

The Adventure Zone Royale: Episode 8

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Griffin: The wizards huddle, four by four,
With fervor and esprit décor
To plumb the depths and shake the trees,
And loot the isle's energies

Of flame and flora, sea and stone,
Or stranger substance unbeknown.
And from these primal sparks of light
Evoke a champion, born to fight.

[The *Adventure Zone: Royale* theme music plays]

Griffin: Hello, and welcome back to *The Adventure Zone, TAZ: Royale*, our winner takes all, battle royale season. Today we are going to kickstart the third of our Octave ziggurat trials, and by third, this one's gonna cost a pretty penny, and—

Travis: Aw man.

Griffin: And we do need you to—

Travis: Every minute is gonna be \$12.

Travis: Push \$12 into your Zune hole, and then we'll get it, and then—

Clint: Ugh!

Justin: Ugh.

Griffin: Oop, here they come! Oh wow, they're pouring in. It's all so wet.

Travis: What people don't know at home is that's what we call our buttholes. Our Zune holes.

Justin: Man...

Griffin: Thank you, Travis, for making that so explicitly clear that we call our buttoholes our Zune holes.

Clint: I didn't know that at my home.

Travis: I wanna preface this my once again complimenting this map.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: How much I love it.

Griffin: Thanks.

Travis: I think it's a great design, you did great artwork.

Griffin: Thank you so much.

Travis: I wanna talk about for a second the logos you've done for each element here.

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: It looks like the four elements are toothpaste blob.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Spotify logo.

Griffin: Spotify logo—

Travis: Skunk's tail.

Griffin: — is pretty explicitly, yeah.

Travis: And like a man with a fiery peacock tail?

Griffin: Yeah. Okay, so you get it, those are the four elements, and we all know that.

Justin: Yeah.

Travis: Okay, good.

Clint: Yeah, we all got it, yeah.

Griffin: So Spotify—

Justin: Yeah, we got a whole of— Land heart, but.

Griffin: [chuckles] Let's get started with this elemental trial. You three with your four teammate Scorpo, a beloved character for whom I had lots of personal backstory and detail.

Clint: Mm-hmm, okay.

Travis: The epitome of our team.

Justin: And I did not need a reminder of their existence at all.

Clint: I think—

Griffin: Justin didn't need to be reminded about Scorpo's existence.

Clint: I think I can help out a little bit. Before we get started, could Hellgrammite have just a real quick chat with Scorpo? Just real quick, real quick.

Griffin: Sure. Scorpo sees you, a fellow Thrikeen, and sees you wanting to talk to him, lumbers over.

Scorpo: [grunts]

Travis: Oh, to be fair, Hellgrammite has to walk past Rictus doing diagrams of incorporating Scorpo into the team.

Clint: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And putting Hellgrammite over at a bench location.

Griffin: [giggles]

Travis: While he's like sketching out cool moves.

Clint: To—

Griffin: Sure, sure.

Travis: That he and Lorovith and Scorpo could be doing together.

Griffin: Yeah, sure.

Clint: Well Hellgrammite kind of looks at that, and kinda smiles warmly, and says...

Hellgrammite: Look Scorpo, I know it can be difficult joining such a well-established, tight-knit group like ours. Don't be put off with our playful banter. We kid around a lot, but the truth of the matter is I'm pretty much the boss here, so you'll do okay if you keep in mind what I say goes.

Things like well, what he's doing over there, that humorous cartoon he's drawing, that's kinda the fun ribbing we give each other. But hey kid, you just follow my lead, and you're gonna be good. Okay?

Griffin: Make a—

Justin: Lorovith leans over to Scorpo's other shoulder and says...

Lorovith: I apologize for the smell of the bug man. [guffaws]

Griffin: Give me— Both of you give me a Persuasion check for me. Actually, Justin's not really persuading anyone. Justin's just being rude.

Justin: I'm not, I'm just being a little stinker.

Griffin: So, Hellgrammite, give me a Persuasion check please.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Clint: That would be an eight.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Scorpo, who towers over you, looks down his well not nose, but face chiton at you, and leans down and says...

Scorpo: I am not a child. What is your power?

Hellgrammite: Uh, uh I have a number of powers. I have Frost Fingers, Scorching Ray, I can cast auguries, believe it or not.

Scorpo: Ah.

Rictus: [from a distance] He can also get you a Gatorade or anything you need. You just tell him what you need and he'll get it.

Hellgrammite: Yes, I—

Scorpo: I—

Hellgrammite: Well, I could do that, I suppose. I can Toll the Dead, whatever that is. And I can set alarms, so it comes in very handy on—when you're travelling, to be able to set alarms.

Justin: I feel like Dad's tone of voice indicated that maybe he even learned a little somethin' in the past 30 seconds.

Clint: [chortles]

Griffin: Scorpo turns and looks at you, Lorovith, and says—

Scorpo: So, are you the one who is truly in charge?

Hellgrammite: No.

Lorovith: Uh. Oh.

Hellgrammite: No, I just said.

Griffin: He just kinda pushes you [chuckles] gently pushes you to the side, Hellgrammite.

Hellgrammite: Oh, okay.

Griffin: With your unconvincing Persuasion checks.

Lorovith: I'll be frank, it's a— I'll— We all by nature, sort of... in our own pursuits, but certainly we've aligned for the moment, is accurate.

Griffin: Scorpo raises his claw and the third Octave, Trace, who was sort of giving you all the lay of the land in the last episode says—

Trace: Yes, what is it?

Griffin: And Scorpo says—

Scorpo: Can we trade teams?

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: And Trace says—

Trace: No. So, we shall begin the Trial of Evocation. This trial shall test your mastery over the four primordial elements that serve as the foundation of our physical world. Fire, element of passion and energy. Yes. [sighs] Yes, Lorovith.

Lorovith: Yes! It sounded as though you said this one would be a vacation!

Trace: No.

Lorovith: So, should we not expect a challenge?

Trace: Sorry, evocation. I forget sometimes that not everybody is as well-versed in the names of the eight schools of magic. Evocation is the channeling and wielding of—

Lorovith: I already have a vocation, sir!

Trace: Eh, okay. No, this is— Should I use a different—? The word— The Trial of... Elements. The Trial of Elements, is that better?

Hellgrammite: Mm.

Lorovith: Give me a second, I'll tell you.

Clint: [laughs]

Trace: Okay.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: Trace waves a hand through the air, and different— there are banners hanging that say, "Trial of Evocation" that all change to say, "Trial of Elements" on 'em.

Lorovith: [chuckles] "Trial by Fire." [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles] "Trial by Fire and Water and Earth and Nature." Trace continues, says—

Trace: Fire, the element of passion and energy. Earth, element of substance and time. Water, element of motion and restoration. And nature, element of life and sky. Your quartet will be assigned one of these four elements and will compete against three other teams representing the others.

Griffin: Juice, give me a d4 roll, please.

Justin: You got it, Griff. Favorites to roll, but for you.

Griffin: It's a sharp die, it's dangerous, it's probably the least steppable on.

[sounds of dice rolling]

Justin: I did manage to pull a four though.

Griffin: Okay, cool.

Justin: Out of that beauty.

Griffin: You—

Justin: Never happens, by the way, what are the odds/

Griffin: You see, as Trace waves a hand through the air, this purple velvet bag floating around between the different groups of people. As it approaches you, it sort of opens up.

You reach inside and you pull out a green marble, with the [chuckles] Spotify logo on it. Not quite the Spotify logo. You recognize this as the symbol of nature, which is the element that your team has been assigned. And Trace continues and says—

Trace: This trial will be conducted over three rounds. In the first, your quartet must harvest elemental motes from around the island. In the second, you will use those motes to forge an elemental entity, which in the third round will engage in battle with the creations of the three other teams.

Today we begin with the harvest. To collect your elemental motes, you must travel to a corresponding elemental portal, then engage with that element in some substantial way. The key to this harvest is change. Create, destroy, transform, transport.

By altering a wild flame, or pool of water, or boulder, or tree, you liberate the motes within for your collection. The more motes you collect in the 10 minutes allotted to this first round, the greater flexibility you will have later in the trial. Now—

Travis: Rictus starts running for nature.

Trace: Nope! Time hasn't started yet! Time— Rictus! Rictus, Rictus! Rictus, there's more rules.

Rictus: Oh! Sorry. I thought that was it. Sorry.

Griffin: You see Trace turns to talk to her fellow Octaves, and like whatever magic was amplifying her voice is still going, and she says—

Trace: [hushed] We should maybe look into like just casting Hold Person on everyone while we explain the rules, 'cause I feel like this does keep happening, and I did say that we should do this.

Rictus: Hot mic. Hot mic.

Trace: Oh, god, sorry! Anyway, our common rule stands, you may not bring harm to your fellow aspirants. However, should you wish to disrupt another team's harvesting rituals, you may deny them the resources they need, weakening them in the later rounds.

One last condition. As elemental magic consumes elemental energy, it may not be used to create it. Conjuring a magical flame will not produce elemental fire motes, building a flame from tinder and spark shall. Any questions before we begin? [pause] When we get to the assigned question part, there's no questions at all, amazing.

Clint: [laughs]

Trace: Then with that said...

Griffin: You see that she waves her hand and eight of the groups of four here are carried into the ziggurat, leaving four groups of four, each representing different elements, here out on the battlefield. Looking around at the three other teams, you see a few familiar faces.

You can see over on the earth side of the field, up by the mountains, you can see four sort of leotard-wearing, athletic, bulky, big muscly looking wizards; Raze, Daze, Haze, and Blaze, the Arcane Gladiators.

Travis: Big meaty men?

Griffin: Big beefy men slappin' beef. Over towards fire you see Hasty Jane, and Hasty Jane's team seems to be pretty bad. Hasty Jane's got Dr Legume, the Mr. Bean type, who did not perish in the last trial.

Justin: Thank God.

Griffin: There's a little frog man, Gunk. There's a dude with a burger for a head whose name is Burger Man. You all have not had much contact with Burger Man, and you may not depending on how this trial goes.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: And then over to the water side, just next to you, you see the Gentleman, the Gentleman from Wizberry, who is there with three

wizards, one of which is a sea witch, looks like Ursula with tentacles, that's Hilda.

[chuckles] You see a man, sort of young man, sort of modelled after Mystery the pick-up artist, named Enigma. And a woman dressed in black with floating swords surrounding her, the wizard Corrigan, so.

Travis: Rictus raises his hand.

Trace: Ah, yes?

Rictus: Um, is this the kinda thing where it's like we lose as a team? Or like are we individually graded, or?

Trace: The proceedings of the third and final round of this trial shall determine the outcome. The team that is eliminated first shall be eliminated from the competition entirely.

Rictus: Bummer.

Trace: So yes, you win as a team, you lose as a team. So you must find a way to work together, overcome your differences, should they exist. You have been matched based on compatibility, that we the Octave have observed, and so we have given you every leg up that we possibly can, but the rest now is up to you.

Lorovith: No individual plaudits, eh?

Trace: No, not in this case.

Lorovith: Not even a Most Improved?

Trace: You want a Most Improved Award, for—

Lorovith: No, I wanted to give the bug man a bit of pope! [cackles]

Hellgrammite: [hushed] Actually, he's standing right there, and he looks very sensitive. I think you needs to stop giving—

Scorpo: He's talking about you.

Griffin: Scorpo says.

Travis & Justin: [chuckle]

Hellgrammite: I don't think so, but that's adorable.

Griffin: With that, Trace raises a hand in the air and fires a Chromatic Orb upwards, that soars into the sky and then explodes with a wave of elemental energy, and another timer appears over the ziggurat, counting down 10 minutes.

You all have 10 minutes to explore the island and harvest these elemental notes by interacting with the corresponding elements within. Scorpo first looks to you, Lorovith, who I think he has identified as the sort of most leaderly of the three. He says—

Scorpo: What—

Justin: Why— Where do— Where is— If— Have I given that? I don't feel— Have I given that impression?

Griffin: I think he knows it's not Hellgrammite, and I think it's—

Justin: I feel like it's just a process of elimination thing.

Griffin: Yeah, for sure.

Justin: Because I don't— Griffin, I think, and like I think I feel like it's 'cause I'm your older brother, you just can't help but see me that way, you know what I mean?

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: And it's kind of—

Griffin: And it's not Dad.

Justin: — your default.

Griffin: For sure, for sure.

Travis: No, it's not Dad.

Justin: I think your default is—

Griffin: Scorpo looks to you, Lorovith—

Justin: I think your default is to see me as a leader.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And I'm kinda the wildcard.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Right!

Griffin: Scorpo is enormous, Scorpo is a very, very, very big bug man, and so I think he respects size, and he's gonna look at you, his fellow size... queen, and say—

Justin: Queen. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yes.

Scorpo: What would you have me do? What is our strategy? I don't want us to lack any of the elements. Would you have me go and harvest, or keep the other teams from harvesting our motes? What would you... What would you suggest?

Lorovith: Yes, I believe... with your size, perhaps defense would be... a good use of your skills.

Scorpo: Okay.

Lorovith: Uh... Would that— Did you— How is your awareness? How is your perception?

Scorpo: It is— I am a subterranean sort of being by my nature, but for what I lack in senses, I more than make up for with speed and grit.

Lorovith: Well, fine, that's all fine.

Griffin: He is going to skitter over, you all are starting over here, in the quarter, the nature quarter, which contains this sort of long observation platform, and the gardens, and a little bit of the forest with the big tower that you ended up leaping out of in the last trial, Hellgrammite.

He's gonna scurry up that tower and sort of just keep watch, keep sentinel here to look out for other aspirants who may come into the nature quarter to get some nature motes, and is going to try and disrupt those. Which leaves the three of you to go off and do whatever you want.

Travis: Okay, Griffin?

Griffin: Yes.

Travis: Can I ask two clarifying questions?

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: Are only nature motes available in the nature sector?

Griffin: Yes, to get, you know, fire motes you have to be in the fire quarter and do something with a fire, right. To do— To get earth motes you have to go to the earth quarter, and do something to transport, transform, create, or destroy earth.

Justin: Are these red lines that— one the map here, are these physical barriers, or just for delineation?

Griffin: No, these are just sort of to note the divisions between the sectors.

Travis: And that's the second question, can we go into the other sectors if we wanted to?

Griffin: You can, yeah.

Travis: Okay, great.

Griffin: But you may be interfered with, and so like the question is like are you trying to do so stealthily, or quickly?

Travis: Got it.

Griffin: Or whatever idea you might have for how you want to like interact with these elements, to harvest them, you know, I will want some explanation of like how you are going about it.

Hellgrammite: Scorpo! You go up the tower!

Scorpo: [from a distance] I'm already up here.

Hellgrammite: Good.

Travis: Is— [chuckles]

Hellgrammite: Good job!

Travis: Is the forest we're in like big, thick, old trees? Or like new growth? What are we lookin' at?

Griffin: Yeah, I guess you didn't come here in the last trial. It's largely sort of pine and spruce, very very tall, towering shady thicket, like a dense canopy that it's difficult to see the sky through when you're standing on the forest floor looking straight up.

Travis: Okay.

Hellgrammite: Fellas, I just want to point this out. Last time I was here, there was a pretty wicked like a giant monster here, in these woods.

Rictus: Okay.

Hellgrammite: So just—

Rictus: Well, we'll keep an eye out for him, and—

Hellgrammite: That's just— Well, hey! Look I'm just showing leadership qualities by warning you ahead of time that it—

Rictus: Okay, well if we see him, we'll hide.

Hellgrammite: Don't want him to stomp on you or anything like that, so.

Rictus: Okay, cool man.

Hellgrammite: Yeah.

Clint: Could Hellgrammite do an Arcana check to see if he can spot these motes?

Griffin: I mean the motes are all over, right? You can see them kind of like floating around the air.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: Even here in the nature area, you— you can see them hovering around. They appear to be somewhat translucent and ephemeral. It stands in contrast, Lorovith, with the mote of earth that you collected during the last sort of off time as you were exploring the mountains.

This is like a hardened amber marble that you have in your collection already, so you all are starting with a bit of a leg up in that you have this one earth mote already that you will use in the next part of the trial.

Justin: Do— What happens when we try to grab the nature motes.

Griffin: Nothing, your hand passes right through them. In order to actually—

Justin: Okay, so we can't move them or relocate them in any way.

Travis: We have to change things.

Griffin: You have to change nature. Change the wind, change the trees, change—

Travis: Rictus is gonna do a Poison Spray on a bush.

Griffin: Okay. Yeah, that's not technically sort of evoking the element. So if you want to do a little bit of sort of pesticide spray, is that the intent here?

Travis: Yes, it is, Griffin.

Griffin: Okay. Go ahead and make an attack roll against a bush.

Travis: Well, it's a Constitution check from a bush.

Griffin: Constitution check from a bush. Okay. You manage to pick the one living bush, and he says—

Bush: Hey, watch it, buddy

Rictus: Aw man. I'm so sorry man, I didn't notice you were alive.

Justin: Wait, all the bushes are dead?

Griffin: What's that?

Justin: What kind of pla— You're telling me all the other bushes are dead.

Griffin: Sorry, the only sentient—

Justin: What plague has swept across this land, Griffin?

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: The only sentient bush, I should say. It rolled a two.

Justin: The only man bush. [wheezes]

Clint: [giggles]

Griffin: It very, very quickly, sort of—

[sounds of dice rolling]

Travis: Ohhh.

Griffin: —starts to wither up. Oh my god, max damage.

Travis: Yeah, it's max damage, yeah 12.

Griffin: Yeah, with a 12, the bush stands with these viney feet, and says—

Bush: You... You think you can take on me, Bush Man, master of the forest domain? Why I oughta...

Griffin: And then he [groans] shrivels up, his leaves turn brown and wither and fall off, and he turns into a tumbleweed that the wind picks up and blows off the island, and—

Justin: I always wondered where tumbleweeds came from.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: That's exactly where they come from.

Travis: From me.

Griffin: As that happens, you see from where he is, two green motes of light solidify.

[magical harp sting plays]

Griffin: And turn into green marbles that fit right into your palm, and you collect two nature motes.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Who's next?

Rictus: Hey everybody, start destroying shit.

Clint: Hellgrammite is going to— There are other motes around, right?

Griffin: I mean there's just nature motes around you. There's— If you want the other elements to sort of get an even mix for your elemental crafting the next round, you'll need to go to those other areas.

Clint: Okay, Hellgrammite's gonna make his way up to the water section. Water.

Griffin: Okay.

Rictus: Wait, hold on, are we— Is everybody clear on how we collect the motes?

Justin: What do you— How do— What's your impression of it, Dad? You tell me what you think, and I'll tell you what I think.

Clint: Well, we either alter them, or we destroy something, and I think that with his Freezing Fingers power, it would make sense for Hellgrammite maybe to head to the water area, where there's lots of water, and try to freeze some of the motes.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: Sure.

Travis: Just— Hey, just be careful, okay? Like be sneaky or something so that they don't see you, 'cause they'll try to hurt you, okay?

Lorovith: I'd like to travel with the bug man.

Rictus: Okay, I'll just sit here and destroy shit.

Griffin: Okay.

Hellgrammite: Well then, use— You do whatever you— I give you permission to do whatever you feel you should do, Lorovith.

Lorovith: Lead the way.

Hellgrammite: Onward!

Griffin: Alright, the two of you make your way north, towards the watery quarter. As you approach, no-one's really been up to this part of the map quite yet. You can see this great lake here that takes up most of this quarter.

There are two bridges spanning the lake, connecting to an island at the center, which appears to be like a two lily pads, with a you know a big building sort of sandwiched between them, that appears to be a red, glassy flower.

Inside, through the red glass, you can see what appears to be a really nice sort of spa, that does not appear to be in operation now during the trial, but you make note of it for later. If you survive this trial, you know, perhaps a massage or a mud mask or something maybe.

Clint: Would you say this great lake was normal, or is it kind of eerie?

Griffin: That's really— It's not eerie.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: It's—

Clint: So, it's a superior, you'd say it was superior?

Griffin: I would say that Huron some bad shit, Dad.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: So, give me both of you a Stealth check as—

Justin: Freddy got finger lakes.

Griffin: That's—

Justin: [wheezes]

Clint: [chuckles]

Travis: Huh. Yeah.

Griffin: Debatable.

Justin: Sorry, I was on a phone call. What's— What are you guys talking about?

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: Uh, give me a—

Travis: Oh, Justin was—

Justin: [chuckles]

Travis: Justin was pitching his sequel.

Justin: I was talkin' to Joel, sorry.

Travis: To the hit John Green film.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: [chuckles]

Travis: That everyone remembers.

Justin: [laughs] This phone's ringing off the hook with *Freddy Got Finger Lakes*.

Griffin: Stealth check from both of you, please.

Clint: I have advantage on Stealth checks, due to Communion Carapace.

Griffin: When you are hiding... which—

Clint: I'm just reading it, what it says here on the thing. "You can change the color of your carapace to match the surroundings, giving you advantage on Dexterity checks made to hide." What else would we be doing if we weren't moving with Stealth?

[sounds of die rolling]

Justin: Nine. 11 minus two, nine.

[sounds of die rolling]

Clint: Mine was 14.

Griffin: Okay, we'll average those out. As you all sort of traipse through the woods on the far edge of the lake here, you notice that within this glass flower building, you can see that someone has taken notice of you.

You see that Hilda, the octopoid, I don't know if that's a word, sea witch comes out and leaps off of one of the lily pads to splash into the water, and she begins swimming in your direction. So, what are you specifically doing here, Hellgrammite, to try to transform the water?

Clint: Are there motes over the water? Are there motes in the water? Where are the motes?

Griffin: Yeah, there's motes everywhere. The motes are not like... The motes aren't necessarily where you're supposed to focus your attention. If you do stuff with the water here, in the water area, water motes will come to you.

Clint: Okay, so the—

Griffin: It's not like a target to aim for or something.

Clint: Alright, there's like a little fingerling of water.

Griffin: Yes, there's like a small, small little outcropping here that you are right next to.

Clint: So, he's going— Hellgrammite's going to cast Frost Fingers on the water.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Frost Fingers freeze non-magical liquids in the area that are not being worn or carried.

Griffin: Okay, give me— Is this a roll of any kind? Constitution saving throw. I mean this is pretty explicitly like not the— I guess it does say, “non-magical liquids in the area that aren’t being worn or carried.” How— 15-foot cone. I mean yeah, this is a significant amount.

Now this is an evocation spell that you are casting. It is not necessarily to create or destroy water inherently, but you were sort of warned that using evocation magic to harness— harvest these would be of somewhat limited effect.

So I think maybe just a straight up... Give me just a straight up sort of Intellect roll, and that will determine kind of like how effective this is, and how many motes you’re gonna get out of it.

Clint: Okay, Intellect. That would not include Nature, no?

Griffin: No, no no no, sorry, Intelligence. So, it’s just a d20 plus... three.

[sounds of die rolling]

Clint: That’s 13 plus three, 16.

Griffin: Okay, yeah, with a 16 you reach your chilly fingers down into the water and you touch it, and as you do, you see... ripples of white begin to spread across the surface, that then penetrate across the surface of the water, and you basically turn this whole little outcropping into a solid sort of block of ice.

As that happens, you see three motes of this blue aquatic elemental energy begin to materialize over this block of ice, and as they appear, you two see Hilda the sea witch spring out of the water, launching herself out of where she was kind of patrolling, swimming around, and she is going to try to seize those motes.

Lorovith, what do you do? Hellgrammite is kind of, you know, deep in his magical process here, freezing the water. You see Hilda coming to try to steal the motes that he’s just created.

Justin: I need a cloak. Hmm. What’s the— What’s like proximity, Griff? Like give me a— Like where— what’s our range here?

Griffin: You were sort of standing right next to Hellgrammite.

Justin: Right.

Griffin: So, I mean, you're— you are right next to this situation. If you wanted to try to grab them before she did, that is an option. If you wanted to try and like get in her way, or block her somehow, as long as you can—

Justin: What do I know of her abilities?

Griffin: I don't know that you know anything of her abilities. I think you can just kind of assume that they are—

Clint: What's her name?

Griffin: Hilda. That they are water-based, as she is like very—

Clint: Shape Water, or— She has the Shape Water spell.

Travis: You're not allowed to know that, though.

Griffin: Yeah, I mean I guess we've— we do have a big list of all the people and all the spells that they do know, so like your characters wouldn't know that, but you know that Shape Water is her power. Now that would be of limited effect here, right, because that's not— that's so explicitly doing the thing that Trace warned you not to do that, you know, it's not like a huge advantage, but.

Justin: And is it the class of magic that is specifically the issue? Is it—

Griffin: Yes.

Justin: 'Cause is— And Shape Water is evocation?

Griffin: Well, I mean, Shape Water, if you use this magic to move the water around or to change it in some way, like it kinda goes against the spirit of the thing. This effect, freezing like a huge body of water like this, would have netted more motes. But because specifically it was sort of evocation magic that used it, it was smaller motes.

Justin: Okay. Um... Yes, okay. I am going to...

Lorovith: Hilda! I know nothing of your abilities, but I look forward to learning!

Justin: And I'm gonna cast Lightning Lure on her.

Griffin: On her?

Justin: Um, wait a minute, hold on. I just remembered your stupid rules, give me a second.

Clint: [chuckles] Attacking rule. [snorts]

Justin: Your stupid attacking rule. Uh... No, you know what? I am going to... cast Lightning Lure on the water.

Griffin: Uh, okay.

Justin: In the direction of the motes.

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: I wanna try to electrify the water.

Griffin: I love it.

Justin: To slow her down.

Griffin: Yeah, to try and ward her off. I like that.

Justin: Yes, exactly.

Griffin: Okay, so that's gonna be—

Justin: Imagine Lorovith like whipping the water with his— the Lightning Leash, trying to like ward her away from it.

Griffin: Yeah, that's rad.

Justin: Basically. Great.

Griffin: Okay, so... Target must succeed on a Strength saving throw. I'm not gonna make you roll for this, because this is not... You're— You don't— The water's not gonna make a Strength saving throw. You—

Justin: It's kind of Intimidation, like but I—

Travis: Intimidating the water?

Justin: I'm intimidating her by attacking— I mean...

Griffin: That's a fair point. Give me an Intimidation check, and I will say because of your app— your clever application of magic here, you can roll it with advantage.

[sounds of die rolling]

Justin: Great. So that's a 16 plus four, 20. Or a...

[sounds of die rolling]

Justin: 18 plus— Oh no, 10 plus four, 14, so a 20.

Griffin: Yeah, with a dirty 20, you see her swim forwards, and then as this crackling wall of energy then courses through the water between her and this block of ice and the motes, you see her double back and swim further away. As she does so, she squirts out some— a cloud of black ink, into which she vanishes, but you have warded her off and you all are able to collect your three elemental motes of water.

[magical harp sting plays quietly]

Clint: [sings the victory tune from *Final Fantasy*]

Justin: Now we got a copyright strike because that exactly like the song, Dad.

Clint: Oh.

Griffin: 100% Dad nailed that.

Justin: That was like listening to it.

Clint: I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

Travis: Hey Griffin—

Clint: I thought I was doing John Williams, I'm sorry.

Travis: In the meantime—

Justin: Addental Gucci over here.

Griffin: [snorts] [giggles]

Travis: In the meantime, can— I wanna find like a densely vegetated type of spot.

Justin: Hell yeah, dude. Meanwhile, the gardening continues unabated.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: Okay, a densely vegetated— Give me a Nature check, Rictus.

Travis: Oh no, I have, I'm gonna tell on myself, reminder I have disadvantage on ability checks. Is this an ability check?

Griffin: Yeah, this is pretty explicitly an ability check. This doesn't apply to like attack rolls or like defense rolls or whatever.

[sounds of die rolling]

Griffin: But yeah, I mean a...

[sounds of die rolling]

Griffin: Yeah, a five is not great. I mean, you look around, you don't necessarily notice like any part of these grounds that are more kind of magically enriched.

Travis: Right.

Griffin: Than any others.

Travis: Okay. Well anyways, I'm gonna cast Wither and Bloom.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Which explicitly says, "non-magical vegetation in that area withers." And it's in 10-foot radius from me, so all around me, and above me, and below me.

Griffin: That's amazing. What kind of roll does this require?

Travis: Well, it would require a Constitution saving throw. The non-magical vegetation in that area just withers, there's no—

Griffin: Yeah, no they're— there's nothing— [chuckles] there's nothing else to it, yeah. And this is not evocation magic, so wow. You— What's it look like when you use Wither and Bloom to this sort of effect?

Travis: The... kind of skeletal, ghoulish magic hand comes out of the left, and the gold angelic hand comes out of the right, and they just kinda whip around in this circle, swirling around each other, creating this ball of like sickly green gold energy.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: And in this... 20-foot-wide sphere, you just see all of the life drain from any plant it touches.

Griffin: 10 foot wide. Well—

Travis & Griffin: [simultaneous] – 10-foot radius.

Griffin: Which is—

Travis: So 10 foot to the left, 10 foot to the right, and in front.

Griffin: So a radius goes— Yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Well a 10 foot radius would be—

Griffin: But what's the circumference? Is the— The question's what the—
If 10 foot's the radius, the circumference—

Travis: Then the diameter's 20 feet.

Griffin: The diameter would be 20 feet, and if we multiply that by pi...

Travis: Then it's—

Griffin: That's a lot of vegetation, no matter what the math comes out to,
that's a lot of vegetation.

Justin: I think the thing is we're talking about a lot of vegetation.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: The—

Justin: Diameter's— If— Is the diameter 10 feet?

Travis: No.

Griffin: The radius is 10 feet.

Travis: Oh my god, guys.

Griffin: Which means the diameter's 31.4 feet.

Travis: No.

Justin: Yeah, 'cause it's three— It's times pi.

Travis: No.

Griffin: How up does it go?

Justin: The diameter is $2r$.

Travis: It goes up 10! It's a sphere!

Justin: Where “r”— Okay, the diameter is $2r$. Circumference—

Travis: It goes 10 to my left, 10 to my right, 10 in front of me, 10 behind me, 10 above me, 10 below me.

Justin: The diameter of— So it’s like 100 feet, ‘cause it’s like 10 in every direction.

Griffin: It’s a lot, goes 10 times 10 is 100, thank you Juice.

Justin: 10 times 10 is 100.

Griffin: I knew we would get there eventually.

Justin: I guess.

Travis: Okay, I killed a whole forest.

Griffin: So—

Justin: Meanwhile, Smokey the Bear is like, “Whatever you’ve done, it’s gone too far!”

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: “10 feet, one foot, a single match, Travis!”

Clint: [imitating Smokey the Bear] “Only you can start forest fires.”

Justin: [giggles] [snorts]

Griffin: You cast Wither and Bloom in this way, and even though you usually use this spell as a sort of more explicitly life-draining apparatus, it is incredibly effective here. And it sort of expands outward from you at first, and you see a light wind pick up that begins to blow through this circle of trees and brush immediately surrounding you.

And then as the circle contracts, it's like it brings all the life and greenery of this forest with it. And as it sort of sucks up that greenery, it manifests at your fingers, and you collect six floating motes of green light from the air.

[magical harp sting plays]

Griffin: You are eight—

Clint: [exhales heavily]

Justin: Nice, dude, nice.

Griffin: Eight of these nature motes.

Travis: I'm gonna collect all the dead leaves and sticks and branches and everything, as much as I can.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: And sprint over to the fire section.

Griffin: Okay. We will circle back to that when we return to your turn. Give me a Perception roll real quick, Rictus.

Travis: Ugh...

[sounds of die rolling]

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: With disadvantage.

Travis: Yeah.

[sounds of die rolling]

Travis: Eight plus four, 12, and a natural 20, so 12.

Griffin: Oof. Okay, with a 12—

Justin: "You make me feel."

Griffin: — as you are sort of collecting these sticks, you look up for a moment, and in this wizard's tower overlooking the forest, where you all have Scorpo on patrol, you see he is staring at you pretty intensely.

He's got sort of little, you know, beady eyes, barely visible on these like little slits of his face chiton, but you can tell that he saw what you did, and seems to be kind of observing you with an expression you can't quite make out, with a 12 Perception check.

Travis: Is it pride?

Griffin: It is not pride. It is—

Travis: Aww...

Griffin: He is feeling a way about you that is... not great.

Travis: Love?

Griffin: Not... Not great, not love.

Travis: I mean love can be weird sometimes.

Griffin: Tell me about it, man.

[somber transition music plays]

[ad break]

[somber transition music plays]

Griffin: Okay, Lorovith and Hellgrammite.

Travis: You can— By the way, fellows, you can custom add stuff to your inventory, if you wanna keep tracks of the motes we collect.

Griffin: I am also keeping track of the motes that you all collect.

Travis: Okay.

Griffin: So far you have eight—

Travis: But Griffin can lie sometimes, so.

Griffin: I'm not gonna lie, you have eight—

Justin: I trust Griffin.

Griffin: Eight nature, three water, you have one earth, and no fire motes so far.

Clint: And where are we on the timer.

Griffin: The time is about halfway elapsed, so.

Hellgrammite: Lorovith, aren't you like a mountain type of person? You know, some stone and shale, and all that kinda crap?

Lorovith: Eh.

Hellgrammite: Why don't we head over to the earth part and see if we can get into some stuff over there?

Lorovith: I just— Look at where— Bug Man.

Hellgrammite: Mm?

Lorovith: Look at where it is that you're saying, look! That's all the way over there, Bug Man!

Hellgrammite: I know, but I mean how—

Lorovith: You wish me to walk all the way over there?

Hellgrammite: Um...

Lorovith: No, come over here to the trees! We'll find more motes over here.

Hellgrammite: Alright, alright. Very well, alright. I mean, I agree.

Justin: I'm just wandering— Okay, we're wandering deeper into the forest.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: Into the water side of things, or into the nature side of things?

Justin: Yeah, into the water side of the forest.

Griffin: Okay, cool.

Justin: 'Cause he just got a bunch of bushes, and I don't know that, but I don't not know that.

Griffin: Yeah. Okay.

Travis: I yell it out.

Rictus: I killed a bunch of bushes!

Griffin: [giggles]

Hellgrammite: Ah, Scorpo! If you'd like to contribute anything to the group, go right ahead!

Griffin: You see Scorpo leap down from the tower and grab the top of a pine tree that he scuttles down, and you hear voices sort of begin to emerge from the forest. You see him, you assume, trying to ward off somebody who has come to collect some motes.

Justin: Are there more motes in the water? Over on our side?

Griffin: There are as many—

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You all could— If you wanted to post up here in the water side and just keep doin' shit with the water, and keep getting motes, if you want to. This is not a situation where you're going to collect all the things, right?

Clint: Okay.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You— The motes materialize as you do the shit.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: And so as long as you're getting—

Lorovith: Bug Man, I'm going to try something.

Hellgrammite: Oh.

Lorovith: Please, try to keep a lookout, hey?

Hellgrammite: Absolutely, you have my permission to go ahead.

Justin: Okay, Lorovith takes off all of his clothes.

Griffin: Great.

Hellgrammite: Oh god.

Lorovith: Bug Man!

Hellgrammite: No, I'm not— No, no I'm not looking at you. I'm not looking. I'm not looking.

Lorovith: This is fine.

Justin: Lorovith takes off all of his clothes. He looks at his tattoos. Goliaths have tattoos, many of which— many goliath believe that their fate is held within these markings, that there's something in these markings, that they can learn about their future. That's not important here, that's just a— something that crosses his mind as he takes off all his clothes and jumps into the water.

Griffin: Awesome, okay, you—

Clint: I gotta admit somethin'.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: He peeks.

Clint: Hellgrammite snuck a little peek.

Justin: Yeah, you gotta peek. You gotta peek.

Griffin: You gotta check it out.

Travis: I mean, come on.

Justin: I'm 10 feet tall, you're gonna peak.

Clint: Sure, yeah.

Griffin: Okay, you hop into the water. It is bracingly cold. You went for a dip in the sort of waterfall pond on the other side of the island earlier, this is considerably colder. You don't know if it is sort of naturally that way, or if it is because of the giant ice cube that was just kind of wished into existence by Hellgrammite.

Justin: Oh geez, damage rolls? Like damage roll?

Griffin: What's that?

Justin: Do you want me to do a quick damage roll, just to see? Is it that cold?

Griffin: No, it's just cold water, you're made of heartier stuff than that.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You're not gonna take damage from getting in cold water. It is somewhat difficult to, you know, see under this water. There is still a lingering ink cloud from where Hilda sort of zipped away earlier.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: But you are able to be in the water without taking any damage.

Justin: Okay. I am— He closes his eyes and casts... Absorb Elements as a second level spell.

Griffin: Okay. Absorb Elements, so that is a reaction, so let me think of how we—

Justin: So I did it when I jumped in, that was my thought is like I'm trying to— I'm trying to trigger something here, I'm trying to see if I could make this work, 'cause I only have these— this many spells, so.

Griffin: Yeah sure. Okay, so you have [mutters] "resistance to the damaging type until the start of the next turn." Okay, I— This is—

Justin: That's why I was trying to goad you into— Man, I was trying to goad you into giving me damage. [chuckles] I was trying to not say like, "Hey, are you sure I didn't get any damage?"

Griffin: [claps] [chuckles]

Justin: "Are yah sure?!"

Griffin: I mean, if you want to— Hmm... If you want to try to damage yourself with water, if you can tell me how you damage yourself—

Justin: Okay okay okay okay okay, okay Griff, okay. [laughs] Okay. Lorovith jumps in.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Naked.

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: Mm.

Justin: Nothin' happens.

Lorovith: Ah! It's so cold! Damn!

Justin: He looks around to see if there's [chuckles] any like higher ledge— higher peaks around the water.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Is there any like outcroppings or like higher ledges, better jumping off points?

Griffin: If you wanted to climb a tree and like phoon into the water.

Clint: Phoon!

Justin: Yeah, I'm gonna—

Griffin: To hurt yourself.

Justin: I wanna try to climb a tree and phoon.

Griffin: Yeah yeah yeah.

Clint: Yeeeeeeah. [chuckles]

Griffin: Great, I love it. Give me—

Clint: Naked. [chuckles]

Griffin: Give me an Athletics check, please.

[sounds of die rolling]

Justin: [chuckles] 17 plus three, 20.

Griffin: Hell yeah man. What's it look like?

Justin: He clambers up the tree, and he reaches the very peak, and I think— I like to imagine that no matter where you were on the island, [wheezes] no matter where you were, you might looked over at the trees at that moment, and seen a giant, naked goliath.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Just leanin' back on a tree and flingin' himself into the water, and just screaming—

Lorovith: Phoooooooooon!

Griffin: As you phoon downwards—

Justin: And then a little—

Griffin: — and you cast Absorb Elements. Are you still doing that, or is the—?

Justin: Yes, yes. That is the—

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: That is what I'm trying to— It didn't work last time, right?

Griffin: Right, no.

Justin: I tried to, it didn't work, okay.

Griffin: As you do it this time. I mean technically you don't have to cast it again, right. You still have the—

Justin: Sure.

Griffin: You still have the ward around you, and so as you hit the water, the effect is instead of feeling that familiar slapping sting on your skin, it is like there sort of an invisible buttress between your body and the water.

Justin: [snorts]

Griffin: Which makes the phoon even more dramatic, and this like perfectly Lorovith-shaped outlined splash launches straight up into the sky.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: Hellgrammite, from where you are, you know a bit deeper into the forest, you can see it arch upwards, creating a sort of rainbow effect as the water drizzles back down. And Lorovith, as you breach the surface of the water again, you see that three more motes of blue elemental light have formed, that you are easily able to collect.

[magical harp sting plays]

Justin: Can they just absorb into me? I mean I've absorbed elements, right?

Griffin: No, they— These are sort of tangible, physical—

Justin: Physical things.

Griffin: — objects, yes.

Justin: Alright, I'll scoop— I'll grab 'em.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Well, you know what? I'm actually pretty disoriented. If you— Is he close enough to get 'em, or should I go ahead and get 'em? Is it easier?

Griffin: I mean they sort of appeared in the cavity [chuckles] you left in the water, you are sort of—

Justin: Yeah, alright, so I'll scoop up my sort of three.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I'll scoop up my guys.

Griffin: Okay, great. Let's check in on Rictus. Rictus, you have collected all of these dead plants and everything, and you were heading towards the fire quarter.

Travis: Yeah, specifically towards the big kinda burning fire closest to the ziggurat.

Griffin: Okay, you make your way over to the fire quarter, and you can see that there is this sort of grand bonfire here between these big glowing red crystals in the residential block. And you can see that there is— You can see Hasty Jane actually is sort of standing guard by the fire, and she says—

Hasty Jane: Oh shit, Rictus! Rictus!

Rictus: Hi Jane.

Hasty Jane: Hey. How's it goin'?

Rictus: Oh, it's goin' great, how are you doin'?

Hasty Jane: Not bad. Have you gotten a lot of motes?

Rictus: Oh yeah, I got some.

Hasty Jane: Awesome, awesome, awesome. We should team up later because if we can work together to take out the other two teams then we, you know, we'll win and we won't die.

Rictus: Oh, that sounds great. Can I grab some fire motes real quick?

Hasty Jane: Yeeeeeah, I'm s'posed to keep people from doin' it though, but Rictus, you're like my dude and... Will you share some of 'em with me?

Rictus: Yeah.

Hasty Jane: Okay. Yeah, I mean as long as you— you maybe split 'em, you know, even 50/50 then we can, you know, make a deal?

Rictus: 51/49?

Hasty Jane: Yeah, I guess, yeah sure, if that—

Rictus: Oh no, that was a joke. Yeah, that sounds great.

Hasty Jane: Okay cool, yeah go for it, man.

Travis: I hand her half of the sticks and stuff.

Griffin: Okay. And you're just gonna chuck 'em right into the blaze?

Travis: I'm going to dip 'em into the blaze one at a time light 'em on fire, and then put 'em out.

Griffin: Okay, that's interesting.

Travis: Because I— That way I'm making fire one at a time, to get as many motes as possible instead of just one big lump chunk.

Griffin: I love it. This is going to be a time intensive thing, so this is going to take the remainder of you— I think this is probably the last option available to you, last action.

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: But it will be more effective doing it in this very specific, very, very kind of clever way. I'm going to say this is not going to take a check because you're not going to do good at that.

Travis: Thank you.

Griffin: What with your exhaustion level.

Travis: Yeah, uh-huh.

Griffin: But if you are willing to spend the rest of your time on this, very slowly putting the sticks into the fire, taking them out, and... you know, extinguishing the small flames that you create, you are able to harvest—

[magical harp sting plays]

Griffin: The two of you together are able to harvest six motes of fire. And you see Hasty Jane say—

Hasty Jane: Alright, three and three?

Rictus: Yip.

Hasty Jane: Sound good to you?

Rictus: Yeah, that works. Thanks for being so chill.

Hasty Jane: Yeah, of course. But for real, like later when I guess we all have to fight, let's— let's try not to go after each other, because I mean we pretty easily could if you all are like sort of a nature one and we are a fire one, we'd sort of burn it right up, but we're not gonna do you like that because—

Rictus: Yeah, and I'm sorry that you got stuck with such an absolute boner team.

Hasty Jane: It's actually cool 'cause Burger Man's actually like super chill!

Rictus: Oh yeah?

Hasty Jane: Like Dr.— Gunk and Dr. Legume, like yeah, they're shit, but like Burger Man is actually pretty chill, and I think you guys actually have a lot in common, and you would get along.

Rictus: What's his whole deal?

Hasty Jane: Burger— He has a burger for a head.

Rictus: Yeah.

Hasty Jane: And fast food, he talks in like fast food sort of slogans, and he's— he can shoot grease all over the place.

Rictus: Aw, that's cool.

Hasty Jane: Yeah. The grease comes out of his mouth. And it's—

Rictus: I bet that's really good with the fire stuff.

Hasty Jane: Um, oh shit, I didn't even think about that. [shouts] Burger Man! Get back here, you should grease on the fire!

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: Let's hop back over to Hellgrammite. Hellgrammite, you have a little bit of time left here.

Clint: Do I have time to get to the mountains?

Griffin: Yes, you should have time to get to the mountains, you're fairly close where you are, sort of at the top of the water quarter here.

Clint: Okay. I'm going to move to the mountains.

Griffin: 'Kay.

Clint: And try to climb up as far as I can.

Griffin: Okay, so give me an Athletics check. This isn't to see if you fall or anything, it's just to see sort of how high up you are going to get to.

Clint: Will I still have an action?

Griffin: Yeah. Of course.

Clint: Okay. Athletics check, you said?

Griffin: Yes.

[sounds of die rolling]

Clint: Yeah. That's five.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: With a five, you are able to, with considerable effort, climb up to the mouth of the mine shaft entrance, where Lorovith entered in the previous trial in order to defeat the icy dragon within.

However, because it took you so long, you can see that... Haze and Blaze, two of the Arcane Gladiators, just dripping with sweat that pouring rivulets down their, you know, intensely defined musculature, are

climbing up the mountain right beneath you to try and stop you from doing whatever it is that you're about to do.

The effect of your sort of slow climb here is that whatever you're trying to do here is going to have to happen pretty quickly.

Clint: Do I have time to do a Nature check and then cast a spell?

Griffin: Sure. Yeah, if the Nature check is just a kind of a relying on your... natural insight, I think that's sort of an instantaneous sort of—

[sounds of die rolling]

Clint: Yeah, that's a 14. I wanna look for loose rock, or loose shale, or loose anything nearby.

Griffin: Okay. With a 14, you are able to find one sort of section of the rock just sort of above the mineshaft entrance, where there has been a cleft that has been carved naturally— Or unnaturally, right? Everything on this island was sort of magically generated, but here you can see basically a weak point in the rock where you can see pretty deeply into this crack, and you know that it is somewhat weakened.

Clint: Okay, I would like to use Infest and send a swarm into there to try to start some sort of landslide.

Griffin: Interesting. Okay. Infest... [pause]

Clint: Infestation. Causes a cloud of some kind of bugs.

Griffin: What kind of insect are we sending into the rock to try and—

Clint: I think Hercules beetles.

Griffin: Oh, I love it. I love it. Okay, so typically this would have to be a Constitution saving throw, but we are really bending the application of the spell here. So why don't you... You see these Hercules beetles, right. They form from your hands, they skitter up into the stone of the mountain, they climb into this crack. Perhaps a word of encouragement or command would be the most sort of mechanically applicable thing here.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: To try and encourage them to go above and beyond the call of bug duty here.

Clint: Okay.

Hellgrammite: Alright, my horny little friends.

Clint: Talking about that big—

Griffin: Yeah.

Clint: That horn on their heads.

Hellgrammite: All you have to do is use physics, move little tiny pebbles and little tiny things to unearth larger things to start a landslide. And because you're so heavily armored, you may possibly survive such crushing efforts. Go, my little buggies, go!

Griffin: Alright, give me Persuasion check, please.

[sounds of die rolling]

Clint: Eh, 10.

Griffin: Okay. [blows a raspberry in thought] With a 10, you see that the beetles begin to scurry feverishly into this cleft. As they all kind of disappear into the rock, that is when Haze and Blaze appear over the cliff's edge behind you. They kind of grab you, Haze says—

Haze: Alright man. Listen, you've had your fun, but we're— we can't let you take any of our motes, so I think it's about probably time you turn back around and head back— You know, obviously we can't beat the crap out of yah or anything like that, but—

Hellgrammite: Oh, but you are restraining me. That's an attack of some kind, is it not?

Haze: Well, we asked Crys, our—

Griffin: And he points to the glove on his hand, and the little light glowing in the crystal.

Haze: And Crys said grabbing is okay. His exact words were “Grabs are okay.”

Hellgrammite: Really? I missed that part of the briefing, I guess.

Griffin: Your own glove lights up and you see this little holographic crystal appear, and you hear Crys say—

Crys: Hey, it’s me, Crys, your personal arcane assistant. Grabs are okay!

Griffin: And then he disappears.

Hellgrammite: [grumbles] Mm, of course. Okay, yes, right.

Griffin: He reappears.

Crys: No punches though.

Griffin: And then he disappears.

Travis: “Grabs, not jabs.”

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles] That’s pretty good. Right at that moment, the boulder begins to tremble, and you see the crack begin to spread. Haze and Daze look up very quickly as the crack forms a perfect sort of section around a big chunk of this rocky cliff face, which then falls down to the platform where you’re standing. I need a Dexterity saving throw from you, and from Blaze and Daze.

[sounds of die rolling]

[pause]

Clint: Ooo, a three!

Travis: Damn, Dad.

Griffin: That is not great. You try to leap out of the way. However, the giant sort of chunk falls down and crashes into the cliff edge where you were standing, and it sort of splits in half. One of the halves just sort of rolls over your legs where you had jumped down, and you are going to take... 13 points of bludgeoning damage.

Clint: Holy schnikey!

Justin: Big rock.

Griffin: Yeah, you got crushed by a big rock. Haze and Blaze both leapt out of the way. The effect here is as the rock falls, you see that six motes of elemental earth kind of tumble down from where the rock was and scatter all over this little outcropping of cliff.

Haze and Blaze both look up, as you look up from where you're laying on the ground, and very quickly the two of them are going to try to scurry and rush forward to try to grab as many of these motes as they can before you kind of come back to their— to your senses. What do you do?

Clint: Before I come back to may senses.

Griffin: Well, before you are— You were just crushed by a big rock.

Clint: Well.

Griffin: And you're not dead or anything, but it did knock you to the ground, right. So this is sort of a desperate scramble, they're trying to collect these motes of earth before you can right yourself a bit.

Clint: Right, I think... I... Well, I'm going to try to grab as many of the motes as I can.

Griffin: Okay, then I think this is just going to be a contested Athletics check to see if you're just trying to move as quickly as you can and grab as many of these motes before they can grab them. Unless you have some other way of collecting these motes before these guys. If you're just trying to do it with your own natural bug-like speed and agility, that's totally fine.

Clint: That's what I guess I'm going to have to do.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: Give me an—

Travis: Now Griffin, would you say that because he has secondary arms, he would have advantage on this, 'cause he has four hands grabbing at them?

Griffin: Do you have four hands, Hellgrammite?

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: You did not sound especially convincing.

Justin: I don't think he has any hands, right.

Griffin: [chuckles]

Clint: No, I do, I have four arms.

Justin: Come on, man.

Griffin: You do have those little tiny bonus hands, I did forget about your bonus hands.

Clint: Got my bonus hands.

Griffin: I'll tell you what, for your tiny bonus hands, the other guys were going to roll with advantage because there's two of them. I will cancel that out, it will just be a straight up roll, Athletics versus Athletics. It's four hands versus four hands, it's even.

Clint: Then could I argue that I could use Sleight of Hand.

Griffin: Yeah, for sure. If you would rather use Sleight of Hand over Athletics, it would still be contested, but if that is a skill at which you are better then I think, you know, you could definitely make the argument.

[sounds of die rolling]

Clint: It's not gonna make a difference, my rolls are rolling big bags of donkey shit, so yeah, there we are again.

Justin: You don't have to..

Clint: There's a five. Okay, great.

Griffin: Okay, that's only a seven from Haze. I— This is just gonna be an even split. By the time Haze and Blaze, you know, get back upright and run around and grab some motes, you use your hands to just stretch out, without even having to stand up from where you crashed to the ground, to grab the other three. So they have taken half of your motes, but you have collected three more, which brings you all to a total of four.

[magical harp sting plays]

Griffin: Of these elemental motes of earth. With that, another Chromatic Orb sails up into the sky and explodes in another dazzling wave of light. You hear Trace's voice amplified all throughout the island, and she says—

Trace: Aspirants, we have completed the first round of the Trial of... Elements, and now you must return back to your assigned quarters. It is time for you all to weave your elemental motes together, to form a mighty elemental warrior.

[outro theme music plays]

[ukulele chord]

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