

The Zone of Adventure: Imbalance - Episode three

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Aabria: Hello and welcome to part three of TAZ: Imbalance. I'm your game master, Aabria Iyengar. I guess I don't have to really introduce you guys because this is your goddamn show. How you doing, boys? I'm breaking all your stuff!

Justin: I love it.

Travis: Love it.

Griffin: I am so stoked.

Clint: Take it.

Aabria: I definitely thought you were gonna something else, Griffin. I was like, oh, no! [chuckles]

Griffin: It means nothing to us!

Aabria: Good. Well, it's time to finish what we began with part three, the future. And let's jump into it! So...

Griffin: [chuckles] Whoa!

Justin: Whoa!

Aabria: Whoa!

Clint: Whoa!

[Imbalance theme music plays]

Aabria: The past is not pristine. The present is at risk. And the future is unknowable. Merle, Magnus, Taako and Davenport, Nikaranoks, also known as the Time Drake, Bond Breaker and the Slow Burn. One of the untethered

fae monsters that exists in a different plane, touching your world, has seen the web of bonds and light that you've created across your illustrious lifetimes, and seeks to empower himself by breaking your bonds by reaching into your past, finding a moment of weakness, and destroying you all.

However, the best-laid plans of mice and monsters often go awry. And Davenport, in an act of cunning, sucked up the time energy that would have driven the four of you into a battle of Nikaranok's choosing. And instead, in a moment of memory, of thought and of feeling, you are launched somewhere... almost familiar. But almost certainly wrong.

A Battle Fest, years ago. Most of you remember this. Davenport, you do not. But you were all there to take part in a... what was supposed to be a joyful competition. Some sport with your friend, Jess the Beheader. That took an ugly turn when a god of wanton violence named Geragos was set to be released back into the world.

But Merle, Taako, Magnus, the place where you see yourself now is most certainly not Battle Fest. It's different. It looks different. It feels different. Close, but not quite. Corrupted. Be here, you all stand. No sign of the Time Drake. No sign of your friends. But you have a moment before whatever is to begin, begins. What do you do?

Magnus: Mine is not normally the like kind of analytical, what is going on?

Taako: Don't you mean, when is going on? Sorry, I got ready to say that when I thought you were gonna say, "Where are we?" And I was gonna say, "Don't you mean when are we?" And then you said, "What is..." It didn't work in the moment. I am sorry.

Magnus: Do you want me to do it—I can do it again?

Clint: Yeah, do it again. Take two.

Taako: That's the idea.

Magnus: Okay, when are we? No, fuck, sorry. Let me try one more time.

Taako: It's fine. Kravitz, why are you here? You were here... were you here...

Aabria: [chuckles] You actually see a younger Kravitz standing in front of you. He's in his full like Grim Reaper array and just doesn't seem to notice how formal he is presenting himself right now. And just:

Kravitz: What are you talking about?

Justin: So okay wait, to clarify, do I see a younger Kravitz and the Kravitz from before? Or is there a singular one of each of us?

Aabria: There's a singular Kravitz.

Justin: Okay.

Aabria: Younger and—

Taako: Look at you, all business formal.

Kravitz: What? Yeah, we're here to do a—I didn't bring a costume, so I was gonna... wear this. Maybe do the old voice? I don't know, maybe.

Taako: The British one? I've always been curious about that. I meant to ask you.

Kravitz: Look, it's—

Taako: You spoke in Cockney at first, it was so weird.

Kravitz: Yeah, it seemed... spooky.

Taako: Yeah.

Kravitz: You didn't really seem off-put by it, so I kind of just dropped it after a while.

Taako: Yeah, that's fair.

Kravitz: Do you like it? Do you want me to—I'll do it.

Taako: Maybe later.

Kravitz: Yeah, okay.

Clint: [laughs]

Magnus: Taako?

Taako: Yeah?

Magnus: Like I said, I'm fuzzy, but... Kravitz wasn't here the first time we did this?

Taako: Yeah, we were discussing that at length just a moment ago, if you'll remember.

Magnus: Yeah, but then you seemed to get distracted by talking about the accent.

Taako: Yeah, but the—do you remember the accent?

Magnus: Yeah, no, it was so weird. I don't—yes, but...

Taako: Okay, you know what else? Davenport, when this happened, you were kind of having a rough go of it.

Davenport: A mindless sort of thrall. Yeah, that's a nice way of putting it. Yeah, I've most certainly had a sort of internal glow-up since then,

Justin: I want to do a perception check to see if I noticed any like... I found that if the three of us talk for any extended period of time, we've probably missed something trying to kill us.

Aabria: 100%. [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles] So, my new thing is a couple of conversations, and then I'm going to take a quick swivel. Just a quick swivel.

Aabria: I love that. Please make a perception check with advantage.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: That's 17 plus three. So 20. And then with advantage, it's... under my soundboard, so who cares.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Justin: That one's a two. So let's be happy for our advantage.

Aabria: [chuckles] All right, with a dirty 20—we'll give you a little extra for this. Is there anything specifically you're looking for? Other than like danger.

Justin: I guess either Garagos or the Time Drake. I mean like, the thing I remember from before and the thing I remember from five seconds ago.

Aabria: Yeah. 100%. Okay. So, what you are noticing, especially in this moment, is that this feels like the time period before the actual Battle Fest began. And yet there's this like pressure and like a very low-level rumbling under the ground, that you don't remember the first time.

Griffin: Is there an audience?

Clint: Yeah, that's what I was wondering.

Aabria: No.

Clint: Okay.

Aabria: It's completely empty here.

Griffin: I guess the most important question is; is Jeff Angel anywhere to be seen?

Aabria: [laughs]

Griffin: The Aarakocra John Cena. This is the most important question to be—

Aabria: Please make an investigation check for Jeff Angel.

Griffin: I have a plus 11 investigation. That's 27 total.

Clint: Is Davenport god now?

Aabria: Davenport might be god now. Let's just—let's make this extra bad for Davenport. Davenport, you've been a fan of Jeff Angel. You were hoping in this moment that you could like meet him and like have that... What's the worst way to find Jeff? What were you hoping wouldn't be the answer to your inquiry?

Griffin: That when we teleported here, I somehow arrived like occupying the same space as Jeff Angel. Just sort of—just like kind of... destroying. Destroying him.

Aabria: Yeah, so—

Griffin: Or even above him, because I'm in incredibly heavy armor.

Aabria: Yes.

Griffin: That would hurt his body quite badly if he landed on him.

Aabria: Now, I wouldn't make you crush Jeff Angel. That would be cruel. But I am going to make you incredibly aware of like the gentle, pink mist around you. And like a single feather, floating down.

Griffin: I've telefragged poor Jeff Angel.

Aabria: Yes.

Travis: Oh, man.

Aabria: Yes, absolutely.

Travis: To be fair, that's how you always wanted to go.

Griffin: [chuckles] Sure. I'm just looking around then, horrified, just going:
[spoofs John Cena WWE entrance music]

Aabria: [laughs]

Travis: [chuckles]

Magnus: I think you can probably let yourself off the hook there, Davenport.

Davenport: It's 10% pain, 10%... [sobbing]

Magnus: Okay...

Aabria: He's gonna rust.

Magnus: I don't think that this is... what's that word, canonical?

Merle: Okay. Oh, well then that's fine then. No, it's a joke. Who likes Jeff Angel? I'm glad he's dead.

Magnus: Oh, boy...

Aabria: [chuckles] As your Davenport gently weeps. Give me—

Clint: [laughs]

Aabria: [chuckles] Go ahead, Magnus. I need you to give me a... give me an investigation check.

Travis: Okay... I'm not good at the thinky stuff. Yeah, it's a six. Plus nothing.

Aabria: Oof...

Travis: Is there anything I can intimidate, or hit, or lift? Those are the things Magnus is good at. [chuckles]

Aabria: I love saying yes. So would you like to intimidate a violent god?

Travis: Yeah, I'm gonna say at this point...

Aabria: Garagos appears. [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: Garagos appears and Magnus is going to turn and just be like:

Magnus: Listen, my dude, we have been through some shit. Way past you. We're level 17 now.

Garagos: What the fuck does that mean?

Magnus: Oh, it means this:

Travis: And Magnus is going to grapple him and pin him to the ground.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Griffin: He's pretty big?

Aabria: Yeah, you can try. I'm gonna roll.

Travis: So, to grapple I need to grab him, right, and that's a strength—

Aabria: Yeah, so that's gonna be an athletics check against my strength. And you have to beat a 26.

Travis: Ah, no! But I am going to use Indomitable again. Oh, there we go, nat 20. 31.

Aabria: Nice. [laughs] Okay.

Travis: Because it was a two before, to be clear.

Aabria: Oh?

Travis: Yeah.

Aabria: So, I think in that very like Simba and Nala, Lion King way, like you go to pin Garagos and then he pins you like Nala and winks at you very weirdly. And then you pin him to the ground.

Clint: [chuckles]

Aabria: Go off, continue.

Travis: I have advantage on attack rolls and I'm gonna say like:

Magnus: Listen, at this point, if I hit you, I'm going to kill you.

Garagos: I'm a god?

Magnus: So am I.

Aabria: Make an intimidation check. Who's Davenport?

Travis: Ah, it's only a 14.

Aabria: I'll give you an advantage because you're literally grappling.

Travis: Okay, thank you. Okay, there we go. That's a 14 plus eight, 22.

Clint: And Bless!

Travis: No, Bless is done.

Clint: I know, I took a shot.

Aabria: No, respect, that got a lot of utility.

Clint: [chuckles]

Aabria: Much to my chagrin. And Garagos pinned under you is just...

Garagos: I... okay?

Magnus: Say I yield.

Garagos: [sighs]

Magnus: Say it.

Clint: [chuckles]

Magnus: Say it.

Garagos: I'm a god of violence...

Magnus: Say it!

Garagos: I yield!

Magnus: Okay, now get the fuck out. We gotta find a dragon.

Garagos: Hey, what the fuck? This is my... this whole thing is my thing?

Magnus: I know! We're fucking busy! Get out!

Garagos: Where am I supposed to go?

Magnus: Anywhere else! Go anywhere else!

Merle: The green room!

Magnus: Yeah! Go to the green room, have some M&Ms.

Davenport: We got crafty back there.

Magnus: Yeah, fuckin' chill out. Have some orange slices.

Garagos: I'm gonna eat some orange slices. I'm going because I want to and not because any of you said it.

Clint: [laughs]

Magnus: Okay.

Garagos: Do you want me to—I could help?

Magnus: No! I don't trust you.

Garagos: Why don't you—

Travis: Magnus gives him a little kick to the butt.

Magnus: Get out!

Garagos: Fine!

Aabria: And he scoots out. And as you kick him... just roll a D20 for me.

Travis: [chuckles] Okay.

Griffin: Oh, shit.

Travis: Oh my god, you kick his butt off.

Aabria: [chuckles] You kicked his butt right off.

Travis: I kicked it right off. That's a 16.

Aabria: That's good enough. You hear a little like... there's something in his pants. That's a stupid way to put that. But you feel like—

Travis: No, tell me tell me about what he's got in them jeans!

Clint: [chuckles]

Magnus: Hey, what you got in them jeans?

Aabria: He's got something you would absolutely love in them jeans.

Griffin: Whoa. [chuckles]

Magnus: Hey, give me what's in them jeans. Give me what's in dem jeans.

Justin: Relax a little bit. There's a lot to get through and it can't about this anymore. It just...

Travis: Now hold on, Aabria would not have brought up what was in this guy's jeans if I didn't want it. So:

Magnus: Hey, give me what's in them jeans. And then go to the green room and have some appy slices.

Garagos: Well now I don't want it because—

Magnus: Hey. Hey, don't make me give you noogies.

Justin: I am—

Aabria: And you see him reach into the back of his pants and he like fishes down and around. It is... surprisingly roomy back there. And he just spikes a scabbard onto the ground. And this is a younger and therefore not decayed version of the Flaming Poisoning Raging Sword of Doom.

Travis: Hell yeah.

Garagos: I was gonna kill you with this, but fuck you!

Aabria: And he just walks away. [chuckles]

Magnus: [gasps]

Travis: Okay. That's Magnus very excited.

Aabria: And he goes back and eats some apple slices.

Magnus: Enjoy these appy slices. We can hang out later, okay, champ?

Travis: Perfect.

Justin: And I walk over and I pick it up.

Magnus: No. Hey, no.

Aabria: [laughs]

Taako: What? It's mine. I don't use magic anymore. I need it more. I'm kind of a sword, sword hybrid now. Kind of a hybrid class.

Magnus: Can we arm wrestle for it?

Taako: Oh, that seems balanced, let's... It's just important for me to—what is—isn't it safer for me to have this?

Merle: He makes sense. He makes a lot of sense.

Magnus: Yeah, but we're not—

Justin: And then Taako tries to lift it up in like a cool position and falls back over from the weight, from the sheer weight.

Taako: It's mine. I don't—it's not a debate. It's mine. This is—

Magnus: You gave it to me?!

Taako: I gave a version of it to you, but not—

Magnus: So then a version of it's yours.

Taako: This is mine. This is probably before I gave it to you. So it's mine. And I really need it because I don't do magic anymore.

Magnus: Okay.

Clint: [laughs]

Aabria: [chuckles] That was the saddest thing I have ever seen.

Taako: Can I ask you though, would you carry it for me?

Magnus: Okay, yes. I'll hold it for you. That's fine. Just let me know when you need it.

Taako: Appreciate it. For sure.

Magnus: Can I use it if I need it?

Taako: 'Need' it so subjective, isn't it? I mean, as long as it's ready for me. But if I need it also, then I take precedence. But yeah, you can... You know what? I'm uncomfortable. Saying it now, I would be uncomfortable with that. I'd prefer you didn't.

Magnus: Just let me use it once!

Taako: You have the weapons and like the last time I let you borrow it, you turned it to dust. So...

Magnus: After like 15 years?!

Taako: Eh, 15 years, a lot of things have lasted—The Simpsons have gone twice that long. No signs of wear and tear there. Fantasy Simpsons.

Griffin: [chuckles] Can I investigate my frickin' time vacuum, now that I'm Blinx the Time Sweeper? Can I take a look at this magic vacuum backpack that I've got to see if I can figure out what the fuck is going on?

Aabria: Yes, please do an investigation check, with advantage.

Griffin: Oh, okay. I did arcane, but I can do investigate—it is the same modifiers, it's plus 11. So, it's 25 either way,

Aabria: Sweet, perfect. I was gonna say you can have advantage, but 25 is fine for that. Yeah, so you realize that like as you sort of took in this time

magic, because the like nature of it is something very different than like—arcana is magic that's sort of wielded by humanoids and formed by their will. And their desire to like change reality around them. This is a creature that is magical.

So like the source of this energy that you're interacting with is a little funky with your instruments. So what you've actually done here is moved into the past, but a disjointed version of it. Like you are moving through possibility, not through an actuality.

Griffin: And do I get the impression that this Time Drake followed us when we traveled?

Aabria: You know very well, like especially now that you kind of have a sense of like the vibration that like your vacuum is running at, that yes, the Time Drake is here. Prowling around somewhere.

Griffin: Okay... That's all I got. [chuckles]

Aabria: [chuckles] Okay, Merle, go ahead and make... yeah, give me a perception check.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: That would be... a nat one. Plus four. Which is a five.

Aabria: No, we're gonna—I don't care about the bonuses. It's just nat one for your girl. So—

Clint: Wait! Do I have the thing where I can roll again? The... inspiration?

Griffin: I'm pretty sure you've already used it.

Clint: I haven't used an inspiration?

Justin: Just take your lumps, Mac.

Griffin: Just take the lumps. Aabria is obviously very excited about this.

Clint: [laughs]

Aabria: [chuckles] You can absolutely use your inspiration if you want to.

Clint: I choose not to! I will save it!

Travis: How very big of you, Clint.

Aabria: Then have another one, Clint. As my question then becomes; as you look around and you're kind of also grappling with this idea that like you are somewhere that you remember and have mixed feelings about, because yeah, this is where everybody saw your butt. And you took a big hit to your self-confidence.

But this isn't quite the location where that happened. You know that there's like a disconnect here. As you look around, you remember something else. Something that was amiss about the original memory. What was it? Because we're going to start populating this place now.

Clint: Hm... Well, I remember that—something that's amiss that I noticed is that there are cameras set up all over the place. And it's being streamed and not... not going to have an audience.

Aabria: Amazing. So as you look around, you actually see, yeah, even though all of these stadiums are—like all this stadium seating is set up, there's no one here and no one coming. And then like with a little like heat shimmer, you see these like cameras popping up. With shadowy, undifferentiated like humanoid figures standing like behind them. And you see the cameras swivel and turn and begin to film you. As if your memory is bringing it into the world.

Merle: Hi, everybody!

Aabria: And you all notice that.

Clint: Did Kujo make the jump through the Shimmer with Merle?

Travis: It's Coolio, dad.

Clint: Coolio, sorry. [chuckles]

Aabria: Did you want Coolio to make the jump?

Clint: I've grown quite fond of Co... bo? Queloo?

Aabria: Kuo!

Clint: I burnt two there!

Aabria: [chuckles] Cool. I'm just gonna make the most noise I can make right now.

Griffin: Yeah, it's...

Aabria: [chuckles] It's hellish over here

Griffin: No, dad's also got his landline telephone I believe going right now.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Justin: Dad, you have a call on your telephone.

Travis: From 1898.

Clint: Excuse me one moment.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Justin: Oh, he's answer it.

Aabria: [chuckles] It's gotta be important.

Justin: "Hi, is this exterminator? The only person who would possibly call on a landline?"

Aabria: [laughs]

Travis: What's that? You have a great investment opportunity for me?

Justin: [chuckles]

Travis: You've been trying to reach my about my car warranty?

Clint: I won a million dollars?!

Griffin: [chuckles] Oh, no.

Clint: Mom, I won a million dollars! That's the Justin play. Sorry about that.

Aabria: That's like not enough money to get me to answer a landline, though.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [chuckles]

Aabria: Is that wrong? Am I different?

Clint: Well, I'm gonna go right from here to get in my flivver and then go down and dance at the USO. [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles]

Aabria: I got one of those references.

Griffin: Just ride. Just ride on it, yeah. Just coast.

Travis: Wow, good one, dad.

Clint: [chuckles]

Aabria: And as you think of Kuo, you feel a little tap on your shoulder. And they're standing beside you and going:

Kuo: What? Where... where are we? What is this?

Merle: It's really tough to say. I think it's some kind of wrasslin'. It's a wrasslin' thing. And we're in a ring here. There's a ring here. And I just wanted to make sure you were okay. I was, you know... I wanted to make sure you were here to you know, protect me.

Kuo: I think I—okay, there's a difference here. I was okay when I was back where it was no longer—I'm less safe now that... It doesn't matter. I'm happy you're safe. And I'm here to serve.

Merle: Oh, good. Good, good.

Kuo: Sir, are you going to deal with that?

Aabria: And they point into the center of the ring. As Kuo points into the center of the ring, all the cameras sort of track and follow. As you see a figure climbing into the center. Dwarven, with long, brown hair. Big, bushy, brown beard. It's Jess the Beheader. And as she likes spreads the like... I don't know what those are called. I don't know things in a wrestling ring! The little bands?

Travis: The ropes?

Aabria: Ropes! Look, I don't know fuckin' words! As Jess goes and spreads the ropes, you see a second set of arms goes and does it along with her. And she moves into the center of the ring and begins to grow in stature.

Magnus: That's the dragon. Everybody, everybody. Jess is the dragon. Because the extra arms and see how she's getting big?

Merle: Oh, okay.

Magnus: Jess is the dragon.

Merle: What dragon?

Magnus: The dragon from before that we were fighting?

Merle: Oh...

Magnus: Yeah, Jess is the dragon, guys.

Merle: Gotcha.

Magnus: Jess! Jess, are you the dragon?

Clint: [chuckles]

Aabria: And she gives you a big grin with far too many teeth.

Magnus: See?

Taako: Yeah.

Aabria: And her jaw unhinges and she goes:

Jess: Yes.

Aabria: And a bunch of embers pour out of her mouth and begin to burn up like the environment around you. So, yeah, fine, roll initiative! Since you're so smart!

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: You said they had extra arms?

Aabria: Yeah...

Travis: I put two and two and two together.

Justin: Such a smart ass.

Aabria: That's fair...

Griffin: Hey, you should—hey, Aabria? Side bar.

Aabria: Yeah?

Griffin: You should fucking kill Magnus.

Travis: 16.

Griffin: That would be so wild. People would be like, "She didn't."
"Did you hear about what happened on that video TAZ?" And they'll be like,
"What?" And you'll be like, "Magnus fucking died."

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: [chuckles]

Aabria: He's gonna rush into fuckin' heaven.

Griffin: To heaven.

Justin: Did you hear the McElroy brothers are making another Balance?
That's actually pay per view and like really expensive and profitable?
Because they said that Magnus died, they had to fix it. So he didn't die.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Justin: It's like a reboot or something?

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: They kept saying it's very lucrative. [chuckles]

Aabria: [chuckles] They just kept repeating that. Magnus?

Travis: I had a 16.

Aabria: Davenport?

Griffin: 14.

Aabria: Taako?

Justin: Two plus three, five.

Aabria: Sir! Is there anything you want to do—nah, it's fine. It's fine. That's a good number to have.

Justin: It's good, it's just initiative.

Aabria: It's a good, Christian number. And Merle?

Clint: 15.

Aabria: Beautiful. And my sweet Nikaranoks got an 18 and is going to go first.

Griffin: Uh-oh.

Justin: Oof. [laughs]

Aabria: And is going to go—

Justin: I know who I'd target if I was that dragon. It would be all smart Alecs to the front. Wise guys get blasted first.

Aabria: [chuckles] And that is precisely what happens, as Jess points one of her arms at you, Magnus. And kind of does a little finger gun. And I need you to make a strength saving throw, as you are pulled bodily into melee with her.

Travis: That's a 12 plus 11. 23.

Aabria: Yeah. I know what level you are. I built a mean enough thing. That's not high enough.

Travis: 23?!

Justin: Whoa.

Aabria: No. You get pulled into melee and—

Travis: Wait, hold on. Hold on!

Aabria: Oh, you're doing something about it?

Travis: I'm doing something about it.

Aabria: Okay?

Travis: I have a thing. I definitely have a thing.

Aabria: Yeah, y'all went unscathed last episode. You think you're fucking cute.

Clint: [chuckles]

Aabria: I'm here to kill you all.

Travis: No, I don't have a thing. Okay! [chuckles] Go on.

Aabria: Good. [chuckles] So, you get pulled into melee with my girl and you take 21 points of bludgeoning damage. As you get pulled in and all four arms crush around you and begin to squeeze. And Magnus, as you're there, locked in her grip, its grip, she grows larger than you and begins to like crush down on you with that increased mass. And you're now effectively grappled.

Travis: Okay!

Aabria: Okay, but you're up!

Travis: I'm going to attempt to break that grapple, I guess.

Aabria: I guess! You can also attack while grappled, for what it's worth.

Travis: Oh, I can? Yeah, then I'm going to attack with the Rail Splitter whilst grappled.

Aabria: Do it.

Travis: A natural 20.

Griffin: Oh my god!

Aabria: So rude!

Travis: Yeah. And if it helps to determine what that is going to do, I'm also going to then use a new maneuver; Grappling Strike. "Immediately after you hit a creature with a melee attack on your turn, you can spend one superiority die to try to grapple the target as a bonus action. And you add your superiority dice to your athletics check."

Aabria: Amazing.

Travis: So, that's what I'm going to do with that. So, if that influences the outcome of my nat 20, please let me know.

Aabria: You're good, your natural 20 absolutely breaks the grapple. Or no, it's the hit. So now you have to make a grapple check.

Travis: Correct.

Aabria: And then you're gonna add your superiority die to that. I rolled a 21.

Travis: 22. And then plus my superiority dice.

Aabria: You don't have to add!

Griffin: You don't need to add, yeah.

Travis: I'm still gonna!

Aabria: [chuckles]

Travis: It's only a one, anyway. So a 23 total.

Aabria: Okay, all right. You have effectively—

Travis: Oh, I should also say, I also get to do good damage of Rail Splitter.

Aabria: Oh, yeah. Do it.

Travis: Yeah, so six, 11 total.

Aabria: Okay. Good to know. So, describe for me then, Travis, what this like reversal of events looks like.

Travis: So, I'm gonna say that what Magnus does is he's being held you know like... what is that, a full nelson? Up under the arms, around the back of the head. And he does the move to strip out of that, that Carey Fangbattle taught him. Which is raise arms straight up, drop down. And as he goes down, he comes around and he is going to grapple Jess' bottom two arms. In a holding both wrists, foot on the small the back kind of way.

Aabria: Amazing. Sweet. You do effectively have Jess grappled. But you watch as her chin like juts up, and then you hear an unnatural crack as it comes all the way around. And you see upside down Jess face staring at you. And then Jess blinks two distinct sets of eyes.

Magnus: I've seen some pretty fucked up shit at this point... This is real messed up, don't get me wrong, but... I was a mannequin for a while and like there's some weird shit in our past and... eh, this is fine.

Aabria: That's fair. Okay, is there anything else you want to do to absolutely wreck my life before I move on?

Travis: That's a great question. I think I'm good for now.

Aabria: Davenport, you're up!

Griffin: I am?

Aabria: Yeah—no, Merle's up, I'm sorry.

Clint: I have a question first. Is it safe to say that since we're traveling through time and everything else, that we got a rest in there? A nice, long rest.

Justin: [chuckles] No, sir!

Aabria: No.

Justin: No, sir. You used a ninth Level spell slot of make it rain!

Travis: Yeah, you made water real hard, my man.

Griffin: You have to live with those—

Justin: Canonically!

Clint: And wiped out nine bad guys. Let's not let that go.

Justin: Powerful rain.

Travis: But choices were made and there are sequences to our choices, dad.

Clint: Yeah. That's fair. All right then, I am going to cast Spiritual Weapon.

Aabria: Love it.

Clint: Level... seven.

Aabria: [chuckles] Okay? Go off.

Clint: And it is—[laughs] it's taking the form of a metal folding chair.

Aabria: Yes!

Justin: [chuckles] That's good.

Aabria: Perfect. You gotta make an attack roll for me.

Clint: All right, attack roll... That is a 14. Probably not gonna do.

Aabria: A 14 does not hit.

Clint: Well then the here's where I'm going to use... my thing where I reroll.

Travis: Your inspiration.

Aabria: Yes, you use your inspiration.

Clint: Okay, it is a 19 plus 10. A 29.

Aabria: Yeah, that's gonna hit.

Clint: That is... 25.

Aabria: Amazing. So, you—

Clint: 25! Did you hear that, boys? 25.

Justin: We're very proud of you.

Clint: Yeah, thank you!

Justin: Chance favored you in your twilight years. We're all very impressed.

Aabria: [laughs] So this massive, ephemeral, spiritual, metal folding chair cracks across Jess' front. Even though her face is like facing the wrong way, sort of staring down Magnus, horrifically. And it scatters a bunch of those embers that she spewed out of her mouth, and they get sent into the air. And now I need everyone to make a constitution saving throw.

Travis: Con...

Justin: That's not my strength...

Griffin: 24.

Justin: I got 13 plus two, 15.

Travis: Eight plus nine, 17.

Clint: 12 plus three, 15.

Aabria: Everyone but Davenport fails the save...

[sound of dice thrown]

Aabria: And you're all going to take 11 points of fire damage, as you inhale these embers. And you feel something in your lungs begin to smolder and burn.

Clint: I take a bonus action.

Griffin: What?

Clint: I can take a bonus action, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Aabria: Well, yeah, you're still on your turn. And technically, Spiritual Weapon was your bonus action. So what's your action-action?

Clint: Oh, I was going to use Telekinetic Shove, the amended Jess away 30 feet.

Aabria: Go for it.

Griffin: Well, wait isn't Magnus grappling Jess?

Travis: Well, decisions have been made.

Clint: It says 18 strength. Do I have to roll an 18?

Aabria: No, I roll against it.

Clint: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Aabria: I absolutely make it. So your mage hand comes out. What does your mage hand look like, Merle?

Clint: It's a towel. It shoots out of my hand. It's a great, big towel. And it like snaps. You know like you snap somebody with a towel in a locker room. So it snaps at Jess.

Aabria: It snaps forward and you see Jess like swivels her head back in the normal orientation and bites the like spectral towel, and like shatters the spell.

Griffin: Whoa?

Justin: Yikes.

Clint: That's impressive. [chuckles]

Aabria: Dissipates into nothing. Okay, anything else you want to do? Move? Ask anything of Kuo? Kuo acts on your turn now.

Clint: Okay.

Merle: Kuo, can you—I mean, do you have like fighting? Do you fight? Can you—[punching sounds]

Kuo: Yeah, of course I can.

Merle: What kind of stuff can you do?

Kuo: I'm an ancient fae creature. Both completely agnostic to good and evil, and incredibly violent. What would you like?

Merle: Could you throw a suplex on Jess and try to pry her off of—

Griffin: Magnus is grappling Jess.

Clint: Yeah?

Travis: Other way around.

Kuo: So you would like me to disrupt the thing? Yeah—

Merle: Yeah, I mean, see if you can—

Kuo: That's great.

Merle: Help pull a couple of arms off of Magnus. No, off of Jess, off of Magnus.

Kuo: Yeah.

Travis: Nobody is holding Magnus. Magnus is free.

Griffin: Magnus is in control of the situation.

Justin: Let me paint the picture. There's a bad person. Magnus has them restrained.

Clint: Okay?

Justin: So that, you don't—that's going—[chuckles] that's going good. We've gotta build on that.

Aabria: I think Clint is giving me a present, which is getting my bad guy free. [chuckles]

Justin: I would believe it if Merle was doing something else and was like, "Oh my god!"

Clint: I misunderstood. I misunderstood. I'm sorry.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Merle: Can you go grab Jess? Can you grab Jess and like wrap your arms around Jess' head so that Jess can't see?

Kuo: Sure. Can I do that from here? Because it feels weird to be close.

Merle: I guess, I don't know what you know your abilities are exactly, but if can—

Aabria: And Kuo is just looking you in the eyes. Blinks with just beautiful, opalescent sort of pupilless eyes. And points a finger in Jess monster's direction, is going to cast Blindness. [chuckles]

Clint: I just can't say no to those opal eyes.

Aabria: Yeah. And you're just locked in it. And you hear a like strangled snarl from Jess, that might suggest that the spell worked. Okay, now Davenport's up. I can read numbers.

Griffin: Is Jess getting larger, you suggested?

Aabria: Yes.

Griffin: Okay. Like larger than Magnus at this point?

Aabria: At this point, Jess is a large creature, yes.

Griffin: Okay. Then Davenport holds out his hand in like a tiny, little like ray gun looking thing, just pops into his hand. And he looks at it and he's like, "No, hold on." And he puts it back in and then does that—again, he's like, "Ah, this is it."

And he points it at Magnus and fires, and these sorts of pink squares come out. And when they hit Magnus, Magnus becomes a large creature, as he is enlarged. His size doubles in all dimensions and his weight is multiplied by eight. He has advantage on strength checks and strength saving throws. And his weapons also grow to match his new size and deal one D4 extra damage.

Aabria: Amazing... A nightmare. Hate you for that. Love it. Okay, that's your action. And anything for your bonus movement?

Griffin: I mean, I'm gonna get close to this battle of the titans that I've just sort of facilitated. To just kind of make myself available. In my sturdy bod.

Aabria: I love this. Because you're also in this like fairly big suit of armor. So it's like another big thing entering this ring. And you notice the sort of like spatial dilation, Davenport, as you move into the ring. The ring seems to get a little bigger, the stadium seems to get a little darker. The seating gets darker and farther away. You are deeply unaware of like the cameras now in the sense that other people are here perceiving this event. It feels way more isolated. All of the light is on this central like fighting space. There you are.

Griffin: Cool.

Aabria: Taako.

Justin: Yes?

Taako: You know, Jess... if you'd been up against Taako, you might have had a chance. But unfortunately, you find yourself pitted against Jocasta Nightstrider. It's my new thing. It's Jocasta Nightstrider. No more Taako. It's in the past. I'm a ranger now! And I shoot with a crossbow!

Aabria: [chuckles] Please... oh, god. Okay, there's gotta be something here.

Justin: 19. Plus nine. 28.

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Taako is a very effective ranger. [chuckles]

Justin: No, Taako is not!

Travis: Sorry, Jocasta Nightstrider.

Justin: Jocasta Nightstrider is an effective ranger.

Aabria: Here's the thing, that was so effective, I need you to make... and it's got to be you telling me. Is this deception or is Taako also convinced that he is now Jocasta? And make that a persuasion check.

Justin: It is not a—it is a marketing opportunity. It's just like a different line of merch. It's a different brand. It's a parallel brand to the Taako brand.

Travis: Oh, like when they sell the Batman toys, but he's got like armor on and shit? Yeah.

Justin: Exactly that. Exactly that. It's exactly that.

Aabria: Okay, then give me a persuasion check.

Justin: Okay.

Aabria: I will...

Justin: Who am I searching to persuade?

Aabria: You're attempting to persuade Nikaranoks. Who is... I'll explain in a second.

Justin: Okay, it's a five. Not particularly convincing. But you know, I did have Inspiration from the great description of Jocasta's hood. So I will go ahead and roll—I'll use that and I'll roll that persuasion again. And this time, it is a... 10. Which is twice as good as last time.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Griffin: Can I... I use my reaction and use my Flash of Genius to add a plus five to this ability check.

Aabria: Shut up.

Griffin: Which is something I can do to my buddies who are within 30 feet of me.

Aabria: Amazing, so—

Griffin: So 15, maybe?

Aabria: No, 15 does it! I rolled a 13 for that Insight check. Sorry, I gotta call you Jocasta now. Jocasta, you level your crossbow. And you like give that little like speech so like suavely and smoothly that it gives Nikaranoks pause. And something stills inside the Jess monster. Because they came here to destroy very specific people. And one of them may be gone now. And you all feel as the world around you, this like weird time energy paradox gets a little unsettled. As Nikaranoks, this incredibly powerful being is confused. And you see—

Justin: This incredibly powerful, yet not insightful being. [chuckles]

Aabria: Not at all! It would not have happened, but you decided to drag success out of a terrible roll. [chuckles] And you actually see like seams in the world begin to split and come open around you. And a bright light, a light that reminds you of that pure white energy of the bonds that you called on, on the day of Story and Song, seem to be coming forth. That this is the energy that is the source of the Bond Breaker's power. And what was your damage off of that hit? Other than the psychic damage to my bad guy.

Justin: It was...

Aabria: Bye bye.

Justin: [chuckles] eight.

[group chuckle]

Aabria: That's so upsetting. [chuckles] You really hurt his feelings more than anything else, but we respect it.

Travis: I'd like to think that a lot of the confusion is like, "But if that was Taako, he'd use magic, right? Taako doesn't use crossbows. He must be Jocasta Nightstrider."

Aabria: I have rolled three times to follow that track. And this dum-dum monster is so deeply confused by Taako, who refuses to do magic or be Taako at all, and just fires a crossbow. So this was sort of the like,

Nikaranoks has no idea what's happening and moves on with its day. Yeah, is there anything else you want to do? Bonus action?

Justin: No, I don't really have any.

Aabria: Cast a fuckin' spell?

Justin: No.

Aabria: No?

Justin: No, gross.

Aabria: I'm gonna make you do it.

Justin: [chuckles] I think I'm good, I think I'm good. I search around for Susan. I don't see her because she didn't come through the whatever thing. You know, the rip. So, there's no way to capture the moment.

Aabria: [chuckles] Yeah, it's just for you.

[theme music plays]

[ad reads]

[theme music plays]

Aabria: We are back up at the top of the round, which means a brand new round of con saves. I need everyone to make a con save. Your DC to beat is 21. It's gotten a little higher.

Justin: No way will I do that.

Travis: 18 plus nine, 27.

Aabria: That'll do it.

Griffin: 16.

Aabria: Okay.

Justin: 12!

Aabria: Ooh. And Merle?

Clint: 12!

Aabria: So everyone that failed it, you're going to take 19 points of fire damage. Ah... those lungs.

Griffin: Cracked into my real hit points.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Griffin: You broke through my temp HP.

Aabria: Finally! I've put a dent in you goddamn monster.

Griffin: Well, I wouldn't say you've put a dent in this incredibly...

Aabria: Challenge accepted.

Griffin: Shit, oh no!

Aabria: Because it's my turn now. Magnus, I just want you to describe from me—well, let's just confirm. You've got to have Jess' arms and you're doing a knee in the center of the back situation.

Travis: Yeah, pulling the two lower arms backwards.

Aabria: Yeah, you're definitely—like, it's a tension pull, correct?

Travis: Correct, yeah.

Aabria: All right. So how would you feel if I just let you have them? And her arms singe at the edges, like her tendons and bones come away. And you pull two arms free.

Travis: Here's the thing, Aabria, I'm gonna tell you, pulling arms off of a thing, not that off-putting for Magnus.

Clint: [chuckles]

Travis: Magnus is actually very comfortable with that.

Aabria: He loves it.

Griffin: It's his love language.

Travis: Yeah, he actually does that and like just like stands a little taller. Feels a little bit like:

Magnus: Ah, it's been so long since I pulled the arms off of something. This feels great.

Aabria: [chuckles] Look, I'm just trying to give you moments that you like.

Travis: I appreciate that. Thank you.

Aabria: Yeah! As she goes one size larger, she is now technically a huge creature, and is going to turn around to you. And the two new arms that she sprouts out of those sockets are not like humanoid, Dwarven, tan arms of your friend, Jess the Beheader.

This is Nikaranoks finally like coming through. And you see these like large like black and red reptilian arms with like long, sort of have black talons at the end, peek out. And Nikaranoks is going to look at you, Magnus. And look at Davenport, who has just entered the ring. We're going to try a new target. As my sweet bad boy is going to rush you.

Travis: Rush me? Or rush Davenport.

Aabria: It's gonna rush Davenport. Does a 27 hit you?

Griffin: Just barely.

Aabria: I *hate* your build! I hate it.

[sound of dice thrown]

Aabria: Okay, so you're gonna take 17 points of piercing damage, as one of those bottom claws is going to actually make its way into one of the joints up under your like shoulder. And kind of is—he's trying to rip one of your arms off. You know, turnabout is fair play. And I need you to make a strength saving throw, as he attempts to grapple you with the two top arms.

Griffin: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Aabria: I rolled badly...

Griffin: I bet you I did worse.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Travis: Whoa?

Griffin: See, my strength comes from the power of my incredible armor and not the sweet, delectable underbelly. The flesh within. That's a five.

Aabria: Oh, no! Well, consider yourself grappled. Yeah, Nikaranoks is going to take you along his right side and kind of tucks you in with two sets of arms. And is actually going to begin like trying to move out of the ring and is going to attempt to like get out and climb upward into the rafters. That's going to allow for an attack of opportunity from Magnus.

Travis: Oh, great. Okay. So, I'm going to draw the large Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom.

Aabria: That's almost what it's called, but we'll let it go.

Travis: No, I can't say it any other way.

Griffin: It's been far too long now, we can't possibly fix this.

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: I told you, go with Killy. Go with Killy.

Aabria: I'm gonna be the one that gets yelled at on the internet about it, so I have to correct you. [chuckles]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: The Flaming Poisoning...

Aabria: You can say whatever the hell you want!

Travis: The sword. The sword?

Aabria: The sword.

Travis: Magnus draws *the* sword. And it ignites and he attacks. And that's...

Taako: Wait!

Justin: You hear a voice.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Taako: Forsooth, isn't that Taako's? The great wizard?

Aabria: [laughs]

Taako: Forsooth, that blade doth belong to Taako, the great wizard.

Aabria: [chuckles] Wild.

Travis: I only got 15 total, so I'm going to use one of—

Taako: 'Tis fate! Fate hath turned a cruel eye towards you!

Griffin: [chuckles]

Aabria: [chuckles]

Travis: I'm going to use my superiority dice to do a precision attack. Ugh, only a four. So it's a 20 total.

Aabria: 20 does it.

Taako: Thine treachery has been duly rewarded.

Aabria: [chuckles] And even though Nikaranoks is kind of looking over his shoulder down at Jocasta like:

Nikaranoks: What is happening?

Aabria: There is no attack more effective than whatever the fuck Taako's doing right now. Let me be very clear.

Travis: Yeah, that's fair.

Aabria: Yeah, you... manages to evade the swing of your sword and bounds out of the ring and begins climbing up to the rafters.

Travis: Okay... Okay.

Justin: So the grapple is broken, is that accurate? Is where we're at right now?

Travis: Magnus', yeah.

Griffin: I'm being grappled now.

Aabria: Davenport's grappled and is about to get snacked upon very soon. Magnus, you're up.

Travis: I'm going to attempt to pull the dragon down from the rafters with strength.

Aabria: [chuckles] Okay?

Travis: And would it be possible to also basically pick pocket Davenport?

Aabria: That's deeply ambitious.

Travis: But he's very little.

Griffin: You're huge now, which is an even better reason why you couldn't pick pocket me.

Travis: No, no, no. No, no, no. I mean, take you from—

Aabria: You're the thing being pickpocketed.

Griffin: Oh...

Justin: Direct—okay, the—you're—the intransitive verb is not—yeah, you're the direct object of the pickpocketing.

Griffin: I got you, I see.

Travis: I'm pickpocketing you from the dragon. [chuckles]

Aabria: Okay, I will say that is a mathematical possibility, but incredibly difficult to do.

Travis: Okay, great, so—

Aabria: You have also rolled 400 natural 20s.

Griffin: Right.

Travis: This is true. So this will be an athletics check, right, to see if I can pull him down?

Aabria: So, yeah, let's take this in order. The first one is the athletics check to pull in down Nikaranoks from the high rafters. And then assuming that success, we'll do a sleight of hand.

[sound of dice thrown]

Aabria: Your threshold is 23.

Travis: Yeah, I didn't get it, it's a 17. Well, I didn't get that...

Aabria: I'm happy if you want to like hold on and try to like reach up and grab Davenport. I'm fine with that, too. We can let that be part of like the sort of called shot you had.

Travis: Yeah, then I'm gonna say I'm holding the dragon but not—let's try not to pull it down. And attempt to like free Davenport from its grasp.

Aabria: Perfect. This is weird, let's call it a sleight of hand.

Travis: Yeah, I thought that might be the case. Oh, that's not going to do it either. Ah, all my rolls have left me. It's an eight.

Aabria: Joke's on you, I rolled a seven. So... go ahead and—

Travis: So I just reach up and kind of poke Davenport just with one finger. Poke Davenport back through underneath the dragon's arms where he pops out the bottom and I catch him. [chuckles]

Aabria: I hate this. [chuckles]

Travis: Much like you know, when Mickey the Giant Slayer goes up against the... yeah.

Aabria: What a specific guy.

Travis: Yeah.

Aabria: Okay, so Davenport, you are freed and Nikaranoks looks down. Are you still holding on to its tail?

Travis: Yeah, I'm gonna try to keep that hauled.

Aabria: So did you just drop Davenport?

Travis: No, I—

Griffin: I'll be fine.

Travis: Yeah, I dropped him.

Aabria: All right, let's do some fall damage, then.

Griffin: Yeah, whatever.

Aabria: 13 points of bludgeoning damage.

Griffin: Whatever. Whatever. Whatever! Did my suit break at all, or did Nikaranoks just kind of get up in it a little bit?

Aabria: Yeah, just got kind of up in it. I'm not gonna break your shit.

Griffin: Okay.

Aabria: Just wiggled a pinky in there, real nasty. Nine in the back, like you do.

Travis: Eh, you nasty.

Griffin: Ew!

Aabria: Yeah!

Magnus: Nikaranoks, you nasty.

Aabria: Heh! Okay, anything else you want to do, Magnus? That was a pretty cool round, but let's keep the party going.

Travis: You know what? If I'm holding him, I'm going to Action Surge.

Aabria: As friends do.

Travis: I'm going to attack three times with the Flaming Raging Poisoning Sword of Doom.

Aabria: Let's go!

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: 20, plus Precision Strike...

Aabria: You're gonna wanna use the Precision Strike.

Travis: Yeah, I thought I might. I remembered.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Travis: A 24?

Aabria: Hits.

Travis: And a...

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: 23?

Aabria: Hits.

Travis: 24. Okay, 18 plus six, okay.

Aabria: Hits! All three hit.

Travis: Okay, so that is a D10m plus 20 each time, 73 total.

Aabria: Oh my god! [chuckles] That is a... that weapon hurts my feelings.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: It hurts a lot more than that.

Aabria: Yeah...

Griffin: Just the nature of it.

Travis: I can't do any spells.

Griffin: This is the thing he does every time.

Travis: I am strong and I have a good sword.

Aabria: Every time.

Travis: I'm just reminding everyone, Merle can call down angels. And Taako can create dinosaurs.

Aabria: Taako shoots a crossbow.

Travis: No, Jocasta Nightstrider does.

Justin: Jocasta Nightstrider.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Justin: Taako didn't come this time.

Travis: Taako couldn't make it.

Aabria: Okay?

Travis: He sent his emissary.

Aabria: All right, you whale into Nikaranoks. And let's be honest, he's not looking great anymore. He was doing amazing, and that round absolutely wrecked this shit. But he is still holding on to the rafters and you're still holding on to him. Merle, you're up!

Clint: Is he still trying to—he's not trying to get away, is he?

Aabria: It's really hard to say now, because some shit changed in... a literal second. [chuckles]

Travis: Yeah. Listen, Magnus is big, Taako's Jocasta. Davenport popped out of his hands like an oily bean. There's a lot happening!

Aabria: And Zendaya is—

Travis: And Zendaya is—[chuckles] there's a lot going on.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Clint: Hm, okay... Well, Travis was a spoiler and ruined what I was gonna do. Okay...

Aabria: What were you gonna do?

Travis: Sorry, I chopped his butt too good.

Aabria: [chuckles]

Clint: No, that's all right. No, no, I'll wait. I can come up with something else.

Aabria: If you want to think about it, I'm happy to do a layer action and make it much worse in this room for you.

Clint: Oh, I don't want it to be worse. [chuckles]

Aabria: No, we'll do that. You keep thinking. So, the seams in the world begin to split even wider. And that white-hot like bond energy flickers. And you see that energy sort of like hits some of the big gashes inside Nikaranoks. Beginning the healing process but not doing a substantive amount of healing.

But in that, that draw of energy from a finite source, unless Nikaranks can kill you all and replenish his stores, time is getting a little weirder and a little

looser. And... we'll let Travis do it. Travis, we slide from a not quite past to a future that might be. Describe something from an encounter in the future that we haven't seen yet, that begins to seep into this world.

Travis: Okay, it's Merle's annual beach party that he throws every year, full like—it's a weird mix of like luau and like kegger. There's like togas involved. The theme is it's not very... you know, it's not very linear. And it was invaded by the goblins seeking revenge for what we did to their friends in the very beginning of our adventures.

Aabria: Yes. Sweet. So, you actually see that the scans become populated with these little like gerblins that look like they are about to ignite with flame. And like all of their eyes are burning points of light. So Merle, in this new context, as the world begins to shift a little bit, what would you like to do?

Clint: How's everybody's hit points?

Justin: Great.

Aabria: Honestly, fine, it seems.

Travis: Yeah, pretty good.

Clint: Okay, he summons Guardian of Faith.

Aabria: Ooh! Love that!

Clint: I think what this Guardian of Faith... could I summon a form of Jeff Angel?

Griffin: [gasps]

Travis: Yes, you could.

Aabria: Yes, you can!

Clint: Yeah, I'm gonna summon a Guardian of Faith, and it's in the form of Jeff Angel.

Aabria: What does it look like as you summon your guardian forth?

Clint: I turn to Kuyo and say:

Merle: Could you hold this for me? I have to use both hands.

Clint: And I hand Kuo the Extreme Teen Bible, flipping open to a page. They hold it for me. And I reach into the bucket and take that, you know, that talc, that white powder?

Aabria: Yeah! [chuckles]

Clint: And smack my hands together and send a cloud into the air. And from the cloud of talc powder comes Jeff Angel.

Davenport: Oh, I'm so sorry, Jeff! Jeff, I'm so sorry!

Jeff: It's fine? I don't think I exist—

Aabria: I don't remember what Jeff's voice is.

Jeff: I don't think I—

Griffin: He sounds like John Cena.

Aabria: Yeah, I can do that voice! What?!

Justin: [chuckles]

Aabria: I got nothing... It's... I'm in hell. It's fine, I don't think—

Justin: Aabria, it's an alternative dimension.

Griffin: Yeah, Jeff Angel can sound like whatever.

Aabria: Thanks! No, I just pretend I'm doing a good John Cena impression.

Travis: That's what we all do.

Justin: We'll get it in post. We'll slap some filters in there.

Aabria: [chuckles] Just ADR actual John Cena, it'll be great.

Griffin: Uh-huh. [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles] We'll get John.

Aabria: We can get him! He's so gettable!

Justin: Jack, as I call him. Yeah, I'll get Jack.

Aabria: And he just kind of looks down at you, Davenport. And he's like:

Jeff: Eh... I don't think I actually exist in this timeline. It's fine. We're good. You need a hand up, little buddy?

Aabria: And he reaches down to grab you.

Jeff: You good?

Aabria: Yeah, and he like lifts you up. And he's actually gonna give you five temporary HP.

Griffin: I mean, that's cute. That's cute, Jeff.

Aabria: That's cute. It's just a little cute moment. And he kind of pats off your armor and goes:

Jeff: Okay, I'm gonna fuck this guy up if he comes close. That's what I do.

Aabria: And he turns in squares off against Nikaranoks! All right, Merle, that was your action. As a reminder, you do have your Spiritual Weapon up.

Clint: Oh, that's right. Can I bonk it with it again?

Aabria: Please do.

Clint: That would be a 29. [chuckles]

Griffin: Whoa?

Aabria: Yeah, that hits, my guy! Give me the damage.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: Three D4... And that equals three, three, two, four, that's 12.

Aabria: Nice. Do you want to move anywhere special? Or command Kuo to do anything?

Clint: No, Kuo's doing a great job holding the book for me.

Aabria: Love that.

Clint: So, you know what, I'm going to be nice and say:

Merle: Kuyo, why don't you get behind me—Kuo, why don't you get behind me, you know, just to protect you. Because you know, you're always protecting me. Why don't you get behind me? Keep holding my book for me.

Travis: "You're always protecting me for the last 20 minutes I've known you."

Aabria: [chuckles] Bonds forged in fire.

Travis: Mm-hm!

Aabria: And Kuo absolutely lines up behind you. And you all see as these little like burning goblins began to like rile up, and look like they're about to attack. But it is now Davenport's turn.

Griffin: Is my backpack still weird and timey? Do I still get the impression that there's some sort of shit happening there?

Aabria: It's a little funky in there, but it's still good. You could dust it off. I'm sure it's fine.

Griffin: Oh, I had other plans for it.

Aabria: Oh? Then yes. Whatever the funny answer is. [chuckles]

Griffin: The backpack detaches from my armor. And I put it in my hand. And just sort of continuing like the 'I have no idea what I'm doing with this thing, but let's have some fun with it,' I take it in my hand. And in my hand, you will see my hand sort of go back up my arm like it's cocking back like a crossbow thing. Which is weird. And I cast Catapult, launching the backpack right into Nikaranoks' face. That's going to be a fourth level spell.

Aabria: Amazing!

Griffin: So I need Nikaranoks to make a dexterity saving throw.

Aabria: Oh, shit. Does a 14 make it?

Griffin: A 14 does not make it. My backpack slams into Nikaranoks' face for 27 points of bludgeoning damage.

Travis: Of backpack damage!

Griffin: Of backpack damage. And then also, I'm hoping some other weird, bad stuff will happen to it. With me feeding a taste of its own medicine.

Aabria: Let's let the dice decide. The difficulty for this roll is a 14. Please make a... make a roll from me, Griffin, with Davenport's like spell attack modifier.

Griffin: Okay, that's plus 13.

Aabria: So, I guess don't get a one. It will be fine.

Griffin: That's a 18 plus 13. Which I couldn't possibly do the math on.

Aabria: Okay, well... good lord. Who could count that high? DM to DM, this is an incredible moment we've curated. Why don't you tell me in this moment, what happens?

Griffin: Oh, no, you know what happens? It doesn't just hit Nikaranoks. Nikaranoks is like seeing this glowing backpack flying at them. His mouth was open, like [gasps]. And it went right in there. And it released this time energy inside of his body. And so, in his flesh, you can see like his body as a baby body. And then like a long, decayed skeleton. And then a pubescent dragon, whatever that looks like.

Aabria: Amazing.

Griffin: And it seems to just become very unstable.

Aabria: And yeah, as all of this hits, it looks like a cool explosion in space. As this like pulse of time energy shoots out in every direction. Let's get one more... I want this to be a save... Let's call it... yeah, let's call it a con save, because that's what we've been doing. Let me get a con save from everyone, as you were thrown into a new location.

Griffin: 25.

Aabria: Okay, I guess everyone just roll exceptionally well. So it's not a problem.

Travis: Con saves are what I'm good at. I'm good at those.

Justin: Hold on, Aabria, I'll hook you up. Hold on.

Aabria: Thank you! Thank you so much, Justin.

Clint: And I haven't gone yet either, so...

Justin: Yeah, Jocasta gets a 12.

Aabria: Thank you. Take inspiration for hooking a girl up, trying to feel successful in this moment where I think I did 11 points of damage to all of you across this campaign.

Travis: I just want to go back in time to when Aabria was like, "Yeah, make level 17 characters." And we're like, "Are you sure?"

Aabria: [chuckles]

Travis: We can get pretty silly!

Aabria: It gets real frisky.

Clint: So this is a con save?

Aabria: Yeah, a con save.

Clint: There we go! Welcome back! It's a nat one! Yeah!

Justin: [laughs]

Aabria: You can also have Inspiration. [chuckles] Merle's just full-dead.

Travis: But not from this. He chokes on a chicken bone he's been chewing on the whole time. [chuckles]

Aabria: [chuckles] You gotta not let him get those chicken bones. He can't have people food. He can't that.

Travis: He thinks he's people.

Aabria: He thinks he's people! Everyone take—well, actually, just my sweet boys, Jocasta and Merle take 11 points of psychic damage. As your—

Justin: My brain...

Aabria: [chuckles] As you're all thrown into that space where, yes, you see Nikaranoks vacillating between a long-dead skeleton, a pupa, and I don't know, like a teenager? Is that what we're saying? Just you know, the circle of dragon life. And you all exist in this place that is all of time and outside it.

And all of you that have experience so much across lots of different races and species, like lifetimes of events, all of it hits you. It all weighs on you. And it all is liberated from you, on and off, tessellating through everything

that you've experienced. And Davenport, I have a specific question for you. What does Davenport regret most? Across like the entire arc.

Travis: Is it naming his ship Wave Humper?

Clint: [chuckles]

Aabria: That could be it.

Griffin: I think... And he would never—he's never admitted this I think to anybody. But during the very end of their century abroad, they were deciding, you know, what to do with this incredible power that they had discovered. And there were, you know, two dissenting opinions. Most folks wanted to make these grand relics and hide them.

And Lucretia wanted to, you know, put the shield up over the world. Even after everything that happened, once he was sort of cogent again, I think Davenport regretted not giving Lucretia's suggestion the weight that it deserved, and truly considering it. Because if he had, you know, he doesn't know if things could have turned out very, very, very differently. So, there is no regret even close to that in his life.

Aabria: Amazing. And a single one last little like burning ember of light lands on the chest of your armor, Davenport, and you're able to pick it up and kind of hold it. It doesn't consume you, but it does burn hot. And you hold it as this little ember of time and a chance. And in your own time, whenever it feels right for Davenport to explore that alternate reality, he can. He can consume the mote and see what may have happened if those other choices hadn't come to be. But that's for him and another time, and for his closure. And we move—

Travis: Can I have one too? Because Magnus' regret is not doing the 72 ounce steak challenge.

Clint: Shut up, Trav!

Travis: Okay, sorry. He could've eaten that steak.

Aabria: [chuckles] Tell me more about this steak challenge.

Travis: This is what I'm saying, he could've eaten the steak. And he always regretting not even trying it, you know what I mean?

Aabria: [chuckles]

Travis: It was back in his home plane before they left. And so like he missed his chance, but he knows he could have done it. Oh, he knows he could've eat that steak.

Aabria: [chuckles] Well, this isn't quite the question. But we do know that as another little mote flies by like zags out of your radius, because that's not your... that's not your gift. Yours is, what does Magnus truly fear the most across his life?

Travis: He fears not being there when someone needs him. Not being there when the... when he could have made a difference.

Aabria: And a little mote lands on your shoulder. And you hold it and it burns the very edges of your fingertips, but it doesn't consume you. And it is not consumed. And that's also a little extra chance, a skip in time when a mistake is made that you can go back and make sure that you're there. That no one that you love or care about can be left behind. And that's your little gift. A vestige of Nikaranoks' power. Merle. what do you love most in your life and in this world?

Clint: His kids, Mookie and Mavis. Absolutely, no doubt. I mean, he loves the other members of the Quatro Horny Boys, but It's Mavis and Mookie, absolutely.

Travis: By the way, we dub Davenport officially horny.

Justin: I figured it was Jocasta.

Travis: Oh, well...

Aabria: [chuckles]

Justin: I'm just say. Okay. It's fine.

Travis: Jocasta hasn't proven that he's horny yet. [chuckles]

Aabria: This is true. Decidedly unhorny ranger. And Merle, you see a little ember flip past you, and it breaks in half into two little pieces. And even though they're nothing near the shape of them, you understand that one of those clearly is Mookie and one of them is clearly Mavis. And they land exactly in the palm of your hands. Warm, but not painful.

And you know that this is one more chance, one more moment that you may have missed when the world calls for you. And you can't be there for the people that you love most. That you get a redo. That you get to have it all. That you deserve that little bit of peace for your service to reality. And finally, Taako. Jocasta. What do you want most in this world? In your life?

Justin: I want a new sense of purpose. I saved the world, saved all the worlds when I was young, for an elf. And nothing I found since then, you know, the magazines and the show and the school, none of it stacks up. So I succeed and I win, but I lack meaning. And I want to find something I care about that much.

Aabria: And you see a swirl of embers kind of dancing around you as if caught in a breeze. It's very hard for whatever this is, this sentient bit of power, this universe trying to shine a little kindly on you, to give you what you ask for. Because it's intrinsic to you. So it doesn't give you a moment. But all of those embers, those little sparks and motes of light and fire and power move around you. And alight on you. And you begin to burn. Not with the heat of it. But with that understanding that like a fire, it takes stoking from within. But when you burn, Taako, it illuminates the universe.

And if the gift was only just the world showing you what you look like to it, it hopes that you see that the light you cast wherever you put your attention and your dedication is glorious. And a single little mote is kind of just like on the lapel of your like hooded cloak situation, for you to pick off or leave. It will stay and burn, and not consume. But Nikaranoks is gone. And this liminal space between times begins to dissipate and vibrate and move away. And there's just one question left. Do you all want to go back to where you

were? Or go somewhere else? Do you want to return to Taako's cottage in a dinner party, or try somewhere new?

Travis: Speaking personally for Magnus, he likes where he's at. He likes the road and where he's come to. And he is happy with a slightly quieter life. He likes jumping through windows and swinging big, flaming swords, but that seems like a young man's game.

Aabria: Magnus disappears from the dark space.

Clint: I don't think Merle is a big believer in regrets. I think he makes his choices, takes his lumps, learns from his experiences, tries to do better in the meantime. And it was a pretty cool party, so I think he goes back to Taako's.

Aabria: Merle disappears from the space.

Griffin: Devonport takes the feather that was left over from Jeff Angel's violent death. And uses Magical Tinkering to whisper a six second long recorded message into it. And hands it to Taako and says:

Davenport: Can you give this to Lucretia for me?

Travis: Yeah, of course.

Davenport: Okay.

Griffin: And he takes a step back and says:

Davenport: I'll see you soon.

Griffin: And he uses that mote to travel back to that decision that he made at the end of Stolen Century. And vanishes.

Aabria: Davenport disappears from the dark space. And Taako, you are alone.

Justin: Where's Kravitz?

Aabria: Kravitz wasn't here in this part. This was for main characters only.

Justin: Got it, all right.

Clint: [chuckles]

Aabria: [chuckles]

Justin: I don't have anybody to talk to.

Aabria: [chuckles] Yeah, no.

Justin: So I'm by myself. All right. Just me. Okay. Can I call Kravitz with a phone or something?

Aabria: Yeah, for sure. Pull out your Adventure Zune!

Justin: I pull out my Adventure Zune.

Travis: It gets great service.

Aabria: It does. Kravitz picks up like immediately.

Kravitz: Yeah, babe?

Taako: Hey, it's me. It's Jocasta.

Kravitz: Oh? I kind of liked it.

Taako: Listen, I—I know, right? I... I think I'm going to try something new for a while. You know, I've been really worshipping at the altar of Taako for quite some time. And I think I'm going to... I think I'm going to try adventuring again. I think I'm going to be a ranger.

Kravitz: You?

Taako: I'm going—but listen—

Kravitz: You've got one crossbow, and now you think you're a ranger?

Taako: I know, but you've got to start somewhere.

Kravitz: Okay...

Taako: Listen, I love you, but I have been called by the spirit of fortune and the spirit of adventure to wander the world. Helping those in need. And I don't know when I will see you again. But I know that it will be by 10 o'clock. Because Masked Singer is on tonight. And I do not have another place to sleep. So I love you very much. I'll be home at like 10-ish. Okay?

Kravitz: Yeah, no, that's great, if you wanna fudge that. I love you.

Taako: Okay, good. Could you—oh, put the—wait!

Kravitz: Yeah?

Taako: Put the Thai in the fridge, okay?

Kravitz: Oh, yeah. No, it's already in there. It's in there.

Taako: Okay, thank you, thank you.

Kravitz: Okay, love you. Have fun!

Taako: Bye-bye!

Kravitz: Bye! Don't die!

Taako: Bye!

Kravitz: Bye!

Taako: Bye!

Aabria: Hangs up. So, Taako, Jocasta, it's a new adventure, a new beginning for you. You step back into the darkness and that little mote of

light kind of leaves your hood and flows into the space as you disappear into darkness. And a new beginning. And that's where we will leave off our little adventure.

Clint: Whoo!

Aabria: TAZ: Imbalance.

Clint: Oh, man!

Aabria: [chuckles]

[group cheer]

[Imbalance theme music plays]

[bloopers beep]

Griffin: That was really good!

Justin: Yay!

Travis: Very good.

Aabria: Y'all are very hard to do a hit to! Shit! That was fun, though!
[chuckles]

Griffin: Sorry... it's because we're afraid of pain. Our tolerance for pain is very low and so if we can cheat our way out of it...

Aabria: [laughs] It was great.

Travis: Even imaginary pain. I feel everything Magnus feels.

Justin: Aabria, thank you so much for coming and doing this. It's gotta be stressful, this was amazing.

Griffin: It was so cool!

Aabria: Oh, gosh! It was truly my honor.

Travis: Before you go, before we wrap up, tell everybody every one of your single projects that they need to check out.

Aabria: We don't have that fuckin' much time?

[group chuckle]

Aabria: We're good! Hey, if you liked my shit, follow me on Twitter. Just do that. It's all there.

Travis: It's all good.

Aabria: Google my name. It's fine. It's fine. We're fine.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Aabria: I do want to just say that like, I was mentioning this a little bit when we weren't recording; but I just want to thank you all so much for making one of like the first games that like got me really into this like storytelling form. So, this is—

Travis: Really?

Aabria: Oh my god, yeah.

Justin: That's so nice.

Travis: You're so good at it!

Aabria: Oh, hey, I learned from you!

Griffin: That's not possible. Thank you for saying that.

Aabria: I don't know how to say goblin right! The hardest part of this entire campaign was not accidentally letting like MBMBaM and like TAZ references slip, that are just in my vernacular like a fucking monster. [chuckles]

Justin: Yeah, we've crossed those streams enough times.

Aabria: You're allowed to! You made the jokes! It's weird when I do it!

Justin: We made our own dad canonical, though. [chuckles]

Aabria: [laughs]

Justin: Well, thanks for watching.

Aabria: Yeah, thanks for joining us! Goodbye! Goodbye forever!

Travis: Goodbye!

Clint: What, forever?! Wait, what?

Justin: No!

Aabria: Who knows what the future holds?

Clint: The stakes were high for this!

[Imbalance theme music plays]

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