

The Adventure Zone Versus Dracula – Episode 18

Published May 9th, 2024

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[*Versus Dracula* intro theme music plays]

Dracula: Dear Diary...

I've got a joke. Why is Dracula so easy to swindle into disadvantageous dealings? Because he's a sucker. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Ha ha. It's funny, but also so sad and quite true.

Justin: [chuckles]

Dracula: I take it right on my pointy and masculine chin though because when you live forever, you're gonna get hoodwinked, that's just law of large numbers.

Travis & Clint: [chuckle]

Dracula: But as my old pal and fellow vampire Roger Daltrey said, I shan't be fooled again.

Justin: [scoffs]

[*Versus Dracula* theme music plays]

Griffin: Phileaux. You are... floating, weightless, not in the crimson waters you were just swimming in, but in an endless black abyss.

[eerie persistent hum plays]

Griffin: And standing in front of you, you see a familiar face. It's not one that I think you've ever met before, given the sort of difference, the gap between your positions in the church. But maybe from [chuckles] some stained-glass windows here and there, you see the Turbo Cardinal, who is looking down at you piteously. I guess you did see him on the—

Clint: Yes.

Griffin: On the operating table, back in the church.

Clint: He didn't see— He didn't see Phileaux.

Griffin: He's—

Clint: But Phileaux did see him.

Griffin: Yes, absolutely.

Clint: Tried to attack him.

Griffin: He... is looking down at you.

[quiet organ music plays]

Griffin: As you try to gain your bearings, and this space that you're in sort of continues to take shape, you realize that the two of you are not alone in here. All around you in this void are humanoid figures. Some are moving just kind of aimlessly shambling about, some are kneeling in a sort of fetal position. Nobody seems to be doing particularly great.

But they are giving a sort of wide berth to you and the Turbo Cardinal. You are sort of so bewildered by what you're seeing and this place that you have, you know, all of a sudden appeared in, it takes you a second to realize you're not a puppet. You are Phileaux again, in this place. The Turbo Cardinal looks down at you, and he says—

Turbo Cardinal: Welcome, my child. Have you come to give your confession? I recognize a member of the flock when I see one.

Brother Phileaux: Oh. No, your... Your Eminence, I am not here for confession, I am— I'm here... Oh, this is gonna take a while. I'm— I am here to help... you. I'm a bit confused as to the situation. Can you explain to me where exactly we are?

Griffin: He looks around the space and smiles, and looks down at you and says—

Turbo Cardinal: I suspect we are nowhere at all. The physical laws that govern our world, or perhaps I should say your world, do not seem to

apply here. It would perhaps be simplest to say that we are within the god Ahn.

Brother Phileaux: Oh.

Clint: I wanna do a Religion check.

Griffin: Sure, to what end?

Clint: To try to see if I can glean any more information from— as to where we are and what state we're in.

Griffin: Maybe— I think—

Travis: Wyoming.

Griffin: Here in Wyoming. I think maybe not Religion, I don't know what a Religion check would get you here, but I do think a, you know, just a straight up Perception check might be more—

Clint: [chuckles] Yes, but Griffin, I have minus one in Perception and plus six in Religion.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: Hmm. He's got a point.

Clint: Okay, Perception.

Griffin: Well, that's very exciting.

Clint: Alright.

Travis: What about Investigation?

Clint: Oh!

Griffin: If you can tell me sort of specifically what you are investigating, then I think I would allow it.

Clint: I want to look at the form of the Turbo Cardinal and see if he still looks vampiric.

Griffin: Yeah sure, go for it. Give me an Investigation check. Or a Medicine check, honestly.

Clint: Investigation.

[sound of die rolling]

Clint: [sighs] Well. Okay, that's a whole six.

Griffin: It's— It— He looks different from the Turbo Cardinal that you saw laid out on the table. More... vital. His cheeks are less sallow, you don't see pointy teeth as he is talking to you. As far as you can tell, this Turbo Cardinal you are speaking to does not appear to have that same affliction.

Brother Phileaux: Your Eminence, do you at all recall... what was the onset of your vampiric state? When last I saw you, to be honest, when last I saw you, you were laid out, almost at the state of death, with vampiric tendencies and yet no bite marks. Do you have any recollection of being in that state?

Griffin: His smile vanishes and he looks down at the floor, and he says—

Turbo Cardinal: Ah.

[harpsichord music plays]

Turbo Cardinal: Perhaps you should receive my confession instead.

Brother Phileaux: Oh, oh. Sir, of course.

Turbo Cardinal: What is your name, my child?

Brother Phileaux: I am Brother Phileaux.

Turbo Cardinal: Phileaux.

Brother Phileaux: Yes.

Turbo Cardinal: Phileaux, what is your rank?

Brother Phileaux: Oh, I am merely a monk, sir. I am looking to advance, I'm looking to move on. I was— I was being audited in the Cathedral of Enumeration.

Turbo Cardinal: [chuckles] Ah, yes.

Brother Phileaux: And by Deacon Atreus.

Turbo Cardinal: Yes.

Brother Phileaux: He took me to see you, and you had fangs.

Turbo Cardinal: Ah, I feared that may be the case.

Brother Phileaux: Yes.

Turbo Cardinal: The— You may not be aware then of the complex politics that your church must be embroiled in to survive. The throne, Phileaux, is no fan of our orthodoxy. The foundations of our church are crumbling, and my pleas for succor to the Lord of Light went unanswered.

And so I must confess that I sought power in the only place where I knew power was guaranteed. In Engrave. I was invited to have audience with the entity in which we now reside, he needed my help, so he claimed, and would bestow upon me power to save our order.

But when I failed to provide it, he found another use for me, I suppose. That is how I came to the state in which you saw me.

Brother Phileaux: So, it was Ahn, that turned you into the pseudo-vampire that I saw you as?

Turbo Cardinal: Ahn is at the source of every vampire that dwells this world. I am ashamed to have fallen into such a state, and I hope I did not do you or any other members of our order any harm.

Brother Phileaux: Oh, well no no no. If I were to, let's say, eliminate this Ahn.

Turbo Cardinal: [scoffs]

Brother Phileaux: Would it cure you? If I were to be able to somehow... murderize him? Her? It? They?

Turbo Cardinal: You... You are young. I suppose. You cannot kill a god. Phileaux, you can only delay it, and Ahn has been much delayed. I fear that I am... beyond saving in the physical world. You may be able to cure me [sighs] of the virulent evil that has plagued my physical form, but there will be no reunion for me.

Griffin: And he gestures to his... his sort of ethereal form. He says—

Turbo Cardinal: When Ahn turned me into what I am now, he... drained me of— It— Well, it would be too simple to say of all the goodness in my heart. He drained me, to put it simply, of my own capacity to be satisfied.

Whatever man you would cure out there would lack decency of any stripe. I would ask instead, should curing me prove impossible, that you dispatch me, so that what's left of my soul may rejoin the light.

Griffin: Outside of the heart.

[harpsichord music stops]

Griffin: Back in the meat space, we are in the petrified heart chamber. On one side, sort of the north half of this room, Mutt you have just conducted a flawless ruse.

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: To free Hyde, and then turn the attention of the half dozen guards or so in this room to turn their attention to him. You have also knocked the gigantic flesh golem into the crimson waters, as the gate of this cell swung open. We're gonna get to that in just a second.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: But on the other half of this room, Lady Godwin, you stand at the mouth of a tunnel.

Justin: Yeah Griff, I'm— You know, it's the problem with taking a little break-a-rooski in between recording these episodes to travel.

Griffin: Yeah yeah yeah.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: I, for the life of me, I'll be damned if I can remember what my plan was over here. [wheezes]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Well—

Justin: Seems like Mutt's gettin' some good work done, and Griff, I think what we got here is a classic case of barbarian trying to be useful in a stealthy situation, and I'll— but I'll be damned if I can tell you—

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: — what my goal was here. [wheezes]

Griffin: Yeah, sure. I mean you gotta do the—

Travis: I believe it's— Justin, the end goal might've just simply been curiosity.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: You know?

Justin: Sure— I think if you guys looked over at Lady Godwin, you would've seen her like ducking down, looking at the cave, and then all of a sudden she just kind of like stands bolt up, like, "What?"

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: "Huh?"

Justin: "What was— What am I doing? Huh?"

Griffin: As if a month passed.

Travis: "Sorry guys, brain fart."

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Why don't you give me a— Give me a Perception check.

Travis: History check, to remember what your plan was.

Justin: [chuckles] Oh, that's good.

Griffin: Yeah, that's good.

Justin: Perception. Great. Groovy.

[sound of die rolling]

Justin: Okay, it's an eight.

Griffin: Okay. At an eight, I will sort of lay out the scene. You see Mutt doing this deception up on the north side of the room and it seems to be working quite well. All eyes are on Hyde right now.

You get the impression though, you are standing fairly out in the open. If, you know, one of these guards turns away from this ruse, they will see you.

Justin: Ah shit, you know what I gotta do?

Griffin: What?

Justin: I gotta go— I gotta— I think I gotta go in the cave with the eyeballs. I think I gotta go into the cave with the eyes.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: 'Cause that's the only safe—

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: I don't know if it's safe or unsafe, but I know being out here is unsafe, so I'm gonna go— I'm gonna head deeper into the cave to try to hide my presence here.

Griffin: Okay. Cool. You step foot into the cave, and vanish from the chamber.

Travis: You hear a bunch of tiny little animal voices go "Wait, what? Wait, really? Okay."

Griffin: "In with us?"

Travis: "I thought we were meant to— Okay."

Griffin: You step inside the tunnel, and it takes you a while for your eyes to adjust in here, it is nearly pitch black, aside from these yellow eyes that are watching you.

Beyond those eyes, at what you assume to be the back of the tunnel some distance away, you also see a flicker of bright red light. It is reminiscent of sort of the flashes of light that you saw in the sort of seams in the tunnels in this cave system, the like arteries, if you will, leading into the heart chamber.

This one is quite bright, and now as you move into the tunnel, you can see it. That light illuminates the creatures that are in here with you, and they are numerous and various.

There is a diverse collection of nocturnal beasts in here. You see foxes and wolves and bats and hedgehogs and any number. It's Noah's ark— It's Noah's dark in here.

Travis: Awwww!

Griffin: Noah's dark in here.

Justin: That's great.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: As you go inside. However.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: These creatures do not attack you in some sort of, you know, weird hive mind formation, like the rats you encountered on the spinal bridge earlier. They are fairly docile. In fact, a lot of them aren't even looking at you as you enter into the intes— tunnel.

They appear emaciated and somewhat bummed out. These creatures that you are now in the tunnel with do not appear to be any kind of immediate threat to you, Godwin. What do you do?

Justin: I'm gonna— Without moving forward into sort of their space, I'd like to take a look at— towards the...

[sound of die rolling]

Justin: Light you were describing, see if I can figure out anything else about it in my limited capacity and understanding, such that there is.

Griffin: Sure, give me a— I think this could be Perception or Investigation.

Justin: Either one is a zero, plus 13, is what I rolled there.

Travis: Better than 12.

Justin: Better than a 12, not as good as a 14, that's what I always say.

Griffin: Maybe 30 feet into this tunnel it dead ends. This is not so much a tunnel as it is just a little hovel, that these pitiful creatures are kind of taking shelter in. At the back, the back wall sure enough has an exposed seam of this red crystal vein.

And it is pulsating much brighter, much more steady, than any that you have seen so far. Not entirely sure why, but I think even you, without any

kind of like magical training to your name, you are feeling a great deal of just energy radiating off of this thing.

[pause]

Justin: [sighs] Man.

Travis: Mm.

Justin: This is like a really bad... I don't love any of my options right now. I hate—

Travis: You got yourself some barbarian impulses over there?

Justin: Yeah. Aw man. I'm not gonna do... [chuckles] I'm not gonna do anything. [wheezes]

Travis: Oh.

Justin: I'm not gonna do anything. I don't know what to do! This all seems extremely bad. [wheezes]

Griffin: That is your prerogative if you don't wanna do it.

Justin: No, I'll tell you, I'll be honest with you.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I am being colored by the conversation that I heard between like Phileaux and the Turbo Cardinal about like what is—

Griffin: Oh yeah, well you didn't hear anything.

Justin: You know what I mean? Like I know I didn't, but like my impulses— I'm trying to balance like knowing that with like what should we do? I'm gonna head towards the light. I'm gonna head towards the light, fuck. I'm gonna head towards the light.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Slowly. With my hands up, in a very non-threatening way. And singing a sweet song.

Griffin: [chuckles] What's that sou—

Clint: Let's hear some of that song.

Justin: What?

Travis: Yah.

Griffin: Yeah, what's that sound like?

Lady Godwin: [sings] Little night boys.

Clint: [scoffs]

Lady Godwin: [sings] My little night boys.

Griffin: [claps]

Clint: [giggles]

Lady Godwin: [sings] Let me sing to you of your greatest joys. The moon overhead and the dew underneath. There is still mouse blood on your teeth.

Griffin: [claps once]

Lady Godwin: [sings] My night boooys.

Travis: My favorite Sondheim.

Clint: [laughs quietly]

Travis: From *Little Night Boys*, I love that one.

Griffin: [chuckles] Give me an Animal Handling check with advantage.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah, thank you.

Clint: Yah, he earned it, man.

[sound of die rolling]

Justin: Six.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You get inspiration for that for—

Justin: And...

[sound of die rolling]

Griffin: I was inspired.

Justin: A two!

Griffin & Justin: [cackle]

Clint: What has happened to us?

Griffin: [claps]

Justin: Griffin likes the songs and Jesus doesn't.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You know what it is? Okay, here's what happens. At a— With a six, I think actually what happens, the creatures love this song. And as you walk down this tunnel singing the tune, they start gathering around you. So much so that you are having to step kind of cautiously so as not to trample any of them.

As you near the— this glowing red vein, you feel little pitter patters on your shoulders. You look over and you see that you have a handful of tarantulas that have descended from the cave ceiling and landed on you.

Travis: Cute.

Griffin: Is Godwin—

Travis: Oh wait, I'm picturing them. Hey, here's a little secret if you're freaked out at home. Picture 'em cute.

Griffin: Yeah, that's all you need to do.

Travis: Helps a lot.

Justin: Can I get— How far have I made it, closing the 30 feet.

Griffin: You've made it to the— You have made it to this vein though. You are here, and you can see it very, very clearly now. I will say, it is—

Justin: What am I feeling— Tell me what I— You know what? Let me do— Ooo. Would you let me do an Insight check on myself?

Griffin: Oh.

Justin: To see like what kind of like—

Travis: To see if you're lying?

Justin: No. I guess Insight isn't exactly the vibe, but like I wanna try to like really get a sense of what kind of like vibes I'm getting from this.

Travis: Mmm.

Justin: Like what kind of energy is radiating— I don't have any magical sense, right, obviously. So I mean an Arcana check I feel like doesn't make sense, but some sort of like what am I feeling from it.

Griffin: Okay, yeah sure. Give me an Insight check.

[sound of die rolling]

Justin: Ooo.

Griffin: Oh my god.

Justin: Of course now a critical 20.

Griffin: What a cool one to get a nat 20 on.

Justin: What a cool one.

Clint: [chuckles]

Travis: This—

Justin: Her Insight.

Griffin: Yeah, right.

Justin: Her third eye opens, she sees all, she is love, everything is love. [chuckles] She understands herself on such a deep level.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: This is a bit weird for me as a DM 'cause I am generally uncomfortable telling you guys how you feel about a situation. Or at least I try to be uncomfortable with that.

Travis: Is that—

Justin: I am— Let me ask you this— As I— Let me rephrase this question, Griffin. As I approach it, how does my mood shift?

Travis: Is there an outside influence.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Do I feel differently now close to it than I did before?

Griffin: Um... Here is how I will answer this question. You are a barbarian.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: You didn't used to be, but then your body got exploded and your head got transplanted onto a barbarian body, and now you're a barbarian and as a barbarian, you have slaughtered some stuff.

You have killed things with your powerful axe, Jennifer Meyers, and severed heads and struck at vulnerable points on a number of different creatures. This thing you are standing in front of, you feel a vitality from it. You feel a... You feel a weakness to it.

Travis: Mmm.

Griffin: That is, I think, the best I can kind of answer without, you know, kind of... directly guiding you and telling you what—

Justin: I'm gonna—

Griffin: — you know, what to do or how do it.

Justin: Okay, I'll tell you what. I'm gonna pick up one of my little night boys, and hold 'em right against it. I got a little possum handy I could test?

Griffin: Uh... Yeah, sure. Yeah, you could pick up a possum.

Travis: Just a little test possum.

Justin: How does he react?

Griffin: It barely reacts.

Justin: Oh wait, let me roll for Possum Test.

Griffin: Yeah, roll Possum.

Justin: [wheezes]

Travis: Just a quick Possum check.

Griffin: You rolled Performance.

[sound of die rolling]

Griffin: Which is guess is— Another nat 20, what the fuck, Justin?!

Justin: Yeah. I don't know, man. I really need to know what's goin' on here. [wheezes] I guess. I don't know. At a certain point, Griffin, like we all have plans, right?

Griffin: [cackles]

Justin: And you had plans. [chuckles] You had plans.

Travis: So Justin starts fushigi-ing a possum around.

Justin: I— [chuckles] You had plans for how you want this thing to go, and I had a plan which was rub a possum on it—

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: — so good that I know everything. [wheezes] And I'm sorry, like there was a chance that this possum plan didn't pan out.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: But the possum plan panned out, and now you gotta— You can't pan me, you gotta— [wheezes]

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: You gotta tell him your dark secrets.

Justin: Give me the gold.

Griffin: [sighs] You hold the possum gingerly, it looks up at you trustingly. It liked your song a lot. And place it against this glowing red crystalline vein. As you do so, the possum... its eyes go wide, and it—

Justin: Okay, I stopped.

Griffin: Stre—

Justin: I stopped. No, I stopped.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Justin: I stopped. Its eyes go wide. It stopped. That's fine. It's bad, it doesn't like it, that's fine. [chuckles] I don't need—

Griffin: It looks— No.

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: The opposite, Juice.

Justin: Oh god, no. [chuckles] Okay.

Griffin: It looks stronger. It stretches its body out and as it does so, you see it kind of snap out of it, snap out of this fugue it's in, and it does like a couple quick circles in your giant hands as you hold it, and it looks like ready to fucking party.

Justin: Interesting. Yeah, okay, I'm gonna hit it with my axe. [wheezes]

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Wait, sorry, the possum or the vein?

Justin: The vein.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Yeah. I've got— My research is complete—

Griffin: [cackles]

Justin: — and I've decided, after extensive testing, the Griffin's not gonna give me anything better than that 'cause I got two 20s in a row, one of which was a possum test.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: So roll to hit it with axe.

[sound of die rolling]

Griffin: The possum—

Justin: Now it's a six. Now it's a six. Now it's a six. Now I'm rollin' sixes.

Griffin: You slam your axe, your trusty axe, Jennifer Meyers, into the vein. It immediately splits down the middle, and a spray of bright red blood shoots out of it, like a fire hose.

Justin: Fuck yes, let's go. [chuckles]

Griffin: It blasts you, leaving a Lady Godwin-shaped silhouette behind you, in— on the wall, and it is pretty gross. You are now covered in god blood.

Justin: Okay. How am I feeling right now?

Griffin: You feel incredible. You heal up to full. I don't even know if you have any damage, but you feel—

Justin: I do, but not anymore.

Griffin: You feel like you are— you have been revitalized.

Justin: Alright!

Griffin: As you pull Jennifer Meyers back—

Justin: I didn't know it was an HP thing, I would've just popped it [chuckles] instantly and chucked it back out.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: I actually would've killed all those guys and then popped the HP, absolutely.

Griffin: As you pull Jennifer Meyers back, the blade of this axe— What does Jennifer Meyers look like? You haven't really, I think, described kind of what sort of axe this is.

Justin: Alright. Oh, well here I go. So imagine a long stick.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And then at the end of it?

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Justin: There's two curved... blades.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Griffin: Kickass dude, yeah. Yeah no, for sure.

Travis: Connected in the middle or separate?

Justin: No no no, this is the best part, right?

Travis: Uh-huh.

Justin: The two blades are connected to the stick at the end.

Travis: Oh, holy shit.

Clint: Ohhhh.

Justin: [chuckles] Yeah, dude.

Griffin: That's just it?

Justin: Oh wait wait wait wait wait wait wait, I didn't tell you the best part. Runes. [chuckles]

Clint: [gasps]

Travis: Whoaaaaa.

Justin: [through laughter] Yeah man.

Griffin: Cool.

Travis: And do the runes means something, or just decorative?

Justin: Well, it's not her axe. She doesn't know the mystery of the runes.

Travis: Gotcha.

Justin: But they are— Oh man, guys. When I start getting into the runes.
[wheezes]

Travis: Oh yeah.

Clint: Yeah. Yeah.

Justin: You are not gonna be able to— It's gonna be a lot of— like a lot to unpack. The runes are really important.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Travis: Can you give us any indication on the weight of it?

Justin: Wh— The weight of the axe?

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: This is about an a— this is about an axe-worth of axe. [chuckles]

Travis: Yeah nice, an axe weight.

Justin: Just a standard kinda big axe.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: The only thing different about it, and it's like almost too normal?
Huh.

Griffin: Whoa.

Justin: [chuckles] You know what I mean? Except for the runes, which we will—

Travis: And Justin, is the blade just loose in the stick?

Justin: The blade is connected to the stick with glue.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: But the other thing about it is that there's only 12 runes, and each one means something really important and different.

Griffin: Cool.

Justin: Yeah, it's pretty cool.

Griffin: As you pull Jennifer Meyers out of the vein.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: You see that its appearance has changed somewhat.

Travis: Aw man.

Justin: Ugh.

Griffin: The half that you—

Travis: I just started drawing it.

Clint: [wheezes]

Griffin: [chuckles] The half that you attacked the vein with, the blade, now has a splash of red crystal making up a part of that blade, that sort of streaks dramatically back towards the shaft.

Justin: I try to wipe that off.

Griffin: It doesn't come off.

Justin: [quietly] Fuck.

Griffin: It is crystal, it is part of the blade. You can see that these red veins, as they reach the shaft of the axe, they weave downwards. They drip and harden and crystallize between— weaving between the runes,

these important runes, and where they meet sort of the grip where you are holding it, it almost looks like they're forming like a... thorny vines around the shaft of this blade.

Justin: [giggles] Making— Griffin, I just need you to just add a one more clause for me, if you would just add "making the runes illegible."

Griffin: [chuckles] Making the runes—

Justin: If you could just—

Griffin: — illegible forever.

Travis: Noooo!

Justin: [laughs] No! The mystery of the runes!

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: Aww.

Justin: I had a whole— It was a whole trans-media property, the mystery of the runes!

Travis: Aw man.

Justin: Damn it!

Griffin: This—

Justin: Damn it.

Griffin: This axe—

Justin: I'm—

Travis: Griffin, are you sure? How could you take that away from Justin?

Justin: Griff, I'm sad, but the listener at home, you should be devastated [chuckles] right now.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Griffin.

Justin: This is the worst moment of your day and you don't even know it.

Griffin: In the presence of this—

Travis: Jesus.

Griffin: — powerful blood, you feel your axe has gotten stronger. And it is feeding... off of this sort of vital blood, and you get the sense that if any of your own blood were to get on this axe, it would reach a truly lethal potential. Jennifer Meyers has become a Blood Rage Greataxe.

Justin: Whoa.

Travis: Fuck, dude.

Griffin: A magic item. You gain +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic greataxe—

Clint: Ooo!

Griffin: — while you half your hit points or fewer.

Clint: Noice!

Travis: Now here— Let me tell y'all, listeners at home, what I love. In *D*— In *TAZ Versus Dracula*, there have been a lot of moments where Justin, Dad, and I have done things that have thrown Griffin for a loop, and he's had to quickly prepare and figure stuff out. I love that Griffin knew that when presented with a big glowing vein, Justin was gonna hit it with his axe.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: So that in this one circ— Like he was ready for like, "Yup, here you go." [chuckles] "This is what happens."

Clint: [chuckles]

Travis: He knew Justin so well.

Justin: Aw man.

Travis: In this circumstance.

Justin: But it— In the context of that though, how excruciating must all the possum tests have been.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: I can see why those weren't more lucrative.

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: The possum, seeing this Blood Rage Greataxe, looks up at you and nods sort of violently, and scampers and sort of drapes itself around your neck like a mink.

Clint: Awww.

Justin: So is this something that's still happening, or is this like, gone?

Griffin: The blood has stopped. It is now sort of feebly dripping from the vein, which has gone now almost completely dark. It is—

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: The scene in here has calmed down, except you are literally like head to toe covered in blood on your front side.

[transition piano music plays]

[ad break]

[piano music plays]

Griffin: Mutt.

Travis: Yeah?

Griffin: Back in the chamber.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: The cultists are beginning to cross the bridge across this blood river to confront Hyde. You have sort of stepped away from this situation, what is your kind of like plan now that you have—

Travis: Well now I look over to where I know my friends Phileaux and Lady Godwin are just waiting for my signal, ready to tell `em like, "They're distracted."

Griffin: [claps]

Travis: "Let's go."

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: "I solved this room. Everything's going according to— Huh?!"
[chuckles] And they're not there.

Griffin: They are not there, no. No yeah, you are alone in here, aside from the—

Crawford: Well, huh.

Griffin: — the many guards that are confronting Hyde. Hyde looks over at you as the guards approach him, and is like—

Hyde: You gotta help me man, come on. You're trying to kill Dracula, right bro? I can get you there.

Crawford: I would never! Unless we— Wait. How do the rest of us feel?

Griffin: All the guards— the cultists all look at you. Like... And the leader of the cult said—

Cult Leader: Did you say we would never? We hate Dracula.

Crawford: Yeah, I mean we would never not kill him, right?

Cult Leader: Yes...

Crawford: Yeah, man.

Griffin: He kinda eyes you suspiciously, and then turns back to Hyde. Hyde is going to start—

Crawford: That guy's a real Dracula lover! He was telling me before.

Hyde: Uh!

Crawford: He said he was gonna save Dracula, and then he said, "I'm gonna turn on off," and he like laughed really hard at it, he thought it was really clever.

Griffin: He said— He shouts out—

Hyde: I don't love Dracula! If anything, I'm ambivalent about Dracula.

Griffin: He is going to start... trying to fight these guys off. And... Are you just gonna stand there and watch this scene sort of unfold? Or are you—

Travis: They're all facing him, right?

Griffin: Yeah yeah yeah.

Travis: Is there maybe a straggler guard towards the back that maybe no-one would miss?

Griffin: Yeah, I mean there is a guard standing nearest to you. You would have to be pretty stealthy to dispatch him without anybody noticing, but it is, you know, it's possible.

Travis: Okay. Let's do that.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay. Give me a Stealth check first.

[sound of die rolling]

Travis: Well Griffin, that's a 10 plus four, a 14.

Griffin: Okay. I'm gonna just roll for the leader here, who is sort of the one closest, a Perception check. To see if he notices. Okay. Go ahead and make your attack.

Travis: Mmm, okay. Uh-huh.

[sound of die rolling]

Travis: A— That's a natural one.

Justin: Oh god.

Griffin: Oh shit, man.

Justin: Now, right now?

Griffin: You... bring your dagger towards the neck of this cultist, and just before it finds purchase in his exposed throat meat, he... ducks out of the way.

Travis: Oh ju— Exactly according to plan.

Griffin: And he look at you and says—

Cultist One: Hey man, the sacrifice. We're not doin' that right now.

Crawford: Naw, man! I'm bein' controlled!

Justin: [giggles]

Crawford: Hyde's usin' some kind of mind control! I'm tryin' to resist! Aw, he really wanted me to slit your throat, man, but I'm doin' my best over here.

Cultist One: [sighs heavily] This guy's such a dick.

Griffin: Give me a Deception check.

Travis: [hums waiting music]

[sound of die rolling]

Travis: That's a 19. A natty— A natural 19.

Cultist One: I've always said that guy has psychic powers. You've always heard me saying it. I don't trust him—

Crawford: I knew it, man.

Cultist One: — on account of his psychic powers. Okay, well I'm gonna turn my back to you again.

Justin: [hisses in amusement]

Crawford: Okay, yeah man. I think I got this thing beat.

Cultist One: Alright, good. Fight him off, brother, you can do this.

Griffin: And he turns back.

Travis: Okay, so I'm still not in initiative or combat or anything. I'm trying— I wanna figure out where... everybody is. I'm going to use... Locate Object.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: To find Phileaux.

Griffin: Sure yeah, that works. You—

Travis: 'Cause he's a puppet.

Griffin: Yeah, go ahead and use that spell slot.

Travis: So an object.

Griffin: You definitely— This works. He's inside the frickin' heart, man. It's fucking crazy.

Travis: Mutt, even with everything going on, just like...

Crawford: [sighs defeatedly]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [giggles]

Travis: Like—

Crawford: Wha—? Um... Man, aw man. [sighs heavily again] Alright. Okay.

Travis: I'm going to... Okay great. I'm going to cast Protection From Good and Evil on myself.

Griffin: Okay...

Travis: And then I'm gonna charge the heart.

Griffin: Cool. To... attack it, or?

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: With—

Travis: Or like, I don't know, man. Get in it?

Griffin: [chuckles] No, I like it. I'm down. What— How are you attacking it? With what?

Travis: I'm just gonna like try to like shoulder check it.

Griffin: Just gonna—

Travis: I don't know— You know, what— Can I see liquid moving inside of it, or is it crystallized all the way through? You know, what am I looking at? Is blood pumping into it?

Griffin: It is, yes.

Travis: What's going on?

Griffin: The blood— The river of blood that flows through this room is going through the heart, and you can see as much, you can faintly see through the sort of like crystallin surface of the heart, and you can see liquid sort of roiling around inside of it.

Travis: [reluctantly] Yeah, I'm gonna try to hit it with, you know, my scythe or something. I'm just gonna try to crack it.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: My dagger, stab it I guess.

Griffin: Okay, this is gonna raise suspicion, obviously, but this is—

Crawford: I'm being controlled!

Justin: Trav, good news. I either weakened for you, or I didn't.

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: One of the two definitely happened.

Griffin: Go ahead—

Justin: Or it's angrier and more powerful than ever. [chuckles]

Griffin: Go ahead and make an attack roll against the heart.

[sound of die rolling]

Travis: That right there is a gentleman's 20.

Clint: Nice!

Griffin: Okay. Sure, yeah. No, you swing this scythe [chuckles] into the surface—

Travis: No, it'll be the dagger, I'm stabbing it, since I don't have a plus seven with the sickle.

Griffin: Okay. You stab the dagger into the surface of this heart. And when that happens, a spray of bright and powerful blood.

Travis: Oh right.

Griffin: Shoots outward.

Travis: Forgot about that.

Griffin: All over you.

Travis: I know that just happened.

Griffin: When that happens.

Travis: [chuckles] Uh-huh.

Griffin: And you pull the dagger back, it is covered in red—

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: — crystalline—

Travis: You're gonna have to describe it first, Griffin.

Griffin: The blade—

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: What does the dagger—

Travis: It was my father's runed dagger.

Griffin: [chuckles] Well, Travis.

Travis: He gave that to me and said, "When you solve these runes."

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: "I'll come back."

Griffin: [chuckles] Well tragically, the runes are illegible.

Travis: No!

Justin: [wheezes]

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Fuck!

Griffin: As a weaving pattern of red crystal—

Travis: I had 11 of 12 figured out, Griffin.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: — wiggles around the blade, and where it reaches the hilt.

Travis: Uh-huh.

Griffin: It forms like thorny vines. This is now a Blood Rage Dagger.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: And—

Justin: Griffin, I have to tell you something. When I added that to my inventory, it was green. And that created a high the likes of which I've never experienced in this show.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I've never added a green item to my inventory before, and the fact that you have just done this.

Travis: To cheapen it.

Justin: Just— [chuckles] To cheapen it in this fashion is— I'll never be able to forgive you for this.

Griffin: Well, for what it's worth, this is not a weapon that you use very much, Mutt.

Travis: No.

Griffin: But yeah.

Justin: Not— Well not until now

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: You are also similarly covered in blood. We're gonna have to hack this item into the game, 'cause I'm pretty sure Blood Rage Dagger doesn't exist.

Travis: Correct.

Griffin: But now you've got one too. I have now established a sort of one stop shop for magic times.

Travis: Anybody else wanna stab this shit?

Griffin: [cackles]

Justin: [wheezes] Phileaux's gonna be so pissed that he was—

Travis: Yeah, I rub my crossbow on it, I guess? I don't know what else I— [wheezes]

Griffin: Whoa, your crossbow now has— No, it doesn't.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: You see... every face in this room, including Hyde's turns to look at you, and the cultist says—

Cult Leader: I gotta be honest, you're taking some liberties with kind of like our whole deal here. You don't stab the god heart!

Crawford: No yeah, I'm— Like I told that other dude, I'm being controlled, man! This is all part of Hyde's— Ah! I'm doin' it again!

Griffin: Make a—

Travis: I attack it again.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay, make an attack roll.

Travis: 'Cause it's not like cracked or—

Justin: Travis, attack with your boot. [wheezes] Get a magic blood boot.

Clint: [laughs]

[sound of die rolling]

Travis: That's a 24!

Griffin: Yeah You—

Justin: Attack with your— Travis, attack with your wiener! Quick!

Clint & Griffin: [laugh]

Justin: This is your moment!

Clint: [shouts] A Blood Rage Wien!

Justin: [wheezes] Make him do it! Make him give you a Blood Rage Wiener!

Travis: No, that time it was with the sickle, 'cause that would hit, and then I went— I want a Blood Rage Sickle too.

Griffin: Yeah man, sure. Now you've got a Blood— No. No. The magic item shop has closed for the day.

Travis: Okay, well I stab it again with the dagger.

Griffin: Okay, you stab it again with the dagger, and some shards of it break off and fall into the water. And then the leader of the cult looks over at you and says—

Cult Leader: Alright! This dude is actin' awfully suss.

Crawford: Yeah, tell me about it! You gotta attack Hyde and break his concentration, or I'm just gonna keep— I'm doin' it again!

Griffin: No, at this point, cultists are now sprinting across the bridge to seize you.

Travis: And—

Griffin: Phileaux. Oh, yeah.

Travis: Can I do one more thing?

Griffin: Real quick, yes.

Crawford: I sure hope somebody helps me smash this big crystal heart! Someone a lot stronger than me, who's good at attacking things!

Griffin: Okay. Back inside the heart, the void. You are growing sort of accustomed to this like weightless feeling in this space. The Turbo Cardinal says...

Turbo Cardinal: I am not positive the rules of this intangible space we speaking in, but I would caution you against staying too long, lest you have your own goodness pulled from your body.

Brother Phileaux: Oh.

Turbo Cardinal: And you should return.

Brother Phileaux: I will. And I will free you from this curse, I... I vow.

Griffin: He smiles and says...

Turbo Cardinal: You... are... a noble. You are... a good man, Phileaux. I— Were I still in charge, I would see to your advancement. I... I do believe I am beyond saving, and so I will simply say this. You... are... pure of heart. And that makes you vulnerable to Ahn's machinations. Do not trust him, no matter how sweet his voice may seem.

Brother Phileaux: I'll try to be more cynical.

Griffin: He nods, and he says—

Turbo Cardinal: Oh, and the most important thing.

Travis: [chuckles]

Turbo Cardinal: His weakness, and Dracula's weakness, and basically the key to your whole quest is—

Griffin: And then a giant fleshy paw—

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: — grabs you from below, and rips you downwards. And you have been pulled back into the crimson waters of this underground chamber, forcibly removed from the heart by the enormous, menacing flesh golem who went plunging into the river after you. What do you do?

Clint: First of all, point of order! Here Brother Phileaux/Pinocchio has been floating in this magic god blood.

Travis: [cackles]

Clint: That gave them super weapons!

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah.

Clint: I— Your honor! I maintain that Brother Phileaux has now become a Blood Rage Puppet.

Griffin: A Blood Rage Puppet, you say. Okay, yeah. Phileaux, you now have cool red crystal on your body, and when you make an unarmed attack roll at below half health, you'll get plus two to attack and damage.

Clint: Thank you.

Justin: Nice job, Dad. Big get.

Griffin: You look also kinda sick.

Clint: Okay.

Justin: [snorts] You should see a doctor though about that. He's terrible.

Griffin: It's bad.

Clint: Okay, so I was pulled out of the heart, correct?

Griffin: Yes.

Clint: How close am I to the opening where I swam in?

Griffin: Uh... a few feet, but you are in the grip of a giant meaty hand.

Clint: That's fine.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: That's fine.

Griffin: What do you do?

Clint: I am going to cast Air Bubble.

Griffin: Oh shit.

Clint: Inside the heart.

Justin: Oh my god!

Travis: Wait a minute.

Justin: Fuck! [chuckles]

Griffin: Is that a—

Clint: Now.

Griffin: Is that a real— Air Bubble?

Clint: Air Bubble. If Dr Sydnee were here, she would tell you that the medical term for that is an embolism.

Griffin: [chuckles] Okay.

Justin: Fuck, this is demented.

Clint: I'm casting an air bubble in the heart.

Justin: Morbid.

Clint: As I'm being sucked out.

Justin: Fuck. [wheezes]

Clint: To create an embolism in the heart of Ahn.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Oh shit, wait guys. It's just— It's coming across my desk right now. It's the competent thing that my dad's ever done. I'm reading— not just—

Griffin: Or any of us.

Travis: Not just— It's the most competent thing a McElroy male has ever accomplished.

Justin: Wow Dad, amazing, what a moment.

Griffin: Okay. Taking some liberties with the Air Bubble spell, which is supposed to go around—

Clint: I know, I know.

Griffin: The head of a thing.

Clint: I know.

Griffin: But I'm such a fan of this move. You are being crushed by this big beefy paw. And so as you reach up and release this air bubble, you see it float upwards into the heart. And as it vanishes, as it passes into one of the chambers of this heart, everything goes still and quiet for just a moment.

[eerie hum sound effect plays]

Griffin: And then a tremor.

[ground tremoring sound effect plays]

Griffin: Tears through this chamber. From above, Mutt, you see a rift form in the ground. The rift sort of cuts across the river at one point, and you see a sort of almost like a whirlpool start to form as the blood just starts to kind of like fall out of this room. Give me a Dexterity saving throw.

[pause]

[sound of die rolling]

Travis: Okay, pretty good at those. Gentleman's 20.

Griffin: Yes. Okay, on a gentleman's 20, you nearly lose your footing in this place, but holding onto the dagger embedded in the crystalline heart, you manage to stay upright. Some rocks and stalactites fall from the ceiling, landing on several of the cultists here. You see Hyde kind of leap out of the way of one of them.

[ground shifting sound effect plays]

Griffin: The fanatic is looking around, he looks terrified.

Travis: Well yeah!

Griffin: And you see...

[disturbed water sound effect plays]

Griffin: As the water in this chamber drain, you see Phileaux in the grip of a flesh golem.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: And they are both completely covered in blood, and the flesh golem though is sort of lying still on the ground and kind of twitching. Whatever has just happened here seems to have neutralized whatever magic was animating him.

Godwin, I... [chuckles] Godwin, this tremor, as it passes through this tunnel, the creatures in here all of a sudden snap out of their fugue and... all begin just pouring out of the tunnel, running away.

[pitter patter of animal footsteps sound effect plays]

Griffin: You look around and realize that this somewhat narrow tunnel that you are in has begun to collapse.

Justin: Oh. I'm gonna run out of the tunnel.

Travis: Mmm!

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Yeah.

Griffin: Give me—

Travis: You've played video games before.

Justin: One end's closed, well [wheezes] see yah. See yah, that's a sucker's bet right there.

Griffin: Give me an Athletics check.

Justin: Now, that I can do.

[sound of die rolling]

Justin: Usually. It's a two.

Griffin: Oh fuck.

Justin: [chuckles] There on that roll. Plus six.

Griffin: Okay. The creature here hoof it, aside from the possum which is kind of chilling with you, and just go sprinting out of the tunnel. I think maybe it takes you a beat too long to kind of like figure out what's going on.

Justin: Right.

[ground shifting sound effect plays]

Griffin: By the time you start running, you are able to do so. You are able to make your way out of this tunnel.

However, at several points, part of the ceiling just kind of cleaves off, and an enormous bit of stone topples down onto you, just sort of smashing against the side of your head, very nearly trapping you in this tunnel, but you're able to make your way out. You do, however, take 11 points of bludgeoning damage.

Justin: Ooph.

Griffin: As this big rock bonks you pretty hard. Mutt, from where you are, you see a flood of nocturnal animals come pouring out of this tunnel.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Immediately retreating from this room through the sort of southern entrance where you all came in earlier. And after all of them, you see a puff of rubble sort of shoot out of the tunnel, and from it emerges a... a blood-soaked barbarian.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Griffin: Wielding a giant axe, now adorned with red crystal. And—

Travis: I point at the axe.

Justin: She comes out— Wait, she comes out with the axe like—

Lady Godwin: Everybody, look!

Clint: [chuckles]

Lady Godwin: Everyone look! You've— I've never seen its equal! The most exciting thing happened! You won't believe it!

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Crawford: Aw man. Yeah.

Lady Godwin: Wait! Mutt, you have to see this. This is going to really send you green with envy.

Brother Phileaux: Oh... Oh, a thrice in a lifetime occurrence!

Lady Godwin: What is wrong with you? Look at your body. [wheezes]

Griffin: [chuckles] You all step out into this chamber—

Travis: We're all blood-soaked, it's important to note.

Griffin: You are all covered in god blood, yeah. This is going great. The surviving cultists look around at each other, unsure what to do. The kind of like bioluminescent.

Justin: Bioluminescent. [chuckles]

Travis: The algae.

Griffin: What?

Justin: [chuckles] Sorry.

Travis: It's from *Moana*.

Justin: Any time I hear someone say, "bioluminescent," [wheezes] I— Sorry.

Griffin: You— Oh, I get you. From the guy from—

Travis: "Oh, it's covered in—"

Justin & Travis: [simultaneously] "— bioluminescent algae."

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: You—

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: You all are standing in this chamber, the cultists are getting their bearings, and they take up their weapons and sort of like half-heartedly begin to walk towards you, and then a voice passes through the chamber, from beyond the heavy portcullis. You hear a voice say...

Unknown Voice: Enough.

[dramatic piano music plays]

Unknown Voice: Bring them to me.

Griffin: And the portcullis, of its own volition, slides upward, disappearing into the ceiling. The cult leader... looks at the other cultists who have not been crushed by rubble and takes a step back, and says—

Cult Leader: Tell me this. Are you really one of us? Because I really am starting to suspect that...

Justin: [snorts]

Crawford: Oh no, sorry man.

Travis: And I click off the runes.

Cult Leader: Ohhhh.

Travis: Of the—

Crawford: Naw, yeah, sorry.

Cult Leader: These.

Crawford: No yeah, we took Toby's robe. Toby's robe.

Cult Leader: I—

Crawford: As we call it.

Cult Leader: I told everyone that if we do this thing where we disguise our appearances—

Crawford: Yeah.

Cult Leader: — we'll be so easy to infiltrate. [sighs]

Crawford: Yeah man, and I'm— As long as I'm comin' clean, Hyde wasn't in on it at all. Like this— He's pretty much innocent, man. You should let him go.

Cult Leader: But that means that.. But that means that we should hate him. Right?

Crawford: No no no no no no. I'm— I just don't want you to think that he was like really in on it and I was the good guy. I was the bad guy in that circumstance, and I was makin' it seem like Hyde was doing all the bad stuff, but I was doing the bad stuff. When I stabbed the heart and I said, "Oh, he's controlling me to do this," he wasn't controlling me to do that. I was just doin' that on my own.

Cult Leader: You dick.

Crawford: Yeah man, I know.

Cult Leader: You embarrassed me in front of my friends.

Crawford: Yeah, and I'm sorry about that man, but I'm being honest now, right? And that counts for somethin' right?

Cult Leader: [sighs] Boss. Should we let this guy go?

Griffin: And you hear a voice from beyond where the portcullis raised up say...

Unknown Voice: Whatever. I don't care. Sure.

Griffin: And Hyde goes—

Hyde: Wa-hoo!

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: And goes sprinting off.

Crawford: Okay, you owe me, bye!

Griffin: Okay. The cultists step aside, and the cult fanatic helps you up out of the now dry gulch where you're standing, Phileaux. He holds out a hand for your— to lend you aid.

Clint: Mm. Phileaux slaps it away.

Justin: Whoa.

Travis: Phwoar!

Cult Leader: Okay, dude.

Travis: You're hard.

Justin: Damn dude, that's hard. Hard.

Clint: Well he's pissed. He's pissed about the—

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Damn, I get it, man.

Clint: — the Turbo Cardinal.

Justin: But that's hard.

Travis: Yeah, fuck yeah, dude. Hard as.

Cult Leader: Fuck, that's so hard.

Brother Phileaux: Well, you keep—

Travis: That's hard.

Brother Phileaux: You keep your helping hand!

Justin: Whoa.

Travis: Whoa.

Clint: And he clammers out of the gulch.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Make a Athletics check.

Travis: And call him a piece of shit.

Clint: Oh, I sure will. You better believe I will.

[sound of die rolling]

Clint: And that would be a... nat one.

Griffin: [claps]

Travis: Ah.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: You start to clam—

Travis: That's soft.

Justin: Unbelievable.

Griffin: You start to clamber out of the gulch, and then—

Brother Phileaux: Whoa, whoa, whoa!

Travis: You're still a fish.

Griffin: [giggles]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: No, your wooden, partially crystallized hand now slips off the edge of the gulch and you fall backwards, [chuckles] and the cult leader is like...

Cult Leader: Come— Hey, man.

Brother Phileaux: Darn!

Cult Leader: Come on. Just—

Griffin: He lends a— He leans down and holds out his hand.

Cult Leader: Just like... It's— Just— I'm just trying to getcha out. You— It's not—

Brother Phileaux: Fine. Okay, fine. Yes, fine fine fine. Help me out. Help me out. That's great.

Griffin: One of the cultists behind him says—

Cultist Two: [chuckles] Puppet man can't climb out of the gulch by himself. [chuckles]

Brother Phileaux: Hey, pal! Listen! It's the die's fault!

Cultist Two: Wow, cringe much?

Griffin: The cult leader ignites a torch, now that things are not lit up by the red heart so much anymore and says—

Cult Leader: Follow me, our lord wishes to have audience with you.

Crawford: Okay. Again man, sorry about how all that...

Cult Leader: Whatever, dude.

Crawford: Okay.

Justin: [wheezes]

Griffin: And he leads you to the now raised portcullis and gestures you inside.

Justin: Yeah, I head in.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: Okay. You pass beneath the portcullis and travel down a narrow tunnel, and the noise of the chamber behind you slowly fades. You hear the cultists trying to lift some rubble off of their friends, you hear one say—

Cultist Three: Oh no, he's pretty good and crushed, man.

Griffin: And you step out into a chamber that is as cold and quiet as a crypt.

[eerie hum sound effect plays]

Griffin: And that's because in a lot of ways it is. You step into this chamber, and the floor below you feels hard and hollow. You recognize that feeling from the spinal bridge you crossed earlier.

You're standing on a bone. But it is so vast that it takes you a second to sort of recognize it as any kind of anatomical feature. You're standing on the chin of a jawbone, attached to a skull the size of a football field. Like the bridge, the skeleton that this skull belong to is in a supine position, staring up at the ceiling of this chamber, in a sort of pained rictus.

There is a single source of light illuminating this chamber, casting the features of this skull in dramatic shadows. This light source is in the distance, over the teeth, and beyond the sort of nasal cavities, up toward where you would assume the eyes to be.

[somber piano music plays]

Griffin: And... in the distance, you hear the portcullis slam shut behind you, you have been left alone in here.

Crawford: Uh... Hello?

Justin: I try to open the portcullis.

Griffin: Um... Make a Strength check.

[sound of die rolling]

Justin: Ugh. Nine plus three.

Griffin: No. It is enormous. It is far, far too heavy for any human to lift.

Lady Godwin: Well, I'm out of ideas.

Crawford: Okay. Hey man, anybody here?

Unknown Voice: Yes, come forward.

Crawford: Okay.

Unknown Voice: Step into the light.

Crawford: Okay.

Travis: I do that.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Yeah, same.

Griffin: You all approach the light source, clambering over the teeth bones, which is—

Travis: Past the gums.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: Look out stomach.

Griffin: No, you're not going into this thing's mouth.

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: This skull is basically forming the floor.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: In this chamber. Anything past it, if you were to go sliding off, there is just... just endless darkness below you. You cannot see where the bottom of this chamber is. So you're traversing the skull, it is somewhat... difficult getting over the mouth area, due to the skeleton's slight overbite.

Clint: Mm.

Griffin: But you navigate sort of over that and around the nose hole, and eventually sort of shuffle towards the top of this skull, ensuring that you don't slide down the rounded frontal bone and fall into the abyss below.

And as you reach that place, the light source reveals itself to you. You see the hilt and several inches of a pristine silver sword is buried in the skull, several feet beyond the brow line. The hilt is adorned with several large shining rubies, and you can see the blade is etched with these ornate Celtic knots.

Travis: Runes.

Griffin: Yes, these runes are— But these are actually important runes. I know we've had a lot of fun with runes here today.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Make a History check.

Travis: Well— Okay, now Griffin. Can Mutt just guess that that's Scalibur?

Griffin: Wow.

Justin: [wheezes]

Travis: Like I don't know why— We've talked a lot about a big shiny sword.

Griffin: Wow.

Justin: Wow, Trav.

Travis: I don't need to make a History check.

Justin: Not cool, man. [wheezes]

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: Not cool at all.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Wow. You've violated a pretty sacred tenet here, Trav.

Griffin & Travis: [laugh]

Justin: Hey, hey, hey guys. No joke. That's the end of the episode. We're gonna—

Clint & Griffin: [cackle]

Justin: We're gonna have to—

Griffin: We're gonna need to fuckin'—

Justin: We gotta talk about this, man.

Griffin: We gotta circle the wagons.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Yeah. Yeah.

Clint: A huge breach of trust has just taken place.

Justin: This is a problem. This is— Yeah, that's the end of it.

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: We'll try it again next week, but this is like untenable.

Griffin: No hold on, wait. We need a tight button here, hold on.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: You feel... in your fucking soul.

Justin: [giggles]

[theme music fades in]

Griffin: That you stand in the presenc— And you didn't work this out yourself. Of the mighty blade Excalibur.

Clint & Justin: [laugh]

Justin: It wasn't— Griffin, I'm gonna be honest. I felt nothin'. I felt nothing.

Griffin: Goddamnit!

Justin: [chuckles] And I wanted those crinkle tinkles so bad.

Clint: [cackles]

Griffin: You've taken everything from me!

Travis & Justin: [laugh]

Justin: Oh Griff. I can see it in my head, little guy. I can see it. I know how beautiful that moment is.

Griffin: It's fucking— The moment's passed.

Justin: No, I can see it. I can imagine how it would've gone though.

Griffin: The moment's gone, it's over with.

Clint: [sighs] Aww, it's beautiful!

Justin: It's beautiful, Griff.

Travis: I feel no guilt. I don't—

Justin: [laughs]

[*Versus Dracula* theme music plays]

[ukulele chord]

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