

The Adventure Zone: Balance — The Suffering Game: Chapter Six

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Griffin: Previously, on The Adventure Zone...

You see in this sapphire mirror, another world. You see tens of thousands of these floating white lights, sailing over a giant lake comprised of swirling rainbow-hued waters. Another rift opens in space, and out of that rift, that white fire comes out of it. The Red Robe leans down and you can like see the Red Robe doing this now, and it extends a skeletal finger. And it's a symbol that thieves use to let others know that it's gonna pop off soon.

Travis: Cool.

Justin: That's fun.

Griffin: Three words appear on the ceiling, "Boss rush begin." And all of a sudden, Cam is now levitating.

Taako: Hell yeah!

Magnus: What!

Griffin: And he holds the wand in his mouth—

Magnus: You could've done that the whole time?! We've been carrying your head!

Griffin: He looks over at you, Magnus, and he says:

Cam: [muffled] Spell slots!

Griffin: And then he points his wand at Jenkins and the two meat monsters, and he says:

Cam: Heads up!

Announcer: What's waiting for our heroes at the end of Wonderland? It's not a cool-ass, weed-smoking caterpillar, I'll tell you that much! It's the Adventure Zone!

[“Déjà Vu” by Mort Garson plays]

Clint: May I ask a stupid question?

Griffin: No, please?

Clint: Is there some significance to 'boss rush room'?

Griffin: A boss rush is just like a video game thing, like in Mega Man, like before you face the final boss, you have to fight all the bosses that you fought so far.

Clint: Right. Okay.

Justin: That's good content though, 'cause that's good for our elderly listeners as well.

Griffin: That's true!

Justin: All the senior citizens that listen.

Griffin: Who've never played a fuckin' Mega Man game 'cause they're not true, elite gamers.

Travis: Yeah, they're noobs, they're casuals.

Clint: Thank you. Thank you for the compliment.

Griffin: Dad, you're such a casual.

Travis: You're a casual.

Griffin: [chuckles] So Cam, with his wand in mouth—by the way, we need to ret-con. Taako, did you get your wand repaired at some point? `Cause I got a lot of tweets from folks last episode saying you did break your wand in the ogre trial. And the reason we didn't remember that is because it was 150,000 years ago.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Yeah, that was in... that was in the... the novella that was given out as a pre-order bonus.

Griffin: Yeah, there was a novella in which you duct-taped your shit back together.

Travis: With spell-o-tape!

Justin: I fixed my shit with magic. Like it's ludicrous to me that I wouldn't have fixed it by now, come on.

Clint: Sure, yeah.

Griffin: Okay. Cam casts Maximillian's Earthen Grasp. And because there's not really any earth in here, a big ol' hand, bigger than a mage hand, forms out of some of the bodies of the mannequins in the back of the room. And this hand reaches out and tries to grab—

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Whoa, what the fuck was that?!

Justin: [chuckles] That was just me dumping a bunch of dice on the table.

Griffin: Oh, all right.

Justin: Getting ready to play Dungeons and Dragons!

Griffin: It grabs the meat monster on the right...

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: And it does grab it for... 12 points of damage. Which is actually enough to kill it. So, I think this fist just comes in and it squeezes this meat monster into hamburger goo.

Clint: Ew!

Griffin: And then as a bonus action, Cam opens that hand up just flat-palm and sends it flying across the room, smashing into the other meat monster, and just kind of swatting it up against the wall.

Justin: I too am a magic boy, and I've never had a bonus action in my fuckin' life. What's the story with that?

Travis: Yeah, like he's really copping all of our swagger, huh?

Griffin: Cam is uninhibited by a bunch of extra weight. He's an efficient—what do you cast spells with? Your brain? He is just a streamline spell casting machine.

Justin: Okay.

Clint: I can live with that.

Griffin: Next up is... hm... who was at the bottom of the action? Magnus!

Travis: It's me, yeah. I'm gonna step up, and I'm gonna punch Jenkins with Phantom Fist.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Okay, just for old time's sake? Or...

Travis: Well, I'll tell you in a second, it's a—I rolled... it's a... 20.

Griffin: Okay?

Travis: Attack.

Griffin: That is more than sufficient.

Travis: Okay, cool. D4...

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: Three, plus four, so that's seven damage! And then I'm gonna push him back into that sphere of tentacles and Della Reeses.

Griffin: Okay. All right, you do so—

Travis: And while he's flying back, second action, I'm gonna throw my Chance Lance at him.

Griffin: Wow, shit. That's—okay?

Travis: So, 12, plus eight... Or is it the same as Railsplitter?

Griffin: It's the same as Railsplitter, one D8.

Travis: Okay so, plus nine. So 21.

Griffin: Okay, yeah, that'll do it.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: Six... plus five. So, 11 damage. And then I recall it.

Griffin: Okay. That hurts him a lot. Next up is Jerkins. Which is what I—I guess it autocorrected? I have it saying in my text document, "Jerkins goes after Magnus who is next," to try to remember the order. So even my text document is not a fan. Taako, roll two D6 cold damage, for Hunger of Hadar.

Justin: Yeah!

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: That's a two.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: And a three.

Griffin: Okay. Jenkins is looking pretty bad-off. Merle, something bad happens.

Clint: Yeah?

Griffin: Della Reese rears back her angelic arm to stab her magic sword into Jenkins. But just before—

Clint: This is gonna be great!

Griffin: But right before she makes contact—

Clint: Yeah?

Griffin: She freezes, and she kind of flickers like a TV losing reception. And then disappears. And, Merle, you've cast this spell like countless times.

Clint: Countless.

Griffin: But you've never seen anything like this. In fact, all these hiccups that your holy powers have been going through all day, you haven't experienced anything quite like it in all your days of cleric-dom. Jenkins is going to take a step backwards towards the mannequin pile, out of the sphere of Hadar's whatever.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: And he casts—Out of Bill Hader’s evil sphere, and he casts Dispel Magic. And the field of inky black tentacles disappears.

Justin: [sighs] Ah...

Griffin: All three of you notice, at the far edge of the room just behind the mannequin body pile, and sort of adjacent to the door, the exit door to this room, all three of you see—And I won’t make you roll a perception check, ‘cause it’s pretty clear as day. You see a dresser just appear out of nowhere. And then it quickly disappears, and it’s replaced by a bookshelf. And then that bookshelf disappears, and then it’s a fireplace, and then it’s a lamp, and then it’s nothing.

And Magnus, with your True Sight, you see the Red Robe channeling the black smoke to create those objects over there on the far end of the room. Taako, you’re up. You got a pretty bad-off Jerkins. All the area of effect spells have been spirited away at this point. And you got your... Well, you don’t know what’s happening, but there’s magical objects appearing in the corner of the room.

Justin: Okay... Can I do an arcana check as a free action to see if I have any insight into that? What’s happening over there?

Griffin: Yeah, sure!

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: That’s a two, ha!

Griffin: That’s a cool—it’s a nice dresser, you notice that. Probably full of wonderful clothes. But it’s weird that it turned into a bookshelf, though. You’re like, “What? That’s crazy!”

Justin: It's crazy... I’m going to hit that fuckin’—

Griffin: Oh, by the way, I forgot to mention this, the room around you, it kind of... it appears like you’re on the Rockport Limited again. Like, the room around you looks like you’re in a train car, battling, and there’s like virtual

windows looking out to like the passing countryside, like you're on a train. Like, the room is recreating the scenes of these classic battles.

Travis: What a nice treat for the audience!

Justin: Let's see, I'm going to... hurt Jenkins.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: With a magical spell of my own choosing.

Travis: Nice!

Griffin: Okay?

Justin: Of my own—

Clint: This would be a spell that is magical?

Justin: Yeah, I'm just gonna do—you know what? I'm not gonna get clever on him. I'm just gonna hit him with a juicy, juicy, Scorching Ray.

Griffin: Okay?

Justin: I got to make a ranged spell attack for each ray...

Clint: [sings] Are you scorching ray.

Justin: There are three rays of them.

Griffin: Oh, that's fun, dad!

Travis: That was a good joke, daddy!

Clint: I'm just bringing back an old one from the past!

Griffin: That's a classic!

Travis: All right!

Clint: You're bringing back all the bosses?

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Yeah, that's a good point, dad! Let's do all our old jokes in this one.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, let's make this—

Justin: Especially if there are ones that—

Travis: This is like our Trapped in a Room episode, you know? Where we all—

Griffin: Yeah, this is our 'bottle' episode.

Justin: Yeah, especially if they're from other podcasts. That's ideal.

Griffin: Yeah, Janitor Morton's gonna be back at 8AM! We got a lotta time to kill!

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: 18, 15, 18!

Griffin: Remember when Dougie found that dead body? I think it went a little something like this—

Justin: 18, 15, 18. Those are the three attacks.

Griffin: All three of those are yes.

Justin: Let me just roll some damage real quick.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Five for the first ray...

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Four for the second ray.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Eight for the third ray.

Griffin: Yeah, for sure. Jenkins goes flying backwards as these rays hit him, and he is vanquished. And as he goes down, something happens that hasn't happened in a while. And that is—

Travis: We feel something!

Griffin: [chuckles] He drops his wand. And Taako, your Umbra staff turns inside out and sucks that wand in and devours it. And it's been a while since you've taken down a magic-user like this, but you remember the Umbra staff is capable of consuming the magic essence of your defeated foes. So, it has a little wand snack.

Justin: [spoofs Cookie Monster] Om-nom!

Griffin: And it turns right-side out again. And you feel... you feel... energized.

Justin: Ooh?

Griffin: You feel like you've recovered. Which is weird, you haven't felt that in Wonderland very much, and you have in fact recovered your spell slots.

Justin: [chuckles] Oh, delicious! Delicious!

Griffin: With that, Jenkins goes flying back. His mannequin sort of falls out of his form and goes flying into the pile in the back of the room. And that pile transforms, with the help of some of that black smoke, into a massive shape, the biggest shape you've seen so far. It's about 10 feet tall and it has sort of a conical shape.

And then as it starts to take form, you realize it is the shark tank from your race in the Goldcliff Desert. And in fact, the screen walls and ceiling around you transform, as if to look like the badlands surrounding Goldcliff, flying past you. And you are up against the shark tank. And next in the order is Merle!

Clint: Okay, I'm going to... I can't heal...

Griffin: Nope.

Clint: I suck at attacks...

Griffin: Can't crow, can't fly.

Clint: All right, here's what I'm going to do, I'm going to cast Divination.

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: This puts me in touch with a god or god's servant. So, in this case, Pan. I get to ask a single question.

Griffin: Oh, this is perfect, thank you. This is a gift.

Clint: Concerning a goal, event or activity...

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: And I have to get a truthful reply.

Griffin: All right.

Clint: From the god.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Once again, I love doing this, 'cause I like contextualizing what's going on. So, what's just happened is this shark tank has appeared and then—

Griffin: And Merle prays.

Travis: ... Merle's just gone, "Hold on, one second!" And then just like starts praying. And everybody just like... holds.

Griffin: Yeah!

Travis: And everyone's just like, "Okay."

Clint: I'm of no use as long as my powers aren't working?

Griffin: Yup.

Travis: And so, to combat that, you use one of your powers. [chuckles]

Griffin: You pray—

Clint: Travis, I am—Merle is a deeply spiritual character.

Griffin: Sometimes.

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: And in times of need, he turns to his god for guidance.

Griffin: Okay, him getting—

Travis: He's a religious person when he needs something. [chuckles]

Clint: Okay...

Griffin: What's your question?

Merle: [sings] Hello, Pan!

Clint: You want more? Or just the question?

Travis: Oh god, no!

Griffin: Well, I mean, the question, yeah.

Clint: Okay, and I have to get a truthful answer, correct?

Griffin: Yes?

Clint: Okay...

Merle: What is going on with my holy powers?

Griffin: Here is the truthful response—this is Griffin, not Pan speaking. Here is the truthful response to your question, Merle. Pan's not answering. It's not... You know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, he's just not... he's just not there! And he's not... he's... he's not there supporting you with a holy power, he's not... he's just... he's just gone! And this is fuckin' terrifying.

Like you—this spell that you're casting is essentially like a telephone call of a prayer, and Pan has always answered. But not this time. He is not there. And it's not like—it's not—you can tell, it's not like you're getting bad reception on your prayer. Like you feel it going through, he's just not... he's just not picking up.

Clint: He's not there, or he's not answering?

Griffin: You don't know the answer to that. But he's not... he just... The reason that your spells aren't working is because they are powered by Pan. And right now, Pan is not there for you.

Clint: So, I get another turn then, right?

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, if you wanna—Yeah, sure. I think that's only fair.

Clint: But now my spells are working, just not as well, correct?

Griffin: They are working less and less well, yes.

Clint: All right, well then while I've got a little bit, I'm gonna cast Bless on all three of us.

Griffin: Okay, what's that do?

Clint: It is a—I'm still buffering— [in radio voice] Still Buffering is a copyrighted feature.

Griffin: That's fun.

Travis: Uh-huh!

Clint: "Whenever a target makes an attack roll or a saving throw before the spell ends, the target can roll a D4 and add the number rolled to the attack roll or the saving throw."

Griffin: How long does that last?

Clint: It lasts... Wow, up to a minute!

Griffin: Okay, I mean that's 10 turns, so...

Clint: Yeah. So, yeah. So, all three of us now can add a D4.

Griffin: A D4, cool.

Clint: Should I roll the D4 now or every time it happens?

Griffin: No, I think it's—I think they roll it every time they do something that the Blessing works on.

Clint: All right, and they get D4 to add to their attack or saving throw.

Griffin: Okay, cool. Shark tank is up. And the shark tank's not like moving at tank speed, obviously, or else it would like burst through the wall or something. Instead, it opens up its mouth, and you see that nasty barbed spear that it used during the race, and it points it at Magnus.

Travis: Mm-hm, yes?

Griffin: And fires off of a volley.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: No, 14? No.

Travis: Nope.

Griffin: It just shoots and misses you, and sort of skids across the ground, and then gets pulled back into its mouth.

Justin: What is attacking? Like the—

Griffin: It's a tank in the shape of a shark.

Justin: Right, okay, great.

Griffin: Yeah. Magnus, you're up.

Travis: Can not up?

Griffin: Oh, yeah! Good point, Cam is up. Cam is gonna cast... the fuck's Cam gonna cast? Cam's gonna cast Lightning Bolt, 'cause Cam's a good sorcerer boy. A stroke of lightning, "A line 100 feet long and five feet wide blasts out from a direction you choose. Every creature in the line makes a dex saving throw."

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Oh shit, oh god, oh god, where'd it go? No, no, no, no!

Justin: [chuckles]

Clint: [chuckles]

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: The shark tanks saves, but it still takes half damage. Which...

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Is 15 damage. Normally, it does eight D6, that's a hell of a spell. So, a line of lightning shoots out, and I think wherever this line hits up against the wall, some of the LED screen just stops working. And like some sparks shoot out of it. You see something in the corner of the room again. You see, right where that same sort of collection of stuff appeared before, you see a potted plant appear, and then a guillotine, and then a marble column, and then a coat rack, and then nothing. Magnus, you're up.

Travis: Okay, well first, I'm going to tell my shield the bold story of the time I fought the shark before.

Griffin: Yeah, that's the truth.

Travis: That's a plus one AC.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Then, okay, so now—The construction of it, Griffin, the thing shot out a spear from like the mouth of the—

Griffin: Yeah. And the mouth is filled with, I believe, if memory serves, these rows of circling teeth that are like moving in opposing directions. And it does have its mouth open now because it just launched its spear attack.

Travis: Now, is there still like a pile of mannequins?

Griffin: Yeah. It's behind it, but yes.

Travis: Okay, cool.

Griffin: You gonna take a turn off, just to go get some arms? Or...

Travis: Yeah! In fact, I am. I'm gonna—like listen, at this point, the magic people seem to have this shit down. All I'm gonna do is, what? Hit a tank with my axe? No, no, no. I'm gonna do what Magnus does best and go pull the arms off some things.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay!

Travis: So, I'm going to Dash with my cunning action past the tank.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: To get to the pile of mannequins.

Griffin: Unless you do some sort of fancy maneuver, it's gonna have an attack of opportunity on you. Dash is just double-move, it doesn't negate attack of opportunity.

Travis: Oh yeah, okay, yeah, yeah, yeah, so Disengage is what I want. So, I can run past it.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Yeah, so I'm going to use Disengage, run past the tank, and get to the thing, and I'm gonna pull the arms off, maybe throw the bodies at the tank.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay! All right, make an attack roll!

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: 11, plus what? Eight? [chuckles] That's my standard attack bonus for arms.

Griffin: [chuckles] It would just be your strength plus your proficiency bonus. But yeah, let's say you throw these mannequins, you throw a couple of mannequin bodies in, you pick one up with each arm and chuck it into the shark tank's open mouth. And it gets caught in the encircling rows of saw-blade teeth, and kind of gums up the works a little bit, and the shark tank's mouth kind of slams shut... Yeah. Next up in the order is Taako.

Travis: Hey, hold up. One more question.

Griffin: Oh, sorry. Yeah?

Travis: This pile of bodies, they're all wood, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Okay. I'm gonna start a fire with my tinderbox.

Griffin: This is... this is... think about a fire, you have six seconds—

Travis: I can't do magic, Griffin!

Griffin: Okay, but think about a fire, and you have six seconds—have you watched Survivor when they do the fire-making challenge? It takes wicked longer than six seconds! I wanna help—

Travis: Well, I'm not doing anything? Like, I got some turns to wait. They got to go, I'm last in the order, I got some time.

Griffin: Yeah, all right, fine, it's fine. Yeah, it's fine. You use your tinderbox and some of the mannequins start to catch fire.

Travis: Thank you—

Griffin: Now, we'll have some fun with this! Magnus, as you catch this pile of mannequins on fire—

Travis: Very patiently.

Griffin: Very patiently, you see, pretty close to you now, you see the Red Robe create, using that black smog, create an oven, and then a pile of crates, and then a tall portrait of a woman, and then nothing. Taako, you are up.

Travis: Do I recognize the woman?

Griffin: Nope! It's just, it is just a big rectangular portrait of a woman.

Clint: What were those three things again?

Griffin: I promise it's not important.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: You won't be quizzed on that.

Travis: But what if that's what he wants us to think?

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Exactly.

Griffin: Taako.

Justin: I am going to... shoot this dumb thing...

Griffin: You have a gun?

Justin: With a gun that I brought from home.

Griffin: I don't remember giving you a gun?

Travis: [chuckles] Oh, I remember!

Justin: Yeah, I have a gun that I—

Travis: It was in the same novella where he fixed his wand.

Griffin: Oh, right.

Clint: Yeah, it's the pistol of Patroneus.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: You know what, actually, how is this thing looking, Griffin? Are we making much of a dent here?

Griffin: You haven't made any... I mean, Travis made its mouth shut?

Travis: Well, and Cam hit it with lightning.

Griffin: Cam hit it with lightning, yes, but it's still looking pretty fucking good.

Clint: So, is that all of its innards, everything is inside of it?

Griffin: That is such a weird, sort of existential question...

Travis: Are the innards inside of it? Yes. They would be the outards.

Justin: Okay, I grow bored with this fight.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay?

Travis: Take that, Griffin.

Justin: I'm casting Polymorph on myself.

Griffin: Oh fuckin' wow.

Justin: Griffin, I'm texting you.

Griffin: Oh?

Justin: Because you'll need this information. If you could just describe to everybody what they see.

Griffin: Oh my god, Justin...

Justin: Yes?

Griffin: Taako's arms sink into his chest so that he's just got sort of little arms, and his head gets really big and really long. And his teeth get very sharp, and he grows a tail, and he turns into a Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: A huge beast—

Travis: Meanwhile, Magnus setting a fire to—

Dupree: My name is Dupree!

Clint: [laughs]

Dupree: Dupree!

Griffin: Dupree can multi-attack using its bite and its... Okay, and also its tail, its T-Rex tail. So, all right—

Dupree: Fuck all haters!

Griffin: What are you doing?

Dupree: I'm Dupree.

Clint: Can he be giving the finger with his little tiny hands?

Justin: I'm gonna bite its dumb shit off!

Griffin: All right?

Justin: I'm gonna bite the motherfucker. I'm done.

Griffin: That's a plus 10 to hit.

Justin: Yeah.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: That's a nat 20.

Griffin: Oh my god.

Clint: [chuckles] Oh-ho-ho!

Griffin: That means you roll eight D12, plus seven for that attack.

Justin: Okay. [laughs]

Travis: So, should we all just like take a break? While Justin rolls his 12 dice?

Justin: Which one's D12?

Griffin: It's the one with the 12 on it, but that's—no, it doesn't have 13. If you have one that has 13, you have gone too far.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: 10.

Clint: 10.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Two.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Five.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: 11. 10, two, five, 11.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: 28.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: That's a nine.

Travis: 37.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Five.

Travis: 42.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Three.

Travis: 45.

Justin: Is that all of `em?

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: It's four D12, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: It's seven, that's seven.

Justin: So, it's just the first four numbers, right?

Clint: I thought he said eight?

Griffin: It's eight D12, bud.

Clint: One more.

Justin: Wait, why's it eight D12?

Griffin: Because you critted?

Justin: Oh, that's right! Okay, groovy.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: 11.

Clint: 56.

Justin: 56 points of damage, plus seven.

Clint: 63.

Justin: Or is it plus 14 since I critted?

Griffin: No, I think it's just plus seven. It is enough to fucking... you bite the fuckin' head off this shark tank.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: And as you like rip the top off this shark tank, you also see the body of... I think it was Marvey, was the driver. You see the legs of Marvey sitting in the pilot's seat that you chomped in half, as you pull back. And—

Travis: Like the lawyer?

Griffin: Huh?

Travis: Like the lawyer from Jurassic Park?

Griffin: Very much like the lawyer from Jurassic Park. That poor guy, I always felt bad for him, he's just trying to poop. Can we please?

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Anyway, you've destroyed the shark tank. Hey, how long do you get to stay a fuckin' T-Rex? 'Cause I'm worried balance issues might pop up.

Justin: Yeah, that's why I was kind of thinking about it. I mean, I'm concentrating?

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Fair.

Justin: I can't cast other spells, but I can do it for an hour.

Griffin: Okay.

Dupree: Dupree!

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Did I mention he has the hat? [chuckles] It's fuckin' funny.

Clint: Like a fedora kind of thing?

Justin: No, no, not in any way, shape or form a fedora. Like a sweet, fuckin' cool wizard hat. Like Taako's.

Clint: Oh, wow.

Travis: Is it T-Rex sized or is it still Taako-sized?

Justin: Still Taako-sized.

Travis: Nice.

Griffin: Yeah, that's very good.

Justin: Jauntily angled.

Clint: Get ready, cosplayers!

Griffin: The shark tank—

Justin: [chuckles] Yeah, cosplay as a T-Rex.

Griffin: The shark tank falls over, which is weird. [chuckles]

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: And turns into just a big sort of sub-pile of mannequins in black smog. And they all sort of congregate back all together into the now flaming pile, and some of the smog picks up all of the mannequins now. The whole pile of mannequins has been sucked up into this new shape, and it forms sort of a big tubular shape. I'm describing the shape of it, not how rad it is. Although it's pretty fucking rad, because what it forms is not just a purple worm, but a purple worm that is on fire.

Justin: Cool.

Griffin: And it is occupying pretty much all of the space in this room. Not all of it, but most of it. It's bigger than—it's bigger than T-Rex Taako is—sorry, Dupree is even.

Justin: Dupree.

Griffin: It is gargantuan. Not as big as the purple worm that you faced in Refuge, because that thing was miles big, but pretty terrifying. And as this appears you hear Cam say:

Cam: Holy shit, you guys killed a purple worm?!

Magnus: Yeah? Did we?

Dupree: Dupree!

Merle: I didn't think we killed one?

Travis: Can Dupree only say Dupree? Is he a Pokémon?

Justin: Yeah, he's—well, he's—I have to—

Clint: He's like Groot!

Justin: Taako is focusing to keep this up, but he adopts the stats of Dupree, and Dupree's intelligence is two. So, yes.

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: Yeah... Well, and also, you got a brain in your head and a brain in your ass, if you're a T-Rex.

Justin: Yeah, that's true. This seems like an opportune time for the second half of my multi-attack.

Griffin: Yup!

Justin: Which I can only have against two separate targets, so it's excellent that one died and the other one came up.

Griffin: What are you using, Primal Rage? Your fuckin' face or your butt?

Justin: [chuckles] No, it's... I get one with the bite and one with the tail.

Griffin: Oh, I see, I see, so it is butt.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Yeah. So, that's a 19, plus 10.

Clint: 19! Oh, god!

Justin: Is that a hit? Is that one a hit? 29?

Griffin: Here's the thing, it's barely a hit.

Justin: That's—I mean, that—I'll take it, you know?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Hold on one second...

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: That's six.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Four.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Seven.

Travis: 17.

Clint: 17.

Justin: Plus seven, 24.

Griffin: 24, you actually only do 12 damage to it, 'cause this purple worm is resistant to physical—

Justin: T-Rexes?!

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: No, just any physical damage, this purple worm is gonna be resistant to.

Clint: Oh! So, it's a dinosaur? Not the band, T-Rex?

Justin: No, no, no, an actual—

Clint: Okay, all right, I gotcha.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Although, he can bang a gong.

Justin: Yes.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Yes, and he does wonder about the metal guru, is it true.

Griffin: The purple worm gets dropped in the order now. And you see its mouth fill up with flames. And all of you, including the T-Rex and Cam, need to make a dexterity saving throw.

Travis: I'm behind it.

Griffin: Huh?

Travis: I'm behind it?

Griffin: Fair play! You're good.

Clint: Awesome.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: What the fuck, Cam?! Cam got a 19. Cam's fuckin' like, "Nope!" Cam's head like floats up to the ceiling really fast.

Travis: [laughs] I mean, he's very aerodynamic.

Griffin: I guess so!

Justin: Okay, so that's 11 for Dupree.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: That makes sense.

Clint: And Merle rolled a perfect... one.

Justin: Ouchie.

Travis: Ooh...

Griffin: All right.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Does Dupree have different health than Taako does?

Justin: Dupree's got 136 hit points.

Travis: [chuckles]

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Let me get a slice.

Clint: [laughs]

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: 16 points of fire damage.

Clint: Wow...

Griffin: The purple worm, this flaming purple worm, you also see where you whipped it with its tail, you left like a little scratch. You see it start to close over as it recovers some health and it roars horrifyingly. And you see in the corner a tall, rectangular crate appear, and then you see a window, and then finally, you see a door.

And as it forms this door in the wall, you see it's an open, wooden-framed door. And it flickers, and all of a sudden, it's a cobblestone-lined door. And then it flickers and it's a big great heavy metal door, and then it's a big glass door. But it's always a door. And as soon as it forms, the Red Robe looks over at you, Magnus, and with its free hand, the one it's not like conjuring this with, it waves enthusiastically.

Merle: Sauté! [chuckles]

Magnus: Time to sauté, boys!

Travis: And I take off running for the door.

Griffin: Okay. We can bounce out of combat. The door is open, you do have the purple worm there. Magnus is fine, Magnus was clear of it. Merle and Taako, if you wanna get to it, you're gonna have to do something. And Cam.

Justin: I scoop both of `em up in my jaws.

Merle: Ow!

Griffin: Holy shit. Ginger—

Justin: In a safe way. In a safe, ginger way.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: It's Dupree, he's a man of class and distinction, with two intelligence!

Griffin: Okay, huge problem. You do get `em over there and the purple worm takes a bite at your torso, and does hit Dupree.

Justin: Mm-hm?

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: For 21 damage. Takes a big bite out of the side of Dupree.

Justin: Oof.

Griffin: And you get them to the door. Dupree, big problem—and we'll see how your two intelligence deals with this, you're much, much too big to fit through this door.

Justin: Mh-mm. Okay, so... Taako—Did I get them to the door yet?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Okay, good. Taako drops the spell, because he's not a monster, he's just a wizard pretending to be a dinosaur. And he turns it off and walks through the door.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: I hope you got them out of your mouth first!

Griffin: You definitely didn't! So like, you did have a little like—

Justin: I said I got them to the door? You told me I got them to the door?

Griffin: Yeah, but they were—

Justin: That would not imply they are still in my maw?

Griffin: All I'm saying is you got them to the door, but they were still in your mouth, so when you transformed back, a little bit of Merle's hand is in your mouth and you taste him and it's bad.

Justin: I didn't bite it off though, that fool can't afford to lose another one, right?

Griffin: [chuckles] No, no, no.

Clint: Maybe it's my wood hand?

Justin: Yeah, could be. All right.

Griffin: You all clear the door, and just as you do, the purple worm kind of rears its body up to come smashing down. And you just barely clear the door as it comes down behind you. And then the door disappears. And Magnus, you saw the Red Robe move through too. So, everybody has moved out of the room!

["Sauté" by Griffin McElroy plays]

[ad read]

Griffin: We have a Jumbotron message on the show, thank you to everybody who bought all of our Jumbotron spots for 2017. Thanks especially to this week's Jumbotrons.

This message is for Divina and it's from Mattlock, who says, "We've been together for six years now and I couldn't have imagined being this happy. Since you introduced me to The Adventure Zone, I thought the dulcet tones of Griffin McElroy would be appropriate. Thank you for being the shepherd to my Vicarian, the healer to my tank, the Killian to my carry. I love you more than words can express." I hope I said Vicarian right. I did, right? I don't want Gerus to get mad at me!

I have another jumbotron message here, and it's from Holly, the most beautiful of Scottish ladies, from Steven, the Grizzly Adams of truck drivers, who says, "Happy 25th birthday, or one year wedding anniversary, depending on how long it takes for you to finally catch up to this point in the podcast. I love you more and more every day and I can't wait for you to come to America so we can sing endless love with sock puppets 'til the end of time. No, Griffin, it's not a sex thing. You're my whole world."

Hey, don't you lie to me. I know a sex thing when I hear one in a Jumbotron message. You think this is my first Jumbotron message, you think this is my first stealthed out sex reference? No, no, no. I've been doing this a long time. You gotta wake up a little earlier to pull a sex thing over on Griffin.

[ad read]

["Sauté" by Griffin McElroy plays]

Griffin: You can tell that this chamber that you've stepped out into is not like the other ones you've been in since you've been here in Wonderland. It's pretty dark in here, but you can tell that this chamber is still circular, but it's way, way bigger than all the rooms you've been in so far. It's cavernous. And behind you, you see this massive cylinder.

And it's what you just stepped out of, but it's completely featureless, except for a small label on its exterior wall that has your guys' names on it. And as you look around, you see there's a bunch of these different cylinders, 38 of them to be exact, all wrapping around a huge central staircase. This big round central staircase which climbs 20 feet up to a circular platform at the center of the chamber. And as you start to approach that staircase, Cam kind of hangs back and he says:

Cam: Hey, I... Listen, I'm pretty sure you guys are gonna get out of here, so I'm gonna part ways with you now.

Magnus: What?

Clint: How's he hanging back?

Griffin: I mean he's still levitating

Clint: Oh, okay.

Griffin: He says:

Cam: It's like I said, Magnus, I'm a living disembodied head. I'm pretty sure the only reason I'm alive is because Wonderland is keeping me alive, eternally, just to pump more suffering out of me. So, if I leave this place with y'all, I'm toast.

Magnus: Wait, so you'd rather—just let me get this straight, you'd rather stay in here, as a head, forever, in a place that feeds on suffering, rather than go with us and be free from this?

Cam: To be free from this place that is keeping me alive. Yeah, that doesn't sound good either, Magnus.

Taako: Why did you come with us and make us take all those extra punishments?

Cam: I thought I could help y'all get out of here and I did! Go Cam!

Taako: I mean you cast a spell! Two!

Cam: Yeah, I provided some sage guidance. Let's not split hairs.

Taako: I mean, I turned into a T-Rex? Like...

Merle: And I found out my god hates me! You know?

Cam: Yeah, that's... that's rough stuff. Anyway, I'm just gonna go hide out I guess? Thanks for... thanks for trying to rescue me. And when you see Lucretia again—

Magnus: No, hold on! I'm gonna stop you one more time. We successfully rescued you, you are refusing to be rescued. I wanna make that clear.

Taako: Right! The rescue—

Magnus: This is not a failure on our part.

Taako: Right.

Merle: Throw him in your pocket workshop!

Cam: Please don't throw me back in your pocket workshop. When you see Lucretia again, tell her... I don't know, make up something... heroic for me, I guess.

Merle: Nope!

Taako: Tad?

Clint: [chuckles] Chad.

Cam: Close.

Taako: Chad? Hey, Tam? What is it?

Cam: Tam.

Taako: Cam.

Merle: Pam?

Taako: I'll make you a deal? If you—

Cam: It's gonna have to be a pretty sweet one!

Taako: If you let me kill you, you can live in my wand?

Cam: No! [chuckles] I don't want that at all!

Taako: My umbrella will eat you—

Merle: And you'll live forever!

Taako: And you'll live forever in service to me.

Travis: [laughs]

Taako: Imagine!

Travis: What's the downside?!

Taako: Imagine the possibilities!

Griffin: He starts floating backwards, away from you guys.

Cam: No, I'm good. I'm good. I'll see you guys later, good luck!

Clint: We are never picking up another hitchhiker, it's just not gonna happen.

Taako: Hey, can I have my wand back?

Griffin: He says:

Cam: Yeah!

Griffin: And he was wearing—he kind of had it tucked up into his—behind his ear. And he just kind of does a little maneuver to put it in his mouth and he flings it at you.

Travis: And it's super cool!

Griffin: It's okay. He goes and sort of skulks around and behind the massive cylinder you all came out of.

Travis: He just floats around eating floating white ghosts and dots and cherries and stuff.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: So, the one we came out of is the one with our names on it, is that right?

Griffin: Uh-huh.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: Can we look, just cursory look around and see if you know, all the other cylinders are labeled?

Griffin: Yeah, roll an investigation check.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: I rolled a nat 20.

Justin: 15. Wow. That's a good investigation check.

Clint: Five. [sighs]

Griffin: Magnus, you—yeah, I mean every chamber—every... With a nat 20, you recognize that every chamber has labels with names on it. You see one that has Lucretia, Sterling and Rowan's name on it.

Clint: Wait, one chamber that has all three names?

Griffin: Uh-huh. And there's a bunch of chambers with a bunch of different names, you don't recognize any of the other ones.

Travis: You said Lucretia, did you mean Lucretia?

Griffin: Oh, sorry, sorry, sorry! No, no, no, no, Antonia, not Lucretia. Yeah, it has their names on it, you don't recognize any of the other name on the labels. With a 20, Magnus, you also realize, this cylinder that you stepped out of, it is... you can kind of tell, especially if you walk up that staircase a little bit to get a better angle on it, it's more or less the exact shape of all of the rooms that you have been in, in Wonderland.

Travis: So, it was just the same cylinder over and over again made to look different through the magic smoke stuff, right?

Griffin: Yup.

Travis: Cool.

Griffin: A spotlight comes on the from the ceiling shining down on top of the central circular platform, which you can get a better angle on if you go up that staircase.

Travis: Yeah! I do that!

Griffin: Atop that central platform that spans about 30 feet in diameter, you see a few dozen seated figures, all positioned around a raised catwalk that vivisects the circle. But all these figures are stationary because they're all mannequins. And all of these mannequins, they're the same ones that you saw during Heart Attack. They are all dressed up in high fashions, kind of like the stuff you've seen Lydia and Edward in. And simultaneously, they all point up to the catwalk where a spotlight is illuminating the catwalk.

Travis: Is there anything on the catwalk?

Griffin: Nope.

Travis: Is it time for us to do our sexy turn on the catwalk?

Griffin: I think this would be a pretty good time for that.

Travis: I look at Taako. [chuckles]

Taako: I don't—I don't understand. No, I'm kind of freaked out. What's going on?

Magnus: I think you need to get up there and strut?

Merle: I think it's a fashion show?

Taako: I'm not a piece of meat?

Magnus: This is what you were born to do, Taako!

Taako: No! I mean I'm not a model, I'm a wizard and a chef. I don't understand what I'm being asked to do here.

Magnus: I think you need to bootytooch.

Taako: Why?! The things you're saying make no sense! I'm not just gonna strut across a catwalk for your delight!

Griffin: All of the mannequins simultaneously sort of pull their arms back and point, sort of more forcefully at the stage. All of them are looking at one of you. Their gaze is sort of split between all of you. And they are all pointing up to the catwalk.

Justin: I cast Prestidigitation, shoot sparks out of my fingers, cast Minor Illusion and put myself in a dope outfit, and start walking down the catwalk with all the style and panache I can muster, which is, I should note, a fuckin' lot. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, roll a charisma roll. Roll a performance roll! We've never—

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Oh, that's weird, I got 30. 'Cause it's fucking so fly. That's very strange and interesting.

Griffin: [laughs] Roll performance. You've got advantage on this Performance roll.

Justin: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: 16 or four, so it's definitely 16.

Griffin: Yeah, they—the crowd is going wild.

Justin: I don't know if there's any modifiers?

Griffin: You stop in this, in the spotlight in this catwalk and the crowd is just fuckin' losing their minds. And then all of a sudden, all of them are looking at you, Magnus and Merle, and pointing up to the catwalk.

Magnus: All right—

Merle: I'll go next!

Magnus: Ah...

Merle: Yeah, I'm next.

Magnus: Okay.

Clint: I saunter up. And what I do is I cunningly take my hand and pull my shirt down off one shoulder.

Griffin: Oh, fuck?

Clint: And I gyrate it and I look seductive.

Justin: Nice.

Clint: And then waddle across the catwalk to stand next to my stunning, cosmetically enhanced friend.

Griffin: Roll a performance check.

Clint: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: Another freakin' five!

Griffin: There's a few like—you hear like three of the mannequins be like:
[slow clapping]

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: You do not get as warm a reception. And now all of them are looking at you, Magnus, and pointing up to the catwalk.

Travis: Awesome, I get up, and I—using my Chance Lance, do like a super sick kind of baton/ you know, kind of like gun twirling exercise like you might see in like a military show.

Griffin: Okay, roll performance.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: That's a 13.

Griffin: You get a pretty—you get an okay reception. You get a pretty good reception for that. All of you are up on the catwalk now and you hear Edward say—you don't see either of the liches, but you hear their voices. And you hear Edward say:

Edward: You did it! I don't know how, but you did it!

Griffin: And Lydia says:

Lydia: Very few people have stood where you're standing now, having conquered suffering itself to claim their prize. Give them a hand, folks!

Griffin: And every mannequin just stands up and is like giving you a big standing ovation. And Edwards says:

Edward: This resolve, this desire to do whatever it takes, no matter the cost to save yourselves, do you know who you three remind me of?

Magnus: No?

Merle: Who?

Edward: Us!

Magnus: Ugh!

Griffin: You hear Lydia say:

Lydia: There were three of us, once, lifetimes ago. We had another sibling, a younger brother, Keats. It was the three of us, surviving against all odds. The world against us. But Keats... Keats got sick. And he wouldn't get better. So, Edward and I joined a necromantic circle to try and save him.

Griffin: And Edward says:

Edward: We were... unsuccessful, but we found joy in our new-found powers. That's when we became liches and managed to sustain ourselves with our love for our dear Keats and each other. But when that became insufficient, we discovered ways of using other people's emotions to sustain ourselves. Emotion is... so powerful, and practical. That's how we discovered that, well, suffering's much more effective than love.

Griffin: And Lydia says:

Lydia: We're the oldest living—well, un-living things in this whole world, I'd reckon. Here's a fun fact they don't tell you about liches – your spectral form resembles what you looked like when you consigned your soul to lichdom. That means we have to spend an eternity in the drab, black robes of our circle.

Griffin: And Edward says:

Edward: Eventually, we discovered how to channel suffering to create new garments for ourselves, fantastic garments! Then we learned how to channel it into other forms. We could summon small household objects, and then bigger objects, and then finally summoning entire rooms from the ether. That's how we came up with Wonderland! It's a perfect centrifuge for extracting suffering from those who, fueled by greed, came to visit us. Wonderland has taken many forms over the past few centuries, but these games are actually kind of a new touch that we're pretty excited about.

Griffin: And Lydia says:

Lydia: And thanks to your Animus Bell, business has been booming lately.

Griffin: And every mannequin kind of walks up to the catwalk and they're kind of like... they're kind of reaching for you. Like they're desperate fans, just trying to get ahold of your—the hem of your garment. And Edward says:

Edward: This place has always thrived because of, well, what else? Advertising! We've got a few consistent channels. Surely, you received a brochure in the mail, or saw our billboards, or met someone drawn here by a beam of magical light? Those are just a few tools of the trade, and they served us well during our residency here. But do you all know the most successful type of advertising?

Magnus: Word of mouth?

Taako: Word of mouth.

Merle: Word of mouth.

Edward: Magnus, you landed on skull in the last round, didn't you?

Magnus: Yes.

Edward: Bad luck.

Griffin: And you hear the Animus Bell ring. And just like all the other grand relics you've seen used during your journey, the effects are immediate and horrible. Taako and Merle, make a perception check for me?

Clint: Yeah, I'll roll another five.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: Oh, 19.

Justin: Yeah, nine for me.

Griffin: You see Magnus reel backwards, threatening to just like fall straight back. And you both see a light cast out of the back of his body for just the briefest moment as he falls. And then you see him spasm and come to, and he throws a leg back to catch himself before he fully loses his balance. And he steadies himself on Rail-Splitter. And he stands up to face you, and he says, "You know, boys, I don't think Wonderland's that bad. You know, I feel like I've learned a lot about myself here, and I feel like our friendship has grown even more powerful, don't you think?"

Magnus: Ahem, I didn't say that?

Griffin: Nobody hears you say that, Magnus, because you've just had the singular sensation of having your soul knocked out of your still-living body. It was as soon as you heard the Animus Bell ring, and it felt like getting kicked by a horse, followed by this absolute numbness that if you had any breath, would take it away. And you see the back of yourself for a moment, which is fuckin' weird. And then your vision goes gray, and in fact, the world goes gray. And you are floating backwards into the ethereal plane. And the scene around you is still there as it was moments ago. You see yourself kind of catch yourself from falling. You see Taako and Merle sort of looking at you.

And you also see some other stuff too. You see other figures in the room. You see small, white, humanoid figures that are hiding behind the mannequins and clinging to the ceiling. And as you start to look around at them, they scurry away and out of sight. But you also see a tear in the fabric of space, and it looks familiar. Because you saw something similar to that during your time in Lucas' lab. It is a rift open to the astral plane, where the souls of the deceased go after their death in the material plane. And you are drifting into it, Magnus. Because you're dying.

Travis: I'm gonna push as hard as I can back towards my body!

Griffin: We'll get to that in just a second. I wanna get back to Merle and Taako.

Justin: One thing you can say, that is bad luck.

Clint: That is bad luck, yeah!

Justin: Truth in advertising.

Griffin: Merle and Taako, you see Magnus catch himself. And you see Lydia now, step out from behind Magnus, and she has this—she’s wearing this black and white, elegant, like Victorian-era dress. And she smiles and you see a smile creep onto Magnus’ face. And for a second, you see the faint figure of Edward surrounding Magnus. And his image fades and you hear Magnus say:

Edward as Magnus: I think I’m gonna head to Neverwinter and tell everyone I meet to get down here to Wonderland ASAP! Lots of riches! More than I could even carry out!

Clint: So, we know that this—that Edward is possessing Magnus, right?

Griffin: Right. And ‘possessing’ is not the right word. ‘Cause Magnus isn’t in there anymore. Edward is—Edward is Magnus right now.

Clint: All right. I’ll talk to him.

Merle: So, Magnus! You really think we had that—

Edward as Magnus: That’s me! Big, tough-man Magnus! That’s me all over.

Merle: That's you!

Edward as Magnus: I’m gonna rush in! Let’s do it!

Merle: You think we had a really good time in here, did you?

Edward as Magnus: I mean it was a little bit rough, I guess, but think of all the riches we found? [chuckles] You know? All the riches and gold and rubies?

Merle: Yeah, what did we find exactly? I don't remember that. You know what? We're all... we did a good job, we won the game. So, I'm with you, Magnus! Let's head out and go spread the good word. And oh, but first, of course, we do need the bell, right? We earned the bell! 'Cause we won the game, and it's the 'heart's desire' thing. So... right?

Edward as Magnus: Yeah! I've got a way better idea, and hear me out, boys, my best friends. My very good best friends, Merle and Taako. What if you guys turn around and go back into Wonderland, and I'll keep the bell. And you'll get to go back in there, but you'll get to live! How does that sound?

Taako: I got a fuckin' idea for you.

Edward as Magnus: Yeah?

Justin: And as soon as I say that, Taako's eyes go blank.

Griffin: Oh shit.

Justin: He is just catatonic. He falls out of it. His soul is gone.

Griffin: What?

Justin: It's in a magic jar. The spell is called Magic Jar. The only action I can take is to project my soul up to 100 feet out of the container and return to my living body, or attempting to possess a humanoid's body. And I'm gonna take Magnus back.

Griffin: Okay. All right. All right. All right. You cast your soul out of Taako's body, and as you do, it steps into the ethereal plane. Which you've been in before, right. It's where you blink into.

Justin: Mm-hm.

Griffin: And as you start to approach Magnus' body, you see—behind you, you see Magnus and he is being sucked into a rift into the astral plane. And you recognize it, too. You recognize the astral plane from Lucas' lab. You

recognize it as Kravitz's home. It is the plane where dead souls go to... go to the afterlife. And you see Magnus getting sucked into this portal. You also see his body in front of you, and you see Edward's faint outline over the body. Which direction do you go?

Justin: I fly towards Magnus.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Wait, which one?

Justin: Spell Magnus.

Griffin: What?

Justin: I mean his soul-Magnus!

Clint: This is—trust me, this is—

Griffin: Soul-Magnus. You fly towards Magnus being sucked into the portal.

Clint: This is so gonna work.

Justin: Yes. Yes. Soul-Magnus.

Griffin: Okay. Magnus, you don't quite see Taako flying towards you yet. You just see the astral plane rift opening up and sucking you into it. And you see—again, you've seen the astral plane before. In the cosmoscope you saw it too, in the mirror. And when you saw it then it was just this like tranquil sea, filled with swirling lights and souls retired to rest in collective consciousness. Through this rift, you see the same sea, but it is choppy and it's violent and there are... there's no lights below the surface. In fact, you kind of see what looks like an oil slick on the surface, and the sky is stormy and pitch-black and nobody's there. Kravitz isn't there. And behind you, you see Taako flying at you. Taako, what are you doing?

Justin: I'm just gonna—I mean, I'm disembodied, so all I can do is kind of fly over and try to grab him.

Griffin: Okay. All right, you fly over and you grab Magnus' hand. And make a strength save.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: [chuckles] Natural 20!

Griffin: All right, here's what we'll do. Taako, you grab Magnus' hand. Just as his feet were being pulled into the astral plane. And you can see into it now, too. You can see into the plane, also. Do you say anything dope when you grab him?

Justin: No, I mean, I can't say anything, I'm a ghost.

Griffin: Okay, fine. But you see each other?

Justin: [chuckles] Yes.

Griffin: You guys see each other, right?

Travis: And we definitely think some super cool action-y quips.

Justin: Yeah, we think something but it's very private, so it's not aloud.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. You both see into this astral plane and you can tell that something is seriously wrong. And just as you pull Magnus back, Taako, you see a hand splash up from the choppy waters. You see Kravitz, and he's struggling to sort of pull himself up to the surface of the water. The oil, this black oil on the surface of the water just twists around him and pulls him back under. And you feel that oil calling for both of you as well.

And you're both getting pulled into the rift now, and... But with a 20, Taako, you fight against the pull, and both of you are flying backwards towards the center of the room, back towards the catwalk. And Merle, you're standing in

front of the two liches, one in the form of Magnus and one not. Lydia just is there in her spectral form. And you're standing next to Taako, who's gone completely catatonic. What do you do?

Clint: I use Planar Ally, where I can summon an entity from another plane. I'm gonna go into that plane and pull... let's see, pull Taako, who's got a hold of Magnus, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yes.

Clint: And I pull him back into this plane. I summon 'em!

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: I summon both of them back into this plane.

Griffin: Okay. Then, Magnus and Taako, you two are flying back towards the center of the room. The pull of this rift is still trying to suck you in. And out of nowhere, just Merle turns around, turns his back to the two liches, and just outstretches his arms. And as he does, you see like spectral versions of his soul-wood arm sort of reach out and grab you.

And he's also pulling you back in too, now. And he rips both of you towards himself. Taako, you are back in your body, and you're back and you are conscious again. And Magnus, you're conscious, too. You still feel numb, but you're back. But you're on the ground. And you're surrounded by the mannequin audience, and you see your friends just above you on the catwalk. What do you do?

Travis: Am I in my body or am I just a spirit?

Griffin: What do you do? You're awake. You're not in the astral—you're not in the ethereal plane anymore.

Travis: I rush in to my friends! I wanna get back in the—I'm back, I rush in!
I rush in, Griffin!

Griffin: All right. You jump back up onto the catwalk, and as you do, you hear fake Magnus go:

Edward as Magnus: [gasps] What?

Griffin: And Merle and Taako, you see, standing beside you, wearing a plate of very, very, very fashionable elven scale-mail, you see one of the mannequins standing right next to you.

Justin: [laughs]

Magnus: I'll be having my body back, you undead fuck.

[“Déjà Vu” by Mort Garson plays]

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[ad read]