tell you guys that—

Justin: I just have seen now— okay, I have seen the one time that Griffin was like, “I don’t know, Barry Blue Jeans.” And then—

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: I was gonna say, his name actually was Peter... Smith. But I just came up— I said Barry Blue Jeans and then he was too polite to correct you guys for the rest of the—

Justin: And then it’s in— it’s in comic books and it’s in serial— serials.

Griffin: And now it’s on comic books, yeah.

Travis: And they’re slapping it on the lunch box and they’re selling it!

Justin: The TTRPG, the... yes. Okay, so, Garret is standing guard there. Who’s chatting him up?

Griffin: I can.

Justin: Sensible choice. Sensible choice.

Travis: Yeah, makes sense, makes sense.

Griffin: I walk up to him and I have a... microphone in my hand... and I... I'm talking into it as we walk up to Garret. And I say:

Montrose: The night was thick with mystery and intrigue. Something terrible had happened in Ustaben, but—

Garret: Mr. Montrose, what are you doing?

Montrose: Sorry, just one second, we are rolling.

Garret: What do you wanna do, Mr. Montrose?

Montrose: I'm gonna take— I'm gonna take clean. Once second, just let me— just one second.

Garret: Okay.

Montrose: The night was thick with stinky mystery—

Emerich: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait—

Montrose: Christ alive.

Emerich: It's the level, it's the level. Try it again.

Montrose: Yeah, yeah, yeah, pop those down for me.

Emerich: Try it again.

Montrose: Okay, sorry. Okay, Garret, hey. Hey, Garret. Is that Garret Long Johns?

Garret: Mr. Montrose, you know that it is me. What do you need?

Montrose: Oh, well, we are just knocking out—

Garret: But it is not safe for you to be around right now, Mr. Montrose. You know this. This is a terrible crime.

Montrose: Unfortunate—

Beef: Oh, Garret, I've got his back. Don't worry about that, Garret.

Montrose: Yes. And that is the danger of our job. You see, we are the creators of a hit murder mystery podcast.

Garret: Oh?

Montrose: Perhaps you have heard of it?

Garret: I bet I haven't.

Montrose: This one carries such tremendous cachet. Certainly, think of the— think of the most popular murder-based podcast that you can—

Garret: I've never listened to one, I'm sorry.

Beef: You've never listened to Murder We Spoke?

Garret: Oh, in— in—

Travis: [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles]

Montrose: That's the name of it.

Beef: Yeah.

Garret: No, you understand, of course, you're from Ustabien. You gentlemen know that I couldn't have headphones—

Beef: Garret...

Montrose: Garret, you're being obtuse.

Beef: Come on, man.

Montrose: Listen—

Beef: We all have those things—

Garret: I've listened to— I've listened to a few murder podcasts—

Beef: You in TV and movies when people are like listening to the ball game in church? We know you have one of those.

Garret: Oh, the little thing with the bad looking cord? Yes, of course.

Beef: Yeah, you know the one.

Montrose: Listen, the advertisers have abandoned us, Garret. And if we are going to stay solvent, we... we need a hit. Our last season did not do so great. When it turned out that the dog did it, people were not satisfied with that conclusion. They were like, "How does a dog even use a gun?"

Garret: I was going to go listen, but now I don't feel like I don't want to.

Beef: Not worth it!

Montrose: Not worth it. The dog used a gun to kill a guy and it doesn't make any sense.

Garret: Very disappointing.

Beef: It's why I— it's— and you know, and people told us over and over again, don't get into like murder podcasts because like... what if it's not

satisfying? And you're like, "Well, we'll just make a good product and then people will like it." No. That's not the case.

Garret: Well, I— I am perfectly willing and able to... to help you, Mr. Montrose. Whatever I can do within my limited capabilities, I am at your service.

Montrose: Sure, just look the other way as we walk into the building, get a little bit of... B-roll with audio.

Garret: I can't do that. You understand, of course, that would be a... dereliction of my duties—

Montrose: Not even for... a producer credit?

Garret: Okay...

Montrose: Garret Long Johns, producer of podcasts.

Garret: Okay, this has got— this— now, Mr. Montrose, this is interesting. Okay. Okay, me, Garret Long Johns, an audio producer. This is where the money is.

Beef: Oh yeah!

Garret: Okay.

Emerich: We could probably even go executive producer?

Beef: Whoa—

Garret: Whew...

Montrose: Don't— he does not speak for the rest of us. That is— that is poppycock.

Emerich: Now, I think it's fair to think about. He's really contributing—

Beef: Whew...

Garret: Okay, this is in intriguing.

Justin: Okay, Griffin, give me some— give me the dice I crave! This is gonna be—

Travis: Give him those yummy bones!

Justin: I wanna say controlled, limited. Okay? Controlled and limited.

Griffin: Okay!

Travis: Oh, wait, can I— and I am going to assist.

Justin: Okay?

Travis: No, it's controlled. So, I think—

Griffin: Yeah, you don't need to.

Justin: Yeah, there we go. That's what I was gonna say.

Griffin: Here we go...

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: 2, 3, 5! Mixed success.

Justin: Mixed success... let me see what a mixed success would be.

Travis: Yeah, look it up on the table, executive producer credit. And then cross reference that—

Justin: You actually have a— you have a choice to make here, Griffin.

Griffin: Okay?

Justin: You can accept this... with some like— you know, a little bit of... a little bit on dust on the gum, you know? You could take it with a little bit of dust on the gum.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Justin: Or you could— you could reroll in a risky position.

Griffin: Yeah, I'll do that.

Justin: Which one?

Griffin: 'Cause statistically, that'll be— I have rolled six dice at that point. So, a 6 will come up. So, I'll try again from a risky posish.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Yeah, 6, 6, 4, that's actually a critical success.

Clint: Whow!

Justin: Whoa!

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah, there it is.

Justin: Holy crap!

Clint: 6, 6, 4.

Travis: Garret disappears!

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Garret ceases to exist.

Justin: God, you guys get rolls right when you need `em.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Dang it!

Clint: No, I don't.

Travis: Is this when we needed it?

Griffin: This feels like when we fuckin' needed it, Trav.

Travis: Okay...

Justin: I mean, it's pretty good! Now I'm gonna have to make up something that's in there. Okay...

Travis: [chuckles]

Justin: All right!

Garret: Okay, Mr. Montrose, you have won me over. I am so thrilled to be participating in... Garret Long Johns presents...

Justin: [chuckles]

Beef: We can just say Long Johns presents.

Garret: Garret Long Johns presents Murder We Spoke?

Montrose: Mm-hm.

Beef: Murder We Spoke.

Garret: Wow... okay, let me just sort of— okay.

Justin: And he opens the door and kind of shoos you all in and follows behind you 'cause he wants to be really, really helpful.

Griffin: Yeah, okay.

Montrose: Would you be open to doing an interview, Garret?

Travis: Ooh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Garret: Ooh? Ooh? Okay? [chuckles] Okay... [laughs nervously] Yes, ha-ha-ha... I'll be interviewed!

Montrose: Okay. And while you do that, how about you two walk around, get some foley... See what you see... maybe, you know, check... check all over. Be thorough, now!

Emerich: Mm-hm.

Griffin: And I wanna... [chuckles] And I'll get set up sort of in a corner and try and position Garret so that his back is facing the room.

Montrose: All right, I'm sitting here with Garret. Can you spell your name for me?

Garret: G... R-A... G-A-R-R-E-T—

Montrose: That's good enough, thank you. We can roll with the rest of it. Mr. Long Johns—

Beef: Yeah, we're gonna go to Paul's room now.

Montrose: Yeah, you go. Yeah.

Emerich: I would like to hear— no, no, that's fine. Yes, let's go.

Montrose: I mean, you'll hear it on the tape. You don't need to be here live when the—

Travis: That's the whole point of a recording, Dad?

Clint: Right, right, got it, right.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Now, Dad, I know that you're new to audio recording, right. But what you do is you speak into a microphone so you can listen to it again later.

Griffin: What do you wanna do? Do we want to do this— I figure we could actually get some information out of Garret that could be useful, but I know also you guys now have an opportunity to poke around a little bit.

Travis: Yeah, we can jump back and forth.

Clint: Let's ask our GM.

Justin: It's up to you guys, what do you wanna do? Yeah, let's—

Griffin: Yeah, let's, I guess, do the interview and maybe we'll glean something that you guys can use to dig up some—

Travis: Yeah, the only thing I wanna make sure of is like we're in a different room from Garret, right. So, we don't have to like justify our actions as we search through stuff, right?

Justin: Right.

Griffin: I'm trying to keep Garret from looking at you guys.

Travis: Right, but what I'm saying is like I think... what... so, we're in the Prize Pantry, but we're going to like Paul's quarters.

Justin: Here's what I'm saying, with a double 6, you can— Garret will not be stopping you.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: There might be some like other complications, but like you don't need to worry about Garret or anything.

Travis: Got it, okay, great.

Montrose: Garret, let's start with the day of the crime. When were you made aware of the terrible murder that took place here at the Prize Pantry?

Garret: Hm... well, I was at home... And they called me in and said they needed all of the security to come in. It was supposed to be my day off, Mr. Montrose. But I came in because I'm a loyal... you know, a loyal employee of Dentonic, have been for many years. And I came in and they told us the story about the terrible misfortune that had befallen Mr. Paul Pantry.

Montrose: Mm-hm, but there's a story?

Garret: Of course!

Justin: And then he recounts to you the same story that you heard from Kenchal this morning.

Griffin: Okay.

Montrose: Did you actually see the body, Mr. Long Johns?

Garret: Oh, no, no, no, I was still making my way in.

Montrose: So, you didn't observe a weapon?

Garret: No, they had it pretty much cleaned. I was down in the dorms and I was taking the utili-spire elevator up to the Ustaben level. And I... came after all of the excitement had passed, it seems.

Griffin: I hold the microphone to my own mouth and I say:

Montrose: And then Garret Long Johns said something. Something innocuous that cracked the whole case wide open for us.

Clint: [laughs]

Garret: [stutters] Ah... ah...

Griffin: I stop the recording.

Montrose: Come, it's okay, Garret. Just anything that sort of seems out of the ordinary that keeps this from being an open and shut case. Something that your keen security instincts may have picked up on. Really just the slightest thread that we can pull on throughout the season. This is your moment, Garret! Okay, recording!

Garret: Oh? I... Well, I did notice something. If... if that's okay? I'd like to say it on the show, on your tape... Now, you understand this may not come to anything or mean anything, mm-hm? Well, I just... they... they said it was terrible, the scene with Mr. Paul Pantry. They said it was terrible, with the blood... But I noticed... the woman... what was her name? The criminal, the perpetrator?

Montrose: Hold on one second.

Griffin: I flip through a notebook.

Montrose: Gravel?

Garret: Gravel... how unusual...

Montrose: Strange name, yes.

Garret: I noticed... Ms. Gravel didn't have a spot of blood on her.

Justin: All right, Travis and dad, what are you guys up to?

Travis: I'm snooping. Snooping my butt off. Opening drawers—

Justin: Snooping your butt off, we are gonna need a little bit more specificity as to the... say, to the nature of said snooping.

Travis: Yeah, I'm—

Justin: The direction and nature of snooping.

Travis: So, knowing Paul, my old friend... my old, dead friend, he had dirt on us, right? So, I know that he has secrets. So, I'm checking drawers, but I'm also looking for any like, compartments. I'm looking for—

Griffin: Baring in mind that we have been in this office before, when he like revealed his... his deceit, his surveillance to us.

Justin: Right—

Travis: So—

Justin: Here... So, tell you what, Trav, give me survey. Right? Or yes. Right? Or is there— that would be the one. Of all your available skills, I feel like survey—

Travis: Yeah, it's interesting 'cause I was going back and forth between study, right. But study feels like—

Justin: I feel like study is after you found it.

Travis: Yeah, right? Okay.

Justin: Right? I'll tell you what, you can survey for something that looks weird, you could... and you could study, if there's something specifically you wanna try to... get some information from.

Travis: Okay, yeah, you know what? I wanna study the surveillance stuff that he had in here before. So, the surveillance tapes of the night in question.

Griffin: Boy, that would crack this whole thing wide open, if we could just see—

Travis: Yeah, wouldn't it? Take that, J-man.

Justin: Yeah, those have been confiscated.

Travis: Yeah, I figured, yeah.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: I figured that—

Justin: Believe it or not, those have been confiscated.

Travis: Okay, then I'm just gonna survey for compartments and rooms and stuff.

Justin: In any specific room? In Paul's office? Or like just anywhere in— most of it is show building, okay?

Travis: Yeah, yeah.

Justin: So—

Travis: In Paul's office.

Justin: Paul's office, okay.

Travis: Posish?

Justin: Hm... Controlled.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: I'm really giving you guys a lot with that 6-6. I just feel like—

Travis: Yeah, man. We got in clean.

Justin: Yeah. You took a risk and it panned out. So, I'm trying to make it pay off for you, but yeah.

Travis: And I appreciate that, brother.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: And effect?

Justin: Standard.

Travis: Okay. I'm gonna push myself 'cause I have zero in survey. I don't know what to tell you.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: It's a 6!

Griffin: Oh my god! Yes, yes, yes, yes!

Clint: Natural 6!

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: Yes, yes, yes!

Justin: Wow!

Clint: The T-man!

Justin: Okay... You go to Paul's desk and you start looking around. And you know that this had been just like loaded up with documents and files and everything. You start looking around the desk and what you notice, mainly, is like, it is barren. I mean, it is beyond empty. There are places where it looks like... like there used to be some files, documents, but it has been absolutely picked clean. This is presumably, if you were to ask someone, because you know, we've gotta— this is a place of business and we have to keep moving forward. But here's what you can discover with a 6. You are reaching underneath the desk of Paul Pantry. And when you're reaching underneath it you feel— and a quick peek confirms this, you feel a one inch by two inch piece of Velcro. Just the... just the hook. The hook half. The part that something would be affixed to.

Travis: So, one inch by two inch, maybe a flash drive's worth of Velcro?

Justin: Or a pack of gum?

Travis: Uh-huh?

Justin: I mean, maybe that's where he stored his secret gums.

Travis: Sure.

Justin: Someone stored secret gums there.

Travis: Uh-huh?

Justin: Whatever this was—

Travis: It's one of those two, though, right? Like a flash drive or a secret pack of gum?

Justin: It ain't— it ain't there anymore.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Montrose, you were doing the interview. Dad, what are you doing?

Clint: I'm going to hit the Way Back button to the first part of this show and finally speak to Eustace Shabo.

Justin: Okay?

Clint: My Hard Light— my Hard Light creation that dwells within the Prize Pantry.

Justin: Okay!

Clint: And... I'm going to talk to him.

Justin: Okay. You call for Eustace and he sort of phases into the room. Typically, Hard Light try— when there are Hard Light characters, they attempt to not form in front of people. The guests find it disconcerting, it kind of breaks the illusion and that would be thought of as poor form. But because of the situation, it's after hours, you see Eustace forming in front of you. And the effect of like Hard Light... a Hard Light person or any Hard Light appearing in front of you is rather... it's kind of beautiful. It's basically in slices, like quarter inch slices that just sort of slide into place. In the course of a second, you know, maybe 150, 200 of these slices just form right in front you, stacking one on top of the other. And then standing before you is Eustace. What does he look like? I don't remember if we talked about this last time.

Clint: He's... he's bald-headed. He has a fringe of... he has a tonsure.

Justin: Oh! A tonsure, nice.

Clint: He has a tonsure. And it's sort of... like overalls. Wears like— not like— not coveralls, like—

Justin: Okay, this is enough.

Clint: And—

Eustace: Well, hello, papa!

Emerich: Oh! [chuckles] Eustace, my friend! How are you?! Ah! [chuckles]

Eustace: Oh, I'm just— I'm very well, papa. How can I help?

Emerich: Oh... Well, I don't know if you're cognizant of what has happened to... to Sticker Fingers Paul Pantry. Were you on standby mode by any chance?

Eustace: Oh, papa, yes. I just heard about it today. Oh...

Emerich: Oh...

Eustace: Oh, papa! What a sadness.

Emerich: It is, I know. And I knew that you would be very distraught over this. I want you to know everything's okay, papa's here. Papa's here.

Eustace: Oh, good papa, you wouldn't let those— whoever did this terrible thing hurt me, would you?

Emerich: Of course not! Are you... no! Nothing is going to happen to my sweet Shabone boy. Don't you worry about it.

Eustace: Thank you, papa.

Emerich: So that I may protect you, do you have any insight at all as to who may have perpetrated this terrible, heinous deed?

Eustace: No!

Emerich: Oh... Well, that's rather disappointing, I'd kind of built up something there...

Eustace: I know! But sometime— but that... I don't know why you thought that, you just sort of guessed—

Emerich: Well, I—

Eustace: I told you, I was in standby mode, papa?

Emerich: I know.

Eustace: I can't— I can't— I'm sorry, I was asleep!

Emerich: I know, but—

Eustace: I get so tired.

Emerich: Okay, I know, I know. But listen, even in standby mode, you have to have some sort of— have your monitoring function, otherwise how will

you know when someone summons you? And I was just hoping perhaps you had heard something unusual or had taken in something unusual? Had Sticky Fingers had any strange visitors or anything out of the ordinary happen recently?

Eustace: Well, papa, this is what was so unusual, I didn't hear anything or see anything. It was— this terrible crime, papa, had occurred, but I have been in standby mode, here on the show floor where Mr. Paul Pantry was found. And papa, I learned nothing!

Emerich: Nothing at all?

Justin: Oh, we already cut away from you. So, you're— I mean, you can say that, but the camera's not on you.

Travis: I think that was Dad.

Justin: Oh. Well, I mean... yeah, I guess dad could be in it too, Trav. Is that what you're saying?

Travis: No, I'm just saying, I think Dad was making the observation—

Clint: Oh my God! Is this an appearance by Clint McElroy, the planes-walking janitor?

Griffin: No, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Clint: Okay—

Travis: No, no, not yet.

Justin: No, we can't, we can't.

Travis: Don't force it, don't force it. So, I wanna reconnect with Garret and... mostly with Montrose, not Garret. [chuckles] I don't— "Hey, Garret, what did you find out?" I wanna reconnect with Montrose now and be like:

Beef: Mm-hm, I got some good B-roll and some good, good room tone!

Montrose: Garret, is there any video monitoring system that is set up here that, you know, someone could take a look at?

Garret: Oh... yes. Yes... Well, we can't, you understand. That goes straight to Dentonic. They're monitoring all of that. They're our cameras, but it all feeds back into the main HQ at the data center.

Montrose: The main HQ at the data center would have this video— well, I suppose then they must have footage of Gravel doing this crime?

Garret: Oh, I have to imagine, 'cause why else would this have happened? I don't understand. Why else would they be saying she did the crime?

Montrose: Yes, this seems like an open and shut one. Perhaps this isn't the season that we were hoping for?

Garret: Perhaps. And I know that this means— I... noticing she didn't have any blood is meaningless and I'm sorry to have wasted your time.

Clint: [chuckles]

Garret: I said it in a way where it seemed so important, but now I can see it was just a big fucking waste of time.

Justin: [chuckles]

Montrose: Well, Garret, they can't all be hits.

Garret: I'm so sorry, Mr. Montrose!

Emerich: I need you to sign this form, if you don't mind. It's a release form.

Garret: I'll happily sign— I wish it was a death warrant.

Griffin: [laughs]

Beef: Hey now, Garret!

Emerich: Come on, now.

Garret: I'm useless!

Emerich: Put your Garret Long John Hancock, right here.

Garret: Sure...

Emerich: And initial here.

Beef: And we're still on for trivia on Wednesday, right?

Garret: Of course...

Beef: Yeah! We wouldn't be— you're our sports guy! We wouldn't be able to do it without you, Garret!

Justin: Garret... Garret slinks off—

Travis: Shouldn't we slink off? He has a job to do. [chuckles] Like, he should—

Justin: No, he slinks back outside.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Griffin: Can I—

Justin: And you all— sorry, go ahead, yes? What did you wanna do?

Griffin: Before we leave, can I take a look at where we saw the body?

Justin: Yeah!

Griffin: Okay. I do that.

Justin: Okay. It's a— you see a floor.

Griffin: There's no blood, no anything that it has been so... it has been scrubbed from existence?

Justin: It has been scrubbed clean, yes.

Griffin: Okay. I rescind my question.

Justin: Okay.

Clint: Can we talk, can we compare notes?

Justin: Sure, yeah.

Travis: Yes, we can.

Justin: Yeah, please do.

Emerich: Fellows, I... I spoke to Eustace. And Hard Lights, when they are in standby mode, still have some... aural intake. They are able to monitor—

Montrose: That's disgusting!

Emerich: A-U-R-A-L. They hear because they have to be summoned. And supposedly, when this murder occurred, there was absolutely no sound whatsoever, according to Eustace. And... is it possible the murder didn't happen here?

Beef: I... listen... if I may, I think that the absence of stuff is all the information we need, right? Because we got Garret saying she didn't have any blood on her. No— right? No blood. We have Eustace saying he should have heard something but he couldn't hear anything. And I looked, and where that information, the secret stuff, should have been, wasn't there. So, it seems to me this was somebody who knew how to deactivate Hard Light awareness, knew where this information was hidden and was going for it. And then knew a good scapegoat that they could pin it on. This was an inside job. This was—

Emerich: Oh my God, it wasn't me, was it? No, no, of course not, sorry.

Beef: No, this was somebody who... this wasn't like somebody trying to rob the pantry and it went wrong, right? This was a hit. This was somebody who maybe was being blackmailed or wanted that information, and they orchestrated a very controlled assassination on Paul Pantry and pinned it on Gravel so that they could get a hold of whatever information was on that drive.

Montrose: You're assuming a lot based on a small piece of Velcro, but I do think there is some merit.

Beef: Either that or Paul wouldn't share his gum and this person was sick of it. That's problem two, I guess.

Montrose: Those are the only two rectangular objects.

Beef: That's the only two it could possibly be.

Clint: [chuckles]

Emerich: This is a very gum-heavy mystery.

Montrose: Yes. I think we have everything we need to crack this thing wide open.

Emerich: [chuckles]

Griffin: And then I press stop on the recording and I say:

Montrose: I have no fuckin' idea what's going on.

Clint: [laughs]

Montrose: But...

Justin: The door bursts open and it's... it's Garret.

Garret: [panting] I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry, but I wanted to... I wanted to improve the show. Ah... So, I went and found the... the investigator.
[panting] So I could— ah... you could interview her for the show.

Montrose: Good! That's a good thing you did!

Emerich: Good initiative!

Beef: Yes, excellent!

Emerich: You may have to work to co-producer!

Justin: So, the door opens and you see a woman who is wearing a formal business suit. Much more modern than you're used to seeing her in. And you look into her eyes and it's Darla Davis.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Griffin: Fuck.

Justin: And she said:

Darla: So, I hear you boys wanted to second guess me?

Justin: And that's where we'll stop.

Griffin: Great!

Clint: [laughs]

[Steeplechase theme music plays]

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