

## The Zone of Adventure: Imbalance - Episode two

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**Aabria:** Hello! And welcome to episode two of... I don't—I'm gonna call this... look, Griffin... [chuckles]

**Griffin:** [chuckles] Uh-huh?

**Aabria:** I decided I was going to do your show real quick. And thank you.

**Travis:** Is this all the title? Is that all the title?

**Aabria:** Yeah. It's a long title.

**Travis:** Griffin, I decided I was gonna do your show real quick. You're welcome.

**Griffin:** It's a little wordy.

**Aabria:** It's a little wordy... I'm trying to do like a Panic at the Disco level title situation, you know?

**Travis:** Oh, yeah, yeah.

**Justin:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** All right.

**Travis:** I write TAZ, not tragedies.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] That's actually pretty good.

**Travis:** Thank you.

**Aabria:** Welcome to The Adventure Zone, colon—I didn't think of one in alphabetical order. I kind of did. We're gonna call it Imbalance.

**Travis:** Yeah, there you go.

**Griffin:** That's really good.

**Justin:** Yeah, that's good.

**Aabria:** All right.

**Griffin:** That'll do.

**Aabria:** Thanks. Got it in one, except it was like 20 minutes of talking.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** Let's see if they edit it down.

**Travis:** Fix it in post. We'll fix it in post.

**Aabria:** We'll fix it in post!

[Imbalance theme music plays]

**Aabria:** Gentleman, the past is not pristine. And the present is currently at risk. Merle, Magnus, Taako and Davenport, you're heroes across realities. Retired. Some of you a little listless after lifetimes of adventure. But a new threat has surfaced. A creature known as the Time Drake has arrived on the heels of a Herald of Istus.

The creature, still unknown to you all, has sent waves of burning soldiers to attack a very lovely dinner party at Taako's house. And that's where you find yourself. About to engage in battle, once again. So, you've rolled initiative. Magnus, would you like to rush in?

**Travis:** Well, first, I'm going to talk, because he's speaking about his reaction.

**Aabria:** Yeah.

**Magnus:** All right, Taako, you know how this goes. I'm about to rush in. Time to activate whatever defenses you've built into your house.

**Taako:** Yeah, let me—hold on. Yeah, let me flip the trap switch. Boop!

**Justin:** And he just points his finger at a piece of the wall and says 'boop.'

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Magnus:** Okay, so—all right. All right.

**Taako:** Oh, no, they've shut down, or were never installed properly. I went to talk to that—the guy I had. I got a guy—you got a trap guy?

**Magnus:** Yeah.

**Taako:** Nice. Can I meet him? I'd love to meet your trap guy, because I...

**Magnus:** I am my own trap guy.

**Griffin:** I take out some micro-machines and scatter them around the floor, and start heating up the doorknob.

**Travis:** Mm-hm, that's good.

**Aabria:** Good, yeah. That's good.

**Justin:** I'm so glad that our brand has now made a Home Alone reference.

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** Finally, in one of our shows, there's been a nod to the popular thriller, Home Alone. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Right.

**Aabria:** That's a deep cut, but I'll allow it.

**Travis:** I think Magnus—yeah, you know what? I think Magnus has been itching for a fight. He is going to... go charging through and jump through a window.

**Aabria:** Beautiful. I will—

**Griffin:** It's so unnecessary.

**Travis:** It's so unnecessary, yeah.

**Aabria:** Yeah, I'm gonna repaint the picture one more time. Not to dissuade you from jumping through the window, but just to remind you of what you're facing off against. And the open door I definitely mentioned before.

**Travis:** Yeah, yeah, no, goes through the window.

**Aabria:** Okay, cool.

**Travis:** Yup-yup!

**Aabria:** All right, well—

**Travis:** Listen, he's got a lot of pent-up stupidity. [chuckles] It's time.

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** You gotta let it off-gas a little bit that's fair.

**Travis:** Yeah, yeah.

**Aabria:** Okay, I'm not gonna make you roll for it. You're very good at jumping through windows. You do a big crash-through. You land amazingly, three point stance, and look up like Black Widow. And you see in front of you a score, somewhere between 20 and 24 of these like dark, sort of burning, humanoid figures that look like they're beginning to burn away at the edges. Like the corners of paper that had been lit aflame. And then the moment you crash through the window, their eyes like kind of turn to you and they start to pick up speed. And they're now closing the like 100 yard distance between you.

**Travis:** And Magnus smiles and draws the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Death.

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Uh... um...

**Travis:** Fuck! [chuckles]

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** He grabs Chance Lance, I'm gonna say. And he's gonna aim for—

**Justin:** Sorry, did you call it the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Death? Because if so, like, RIP your mentions forever.

**Travis:** Oh, did I say of death? Well...

**Justin:** You said of death. RIP your mentions.

**Travis:** We'll fix it in post.

**Aabria:** Also, apparently, it's the Flaming *Poisoning* Raging Sword of Doom? I had to look that up.

**Travis:** No...

**Justin:** No, that can't be right.

**Travis:** It's the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom?

**Aabria:** No, poisoning is before raging.

**Travis:** Man...

**Justin:** Whoa.

**Aabria:** Yeah.

**Travis:** This is Berenstain Bears.

**Aabria:** Uh-huh, I'm here to nerd-check you. I've been here for an hour and I know your game better than you.

**Justin:** Flaming Poisoning Raging Sword of Doom, Aabria is exactly correct.

**Aabria:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Dang it.

**Justin:** It doesn't sound good to say.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] It feels bad in the mouth.

**Travis:** Flaming raging poisoning... ah, okay.

**Justin:** We can retcon it.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Justin:** We can retcon it!

**Travis:** Okay. I draw the Chance Lance...

**Aabria:** Okay?

**Travis:** And I throw it at the baddest-looking warrior in the ranks.

**Aabria:** Okay, I love that. You see this massive goliath sort of like picking up a little bit of steam and creating a little bit of a gap between the rest of the hordes. Go ahead and make an attack roll for me. Oh, we're doing it! We're doing a fight!

**Travis:** Well, it's 15...

**Aabria:** A 15 does not hit! This is a level 17 encounter.

**Travis:** But I'm going to use—I know I have something that lets me use it...  
[sings thinking tune]

**Aabria:** Don't forget, I gave all of you a round of inspiration. So you get a free re-roll at some point.

**Griffin:** Because of our many, many failures.

**Aabria:** Because y'all like didn't get the plot in the first episode, because you rolled like dog shit. [chuckles]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay, I'm going to use Precision Attack, which I knew I had.

**Aabria:** Love that.

**Travis:** To use one of my superiority dice. God, I'm so out of—what are my superiority dice? What do I get to roll? Okay so, add to that a five. So a 20.

**Aabria:** Yes.

**Travis:** A dirty 20.

**Aabria:** A dirty 20 absolutely hits.

**Travis:** And for damage, a D12 plus five, so that's 12 points of damage.

**Aabria:** Ooh, love it.

**Travis:** And then I am going to recall it... and throw it again!

**Aabria:** Nice.

**Travis:** I attack three times in a turn.

**Aabria:** Yeah.

**Travis:** There we go, a 12 plus 11.

**Aabria:** Absolutely hits. So, as you roll the damage, why don't you break off for me—I love giving this to other DMs. You tell me what that looks like.

**Travis:** So, what it is, is he throws the Lance, hits the guy the first time in the shoulder. Recalls it. He throws it the second time and it misses. And then when he recalls it, it comes flying back and hits his other shoulder.

**Aabria:** Oh, that's beautiful, yeah. Because this guy kind of looks up at you with these like empty socket eyes as you miss the second time, and gives you like this big grin and starts laughing. And then his entire right like arm at the shoulder gets blasted off his body as the Chance Lance comes back through him on the hit.



**Travis:** And on that second—that third—yeah, second hit, I'm going to use Disarming Attack.

**Aabria:** Ooh?

**Travis:** And when you hit with a weapon attack, you expend one superiority die and add it to the damage. And disarm the target if it fails a strength saving throw.

**Aabria:** Let me do the strength save. With a natural five on the dice, I don't think that's going to do it.

**Travis:** No, unless it has a plus 14. It does not.

**Aabria:** It does not. And I love that I already said you took its arm off. So you literally disarm my boy. Beautiful. Okay, is there anything else you wanna do with your turn?

**Travis:** Just gonna brace for whatever's coming.

**Aabria:** I'll do you one better. Give me a perception check. I'm gonna force you to do a bonus action. Please perceive your surroundings, my friend.

**Travis:** Okay. A 13.

**Aabria:** Okay. With a 13, as you sort of brace and hunker down, you feel your brain like moving back into that flow state, of like battle mastery when everything actually calms down and gets slow, and you're able to like see the like waves of movement as a battle builds. With a 13, you see that like off in the distance, about another 50 yards behind, where all like the main group of these burners are running in, you see like a shimmering. Like a mirage at the edge of like an extremely hot beach or desert.

**Travis:** Okay, I'm gonna take cunning action. And I am going to dash back into the house. [chuckles]

**Aabria:** [chuckles] All right. And you are now back. Do you jump through a different window or just go through the open door?

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah, I come back through the other window.

**Aabria:** Yeah, respect. All right.

**Travis:** In for a penny, in for a pound.

**Aabria:** Kravitz looks like he wants to fucking merc you for that. [chuckles]

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Magnus:** Oh, sorry, I'll fix it later. There are a lot of bad guys outside, and like a mirage thing.

**Aabria:** Davenport, you're up.

**Griffin:** Oh, boy. I guess I'm seeing the same thing that Magnus just saw? With regards to the literal army of the damned outside?

**Aabria:** Yes. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Okay. Yeah, I'm just gonna sort of shore up our defenses. I'm gonna poke my head out one of the shattered windows that Magnus just made. And a few little sort of silvery disks pop out of my hand and sort of form a line in front of the house here. And I cast Wall of Force. And 10 10ft. by 10ft. panels form an enormous, impenetrable wall in front of the house here.

**Aabria:** I hate you for that. That's very good.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Aabria:** Okay. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** And yeah, I'm also going to, with my bonus action, press a button on my bicep here. And a little shield appears around my guardian armor, giving me 17 temporary hit points on top of what I've got.

**Aabria:** Oh, that's good. Beautiful! Okay.

**Griffin:** That'll be it.

**Aabria:** Same thing, why don't you give me a perception check. Like as you set this spell up and you're kind of looking out through it, because your Wall of Force is invisible.

**Griffin:** Right.

**Aabria:** You have like kind of a safe view of what's going on outside.

**Griffin:** That's a 17 plus seven, 24.

**Aabria:** Dang. Okay, with a 24, I will ask you, is there anything interesting Davenport would be looking for as this fight like begins to go into full swing?

**Griffin:** Like, fully... I think he's looking for the Hunger.

**Aabria:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** Like, because it's hard for him to kind of shake the habit, I guess. And it is the most sort of destructive thing that he has witnessed before. So yeah, I mean, he's looking for eyes in the sky and swirling, sort of black clouds. And all that jazz.

**Aabria:** Yeah, Davenport, as your eyes kind of do that unfocus, we get that like vertigo pan of extraordinarily long vision, as you're looking out to see something massive and terrible that will like sort of eclipse the group. You're waiting for that like doom sign. But all you get is that you see that shimmer on the horizon that Magnus mentioned.

But you see something a little past it. Something that seems to hover over top of the shimmer. That almost has form, even though it doesn't have like color or mass. It looks almost... it's huge. Dragon-like, but not... but it's not the Hunger. But there is something big and terrifying on the horizon. And you just made eye contact with it.

**Travis:** I'm glad you mentioned terrifying. Up until terrifying I was like, maybe it's nice?

**Griffin:** Maybe it's cool?

**Aabria:** Maybe it's super chill!

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Okay...

**Travis:** [in a silly voice] I heard you guys had mutton!

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** [in a silly voice] Love it.

**Aabria:** Amazing. Okay, perfect. So then with that, my first round of bad boys are going to come in and slam themselves against the Wall of Force. Cool, this is a very obnoxious spell. Thank you.

**Griffin:** [chuckles] Mm-hm.

**Aabria:** So, you see as a dozen of these like burning humanoids like begin to throw themselves against this invisible wall and claw at it. And it's not until you see two of them kind of push themselves back, and back off. And you see them beginning to cast like a very big spell. It's going to take the entire round to cast, but it looks like they've gotten the shape of what this is and they're going to bring it down. But not yet. And the rest are just sort of skittering across it helplessly. Next up is Taako!

**Justin:** Question, Aabria, do you feel like I got all my shit? Like, would I have any reason to have all my shit on me currently?

**Aabria:** You're in your house...

**Justin:** Like, I'm in my house.

**Aabria:** You got all your shit.

**Justin:** But I feel like—yeah, just on me. Okay, cool.

**Aabria:** Look I wouldn't take anything from you, I would only take away important items from like people I don't like.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** Right, that's fair.

**Aabria:** That I don't want to see succeed.

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** I'm trying to come up with...

**Travis:** [shudders]

**Justin:** I was about to throw the Krebsstar, but I don't actually know that it was ever rated for combat. [chuckles] I don't think it had combat stats. I'm looking through my—

**Griffin:** It's also worth noting, the Wall of Force, nothing can physically pass through it.

**Aabria:** Yes. We're at a delightful little impasse for a second. Well, I will say, the way you built it, do you think, Griffin, it would completely surround the house, or just sort of the front?

**Griffin:** No, so the options with Wall of Forces, you can make a 10ft. radius like dome. Which like it was... it went against my every instinct to not include a dome in this story, but that's not big enough. So no, it is just a 100ft. Invisible, flat wall.

**Aabria:** Cool.

**Griffin:** So you know, I was mainly trying to get some dummies to smash into it, which they did.

**Aabria:** They happily did. So, you can go around the back and kind of circumnavigate, or try to yeet stuff up and over the wall.

**Griffin:** It's 100 feet up, also. So that would be quite a yeet.

**Aabria:** Look, I don't know how hard people can throw things?

**Griffin:** [chuckles] It's D&D! What's your yeet modifier?

**Aabria:** [chuckles] It's gotta be like a plus three.

**Justin:** You know what? I have assessed the situation and where I'm gonna go at is... Taako's good in here!

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** I'm going to prepare—I will prepare a crossbow attack. In case any of 'em get through. So I'm ready with a crossbow attack.

**Aabria:** Amazing. Sort of above the game question, have Taako and Kravitz had a discussion about Taako's sort of turning away from magic?

**Justin:** Well, Aabria, it was more of a bet. [chuckles]

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Justin:** He did the dishes with magic. And he and Kravitz got into a fight about it, and Kravitz bet him he couldn't go a whole year without doing magic. So he's like month three of it and he does not want to fuck it up at this point. And he refuses to lose the bet. [chuckles]

**Travis:** What's on the line?

**Justin:** What? Back rub, baby. One stone cold back rub. He's not fuckin' losing.

**Griffin:** One back rub?

**Aabria:** Let's go!

**Clint:** With Mage Hand.

**Aabria:** Oh my god... Kravitz is looking at you right now as you level the crossbow like... you're gonna do it.

**Taako:** One shot, one kill, baby! Here we go!

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Taako:** Hey, real quick Q though.

**Kravitz:** Mm-hm?

**Taako:** It's the trigger? That's the...

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Taako:** Yes!

**Kravitz:** Yeah. Yeah, babe. That's the trigger. Good luck.

**Taako:** Hey, just to clarify, just so we're agreed, this still counts, right? Yes?

**Kravitz:** It counts. But you're gonna do magic by the end of it, like look at—

**Taako:** No! [chuckles] I got the crossbow. This is the only magic I need. Arrow spells. The way our forefathers cast 'em!

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Kravitz:** Okay, I'm gonna take the normies out real quick.

**Aabria:** And you just see Kravitz gets up and like boosts Susan and just walks out the back door. Susan just lets it happen. I don't know why she's being carried like a puppy.

**Travis:** Well, she's drunk.

**Aabria:** Yeah, she's drunk and I've lost the thread of why she's still in this scene, so... [chuckles]

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** That happens. Taako, is there anything else you want to do? Are you—okay, so, would you like a specific trigger for your crossbow attack?



**Justin:** I think if they—well, okay. If they get into... like somehow get around, through, over the wall.

**Aabria:** Perfect.

**Justin:** To where I would be in range. If they enter crossbow range. Yeah, I mean, is—should—yeah.

**Aabria:** Love it. Okay, I just wanted make you make sure you feel like—

**Justin:** I may need a little hand holding on making a ranged attack... for the first time in my life.

**Aabria:** Yeah! Look, as another caster, who could say how to do manual fighting like a peasant? I don't know. We'll figure it out. Okay, Merle, you—actually, hold on. Taako, give me a perception check. We're giving one for everyone. As you kind of line up and start—

[sound of dice thrown]

**Justin:** Oh, that's a... six, plus seven, 13.

**Aabria:** Okay. A 13 is still pretty good. So, what does Taako care most about in this moment as he's sort of looking out and waiting for his moment to strike? [chuckles]

**Justin:** What he cares most about is... property damage, number one.

**Aabria:** Yes.

**Justin:** His boyfriend's death. The others have gone through with him. They've done some really wild stuff. Currently, property damage is the number one thing. Because he will have to physically—like one, Magnus will be over trying to repair stuff. Very much a bummer.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** Won't be able to use magic to repair things. So I'm gonna have to like... you know when you have to like call a guy? And you're gonna have to find a guy to come out and... plumbing. All that stuff. Like, that's the main concern. Property damage.

**Aabria:** Yeah, as you mind sort of drifts to everything that will happen past this, you sort of noticed as like the second wave of these burning enemies seem to splinter off and they don't throw themselves against the wall the way that first dozen did. They're moving around the wall. You can kind of see them moving around the edge, trying to make their way around and back, to bust out the back of your house. So, you see that coming down the line. Merle, you're up.

**Clint:** Okay, Merle climbs up on the table. Who is in the room?

**Aabria:** Right now, it's the four of you and Lucretia.

**Travis:** And the messenger?

**Aabria:** And the messenger, Kuo. Sorry, my garage just freaked out and it scared me.

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Clint:** Okay, Merle climbs up on the table, stands up on the table. Kind of sways a little bit. He's got the Extreme Team Bible open in one hand and that bottle of wine with just a little bit left in it. There's not very much of the buttery Chardonnay left in it.

**Aabria:** You hate to see it.

**Clint:** And he runs around the room, and spritzes—[water sloshing sounds] Hey, that was full? Spritzes everybody one at a time and casts Bless.

**Aabria:** Amazing. So, are you hitting for people with Bless?

**Clint:** Yes. Hitting four people with Bless... Well, actually, at higher levels when you cast this spell, using a spell slot of second level or higher, you can target the additional creature for each slot level above first. So, I could cast it on everybody. Right?

**Aabria:** Are you trying to get everybody?

**Travis:** Do you think the holy messenger needs Bless?

**Clint:** Nah, we won't bless the messenger. So, I blessed the four of us, and Lucretia.

**Aabria:** Okay. Kuo just kind of gives you a look like:

**Kuo:** That's fine, my feelings aren't important.

**Merle:** I ran out of wine! Sorry! [chuckles]

**Aabria:** And kind of looks at the empty bottle and then watches you drink it.

**Kuo:** Okay... Okay, that's fair.

**Clint:** Does he still have the Adamantium Spanner? You know?

**Griffin:** Yeah, I don't know why he wouldn't.

**Clint:** Unstraps the spanner and gets ready to kick some ass!

**Aabria:** Love it. Okay. So you line that up, go ahead and give me... give me a perception check, or... a nature check.

**Clint:** I'll go with nature. Because that's a plus seven.

**Aabria:** Love it.

**Travis:** Makes sense.

[sound of dice thrown]

**Clint:** And that would be 20 plus seven.

**Travis:** So, a natural 20?

**Aabria:** You got a natural 20?

**Clint:** A nat 20.

**Travis:** A natural 20.

**Clint:** And a seven.

**Travis:** A natural 20.

**Aabria:** Time to give the entire game away, I guess. Here we go!

**Clint:** We win!

**Aabria:** [chuckles] So, you do it. It's over. This has been so lovely. Thank you. So, Merle... something happens in this moment as you finish blessing your friends. And like the array of magic that you've sent out, you are now sort of standing at the center of a sigil that you've drawn, of protection and nature.

And Kuo, who was vaguely annoyed that you didn't include them in the Bess, is fine. And you see them move into like a very specific position. And with that, something pulses between the two of you, as a connection that feels and smells and... almost tastes like the green wilds that you associate with your god, Pan, are summoned into this place.

And Kuo speaks directly into your mind and says:

**Kuo:** Oh, this is new. Merle, are you doing this, or am I? What is... are we having a moment right now?

**Merle:** Yeah, is this a chemistry thing? Like I mean, are we connecting-connecting?

**Kuo:** I mean, we could be. I don't know. I'm kind of up for whatever.

**Justin:** Check, please. I want off the call. I want out.

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** [laughs]

**Travis:** L'addition, s'il vous plaît.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Merle:** My lips aren't moving and we're talking. This is cool.

**Kuo:** Well, I'm happy to keep this up, and... if you need anything...

**Merle:** Sure, yeah. No, I think I—

**Kuo:** Kuo will serve you.

**Merle:** Wow! Okay.

**Aabria:** And you feel the sense of genuflection. Like even though Kuo doesn't move in this moment, they sort of turn and address you, and sort of bow to you. Like something has happened in this moment where they are recognizing—it's a game recognizing game kind of thing. And you have now sort of like created a bond between the two. Kuo can act as an ally and assist you with things on your turn.

**Griffin:** Whoa?

**Aabria:** You can describe what that is, like don't worry about the action economy of it. You don't have to get like in the weeds on it.

**Clint:** Awesome, love it!

**Aabria:** But something important has just happened.

**Clint:** [cheers] He-hee!

**Aabria:** Okay. Is there anything else you would like to do, Merle? Is there any...

**Clint:** Could I send them out for more wine? No, no, no, no, I'm good. I'm good. Let's get ready to kick ass.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Okay, and you sort of like spin your Adamantium Spanner in your hands and wait for what's to come.

**Griffin:** I've been informed via messenger that you did give up the Adamantium Spanner during the Suffering Game. I forgot. So, now you've got just a big... a stick or a rake or something.

**Travis:** Or just a regular spanner that you bought.

**Justin:** I think he... here's my head-canon, is that he made another one and covered it in foil for pictures. Because people were always like, "Can I see the spanner?"

**Clint:** Okay. And I call it the Adam Ant Spanner.

**Justin:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Yes, perfect.

**Clint:** And it's magic!

**Aabria:** Did you say it's tragic?

**Clint:** Magic!

**Aabria:** Oh, it's magic, okay. I heard tragic and that was funnier, so I'm gonna put that in my brain.

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Clint:** It will end up being tragic, I'm sure. [chuckles]

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Okay, so the second round of burners, you all see now that they have sort of disappeared. And they are slowly circumnavigating the house. It's going to take them a lot of time to move even with their dash. But now, only half of that full force is in front of the Wall of Force, trying to break it down as the spell is about to go off. And the next step would be Kuo. So, Merle, what would you like this like fae creature to do to assist you all?

**Clint:** We still don't know a whole bunch about who's attacking us, do we?

**Travis:** would say zero.

**Justin:** Zero.

**Travis:** I would say we know absolutely zero.

**Aabria:** You know literally nothing.

**Clint:** I think I think he would ask them what they know about these creatures.

**Aabria:** Yeah. So, the moment you sort of send out this like impulse for like information, what is this? You feel just a wall of like... words and ideas, and like mental images shoot into your head. It begins with like deep within the dae wild. This, once again, very wild, very green place.

There are a group of incredibly powerful beings called the Untethered, that are these fae monsters that are unconstrained by linear spacetime. And they sort of lie in wait, in that realm where time doesn't have to make that much sense. And one of them, a being known as the Time Drake, the Slow Burn. But its true name is Nikaronoks. That looks kind of like a komodo dragon with an extra set of arms, but huge... Got wind of the things that you did on the Day of Story and Song.

Smelt the bonds that you forged, like spiders at the center of a web that reached across all realities. Sensed all of the energy of that and broke from its constraints, it's prison within the fae realm. To make one big attempt to find the four of you, to find your weak point. To sever your bonds to the world, even if that means undoing the victories that you've had across your lives. Because that's enough energy for it to sustain itself.

So, what you understand, Merle, very quickly in this rush of images, is that this is a very powerful creature's one shot at survival. And it has to find a point in your timeline to kill you, in order to like generate enough power to keep itself alive. And these are its little baddies that it brought with it.  
[chuckles]

**Griffin:** [chuckles]

**Merle:** So, Coolio, is it?

**Travis:** Mm-hm.

**Kuo:** Yeah, Coolio.

**Merle:** I'm gonna need you to text that to me.

**Griffin:** [laughs] What a good sport.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Clint:** What? [chuckles]



**Griffin:** Was Kuo so charmed by this incredible nature roll—

**Justin:** What a roll!

**Griffin:** Yes!

**Aabria:** What a roll. You gotta honor the dice because that makes no fuckin' sense.

**Merle:** Can you email that to me or text it to me? Because I don't know if I'll remember all that.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Merle:** How about this—

**Clint:** Merle tells everybody what you just told him.

**Aabria:** Yeah, perfect.

**Travis:** Yeah, thank you.

**Aabria:** Okay. So, information has been given. Do you want Kuo to assist you at all in the fight or just hang back and protect the house?

**Clint:** Stay near to me, because I just blessed everybody else. So, you know, I might need more protection. Because as a true cleric, I have put everybody else's welfare ahead of my own.

**Aabria:** Mm-hm. And even through this like incredible bond, you hear a belabored sigh. As Kuo takes up a position of defense behind you.

**Travis:** What does Bless do, dad?

**Clint:** Oh, I'm glad you asked me that, Travis. Bless, you bless up to three creatures of your choice—in this case four—within range—five. 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 saving throw.

**Travis:** Excellent. Perfect, perfect. Thank you.

**Aabria:** Okay, so we're back up to the top. Magnus, you're up.

**Travis:** So, Magnus is going to rush out the back door.

**Aabria:** Mm-hm?

**Travis:** Or are there back windows?

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Of course there are.

**Travis:** Yeah. Okay, Magnus goes cannon-balling through one of the windows.

**Aabria:** Yes.

**Travis:** And yelling:

**Magnus:** No time for doors!

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** Are there any trees around?

**Aabria:** You know, I'm gonna leave that as a question for Taako. Where is this beautiful home of yours?

**Justin:** Dang, I was just sort of floating in Oblivion in my head...

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** Oh, no.

**Justin:** It's like... I think it's like on a... I feel like seaside town. By a cliff. Like picturesque. You know, real pretty. And yeah, that's about it.

**Travis:** Are there any trees?

**Justin:** Trees? You want trees? You got trees, baby.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Like yeah, some pine trees.

**Justin:** There are some trees over there. And then over there, there's an ocean. And then there's a desert behind. There's like kind of, like whatever kind of environment you want to envision, it's like got that nearby. It's a prime locale, except for the current moment when it is being attacked by the Slow Burn.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** All right. Magnus wants to line up and see if he can line up a tree with some baddies coming. And he's gonna Rail Split that tree down.

**Justin:** They're more like—they're like not—they're pretty small trees.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Why would you do this to me?

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** I just don't want you to feel like—it's like—it's not—not like a thick, lush... It's more like, you know, they're wispier.

**Travis:** How tall?

**Aabria:** It's like a chaparral situation.

**Justin:** Like a chaparral, it's like seven feet.

**Travis:** Is this because I smashed through your windows?

**Griffin:** This is just what the world—

**Aabria:** This is the third one.

**Griffin:** Justin didn't decide this, Travis. This is just what the trees are like.

**Justin:** Listen, I've got a lot of sketches here of my home that I've known about for a long time.

**Travis:** It's just in the entirety of TAZ: Balance, I don't think Magnus ever felled a tree with Rail Splitter the entire time. A thing that I was so anxious to do.

**Justin:** I mean, you could fell these for sure, it's just not going to have a big impact.

**Travis:** Oh, okay. Well then rather than fell a tree, Magnus is going to... charge at a bad person.

**Aabria:** Yeah, I'll say that there's a couple coming around like the far edge of this incredibly long, encounter-busting wall that's been thrown up.

**Travis:** He's going to charge at them with Rail Splitter drawn.

**Aabria:** Yes?

**Travis:** In a straight line. "Immediately before taking this [action??], you either gain a plus five bonus to the attack's damage roll, or push that target up to 10 feet away from you." How close are they to the Wall of Force, coming around it?

**Aabria:** They're probably only like 15 feet, like they skirted the wall very closely to try to get around as fast as possible.

**Travis:** Excellent, excellent, excellent. Yeah, so then he's gonna rush at them with Phantom Fist.

**Aabria:** Ooh?

**Travis:** And he's going to punch the one closest to him.

**Aabria:** [chants] Do a hit!

**Travis:** With a hit. So, that's plus 11...

**Aabria:** Yes?

**Travis:** Oh, that's a nat 20. So that's 31.

**Griffin:** Whew!

**Aabria:** Amazing. Yeah, that's gonna barely hit, good.

**Travis:** And so, the damage there is two D4 plus five.

**Aabria:** We're gonna be cute about crits, because totaling damage at this high level of D&D is actually incredibly boring. You crit, so just tell me how you destroy like this sort of like burning elven figure.

**Travis:** So, as he comes running in, he has the charger maneuver to push them 10 feet back. But as he hits, Phantom Fist also fires off. So, that glowing fist lifts them off the ground and blows them back into that Wall of Force. And they hit that and disintegrate against the Wall of Force on impact.

**Aabria:** Amazing. You see them like hit and sort of shatter against the Wall of Force. And then you see the very edges of the Wall of Force begin to catch fire.

**Griffin:** Oh, no!

**Aabria:** At the very, very edges, the wall a force is beginning to burn away.

**Travis:** Cool! Magnus thinks that's great. He then draws Phantom Fist two-handed—or sorry, Rail Splitter two-handed and swings at the next closest one.

**Griffin:** Using Phantom Fist two-handed is an interesting concept.

**Travis:** I know, it'd be like this—boom.

**Griffin:** Just like tucking— nyeow! [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Ga-gah! That's a normal punch.

**Travis:** That was a nat one with Rail Splitter.

**Aabria:** Oh, no.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Clint:** Don't you have advantage?

**Travis:** Oh, wait, do I have advantage? Oh, I have that inspiration. Right, I'm gonna use the inspiration.

**Aabria:** Yeah, use the inspiration!

**Clint:** Is that from the Bless?

**Travis:** No—

**Aabria:** Oh, don't forget, you're supposed to be adding a D40 to your attack rolls, also.

**Griffin:** Yeah!

**Travis:** Well, yeah, but I just disintegrated that guy last time, so...

**Aabria:** Yeah, I mean, that's fair.

**Travis:** So then...

**Aabria:** Keep using it until I figure out how to knock the Bless off of Merle.

**Travis:** There we go. 28 total.

**Aabria:** It hits. Roll your second attack, too.

**Travis:** And then... that's the nat 20 again.

**Griffin:** You're fucking kidding me!

**Aabria:** Amazing!

**Griffin:** This is on the computer. These are real-ass rolls.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] I love this. Go ahead and just describe for me how you absolutely like destroy this like burning, dark blue Dragonborn.

**Travis:** So, he comes in with that first hit and hits it real solid. I'm gonna say buries it in the ribs. Like in the ribs. And then with his strength, lifts it up like in the ribs and pushes down again, so it chops all the way through.

**Aabria:** Amazing. So you chop through a guy?

**Travis:** Mm-hm.

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** That's horrifying.

**Justin:** Whoa, he's a dad!

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Oh, no!

**Justin:** [chuckles] A picture of his kids falls out of his pocket.

**Travis:** And then Magnus chops up the picture, too.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** The kids are all burning and weird, also.

**Travis:** Yeah!

**Aabria:** Amazing.

**Justin:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Okay, Magnus, I do you need something from you. Let's call this... I don't want it to be a con save because I know that's good. Fuck it. Give me a constitution saving throw.

**Travis:** A constitution saving throw...

**Aabria:** As you chop this boy in half.

**Travis:** That's a four. But I'm gonna use Indomitable to roll that again.

**Aabria:** Okay.



**Travis:** Because that would only be a 13 and I—oh, that's a 10, great. 19 total. Wait, can I use Bless on saving throws?

**Aabria:** Yeah, you can! [chuckles]

**Travis:** Okay, is it D4?

**Aabria:** I mean, it's fine and I'm happy you did it.

**Travis:** Or is it a dad four?

**Aabria:** It's a D4.

**Travis:** Yeah, it's a three. So, 22 total.

**Aabria:** Ah, man, the DC was 20. You're very, very welcome for Merle doing a good job.

**Travis:** Thanks, Merle.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Clint:** You're welcome!

**Aabria:** As you split to this bad boy in half, it kicks up embers like a dying fire. And you see one of them alights on like the sort of cuff of your shirt and begins to hit and burn too. And you quickly like tear off and like get rid of that piece of your shirt. Realizing that like if this burning on these bad boys touches you all, you will begin to be consumed by it too.

**Griffin:** Fuck.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Aabria:** Okay. Anything else with your bonus action?

**Travis:** I am then going to dash back to the house. I'm just gonna keep that going. You know what I mean? Like rush out, hit, get back. He's not as young as he used to be. He's not a fool, he's not gonna be out there by himself. I'm not an idiot anymore. I'm a wise, old man now. Of what, 39? I don't know. How old's Magnus?

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Clint:** When you go through these windows, are you breaking them or are you opening them first?

**Travis:** Oh, yeah, no, I was smashing right through. I come back through another window.

**Aabria:** Yeah, that's four now.

**Travis:** Yeah, I've gone through four windows.

**Aabria:** After Taako mentioned he was more worried about his material goods than us.

**Travis:** He should have big trees to protect his windows, I guess.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** If he had some big trees, the windows would've been safer in a storm or whatever.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Amazing. Okay, Davenport, you're up.

**Griffin:** So, a good number of these slow burners are still like pressed up against the Wall of Force trying to break through, right?

**Aabria:** Yes.

**Griffin:** About like how many of them, if I were to—

**Aabria:** 10.

**Griffin:** 10? Oh, okay. I... click my heels together, activating my Boots of Speed. Which doubles my walking speed. So I can get all the way around the Wall of Force, just right on the other side of it so I'm sort of lined up with all the bad guys.

And then like I reach into my sort of backpack, my JanSport. And a little Tesla coil kind of comes out on my shoulder. And I cast Lightning Bolt in a straight line right down the group of burners. So, everyone in that line needs to make a dexterity saving throw. I'm casting this as a fourth level spell.

**Aabria:** Of course you are. Oh, god... Okay one made it.

**Travis:** [chuckles] The one at the very end just saw nine buddies in front of him, "Oh, no!"

**Aabria:** It was literally just one guy in the middle who was like, "What's happening?" And then just takes one five foot step back.,

**Travis:** He sneezed at the right moment.

**Aabria:** Yeah! [chuckles] He's allergic to walls... of force, and just backs up enough. And the other nine are going to catch the full smoke of this.

**Griffin:** Wow, that's a lot of... wow.

**Aabria:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** That's a fuckin' lot of fours and fives. That's a 41 to everybody who failed, and half that to the one individual who managed to dip out of the way, takes 20.

**Justin:** Whew, fine line.

**Griffin:** Yes, it's everything in a 100 foot by five foot wide line. As a just arcing, blue bolt of electricity just—[cutting sounds] cuts through.

**Aabria:** Hey, go ahead and break some more off, because that's enough to kill all nine of those. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Okay! What do you mean? Break some more like—

**Aabria:** Yeah! Like if you wanted to add a little more dazzle to it.

**Griffin:** Oh, yeah. I mean, it's just... it's like fireworks. They just—[fireworks sounds] pff-pff! Pff-pff-pff-pff!

**Aabria:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Did it get the one that managed to backup or is he—

**Aabria:** No, the one that backed up is just screaming because it's still alive and watched so many people just get melted down.

**Travis:** So, not screaming in pain. Screaming in like terror? [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Ah! It's a little of both, it's mostly mortal fear. [chuckles]

**Travis:** Mm-hm.

**Aabria:** And the two that were casting the like spell get temporarily—like they pause for just a second and look over at the screamer. And then over at you. And kind of clock you. Yeah, okay, that's a pretty good—that's a pretty good action. Anything for your bonus action, Dav?

**Griffin:** Is this shape that I saw earlier, is it getting closer? Is it moving at all? What's the—I want to keep an eye on it now that I'm sort of exposed, because I don't want to get touched.

**Aabria:** Now you're on this side of it. There's only—like you in the front of this house, there's only three burners in front of you. The rest have been

moving around to the back of the home. And you see out in the distance, once again, 50 yards away, that shimmering heat mirage. And then a shimmering mirage on top of it. It's just prowling back and forth and watching. And you see that when you kind of look up to regard it, it sort of turns its head to regard you back.

**Griffin:** I don't like that. I don't actually have anything else I can do because activating my speed boots was my bonus action. I just realized, so I'm done-zo.

**Aabria:** Amazing.

[theme music plays]

[ad reads]

[theme music plays]

**Aabria:** The burners, the three of them that remain, one, gonna keep screaming for a second. The other two finish this spell. And you see kind of—I keep using—that like same burn. But you see they walk forward again and their hands are kind of aflame. It looks like they're going to cast something like Burning Hands. But all they do is touch the Wall of Force. And it begins to ignite.

But it picks up faster. You feel like the wind around you seems to pick up, it feels dry and hot. Very like Southern California fire season. As this entire wall gets effectively disintegrated by this joint spell. The Wall of Force drops. Not that it means that much, now that most of them have walked around to the side. And that's two of the burners' turn.

And the third one, the one that's screaming and in pain, is going to sprint to you, Davenport, and attempt to attack you.

[sound of dice thrown]

**Griffin:** This should be fun.

**Aabria:** Crap... Misses with the first, and natural 19 on the second. That's a 23—

**Justin:** Now wait. If he rushed—did he get within range?

**Aabria:** Oh, shoot!

**Griffin:** Oh!

**Aabria:** So before he's able to reach Davenport, the wall drops, triggering your attack, Taako.

**Justin:** Here it comes, baby.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** Taako raises the crossbow. I'm gonna say the line before I roll because I think it's always better.

**Griffin:** [chuckles] Uh-huh.

**Justin:** There's nothing funny about a cool guy line after the spell's already succeeded.

**Aabria:** Yeah.

**Justin:** So I'm gonna raise a crossbow bolt to my eye and say:

**Taako:** Here's an arrow for you. From me to you. Dwing!

**Justin:** And he makes the sound of the bow with his mouth for some reason.

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** And let's see what we've got here. I've just clicked the button on here because it makes it easier to...

**Griffin:** Oh, boy howdy, that's not very good.

**Justin:** That's a three plus nine, a 12!

**Griffin:** Wow, wow, wow.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Does not hit. Would you like to use your inspiration?

**Justin:** Yeah. Yeah, I'll roll it again.

**Aabria:** Yeah.

**Justin:** Because yeah, I need that inspiration. Here we go.

**Aabria:** I'm gonna pray for you.

**Justin:** Five plus nine, 14!

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** Yeah...

**Clint:** And you've got bless.

**Aabria:** Oh, crap. You do have bless. Add a D4.

**Justin:** Okay, so that's... two. 16.

**Aabria:** Just hits. 16 is a DC on all of our burners.

**Justin:** Yes. Let me roll my damage here.

**Aabria:** Amazing.

**Griffin:** It's gonna be like three.

**Justin:** Eight! Plus three, 11!

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** Not bad!

**Justin:** Not bad!

**Aabria:** Wait, it's 11?

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Aabria:** Okay, this guy is barely alive. And he takes the crossbow bolt to the neck and continues screaming, as you actually see the bolt begins to get consumed with that same fire. But he's gonna use the last of his strength to lunge and try to tackle Davenport. And the second one—

**Justin:** Taako immediately by the way turns away like hands in the air like:

**Taako:** Did you see? With a crossbow!

**Travis:** And Magnus like...

**Magnus:** Ah, yeah!

**Taako:** Yeah! I'm an archer now.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Taako:** Someone give me a large pet. I'm a hunter. Prowling the woods for my prey. I'm a ranger now.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Davenport—



**Taako:** I need a hood! This is a whole new identity. I need a hood! I'm a ranger!

**Aabria:** You hear Kravitz yelling from the back:

**Kravitz:** Stop bragging! There are so many people back here!

**Aabria:** And Davenport, you get effectively tackled by this slow burner, because—sorry, let me double check. Does a 23 hit?

**Griffin:** You're not gonna believe this. It doesn't. [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Shut up! Crap...

**Travis:** It helps to have magical Ironman armor.

**Griffin:** It's pretty close! It's pretty close. But no cigar.

**Aabria:** Amazing. So, this poor boy scrabbles helplessly against your armor. And it's just gonna fall—

**Davenport:** Shh-shh. It's okay. It's okay.

**Aabria:** Yeah. [chuckles] He's just sort of sobbing.

**Davenport:** Shh, I know, I know. It's been a long day for all of us.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Justin:** He's in full like, "Just think of the rabbits, George," territory.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah, look out over the water.

**Justin:** Look out over the water, poor guy. Hold on.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] I will let you, as a reaction, end this poor boy who has literally two hit points left.

**Griffin:** Yeah, anybody—actually, anybody who ends their action in range of me has to make a strength saving—I can activate this. Make a string saving throw, little friend.

[sound of dice thrown]

**Aabria:** A 16?

**Griffin:** No. So, I pull him right up into me and uppercut him with my Thunder Gauntlet. So, that's going to be a...

**Justin:** [chuckles] What an unnecessary display of force, Christ.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** 28...

**Justin:** "Shh, it'll all be over soon." Ka-boom!

**Aabria:** Don't forget your bless.

[group laugh]

**Justin:** "Just slip gently away." Ka-boom!

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** He could have forehead kissed him to death.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** All right, I add four with the Bless, so that's 32. Does 32—

**Justin:** [chortles]

**Aabria:** Yes, Griffin, that hits. [chuckles]

**Clint:** That kills him and his twin brother who's 20 miles away.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** That's nine thunder damage. And also, if he tries to attack anybody else—

**Travis:** I don't think that's gonna happen.

**Griffin:** He has disadvantage—okay, yeah.

**Aabria:** He's *dead!* [chuckles]

**Griffin:** I go:

**Davenport:** Shh. Shh. Shh.

**Griffin:** [spoofs punching sound] Fw-bwsh!

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Travis:** And we all go:

**Magnus:** It was his time.

**Justin:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** My god.

**Justin:** Natural causes.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Aabria:** Somewhere in the back, even though you can't see the full form of Nikaranoks, you see it kind of shudder uncomfortably with like the extraordinary—

**Travis:** "That's fucked up. That was really fucked up." [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Even the bad guy's like, "Look, I'm an untethered trying to erase you from existence. And that was fucked."

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Come on, guys."

**Aabria:** [chuckles] And continues fixing—

**Griffin:** I point like:

**Davenport:** You're next.

**Griffin:** Even though I have no idea what this thing is and I'm very scared of it.

**Aabria:** Make an intimidation check!

**Griffin:** Oh, that's not gonna go good at all. I'm just a little guy.

**Aabria:** You're just a little guy in a big suit!

**Griffin:** Four plus zero.

**Travis:** You just—okay.

**Aabria:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** No, you know what? I'm gonna use my inspiration.

**Aabria:** Do it.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** Do it!

**Griffin:** Eh... nine.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Does nine do it for you?

**Travis:** [excited squeal]

**Aabria:** No.

**Davenport:** Ah, yikes, bye!

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] It kind of gives you a strange look. And it's caught between... we're gonna follow this up, give me an insight check.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Aabria:** Because you know you didn't... like, you didn't cow it, even though it's uncomfortable with what it saw.

**Griffin:** That's another fuckin' four. Plus one this time though, for five.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] You have no idea what its fucking thinking. And it's gonna continue pacing. We're gonna keep going. Initiative. [chuckles] Please roll higher.

**Griffin:** Yeah, it would've been weird if I did know what it was thinking. That would have been pretty weird.

**Aabria:** It would have been pretty wild.

**Travis:** You can read it all over its face. It's hungry.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Taako, you're up. That was your health action from round one. So, you're up now.

**Justin:** So, what do we have now? There are just two—

**Aabria:** You got two in the front of the house with the wall dropped. And you still got like nine in the back of the house.

**Justin:** Dang. So that's a lot back there... How does it look, like overall, does it feel like we're like handling this pretty comfortably currently?

**Aabria:** I mean, there were like 20 something of them six seconds ago, and now there are half of that many. So, you're actually doing a very good job. Whatever is on the horizon that you see Davenport's giant Iron Man suit staring at, is probably cause for concern.

**Travis:** Right, right.

**Griffin:** Right. Yeah, you probably didn't—

**Travis:** Yeah, yeah. Giant, evil, untethered dragon god. It's not like, "Well, we've just about got this one wrapped up."

**Aabria:** He's just like a cat staring in the corner, yeah.

**Justin:** Okay, let me... one of the stragglers that's up front, I'm going to shoot him with a crossbow.

**Aabria:** All right. Make an attack roll for me.

**Justin:** Hey!

**Griffin:** You are fucking kidding me. He really is!

**Justin:** That's a natural 20! Plus nine, 29.

**Clint:** Plus four from Bless!

**Justin:** 33.

**Aabria:** There you go—you have to roll it. You don't just get all four, Justin.

**Griffin:** You gotta roll, you don't—yeah.

**Justin:** Oh, okay, yeah. I need all of 'em, so let me see...

**Travis:** The DC is 32, so—

**Justin:** That's a one, that's fair. Okay, so it's 30.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] It's just 30? Doesn't hit. Now, we're going to respect the crit rule. You just describe how you completely merc one of the two left in the front.

**Justin:** I'm like:

**Taako:** I don't know what to do without magic!

**Justin:** And then I pull out the crossbow from behind my back and just blast the guy right in his head.

**Aabria:** [laughs] Amazing. One of these like caster burners like just takes the bolt through the center of his dome and drops immediately. And there's one left in the front.

**Griffin:** Level 17 is awfully late to duel class, but it really does feel like Taako is moving in that direction.

**Justin:** Well, you know what it is? Part of it is like my dexterity scale, like...

**Griffin:** It's big. You're the flick with it, yeah.

**Justin:** Taako's dexterity is really high, so it's like, yeah, it's fine. Level 17, I'll just shooting 'em a crossbow.

**Aabria:** Look, that was crazily effective.

**Justin:** But that's the implication of a level 17, right? You've lived a full life.

**Aabria:** Yeah!

**Justin:** [chuckles] You know where you're at time to explore?

**Aabria:** You're basically demigods now. This is great. All right, anything with your bonus action or movement?

**Justin:** I am gonna rushing to the house to see if I have some kind of hood. I feel like I need a hood. So, I'm going to rush back into the house to look for hood.

**Aabria:** Yeah, give me an investigation check.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Aabria:** Because Kravitz for sure does the laundry and would have put it away.

**Justin:** That's an 18 plus five, 23.

**Aabria:** Oh, yeah, you know, exactly where all the like mood clothing—what does the hood look like? You have a lady DM now, so fashion is important to me. [chuckles]



**Justin:** Okay.

**Aabria:** Paint me a little picture.

**Justin:** Well, that doesn't make me any more skilled at coming up with it, though, Aabria.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Pressure.

**Justin:** So it's like, really dark, dark purple. And if you hit it in just the right light, it like glints off with a prismatic sort of shimmer. And he pulls it up far enough so that you can just see two glowing eyes from his elven, you know, heritage. And it's glowing out. And that's the sort of like purple cloak that he's wearing, as he strides back out with his arrow.

**Aabria:** Please take an inspiration—

**Taako:** Good news, babe! I'm a ranger!

**Aabria:** [laughs] And you just hear like a slight delay and Kravitz...

**Kravitz:** What?

**Taako:** Susan, quick! One shot! One shot for the Gram! Look, I'm a ranger!

**Aabria:** You hear just like—

**Justin:** And I pose in front of the guy I just shot with the arrow in my cloak, with the bow over.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Taako:** And then the caption, make it #WhoNeedsMagic. And then make sure you get the arrow and it's clear I did the arrow.

**Aabria:** Susan does in fact come sprinting back in.

**Justin:** Of course she does. She knows a good opportunity when she sees one.

**Aabria:** She like has escaped Kravitz's grip. Comes in, snaps a couple for the Gram.

**Travis:** On her Adventure Zune, yeah.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] On her Adventure Zune. And then gets re-scooped up by Kravitz, who's like:

**Kravitz:** Just leave! You useless bitch!

**Aabria:** And carries her back out of the house again to leave the narrative.

**Travis:** This time, for sure.

**Aabria:** This time, for sure!

**Justin:** I wanna give—yeah, this time Carol's actually—yeah. Susan's actually done for. I do want to give a quick award to Travis. I've just, this is the first time I've noticed it, most distracting drink. We've all been competing for it and I think Travis has finally gotten it.

**Griffin:** Yeah, you win!

**Justin:** With the most sort of visually distracting beverage. [chuckles]

**Travis:** I'm a thirsty boy.

**Justin:** Yeah, you're thirsty.

**Aabria:** I like it. Also, you do have inspiration for a very good hood description.

**Justin:** Ah, nice!

**Aabria:** So, you know how to impress me, boys. Paint me a word picture. Okay, Taako, that's you. Merle, you're up.

**Clint:** So, there are nine in the back?

**Aabria:** Nine in the back, one in the front.

**Clint:** Okay, are the nine in the back—

**Justin:** As they say.

[group chuckle]

**Justin:** If you know what I mean.

**Travis:** I don't?

**Justin:** Perhaps you—

**Aabria:** The shocker is different in 2021.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Justin:** The super shocker!

**Travis:** A lot of things have changed in the last two years. [chuckles]

**Aabria:** We're all different now!

**Clint:** And the nine in the back, are they all like fire-based?

**Aabria:** I mean, they're all physically burning, yes. These are all... and you even hear a little bit from Kuo, like yeah, these are all in the thrall of the Slow Burn.

**Travis:** Oh wait, are we killing innocent people?

**Aabria:** No. They're already dead. You're good. These are Marvel rules. Faceless hordes, you're absolutely good to kill 'em.

**Travis:** Cool.

**Clint:** Merle is going to create water in a big block. He's going to drop this giant cube of water on... just drop it amongst the nine out back. He has to flip through the index in the Extreme Teen Bible to find out where it is because he's never tried this before.

**Aabria:** Respect.

**Clint:** And he's out of wine. So, he creates this water, "Up to 10 gallons of clean water within range in an open container, or the waterfalls as rain in a 30 foot cube within range."

**Aabria:** So you want the rain, yeah?

**Clint:** Yeah. And he is doing this at sixth level. Casting a sixth level spell.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Okay?

**Clint:** "At higher levels, when you cast a spell using a spell slot of second level or higher, you create or destroy 10 additional gallons of water." He is dropping 60 gallons of water on those nine.

**Aabria:** Amazing.

**Justin:** That's not that much water. Like it sounds like a lot of water, but it's really not that much.

**Travis:** It's like a fish tank.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** You think 60 gallons is a large fish tank?

**Travis:** A very large fish tank, yeah.

**Clint:** Okay, wise-ass. How about this, he does it at ninth level!

**Aabria:** Oh my god. [chuckles]

**Clint:** He does it at ninth level! Which means—

**Justin:** There's like, I'm looking at some large fish tanks, and most of 'em are like 75 gallons.

**Griffin:** Wow?

**Justin:** Like, they're not even that big.

**Travis:** Still, hold on, if somebody dropped that on you though Justin, even without the glass—

**Justin:** Like if you think about a standard barrel, that's about 60 gallons. Like you just kind of like... dumped a barrel of water on 'em.

**Travis:** It's a lot! Didn't you see the ice bucket challenge? That shit would hurt.

**Justin:** Yeah, if you're trying to prank 'em, it's very good. It's a good prank.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Clint:** All right, I'll go back to sixth level.

**Aabria:** Merle Highchurch.

**Griffin:** Dad, I support your choices.

**Clint:** Thank you.

**Justin:** I support you too.

**Aabria:** Merle Highchurch, are you using a ninth level spell slot?

**Clint:** No, no, only sixth—

**Aabria:** No! No, no, no. You stay with me, sir. Look at me. Are you using a ninth level spell slot to cast a non-violent, water-based spell?

**Travis:** Trust Aabria. Yes, trust Aabria.

**Clint:** Yes. Yes, I am. Yes.

**Aabria:** I love this. So, as you cast it, I—like when you burn something high, this is—this feels like a crit. And you are synched up with Coolio right now in a way that would suggest that you have a little extra insight on what's effective and what to do here. So, even though that seems weird and bad, and maybe everyone else in the party would tell you that's a horrible idea to do, you trust your instincts. And you cast the spell.

**Clint:** And I say:

**Magnus:** H2-Oh, yeah!

**Aabria:** Look, I was curating a cool moment. You fucking killed it.

**Clint:** I'm sorry.

**Griffin:** [laughs]

**Justin:** Boy, Aabria, if you knew how many times I've wanted to say that to my dad.

**Aabria:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And not just in The Adventure Zone, but in life.

**Justin:** Yeah, just in life.

**Clint:** Every birthday party.

**Aabria:** Every birthday party! So Merle, here's we're gonna do. Kuo, what you see is as you are like doing whatever hand motions and like spell components it requires for you to like cast the spell, Kuo is doing it with you perfectly in sync behind you, as you like face out the back of this house. And what you summon is not a cube of rainfall, but like a torrential downpour of rain. You're going to wipe the nine off the board. I want you to describe how it happens and what it looks like.

**Travis:** Some fuckin' water bending!

**Aabria:** Let's go!

**Clint:** Well, it starts off as a gentle rain. More of a mist, really, or a heavy fog. But then very rapidly the drops get bigger. You know those great, big drops that—and then, man, they're just pounding down. I mean, you can't even see on the other side.

And this—and it almost looks like a cube of rain. But that would be ridiculous. And it comes down and it just wallops 'em. And it takes 'em out like the... the pharaoh's troops at the Red Sea. Just bwah! Just whams over 'em. Creates two walls of water even that spreads from the outside. And it's pretty damn majestic.

**Aabria:** You see that like this water has both sort of physically bludgeoned and also put out the like burning across the Slow Burn's thralls. And with that, anyone that was still in the front of the house, especially Davenport, looking out and kind of seeing Nikaranoks moving back and forth.

You see them suddenly like freeze, panicked. And he gets really low to the ground, realizing that only one of his thralls is still on the board. And you

see him turn and begin to sprint, galloping on all six legs. Away, back towards the shimmer.

**Clint:** And Merle turns to Taako and says:

**Merle:** Yeah, that's how you do magic. He-he-he.

**Justin:** Do he think I've lost the ability to do—I guess you would have any context for it. He must have thought I lost—

**Travis:** And also, he is technically correct. That is how you do magic.

**Aabria:** [chuckles] None of this is technically wrong.

**Clint:** Don't forget the, "He-he-he."

**Aabria:** [chuckles] Okay. Merle, is there anything else you want to do like bonus action or movement?

**Clint:** Check with... Kuyo?

**Aabria:** Kuo.

**Clint:** Kuo! Checks with Kuo through the mental link to—

**Merle:** You okay? You cool? You didn't get any water on you, did you?

**Kuo:** It's fine if water gets on me.

**Merle:** Oh, yeah. But I mean, you saw the kablooeey of—

**Kuo:** I'm not a normal person. But that's fair.

**Merle:** Right, not normal.

**Kuo:** We did a good job.



**Merle:** Check. Check. Check.

**Kuo:** You know that the Time Drake is running away, right?

**Merle:** Oh, I did that? I chased it away? [chuckles]

**Kuo:** Oh, you think that's a victory? It's going to go somewhere else in time to try to kill you since it didn't win here.

**Merle:** Oh... oops.

**Kuo:** You're not getting this.

**Aabria:** And Kuo is going to push you towards the front door.

**Kuo:** Fucking run!

**Merle:** Right! Running! Running... running...

**Travis:** I follow Merle.

**Griffin:** Are we still in initiative? Or are we—

**Aabria:** Yeah, we'll drop out of initiative.

**Griffin:** Sick.

**Aabria:** There's one burner left, by the way, that looks very abandoned and confused.

**Justin:** I'm gonna get him—I'm gonna get—we've just dropped out of initiative and I'm gonna get him with a shot as we're running away.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** I love that. I'm not gonna make you roll for it. Is it behind the back? Just paint me a word picture.

**Justin:** [spoofs arrow sound] Pi-chew! Just like as we're sprinting, he just puts his arm behind him and fires off a shot. And just hits him in the leg and he like falls over like, "This is worse!"

[group chuckle]

**Travis:** "Gangrene is definitely gonna set in, but we don't have advanced medicine."

**Justin:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** Yeah, so as you guys like sprint in the direction of the heat shimmer, what you actually see is, as this last burner is sort of felled and like sits on the ground like, "Ah!" You see that across the next like minute and a half, the rest of its form is completely consumed and just sort of dissolves down to the crossbow bolt.

So these things were never here for a long time. Just a good time. And that's what you see as you sprint towards the heat shimmer. Is there anything else you guys want to do as you're like covering ground? If we were doing this in rounds, you would have a little bit of time to get there. So, any intel you're trying to get as you go?

**Griffin:** How far are we from the shimmer, would you say?

**Aabria:** About 50 yards.

**Griffin:** Can you give me that in—

**Aabria:** Sorry, 150 feet!

**Griffin:** 150 feet?

**Aabria:** I don't know why the fuck I decided yards was—

**Justin:** It's like three, Griff—but Griffin, it's like... it's times three.

**Griffin:** It is times three, you're right.

**Justin:** Just, you can do times three?

**Travis:** It wasn't like you had to convert it into meters?

**Griffin:** [chuckles] You're right.

**Aabria:** But still, like times three though. [chuckles]

**Justin:** It's like times three.

**Griffin:** Is this shimmer any kind of like spell or anything that I would recognize?

**Aabria:** Give me an arcana check. And I'll give you an advantage.

**Griffin:** That's a 10 plus 11, 21. And a nine plus 11, 20.

**Aabria:** You guys have dealt with a lot of very strange non-spell-based like powerful magic. This is different than you've experienced, but like in that it is unique to your experiences, but very familiar. In that this is something that like tears between not just like places in the world and in the universe, but like time. It treats time like location.

So, what you are running toward is this massive like chasm in time—that's going to stay relative to this location—just appears in front of you as this like heat shimmer that the Time Drake has like dug out. And you see it kind of like getting towards the edge and like re-digging its claws in. Before it's going to like try to jump back through.

**Griffin:** I want to try something pretty foolhardy, but I feel like Davenport's feeling pretty...

**Aabria:** You feeling spicy?

**Griffin:** Yeah, feeling pretty spicy.

**Aabria:** Love this.

**Griffin:** I've still got my speed boots on, so I'm gonna try to gain some ground and cast Dispel Magic on this shimmering rift. Just to like see what happens. I don't know if this will do anything. "Any spell a third level or lower on the target ends. For each spell of fourth level or higher, make an ability check using your spell casting ability. The DC equals 10 plus the spell's level."

**Aabria:** So, this is not a spell.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Aabria:** But I love a chance for success.

**Griffin:** Okay?

**Aabria:** So, go ahead and make that ability check for me. And Bless doesn't count anymore.

**Griffin:** Okay, that's 16 plus my spell casting modifier, is plus five. So it's a 21.

**Aabria:** A 21 will do it. What does it look like as Davenport attempts to disrupt this miasma of energy.

**Griffin:** So, all the artificer spells are not sort of magic. They are like gadgets. I think this is just like almost a Luigi's Mansion style vacuum that like comes out of the backpack. And it's got a hose and I try to just suck all of the magic up into my vacuum cleaner.

**Aabria:** Griffin that's a very specific description. Are you gonna stick with it?

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Yeah, I am.

**Aabria:** Okay. So, what happens, as Davenport like summons and gathers his energy and takes it into his own magical ability, is that the magic doesn't go away, it's just no longer under the Time Drake's control. And it looks up at you. And you get a little bit of that shimmer dropping as you pull the magical away, and you see its face.

It's this massive like red and black, like iguana, Komodo dragon. Like a very normal lizard looking dragon. With two sets of like front legs and a set of powerfully built back legs. And like a long, mean tail with spines going down from like the top of its head all the way to the tip of its tail. And it quirks its eyes and blinks two sets of eyes at you, as you take all of that magic away from it. But the magic still hits. And this was a rupture in time.

So, instead of the Time Drake getting to decide where you're going to go next, you're going to. So, let's play a game, the five of us.

**Travis:** Weren't we already doing that?!

**Griffin:** That's what we've been doing this whole time!

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** It's a game!

**Aabria:** It's a game within a game. We love it.

**Travis:** [groans] Ah!

**Aabria:** [chuckles] So, we are going to jump back in time to the... We're going to go back to the scene of another triumph. Back when you were younger adventurers, when you were still chasing down grand relics. Maybe just after the Suffering Game. You had a fight. I want you to tell me the

circumstances of it. Because you're about to go revisit it and fight in it again. Let's start with you, Davenport. Where was it?

**Griffin:** I mean, whenever—

**Aabria:** Just give me a—

**Griffin:** When everyone else was gathering the grand relics, Davenport was a sort of mindless... husk.

**Aabria:** I know! This is sort of a Griffin describing the thing.

**Griffin:** Oh, okay.

**Aabria:** Yeah, so you are all going to build this battle that's happened, but we never saw in The Adventure Zone.

**Clint:** So are we like quantum leaping into our old forms?

**Aabria:** You'll find out in a second!

**Travis:** We'll get to that!

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Clint:** Okay, okay.

**Aabria:** So, you give me the location and I'll get the like other details from other people.

**Griffin:** I mean, the only thing that happened kind of after Suffering Game was the day of Story and Song. So, I feel like—

**Aabria:** You say that... I am changing the timeline, my guy.

**Griffin:** Oh, shit. Okay.

**Aabria:** Welcome to me being in charge.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Aabria:** Like it doesn't have to have like dire consequences. This can literally be like you go lie the full rogue samurai. Like, at some point you guys were traveling, you crossed the town, there was like a bandit situation and you helped them out. Like this doesn't have to be a big thing.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Aabria:** Just at some point, an encounter broke out where you were fairly high-level, but it's before endgame.

**Griffin:** Then it was... it was an adventure in which a ghost ship surfaced and was sort of terrorizing the seas. And the ghost ship summoned basically the Kraken. And there was a horrible battle.

**Aabria:** Okay, okay, okay, all right, everyone gets a—shh, shh, shh.

**Griffin:** Oh, sorry.

**Aabria:** Travis—no, you're good. Travis, add a detail.

**Travis:** I am going to say that—

**Griffin:** Oh, wait, can I change it? Oh, no, shit. I changed it.

**Aabria:** [laughs] I'll allow it.

**Griffin:** Can it be the Battle Fest, the WrestleMania event that the heroes had to stop a war god from returning?

**Aabria:** Absolutely!

**Griffin:** Okay, cool.

**Aabria:** Perfect. Okay, Travis, add a detail.

**Travis:** There was a huge cash prize for the Battle Fest that they were playing for. That made it very, very attractive for everyone.

**Aabria:** Extremely lucrative. Love it. Justin, there was a point at which this could have gone incredibly poorly. But you averted disaster. What went right?

**Justin:** Chrombo was the big, bad guy. And he was about to—he had just jumped off the—they have like eight turnbuckles at Battle Fest and he jumped off the highest turnbuckle. And he was gonna squash everybody. But Taako had one spell slot left, because he had used all of his other spell slots. And he cast Feather Fall on him and just made him fall very slowly. And then they kicked his ass.

**Clint:** [chuckles]

**Aabria:** [laughs] Amazing. Was there something else you wanted to add? You had a thought?

**Justin:** No, that's it. I just wanted to make it clear that Taako had used all of his spell slots, so he basically had like no magic.

**Aabria:** I love how into doing magic for this you are. It warms my heart.

**Travis:** Oh, I should also say that detail. So the huge cash prize is what Magnus used to start Hammer and Tails and Merle basically retired with that money.

**Justin:** Oh, okay, yeah.

**Travis:** And Taako bought his house with.

**Justin:** Okay, yeah, I love that.



**Aabria:** That's great. All right.

**Travis:** And you know what? Eventually a portion of it went to Davenport and helped him buy the Wave Humper. It just—that was a huge cash prize.

**Griffin:** It was seed money for all of our retirements, yeah.

**Justin:** We invested properly, so off the dividends.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Aabria:** Okay, and Clint, finally—

**Travis:** In Buttcoin. Which is like Bitcoin but in The Adventure Zone world. [chuckles]

**Griffin:** Awesome.

**Aabria:** I hate that I have to write Buttcoin down.

**Travis:** It's like money, but coin.

**Griffin:** You do not hate that.

**Justin:** You don't have to, it's not canon.

**Travis:** It is canon. We invested in Buttcoin.

**Aabria:** I got it. It's canon now. You hate to see it. But there it is. And Clint, finally. There was one regret, one thing that sort of slipped between the cracks. An acceptable loss on this victory. What was it?

**Clint:** At one point, Merle's tights split open. And everybody could see his rear end.

**Justin:** Don't say butt—no, they saw his butt?! Aabria, is that the fucking dramatic stakes you're hoping to work with here?

**Aabria:** [chuckles] I don't know what I expected.

**Justin:** Is that what you were angling for?

**Travis:** You've learned an important lesson as a DM for the McElroys, don't let dad go last.

**Aabria:** [chuckles]

**Justin:** [laughs] You need somebody swoop behind him like, and that was the butt that started a war that people cared about.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Clint:** And it ruined his confidence. And he developed terrific stage fright.

**Aabria:** Man, that's great. I'm writing that part down, too. Thank you. So, as Davenport like sucks up this time magic, you see a bunch of possibilities flip before your eyes.

And Davenport, so much of this has circled around events that you were tied to, but that you missed out on. That you were held back from for so many reasons, a lot of which your fantasy therapists would love to unpack in the future. But you remembered hearing a story of a massive like wrestling situation. And in that little spark of thought, all of you are dragged there. And that's where we're going to pick up next time.

**Griffin:** Whew...

**Aabria:** Prra-prra-prra!

[Imbalance theme music plays]

[blooper beep]

**Griffin:** If you'd—okay, let's—dad, you've gotta get off the call because we've gotta talk about this.

**Aabria:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Nine in the back is a lot, but what's almost more ridiculous is that you have just one in the front.

**Aabria:** Just to remind you.

[Imbalance theme music plays]

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