

The Adventure Zone Balance: The Crystal Kingdom, Chapter Five

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Griffin: Previously, on *The Adventure Zone*:

Justin: Alright, I cast Charm Person on Klarg.

Taako: Klarg, my name is Taako.

Klarg: It's a pleasure! It's, uh, it's really, really super great to meet you.

Taako: I feel like we've known each other for ages, right?

Klarg: I feel that way... too. Do you need any... money, or any— can I just start— can I give you all of the things I have?

Taako: There will be time for that.

Griffin: The dwarf opens up his helmet and a thick cloud of smoke comes out.

Boyland: My name... is Boyland.

Clint: [wheezes]

Travis: Excuse me?

Griffin: This big crystal golem holds out one of its long, sharp claws and points it at... Merle.

Crystal Golem: You.

Griffin: A robot about the size and shape of a car engine...

Noelle: Are you in need of assistance? My name is Noelle.

Magnus: It doesn't have an "L" in it?

Noelle: Oh boy. That's a real— that's a real stinker, I gotta tell you.

Griffin: Uh, the central pillar in the room that is now completely crystallized begins to... groan.

Justin: Sorry, did you say Billy Crystallized? [laughs quietly]

Griffin: [wheezes] Alright! That's the end of the episode.

Justin: We're Billy Crystallized!

Clint: No!

Justin: You look mah-velous!

[all laugh]

Announcer: What mortal danger will our heroes not take seriously this week? Maybe they'll make some boner jokes at some skeletons! It's *The Adventure Zone*!

[theme music plays]

Travis: At what point, Griffin— we haven't, um, solidified the structure of the episode, now 33 in. What point do we get to talk about, like, our theories about what's going on, and like, fan theories? Is that in the after show?

Griffin: That's, uh, af— af— after the final... r-roll. No, wait.

Justin: In *The Adventure Zone Zone*.

Travis: Uh-huh. Hosted by Chris Hardwick.

Justin: *The The Adventure Zone Zone*. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, we'll talk about 'em there. We'll get some, like, famous guests that love the program. I'm talking about people like David Duchovny. I'm talking about people like...

Justin: Flavor Flav.

Griffin: Flavors...

Travis: Like Flavid Duchovny.

Griffin: Flavid Duchovny.

Justin: Flavid Duchovny?

Griffin: Yeah, when they both stepped in the teleporter experiment that was at that high school but something went terribly awry, and they become some sort of slime man.

Travis: The whole gang.

Griffin: You know, the whole gang of people who like and listen to and enjoy our show. Um, so yes. The room has just been crystallized. The central pillar is— this white light has moved into it, and it has started to groan, and these large cracks are starting to form in it, and it's starting to make some pretty gnarly noises. Just to give you a reminder, this room you're in, there's the door into the... uh, shit. What was the last room you were in?

Travis: We went to— okay. We were in Lucas's bedroom.

Griffin: Uh, right. So there's the door to Lucas's bedroom. There's the door to the room you came through from Hodge-Podge, and then there's the door leading inward into the heart of the lab.

Travis: And isn't there a mystery door?

Griffin: Oh, yes. And there is a fourth mystery door that you could not get through, because it wasn't active.

Travis: Even if I chop it real hard?

Griffin: Um, I mean, you could certainly try. You can do whatever you want. I was accused of railroading, viciously, in the Reddit this week.

Travis: Was that on the train episode?

Justin: Why are you reading the Reddit?

Travis: Well, I read the Reddit so I can figure out what's going on.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Yeah, if everybody could stop—

Travis: That's where I get all my theories from.

Justin: Yeah, stop giving us all your really smart fan theories. [laughs quietly]

Travis: I figured the whole thing out, now.

Griffin: But folks, it makes nobody feel worse than me, because they're so much better than my own shit.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: Yeah. But then people suggest—

Travis: I just picture Griffin going, "Oh, yeah!" And writing that down.

Justin: Then people suggest things that they think I will do, and then I read them and I think I should do that, and it turns into this stranger than fiction, self-fulfilling prophecy.

Griffin: Yeah, exactly.

Travis: I love it. Okay, I would like to, before we run out of the room, try a chop on the mystery room.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Just so I can feel like I've done something.

Griffin: Yeah, sure. Uh, yeah, sure. The door—

Travis: What would that be?

Griffin: The door has not— it would just be a melee attack. The door hasn't been crystallized, because it's protected by the airlock seal, so yeah. It's just, like, not— it's not active, it's not working.

Travis: Well, I rolled a 12 plus 7, so a 19.

Griffin: Okay, yeah. That's good enough to, uh— to wedge your axe in there and make a little— make a little hole. And through that hole, um, you can see through the airlock. It's— it's open, actually, on the other side, and through that hole you can peek into what looks like another sort of private residence, like another sort of private sleeping chambers. Much like the room that you were in just before, in Lucas's room, only it's not lit up at all. It's, uh— it's a bit— it does look derelict, but it is definitely a, um... a dormitory of some sort.

Justin: Like, did—

Travis: Okay, great. Let's get out of here.

Justin: Did the nurse bot see that?

Griffin: Uh, yeah. And she said, uh...

Noelle: Hey, can you not? We should get the hell outta here, come on! This is like a l—

Griffin: Carey Pietsch who does, like, all the wonderful art for our show did this amazing drawing of her, and her sort of, uh, like... uh, I'm just gonna say it, scumbled together nature.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, and there's a great— the best thing about it is there's, like, a little label on here that says, uh, No., like number, 3113. Like No.3113. It's fucking perfect. That's fucking canon. Okay, anyway, yeah. You're in this room. The central pillar is starting to crack.

Travis: [simultaneously] Yeah, let's skedaddle.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Should we do a skedaddle check?

Griffin: Uh, if you want.

Travis: Ohh, critical mi— no, I got a 17 skedaddle.

Griffin: Uh-oh. You skedoople.

Travis: Oh no!

Griffin: You fall over.

Travis: I skedoodled.

Griffin: Where are you going, what are you doing?

Travis: Out the airlock. Like, the one place we were supposed to keep going, right?

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Like, my other option is back into Lucas's room, take a nap, and hope that it doesn't collapse? Is that an option?

Griffin: Yeah, so you're making your way in towards the middle of the lab.

Justin: Yes.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Okay. You make your way in through that airlock leading into the center of the lab. And as you sort of clear that airlock and get inside of it, the central pillar in the middle of the room just kind of explodes, sending shards of crystal shrapnel all over the room, although they just kind of stop in midair right in front of the airlock that you just came through.

Um, and the curious thing about the shards as they're stuck in midair is they form almost a perfect, like, dwarf shape, as if they were all targeting Merle when they flew in your direction.

Clint: Man. Well, that's just ridiculous!

Travis: These— these gemstones, they done hate Merle!

Griffin: Um, and as they sort of fall harmlessly to the ground, you see that light pass through another rift, and disappear.

Travis: Hey, Griffin. I don't wanna derail it, but is this the gems targeting Merle, or you targeting Dad? Is there something you need to talk about?

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Are you mad at Dad for some reason?

Griffin: Uh, I'd rather not get into it.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: I don't wanna—

Travis: We'll save that for *The Adventure Zone Zone*.

Griffin: Yeah. We're gonna go, uh, in *The Adventure Zone: Untucked* we're gonna get into it.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: As that white light sort of disappears through the rift, you see Noelle has her little satellite disk that she has on top of her head that was pointing at her. And she says, um...

Noelle: Hey. I just want to let y'all know, I scanned that thing just to, like, try and figure out what it is, and it's definitely— it's of undead origin. But it's got some sort of— it's got traces of divine energy all around it. I'm trying to figure out... you guys know what's going on? I'm not a big fan of that thing.

Magnus: Well, I mean, I've got some theories, but I don't think this is the time and place.

Taako: Besides, he read 'em all on Reddit, so...

[all laugh]

Griffin: Um, Angus actually chimes in through your Stone of Farspeech and he's like...

Angus McDonald: Ugh. This is killing me! This all sounds so familiar, but I just can't place it.

Griffin: And you hear him flipping through some books. He's like...

Angus McDonald: I'll keep digging into it. You guys just keep on moving in, and just regroup with the rest of the team.

Magnus: Hey, Ango?

Taako: Listen, it may be familiar, but it's not *too* familiar, because I've never heard of anything like it.

Magnus: But not too *not* familiar, because it seems like something I would know about.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs] Um, so you're in this airlock that is another one of these branching pathways, and it's leading towards two doors, and they are labeled as follows. Um, the one going to the left is labeled the death laser calibration chamber. And the door on the right is labeled large humanoid species behavior modification testing. And then that sign is actually scratched out, and underneath it in sort of crude handwriting is the word hugbears.

Justin: [gasps]

Griffin: And Lucas says, uh...

Lucas: Now, by my calculations, I think I know where you guys are, and you definitely— trust me on this one. You gotta go to that death laser calibration chamber.

Magnus: Hugbears!

Taako: Hugbears!

Merle: Hugbears!

Lucas: No, trust me. You guys—

Magnus: Hug! B-b-bears!

Lucas: It's gonna be— it's gonna be way too [crosstalk]—

Magnus: Hug b-b-bears!

Merle: Hugbears!

Lucas: You're just yelling Hugbears at me. [crosstalk]

Magnus: Bug hairs.

Lucas: What?

Magnus: What?

Clint: [laughs]

Magnus: What did you say?

Merle: I say we go to the Hugbears.

Griffin: Okay. As you pop open the room labeled Hugbears, you enter into a pretty curious scene, and it's unlike any room you've been on in Lucas's lab so far. It's actually a pretty cozy looking living room, um, and there's a lit fireplace and a mantle with some family photos on it.

Um, but this room has been turned over, it almost looks like. There's a couch that's been overturned in the middle of the room with some scratches on it. There's some smashed teacups and spilled tea on the ground. There are a few

potted plants that have been upended that are weirdly, like, writhing on the floor. And then right in the middle of the room is just basically a giant hairy mass.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Um, and you can make out in this mass four bugbears of various shapes and fur colorings, and they are all asleep. Um, and one of 'em actually has a pretty bad cut on his head, it looks like. But they are sleeping fairly soundly.

Travis: And Ditto, just so I can get a full picture, is Noelle still with us, or is she like—

Griffin: Yep.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Yeah, Noelle is with you.

Travis: Um, and gonna whisper to Noelle...

Magnus: [whispering] What— what's up? What's all this, then? [pause]

Clint: [laughs quietly]

Magnus: Noelle, what is this shit?

Noelle: What do— oh. I don't— what happened to them? Hey! Can y'all check and make sure they're okay?

Magnus: Um... what is this testing room for? What were you testing?

Noelle: Well, it's not really a testing room. It's just where the hugbears live.

Travis: Oh, cool, cool, cool.

Noelle: Oh, I shouldn't call 'em that. The— the— I forget what I'm supposed to call 'em. I just call 'em hugbears.

Travis: Cool, cool, cool. Great, great, great.

Taako: What's the story with hugbears? I'm not familiar.

Griffin: Hold on, I got a truck passin'.

Travis: Like a fart?

Griffin: No, like a truck.

Travis: Oh.

Justin: "I got a truck passin'" is pretty good podcast slang for "I have to fart."
[laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Noelle: I mean, it's kind of an experiment I guess, but mostly they're just like— they're just like buds. They just hang out and help us out and, you know, they—

Magnus: Oh, that sounds cool.

Noelle: They do a little bit of work here and there around the lab. Yeah, they're just— they're— they're good folk. I'm worried about 'em!

Magnus: That sounds great.

Taako: I'm saying, like, take us in from the ground level on hugbears. What are hugbears?

Griffin: As you say that, Taako, this hugbear starts to sort of rustle around.

Justin: Natch, of course.

Griffin: And you hear some groans coming from it.

Travis: I am chuggin' for some huggin'. Let's do this. I wanna get in there! I wanna hug these bears!

Justin: So you're just hugging them, then.

Travis: Well, not yet. But I'm definitely gearing up for it.

Clint: You're not saying Huggy Bear, like from *Starsky & Hutch*, right?

Travis: Good question, Dad.

Griffin: You're doing your pre-hug stretches.

Travis: That's correct.

Griffin: You don't wanna tear something.

Travis: No.

Justin: I wanna do a...

Clint: Attack?

Justin: Um, no. Um, I wanna do a nature check to see if I know anything about hugbears.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Or can assess anything about the situation, about these creatures here. We've got a...

[dice roll]

18. 14 plus my 4 in nature.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, I mean, there's no such thing as a hugbear. There is such a thing as a bugbear, and you have met one. Klarg.

Justin: Klarg.

Griffin: Um, and the only thing you really know about bugbears is that they are giant and super strong and, like, unswervingly violent. They are just like— they're just little furry balls of violence and hate and bloodshed.

Taako: I'll be outside.

Griffin: They're irredeemable kill monsters.

Taako: Taako's good out here.

Clint: So not our friends.

Travis: But Noelle said they were fine, that they were good folk.

Taako: Cool, cool, cool. Glad we all agree.

Griffin: This hugbear pile is now rustling and ruffling a little bit more.

Travis: Okay. So we should sneak past them.

Clint: I want to heal the one with a cut on his head.

Griffin: Okay.

Taako: Cool.

Magnus: Great. Good for you.

Clint: You know, it's like the whole *Androcles and the Lion*?

Justin: I'm staying, like, literally— I'm not joking. I'm outside of the room. Like, I'm not going in to this room.

Griffin: You're, like, in the airlock watching.

Justin: Yeah, like watching, like "What are they doing?" [crosstalk]

Travis: I'm whispering to my shield about that time I fought a hugbear.

Clint: I have a big—

Griffin: Okay, that's a lie. Oh, no, you really did.

Travis: I rolled an 18, by the way.

Clint: I have a big fake smile on my face. You know, like Ralphie in *Christmas Story*.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Clint: And I'm walking up very slowly, and I find the adorable, sweet, open minded...

Justin: [laughs] Very progressive.

Clint: ... sweet-demeanored hugbear with a cut on his head. And I cast Prayer of Healing... to heal his cut.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: He devours you.

Griffin: You're devoured.

Clint: Oh.

Griffin: You heal him from inside.

Clint: I— I'm willing to do that. That's how much I care.

Travis: Oh, wow.

Griffin: [laughs quietly] Okay.

[dice roll]

Clint: Okay. So it's 12...

Griffin: Okay. Uh—

Clint: So that's...

Griffin: 18.

Clint: 18!

Griffin: So you heal him for 18 points of damage. This bugbear with the cut on his head— he looks like sort of the most grizzled of the bunch. Uh, that wound starts to fade a little bit. Um, and he wakes up, and the whole pile kind of wakes up, and very quickly sort of gets to their feet. And the smallest of this bunch runs up to you, Merle, and grabs you, and screams terrifyingly in your face.

Clint: Aww!

Griffin: And, uh— uh, one of the bugbears says, uh...

Bugbear 1: Christie! Christie, stop! Christie, stop! This is a different— this is a different batch of folks. These aren't the folks that came through. These are different.

Griffin: And Christie's like...

Christie: I don't care! I'm still gonna— I'm still just gonna— I'm gonna start bitin'!

Magnus: Hi, everybody!

Clint: [wheezy laughter]

Bugbear 1: Who— who are you guys? What are you guys doing here?

Magnus: Well, my name's Magnus. Um, big bugbear fan by the way, from way back.

Merle: Love your work.

Magnus: Love it.

Merle: Love it.

Magnus: Um, we're looking for Lucas. We want to help him. Um, there's a lot of scary hinky stuff going on. We've got Noelle with us. Say hi, Noelle.

Noelle: Hey, guys. These guys are cool. They're with us. Christie, you can set—you can set Merle down. He's good people, he's good folk. He healed your grandpa, so.

Taako: And I'm— and I'm not really with that crew. I'm— they call— Taako's my handle, and I'm kind of more with the airlock crew, which is me out here in the airlock.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, Christie sets you down, Merle, and says, uh...

Christie: Oh, I'm sorry. I just thought... I thought you were... I thought you were part... we just got into kind of a skerfuffle, and I thought you— I thought you guys were party to that.

Magnus: No.

Justin: Sorry.

Magnus: We don't party.

Justin: Quick check. Uh, a skerfuffle?

Clint: [wheezes]

Christie: Yeah. I— yeah, it's what I said.

Magnus: Alright, listen. We're sorry that we interrupted—

Clint: [simultaneously] Look, scumblebot! [laughs]

Magnus: —your Country Bear Jamboree. We'll keep movin' on along.

Bugbear 2: No, it's fine. You didn't interrupt nothin'. We just were takin' a nap. We got hit with some sort of sleepin' dust. And, uh—

Magnus: Ugh. That's the worst.

Bugbear 2: Yeah, no, it's not a good— it's not a good night's sleep.

Magnus: Who are these other people?

Bugbear 2: We should— we should introduce ourselves.

Magnus: Please.

Griffin: And one of the other bugbears goes...

Bugbear 1: Oh, yeah. Let's, um... I guess we should go down the line. So, we're bugbears.

Magnus: Uh-huh.

Bugbear 1: You probably figured that out already.

Magnus: Yep.

Taako: Yeah.

Aaron: We're sort of the help, here. We kind of help out around the place, and my name's Aaron Styles. I do, um...

Travis: [muffled laughter]

Aaron: I help with Lucas's, you know, fashion. I help get him dressed, you know, barber stuff, shavin'. You know, that kind of thing.

Magnus: Yeah, basic, gotcha. You're his valet.

Griffin: The older, grizzled one says, uh...

John: Well, my name is John Cook, and I do all the cookin'. And I guess I do all the Johnin'.

Magnus: Uh-huh.

Clint: [wheezes quietly]

Magnus: [fake laughter]

Taako: He's the funny one, I guess.

Griffin: Another one speaks up and goes, uh...

Jamie: Oh, well, my name's Jamie Green. And, uh, I help tend to the plants and the stuff like that. Got kind of a green thumb, that's sort of my joke that I do.

Griffin: And Merle, the one that attacked you says...

Christie: And my name's Christie Killgore. And I'm sort of in charge of maintenance around here, but couldn't think of, like, a clever last name for... maintenance. So I just went with— I just kept my original name, my bugbear name, which is Killgore.

Magnus: Is this like a Jellicle cats kind of situation where these are like the names Lucas gave you, but you have your own names for each other? Like, these are—

Aaron: Well, I mean, we—we have our—

Magnus: —all the human-est names.

Aaron: Well, yeah, I'm sure. I mean, they're not our original names. We have our bugbear names, but we choose not to sort of remember that part of our lives, 'cause it was pretty... we used to do some pretty bad stuff out there, out in the wild.

Magnus: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Taako: Do you guys— or perhaps did you guys, depending— not really sure— uh, know Klarg?

Griffin: All four of them look at you, Taako, immediately. And Christie runs over to the airlock door and shouts, um...

Christie: Wait! You— you know Daniel?!

Magnus: 'Scuse?

Christie: You— you saw Daniel out there?!

Magnus: If that's Klarg, then yeah.

Griffin: Um, and Aaron walks over and sort of pulls Christie back, and it's like...

Aaron: You'll—[sighs] I'm sorry. How did you— how did you meet— Klarg was his original name, but when he lived here with us his name was Daniel. He's my son, and we're all... we're all family, here. We're all— you know, we were a family tribe of bugbear that Lucas found and sort of adopted. Um, how did you— how did you meet Daniel?

Taako: Was he— wait, wait, wait. Was he Klarg originally, and then he came here and switched to Daniel, and then went back to Klarg? Is that what's up?

Aaron: It's hard to explain. You might... you may want to ask Lucas about it. It's kind of— the specifics are kinda tricky.

Magnus: We totes will. He's our buddy. I hugged him once. He gave us some oolong. Then he joined in a wacky racers thing with us. It was great. Um—

Aaron: Is he safe? Is he— is he alright? Is he—[crosstalk]

Magnus: He's totally fine.

Taako: He's totally fine. He once saved my life.

Magnus: He's a good guy.

John: That sounds like our Daniel.

Taako: Yeah. Um...

Merle: Well, he's actually the ursine formerly known as Daniel.

Taako: No, he's fine! He's probably—

Magnus: We saved him from, um, some bad dudes. He saved us from some stuff.

Aaron: Well, gosh, we sure to appreciate that. We miss Daniel a lot around here.

Magnus: No problemo.

Merle: And we didn't kill him or anything.

Magnus: No, he's fine.

Merle: We didn't fight with him. Nope! Didn't kill him.

Taako: Okay. We— we need to check. He's not dead.

Aaron: No, he's not dead.

Merle: No! He's not dead.

Travis: No, Dad, this is us telling you. He's not dead.

Justin: [simultaneously] No, no, Dad, he's not dead.

Clint: I know he's not dead!

Justin: Well, okay. Now, listen. Here's—

Griffin: Why do you keep saying that he is?

Justin: Here are the two ways people say someone's not dead. "He's not dead."
"[quavery voice] He's not deeeaad."

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: You were doing the second one. The second one means [crosstalk].

Travis: You were falling into that second category hard. You're leaning into that category.

Justin: He's not dead. He's very much alive.

Clint: He's not dead?

Travis: You're so bad at inflection!

Justin: I like that one 'cause it betrays the actuality of the situation which is "I don't know. It was ten episodes ago. I don't remember."

Clint: We did fight him, though!

Travis: No!

Justin: No! He fell off the back of the car!

Clint: No, the first time!

Travis: Do you listen to our show?

Justin: Like, we check—

Griffin: And then you met him again!

Justin: Then we saw him again!

Griffin: You think you killed him and that it was a fucking bugbear ghost?! That helped you out in—

Travis: We record these. You can listen to these again!

Justin: He's fine. Klarg's fine.

Travis: Klarg's fine.

Clint: Yeah! [sarcastically] Klarg's fine...

Justin: [laughs loudly]

Travis: Alright. Bugbears.

Magnus: Tell us about this other group that you encountered before us.

Aaron: Oh, yeah. They were really rude! They came through and we offered them, you know, some tea, and we just... you know, we asked how they were

doing, and they wanted to get by and head inward towards, you know, the inner chambers of the lab, and we can't let that happen, of course, and so we had sort of a disagreement.

Magnus: Oh, pardon?

Aaron: Uh, sorry?

Magnus: Um... totally gotcha. Why— why can you not let, hypothetically, a group of people pass by to get in?

Aaron: Oh. Well that's, like, sort of our thing. You know, we do odd jobs around the place, but we're also— we are still bugbears.

John: Yeah, so we're, like, really big, so we also do some light security work for the lab as well, you know. We can't really let folks... [clicks tongue]

Magnus: Well, what if Lucas said it was cool?

John: Uh... I guess that would be fine. He didn't tell us it was cool with this last group, so, uh... we got in a sort of a kerfuffle. And there was a little dwarf guy that attacked us, so we gave him a little piece of our minds, and then there was a lizard lady, and she threw some sort of smoke bomb at us, and we all went to dreamy dream town.

Magnus: They sound like dicks.

Merle: I hate those people.

John: Yeah, I hated— I hated 'em.

Travis: Hey, Lucas? Can you hear me? Come in, Lucas.

Lucas: Yeah. Yeah, okay. I guess you guys have sort of found out about one of my less ethical sort of experiments. Um...

Magnus: It sounds fine. They seem great.

Taako: Yeah, they're real sweethearts.

Lucas: No, they really are— they're great. They have these, um... these inhibitors? These inhibitor chips in their brains that I—I—I was trying to come up with a way to, like... have people that would do some help for me around the— around the lab—

Magnus: [simultaneously] Ohhh.

Lucas: But also, like, also protect the lab from attackers, and so I found this—

Merle: So, slavery, right? So that's like slavery.

Lucas: Well... [sighs] I guess, kind of, yeah, a little bit. But they— I mean, they seem genuinely happy, and they— you know, they didn't like being all violent and stuff.

Magnus: So this is why we couldn't charm Klarg again.

Lucas: Yeah. So, I watched what you guys did with Klarg when I watched you on the races, when I saw him pop up I was a little bit surprised. I gotta know, what did you do— what did you guys do to him down there?

Merle: We charmed him.

Magnus: He's our buddy.

Lucas: You used, like, a charm spell on him? Klarg, or as he was known here, Daniel Butler, he was my butler... he, um—

Magnus: Lucas, you gotta get better at that. Come on. A little subtlety?

Lucas: No, I thought it was cute. Anyway, um, he ran off. He got into a little scuffle with his sister and he bumped his head, and I think it disabled the inhibitor chip, and he had a freak out, and he ran off and escaped. And all I can think is that when you charmed him, somehow the wires got crossed in his brain? As it turns out, if you inhibit all the aggression in a bugbear, they're actually very sweet. Um, and so I think that he's a bit on the fritz, Taako.

Taako: Oh, right! Yeah, okay, now I remember. I charmed him the first time we met him to turn him into, like, Kelsey Grammer.

Lucas: I think the odds are actually pretty good that he's maybe gonna be charmed by you forever, kind of, like, on and off.

Magnus: Cool.

Taako: So he can join a nation of podcast listeners.

[all laugh]

Taako: In that— in that particular affliction.

Magnus: Alright. So, Luco, need you to pass on to these hugbears that it's totally cool for us to continue on our way unmolested.

Lucas: Um... yeah, sure. Hey, guys. You just gotta let 'em pass, okay? They're trying to get into the middle.

Griffin: And, uh—

Merle: Before we go, will you tell us a little— just a little bit more about the scuffle? Was there a problem with the scuffle?

Aaron: Oh, yeah. Like, uh, uh... you know.

Travis: [Canadian accent] Oh yeah, dere.

Aaron: Yeah, we—we were... we don't wanna be rude. We try to be real nice here as much as we can, but... yeah, these three. Honestly it was just the dwarf guy that was mostly sort of causing all the trouble. Honestly, he reminds me of back in my day. Um, one time a guy came into my cave, and I just killed him!

Magnus: Yeah. We've all been there.

John: Oh yeah, I killed— yeah, I definitely killed some guys who came into my cave, too. Just for, like—

Magnus: If that happens, you can throw 'em right off a cliff and it's usually fine.

Christie: Oh yeah, I've thrown plenty of people off cliffs. That's, uh...

Aaron: Yeah. That's, uh... cliff— cliff-throwin's what bugbears do best, really.

Magnus: We should compare notes. Um, so we need to keep on the move.

Aaron: It's all about the angle. The angle of the—

Magnus: I think it's about the dangle, but that's just me.

Aaron: Well, I guess I— I guess we can let you through if Lucas has vouched for you. Can you tell me what's going on in this lab? 'Cause I've heard lots of crinkle tinkles.

Magnus: Oh yeah, you guys need to get movin'.

Taako: Yeah, this is not a cool scene. You need to move on out.

Magnus: Yeah. Do you want to come with us?

Christie: I guess we could? But, like...

Taako: [threateningly] Swear fealty!

Travis: [laughs] Swear to me!

Taako: Sorry, I don't know where that came from. But, like, yeah, you all are welcome to join us. You just have to [threateningly] swear fealty!

Aaron: I... is he okay?

Magnus: He's fine.

Taako: [simultaneously] I'm fine.

Magnus: You should just do that, though.

Griffin: Um, Noelle says...

Noelle: Well, hold on. It might be kind of dangerous, 'cause it's all crystallized out there. If they touch it—

Magnus: Well, that's why I'm saying they should come with us. They can't go out that way, so we just have to keep moving inward.

Noelle: Yeah, but there could be other parts of it. Why don't you— I tell you what, you four just lock yourselves in the airlock when we leave, and you'll be safe in there until we can come getcha.

Magnus: Okay.

Travis: I think that's Griffin's DM way of not having to do six voices of the rest of the game.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Yep! Well, it would actually be— at this point it's, like, eight voices, because you got also, like, two different radios.

Travis: That's true.

Griffin: This whole thing's gotten wildly out of hand.

Justin: Yeah, we're gonna elect one of us to speak for the others.

Griffin: [laughs] I'm gonna have, like—I'm gonna write in a story element where they all, like, merge into one—

Travis: Oh, like sliders.

Griffin: Well, like— like David Slimechovny.

Travis: Okay.

Noelle: Uh, can we get y'all anything before you— before you go?

Aaron: Yeah, can we get you a tea or something? Can I give you guys a quick shave, or...?

John: Yeah, I could cook you up a... a nice meal. I could make y'all a... a ham—

Magnus: Listen.

John: —a ham steak.

Magnus: Y'all have been lovely. Um, we have got to mosey. Uh... farewell, we'll never forget you.

Merle: We will never forget our time.

Aaron: I guess you don't wanna know where the bugbear treasure is buried.

Magnus: Wait! Where is the bugbear treasure?

Merle: [simultaneously] There's a bugbear treasure?

Aaron: No, I'm just kiddin'. [laughs quietly] I'm playin'.

Magnus: Hey, wait. I have a question real quick. Why is there a second dormitory out there? Do you guys know, if you're, like, doing the day to day stuff? There was Lucas's room, and then there was, like, an empty room.

Aaron: Oh yeah, well, that was... well, that was Maurine's room.

Magnus: And Maurine...

Christie: Maurine. You know, Lucas's Mom?

Magnus: Gotcha.

Christie: Yeah. She's, um... she's not with us anymore, unfortunately.

Magnus: Where is she?

Christie: Um, you should probably—

Merle: [whispering] I think she's dead.

Christie: You should probably ask Lucas about that when, um, you know, later on. You guys, uh— you guys should probably get a move on. I get this feeling that the base is sinking, and we all don't wanna die, so.

Magnus: Yeah, no, I feel you, I feel you, I feel you. Um... did Maurine die?

Aaron: Yeah! God, how indelicate can you be, bud?

Magnus: Well, I didn't know her!

Merle: Well, he could've asked Lucas. [laughs quietly]

Magnus: Yeah.

Lucas: Um, yeah. I can talk to you guys about that later. Let's just— can we get this show on the road? We're running out of time.

Magnus: Oh yeah, Lucas can hear. That's right. Sorry, dude!

Travis: We keep going.

Lucas: Thanks. Cool. Cool talk! Pretty cool day I'm having with you guys, my three friends.

Travis: [laughs]

Merle: Come on, Noelle!

Griffin: Okay. You guys say your goodbyes to the bugbears, to the hugbear family. As you leave the hugbear room, you pass through an airlock that is just, like, a straight tunnel. Um, and this one, the single door is labeled, um... a hugbear supply room. Um, and it's where all the hugbears' cleaning supplies, cooking supplies, all of the supplies they need to do their work around the lab are. Uh, and as you enter into it, you realize that this room has already been crystallized. And, uh, there's some shelves with supplies all over it. It just kind of looks like a big storeroom. Even through your suits, you can feel this room is actually really cold.

And you realize it's actually because there's a small vent to the outside of the lab in this room, and there's some snow blowing into the room that is actually, like, instantly crystallizing and falling to the ground so there's, like, a crunchy layer of crystallized snow.

Travis: And how cool would you say that looks?

Griffin: It looks pretty neat, actually. It's like a little crystal confetti cannon coming into the room. Unfortunately, right underneath that window you see a crystallized figure. And... it's pretty small. And it's wearing a null suit. Um, only the helmet is open in that null suit. And you see a dwarven figure with a cigar in his mouth.

Travis: Oh god, it's Merle!

Griffin: And it's Merle from the future. [laughs quietly]

Taako: Twist!

Griffin: Um... uh, no, you actually recognize this crystallized figure as Boyland, the dwarf who came in with Carrie and Killian.

Travis: Boyland is closed for good.

Clint: [laughs loudly]

Justin: The sad thing is he'll never get to be Manland.

Travis: [laughs] Why did he take off his helmet?! He was always so stupid!

Justin: We probably just high fived, by the way.

Travis: Yeah, oh, definitely.

Justin: In fiction. I don't know if that matters.

[music plays]

Griffin: Hey everybody! This is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master, your best friend, and your... dirty little secret. [laughs quietly] Thank you all so much for listening to *The Adventure Zone* episode 33. I really appreciate you taking the time out of your busy day and your busy schedule to spend some time with four genuine nerdos as they talk about fantasy robots and shit.

I want to thank everybody who's been tweeting about the show using the #thezonecast hashtag, because if you tweet about the show using the

#thezonecast hashtag, great things can happen. All of your dreams and wishes come true. You help us spread about the word about the show, because we have literally no other way of spreading the word about the show.

And you could end up as a character in the show, like the huge slate of characters that ended up in this week's episode. I'm talking about folks like John Cook, I'm talking about folks like Aaron Styles, I'm talking about folks like Jamie Green, I'm talking about folks like Christie Killgore, I'm talking about folks like Daniel Butler, whose friends all messaged me to make sure his name ended up on this show. We'll probably have a couple more characters in this arc, uh, and then a bunch more for the next arc, so go ahead and tweet the show. We really do appreciate it.

[ad break]

Griffin: We have a couple of jumbotron messages on this week's show. If you want to get a commercial or personal message out there for you are a buddy or a small business— maybe a small business is your buddy, I don't know. Uh, just go to Maximumfun.org/jumbotron and we will read it on this show. Here's one from Zach Ayers, who wants you to search for *Teenagers with Attitude* on iTunes, and subscribe or listen to their sampler by searching *Teenagers with Attitude* sampler on YouTube.

And I know you're sitting here wondering, what is *Teenagers with Attitude* about? That just sounds like my whole life. When teens come up to me on the street and just fuckin' bully me right there on the street.

No, this isn't about those teens that bully you on the street. It's a podcast, and it's about the *Power Rangers*. Specifically a podcast in which a bunch of adults sit down each week to talk about an episode of the more phenomenal 90's kid show, *Power Rangers*. Listen to them try to figure out what the deal is the with the big floating head in the tube, why Rita Repulsa can never quite seem to stop foiling her own plans, and why Goldar the Winged Ape-Man has such a strong labor union. Having just finished the Green Ranger saga, they've got 20 episodes down and [holding back laughter] 800 to go, so now's a great time to jump in.

There couldn't have been that many episodes of that show... but maybe there probably were. Anyway, *Teenagers with Attitude*. Go check it out.

Here's another jumbotron message. Go check out *Friendship and Firelight* at fnfpod.com or wherever you download podcasts. A lot of hot podcast

recommendations for you this week. *Friendship and Firelight* is a podcast where we invite you to take a rest from your journey and sit around their campfire. They tell stories, they have some laughs, and they discuss all things nerdy and great. D&D fans should check out episode 3, where we talk about Fifth Edition, and episode 6, where we talk about the chaotic neutral alignment. Also, the show's music is by *MBMBaM* favorite Ira Wray.

Are you Ira Wray? Hm. *Friendship and Firelight*: the podcast where the quest is only as good as the companions by your side.

I like that. I like the idea of a podcast taking place in a place. And not just, like, in the void where four nerdos just shout garbage about dice. Anyway, Fnfpod.com. Check it out!

Go listen to the other shows on the Maximum Fun Network. I'm talking about shows like *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* I'm talking about shows like *Stop Podcasting Yourself*. I'm talking about shows like *Throwing Shade* and *Can I Pet Your Dog?* and *One Bad Mother*. There's so many amazing shows, all on Maximumfun.org for you to check out.

And like I mentioned before, we have a ton of new projects that we're working on that are all collected at mcelroyshows.com. I'm talking about, like, my new video games podcast, *Cool Games Inc.* I'm talking about *Shmanners*, Travis and Teresa's new manners podcast. I'm talking about *Still Buffering*, which Sydnee and her sister Rileigh are doing. I'm talking about *Rosebuddies*, a *Bachelor* cast I do with my wife, Rachel. We got our fingers in a lot of pies, and you can find that pie... display rack... at mcelroyshows.com.

That's it for the commercial break. I'm gonna let you get back into it. The next episode will be up on February 25th, and we'll see you then. Bye!

[music plays]

Griffin: So, here's a crystallized Boyland. He has his helmet open, and he has a pretty grim look on his face—

Clint: [through laughter] Yeah!

Griffin: —and his got his cigar in his mouth, um, that he had when you guys first came in through here, when you guys first crash-landed into the laboratory. And he's sitting right under the window where the snow is coming in.

Travis: I wave my hand and see if his eyes move.

Griffin: [through laughter] No.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Griffin: No.

Travis: I thought maybe I could get him out.

Clint: The cigar. Is the cigar covered with crystal?

Griffin: Uh, yeah. All of this man is covered in crystal.

Travis: How covered?

Griffin: completely covered.

Travis: Like, what's the thickness of the crystal?

Griffin: Pretty damn thick.

Travis: Okay. Well, I feel nothing about this.

Griffin: [laughs loudly]

Clint: And yet you have so much to say!

Travis: But is it weird? Like, I feel no emotional connection to this crystallized man.

Griffin: Fuckin' savage, Travvy.

Travis: Well, I barely knew him before, and I won't even know him now.

Griffin: He volunteered at the boys and girls club. The boys and dwarves club every single weekend. He, um... what else can I say? He had a gigantic family, oh my god. He was the father of 400 sons and 13 daughters, which is weird.

Clint: That's why he's called Boyland.

Griffin: Yeah. 'Cause they spring from him, fully formed. Um, and boy was he just a great dad.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: He had a big old camping trip for all 413 of his kids planned for actually next week! Oh, shit!

Justin: Oh no!

Travis: Oooh! And he was two days away from retirement.

Griffin: And he was—

Justin: Are the tickets nonrefundable, or...?

Griffin: Uh, for camping? Camping tickets?

Travis: [simultaneously] [laughs] The camping tickets?

Justin: The camping ti—

Griffin: No, that's a good point. You would have to rent out, like, a whole forest to get all those kids up in the mix. Anyway, he was the sweetest guy. I'm sorry, I did a bad job sort of storytelling I guess for him. This and his brief eulogy, it's a shame that only now can I tell you—

Travis: Do I have a marker or something with me that I can draw, like, a smiley face on his face?

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Clint: Does he have anything worth stealing that we could take?

Griffin: Hey!

Justin: It's all coated in crystals, right?

Griffin: No, actually. He has a weapon, and it's a— it's kind of a small hand axe that he's got.

Clint: I take it.

Travis: Why would you take that?

Griffin: It's just a one-handed axe. It doesn't look like anything special, but it was coated in the— in the null suit juice when he got sprayed down, so yeah, that would be protected. But him, he's all froze.

Clint: Eh, that's too bad. I take the axe.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Alright, so we move on.

Clint: Oh, I should say something too, right? I'm a cleric.

Travis: Well, and a dwarf. Maybe is there like a dwarven... rite? Some kind of, like, passage you want to read from the dwarf bible?

Clint: Yes. I have to say it in Dwarf-ese. Is that alright with you guys?

Travis: No, please.

Clint: Okay. [clears throat]

Justin: Hold on, let me get comfortable.

Clint: Meka leka hi—

[all speaking over each other]

Travis: I fucking knew it!

Griffin: Stop it.

Travis: I could have shot— I could have written it down in an envelope, held it to my forehead, and said that's what you were gonna say. I fucking knew it.

Clint: [laughs] Long live Jambi.

Justin: Long live Jambi, but short live Boyland.

Clint: Yeah. Boyland, he always had, uh... a big cigar in his mouth.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: And a story to tell.

Clint: And not even in a Freudian way. I mean—

Justin: And at least half the time I knew him, he was covered in crystal.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: He always had a crystal to share with you.

Clint: Yeah.

Travis: A pocket full of crystals he had, and he loved root beer barrels. Okay. So... let's move on.

Clint: Wait, there's gotta be some significance to the window. I mean, why would he be right under the window—

Travis: Because it's a no-smoking lab and he wanted to, like—

Griffin: [laughs] Sneak in a quick puff.

Travis: [simultaneously] He had to blow the smoke out the vent.

Clint: I think that makes a lot of sense!

Justin: That makes a lot of sense to me. I think that's what happened.

Clint: He took his helmet off so he could have him a smoke, and bingo, bango, bongo.

Justin: That's it.

Travis: He don't wanna leave the Congo.

Clint: He got turned into a big decanter.

Griffin: Yeah, you could roll an Investigation check, but circle gets the square, that's exactly what happened.

Travis: Boom!

[all laugh]

Justin: I roll an Investigation check just to be sure.

Travis: Just to make Griffin feel useful.

Clint: Alright. I make an Investigation check.

Justin: Oh my God, he's really doing it.

Clint: Alright.

[dice roll]

Griffin: No, I'm literally telling you.

Clint: Yeah. Go ahead and tell me, but I rolled a 14.

Justin: What's your investi—

Griffin: Yeah, no, you—

Clint: 0.

Justin: Hold on. That's a z— that's 14 with a 0 modifier, Griffin.

Griffin: Yeah, no, he—

Clint: Yeah.

Justin: Is that enough for you to tell him what you just told him?

Griffin: Yeah, he was standing next to the window and tried to vent his smoke from out of his suit like you saw him do earlier, and some of that crystallized snow got on him. A single flake.

Justin: In our time with Boyland did he seem like a total ding-dong?

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [laughs] 400 sons, 0 brain cells.

Griffin: Ain't that how it go?

Justin: How it go.

Travis: Don't it always seem to go?

Justin: Well, that's very sad, but I think we should— uh, er, oh! Of the bugbear supplies, is there anything that would be salvageable that would be useful to us? Or is it all just pretty common material?

Griffin: There's a can of crystal beans.

Travis: I'll take it.

Justin: What?

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Is there any Wonderglue? 'Cause I've been looking for that stuff all over the place.

Justin: In Fallout 4, you mean.

Clint: In Fallout 4, but I mean—

Justin: [simultaneously] In Fallout 4, okay, right.

Clint: I even find myself walking through the grocery store, and I see duct tape and I go, "Oh, I should buy that, 'cause I need it in Fallout 4!" [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: Actually, you can feed that into the port in the back of your Xbox, and that will— that will work.

Justin: Yeah, you can just feed it—

Griffin: Yeah, that's how it works.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Um, no, there's nothing really salvageable in this room. It has been— it's been— it got crystallized.

Travis: Is the axe that Dad took any good? Should I fight him for it? Do we need to roll need?

Griffin: Uh, no, it's not especially great.

Travis: Okay. You can keep your shitty axe.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: I just has— it has every single one of his children's names is carved into it.

Travis: Oh yeah, please, I don't want that.

Clint: God, it's probably fallin' apart now.

Griffin: Alright, are you moving on?

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: Yeah, let's go!

Griffin: So you're in another wide chamber, another airlock. This one is a little bit different from the ones that you've been through, because the two doors on either end of it are kind of in a state of disrepair. Um, one of this is labeled the gravity augmentation chamber. And this actually looks like an older version of the airlocks you've seen so far. The door just kind of looks not as futuristic. I mean, it still is—

Travis: It's, like, made of planks of wood. [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Uh, yeah, basically. It is a wooden airlock. It looks— no, not quite that old. But, you know, it looks pretty aged. The other airlock is labeled the temperature augmentation chamber, and this door actually has, weirdly enough, like, a layer of ice around it, like it's been completely iced over.

Travis: Do we need to go find a plasmid to get through it?

Griffin: Oh, shit! That is kind of like what that is.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Well, no.

Travis: Okay. Dad, which way do you want to go?

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: Um... well, let's see. We have a door we can't go through.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Clint: And we have a door we can go through.

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: Seems pretty obvious to me we want to try to door we can't go through.

Travis: Yeah, I'm there, too.

Justin: [simultaneously] For sure.

Clint: We gotta do the frozen one.

Travis: You know what? I say we just let it go.

Justin: [simultaneously] That's actually not a big deal. Yeah.

Clint: Let it go?

Justin: Um, I would actually like to... cast, uh, uh— before we go through all of the rigmarole, and because my spell fingers are getting a little rusty, uh, I'm gonna cast Clairvoyance so I can see on the other side of the, uh— on the other side of the door there, to try to get some sort of inkling of where we're going, here. Whether or not this is, like, worth the certain-to-be 15 minutes of audio.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: That is will require for us to get through this fucking thing.

Griffin: Okay. Which door are you checking?

Justin: The one that we—

Clint: The frozen one. The one that—

Griffin: [simultaneously] The fr— the frosted one, okay, okay, okay.

Justin: [crosstalk] necessitates magic to see what's on the other side of it.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Uh, it is— I create an invisible sensor within a range of a location familiar to me—

Griffin: Oh, no, I know what's up with Clairvoyance.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You don't have to— you just don't have to make any rolls or anything?

Justin: No, just concentrate.

Griffin: Okay, yeah, you concentrate—

Justin: I'm choosing "seeing," by the way.

Griffin: Sorry?

Justin: I could choose seeing or hearing. I choose seeing.

Griffin: What, you could fuckin' taste the room?

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: No, I just—it's just the two, there. Just seeing and hearing.

Travis: You could smell it. Smells like cold!

Griffin: Yeah. You, um... you—

Clint: But he's gotta concentrate first. He's gotta concentrate.

Justin: Hold on, I'm concentrating.

Clint: Hey, I'm not touching you. Hey, look! I'm not touching you! I'm not touching you!

Griffin: [snorts] Alright.

Clint: I'm not touching you!

Griffin: Um, are we sure we're not Dad's dad?

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, who's the dad?

Clint: Let me describe this. Justin's eyes are tightly cinched together. He has, like, a grimace.

Travis: You put a belt on him?

Clint: On his face. He has one finger extended, I can't tell from this distance—oh! Okay.

Griffin: Okay, Taako. You pass through this icy door, and actually once you get through, the whole airlock tunnel is just a giant, solid sheet of ice. And as you make it into the door, even that ice is sort of extending into the room, probably a good... eight feet or so of just solid ice.

Inside of that room, though, you see two figures in null suits battling what appear to be sort of, like... ice-covered robots, almost?

Travis: [gasps loudly] We have to get in there!

Griffin: This room looks like a winter wonderland, and these two figures are just taking these ice robots to fucking fool school. One of them is running up a wall and, like, hanging off the ceiling and just, like, throwing down daggers that are just, like, cutting these things apart. Um, the other one is using a crossbow to just, like, blast 'em to little pieces. Um... but yeah. In this winter wonderland scene, you see Killian and you see Carey just, like, mercin' some robots in there.

Travis: So they're, like, holding their own.

Clint: They're really better than we are at this stuff.

Travis: Super better at it.

Justin: Um...

Taako: Well, guys, it's empty.

Travis: [laughs loudly]

Clint: [laughs loudly]

Taako: Let's try the other one.

Magnus: Are you sure?

Taako: No, I'm positive. It's empty.

Magnus: 'Cause I heard— I saw your eyes twitching a lot.

Taako: Empty as hell.

Merle: If he says it's empty, it's empty.

Taako: And when you heard me say "Aw, shit! Sweet flip!" That was just a— a childhood rhyme I use to help focus myself.

Griffin: [laughs breathlessly]

Magnus: So you didn't see anything? It was just a frozen room?

Griffin: Just, like, your mother would swaddle you, young Taako, baby Taako, and just sing to you [singing] Oh shit, sweet flip!

Travis: When you were just a taquito.

Griffin: When you were just a—

Justin: [singing] Aw dip, sweet flip, my little nugget."

[all laugh]

Griffin: [singing] Hot stunts, cool nights.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [through laughter] Hot stunts, cool nights?

Justin: [singing] Are those ice robots? Oh, dunk.

Magnus: Wait, there's ice robots in there?

Justin: That's part of the rhyme.

Griffin: No, that's just— it's just part of the song.

Justin: It's just part of the song.

Magnus: It's oddly appropriate.

Taako: No, but yeah, it's empty.

Magnus: Because I can— I think I can hear fighting?

Taako: You don't hear— you don't—

Merle: Like clanging.

Taako: You don't hear shit. There's eight inches of ice between us and the ice robots.

[pause]

Magnus: There's ice robots?

Taako: Son of a bitch.

[muffled laughter]

Taako: Yeah... there are ice robots. Fine. Fuck!

Merle: Do they have arms?

Taako: No— well, currently, yeah.

Magnus: The ice, can you melt it?

Taako: [sighs heavily]

Clint: I cast— how about if I cast Sacred Flame, just to see if it'll open if we thaw it out?

Taako: But it— it's empty.

Merle: Okay.

Taako: That ship has sailed, hasn't it.

Merle: Yeah, you're not gonna be able to pull it off.

Taako: Okay. Kidding aside, I don't— I— there are people— I wasn't "kidding," it's "lying." It— we— they're in there, Killian and, um, Carey are in there, and they're handing a couple of ice robots their metal asses, but they have it under control. By no means do I think we need— they are in need of our, uh, specialized services.

Magnus: Gotcha. So let's check out the fizzy lifting room.

Taako: Cool.

Griffin: Okay. As you open up the door to the gravity augmentation chamber, you see a large spherical chamber, um, that is pretty dark, and pretty dirty. It looks like nobody's really been in here in a while. And things in this chamber are just floatin', just floatin' in space. There's a lot of just sort of flotsam and jetsam, and it almost looks like Lucas has just kind of been throwing his trash into this room?

Because there's, like, a refrigerator floating around and, like, some just panes of glass flying around, and some cages flying around, and some microscopes, and— and, uh, some just industrial equipment and crates and barrels just kind of floating around in this chamber, uh, without the effects of gravity on it.

Magnus: Hey, Lucas?

Lucas: Yeah, what's up?

Magnus: What's with your trash room?

Lucas: Oh, bless this mess, right?

Travis: [snorts]

Clint: [laughs]

Lucas: Yeah, um. I, uh... yeah. So I'm not especially great about, like, getting rid of my junk, 'cause I might need it again someday, and also I guess I don't really know where you throw away industrial waste. So, um, that chamber actually, um... Maurine, my mother, she actually worked on it. Um, to sort of master gravity, anti-gravity technology. It's actually helped make our labs and your headquarters, so.

Magnus: And you made a weird shrinking elevator thing? Cool, cool, cool.

Lucas: Yeah. It's pretty sick, right?

Magnus: Well...

Lucas: Do you remember when you went down there?

Magnus: Your mom made anti-gravity.

Lucas: Okay, yeah. She had—

Merle: That's pretty cool.

Lucas: She had some stuff going.

Merle: Was that before she died that she made that?

Lucas: Oh, cool.

Magnus: Well, I would have to assume.

Lucas: Cool and neat. Anyway, yeah, just get through there. And come on, you're getting close. Um, the—the—

Travis: I jump.

Griffin: You jump into the anti-grav room?

Travis: Yes!

[whimsical music plays in the background]

Griffin: Okay. You're in there, and sure enough you're just floating now through the room.

Travis: [singing] It's everything I dreamed it would be.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: [singing] I feel alive for the first time.

Griffin: You're experiencing the magic of flight.

Travis: Uh-huh!

Griffin: Um, and it's pretty— well, you're actually having to, like, scoot some trash out of the way as you fly through the garbage room.

Travis: Still pretty good.

Griffin: Yeah. If it weren't for all the garbage this would be, like, the most miraculous experience basically ever.

Clint: Okay. Now, Taako takes my hand and we leap out together, and I look at him and I say...

Magnus: Can you read my mind?

Travis: Is that a reference?

Clint: We'll see who gets that joke later.

Griffin: Okay. 'Cause it's not us! The people on the show you're doing it with.

Justin: It was Superman, right?

Clint: It's a Superman reference!

Justin: [clicks tongue] Got you, Dad.

Clint: Thank you, son.

Justin: At least I paid attention—

Clint: I know.

Justin: —when we sat at your lap, your fatherly lap.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: Last year.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Your fatherly hearth.

Griffin: Your weird three laps that you have.

Travis: That you had installed.

[muffled laughter]

Griffin: [laughs] Your dorsal—

Clint: Well, that's gonna get some fanart, yeah.

Griffin: Your dorsal lap. Um... uh, yeah. Noelle follows you into the chamber too.

Magnus: Noelle, look at me!

Noelle: Yeah. No, yeah, you're doing great.

Magnus: I'm a angel!

Noelle: Yeah, you're— you're a beautiful angel, and you're floating around, and you're doing such a great job.

Magnus: Are you proud of me?

Noelle: I'm real proud of you. Uh—

Magnus: How do I get down?

Noelle: Hey, Mag— Magnus, do a stunt!

Travis: I do a stunt!

[dice roll]

Noelle: Oh man.

Travis: Oh, that's a 18 on stunts.

Griffin: Uh, yeah. You don't really have anything to push yourself off on, so you just kind of, like, twist around. But she's very—

Noelle: Oh, wow. That was real good, Magnus!

Magnus: Am I the best at stunts?

Noelle: You're the best at flipping and spinning.

Magnus: Thank you!

Noelle: You're so great.

Travis: Alright.

Noelle: Taako and Merle? You guys, do a— do a duo stunt!

Merle: No!

Noelle: Okay. I thought you'd have fun in the zero gravity room, but... if you're gonna be—

Merle: This isn't about fun.

Taako: I can fly whenever I want so it's, like, pshaw.

Magnus: Yeah, I can, like, just standard not do magic, so this is, like, the best I've ever felt ever.

Taako: Yeah. It's pretty good, I guess.

Merle: Do you want to stay here?

Magnus: No. I just signed a lease on a condo.

[muffled laughter]

Griffin: Y'all hear something coming from a pretty big ball of, uh— of rubble. Um, below you, towards the center of the room. And emerging from that ball of rubble, you see three shapes sort of push themselves off the bottom of this spherical room, and start to move upward toward the three of you very slowly.

And you can't really get a beat on what these three figures are. They're— they're— they're— they got this, like, pink... weirdly shiny, like, bubblegum skin almost, and they have these eight, like, padded feet, and these circular snouts with this row of sharp teeth all around them. And they got these eight legs that are ending in these, like, gross, wispy tendril fingers. And they are—

Travis: And they seem friendly?

Griffin: Um... they're just— they're not making any noise, and they're not really animating very much. They're just kind of floating up in your general direction.

Travis: Okay.

Magnus: Hey, Lucas? Me again.

Lucas: Yeah, what's up?

Magnus: What's with the—

Lucas: You guys having fun in my trash room?

Magnus: What's the weird bubblegum octopus things?

Lucas: Weird bubblegum oc— what are you talking about?

Magnus: Yeah, they got a snout— Griffin described it better. Were you listening? Were you listening when he described it?

Lucas: I mean, there shouldn't be anything in that room.

Magnus: There's, like, three of them. They were in broken cages, they're floating to me in a very threatening manner...

Lucas: Oh, the tar— oh, the— oh, they're just tardigrades. Well, they're just— they're just little guys.

Magnus: It's pretty big.

Lucas: They're, like, micro— they're microscopic. We were doing experiments on zero gravity, like, animals, how they thrive in it. And yeah, no, tardigrades— they're microscopic. Quit bein—

Magnus: No, these have thrived.

Lucas: —being so dramatic.

Magnus: Thrived is a good word.

Merle: They are thrived as hell.

Lucas: Wait, what?

Magnus: It's like the size of... I don't know, how would you describe it, Griffin?

Clint: Uh, a car engine.

Griffin: Yeah, they're about the size of a car engine. He says, uh...

Lucas: No, that's not—

Travis: That could be anything.

Lucas: That's not possible. They're— tardigrades are microscopic creatures.

Travis: I hold the necklace up.

Magnus: Look!

Lucas: Oh, shit! I can't see, but now I believe you!

Magnus: Thanks.

Clint: [laughs]

Lucas: Um, you guys need to get outta there.

Magnus: Yeah!

Lucas: Tardigrades— we call 'em unkillable water bears. You gotta get the fuck outta there!

Magnus: You call them that?

Clint: Is everything a bear here?

Griffin: Um...

Travis: I push off some garbage towards the door. Bye-ee! [laughs]

Griffin: Okay. As you push off some garbage to start floating away from the door, the three tardigrades— which is a real animal. I was doing some googling around, guys. It's a neat animal! They do zero gravity environments on 'em. Do a quick google search.

Justin: They're one of Sydnee's favorite animals, actually. She thinks they're adorable. But these three—

Travis: How do you spell it?

Griffin: Like tardi, like Tardis, and then grade.

Travis: Oh! Okay. Uh-huh. I don't like that.

Griffin: Yeah. When they're you-sized they're definitely less adorable.

Travis: It does look like a super fat, angry manatee though.

Griffin: Yeah. These three super fat angry manatees...

Travis: [very indistinctly] They probably sound like this. I'm a tardigrade. I'm gonna eat you 'cause I'm angry! [eating noises]

Taako: The bad thing about tardigrades is that they basically will eat anything.

Griffin: Uh, and just as you—

Taako: Some water bears have been known to eat entire live organisms, like rotifers and other tardigrades.

Griffin: Or elves— or elves, humans, and dwarves. Because all three of these stick out these— shoot out these long, fleshy, pink proboscises. Boy, that's a fun pleasant mental image. Um, at all three of you. And I need all three of you to make dexterity saving throws with disadvantage, because you don't really have anything to move off of.

Travis: Even though I said I push off some garbage?

Griffin: Alright. You can— you don't have disadvantage.

[dice roll]

Travis: Yeah. 19!

[dice roll]

Clint: 18!

Justin: 2!

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, Taako, you don't really need to roll again. Merle, you do, 'cause you have disadvantage.

Justin: Well, let's see if I can get a 1.

Clint: Wait a minute.

Justin: Disadvantage means you roll twice and you take the lower of the two.

Clint: Ahh.

[dice roll]

Clint: 8!

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Did you guys know that tardigrades were first discovered by a German pastor named Johann August Ephraim Goeze?

Griffin: [wheeze-laughs] Thanks, Siri.

Travis: You're welcome. Just a little thing I learned from the tardigrade wiki. Knowledge is power. I'm just looking for something that'll help me beat them.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah. It's definitely— I definitely wanted to send you on a fucking science hunt. That's the key to winning this battle.

Justin: You literally told him to google them. You literally told him that.

Griffin: Yeah, I guess that's— I guess that's true. Um, yeah, now that you've spoken the name of their discoverer, all three just disintegrate. Well done.

[all laugh]

Griffin: [shaky voice] You figured out our secret! Poof!

Clint: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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