

The Adventure Zone Balance: The Eleventh Hour, Chapter Seven

Published on August 25, 2016

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Griffin: Previously, on *The Adventure Zone*:

There is some kind of force field, and it's surrounding the only other door in this room, on the opposite end of the pit that you're currently standing over.

Paloma: [echoing] You will need divine intervention. You will find it at the Temple of Istus.

Taako: Alright!

Griffin: There is... a skeleton!

Luca: I would be willing to help you out, to help you seek divine intervention from Istus herself. But I will need my brother's help in order to do so.

Redmond: So, you help me rob this bank. It'll take five minutes! I know you're in a hurry.

Taako: Hell yeah!

Merle: It's a caper!

Magnus: Yeah, fuck it. What's the plan?

Griffin: Isaac's next-to-last entry in Isaac's journal reads...

"From the moment I saw it, I knew there was nothing I wouldn't do to get that cup. I just didn't know why. I killed Jack. I saw my prize: the cup I had killed my very best friend for, in June's hands."

Taako: Junebug!

Griffin: Roswell says...

Roswell: What would you like me to do?

Announcer: I hope these boys never find my journal. My Livejournal, that is! Unless you wanna hear all about My Chemical Romance. It's *The Adventure Zone*!

[theme music plays]

Travis: Alright. I have an idea, fellas. Go with me on this.

[soda can opens]

Griffin: Okay.

Magnus: Roswell! Junebug!

Roswell: Okay, yeah. What— what do you need?

Magnus: Go get the Chalice for us!

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: That's good.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: That's very good.

Travis: I thought maybe that might work.

Clint: 45 seconds in: done!

Roswell: I'm sorry, I don't— I don't understand what you're talking about.

Magnus: Dunk!

Griffin: Um, you are— I mean, you are in that moment, right after what just happened at the end of the last episode. You now know Roswell's command word. Um, it is 11: 53. You're still at the end of that same loop. Um, and sort of the clay has been cleaned up, pulled back into Roswell's form. Merle and Magnus, you have both sort of recovered. Um, and yeah, it's 11: 53, and Redmond finally walks into the bank, and that elf wizard is with him. Uh, and they are holding the lock box that had that big bomb in it, uh, and they both kind of nervously look at

Roswell as they walk in, but kind of don't— aren't— don't seem too afraid of them, because Roswell's not, like, now attacking anybody.

Travis: No, everyone's being cool. We're all being little fantasy Fonzies.

Griffin: Everyone's being really cool. And Redmond says, uh...

Redmond: Well, it seems like everything went pretty— pretty well in here, all things considered.

Magnus: I don't know how! [laughs] I got really confused halfway through what was happening there, but...

Redmond: What was in the vault? I gotta know.

Taako: Gems.

Merle: Some food. There was, uh, some sandwiches.

Magnus: [quietly] Taako, Merle. They're not gonna remember this anyways. Fuck it!

Griffin: Redmond sends the elf that's with him into the vault to kind of poke around and look around. Redmond says, uh...

Redmond: Well, it doesn't seem like it was the prettiest job, but I gotta say, you got it done.

Magnus: Listen, Redmond. We're pretty short on time here, fella. Um, we did the thing for you, and we will tell you what's in the vault, but we need you to come with us to your brother to do what you can with the Temple of Istus. That was the deal.

Redmond: Okay, yeah, no. Just give me, like, uh— like, 15 minutes or so if you don't [crosstalk]—

Magnus: Nope! We gotta go. Nope! No!

Merle: [simultaneously] Nope. Nope! Mm-mmm.

Taako: [simultaneously] No, absolutely not.

Magnus: Nope, nope, nope, nope. Gotta go now.

Redmond: It really— it really can't wait?

Magnus: Okay. Roswell? Grab him!

Griffin: Uh, okay. Okay. Uh, Roswell says...

Roswell: You got it!

Griffin: And kind of just, like, bear hugs Redmond. And Redmond's like...

Clint: Give him a back rub!

Redmond: This is— this is unnecessary! This is unnecessary.

Magnus: Okay. We're going to the Temple. Come on, Roswell!

Griffin: Okay. Roswell is now sort of— Roswell says...

Roswell: Okay, you got it!

Griffin: And walks—

Taako: Put him on your— put him on your shoulders like a toddler!

Merle: Awww.

Magnus: Oh, that'd be cute! Watch the doorways.

Clint: Clunk!

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, kind of fireman carries him out of the building, and does bonk his head on the side of the door as Roswell carries Redmond out of the bank. Um, it's 11: 54—

Travis: And just remember! This bank was robbed by the wet bandits!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: Griffin, did you roll to see if him bonking his head killed him?

Travis: [laughs loudly]

[dice roll]

Griffin: Oh. I actually rolled a critical miss, so the bank falls down, I guess. I think that's how that works.

Clint: [laughs] It's going to!

Justin: That's a bad bank.

Griffin: Yeah. It's 11: 54. You actually see Horsie, Magnus, the horse that you stole, essentially, during the last episode. Uh, runs up through the woods and kind of, uh, goes to the water trough in front of the sheriff's office where it was before.

Travis: Alright. So do we wanna horse and Garyl this?

Justin: It's, like, a high-level spell slot.

Clint: Yeah...

Justin: [clicks tongue]

Griffin: It's 11— it's 11: 55.

Travis: You've got fuckin' five minutes! Well, hold on. I'll take Redmond and Horsie. Merle and Taako, you do Garyl.

Clint: Oh, no, no, no! Not after last week. No, uh-uh. I'm not putting up with that Garyl horseshit.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: I'm pretty sure you rode on the other horse last week.

Clint: I did, I know. But last week Garyl called me dense, and fat, and heavy.

Travis: Okay, well, how fast is Roswell, Griffin?

Griffin: Um, not the fastest!

Travis: Okay.

Justin: I've summoned Garyl.

Clint: Shit.

Garyl: I hope you like walkin', old man. Get on. I love— as much as I'd love the grand spectacle of watching those stubby little legs pump their way all the way to wherever the hell we're going, I ain't gonna see it today. Get on.

Merle: Hi-ho, Garyl! Away!

Garyl: Don't talk to me, little man.

Merle: Okay, sorry.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, Redmond is, like, down to go with you and help you out. He doesn't need to be restrained.

Travis: Okay. He does have to be little spoon, though, and ride in front of me. I don't trust him.

Griffin: He says, uh...

Redmond: That's how I prefer it!

Griffin: And little spoons on you. And yeah, you ride up the path up the side of the, uh— the plateau to the west of town, and you get to the cave at that plateau. It's about 11: 57—

Clint: [quietly] Shit.

Griffin: —as you make your way inside and dismount and run into the cave. And as soon as you do, you see Luca, the skeleton brother, and seeing that Redmond is in the cave, they sort of don't do their— he doesn't do his act of pretending to be dead. And he says, uh...

Luca: Brother! Have you finally returned your—

Travis: Brother!

Griffin: Brother!

Travis: Brother!

Justin: Brother.

Luca: Have you returned to your senses? Who are these gentlemen with you?

Griffin: And Redmond says, uh...

Redmond: There's not much time, Luca. These men have business with Istus. I told 'em we'd try to raise the temple.

Griffin: And Luca says...

Luca: Well then, come and sit with me, weary travelers! Tell me your life's journey!

Magnus: No! Just—

Luca: I would like to hear all the winding paths that our lady of fate has led you down. If you wish, I could start with my own autobiography.

Magnus: No! We have, like, three minutes!

Luca: You don't wanna hear about the beautiful rolling hills of Star Hollow that—

Magnus: [simultaneously] You can tell me at 12: 01!

Merle: [in Clint's voice] Yes, in five minutes you can tell us that story.

Luca: Uh, okay, if you insist!

Merle: [in Clint's voice] And by the way, when was say raise the temple, we mean R-A-I-S-E, not R-A-Z-E.

Justin: Do it again. Do it again. Take that whole conversation again. Take it from the top.

Merle: By the way—

Justin: We're wasting time! Now it's 11: 57.

Merle: — when we say raise the temple, we mean R-A-I-S-E, we don't mean R-A-Z-E!

Griffin: Unfortunately, that was the time that I needed to blow up the town. And let that be a lesson to you now, Dad! If you don't use your character voice—

Travis: People die!

Griffin: Then the apocalypse happens.

Clint: People die!

Justin: People die.

Griffin: No, you manage to get Luca out in time, and you— I think all of you just kind of sprint the short distance from the cave to the temple. Um, and it's 11: 59, and Redmond rolls out a little mat in front of the fallen temple, and the two brothers get on their knees, and they place their hands together, and they start to do this prayer. Um, and they say...

Redmond and Luca: Lady of fate, Mother Istus, author of the story of life and the nurturer of passing time. We beseech these things in your name: raise this temple so that—

Griffin: And, like, as soon as they say "Raise this temple" it start to, like, rebuild itself in a hurry, and it starts to de-age, if that's a verb. It starts to youngify. And

the walls sort of rebuild themselves. You see the curtains that were laying on the ground. They just sort of lift themselves into the air, and they snap perfectly over the windows.

Travis: Griffin, I would like to do a carpentry check to see if I'm impressed by how it's building itself.

Clint: [wheezes]

Griffin: Yeah, sure. I mean, that—

Travis: I never get to use that skill.

[dice roll]

Griffin: I mean, that's not a skill per se—

Travis: Shh, shh.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Uh, it's an 18. Um... and I think I had 10, 'cause I'm super good at it.

Griffin: You add 100 to that, yeah. No, yeah, it's super impressive. I mean, you can also tell that, like, this thing was built pretty well for the limited resources available to whoever built it.

Clint: Praise Istus!

Griffin: And the steeple starts to right itself, um, sort of casting a shadow over your party. And as it's rebuilding itself, you hear the clock start to chime behind you. Um, and the final piece, those two double doors facing the town, they snap into their frame right as you hear that anguished roar coming from the purple worm. And from your vantage point, you see the city of Refuge start to buckle and collapse in on itself, and the double doors swing open, and you see a voice beckoning you from within.

Travis: I go! Magnus rushes in.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Uh, this is one instance in which Taako is not good out here. Uh, Taako will follow.

[music box music plays in the background]

Griffin: Okay, yeah. And as you're running in, the two brothers, who still have their eyes closed and heads bowed in prayer are just like...

Redmond and Luca: Go! Go! Go, go, go, go!

Justin: I turn back and, like...

Taako: Sorry! [wheezes] About this!

Magnus: Later, dudes!

Griffin: Merle, are you rushing in as well?

Clint: Yeah. Peace out. I'm gone.

Griffin: Okay, yeah. All three of you run into the temple, and you do so as, like, that explosion was coming. But as soon as you cross through, like, the threshold of the door, there is no explosion. There is no calamity. And when you look back through the open doors you can see the two brothers still kneeling, but they're, like, backlit by fire.

But in here, inside the temple, it's completely still. You see the rows of pews lining an aisle, leading up to a fairly humble pulpit. Behind that is a tapestry showing a city of happy, busy people, all nestled in the embrace of a beautiful woman with long, flowing white hair. And that woman is in front of you, in the flesh.

Magnus: Hail and well met!

Griffin: Or whatever gods are made of. And as you call out to her, she looks up from— she's knitting something as she sort of sits on the steps leading up to the pulpit. Um, and she looks up and says, uh...

Istus: Well, the three of you are...

Griffin: Well, let me do a voice.

Travis: Yeah, please. Come on. Set a standard for the rest of us.

Griffin: She says, um...

Istus: Well, the three of you are just in time.

Griffin: And she puts her knitting down. And the three of you are standing before an actual, literal goddess. What do you do?

Merle: Let me handle this, guys. Kind of my area of expertise. [clears throat loudly]

Taako: Yeah, okay.

Magnus: Oh, god. I'm so scared.

Merle: How *you* doin'?

Taako: Cool. Okay.

Magnus: [simultaneously] Oh, god. No! Nope, nope, nope.

Taako: About as bad as it could've gone.

Merle: Love the hair.

Magnus: Could've been worse.

Taako: [crosstalk]

Griffin: She kind of— she kind of laughs, and sort of runs her hand through her hair which is, like— it's kind of shimmering silver with, like, a tinge of blue. And she says, uh...

Istus: Oh. Thanks, I've had it for a while.

Merle: All hail mighty Isthmas.

Istus: It's, uh— it's Istus, actually. Not...

Justin: [snorts and laughs]

Istus: I'm not, uh...

Merle: Merry Christus. Merry Christmas, mighty Istus.

Istus: Um, I don't blame you for not knowing about me. I'm sort of an older goddess in this realm. My followers are few, and most of them are somewhat lacking in devotion. It's hard to get behind a goddess who's all about enforcing the whims of fate when, you know, the whims of fate deliver nothing but mass destruction upon you. Um, but it's good to see the three of you.

Magnus: It's good to see you as well, my lady fate.

Griffin: Um...

Merle: Oh, god. [laughs quietly]

Magnus: [out of the side of his mouth] Just go with me on this!

Griffin: She says, uh—

Travis: I've got— I've got rustic hospitality comin' out of my ass. Everybody loves Magnus.

Griffin: How— I wanna ask the question of, like, how the three of you are— 'cause you've never— I want to impress upon you, you're standing in front of a deity, and I don't think that's happened to any of you before. And I just kind of wanna know how that treats you.

Travis: I would say that Magnus is not religious, but he's very spiritual.

Griffin: Okay. [laughs quietly]

Clint: [snorts]

Justin: Taako doesn't get the appeal. I mean, they can do magic, he can do magic. He feels like they're just about equal.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Merle's rocked to his very core!

Griffin: Alright, good.

Travis: You have a hand from a god!

Clint: Well, yeah! Oh, gosh, thanks for the wood hand, god!

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: But I'm saying, like, this isn't the first divine proof you have received.

Clint: Well... maybe I'm lookin' for a better deal!

Travis: Keep that on the DL.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: [whispers] A better deal.

Griffin: Istus beckons all of you to come in through the entryway, and motions for you to sit down in the front row of pews and have a chat with her. And she says, um...

Istus: Look, I'm not telling you anything you don't already know, but this town is sick. Obviously the whims of fate aren't being obeyed as much as they're being made a mockery of, and the force that's wielding the Temporal Chalice is forcing everyone in this town to relive the same horrible day, the same horrible hour, over and over again. That's not right. And you may find this upsetting, boys, but... you are dying. Time isn't— time isn't rewinding every day at noon. It's repeating, for everyone. But for some reason the Temporal Chalice, or whatever's wielding it, is allowing you to remember the loops.

Magnus: Wait, hold on. So we are dying?

Istus: Yeah.

Magnus: So when this is all done, are we gonna be dead?

Istus: Not if you get out after a loop that you survive, and that's maybe something I can help you out with.

Griffin: She says.

Taako: Although if we got out after a loop that we died during, that would be a hell of a thing, huh?

Magnus: Yeah, right? Wouldn't that be a— that would be like waking up dead, am I right?

Taako: I don't wanna get into semantics here. [laughs quietly]

Istus: Okay. You really razzed me there!

Taako: [laughs] That's me!

Travis: [laughs loudly]

Clint: That's Taako!

Magnus: So you get Taako, baby!

Taako: That's Taako! 100%.

Magnus: What you see is what you get.

Taako: Uncut.

Travis: [giggles]

Griffin: She says, uh... uncut. She says...

Istus: Heh, that's funny.

Griffin: And she reaches into this white tunic that she's wearing and she pulls out a small pair of scissors, and she cuts a loose string out of the scarf that she's knitting. But she does it in kind of a vaguely intimidating way, and that string falls to the floor, and she tucks the scissors back in her tunic.

Justin: Okay, Taako's appropriately intimidated.

Griffin: She says, um...

Justin: Now, I'm gonna need to have her make an intimidation check. [wheezes]

Griffin: Okay.

[dice roll]

Griffin: Uh, 19. I don't know what I'm rolling against there.

Justin: Well, let's just say that probably did the job. [laughs]

Clint: He's intimidated.

Griffin: She says, uh— she puts her knitting down again and she says...

Istus: The three of you are just so special. You know that, right? Like, our existence is made up of countless realities where the same people are just doing the same actions at the same time, in parallel worlds, throughout the echoes of creation. Except for you! The three of you are the only three of you that there are, doing the things the three of you do here in this world. When I say that you're unique, I'm not being flattering. I'm being... quite literal.

Taako: I think we assumed that our— the way we were different was just because we weren't here when this spell got cast.

Istus: I'm not even talking about this town, Taako. I'm talking about... all of it! The— the— the world, the plane, the— the planar system, reality, existence, all of it! The three of you are anomalies. And I certainly, you know, have godlike powers. I don't like to brag. I don't— I've never known anything like the three of you, and I don't know why that is, but I'm intrigued. Because whether you realize it or not, you've been serving as my agents for longer than you could ever remember.

Magnus: How far back?

Istus: Really, really far back! I mean—

Magnus: Like two weeks?

Istus: Much farther than that.

Magnus: Three weeks?

Taako: [simultaneously] Don't say three— not three weeks!

Magnus: No.

Justin: Three?

Magnus: Three weeks?

Istus: Almost your entire lives, the three of you have been preventing things that go against the designs of fate from happening, stopping powers that would reshape reality, used by people who shouldn't be using them. And that's my whole jam.

Magnus: But Istus— I'm sorry, but there's some really shitty stuff that has happened in all of our lives. Like, do you, like, just, uh, like, I don't know, Phandalin? That kind of shit? That's supposed to happen?

Istus: No, it wasn't. That was one that you kind of goofed up on.

Magnus: Oh, cool.

Taako: Oh, that was a goofer.

Merle: That was one, okay.

Magnus: That's a mulligan.

Istus: But you tried to stop it. That's what I'm saying. The three of you have been serving as my agents for so long, and you've done so much great work.

Here in Refuge, probably the most fucked up, fate-defying place that ever was or ever will be. And you've done so much to try to stop it. I'm... I wanna ask you to make it formal. I want you to become my emissaries in this world, and if you do, I will grant you my blessing.

Taako: Hmm.

Merle: I've already got a gig!

Magnus: What's that, uhh... what's that entail?

Taako: Yeah.

Istus: Just keep doing what you're doing. Just stop the—

Magnus: Cool, done!

Merle: [laughs] Oh yeah!

Magnus: You got it!

Istus: Keep standing in the way of forces that want to reshape creation in their— in their image, following their will, and not the will of fate.

Taako: Listen. If we pledge our allegiance to you, does that mean I get to watch Merle's hand fall off?

Magnus: Good question.

Taako: 'Cause if so, yes.

Istus: Oh, you're talking about Pan, right?

Taako: Or Dan, as I've come to know him. [laughs quietly] Yeah, Pan!

Clint: Pan the Dan?

Istus: I call him— I call him Dan as well! That's amazing. Merle, Pan and I are best buds. We have a weekly poker night over in the celestial plane. So don't even sweat that. I don't think he's gonna hold this charge against you.

Magnus: What kind of bennies do we get?

Istus: Uh, many bennies.

Griffin: She says, and smiles.

Magnus: I'll take it. I'm done, yeah!

Taako: Good one!

Magnus: Where do I sign? How about we do this as, like, a trial basis. We make this one the test run of how this goes, and if we make it to the other side of this whole time loop thing and survive, we're good to go?

Istus: I mean, I guess I can live with that. I haven't seen you do anything so far that has defied fate's will, so I— you've earned a certain amount of trust, I suppose.

Travis: I stick my hand out.

Istus: We don't have to hand shake. You actually— in fact, you shouldn't touch me.

Travis: I keep my hand out.

Merle: We really oughta have our lawyers look at this.

Istus: I just— I just— I think you might explode.

Travis: I go for a high five instead.

Istus: That would double explode you. Yeah, that's a super duper bad idea.

Magnus: Okay, cool! Cool, cool, cool.

Travis: I put my hand down, but I high five myself quietly.

Griffin: She says, uh...

Istus: Taako, Merle? Are you interested?

Merle: [sighs heavily] Okay! [laughs]

Magnus: Cool! So it seems like two— two of three.

Taako: Yeah, I'm fine.

Magnus: Yeah, we're good! Yeah.

Taako: Is it more work?

Magnus: Good question.

Istus: Ideally, it'll be the same amount of work. I'm sorry—

Taako: [simultaneously] Perfect.

Magnus: [simultaneously] Could it be less work?

Istus: No, I don't think— I know that's Taako's sort of whole—

Taako: Let's talk god powers.

Merle: Is there judgment involved?

Istus: As long as you don't, you know, cross me, I guess.

Magnus: So— okay. So, hold on. [laughs] The one thing we can't do is do what we're not supposed to do, but we don't know what that is.

Istus: You'll know— you know what it is.

Magnus: Cool. I'm still on board. You had me at hello.

Griffin: She sort of... how would she do— okay, she knits— she pulls out a new color of thread from her tunic and knits it into this scarf, which you now see, like... it doesn't end. It just kind of fades into maybe another plane or something like that. What you can see is already a very long scarf. And she knits this new thread into it.

And as she does, um, these three sigils of Istus appear in front of you, floating in front of you. And they're the same sigils that you've seen the two brothers were wearing, and you saw some of this sort of symbolism— I mean, god, you can see it in this temple whenever you look around you.

And it's kind of a... it's a circular symbol with a needle in its center, with sort of strings represented by these little brass lines that wrap around the needle and the symbol as a whole. And they are essentially little pendants that are floating in front of each of you, one apiece.

Travis: I take— I take it?

Griffin: Okay. Um, as you take them, she says, um...

Istus: I have more blessings to bestow upon you, of course. I wouldn't just give you some necklaces.

Griffin: Um, she says...

Istus: Merle, I have something for you. Since you're sort of a nurturer of both plants and people, I'm gonna grant you something sort of unique among my followers. A bit of, um... a bit of fateful leeway.

Griffin: And she knits something into the scarf. And in front of you, Merle, a small about tennis ball-sized orb appears. And inside of it, it looks like there's a sandstorm brewing in it. Light colored sand swirls with these golden flecks that sort of shine light across your face as you look into this orb. And she says, uh...

Istus: This orb, when smashed, will send your consciousness nine seconds into the past. It's not quite enough to rewrite the fate of all mankind, perhaps. But maybe enough time to fix a mistake, or save a loved one.

Griffin: She says.

Merle: Awesome!

Griffin: Um, so yeah. You have this—

Clint: I stare at it— I stare at it and I say...

Merle: It's beautiful!

Istus: It is pretty beautiful.

Magnus: I wonder how long before Merle forgets he has that.

Merle: Has what?

Magnus: Yep.

Istus: [laughs] Fantastic.

Griffin: Um, she says, uh...

Istus: Taako. For you.

Griffin: And knits something into the scarf. And a small brown bag appears in front of you, and it's cinched with a golden thread. And that thread is, uh, bound together with a knot, which is threaded into this golden glowing lock. And she says...

Istus: This, Taako, is a bag of necessity. And it's kind of curious. I don't know what's inside, and neither will you, until the appointed time that the item or items inside are exactly the item or items that you most need.

Taako: Okay. I see what you're saying.

Istus: Yeah. I don't wanna tell you your business, but—

Magnus: It's a magic bag.

Istus: —you might wanna keep it on your person at all times.

Taako: You're saying that I had courage within me the entire time.

Clint: [wheezes]

Taako: I just needed this bag to bring it out, right?

Griffin: Um, as you sort of grab the bag, you actually do feel a weight inside of it. So something is in there that's not just—

Travis: Like a weight set?

Griffin: Something that's not just fucking courage. No, it's not just like a weight set.

Travis: For Taako to get buff?

Justin: Do I— okay. [sighs] Do I— is it like an ambiguous just, like, weight to it? Or do I have a feeling that there is a— a solid, concrete object in— obviously not concrete, but there is a physical object in there?

Griffin: There is a physical object in there.

Justin: The nature of which would not change... if I were to remove it, like, now or in three days or whatever?

Griffin: Um, the nature of this bag is that you would not be able to remove it until you most needed it, hence the golden, glowing lock on it.

Justin: Okay, good.

Griffin: Kind of a Schrodinger's Bag.

Justin: I love it.

Griffin: Um, and—

Justin: I put it in my most special pocket, my armpit pocket.

Griffin: Okay. [laughs quietly]

Clint: Is that your best?

Justin: That's my best one.

Clint: Yeah.

Justin: That's the most— nobody ever thinks to look there.

Clint: Mm-mmm! No!

Griffin: And Istus says, uh...

Istus: And for you, Magnus. You're gonna need a tool to strike down the unnatural time locked barriers preventing you from reaching your goal down in the quarry, right?

Magnus: [sing-song] Yes please! Yes.

Griffin: She looks up and above you and, uh, looks down back at you. And she says, um...

Istus: I think I have just the thing.

Griffin: Um, and I actually want you, Magnus, to make a dexterity saving throw.

[dice roll]

Griffin: And go ahead and add your—

Travis: That's a nat 20.

Griffin: Is it really?

Travis: It really is.

Griffin: Okay. It's a— it's an inconsequential one. It's a swag roll, if anything. But from behind you, you hear a crash. And as you look to see what it was, you realize that the clock has fallen out of the steeple and into this main sanctuary space, and crashed right by the front door. And after the debris settles, the pile starts to rattle. It rattles for a bit, and then something comes flying out of it, and you recognize it as the minute hand of that clock. Which arcs high through the air, and then you just fuckin' reach one hand up and grab it, and claim it. And now that it—

Travis: Oh, I Grayskull the shit outta that!

Griffin: Yeah! And now that it's been restored, you can really appreciate the craftsmanship of this minute hand. It's this woven light metal. You think maybe mithril? And it ends in a razor-sharp point, and the metal comes together to form a really long straight base, which you can— you could easily get a nice grip on. And for all intents and purposes, it's basically a spear.

Travis: Nice.

Griffin: And she says, uh...

Istus: Wanna see something cool?

Magnus: Yeah?

Istus: Why don't you go ahead and throw that at my pulpit. It's fine, this place is about to explode again anyways.

Griffin: And as you look around, like, the wall— the front wall of the temple is actually starting to buckle a little bit.

Magnus: Okay.

Travis: I heft the spear and do as the lady asks.

Griffin: Alright, yeah. You chuck the spear, and it sticks in to the, um, wooden panel of the pulpit. And she says, uh...

Istus: Okay. Now... recall it.

Magnus: [gasps] To me, spear friend!

Griffin: [amused] Um... the spear reverses its path in time, reversing the path it just flew, arriving back in your hand, but the damage that it did to the pulpit is still there.

Magnus: That's awesome!

Griffin: She says, um...

Istus: I've enchanted this so you'll be able to pierce the barriers that have prevented your progress on your quest.

Magnus: Just, like, whenever, or like one time use?

Istus: Whenever you want.

Magnus: Awesome.

Istus: Although... hmm. You won't have it this after this loop comes down, so...

Griffin: And she reaches into her tunic and pulls out a couple of threads and starts— for, like, 15 seconds she's just furiously knitting these into this scarf. And then she says, uh...

Istus: Okay. I don't often do this, but I've edited things a bit? So you've actually had these gifts from before you even came to Refuge.

Magnus: Awesome.

Taako: Oh, great!

Griffin: And the wall behind you has started to buckle a little bit more. Um, you actually can't see the brothers anymore, outside of the door. She says, uh...

Istus: It looks like our time here is almost up, my dears. Do you—

Magnus: Is there anything else you could edit in our past?

Istus: I can't. I— I— I... what you need to understand is that the big picture stuff, Magnus? I can't touch that. Because if I do, I'll cease to exist. I'll cease to be. I can only help you out in small ways, but I can't affect that big picture, and I know that's hard to hear. Do you have any other questions? We're almost out of time!

Magnus: Yeah— yeah, uh...

Taako: I mean, yeah, kind of.

Magnus: Like, where's Isaac? Where's June? Where's the Chalice?

Istus: All three of those, you've been next door to them. When you were down in the quarry, remember the room with the seals over the door? You should have no problem getting through those now.

Magnus: Oh, dunk! Okay, cool!

Griffin: She says...

Istus: Okay, we're— we're seriously almost out of time. Um, I have one last blessing for you, my emissaries. Your fate is guiding you, not today, not tomorrow, but to a moment that will challenge you in a new and horrible way. And I cannot make the difficult decision that lies at the end of your quest for you, but I can grant you the time that you need to make that decision.

Griffin: And then she just disappears? For, like, a couple of seconds. And when she reappears she is wiping a tear from her eye, and she says, um...

Istus: You're going to be amazing.

Griffin: And then the building comes down.

[music box music plays]

Griffin: Hey, everybody! This is Griffin McElroy, your dungeon master, your best friend, your... part-time Spanish tutor. Thank you for listening to episode 47 of *The Adventure Zone*. It's the seventh episode of the Eleventh Hour saga. Only got a couple more episodes in this arc, and then we're gonna be moving on to probably one of the last couple arcs, um, but before we wrap up this campaign, I'm pretty excited for where we're gonna get to, um, in those arcs. But let's wrap this one up first and— well, first things first. Let's get through this commercial break, huh?

I wanna thank everybody who's been tweeting about the show using the #TheZoneCast hashtag. If you do so, you might end up as a character on this show. Talking about characters like... oh my God, my document for this arc has gotten completely ridiculous. I'm talking about characters like Paloma, Church of Fear on Twitter, or Luca, PurpleMFTW on Twitter, or Ren, Ren Fraley on Twitter, Roswell, Ben Roswell, Roswell Writes on Twitter, um... uh, all these folks tweeted about the show using the #TheZoneCast hashtag and they ended up as a

character on the show. You could too. Um, probably on the next arc. I think we're all out of characters for this one. I don't know, we'll see.

Um, but we appreciate you spreading the word about the show. We don't pay to market the show in any way. We don't advertise or any of that. Um, so you telling your friends is the only marketing that we get, and it's been so amazing, the growth that we've had for this show, and we appreciate you very, very much.

[ad break]

Griffin: Got a couple Jumbotron messages here. If you wanna get one on the show, just go to Maximumfun.org/jumbotron and you can find out how. It's— it's wicked easy. This first spot— I really want you go to heroforge.com and design a customized tabletop miniature for yourself. Hero Forge is a service that lets tabletop gamers create a hero online, in full 3D, without any downloads or plugins. And that in depth character creator lets you create your favorite heroes or villains or anything in between. And then, using the magic of 3D printing— and it is magic. I'm not supposed to read that part, but they got Keebler elves up on that shit. Uh, Hero Forge will create a custom tabletop mini in plastic, steel, or bronze, and send it right to your doorstep.

Doesn't support mobile devices right now. Get on your desktop computer and head to heroforge.com and get yourself a customized tabletop miniature.

I might do that myself. I don't know who I'd— I'd probably immortalize Angus. Um... "Make me a boy," I will say to them. "Just make me any boy."

Um, we got another personal message here. This one's for Sergio D, and it's from Anna B, AKA Mod the Gnome, who says:

"Thank you for being the best DM a grandmother gnome could ask for. Sorry I'm leaving this coast to go on a new adventure 2000 miles away. You're a wonderful friend, a wonderful DM, and I'll miss you bunches. PS: I turn into a bear."

That's how most letters should end, I feel like. I feel like a lot of— like, I've read a lot of Civil War love letters and it's, like, so boring. And if I could just read, like, "My dearest Prudence, I love you and, um, please send me saltpeter. And by the way, I'm a fuckin' bear now. What's up! What's up now, Prudence?"

Hey, I wanna tell you about something very, very, very cool I'm very excited about. Launching today, we are starting off the campaign for The Adventure Zine! I say "we." I mean, like, a billion super talented artists who have all contributed fanart for *The Adventure Zone* to this zine. Um, here's how it works. The zine is gonna be about a 56-page art book with fanart all done from different artists. You're gonna see a lot of names on there that you're gonna recognize, all doing original pictures from the show. Uh, and I've seen some previews. They look totally great.

So this book's gonna be about 56 pages. It's gonna be an 8x10 book with full color art, with character designs, weapons, prop and collection items, full scene illustrations, inventory sheets, Fantasy Costco stuff, and a whole lot more.

Um, it's gonna be printed in about Fall 2016, and so what's launching today is a generosity crowdfunding campaign to help pay for the printing, and to pay some of the artists, uh, and stuff like shipping. And all of the net profit from the book following the distribution of the book is gonna go to Facing Hunger, which is a really amazing nonprofit charity in our hometown of Huntington, West Virginia. Um, so it's a super good cause, and the book is gonna be super cool. The campaign kicks off today. Donations of I think \$10 will get you a PDF of the art book, while I think there's a \$25 early bird tier that will get you the PDF and the book in a bundle.

You can find— I'm not 100% sure on the details, but you can find all of the details and the generosity campaign that you can become a supporter of and get yourself a copy of this rad book of all Adventure Zone art, if you go to theadventurezine— that's theadventureZ-I-N-E— theadventurezine.com. It's a super, super cool project, and benefiting a great cause. And, like, I'm— I'm out of my gourd excited for this thing.

So, once again, theadventurezine.com. Go become a supporter and get your copy of the book.

Big thanks, by the way, to Megan Raley and Carey Pietsch, who are the organizers of that project. Thank you, thank you all so much.

Uh, and then all the usual stuff. Go listen to all the shows on the Maximum Fun Network. We're proud to be a member of that network. There's great shows like *Throwing Shade*, and *Stop Podcasting Yourself*, and *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* You can find all the shows that we do at mcelroyshows.com. We have tons and tons of

different podcasts that we do, and we'd love for you to give 'em a shot. MaxFunCon East, we'll see you next week, if you're gonna be there, doing a fun little show that I think we're gonna hold on to the recording of until, uh, our holiday sort of break when Travis and I have babies, and are gonna take a little bit of time off the podcast. We're gonna have some stuff to put in the feed then that I'm excited to publish. We're still sitting on that Boston live show, it's gonna be so great. Anyway, uh, back to the show. Thanks for listening and, uh, see you. The next goes up on September 8th, so I'll talk to you then. Bye!

[music box music plays]

Clint: Aww!

Taako: So check this. The chance lance.

Magnus: Aw yeah!

Taako: What do you think about that?

Magnus: I like that a lot.

Griffin: Yeah, you can call it what you wanna call it. I had it labeled as the minute hand, but obviously it's your purview.

Clint: I'm gonna call my ball... nine seconds in heaven.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: That's good.

Justin: Mine's just my sack.

Travis: [laughs loudly]

Clint: Yeah, so we've got a ball, a sack, and a tool.

Travis: We did it!

Justin: [wheeze-laughs] Wait a minute!

Clint: That's true! We got a ball, a sack, and a tool!

Travis: Everything is gross in D&D. Everything is gross here.

Griffin: Um... yeah. So you— do you guys feel like you understand the stuff that you got? Magnus, basically you got a spear that is a plus 1 spear.

Justin: A spear?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I feel like it's the chance lance...

Travis: [out of the corner of his mouth] I'm pretty sure it's the chance lance.

Griffin: Okay, the chance lance. Um, the chance lance, yeah. It's plus 1. It's basically the same stats as, uh— actually it's probably d8 damage, not d10 like your ax, but you can throw it and recall it, um, is the cool thing that you can do with that, and it will pop those bubbles.

Travis: Will it pop any bubble?

Justin: [snorts]

Travis: Is this a magic bubble-popping lance, Griffin? Or is this specific to this—

Justin: I would say it statistically pops most bubbles. [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: Um, no. The enchantment pops these time bubbles.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Um, so if somebody puts up, like, a magic barrier around themselves, it won't necessarily bring that down.

Travis: What if they put a soap bubble up around 'em?

Griffin: I mean, it will pop that, yeah. It's a very sharp spear.

Travis: Nice.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: I'm gonna write down "Pops most bubbles."

Clint: In clinical testing.

Travis: Yeah. Five out of six doctors agree: will pop bubbles.

Griffin: So you've just died again, and you're back in the white space, and the old woman is still lying on the ground. And the good news is that you can see that she is breathing. Um, the bad news is the reason that you can see that is because she is, like, so withered up in the— the— the yellow sundress that she is wearing that you can, like— you can see her breathing, like, very clearly. It's not... it's not great. Um, she looks, like, 140 years old.

Travis: Griffin, in the half a second that we're there, is there anything we can see in the room? Anything about the room, any characteristics?

Griffin: You think you hear music? That's it.

Travis: But we can't, like, see the room?

Griffin: No. It's, like, fa— it's completely faded out white.

Travis: Cool.

Griffin: Um, yeah. And you wake up! And you're in front of Roswell, and you're in front of Refuge, and sure enough, you are armed still with your gifts from Istus.

Magnus: What do you guys think would happen if I just smashed this bubble right now?

Merle: Death, destruction, the usual.

Taako: It wouldn't be great.

Magnus: Probably not good, right? Like, I shouldn't, right? Like, I could, but I...

Taako: You could...

Magnus: I could...

Merle: Don't— don't. No, don't do it.

Magnus: Oh, wait! I know what we need to do! First, Junebug.

Griffin: Roswell stands to attention.

Roswell: Um, how did you know that— well, I guess it doesn't matter. What do you need me to do?

Taako: Junebug, and our first order is don't question us.

Magnus: Yeah. No questions. The well. Guys, the well, remember how we, like, did the well and we could hear the thing? That's our shortcut to get back down the mine.

Taako: Right, okay, sounds good, let's do it!

Magnus: Yeah. Right?

Merle: And there's a bubble you can pop!

Magnus: Yeah, now that I've got the thing, we can get through the well.

Merle: And I'm ready with the sound effect!

Magnus: Okay, cool. Great, great.

Taako: Oh, this is good. This'll be good to watch with my eyes.

Griffin: [laughs]

Magnus: Good synergy of a plan.

Griffin: Okay. Um, you head over to the large well.

Magnus: Roswell, hold this rope.

Griffin: Okay. Roswell says, uh...

Roswell: Okay, you got it!

Griffin: And hold— do you have a rope? You probably do.

Travis: Yeah!

Griffin: Okay.

Merle: Roswell, pull my finger!

Justin: We don't need a rope. We got the umbrastaff. We're good.

Griffin: Um, does the umbra— oh, you have group slow fall.

Travis: Well, but the rope will let us get back out quickly, too.

Justin: Ye— okay, that's fine. I mean, if you guys wanna rely on ropes, gravity's not really, like, a thing for me. But, like, if you wanna throw a rope down, that's fine. I won't be using the rope.

Clint: You think he should pop the bubble before we jump down?

Griffin: The bubble's kind of at the bottom of the well. I was mainly asking you guys, like, mentioned a few things there. I don't know how the three of you are actually getting down.

Justin: I'm not going first, but if you guys wanna do the— the— that thing, the rope thing, feel free.

Travis: Sure.

Griffin: Uh, Roswell holds on to the rope, and it is really, really— you know. They're holding it tight and it's sturdy.

Justin: You're gonna leave them out here? We're gonna leave them out— out here? Shouldn't we have them come down with us?

Travis: Huh, that's a good point. Sure! Yeah, you know what? You're right.

Justin: I mean, we can tie a rope. [wheezes] Like, we can do that.

[all laugh]

Travis: Okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Justin: Like, this is a bad use of resources.

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Let's— let's do what you said.

Justin: I've got a tank that I'm gonna use to press my robes, make 'em look all crisp and nice.

Griffin: Okay, so what are you— how are you getting down? You tying the rope off to— I mean, it's near the exterior fence of town, so there is a thing that you could tie it to. Um, or you could do some other way of getting down the well.

Travis: Yeah, that's good. We'll tie it off.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, you tie it off and you have this length of rope that goes down into the well.

Travis: We'll climb down. I'll go first, 'cause we got that there boo-blay.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Um, and I'll climb down and pop the Michael Buble.

Griffin: Alright. Um... I don't think this would require a climbing che— well, yeah, let's go ahead and do it.

[multiple dice rolls in the background]

Travis: Is that athletics?

Griffin: Take advantage on it, though. 'Cause, I mean, you're rappelling so you're having an easier time; and you have a rope so, like, you should— you should be...

Travis: Okay. Yeah, my second one was 16 plus 8, 24.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, you— you make it down easily. Is anybody else coming in after you, or are they waiting to see if you pop the bubble and get down safely?

Justin: I'm waiting until the bubble is popped.

Merle: I believe in you, Magnus

Griffin: Alright, yeah. Magnus, you make your way down, and it's a fairly dark trip down for the most part. Um, but when you get close to the bottom of the well, um, sure enough you can see some faint light coming from that gigantic chamber below you. And, in fact, you actually see that light shining off of the purple worm, or the— the glistening teeth of the purple worm. You don't share— that's not the same bubble as the one that you're basically standing on at this point, um, but you can see into that large room that you were in before.

Travis: Okay. I pop the well bubble.

Griffin: Okay. You use the chance lance?

Travis: Yeah, I lance it. I lance the boil.

Clint: [pop]

Griffin: Alright. You drive the point of the chance lance down into the bubble below you, and it, uh— it opens a hole in the bubble, and then the bubble— the entire, like, sphere of the barrier just pops and disappears.

Clint: [pop]

Griffin: And sure enough, you now have access into Shaft A.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: And the rope drops the rest of the way down once you pop that bubble.

Travis: Okay, I climb down, but is there any way to, like, not land on top of Dr. Worm?

Griffin: Um, I mean, Dr. Worm is still covered by a bubble. So as long as you don't pop that, then you're good.

Travis: I don't trust myself. Uh, sure. I land on that and I move away from Dr. Worm as quick as I can.

Griffin: Okay, yeah. And now you're standing on the walkway that was going around that shaft.

Magnus: [shouting] All clear! It's fine—

Griffin: That— that echoes— that echoes up the well, and you hear it.

Justin: Uh, I go last, so—

Taako: Roswell, get down there.

Griffin: Uh, Roswell says...

Roswell: You got it!

Griffin: And, uh, just pretty much effortless rappels down the side of it. You hear, actually, the... hmm. Nope. That can't be how this happens. Gotta respect the fiction here a bit, because Roswell weighs, like, a ton?

Travis: Quite heavy.

Griffin: They're a ton of clay. So as they grab the rope and sort of position themselves to start rappelling down the well, the— the, uh, fence at the edge of town that the rope is tied to, you hear it start to crack and groan.

Justin: Uh, I... transform the fence into stone with Transmutation.

Griffin: Okay, dig it. Yeah, you transform the thick fence post that this rope is suspended to. You go put your hand on it and it turns to stone and supports

Roswell's weight, and Roswell manages to climb down the length of the rope, and joins you, Magnus, in Shaft A.

Magnus: Check out this shaft!

Roswell: Okay.

Clint: [wheezes]

Justin: I know there's some other name for this thing I just did, but I know I can do the thing, so let's just all try to have some fun here, okay?

Griffin: I mean, it's called Change Material?

Travis: Transmutation is such a better name!

Griffin: Next, uh— Taako, Merle?

Justin: It's probably something that takes, like, three hours.

Clint: Okay, so what kind of check is it? Athletics check?

Griffin: Depends on how you do it. If you just wanna climb down the rope then yeah, it's athletics.

Clint: I just wanna climb down the rope.

Griffin: Okay. Go ahead and roll it.

Clint: Okay. I already did. I rolled a 14 plus 2 for athletics, so it's 16.

Griffin: Yep, that is adequate. And Magnus, you see Merle descend from the hole in the ceiling and climb down on to the top of the bubble and join you on the walkway.

Travis: As he climbs—

Merle: Hi, buddy!

Travis: As he climbs down in my head I'm going, "[singing] Rit-dit-dit-dit-dit-dit-dit-dit, dit-dit-dit-dit-dit—"

Griffin: Yeah, 'cause he's doing— that's the sound that would accompany this climbing effort.

Travis: Yes.

Griffin: Um, Taako?

Justin: Uh, yeah. I cast Feather Fall on myself with the umbrastaff and just kind of... lightly float down. Just chill.

Griffin: Yeah, you just— the three of you, Merle and Magnus and Roswell, just see Taako descend down. Are you using the umbrella like Mary Poppins-style? You don't need to.

Justin: Oh— oh, natch! And I *don't* need to for sure, but I defo am.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: [sings descending notes]

Griffin: Then all four of you have made your way down into the sort of top room of Shaft A, and you see the worm below you. You have that door that you had to, like, work so hard to get through through your many attempts at solving the puzzles of the quarry. And in front of you is another door with another bubble on it that you weren't able to get through before, and it's only about, um— it's only about 11: 07 right now.

Travis: I pop that shit.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: [pop]

Griffin: You pop that other door, and it's— you see the sort of mechanism to open it, which you do, and you find yourselves in another airlock, like the one that led into this room, only this one doesn't have a puzzle bomb inside of it.

Travis: Is there a window or anything in this airlock, Ditto, that we can, like, check the next room before we go trompin' through?

Griffin: Um, no. But, uh... if this were a Final Fantasy game, there would be a save point in this place.

Travis: Okay. So we use a tent and a couple, uh, ethers.

Griffin: And, uh, the other door of the airlock opens up. And you see a fairly similar sight. It's another huge room with a fenced-off circular section in the middle, hundreds of feet wide. There's a sign hanging directly in front of you on a guardrail that has this marked as Shaft B.

And the metal sliding hatch that you saw over the top of Shaft A that hadn't been shut is actually shut over this hole, so it's covering the entirety of Shaft B. Um, and there's the same sort of circular cart track going around this shaft, but this room has a large wooden observation deck, and it's flush with the rest of the room, built off just to the side of the track.

And on that observation deck, you see two figures. And the first is the woman from the white space. And she's wearing that same yellow sundress, and she's floating in her own time locked barrier, and her withered hands are wrapped around the Temporal Chalice, and her eyes are closed, and her face is looking down almost in prayer.

The other figure on this deck is sitting on the floor of the deck, and he's got his back up against a few barrels, and he's wearing a big, black Stetson hat. And he's holding the handle of a mattock, like a pickaxe, that he's just twirling lazily at the ground at his side. And he's smoking a long black cigarette. And as you enter the room, he doesn't move an inch. He just says...

Figure: Merle, Magnus, Taako. May as well come on in. You boys want a smoke? I've only got two, but if you wait an hour or so, I'll be back to having three again.

Magnus: Isaac?

Isaac: Yeah, of course.

Magnus: Yeah. Only losers smoke, Isaac!

Griffin: Isaac sees that—

Justin: I give Isaac an hour-long lecture about the dangers of smoking.

Griffin: [laughs] He sees— he actually sees that Roswell is in here, and that actually kind of gets his attention. He says, uh...

Isaac: Big buddy, I didn't... didn't expect you to be down here too, but... okay. What can I do for you fellas? I think I know, but let's hear it.

Taako: I mean, the short version is we need that cup.

Magnus: Yeah.

Isaac: Yeah, I've been there. Trust me, I know. I know all about needin' that cup.

Magnus: No, no, no. Not like— it's not— we don't *desire* the cup. We, like, need it, like as an adult responsibility. We need it to do a thing? And then we'll leave, and we can save everything.

Taako: We're businessmen. We don't want the cup for, like, amateur reasons. It's like our job.

Merle: We're pickers.

Magnus: Yeah. We're, like, paid to do it? This is like a thing we're supposed to do, and then we can maybe fix what I think maybe *you* fucked up.

Griffin: He take a long drag of that cigarette and he says, um...

Isaac: Oh, I—[laughs quietly] I know exactly the types of men that you are. I seen it. You're the types of men that abuse every drop of power ever given to them. Men—

Magnus: No—

Isaac: —men like— men like me. You're bank robbers! You're bullies and thieves and liars and swindlers.

Magnus: I'm gonna stop you there.

Merle: [simultaneously] Yep!

Magnus: Not— not really. I mean—

Taako: Well, I mean, if you wanna itemize, yes.

Griffin: He says—

Merle: You left out murderers, extortionists...

Magnus: Also carpenter. I don't know if that's a thing. I bake.

Griffin: He says...

Isaac: I— when y'all made yourselves known to me, I managed to keep an eye on you these past couple loops, and I feel like I know your character pretty damn well. So, listen. Folks like us just can't be—

Magnus: So you're the shadow, right?

Griffin: He says...

Isaac: Folks like us can't be trusted with power like this. You can't have it. And if you make a move on this girl, I will draw on you. And maybe I'll win, maybe I'll lose. But I can guarantee you one thing: and that is that [scoffs] I'll see you tomorrow.

Magnus: So you'll kill us, just like you killed Jack.

Griffin: He says...

Isaac: The reason why I killed Jack is exactly why I can't let y'all have this cup.

Magnus: Because you want it.

Isaac: No. This cup makes you do unnatural things.

Magnus: Do you think that this is the first object like that we've dealt with?

Isaac: What are you talking about?

Magnus: Do you possibly know a figure in a red robe, Isaac?

Isaac: You're talking about the visitor that came and brought Jack and June to this town, right?

Magnus: Yeah.

Isaac: I never met him personally, no.

Magnus: Well, that visitor and us, we share a similar purpose. There are items like this throughout the world, and if we get our hands on this, it'll be like the fifth one we've dealt with.

Griffin: He takes another long drag and he sort of eyes you over. And he says...

Isaac: That's an interesting proposi—

Griffin: Why don't you make a persuasion check actually, before I—

Travis: I'm not really good at that...

Griffin: Well, you're doing it.

[dice roll]

Travis: Well, it's an 18 plus 1, so 19?

Griffin: Um, he's intrigued by this line of logic. He's like— he takes a long drag of his cigarette and he says, uh...

Isaac: That's an interesting proposition, although I've gotta say, boys, actions speak a lot louder than words, and your— your actions these past couple loops have been... well, pretty heinous.

Taako: Well, yeah, but they didn't count! It's like pretendsies.

Griffin: He says...

Isaac: How do you know? How do you know they weren't gonna count? How do you know that each of these loops ain't gonna be the last one? None of us know.

Magnus: Isaac, aren't you a man of the law?

Isaac: Uh... I find myself in that position, yeah.

Griffin: And he is— you can actually see, he's wearing a big sheriff's badge.

Magnus: So, all those things that hold you back from doing good, because you can't be as destructive as the bad guys, 'cause you have to worry about everyone, you have to protect everyone. What if you didn't have to worry, and you could just cut out the bullshit and do good recklessly?

Taako: [snorts]

Magnus: That kind of defines our whole being. Reckless good-doing is, like, kind of what we do.

Isaac: Was it reckless good-doing when you attacked Roswell in the last loop, or when you robbed that bank? Or Taako, was it reckless—

Magnus: Yes!

Isaac: Taako, was it reckless good-doing when you swindled those two folks at the Davy Lamp outta their money and had no intention of giving the great magic lesson that you promised?

Taako: I— I did— listen, if that had been the last loop, I would've done the fucking class, okay?

Clint: [laughs]

Taako: Let's leave it at that! Had I had to call to the bat, I would've done the class. Listen. We're on the same side here. We're in law enforcement as well.

Justin: And I pull out my, um, plastic sheriff badge, and attempt to bluff him that we are also law enforcement, which I get a plus 3.

Griffin: Yeah, go ahead and make that roll.

[dice roll]

Clint: [gasps]

Justin: That's a 17, 20 altogether.

Griffin: He, uh— he stops twirling that mattock on the ground and he just kind of holds it firm. He says...

Isaac: You law? Where— where are you from? Where do you do your law-keeping?

Taako: Well, partner, um...

Griffin: [laughs loudly]

Taako: We're some of that undercover Kansas City law, if you've heard about that. Sort of the federales.

Merle: Pinkertons!

Taako: Pinkertons, sort of federale Pinkertons, partner.

Griffin: He, uh— he hoists himself up using that mattock and, um...

Justin: Sorry, point of order. Mattock? Can you clarify what—

Griffin: It's like a pickaxe.

Clint: But it's got a flat...

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: And he loses this, like, eagle-eyed concentration that he's had on the four of you this whole time as he walks towards you. He says...

Isaac: Let me see that badge.

Griffin: And he starts to walk in your direction.

Justin: Um...

Merle: [whispers] We better kill him!

Travis: Yeah, I— I kind of side-eye Taako. Like...

Merle: [stage whispers] We need to kill him! Let's just kill him!

Travis: I side-eye Taako and just, like, silently tighten my grip on the chance lance.

Griffin: [laughs] he says...

Isaac: Taako, let me— sorry, Sheriff Taako, just let me see the badge. I just wanna verify something real quick.

[pause]

Taako: [wheezes] Um... [pause] um...

Merle: [whispers] You just got it cleaned.

Taako: [strained] This is a— this is a temp one. [wheezes] I lost my main one... partner! [wavering] And, uh, this here is my, um...

Merle: Call him buckaroo. Call him buckaroo.

Taako: Buckaroo, this one is kind of a loaner.

[all wheeze-laugh]

Travis: Sounds legit!

Taako: It's, um... you got... respect for your badge is real important, and I had to get mine—

Griffin: [laughs loudly]

Taako: I—[holding back laughter] I had to get mine cleaned, partner, and this one here is, um, sort of a temp. Like, um... when you lose your driver's license.

Griffin: He, uh, takes the badge and he looks at it.

Taako: Don't bite it!

Clint: [wheeze-laughs]

Griffin: [wheeze-laughs] He, uh—

Taako: Now, but careful with that! That's the only one I got!

Griffin: He hangs his head for a second and he's just like...

Isaac: Just... just stop. Just stop.

Magnus: I hurl the lance at the bubble.

Griffin: Okay. Um... you and I are gonna make dexterity contests against each other.

Travis: Okay.

[two dice rolls]

Travis: Ooh, fuck. Um... I have 10 plus 2, 12.

Griffin: I'm trying to think of how I can make this the most... interesting. You reach down and grab the lance, and—

Travis: Point of order, I did already have my hand on it.

Griffin: Okay. No, I mean, you have the lance, and you sort of arc it back to toss it at the bubble with June inside. And, like, as soon as you move too quickly, his hand is at his side, and he— he pulls out the wand that he had in his holster. It looks badass. It looks kind of like Ren's wand, that Ren had up in the Davy Lamp. Um, and pulls it, and a bolt of lighting arcs out of it in your direction. Magnus, make a dex saving throw.

Travis: So I didn't beat that contest then, is what you're saying.

[dice roll]

Griffin: You did not, no.

Travis: Uh, nope. That's not gonna do it. That's a 3. Where'd those— see, you called me out on those good rolls, Griffin, and they disappeared. So that's a 3 plus 2, it's a 5. Fuck!

Griffin: Okay. You are going to take just a great deal of damage. Um... 31.

Travis: Okay. Well, I'm gonna use—

Griffin: 31 points of lightning damage.

Travis: I'm gonna use parry, then.

Griffin: Well, that's a— it was a ranged magic attack.

Travis: Oh, magic. Oh, fuck. Okay.

Griffin: Yeah. And you are sort of blasted backwards a ways, and you—

Travis: 31, you say?

Griffin: Yeah. And you dropped the chance lance.

Travis: What?!

Griffin: Uh, as you were knocked backwards.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Just because you were sort of in the process of getting ready to throw it, I think it would disrupt your attack and make you drop it.

Justin: Okay. Um, so we're not in a fight, right?

Griffin: Um, no. I would rather we didn't get into a fight right now, just because I think it would go on a bit too long, and I think there's more interesting ways of resolving this without resorting to initiative and stuff.

Justin: Okay. As I go to cast, I shout at Merle...

Taako: Handle the sheriff!

Merle: Got it!

Griffin: Alright, what are you doing?

Clint: Um... I'm gonna cast Banishment on him.

Griffin: Okay. Um, you and I are gonna make a dexterity contest then, and I guess that will be the way that we distract him. That's what he sees—

Clint: That's what I'm thinking.

Griffin: Okay. Uh, go ahead and roll a d20 and add your dex modifier.

[two dice rolls]

Clint: 15.

Griffin: Uh, that is a 22. A bolt of lightning emerges from his wand that he just kind of whips around in your direction, and you are also struck by a bolt of lightning, but you give Taako sort of the opportunity that he needs. I'm gonna do more quick math real quick.

[multiple dice rolls]

Griffin: Actually, I'm gonna do this on my computer. You take 25 points of damage.

Justin: Aw, dunk!

Griffin: And you are knocked backwards. But you and Taako drew at the same time, and that opens you up, Taako, to not having to duel him to do whatever it is you're gonna do.

Justin: Alright. I cast Bigby's Hand, and a large translucent hand of pure force emerges over the chance lance.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: I grab it with Bigby's Hand and send it flying at the bubble, and I'm not talking about the thing. I just send Bigby's Hand with the chance lance hurtling at the bubble.

Griffin: Okay. Um, you do this, and how fast does the hand move?

Justin: Hmm, good question.

Travis: Super fast. Like you wouldn't even believe it, it's really good.

Justin: The hand lasts for the spell's duration. It moves at your command, mimicking the movements of your own hand. So I mean, like, I guess... it doesn't have— okay. Range is 120 feet.

Griffin: Okay, yeah, that's close enough. So you reach out and your hand is now mimicking Bigby's Hand, and it takes Isaac a second to realize what it is you're doing as you sort of reach down to the ground and grasp nothing. Uh, and then jab your arm forward. Um, and as you do that he kind of gets the picture and turns around and levees a bolt—

Magnus: Roswell, clobber him!

Griffin: —at the hand. Yeah, alright, sick! Uh, he draws on the hand as it flies towards the bubble. Let's paint this picture.

[guitar music plays in the background]

Griffin: Magnus, you're lying kind of smoking on the ground, not cigarettes but from being electrocuted.

Travis: No, cigarettes are for losers!

Griffin: Yeah, you've made that point known. Merle, you're kind of the same up next against him, and Taako, you've just jabbed an invisible spear forward. A bolt

of lightning is kind of coming out of the wand as Roswell runs and just, like, tackles Isaac.

Justin: As Roswell is running, do I have time to get in a great quip? [laughs quietly]

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: Okay. As Roswell's running I say...

Taako: Sheriff Isaac, guess what time it is?

Isaac: What?

Justin: And then—

Griffin: Then Roswell tackles him.

Taako: Fuck if I know!

[all laugh]

Griffin: And the spear pops into the bubble, and it opens a hole. And as soon as it does, time starts to slow down. Like, just sort of capturing this tableau as lightning is, like, halfway to its target. And Roswell and Isaac are kind of both sideways in the air, uh, and Taako, you've got your arm jabbed forward, and the other two boys are lying, smoking, on the ground, and time slows and slows and slows, and then just stops.

[music ends]

Griffin: And it's quiet. And then... a wave of white light. Not like flashlight light but like physical light, almost like white milk or something, with these bright sort of rainbow streaks in it, comes pouring out of the cup in a wave. Like a literal tall ocean wave. And it washes over everybody in this room. And then suddenly the three of you, without Roswell, without Isaac, are in the white space. Um, but it's not... it's not like the white space that you've stood in before. It's not this undefined empty room. In fact, it looks almost identical to the Davy Lamp.

[piano music plays in the background]

Griffin: And there's, like— there's shadows of patrons here going about their business in slow motion that you can't really hear or interact with. The pianist is at the piano, and they're playing sort of a soft, sad jazz song. And you see June, and she's holding the Chalice, and she invites you to sit at a table that she's sort of reserved for you.

Merle: Is this the matrix?

Taako: I think this is the matrix.

Merle: It's the matrix!

Magnus: Oh, this is the ma— we're doing—

Taako: We're finally in the matrix.

Clint: We're in the matrix.

Magnus: Is it the red pill or the blue pill? I can't remember which one do we do.

Griffin: Lawrence Fishburne is there now.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, but Cowboy Curtis Fishburne, which is weird. No.

Travis: We sit at the table.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Or I do. I can't speak for you guys.

Justin: Yes, we sit down.

Griffin: Okay. And June, who actually looks not quite as withered up as she did before, she looks like she's maybe 90 years old now, not 120, um...

Travis: And she tells us about the heart of the ocean and the man that she met on the Titanic.

Griffin: [wheezes] No. She says, um...

June: I just knew that the three of you could do it! From the moment I saw you, I knew you wanted to find me bad enough to actually do it!

Merle: Yeah, we're pretty cool.

June: You must be pretty confused right now, right?

Magnus: You're the little girl, but you're old now 'cause you were in a time bubble thing.

June: You're close. Um, this is... okay. This is complicated. I'm the cup.

Travis: Hmm?

June: I'm the— the Temporal Chalice, I guess you'd call me. I— in a way, I have June. Which sounds a lot more sinister than it is. I just— I just needed a place to hide out for a while until the right folks came along.

Griffin: And she taps her fingers on the table. She says...

June: The fact that the three of you aren't sort of freaking out right now tells me that you've encountered other relics like me already, and I'm guessing the fact that you're sitting here right now means that you didn't use them.

Magnus: You're a cup?!

June: Yeah. Well... yeah.

Magnus: Like people could drink out of you?

June: I guess if they wanted to, although it doesn't seem advisable.

Magnus: But, like, they could. That's weird!

June: Yeah, I don't— I mean, I wasn't always a cup. Um, but... yeah.

Magnus: Wait, hold on. Is that... is that true of all of the artifacts? Are all the artifacts former people?

Griffin: Uh, the cup in June's form— it's not June's form. June is here, June is holding the cup, June is talking to you, but addressing you as the cup. And she says...

June: Well, that's kind of hard to explain. I don't remember being made, but I remember... well, I remember two things. I was made to want to be used, and to make other want to use my power. But I remember before all this, before I was a cup, and before I was torn into seven parts and jammed into dishes and gloves and what-have-you, I was something incredible. I could breathe life into entire realities and shape existence at my master's will.

Griffin: And when she says that, June kind of gets lost in thought a bit. And she says...

June: In this form, as a cup, with a seventh of the power that I once had, I just don't have that kind of freedom anymore. I have some broad power over time, yeah, but not enough to actually change anything. And I'm hoping that that's where you can come in. I believe that with a user who is determined enough to use me to change the world, I could have the power to change the past and reshape the world. And I promise, I'm not gonna do anything to you that you don't want me to do. I swear it. I'm not gonna cast some thrall over you or whatever. But I truly believe that together, we can fix the wrongs of the past and we can make this world better in the process.

So I'm not gonna hypnotize you or anything like that. I'm just asking for the opportunity to make a pitch for you. I just want you to hear me out, and then I'll release the girl, and then I'll go with you in peace.

Merle: So you're the cup?

Taako: Uhh...

Griffin: What I wanna set up here, I'll tell you straight up. I don't think it's interesting to have you guys do, like, a wisdom saving throw to decide whether or not you don't use the grand relic, right? I don't think that's interesting. What I want to do is try to sell you on it. Just words, no rolls, no— no, you know, thrall,

no nothing. I just wanna try to sell you on using this thing and see how you respond to that.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: In the next episode. So, that in mind, how do you respond to this?

Merle: Eh, you know.

Taako: Well, we'll listen, sure.

Merle: Yeah, we'll always listen!

Taako: But listen, I don't want you to think that we're not on equal footing here. You may be able to shift worlds and breathe life into realities, but I've recently come across some information of my own. I know kung fu.

Griffin: [wheezes]

Clint: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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[music plays]

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[music and ad play and end]

[music plays]

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[music and ad play and end]