

The Adventure Zone Versus Dracula - Episode 7

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[intro theme music plays]

Dracula: Dear Diary, today was a wild one. The Wolf Man swung by the castle with a little Lurchable of a dude, whose blood alcohol content was high enough to send me to the moon! Wolf Man wanted to see my new automobile. And I was like, "Hey, man, no shame to drive, Wolf Man." And he was like, "Don't worry, I got this."

So we grooved on down to Lumino and, well, long story short, we hit an older lady with the car so hard she exploded. Now, I'm no fan of senseless violence. But I must admit that sometimes it is very, very funny.

[The Adventure Zone Versus Dracula theme music plays]

Justin: [chuckles]

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Lady Godwin.

Justin: Yeah? [chuckles] Yes?

Griffin: You are standing in a vast field of golden, glistening oats. And you are strong and tall and quadrupedal. And for the first time in your life, truly free of the shackles of what society expects from you. There is a soft wind rustling the grain, carrying this sweet smell of oats through the pasture and back down to a freshly painted farmhouse in the distance.

You see by the perimeter a wild silver stallion, sinewy and imposing. And it frolics up to you and runs a lap around you before making eye contact with you and leaping over the fence, towards the woods where all the other wild horses roam. What do you do?

Justin: I think I gotta get just a big mouthful of oats.

Griffin: You are accustomed to the finer things in his life. You, in your original body, consumed any number of small plates and award-winning meals from restaurants across the city. Nothing rivals this first bite of beautiful, golden oats. As you graze here, you see in the distance a farmer, an older lady wearing overalls. She shouts something at you in her human tongue which is inscrutable, calling you in from the pasture. You rear your head up as you—

Justin: How do I feel about her when I see her? Like how do I feel about her?

Griffin: You tell me.

Justin: I mean, I don't know. Do I recognize her? Is she a stranger to me?

Griffin: That is the human that lets you live in the barn and the human that made—

Justin: Yeah, she's a good human.

Griffin: The human that—

Justin: Yeah, she's all right.

Griffin: The human that made these oats, you have no fuckin' idea how that whole process works.

Justin: Fair. Yeah.

Griffin: But you do know that the oats used to be smaller. And then the humans did some stuff to them. And now they are way bigger. And that's cool.

Justin: Thank you, science. Appreciate that. Yeah, I'll go ahead and follow what the lady asked me to do. Yeah, seems all right.

Griffin: You start—

Justin: Following.

Griffin: You start cantering through the oats to the old lady. And as you do, that silver stallion catches your eye one more time. And you feel yourself torn, trying to make a decision between this life of equine freedom and the life you know.

Justin: No, you know, I'm so high off of the freedom I think that I'm experiencing right now from just being in this body and being in this form, I am... I'm gonna—I have to sprint after the silver stallion.

Travis: Can I make an observation? I've played games now with Justin for many, many years. I've never seen Justin so happy.

Griffin: He's dialed in, yeah. For sure.

Justin: Yeah, I can't believe you'd ruin the flow with that. Like, you're zapping me out of it right now. I was like so in the paint, in the bucket. I was really in the bucket.

Griffin: You start at a cantor, feeling the oats whip across your shanks. As you—

Travis: [chuckles]

Griffin: As you sprint towards the—

Justin: I think the shanks, too—and I'm like, I've never done that before. Why would I think of them as shanks? But that is what I knew them to be.

Griffin: That's what they are!

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: You jump over the fence. Brother Phileaux and Crawford, you see your traveling partner, Lady Godwin, is now a very tall horse. Runs and jumps over the bar, and smashes into all of the bottles behind the bar, making a big and terrible mess. There is a giant, wild horse loose in this place of business. Pierre Reynolds looks confused and upset about the state of—

Justin: Both are fair.

Griffin: Of his small business.

Crawford: Hey, Brother Phileaux?

Phileaux: Mm-hmm?

Crawford: You remember earlier today when you transferred your consciousness from your human body into a puppet body?

Phileaux: Mm-hmm?

Crawford: Can I tell you it's wild, man?

Phileaux: What's that?

Crawford: I remember thinking, how could the day get any weirder?

Phileaux: Mm-hmm. Yeah, yeah. I'm with you there. But it has.

Griffin: Pierre Reynolds says:

Pierre: Please, you must... my business! I just remodeled! Please! She's making a terrible mess!

Justin: I'm completely out of this, right?

Griffin: You're in oats land.

Justin: This is not what I am—okay, I'm like a different—okay.

Travis: I'm gonna cast Speak with Animals.

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: That's good. That's good.

Griffin: That's great.

Travis: Yeah. So, I can, you know, speak with... animals.

Griffin: Animals, yeah, can you link that in chat? What are the parameters here? Because this is—we're on the—

Travis: "You gain the ability to comprehend and verbally communicate with beasts for the duration. The knowledge and awareness of many beasts is limited by their intelligence."

Griffin: Great, show me what this looks like. What does it look like when Crawford Muttner does this?

Travis: So, Crawford has had experience with horses and wild animals. He's gonna do some horse whispering.

Griffin: Okay.

Crawford: Hey. Hey! Hey, Lady Godwin.

Justin: I'm gonna need this to be contested, Griffin. [chuckles] I have to demand that this is contested, if he's trying to contact me.

Griffin: Okay, let me set this up first though. The connection to animals that you have, Crawford, is so potent, so unbelievably strong. Your form and your words appear in the plane of oats that Lady Godwin currently resides in. As you clear the fence Lady Godwin when you see a familiar human. And they are using that wild language that has no [winnies??] or clicks or neigh in it whatsoever. But you do actually—you know what? I say that, he did click. And in that click, you hear concern. You hear almost a warning.

Justin: Hm... okay, I sprint towards the silver stallion... that's what I'm doing. So what do I need to do about him?

Griffin: All right, now I do think we should do a contested check. So let's do an animal handling check from Crawford Muttner. Versus a... wisdom... hm... a wisdom saving throw from Lady Godwin.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: I got a 19 plus six, a 25.

Justin: Dang! I did okay, but it's not going to beat that.

Griffin: That's a 15.

Justin: I got a 15.

Griffin: The result of this check is, Lady Godwin, you take the reins a little bit. Now it's you and the—before it was just the horse. Now it's you and the horse. You're in the oats plane, but you're also in your old friend, Pierre Reynold's bar, smashing it up terribly. In a body that is unbelievably even bigger and wilder than the one that you have just sort of switched into.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You gain a moment of lucidity. Where you feel like you have some control over the situation.

Godwin: Crawford, dear, with is happening?

Crawford: Okay, well... Hey. Hey, it's okay. You... you...

Godwin: How dare you?!

Crawford: No, I know you—

Godwin: What...

Crawford: Yeah, you've been turned into a big horse.

Godwin: You know your class! Don't ever speak to me like this!

Crawford: Yeah—oh, calm, girl. Calm, girl.

Godwin: You are three concrete runs lower than me on the social stand.

Crawford: And I'm about three hands shorter than you now. So here's the thing—

Godwin: Good lord.

Crawford: Yeah, you've been turned into a horse.

Godwin: Oh? [chuckles] Oh!

Crawford: You're a big old—

Phileaux: Very pretty.

Crawford: You're very—you're... her eyes are up here. You're a horse now. And I assume not forever. But I don't know.

Godwin: Well, I should hope not. This would make it very difficult to exact my vengeance on Dracula.

Phileaux: Don't make any assumptions, if I may say from past experience.

Justin: You're not in my brain. This is just me and Crawford—

Clint: Oh, right, yeah.

Griffin: You hear his—okay—

Justin: Crawford is in my brain.

Griffin: A barn door appears out of the ether, directly in front of you, between two trees. Crawford is standing on the other side of it, and you see an exit from the plane of oats.

Godwin: Well... perhaps tomorrow, I will begin plotting my escape from this horrid plane. But the oats, Crawford...

Crawford: I know!

Godwin: If you experience it the way I have...

Crawford: Listen, we all love oats. Yeah! We have oats out here though?

Godwin: Crawford! Crawford!

Crawford: Yeah?

Godwin: Do you?

Crawford: We do have oats.

Godwin: Do you?

Crawford: But also, whatever you're seeing ain't what's really happening. And you just smashed into a bunch of bottles and got a lot of little cuts and you smell like whiskey. You reek of booze, Lady Godwin!

Godwin: Frankly, I can't afford to replace them. Hm...

Justin: I want to—[chuckles] I need to steal one last look at the silver stallion.

Griffin: [chuckles] You see the silver stallion and a tear rolls down his eye, which takes a long time for a horse. And—

Justin: It's a whole journey. It's regular Schlitterbahn.

[group chuckle]

Griffin: He looks—

Travis: [sings] You're going to Schlitterbahn! You're crying because your horse is gone!

Griffin: He looks through the barn door. He looks at you. He nods. He knows this was never going to last forever. As much as he wanted it to.

Godwin: Thank you, I... I will find my way back.

Justin: And I'll go through the barn door.

Griffin: As soon as you—

Justin: If I have—do I have that level of like control?

Griffin: Yes.

Justin: I feel like we kind of opened a door and I don't want to rush it if you—

Griffin: No, you—

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You pass through the gateway, into the plane of oats. And you see the silver stallion rear back, as he does, as you do so. And the door shuts behind you. And Brother Phileaux and Crawford, you see pop up from behind the bar, Lady Godwin. In her original but also reanimated form.

Justin: Not original.

Travis: Her secondary, not tertiary form.

Griffin: Yes, right.

Justin: [chuckles] Right.

Griffin: And Pierre says:

Pierre: Oh, thank god. Oh, my goodness! Oh... Are you okay, Lady Godwin? I had no idea you had been afflicted.

Godwin: I... wait, sorry, Pierre, do you have some insight into what just occurred?

Pierre: I'm afraid to tell you, Lady Godwin, that you have... you have been struck with the curse of the werebeast. In this case, a werehorse. Have you been bitten by a horse anytime recently?

Godwin: Here! Here, Pierre. You saw. The horse was right here!

Pierre: No, this was... you are—

Godwin: You said werehorse, I... it was here! It was me!

Pierre: Oh, my apologies—

Godwin: The horse was me! It didn't leave.

Pierre: Yes, this happens a lot with the accent that I have. Hold on one second.

Griffin: And he picks up a notepad and writes the word were, W-E-R-E, horse. And he holds that up.

Pierre: Werehorse.

Crawford: Oh...

Godwin: Were horse. I were horse, yes—

Crawford: We are horse?

Godwin: I was a horse.

Pierre: You know the werewolf?

Godwin: Eh, the forest? I mean, typically. [chuckles] No, yes, of course.

Pierre: This is outrageous. I know you know the werewolf. You know the Wolf Man! The Wolf Man hit you with the automobile—

Godwin: No!

Pierre: Yes. You—

Godwin: You're saying that I'm a horse woman?

Pierre: I'm saying... when were you bitten? When did you arrive in town?

Godwin: Oh... some...

Griffin: Sort of in the previous morning, probably, yeah.

Travis: Yeah, 36 hours ago.

Pierre: This is terribly—

Justin: Yeah, right.

Pierre: This is terribly... there is a way to reverse it, but there's not much time! When you are bitten, you are afflicted with the werrecurse—

Godwin: You say reverse, it sounds so final, doesn't it? I wonder if there's a sort of happy medium, you know, we can perhaps strike?

Pierre: There is no happiness to be found in... where did you... may I talk to you privately, please, for a moment?

Godwin: Of course.

Pierre: Where did you go?

Godwin: Oh...

Griffin: [chuckles]

Godwin: I...

Justin: My wife just came in to hand me the coffee she very kindly brought me in. I just can't imagine a stranger thing to walk into.

[group laugh]

Justin: I cannot—

Griffin: You describe the erotic horse experience that you just—

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Just, like... I never—

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Justin: Okay—

Travis: And Griffin, I would say erotically charged. I don't—

Griffin: Charged, you're right. You're right.

Justin: [chuckles] Thank you!

Godwin: There were oats as far as the eye could see, the most beautiful silver stag, and a woman that felt so much like home. Frankly, Pierre, I wasn't obliged to hurry back.

Pierre: For me...

Griffin: He pulls up his sleeve and shows you there's a huge bite mark scar on his arm. He says—

Justin: It seems old, right? It looks—

Griffin: Very old. Very old. Very—

Justin: Very old.

Griffin: Yours, looking at it now, is like still pretty messed up. And there's still just a gentle grazing of chestnut brown like hide growing around it. And he says:

Pierre: For me, it was a bear. And I went to the plane of salmon, where everything was salmon. Towns made of salmon, made and filled with salmon. People inside of them, and they loved to be eaten.

Godwin: Were you a fan of salmon before?

Pierre: Absolutely not. It may not surprise you to find that we did not get a lot of fresh seafood here in [Ungrave??]. But eventually, you will cross a threshold where Lady Godwin will be gone and only the horse will remain. But listen, there is—we can rejoin the others now. I feel like I'm being rude excluding—

Crawford: Oh, thank you!

Pierre: Your friend can be saved, but we have a very narrow window of time.

Travis: And Griffin, just to establish—and I as a player know this obviously—

Griffin: Oh, you know all this shit.

Travis: Right, as a player, know this. But also Pierre's a werebear.

Griffin: Yeah, no, not anymore. Because he did this thing that he's—

Travis: Okay!

Justin: So Pierre were a werebear. [chuckles]

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Pierre were a werebear.

Clint: Well, and—

Justin: Pierre were a werebear.

Clint: Brother Phileaux rolls up his sleeve on his wooden arm. And shows you where he used to be somebody's home, the wood. He used to be somebody's home. He's a warehouse.

Griffin: Oh, man!

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Let me just delete that joke that I had later—

Clint: Oh, no!

Griffin: No, it's okay. No, because now it'll be a call back when it comes back around.

Clint: Gotcha.

Justin: Okay.

Pierre: When you are bitten, when you are afflicted with the werewolf curse, you have 48 hours. 48 hours. If you can in that very narrow—and it's so specific. It's exactly 48 hours, which is weird.

Crawford: How do they know?

Pierre: That's my—yes. If you can, in 48 hours, find the beast that bit you...

Godwin: 48 hours now or 48 from when I was—

Pierre: 48 hours from the moment of the affliction—

Godwin: Transformation.

Pierre: You have like half a day, yes. No, from the bite.

Godwin: Oh? So I have approximately 12 hours?

Pierre: Not a lot of time. Yes. I'm sorry, the heat is on, as they say. Let's simplify things a little bit. You now have 12 hours to find the beast that bit you, and bite them back. If you bite them back—

Crawford: Wait, sorry. Hey!

Clint: [chuckles] Whoa!

Crawford: Pierre?

Pierre: Yes?

Crawford: You're sure that's it?

Griffin: He rolls up his sleeve.

Travis: Okay.

Pierre: Look at this. Do you see me going around throating down salmon? No. Do I walk around with no pants and big a jar of honey stuck on my head? No.

Clint: [chuckles]

Godwin: He's right, it's the closets I have to—

Pierre: 12 hours you have to find him, the beast that bit you. Bite him back, the curse reverses.

Crawford: If the horse then bites her again, does the 48 hours start over?

Pierre: Double jeopardy.

Crawford: Oh, okay, great!

Pierre: Yes.

Godwin: But they don't have horse anti-ponies. That'll keep the [bite??] at bay.

Pierre: I believe I can help you. If you're looking for any sort of were-creature, they almost always congregate in the Wolf Man's compound, out in the Ungentle Wood. It's northwest of town. It is—I mean, it is nearly a half a day's ride. So you need to get moving pretty quickly if you wanted to get there in time to reverse the curse.

But I will also warn you that your friends will not be welcome there. It is really just an establishment for were-people. And so that might be an issue. But if you are looking for the creature that beat you, you will find it at this place, which is a nightclub called The Warehouse. And that's funny because it happened so that you were also a warehouse. Anyway...

Travis: [laughs]

Pierre: Wolf Man is—

Clint: Callback! Callback!

Pierre: Wolf Man is Dracula's best friend. If you are looking for Dracula, Wolf Man may be a good lead.

Travis: How do the were-folk—how do you think they'll feel about a puppet?

Griffin: How convincing is the puppet?

Travis: I mean, look at him.

Pierre: Oh, him.

Clint: [spoofing Mikey-Mouse voice] "Hi, everybody!"

Pierre: Yes... I mean, I am upset by looking at him. He is a mockery of sort of humanity. But they are not human, so maybe they are down to clown. Yeah, that said, this is a coin toss.

Godwin: What does one wear to the werebear lair? And where is The Warehouse?

Pierre: The Warehouse is beyond the borders of Lumino. North from the North Checkpoint, you go basically—okay, so what you're going to want to do is you go north from the Northern Checkpoint. And then once you hit the Strangle Mire, obviously do not go in there. [chuckles]

Crawford: Sorry, Strangle Mire East or Strangle Mire West?

Pierre: The Strangle Mire is to the north. I'm saying once you hit the Strangle Mire borders—

Clint: Upper Strangle Mire, okay.

Pierre: It's just one, big mire—

Godwin: No, no, that's where the Raising Cane's is. It's low—

Phileaux: Oh! Oh, oh...

Pierre: You're going to hang a... at that point, you're going to go to hang a Ralph.

Crawford: [chuckles] Okay?

Pierre: And proceed to the east until you reach the Ungentle Wood. Now, I must tell you, once you get there, good luck. Because it's the woods, there's

no roads. And if you see Jeremy, give him my best. He his the bear that bit me. And then I bit him back. That was an adventure for another time.

Travis: [laughs]

Crawford: Pierre, you have lived multitudes, my brother!

Pierre: You have no idea, my friend. Any other questions? Your time limit, I cannot—it's like 11 hours and 58 minutes now. Do you have any further questions?

Godwin: I shouldn't expect...

Justin: What I'm trying to figure out is do we have the sort of relationship where it would be taken for granted that they would be coming with me, or like... since this is just for her, I don't know if she wouldn't try to put up a fight.

Griffin: I mean, that's up to you guys, if you want to just hash that out.

Justin: Well, that's—I do, I just wanted to check the—

Travis: Yeah, the back.

Justin: History that the—the history.

Griffin: I mean, you all partied up to hunt Dracula. And so this is not... this is running parallel to that. But it is not—

Godwin: Well, yes, it's... I suppose... I could do this on my own, if you prefer. It's not strictly related to our—well, it is related, I suppose. It's not strictly our mission, though.

Travis: Crawford lays his hand high on Lady Godwin's shoulder and looks in the eyes and says:

Crawford: I don't have anything else to do right now. So... Like, I didn't have any other plans...

Godwin: Thank you! Thank you...

Crawford: And we've got to wait while for Dracula to reform anyways, so like yeah, fuck it.

Phileaux: Yeah! And I am... I am charged with helping those in the community in need. And I believe this is you in need, and... let's rock and roll.

Godwin: I... yes, I would also point out, you're a little puppet boy.

Phileaux: Yes.

Godwin: So you will probably be best with us, frankly.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Godwin: I don't want you wandering about being lured into temptations beyond your control.

Phileaux: Absolutely.

Godwin: You, I could just pick up, actually. I don't know why I asked. Come on!

Phileaux: Yes—oh! Whoa! [chuckles]

Pierre: Au revoir, my friends.

Griffin: He waves since you all walk out of the bar. And as you do, he lurches over. And you see claws start to form on his hands.

Justin: What?

Griffin: And he sucks them back in.

Pierre: No, not yet.

Godwin: What, I thought we—

Griffin: [laughs] You didn't see that! The audience saw that!

Pierre: No. Not yet.

Justin: [laughs] Wait, no, I did—you gotta tell me to take my headphones off. Now I know this whole thing's bullshit!

Griffin: He stands up.

Pierre: Nothing!

Travis: [chuckles] What did you say?

Godwin: You can't just say 'nothing!'

Pierre: Au revoir, my friends! Au revoir!

Crawford: No, are you okay? Because I heard you bend over and then you mumbled something? You got tummy troubles?

Pierre: I mumbled au revoir.

Crawford: Why would you mumble that?

Pierre: You must go. The time limit is tick-tock, tick-tock. Go!

Godwin: Okay... well, all right.

Griffin: As soon as you cross the threshold at the bar, he bends—he reaches inside his coat and pulls out a big hunk of salmon.

Crawford: Oh, I left my pen in here, hold on.

Pierre: Oh, it's... hello!

Crawford: Have you seen my pen?

Pierre: A pin like a broach or a fountain pen?

Crawford: No, like a writing pen. It's got like my name on it. I got it when I graduated.

Pierre: Oh, here it is!

Crawford: Oh, thank you. Ah, it's all greasy?

Pierre: Don't smell it.

Clint: [laughs] Always good advice.

Crawford: I wasn't gonna?

Justin: Travis, we are approaching levels of Pierre's accent in this podcast that test the limits of human frailty. We are getting to toxic levels where Poison Control will need to be called. This podcast is about to be a brownfield site that the government has to pay to reclaim.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: To get all the fuckin' Pepé Le Pew stink off it.

Travis: [chortles]

Justin: We were almost out of the fucking building. Please, for the love of god. [chuckles]

Clint: Oh...

[theme music plays]

[ad reads]

[theme music plays]

Griffin: The lands beyond the northern checkpoint leading away from Lumino, it is like looking out of an airlock into space. The light from Lumino Tower ends abruptly at the border. You can see a bit of the road and some trees beyond, the rest of it is just Stygian blackness.

It is way more sparsely populated around this part of the city. You are far from the tower and most of the other important landmarks of Lumino. There is a portcullis over the gate, and standing in the booth next to the gate, you see Robert Halloween. And as you approach, he says...

Robert: Ah, hello! It seems you all have done quite well for yourselves here!

Godwin: Is that your understanding? Looking at us?

Crawford: Yeah, based on what?

Godwin: Yes, one of us is quite clearly a puppet.

Robert: Maybe... maybe. But you seem to have those handstamps that I love to see so much from people who come to the Northern Checkpoint.

Crawford: So okay, when you say 'done quite well for yourself,' what you mean is managed to get a thin kind of piece of ink on our—a very temporary piece of ink.

Robert: Yes.

Crawford: We really made it

Robert: Now, I will warn you, it is quite dangerous beyond this—

Griffin: I almost fell back into a terrible—

Travis: You're a were-Pierre!

Clint: [chuckles] Oh! Ah!

Griffin: [chuckles] A werebear Pierre-bear.

Robert: It is quite dangerous. It's not too late to turn around and not go out here searching for Dracula any longer. You could just sort of go on and live your lives. Crawford, your mother probably misses you, don't you think?

Crawford: Hey, listen, man, I want to tell you. After we left Pierre's, we all kind of took a nap for a while. And now we only got 10 hours left to save—to stop this thing. So we do need to go. Time is of the essence.

Robert: Ah, yes, the werehorse curse. A tale as old as time! Well, if you... if you won't heed my warnings... I wish you the best of luck. Stick to the roads. If you hear howling or any sort of scary noises, just take off. Be safe, be smart. Be vigilant.

Godwin: How dangerous, in your understanding, Robert, is the outside of Lumino? You know my memory isn't what it once was. What should—what do we... how dangerous?

Griffin: He reaches down under the counter and he picks up a lunchbox. He sets it down on the counter and he opens it up. And he pulls out a corned beef sandwich. And then he goes to the back of his booth and opens up a window and just chucks it out into the blackness. And before it even hits the ground, two wolves jump up and just—[spoofs devouring sounds] argh-om-nom! And drags it into the woods.

Crawford: Okay, if either of you have a corned beef sandwich with you, leave it here. Do not—it is not safe for corned beef sandwiches out there!

Godwin: All right, well, Robert, this has been chilling, frankly. But time is of the essence, as they say.

Robert: I understand. Well...

Griffin: He pulls the lever and the portcullis slides open.

Robert: Good luck. Godspeed. And I hope our paths cross again one day. But that's gonna have to happen here in Lumino, because I am not going that way. Holy shit. No way.

Godwin: Oh... well, I suppose we do suffer from a lack of planning here. Brother Phileaux, Crawford, do any of you have any sort of light source? I'm affraid I've gotten used to the lighthouse there in Lumino.

Phileaux: Mm-hmm, oh, yes. I can—I have the ability to infuse a small item and make it a light source. Do you have something that I can use?

Godwin: What an odd way of putting that.

Phileaux: I know!

Crawford: Like you paint it? You paint it with glow in the dark paint? What do you mean?

Godwin: What an odd, rather stilted way of structuring that—

Crawford: You make something—just say I can make things glow? Why would you be so technical?

Phileaux: I can make things glow. Yes. I can—

Crawford: Okay, cool, man!

Phileaux: I can definitely make things glow.

Godwin: This is this is why you have such a problem connecting with the layman, Brother Phileaux.

Phileaux: Well, I'm used to being in the—

Godwin: So much jargon!

Phileaux: I'm used to being in the abbey and you know...

Travis: Who's Abby?

Phileaux: Abbey...

Godwin: Oh, come on.

Phileaux: Abby Norman.

Robert: You're better than that!

Crawford: What, Robert?

Robert: You're better than that!

Phileaux: What small item that, you know, we have that... you know, wouldn't look odd—oh, wait! I know. I know. I know.

Clint: And he pulls out the bloody cross.

Griffin: [chuckles] Oh, sure. Yeah, that's not weird. All right. Yeah. You pull out the bloody cross.

Crawford: Hey, Phileaux, what's that? Where'd you get that? Why you got that, bud?

Godwin: Yeah, let's have a very necessary discussion about the bloody cross you've just pulled out.

Phileaux: Remember, we found—

Godwin: Is that standard for your order?

Phileaux: I found it—

Crawford: This is news to us!

Phileaux: Oh, that's right. I guess I didn't fill you in. Okay, found a dead body full of blood, blah, blah, blah. Yadda, yadda, yadda. You know, the way you—

Crawford: Knew that part. Yeah, knew that part.

Phileaux: And—

Crawford: I guess the part I'm hung up on is where you're like, "Hey, see this cross covered in that man's blood? Taking that."

Justin: [chuckles]

Phileaux: Well, it's a holy relic. And so I... okay, I liked it. Okay? I thought it—

Crawford: Yeah, you stole it!

Phileaux: I thought it would look good with my ensemble, but I was wearing a different ensemble at the time. You know, pretty wood. So, yes. Is it all right if I use this as a light source? It would make for some really cool... yes.

Godwin: I suppose.

Crawford: It's hard-ass, man. Go for it.

Griffin: All right. Your beautiful, glowing cross, symbol of Christ's love for all of us, shines like a beacon in the darkness as you step through the Northern Checkpoint onto the road, through the winding woods. It is comforting to have this illumination, unnatural though it may be. And you all—

Justin: A rock. I think just a rock—

Travis: A rock would've done it. A coin.

Justin: Just pick a rock p off the ground, I mean...

Travis: A stick?

Griffin: [chuckles] You all set forth. I am going to want a roll here. This is a perilous journey through the wilds. There are some roads along the way. But eventually, those will come to a halt. You have an expert tracker in your party. So, I am going to need a check from you, with any kind of assistance that your friends may want to give you. I will go ahead and say, by providing this light source, Brother Phileaux, you already have assisted on this roll. So I'm going to go ahead and give plus one to whatever your modifier is for that action.

Justin: It was my idea. I mean...

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: It was my idea.

Griffin: It was, yes. And it was a cool idea.

Justin: So I really... but I was like—I assisted, really.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: You know what I mean? [chuckles] Okay.

Griffin: So, this is going to be a survival check. I'm looking for a DC of 15. If you get lower than that, it's not going to be great.

Travis: Okay?

Griffin: If higher than that, it'll be okay. Is there any other way that Godwin or Phileaux want to assist—

Justin: I have the characteristic—a natural characteristic of intimidation.

Griffin: Okay?

Justin: So, like that is something that I can use. So I feel like my presence is a deterrent.

Griffin: Warding off like... okay.

Justin: Like the low hanging fruit, right? The lightweights. That they're not—it's not worth it. Like if I'm a regular brigand, no, thank you. No.

Griffin: Yeah. You're just corned beef at that point. Give me an intimidation roll, just to see how effective you are as a deterrent.

Justin: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Oh, good. It's a one. [chuckles] I rolled a one.

Griffin: Okay, so...

Clint: I have a way to help as well.

Griffin: Show me what bat—what is—well, hold on. One joke at a time. Tell me what bad intimidation looks like from Lady Godwin, as you all are traveling through the woods and you don't help going through.

Godwin: Well, I'm feeling extra tough today! Yes, sir. These muscles are just aching to get into a little bit of a rough and tough action. Oh, my! I'd love to kick a wolf! Maybe rip its... ears off. Oh, I'm boiling for a fight! It's got me really steamed!

Griffin: You see a pair of wolves at the roadside. One looks cowed by your speech and the other one looks at him like, "Come on. No, man."

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: I'm going to give a minus one to this roll for that very, very, very shitty intimidation check.

Justin: I appreciate that. Even that feels like an act of generosity. I thank you.

Clint: Phileaux's gonna make a history check. Just to refresh everybody's memory about the incident where she did get hit by the horse.

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: Because if you remember, she had wounded the horse with her axe. So I would assume there would be a blood trail.

Griffin: Oh! Okay.

Clint: Which might assist—

Griffin: Yeah, sure. Okay.

Clint: In searching for it.

Griffin: I'm not even gonna make you do a history check. I think that's—I think that is good. I will give Crawford a plus one on his roll. So you now have a plus one, Crawford. Let's—

Travis: Well, if I remember correctly—

Justin: He's up to a zero.

Travis: Yeah, my math—

Griffin: No, he had a plus one for the light. Minus one for the intimidation. Plus one for the—

Justin: Okay. All right.

Travis: Plus one, plus one, minus one. Okay.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Two steps forward, one step back.

Travis: So, I'm—Crawford has spent a lot of time, right, in the woods, hunting and stuff. So he's a natural explorer. So, I don't know if we've ever—besides Jocasta Nightstrider, I don't know if we've ever had a ranger on the show before.

Griffin: Looking at the numbers, Travis, about 84% of our audience just heard that name and was like, "What the fuck?" Who the fuck is Jocasta Nightstrider?"

Justin: Who's Jocasta Nightstrider?

Griffin: Crawford, let's track!

Travis: Okay, so—

Justin: [sings] Let's track!

Travis: [sings] 'Put on your boots!' So this is like Crawford—being in the city, right, being surrounded by like buildings and walking on stone floors, that's not Crawford's thing.

Griffin: No.

Travis: That's not where he lives. This is where he lives. So he's doing stuff, he's looking at little broken twigs.

Griffin: That's good shit.

Travis: He's tasting the dirt.

Justin: Hm-mm!

Griffin: That's fucking gross.

Travis: And then he's spitting it out because he's like, why the fuck that I do that? That's so—oh, they're looking. I need to keep a straight face. And

like Aggie's sniffing around, following the horse blood trail. Anything we can get a handle on. And so, when we travel, "Difficult terrain in the forest doesn't slow our travel. We can't become lost except by magical means."

Griffin: Oh, wow.

Travis: We remain alert to danger, even when we are engaged in another activity.

Justin: Sheesh.

Travis: We can move stealthily at a normal pace. Or I can while alone. And if we get fortune, we find twice as much food. So if you guys want to collect some mushrooms later. And while tracking creatures, you learn the exact number, sizes and how long ago they passed through the area.

Griffin: Oh, great!

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: All right.

Travis: Also, my proficient bonuses doubled... in proficient skills when I make an intelligence or wisdom related check.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Wow.

Griffin: Then I'm going to give you advantage on this survival roll, because this is absolutely your shit. And your proficiency bonus you will add again to these rolls.

Travis: Yeah, so another plus two.

Griffin: As you do a survival check. We are looking for a DC 15.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: Well, that's...

Griffin: [chuckles] That's a 25. So that's fuckin' good.

Travis: Well, it's a 27.

Clint: Wow!

Travis: A 27.

Griffin: 27.

Justin: Sheesh...

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: And then a nat 20.

Griffin: Holy shit!

Justin: God!

Clint: Wheew!

Justin: Good heavens.

Travis: I'm good—he's good at this.

Justin: Good heavens!

Clint: Yeah!

Travis: He's as good at tracking as I am at D&D!

Griffin: The horse's name is Marcus.

Travis: Yeah.

Crawford: We're looking for Marcus!

Griffin: [chuckles] You taste the dirt and you're just like, "Marcus." You know the horse's name is Marcus. That's a wild piece of information for you to glean from this, but on a nat 20, you taste the dirt and you know Marcus. Marcus did come through here. Marcus was wounded and sprinted off, sort of circumnavigated the city of Lumino. Which you all could have done and not had to do all that shit where you had to get like a checkpoint pass and all that.

Travis: Well, I assumed it was wide, is it not? Very narrow city?

Griffin: Not wide enough for Marcus. Marcus followed this road and you are able to follow his trail as if you had a... like a... as if he was a Family Circus cartoon. Even a little [PJ dotted outline??] as he goes.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You are hypervigilant. Lady Godwin, Brother Phileaux, this is a different dude that you are exploring with right now. This is a... it is magical, the way that he is navigating this land.

Justin: I feel like watching this for the first time, like Godwin starts to think they might actually be able to kill Dracula.

Griffin: You all approach this fork in the road, at the border of the Strangle Mire. You know to hang a Ralph. Even if you hadn't gotten those incredibly explicit directions from Pierre Reynolds. You know where to get Marcus. Your hyper vigilant-nature, Crawford, alerts you to oncoming danger well in the distance, well before it can be a threat.

Approaching from the east, in the direction that you need to travel, and sort of coming towards this crossroads and continuing west, you see a convoy. And they are all traveling on foot. You see about a dozen humanoid figures. And they are wearing that same red regalia as the cultists who attacked you upon your arrival in Ungrave.

With the same opaque, red smog seeping from the collars, disguising their appearances. They are towing a cart that is piled with livestock—with formerly alive livestock. With unalive livestock.

Travis: Deadstock.

Griffin: Deadstock.

Travis: And I'm aware of them before they're aware of me, right?

Griffin: Well before they are aware of you.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: I always get deadstock confused with death pool.

Griffin: Yes.

Clint: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: And Woodstock.

Griffin: Yes.

Justin: No.

Griffin: The bird.

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: Stupid.

Travis: So, Crawford just like, turns and just says hide to his two companions. And he like kind of steps back into the brush of the side of the road. Down into you know, like a roadside kind of ditch, divot kind of thing. To become out of sight.

Griffin: I want a group stealth check. I am going to give you a bonus for this. Because of the forewarning, the notice that you have given them. And so, everyone can use Crawford's stealth bonus. Which I imagine is considerably higher than—

Travis: Yeah, my stealth bonus is a plus four.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Plus four.

Justin: Okay, so I got four plus four, eight.

Griffin: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: 16 plus four is a dirty 20.

Griffin: 15 plus four. You're just using his bonus.

Clint: Oh.

Griffin: So 19.

Clint: 19. Dirty 19.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: I got a 16 total.

Griffin: Okay. We'll strike the low and the high, we'll take the 16. With a 16, you duck down, you get out of sight. And the procession walks by and you are able to... you're able to see them very clearly. They are not able to see you.

Travis: Is there anyone struggling at the back?

Griffin: Make a perception check for me.

Travis: Okay, and that's...

[sound of dice thrown].

Travis: A 12 plus six, plus another two. So 20. Dirty 20.

Griffin: Oh, because this is a wisdom check. Okay.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Yes, there is a pair of people that are well behind the rest of the procession. In fact, the procession passes by without any sort of issue. And these two are a good—I mean, it takes them another couple of minutes to catch up to where the others are. There is a very tall, very muscular looking man, that with a 20, I will say you see stitches on his neck. And you assume that this man is also a Frankenstein.

And with him, there is a much older, much sort of wispier looking man wearing the same red regalia. Both of them don't have the red smog. You can see their faces quite clearly. They're not going to any effort to disguise themselves. And as they approach you, you hear the old man sort of castigating the big one.

And he says, "I told you not to kill the livestock! Living livestock makes for much more appeasing sacrifices, Hyde. How many times do I have to tell you?" And you hear the Frankenstein man say:

Hyde: Yeah, sorry, man... You know, it was an accident. The livestock here, it won't surprise you to hear, not sort of the most sturdy. Because they're eating very dead grass and stuff like that. So it was not... they're very fragile. Snap like twigs. So, I will do my best. I mean, all I can do is the best I can do, you know what I mean?

Travis: Crawford motions to Lady Godwin and communicates, or attempts to communicate non-verbally. Like saying—like pointing—like pointing at her, pointing at

the big one, and indicating like a knock on the head kind of thing. And pointing at himself, and pointing at the little one, and indicating that he's gonna grab the little one.

Griffin: [chuckles] That's so much for you to pantomime.

Travis: No, listen, I know—

Justin: Lady Godwin is just like staring and nodding.

Travis: This is one of those moments where it's like, oh, he's really used to like hunting with like his family.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And like doing all this tracking and stuff. Where they're like, Mm-hmm. And then they communicate back, "What do you think, maybe biscuits, maybe like some chicken for lunch?" And he's like, "Oh, I don't know. I had biscuits for breakfast."

Justin: I think Lady Godwin when like nods through all that and then just slowly kind of turns her attention back to the conversation. [chuckles] Like, "Yeah, I got it. All right, sounds good."

Travis: At which point—so just assuming—she nodded, so Crawford's going.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Phileaux, what do you—you see this conversation take place. Do you—are you able to piece together this pantomime? What is Brother Phileaux—

Clint: I believe Brother Phileaux got it. Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. [chuckles] I love that! You see Crawford start to approach. And what are you doing as you... as he begins to take this action, Brother Phileaux?

Clint: I'm readying my quarterstaff to conk somebody on the noggin.

Griffin: Okay. So, I'm going to need another stealth check. This time individual, from Brother Phileaux and from Crawford Muttner. If you're successful, I will give you a surprise attack round here on these two.

Travis: I got a 15 total.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: And I got a seven total.

Griffin: And Lady Godwin, you just see your two friends begin to creep out. And you're just gonna—you're just gonna—

Justin: No, I'll slow—I mean—ah, man... if they're creeping?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: No. That will only go bad for me. I'm watching, though. I'm ready to pounce.

Griffin: Okay, yes. The road is not far from where you all are hidden. Crawford, you are successful in this. And so you're going to be able to get one of them.

Travis: Can I tell you what I picture?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: What I'm picturing is like Crawford steps up and he's like wrapping his hand—he's going to like wrap his hand around the, you know, the little man's mouth, right? And he looks over expecting to see like Lady Godwin

conking the other guy out. And there's like puppet Phileaux with his stick and a thumbs up. And he looks over and there's Lady Godwin still in the bushes, like thumbs up. And he's like, "Oh, no. Everything's gone wrong."

[group chuckle]

Justin: We gotta—first I gotta say, dad, it's got to be at least a three quarter staff for you at this point, right?

Clint: Oh, yeah, it's—

Justin: Okay.

Clint: Yeah, it's much bigger than he is.

Travis: But that's what I'm trying—I'm trying to grab him and muffle his cries to try not to alert—

Griffin: The big one or the little one? The rest of the convoys is like barely visible in the distance. They are—

Travis: Yeah, I'm trying to grab the little one, expecting the big one to be in the process of being knocked out.

Clint: [laughs] So not only... [chuckles] Phileaux's attacking the big one?

Travis: Yes, correct.

Griffin: Yeah, it's great.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Okay, give me a—so you're just trying to... this is just an unarmed attack roll, as you're trying to grapple this dude, it sounds like?

Travis: Yeah? Yeah.

Griffin: Okay... so the way that—

Travis: I'm not trying to do damage, so wouldn't it be like an athletics track or acrobatics? Something to like grab him?

Griffin: Yeah, it would be a grapple. When you use an attack action to make a special melee attack, a grapple. And we are going to do a strength athletics check contested by the target's athletics check. You will have advantage on your roll because this is a surprise attack.

Travis: Okay, so I'm rolling a strength track with advantage.

Griffin: You are rolling in athletics check.

Travis: With advantage, got it.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: Okay, so that is a 15 total. And an eight total. So a 15.

Griffin: Okay, so this is just a straight up... zero. That is a seven. So yeah, you sneak up on the little one and grab him. As you grab him, you hear him start to protest. Are you trying to like, clasp his mouth?

Travis: Correct.

Griffin: Okay. You hear: [incoherent muffled speech] Brother Phileaux, you creep up. You're creeping. You're creeping up. Getting ready to do a big bonk.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: What does that look like as you're reading the attack?

Clint: I think he has a hold of Conky, his three quarter staff, like in the middle.

Griffin: Yes.

Clint: Which he has calculated will give him just enough stretch to be able to whack the big one on the hip.

Griffin: Okay. It is... you realize, it was not the wisest decision to attempt this maneuver with your floodlight crucifix?

Travis: Mm-hmm, yeah! Mm-hmm, yup, yup, yup, yup, yup!

Griffin: Because this towering, muscular man sees a very bright light approaching him from behind, even before he hears his associate scream. He turns around and just kind of like grabs the stick with his thumb and forefinger in midair as you swing it down on him, and just kind of like gently pushes it to the side. Like:

Hyde: Whoa, that's—

Travis: Does he seem angry?

Griffin: He does not. Not nearly as angry as the man who you have grappled here. And you see this big man say:

Hyde: Whoa, puppet.

Griffin: And...

Clint: Wait, so that was my attack?

Griffin: I mean, you failed your stealth check. So, you did not get the surprise attack.

Clint: I see. Okay.

Griffin: I will say that in this moment, he did not immediately counter-attack you.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: So I mean, he basically has addressed you here and said, "Whoa, puppet." Because he seems to be more fascinated by you than the fact that is his friend here has been grappled.

Clint: Good, because I'm gonna take advantage—

Travis: I think I would be too.

Clint: I'm going to take advantage of that.

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: And take a bonus action.

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: Which is Polearm Master.

Griffin: [laughs] Yeah, man, why wouldn't you have that feat?

Clint: "When you have the attack action with a quarter staff, you can use a bonus action to make a melee attack with the opposite end of the weapon."

Travis: Yes.

Clint: "That uses the same ability modifier as the primary attack and has a damaged die of D4."

Justin: You've come so far, dad.

Griffin: I love this.

Travis: I love you. I'm so proud of you.

Griffin: I'm so proud of you because I also know you guys leveled up to level four in the intervening episode. We forgot to mention that. And this does mean that instead of taking additional attribute points, you did take the Polearm Master feat. And that's fucking great for me. I love that.

Travis: I'm so proud of you.

Griffin: Okay, go ahead and make another attack roll with your quarter staff, please.

Travis: How does this look? I want it—so he grabbed the top, right?

Clint: He grabbed the top of it, so I'm—so he's just gonna pivot and use the bad guy's hand as the fulcrum and whack him up the side of the head with the other end of Conky.

Griffin: Okay, yeah.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: And that's a 15.

Griffin: Yes, a 15 connects. As he grabs the tip of the quarter staff with his thumb and forefinger, you just lower your hand to the other side of the quarter staff and upper cut it right into his jaw. Go ahead and roll damage for me.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: That would be a four.

Griffin: Okay, he takes four points of damage. Not a ton, based on sort of this man's pure bulk. But he—

Clint: I'm a little puppet boy, what do you expect? [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles] He does take a step back. And you see him sort of like touch his stitches, as if that kind of hurt. And he goes, "Ow!" And the man with his mouth covered shouts, [muffled] "Hey, the person! The person, hey!" And the giant man very quickly reaches into his pocket and pulls out a glass flask filled with—

Justin: Now wait a second. There has been enough time for all this stuff to happen. And I said I was ready to intervene. I clarified that specifically.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Justin: You gotta let me up—you gotta let me up in the biz.

Griffin: Get messy. Get in there. You see this. You see this big man pull out this glass flask and pop the cork on it. But I will give you a moment here.

Justin: I'm gonna leap at him and try to cut his hand off with my axe.

Griffin: Oh, Jesus Christ.

Justin: No, wait, you know what? Actually, flat side. We're gonna use flat side. I'm just trying to knock it out of his hand.

Griffin: Okay?

Justin: I don't know what's going on, but I don't want him to do what he's about to do.

Griffin: That is wise!

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: There's a big man named Hyde trying to drink a potion.

Travis: Oh, okay!

Griffin: Go ahead and make an attack roll with Jennifer Myers. And so you're trying to attack the bottle? You're trying to attack his hand, right?

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: So this is almost like a dexterity—just, let's make an attack roll with Jennifer Myers. And we'll see what we're looking at.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Oh, a 15. Plus five, 20.

Griffin: 15 plus 5 is a 20. Okay. With a 15 plus five, a 20, you smack the flask out of his hand. And it goes flying and it tumbles down the road. It lands a good 15 feet away.

Justin: I'm gonna go ahead and enter rage by the way.

Griffin: Oh yeah, for sure. He looks up at you, sees a fellow Frankenstein, and his demeanor shifts. And it looks suddenly like he is taking this situation much more seriously. I'm going to need a... hm... a constitution saving throw from Crawford Muttner.

Travis: Oh, no! Okay...

Griffin: Those are scary in this game, I will say, historically. Because sometimes they make you turn into a horse if you don't do good enough.

Travis: Yeah!

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: The heat is on.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: Nat 20, baby!

Griffin: Jesus Christ...

Clint: Woo!

Justin: Woo!

Travis: This is where Crawford Muttner thrives. I am the force.

Griffin: Wait, okay, the tracking I will give you. What happens here is that the man bites your finger and it does—it's not—his teeth are so old, it does—

Travis: You've gotta remember, bud, like Crawford Muttner is a monster hunter. Right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: So, this idea of like—

Griffin: An old man—

Travis: Subduing a beast, right? An animal in a way that you're not gonna get your fingers bitten. Or being used to it. Maybe at this point, he's been bitten by so many gnarly things that he's just like, "Ah, yeah, man. It's all scar tissue at this point."

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Okay, this moment is incredibly tense. It's good to say that sometimes when you're telling a story just to let people know.

[group chuckle]

Justin: Yeah, because otherwise—

Clint: In case people didn't sense the tension on their own.

Justin: Yeah. You gotta tell 'em.

Griffin: You have grappled this old man who is fighting and trying to fight his way out. You are face to face with this Frankensteinian man who looks like he's about to enter his own kind of rage. And from beneath your hand, you hear this voice say, "Unhand me, you fool. Don't you know who I am? I am Dr. Jekyll!"

[The Adventure Zone Versus Dracula theme music plays]

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