

The Adventure Zone Royale: Episode 21

Published April 2nd, 2026

[Listen here on Maximum Fun](#)

Griffin: Previously, on TAZ Royale...

Hellgrammite: I am a turmoil of emotions! I just found out I'm engaged!

Doober Sweetleaf: As long as we're sort of exchanging favors.

Griffin: And he hands you a freshly packed pipe. If you're hitting that thing, give me a constitution saving—

Justin: [yells out] *Nooo!*

Griffin: Give me a constitution saving throw, please. [chuckles]

Travis: And he picks up the time crystal and places it on his Grimoire.

Griffin: Give me a wisdom saving throw.

Travis: Oh? Two plus five, a seven.

Griffin: That was not a great roll to roll that on, Trav.

[The Adventure Zone Royale theme music plays]

Griffin: In our last episode during the mid trial break, we had a nice scene with Lorovith getting absolutely just zooted with Doober Sweetleaf. And Rictus experienced the quickening by taking a secret stone from a specter of death.

Today, I would like to check in on Hellgrammit, see what you'd like to do during the break. And then do a little bit of shopping around for spells and items before we get into the next trial. So, Hellgrammite, you got a day off here to rest and recover and spend how you'd like. How would you like to spend today?

Clint: I think Hellgrammite is a little confused how—

Griffin: I can't—I cannot imagine why.

Clint: How he could find a message written in his handwriting, that he doesn't remember writing.

Griffin: Okay?

Clint: So, I think he wants to do some research. I don't know which one of the Octaves—does he have—do they have access to the Octaves? Can they talk to the Octaves?

Griffin: So, you all have access to basically the run of the place at this point. There's only 12 people left.

Travis: And we all have Bing our Grimoire.

Griffin: You do all have Bing. Rictus had to sort of like request an audience with a member of the Octave in order to talk to them. So, you may be able to, you know, have a meeting with the Octave. Other stuff that you guys have access to though are like all of the facilities, except for the Crystalarium here. So like, there is a grand library that you could try to find answers in, or you could, you know, try and see if you could gain audience with one of the—with one of the Octave.

Clint: Well, while I do realize that going to a library makes for compelling podcast content—

Travis: Well, yeah, Dad! You could explore the exciting world of periodicals and microfilm, and all kinds of things!

Clint: Okay, yeah, I'll go to the 'brary!

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: This will be a McElroy challenge. Yes!

Griffin: The—

Clint: He's going to the magic library. And not even using Doober Sweet's— [chuckles] Doober Sweet's magic herbology to get there.

Griffin: Doober Sweet is a totally different character. That's from—that's from Ethersea... yeah. Okay, you make your way to the library. There is a large sort of ornately carved wooden double door leading out of the foyer of the Ziggurat, right to the back center of the room. And when you head in, you look all around this library and see a great sort of circular chamber.

And running around sort of the entire perimeter of this round room is just shelves and shelves and shelves and shelves of books. And as you walk in, you realize that this is sort of the highest floor of the library, it like burrows downward into the island.

So, by sort of walking down a spiral staircase that leads, you know, four or five stories down below, you just move deeper and deeper and deeper into these rows of books with these tiny little plateaus set out every level or so, with, you know, chairs and tables and desks where you can read and study. And you're trying to look for answers for how you could leave yourself a message that you don't remember writing, right?

Clint: Mm-hm.

Griffin: Okay, so, I mean, there's a couple checks you can make here. I think arcana would certainly work to sort of like leverage what you know about magic to sort of start your search. If you wanted to do an investigation check, just to see if you could find like a particularly, you know, salient book on the topic, you could—you could certainly also do that.

Travis: Could he not just check the Dewey Decimal system, Griffin?

Clint: Decimal system—yeah!

Griffin: Yeah, I mean, also, if you want to look for—if you want to look for some sort of filing—

Justin: [in a dopey voice] Don't you know the Dewey Decimal system?

Griffin: If you want to look for a filing system, you can definitely do that too.

Clint: How about I look for a librarian?

Griffin: Okay—

Clint: So I can have interaction with someone.

Griffin: Yes. As you look around, give me a perception check, please.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: And it's an eight.

Griffin: Okay with an eight, you do not—you do not see any other people in here. No other Octave members or Aspirants, or anyone. What you do notice is some movement going around most of the different sort of layers of this, you know, whole of a library. And that movement, as you kind of like zero in on it, you see books kind of moving on their own.

Books that are sort of resorting themselves, books that are kind of cleaning themselves up from little piles on these little study desks, you know, scattered around the chamber. You don't see any people, but there is like a, you know, some sort of presence in here moving the books around.

Clint: Okay, I'm gonna do an arcana check, see if I can identify the—would it be... I have pretty good nature stats. Do I think it's—

Griffin: If you wanted to roll nature, sure, we could try and... we could find an answer for that, for sure.

Clint: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: Then how does a 25 suit you?

Griffin: Holy shit, man! Okay.

Travis: Now you can speak to the trees that the books were made of.

Griffin: [chuckles] Yeah, the paper—

Clint: [yells out] "Ouch!"

Griffin: Revives—

Clint: [yells out] "Ooh!"

Griffin: "Ow! They cut me up real skinny!"

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: "I make apples."

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: I hate— Sorry, I'm sorry.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: I hate the idea of a tree getting chopped down and he's like talking about the fruit he generates. That sucks. I hate that I said that.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles] I have to think about that now.

Griffin: For the better part of the morning, you spend your time going layer through layer of this library—

Travis: "I got used to make the McElroy's podcasting book. I'm so lonely!"

Justin: [chortles]

Griffin: [guffaws]

Travis: "Please! Somebody!"

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You spend—

Justin: Hey Trav, you—I will say, this you can't teach timing like that with a book. That's the problem.

Griffin: No, you can't.

Justin: That was our hubris—

Griffin: In fact—

Justin: You know what I mean?

Griffin: Yeah, we—

Justin: To think—

Griffin: I wanted to—

Justin: To think that the—that we can throw enough pearls out.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: I tried to get—

Justin: Would be able was able to absorb, you know.

Griffin: I tried to get a chapter in there that's like, if one of your brothers has been talking for like 30 seconds about some other shit, feel free to jump right back to the joke that you guys were just working—

Travis: Well, when the jokes hit, they hit, Griffin.

Justin: They hit.

Griffin: You can't—yeah.

Justin: Check the laugh-o-meter.

Griffin: The muse moves how it moves. You look around, right? You're looking for books on secret messages and, you know, remote conversation, and anything along those lines, anything about sort of the sending and receiving of secret messages.

And while you definitely find plenty of books on the topic, you don't really find anything describing what you're—what you've experienced, of like finding your own message that you've forgotten about writing. And so, you turn your attention instead towards, you know, memory spells, memory magic, things that could potentially, you know, erase the memory of this message that could be sort of returned to you in this way.

And that's almost a like—the signal to noise ratio there is not helpful. There are so many ways to make people sort of forget things. And so, after a few hours of fruitless searching, you turn your attention over to the sort of more biological parts of the library. The more zoological parts, I should say, because you're looking for insect pornography. You get so bored—

Justin: I'm surprised that the—I'm surprised that the resolution of all your fruitless searches was insect pornography. [chuckles]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You burnout—

Clint: With a 25!

Griffin: You're burnt out, and you start looking for insect pornography.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: Because like sometimes they have that in libraries.

Clint: Yeah.

Griffin: And—

Clint: And I only read insect pornography for the articles anyway.

Griffin: Yeah. While you are flipping around through the pages of these incredibly erotic bug novellas, you find something that actually does—feels like relevant to your search. You see, as you're kind of flipping through this, grand almanac of, you know, exotic bugs, you find an entry for something called an echomite, M-I-T-E. And looking at it, it looks incredibly familiar.

With a 25 arcana check, you sort of scan the page, you realize why it looks familiar. The insect that you saw that kind of drew your attention and, you know, spoke to you psychically or was maybe a sort of conduit for some sort of psychic speech from whoever this was that called you their bridegroom, that insect, this sort of long, flatworm, centipede, plated looking thing with crystals sort of poking out of it, is one of these things, is an echomite.

And reading about them, the thing that they are most known for and that sort of wizards are cautioned, you know, against getting too close to one of these things, is their ability to attack anyone with a certain level of intelligence and encode their memories, steal their memories from them, in the form of these kind of crystalline shards that jut out of their back. So, you're not sure exactly, you know, if one of these things got to you, if perhaps like this is the reason why you could not remember if you—if you were attacked by one of these echomites.

But the pieces kind of aligned for you in a way, as you are studying this this book. And then, you know, you find more sort of like super-hot pictures—I imagine grubs are like big for you, like really big for you, sort of erotically.

But yeah, that is your sort of main find here in the library. If you wanted to look for something else, to try and gain any more clues or any more information, you would have a little bit more time to do that.

Clint: Maybe not in the same entry, but I did—I'd like to know a little bit more about these things, could I do a history check?

Griffin: Yes! Give, me a history check, please.

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: 18.

Griffin: Okay, with an 18, this kind of like lights a fire in you at this the sort of realization. It can't just be, you know, serendipity, there has to be some sort of reason for why these things are on the island and why your memory is faltering.

And so, you turn your search to echomites, and try to find more books where you can learn more about them. You find a couple other editions of that like same almanac where the information is roughly the same, but in one of the—the first edition of this almanac, the oldest—the pages are weathered and many of them are missing.

The bindings are weakened on this this old book. You flip to the intro—the entry on echomites to try to learn more about them. And at the very bottom, there is a single kind of paragraph with a picture of this large, large, large insect that looks like a like wildly evolved version of the—of the echomites you've seen so far.

And it is surrounded by just a thrall of smaller similar insects. And this paragraph enlightens you to the fact that there is a figure in the history of the Thrikeen that is an echomite, and this information, for whatever reason, has been kind of like removed from following editions and, you know, seemingly, you know, tried to keep a secret.

The first brood mother of the Thrikeen, the one that kind of got wise and overthrew the wizards who created the Thrikeen to be their kind of like

insectoid soldiers, was an echomite. The first brood mother who is responsible basically for the Thrikeen's independence and the fact that you are a kind of—your own people under no one's control, was one of these echomites.

Clint: And her name was...

Griffin: It does not say.

Clint: Hm... Rumpelstiltskin! Nope.

Travis: Nailed it.

Justin: Liza Vermicelli? That can't be right. Griffin, is that right? He just texted me Liza Vermicelli? [chuckles]

Griffin: I have told you guys not to text each other while we're making—

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: So, with this information in hand, you make your way back up to the surface, your eyes kind of readjusting to the sunset light. It is—

Clint: Is it safe to say—

Griffin: Quite late. Yeah?

Clint: Is it safe to say Hellgrammite might have stolen the books, to take with him?

Griffin: Huh, I mean, if you'd like to try to—

Clint: I assume it's a lending library?

Griffin: Are you trying to steal all these books, or are you just trying to steal this kind of like first edition almanac?

Clint: Those two—those two almanacs that refer to the echomites. Actually, I don't think he needs the first one, but this ancient one—

Travis: I also don't think you have to steal books from a library? I think they like it when people check books out?

Clint: Yeah, but then you gotta get a card and you gotta get stamped...

Griffin: Okay, here's what I would like. If you're just taking the one book, it will be a lower check, but I would like either stealth or sleight of hand to get this thing out of here.

Clint: Okay, I will do—ah, they're the same. Okay, sleight of hand...

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: That is a 15.

Griffin: Okay. Yes, with a 15, as you make your way up the spiral staircase, you get the kind of like faint impression that several books floating on their own have begun to sort of follow you up the spiral staircase, you know, keeping a fairly good distance. But you manage to kind of like keep your cool and make your way back up to the ground level floor, and you exit the grand library without anyone sort of stopping you. So, you are able to get out of there with this ancient almanac.

Clint: Cool!

Griffin: You—

Clint: And I shall hold that information close to my heart.

Griffin: I believe—I believe you will.

Clint: And my bosom.

Griffin: You make your way out of the Ziggurat. It is—it is dusk, and you realize you have not done your business at the atelier yet. So, you make your way over to this giant tent with a huge, white cat head popping out of the top of it, to do a little bit of shopping, where you encounter Lorovith and Rictus.

Rictus does—Rictus looks weird. Rictus looks like he's had a day. And you know what? Actually, I'm gonna go ahead and say both of 'em are being kind of weird, but for different reasons. One is because they had the quickening, and one is because they partied way too hard with Doober Sweetleaf.

Clint: [chuckles]

Hellgrammite: Hey, fellas!

Rictus: Oh! God. Oh, sorry.

Hellgrammite: [yells out] Hey! Everybody doing okay?

Lorovith: [unintelligible]

Hellgrammite: What?

Lorovith: [unintelligible]

Hellgrammite: What? Oh—

Lorovith: Shh, down here, Bug Man.

Hellgrammite: Oh?

Lorovith: Look at me, I'm down here.

Hellgrammite: Oh, right—

Lorovith: I've come down to— shh, shh, shh-shh.

Rictus: How long have you been standing there?

Hellgrammite: Are you ill? Are you fellas all right?

Lorovith: Bug Man, you do not need to shout. I am right here, Bug Man.

Hellgrammite: I'm whis—I'm whispering?

Rictus: Why are you guys being weird?

Hellgrammite: I'm just excited, I—like I told you, I found out a little bit more, I think, about my fiancé and... you guys wanna hear about her? Or I mean—

Lorovith: I have never wanted anything less, Bug Man.

Hellgrammite: I unders—oh, right. So, it's... yeah. Well, I'll just save this, and then maybe lunches later? And I'll—oh, I can't—I got pictures, I got books, I got porn. I got so much cool stuff you want to see.

Griffin: [chuckles] John Arbuckle pops up from behind the counter.

John Arbuckle: Did you say you have pornography?

Justin: [chuckles]

Lorovith: Here he goes. Step aside.

Hellgrammite: It's a—it's very... very specific. It's a very small niche kind of—

Rictus: You don't know what John's into?

John Arbuckle: I like it all! So, you guys here to get some new spells?

Hellgrammite: Yeah.

Lorovith: I would like to test my my luck, Mr. Arbuckle. Yes.

John Arbuckle: Well then, step right up!

Griffin: He says. You all have gold level rewards from your last trial, for picking your combatant and defeating them. And so, you will each get to draw three spells from a spell level of your choice, and pick the one that you want. You all, at this point that—the grimoires, the gauntlets that you're wearing, where you've kind of been slotting in these different spell stones, they are all full up. So, at this point, in order to put in a new spell, if you get one that you do like, you will—you will have to remove one that you are maybe not utilizing quite as much. So, who wants to go first?

Travis: Lorovith.

Lorovith: Yeah, I believe I called dibs.

Griffin: Okay. Lorovith, you step up and hand in your sack with the three golden cubes. John Arbuckle sweeps them up, and all of these spell stones kind of floating in the air behind him, behind the counter, begin to sort of tremble, as you begin to will them to your collection. What spell level would you like to shoot for? You can also, for—if you don't want to specify a spell level, you can draw one from five random ones, taken from all the spell levels available, which is cantrips first, second and third.

Justin: Hm... I think I'm gonna try for third level, because I do not have any third level spells.

Griffin: Okay!

Justin: And I would like to try to have something that's like—got some oomph.

Griffin: Perfect. You sort of focus your intention, and three stones larger and sort of smoother than the rest float down before you to take your choice, Pokémon starter style. The first is... Leomund's Tiny Hut.

Justin: Yes.

Griffin: That sounds good.

Justin: Yes, that should—that should change the... tides. [chuckles]

Travis: Take Leomund's Sunglasses Hut.

Justin: That should shit the battle in my favor.

Griffin: The next is...

Justin: Wait, Griffin, I don't know—I don't want you to have to read the spell description, but is there any chance that it's a tiny hut that explodes and kills everybody nearby? [chuckles]

Griffin: [laughs] Knowing you, you could probably find a way to make it do that. Sorry, I'm trying to—

Justin: This sentient murderous hut will stop at nothing until its target is dead. [chuckles]

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: It's—

Travis: Leomund's Tiny Baba Yaga Hut.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: It's also a master of disguise and seduction. [chuckles]

Griffin: The next is— The second one is... Fireball. Where's your laughs and where's your jokes now, Mr. Jokes? Will the fireball—will the fireball—

Justin: Why is Leomund's Tiny Hut a third level spell? I'm looking at it—

Travis: Because you create a—

Justin: It's literally like—

Travis: Dimensional hut! Taako used that shit all the time!

Griffin: Yeah, Taako would have definitely used that, and not complained.

Justin: He was good at this stuff. [chuckles]

Travis: I miss him.

Griffin: And your final choice is... Speak With Dead. I can send you a link to that one, but that's like—

Justin: Now, okay, can I ask about that?

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: What, in the context of what we are doing—

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: What can you tell me about that—the effect that that spell?

Griffin: Speak With Dead?

Justin: Yeah. Do you know what I'm asking?

Griffin: Yeah, so, I—

Justin: I don't—I don't wanna get into the specifics of like—

Griffin: Right. Lorovith wouldn't know this. I will tell—

Justin: We haven't had a...

Griffin: I will tell—

Justin: Let me just say this. We haven't had individual scenes where characters have been met at the River Styx as they're shepherd into the afterlife, right? [chuckles]

Griffin: So, there's—

Justin: So I don't know—

Griffin: There's rules with Speak With Dead. You cast it on a corpse, and it has to have a mouth, and cannot be undead. And the—

Justin: Oh, okay so it's like fresh, it's not like summon my grandpa.

Griffin: Right, no, yeah, it has to be a corpse—

Clint: Only 10 days old is the max.

Griffin: Well, no, you can cast it on a corpse every 10 days. The corpse can be—

Clint: Oh, I see, okay.

Griffin: Much, much older than that. So, Leomund's Tiny Hut, Fireball, or Speak With Dead?

Justin: Only mostly dead. I am—oh, god... god... This is—y'all... these—you asked what the difference is between being an actual play podcast and playing Dungeons and Dragons at home, right? Because like the payoff if Speak With Dead hits—

Griffin: Oh, it is good!

Justin: Massive, massive! I mean, it's like massive. Like, story-wise, like forget about it, right? It's like massive. But it's also like so what, you know what I mean? You know, he who dies with the most toys, wins. So what I have a spell if I can't use it?

Griffin: Right.

Justin: On the other hand, Fireball is like...

Griffin: It's Fireball, yeah.

Justin: It's fireball, for sure.

Griffin: It's kid-tested, mother-approved.

Justin: [chuckles]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: I mean, it's been—it's been doing it since Gary days, you know what I mean? Like it's—

Travis: Yeah!

Justin: It gets it done. The Gary way. [chuckles] I am gonna go with...

Travis: Now, Justin, before you decide—

Justin: Speak with—

Travis: If you—

Justin: I'm gonna go—no, no, no, I'm sorry, Travis, I'm not gonna go speak—

Travis: No, if go with Speak With Dead, you could do Pushing Daisies roleplay.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah, that—which would be amazing. I actually kind of feel like Speak With Dead is like too close to Rictus territory for me, like dabbling with necromancy doesn't feel exactly right. So, I think I'm just gonna go with Fireball.

Griffin: Excellent.

Justin: Yeah. I don't think that's surprising—

Griffin: No love for Leomund's Tiny Hut, huh?

Justin: What?

Griffin: No love for Leomund's Tiny Hut. Too tiny, this hut. Okay, you got—

Justin: I think it's just we've already done that. I apparently have already done that. Like, I don't remember all of my old—you said his name was Taako? I don't remember all the—you know—

Griffin: [guffaws]

Justin: I'm in the moment, I'm now.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: You know what I mean?

Griffin: Yes.

Justin: This is today.

Griffin: Would you like to target another level, or would you—do want five randoms?

Justin: Can I—wait, in addition to? How many do I get, three?

Griffin: So, you have two more stones. S, two more—two more draws. You can either pick from three from a specified level, or—

Justin: Level four.

Griffin: You don't have that one yet.

Justin: Level three. Another level three.

Griffin: Another level three, okay.

Justin: No, level two. Level two, level two, level—

Griffin: Level two, level two, level two.

Travis: Final answer.

Justin: Final answer.

Griffin: Okay, level two. The first is Enlarge/Reduce.

Justin: Cool. I can't do that already?

Travis: No, you have—you have your hill giant thing that lets you get big.

Griffin: Yeah. So, you can get like super—

Justin: Oh, well, how—could I double dip?

Griffin: Well, you could go giant, and then you could reduce, to turn back to normal.

Justin: [yells out] *Whoa! Cool!*

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: No, dip shit! I mean, can—

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: [chortles] You know that's not what I meant!

Griffin: The second is—

Justin: I wanna get double big!

Griffin: The second is Knock, the unlocking spell. And the third is... Spider Climb. Enlarge/Reduce, which does what it says on the tin. Knock, which lets you unlock things. Or Spider Climb, which lets you climb, like a spider would do.

Justin: Yeah, we're gonna grab Spider Climb.

Griffin: Okay. Make sure you unseat one of your—you can, you know, pop it back in whatever you want to, but this is like sort of the equivalent of preparing—

Justin: Okay, how did—let me see, what's the best way... This is the problem with us never doing the whole...

Griffin: Rules?

Justin: Pairing thing.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I'm looking at the spell list, and I'm not like at—are you adding these for me?

Griffin: No, you'll have to manage those—

Justin: Would you say—okay—

Griffin: So, when you click "manage spells" in DnD Beyond, it let's you—

Justin: All right. So, we'll do that. I think that that's better than Color Spray, for sure.

Griffin: Okay! And one more choice.

Justin: I'll delete Color Spray from our prepared—how many are we allowed to have prepared?

Griffin: As many as—I don't know, the thing will tell you.

Travis: As it lets you.

Justin: No, but I'm asking for—you said that I had to unseat something, so like I'm asking—

Griffin: That was—that's so that you don't go over your limit of spells. At this point, you all should have learned more spells than you can actually prepare at one time. So...

Justin: I don't think you're quite understanding. How many can I have...

Griffin: Of each—

Justin: I'm now looking at five spells that I have prepared; Lightning Lure Absorb Elements, Burning Hands, Shield, Detect Thoughts. You were saying I need to unseat something, so I just unseated, or I unprepared I guess you would say, Color Spray, to make room for the Spider Climb.

Travis: But you have a limited number of prepared spells that you can have like—

Griffin: Sorry, not prepared, I'm talking about where it says "add spells." So, you click that and it brings down like the whole big-ass list of—

Justin: Right.

Griffin: Every spell. That is where you're going to be doing those. And I think, can't you only learn a certain number of those at a certain time?

Travis: Yeah, you can have—like, I can have 11 spells prepared.

Griffin: Yeah, you can have four—

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: Four cantrips and ten spells.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: So, if you don't—if you're not at that limit, then you don't have to—

Travis: Go ham.

Griffin: Pop anything out.

Justin: Okay, what was the name of the first one? Fireball, yeah, that's right. Fireball... Okay.

Griffin: And Spider Climb. Okay, one more choice, Juice.

Justin: Let's do a mix. Give me a—give me a selection.

Griffin: Okay. I'm just gonna call 'em out, if you want a link to the description, let me know. Okay, first is—

Clint: Wait, there is—you know there's a document? Of the random spell generator.

Griffin: Yes, that is what I'm using.

Clint: Yeah, oh, I meant if Justin wanted to look at it.

Griffin: Oh, yeah, sure.

Clint: Get a description.

Justin: I like to just listen.

Griffin: Okay, we've got Spray of Cards, we've got Snare, we've got...

Justin: What's Spray of Cards do, Griff?

Griffin: Spray of Cards says you—

Clint: Spray of Cards, you spray a 15 foot cone of spectral cards. Each creature in that area must make a dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 2D10 force damage and is blinded until the end of its next turn.

Justin: It's absolutely inappropriate for the character, but does sound sick.

Griffin: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, it's fun as hell.

Justin: You know what I mean? But it's like such a bad—

Clint: Like a Gambit kind of thing.

Justin: Yeah, for sure, man.

Griffin: Third, we have Frostbite, a cantrip. That's sort of like a, I believe a melee ice attack. Fourth, we have... Catapult, the spell—the first level spell that belonged to Grakhan, before his untimely passing. And fifth, we have... Sleep. So, your choices are; Spray of Cards, Sleep, Snare, Catapult and Frostbite.

Justin: I'm getting—I'm getting Catapult.

Clint: Ooh?

Justin: It's what he would have wanted.

Griffin: Rad.

Clint: Aw.

Travis: Beautiful.

Griffin: Okay, you claim these stones and—

Justin: I put the—I put the Catapult one in a special pouch I keep right next to my nuts.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: You don't put it in your gauntlet?

Justin: No, not yet. [chuckles]

Griffin: Okay, great.

Justin: Not yet, just like, my hands are full. [chuckles]

Griffin: I love it. Yeah, you put that one—

Justin: I just had to put that one in my secret nut pouch for a second. [chuckles]

Travis: Yeah.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: You—[chuckles]

Clint: For sentimental reasons.

Justin: For sentimental reasons. [chuckles]

Griffin: Well, as you—

Travis: You always loved my nuts.

Griffin: As you slot in the Spider Climb one, you are inundated with the memories of the spider, the one who dressed up like Spider-man in this contest. And you see him—

Justin: [chuckles] "Uncle Bun! No!"

Griffin: He's a nerdy—he's just a—

Justin: I'm seeing Uncle Bun before my very eyes!

Griffin: He gets picked on by all the other... men, and—[chuckles]

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: He's so small—

Travis: Flush Tampkins picks on him.

Griffin: One day, a big spider bites him—

Justin: Flush Tampons. [chuckles]

Griffin: [titters] He has to—he puts him in the hospital for like two years—

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: But then he comes out of the hospital and his Uncle Bun had passed away. That was totally unrelated.

Justin: Uncle Bun!

Griffin: He didn't really have anything to do with it, but he feels pretty bad about it. And then he learns to climb on walls.

Justin: It was a—it was actually turbo scurvy that got Uncle Bun. [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah, yeah.

Justin: He had nothing to do with it.

Griffin: Nothing to do with like—he didn't—no responsibility. The power is okay. Okay, those are your spells. Next, who wants to go? And then after we're done with all of our spells, we'll do some items.

Travis: I'll go.

Griffin: Okay! Which level would you like to target?

Travis: Cantrip, please!

Griffin: Cantrip. We've got; Friends. Friends.

Travis: Friends.

Justin: [titters] Do you think in the—

Travis: Hello, friends.

Justin: By the third Enter the Spider-Verse thing, it—that the—will be able to get the spider into there—

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Do you think?

Griffin: I would—I think that—

Justin: Wouldn't that be sick? If they're like, [in a silly voice] "I got an adventure for you."

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: I don't remember what he sounded like.

Griffin: Mind Sliver, is the next one.

Travis: What's that?

Griffin: That is a psychic spell attack. You drive a disorienting spike of psychic energy into the mind of one creature you can see within range. They must succeed on an intelligence saving throw or take 1D6 psychic damage, and subtract 1D4 from the next saving throw it makes before the end of your next turn.

Travis: Oh, okay, cool.

Griffin: And you can increase the damage—actually, you guys are above fifth level, so like most of these spells are gonna do more damage. This one does 2D6 now.

Travis: Okay, cool.

Griffin: And the third is... Chill Touch. Chill Touch.

Travis: Is Chill Touch necromancy?

Griffin: It is! You create a ghostly skeletal hand on the space of a creature within range, you make a ranged spell attack. And on a hit they take 1D8 necrotic damage, and cannot regain hit points until the start of your next turn.

Travis: Yeah, he's taking that one, taking Chill Touch.

Griffin: If the target of the spell is undead, it has disadvantage on attack rolls against you until the end of your next turn. And it does 2D8 damage.

Travis: Yes. He'll be taking Chill Touch.

Griffin: Okay.

Travis: Give me a... What have I got? I got... Give me a third level spell.

Griffin: Okay. You hold out your hand, and three new stones fly down to your position. The first is... Sending. It's the sort of telekinetic secret messaging spell.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Griffin: We've got... Fly. That let's you fly.

Travis: Mm-hm, cool.

Griffin: And we've got Major Image, this is like a very advanced sort of illusion magic. An illusion within a 20-foot cube... and it seems completely real, including sound, smells and temperature. And—

Travis: Fly, please!

Griffin: Fly it is. Okay, I assume you are unpreparing spells if you are full?

Travis: Yeah.

Griffin: I just assumed you guys had more than I think 14 spells at this point, but—

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: Okay. And what would you like next?

Travis: Can I have another cantrip, please?

Griffin: Another cantrip, sure.

Travis: I'd like to buy a vowel.

Griffin: Okay, first we've got... Mage Hand.

Travis: Mm-hm, classic.

Griffin: Which belonged to Pockets, who passed in the last trial. We've got Friends again. It will be there for you.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Griffin: And we've got... Shape Water. That lets you have a fish man boyfriend.

Travis: Ah?

Griffin: And he teaches you about like yourself.

Travis: You know what? Mage Hand's a classic for a reason, I'll take it.

Griffin: All right. Those are your three. And next up, we've got Hellgrammite.

Clint: Fourth level!

Griffin: Don't have that yet.

Clint: Okay, let's start with third level.

Griffin: Yeah, that is the next biggest one. All right, third level—

Justin: What a—what a maroon. [titters]

Griffin: We've got—

Justin: Who could make that kind of mistake? [chuckles]

Griffin: Hypnotic Pattern.

Clint: Mm-hm.

Griffin: We've got... Major Image, again. And we've got... Summon Undead. This gives you like an undead spirit thrall who acts, I think, on your turn Major Image is a big illusion spell, and Hypnotic Pattern is like, you know, a mass hypnosis spell.

Clint: Yeah, let's go with—

Griffin: You can charm a bunch—

Clint: Hypnotic Pattern.

Griffin: Okay! All right, what next?

Clint: Let's go with... let's do a cantrip.

Griffin: Cantrip. Okay! First up, we got... Minor Illusion. We've got... Friends, once again. And we've got... Firebolt. Minor Illusion, Friends or Firebolt.

Clint: Hm... let's do Minor Illusion.

Griffin: Okay. Jot all that down, please, you claim all of these spells. Plug them in with sort of faint residual memories of the wizards, many of whom you all have defeated in this contest, who trained those spells up in the first place. And you know, while you get a lot of memories of, you know, folks hitting the books real hard and practicing their stuff over and over and over again, not much else sort of powerful details come through other than that.

Travis: Hey, Griffin, when I put in Mage Hand, tell me of Pockets' life on the streets.

Griffin: Pockets actually was—grew up in the lap of luxury.

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: It's like—you would think it's like a charming kind of like street urchin, making her way. No, dude, total nepo baby.

Travis: Ah, man. What an Oliver Twist!

Griffin: [chuckles] Terrible. It feels bad.

Clint: Do I get a third choice?

Griffin: That was your third choice.

Clint: I've only picked two.

Justin: Just like Griffin.

Griffin: Hey...

Justin: [chuckles]

Travis: Ooh...

Justin: [laughs]

Clint: I got Hypnotic Pattern—

Justin: Sorry, I don't know—

Clint: I got Hypnotic Pattern and Minor Illusion.

Griffin: Oh, okay? Yeah, then yes, sorry, my apologies, I thought that was your third. Okay, one more, Hellgrammite.

Clint: Third level.

Griffin: Another third level spell.

Clint: Yes.

Griffin: I will tell you guys, there is not many more of these that have not been claimed. [chuckles]

Justin: I haven't really been thinking about it that way, that's a good point.

Griffin: We've got... Leomund's Tiny Hut. [chuckles]

Travis: Mm-hm! I've heard good things.

Griffin: We've got... Haste. And finally, we have—

Travis: Wait, did Hasty Janes beef?

Griffin: Hasty Jane has a different spell.

Travis: Oh, okay, whew.

Griffin: And third, we have... Dispel Magic.

Justin: The party pooper—[chuckles] they call it.

Griffin: The no fun allowed.

Justin: No fun allowed!

Clint: God, those—

Griffin: Don't you already have Counter Spell also?

Justin: Fuckin' over here.

Griffin: You're just gonna be the fuckin' fun police.

Justin: "Hey, you guys doing magic in there?"

Griffin: [laughs]

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: "Cut that out!"

Justin: "I can smell it! I can smell it! Get out!" [chuckles]

Clint: It's also known as the— The RA spell. Yeah.

Justin: "I smell com—I know components when I smell 'em!"

Griffin: [chuckles]

Clint: Jeez, that's all? Eh...

Griffin: You can also, if you don't want to, you know, unseat a spell for one of these, assuming you're full, you can—you can just say, "No, thank you, John."

Justin: "I know the sound of bone striking an oak ring, Jeremy!"

Griffin: [chuckles]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: "We know you're casting!"

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: "Oh, I'm inverting, I'm turning inside out, is that what the spell was? Oh, f—ha-ha!"

Griffin: "Oh, that's so good, you guys!"

Justin: Oh, that's—

Travis: "Put out the candles!"

Griffin: "Oh, my insides are now outsides. That's real fuckin' funny, Trevor!"

Travis: "Put 'em back where they go!"

[pause]

Travis: "Calling your mom."

Clint: All right, what are the three choices again? [chuckles]

Griffin: Man, I don't—

Justin: That—

Griffin: Dispel Magic, Leomund's Tiny Hut.

Clint: Just to get it off the board, give me the damn hut.

Travis: Yeah!

Griffin: Okay. [chuckles]

Clint: Now watch, this is—that'll be the spell that the whole season turns on us.

Travis: It's gonna change everything.

Griffin: Absolutely it will, man. Okay!

[theme music plays]

[ad reads]

[theme music plays]

Griffin: Okay, before we wrap things up here at the atelier, you guys also are able to draw a prize from the Orb of Conjuring. You all, because you got gold level rewards, we'll get to roll 2D20s, and take the higher result.

Clint: Okay.

Griffin: Let's go in reverse order this time.

Justin: Okay.

Griffin: You're already up there, Hellgrammite. Why don't you reach into the orb and tell me what you pluck out of there?

Clint: All right. All right, and here's...

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: A six, and...

[sound of dice thrown]

Clint: Two sixes! I get to roll again.

Griffin: No. [chuckles] No, not it—it's not—

Clint: Yeah! In Sorry, you do!

Griffin: So, with a six, you reach in, you clasp your hands around a small kind of metallic-feeling disc, and retrieve it. And what you retrieve is a very ornately painted metal dial, it is sort of split into two sides. On one side, there is a small illustration of a smiling sun, and on the other side is a frowning moon. And John Arbuckle says:

John Arbuckle: Oh, yeah, that's the sun and moon dial. You can place it on the wall on any enclosed space, and turn it to either fill the room with bright light or magical darkness. And—

Hellgrammite: Oh?

John Arbuckle: Yeah. It's a—it's very powerful stuff. Don't do it like at like a kid's birthday or party or something—

Hellgrammite: No, I—

John Arbuckle: You'll scare 'em, absolutely.

Griffin: Okay.

Clint: Cool!

Griffin: The sun and moon dial, sent to us by Marissa.

Clint: Thank you, Marissa.

Griffin: Frequent contributor. Who would like to go next?

Travis: Well, if we're going to reverse order, Rictus is up.

Griffin: Okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: Nat 20!

Justin: Whoa!

Travis: And a one!

Griffin: Nat 20!

Travis: I got a nat one and a nat 20.

Griffin: Mm-hm, the duality of man.

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: You reach into the orb, Rictus. And after rifling through there, you feel something, and it just feels like a bag of beans. You're like, "Nope, next," and swat that away. You try to clasp on to a few rings, but they're tricky to grab on to. And instead, you feel your hand sort of press into a very sort of cool, faintly sort of damp piece of cloth. And you grab it and pull it out. And you retrieve—

Travis: It's the Shroud of Turin!

Griffin: It is not—

Travis: Oh.

Griffin: Any kind of foreskin, divine or otherwise.

Travis: I don't think the Shroud of Turin was his foreskin, Griffin.

Griffin: Was it not?

Travis: No, man!

Clint: Please don't write.

Travis: That would have really changed that. It was the shroud draped over him—

Justin: Shroud of Turin, it's his burial wrap. What on earth?

Griffin: What was the for—what was the foreskin one?

Justin: You—what on earth? What?

Griffin: The holy prepuce. [chuckles]

Travis: [laughs]

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Griffin, that was a...

Griffin: I was thinking of the holy prepuce.

Justin: That was a story we told you when you were a kid. [chuckles] Sorry, man, I had—

Griffin: No, no! I was thinking of the holy prepuce, guys. I'm so sorry.

Travis: [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles] That's a different thing, that's the foreskin. The Shroud of Turin is 14 feet long, I don't think Christ's—[chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: It is—as you pull it out, you see a cloak, that doesn't appear to be like one color throughout. It is almost animated, just sort of gray and white wisps sort of faintly floating around. The cloak is somewhat transparent, so wear something underneath it. But it looks like you are holding sort of a garment made of sort of a cloud. And John Arbuckle says:

John Arbuckle: Wow! That's about as close to a grand prize as we—as we get from the Orb of Conjunction. That's the Cloak of the Misty Lake.

Griffin: The Cloak of the Misty Lake wraps magically around the user. While wearing this cloak, your AC is increased by one, and you may also cast the spell Fog Cloud once per day.

Travis: Oh? Hell yeah.

Griffin: So, you can cosplay as Doober Sweetleaf, if you'd like. This ability recharges after a long rest.

Travis: That makes up for the fact that I have lost both the Shadow Sear's Lantern and Jordan's Secret Stuff.

Griffin: Yeah. Okay! And Lorovith, finally you.

Justin: Indeed.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: Oh my god, holy shit, wow. God damn.

Justin: Dang. What are the odds against that?

Griffin: This is unbelievable—

Justin: Dr. Oddsman.

Griffin: Okay, so that's—Justin has rolled a 40, which is to say two 20s on the 20 sided dice.

Travis: Ooh!

Griffin: Travis just got the grand prize. Travis just got the one I had for—you reach in to the orb—

Justin: No, don't try to make this—

Griffin: No, shush. You reach into the orb, and you swat away a nasty bag of stinky beans. You actually grab the beans and—

Justin: But then wait! No, no, wait, Griffin can't—may I?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Can I—can I make a point for a second? I swat aside a bag of nasty beans, right?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: But then something in me is like, "Beans? Huh, doesn't seem right." You know what I mean? Like there's something in me that's like, "Why would there be... beans?" [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And then I go back and I'm like—starts reaching through and digging through, and it's like almost like they don't want to be found. Like, is there—

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: Were they maybe like hiding? Was that a test?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Have I realized like—you know what I mean? Like, what is...

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: "Beans?"

Griffin: Sure.

Justin: Okay, so you can do something with that.

Griffin: So, you grab the beans.

Justin: That quick, huh? [chuckles]

Griffin: And you pull 'em out.

Justin: I thought there would be more of a sto—I thought there might be a flashback or something.

Clint: [chuckles]

Justin: Okay, that was fine! That's fine.

Griffin: You grab the beans.

Justin: Well, just that quick? Wow. [titters]

Griffin: You grab the beans and your mind is flooded with memories—

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: Of the farmer who grew these beans. His name was Jacob. And his was—

Travis: He was on an island!

Griffin: His was a meager life, but one he was very proud of. And he—and you pull them out, and you see these beans were definitely special.

[group laugh]

Justin: Hey, Griffin? Hey, Griffin?

Griffin: Yeah?

Justin: Is it possible that they're so special, that it may indeed take me a full week to realize just how incredible they are? [chuckles]

Griffin: Yeah. Yeah, definitely, dude. You pull these bean—

Justin: Dang!

Griffin: [chuckles] You know—I know exactly what they are! You pull 'em out, you open 'em up. And these beans don't look like your dad's beans. [chuckles]

Justin: [chuckles] Don't look like what?!

Griffin: They don't look like your dad's beans. They don't appear to be any sort of single color at all. They appear to be filled with little swirling gray clouds. And as you pop them all in your mouth and eat them, because you can't resist—

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: You see that John Arbuckle says:

John Arbuckle: Those... why, those were the beans of the misty lake. And when you eat those beans, your AC is increased by one, and you can cast the spell Fog Cloud once per day. And this ability recharges after a long rest. They're sort of like the sister item to the Cloak of the Misty Lake that your friend pulled out. So, you both have sort of Misty Lake stuff happening for you now, only—

Travis: Can the fog come out of his butt, though? Because it was beans—

Justin: So, where... And so I'm like, so... okay—

Griffin: You feel these magic clouds—

Justin: So, I'm like, as I'm chewing the beans, I'm like:

Lorovith: I have a question, though. What about my other 20?

Griffin: You look down at the bag that the beans were in.

Justin: [chortles]

Griffin: It doesn't seem to be any single color at all. The bag appears to be swirling around.

Justin: And I'm just slowly chewing. [laughs]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Travis: "These dry-ass beans!"

Justin: [chuckles]

Griffin: [chuckles]

Justin: Wash down—

Travis: Now normally, you'd have to soak 'em—

Justin: The dry-ass beans.

Travis: For six to eight hours, but it's fine—yeah.

Justin: Burlap sack.

Griffin: He says:

John Arbuckle: Good lord... that's the Little Bag of the Misty Lake. And if you put something in it, it's AC is increased by plus one, and it can cast the spell Fog Cloud once per day.

Justin: Hold on, Griffin. [laughs]

Griffin: There once was a— Let me finish! There once was a great sorcerer! The Sorcerer of the Misty Lake. He had three things.

Justin: [chortles]

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: One, he had a cloak. Two, he had a little bag with nothing put in. And three, he had a big friendship with Jacob—

Justin: He had normal beans! [chuckles]

Griffin: He had a friendship with Jacob, the bean farmer. So, he bought all his beans one day. For exchange—

Justin: Just normal beans.

Griffin: For exchange of a normal cow. And then I guess he put the beans inside the bag, and they kind of just sort of...

Travis: Well, what happens if you bring these three powerful artifacts together?

Griffin: Well, he just ate the beans.

Travis: He could eat my cloak?

Griffin: In the bag, I guess if you want to do—this is like how they cast the spell in Into the Woods! For sure, for sure, for sure!

Justin: Well, okay, let's be—let's be reasonable.

Griffin: Okay?

Justin: Because I did eat the beans... the magical beans.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Before really thinking about it. So, I have selected that item, I don't get both the items, right? I have to choose. And sadly—

Griffin: You get the Beans of the Misty Lake, and the Little Bag of the Misty Lake.

Justin: Are you sure?

Griffin: But the little bag—the Little Bag of the Misty Lake is so small. You're gonna have a hard time putting anything in there. You can't like—

Clint: Can we call the beans toot fruits?

Griffin: You can't stick—you can't—you cannot stick your hand in there and be like, "Now it's on me, I have plus one more AC."

Justin: So, in my—in my—so, the way that, to me, that this worked, was that the beans from Jacob were normal, the bag was magic.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Because—and in the bag—

Griffin: Gave its—

Justin: Transferred the magic—

Griffin: Yes, to the beans.

Justin: To the regular beans. So, I ate the magic beans that were originally regular, and I kept the magic bag, which now does not have magic.

Griffin: Yeah, I've added normal little bag to your inventory.

Justin: You've added normal little bag here.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Okay, got it.

Griffin: Awesome.

Justin: That makes perfect sense! I think that's very fair.

Griffin: Yeah, great!

Justin: One AC, let me—just hold on one second. I'm getting the double digits here..

Griffin: Wow, you had nine armor class before? That's pretty low. You should talk to someone—you should talk to a medical professional about your armor class.

Justin: There's a negative one dexterity problem. I don't know how to just like add—

Griffin: I can toss a magic item in there in a bit. So, the day concludes. And after a night of rest, that is, I'd say, maybe particularly fitful for you, Rictus, in particular. Rictus, give me a wisdom saving throw, please.

Travis: Okay!

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: 16 plus five, 21.

Griffin: Bad dreams this evening. And part of it is like pretty explicitly like these continued assaults from, you know, these memories from The Gentleman, that at this point you have—you have learned to sort of control. They're not going to be like a constant ongoing threat necessarily anymore. But they do make it hard to get a little bit of shut-eye.

Travis: Am I learning anything from him? Like why he was weird?

Griffin: They're too—they are too like chaotic. And honestly, like the reason why you are having a hard time kind of discerning that and the reason why you're having sort of a difficult time focusing in general, is this spell that you have gained, Time Stop, is... a lot more powerful than anything you have like fucked with before. And just sort of having that in your—in your brain is proving to be pretty like, pretty bad for your mental health, generally speaking.

Travis: Mm-hm.

Griffin: So, you make it through the night. And when you all awaken, it is somewhat confusing, as you look out the windows, you see that the morning, the Sun has not come, it has not risen. You look out and the sky around you, it doesn't look like the sort of like evening sky that you saw when you went to sleep. It looks like cartoonishly scary. Like there's a *huge* full moon that seems like unnaturally large and there's like creepy clouds floating around in front of them, and swarms of bats sort of flitting throughout the sky—

Justin: Can you stop, please?

Griffin: And two—

Justin: Please, can you stop?

Griffin: And two, big—

Travis: You're spooking Justin out!

Griffin: Two big jack-o'-lantern pumpkins.

Justin: [yells out] God damn it, Griffin!

Travis: [yells out] No!

Justin: No! Lorovith is terrified of jack-o'-lanterns, just like every character I've ever—

[chuckles]

Justin: And you know that.

Griffin: Is it possible—

Travis: Or he's—

Griffin: That just you don't—you're scared of—

Travis: Well, Justin's definitely allergic to pumpkin.

Griffin: Yeah. We did learn that.

Justin: Everyone knows that.

Griffin: You all, in sort of like getting the—getting the lay of the land, you see the members of the Octave and some of the other Aspirants have begun making their way toward the graveyard, at the corner of the—of the Ziggurat Island. As you all approach and step in through the gates of the graveyard, you can all see—you all haven't spent equal amounts of time here.

Rictus, you especially notice the layout has kind of changed. This mausoleum at the rear of the graveyard that you've gone into and sort of communed with this, well, in one case, this statue of Death, and in the other, the Octave member responsible for necromancy.

That mausoleum is gone. And standing in its place, far at the back of the graveyard, is a large two-story manor. It is surrounded by a sort of wide, lush lawn, peppered with dozens of unmarked graves. And this big manor house is surrounded, this yard is surrounded by a tall black iron fence.

And the atmosphere in the area, as everyone kind of makes their way toward it, is pretty oppressive. You all step in toward the manor, and this black iron gate swings shut behind you. And as you file into this building where everyone is congregating for the trial, you are there with the nine other Aspirants.

There's 12 in total. You see the floating sort of image of Four, Rictus, the Octave of necromancy, wearing this very, very fashionable, very sort of mystical-looking, dark purple robe that is hiding his face. And standing in front of him, you all see Osham, the Octave member who sort of led you into your first trial and welcomed you to the island when you first got here. He says:

Osham: Welcome all. Welcome. Come in. Come in. Welcome. As you probably have guessed at this point today, we will be conducting the Trial of Necromancy.

Rictus: Yes!

Osham: Yes, Rictus, I assumed that you—

Rictus: Sorry. Was that out loud?

Osham: Yes, it was out loud. I understand your excitement, you are likely well-versed in what happens, the possibilities of sidestepping the veil of death. And today, you all will learn that lesson. You will also learn the way that death marks those who send people beyond that veil in either direction. I will be speaking for my associate here. Go ahead and introduce yourself.

Griffin: And you see this floating wizard wearing this purple robe just hold up a slender, gloved hand with four fingers. And Osham:

Osham: Yes, okay. So, this trial will be different. This trial marks the end of our no hurting each other rule. You all, if you—

Lorovith: Hell yeah!

Osham: Yes. If you so choose, you may of course—

Travis: Is Bucatini still around, Griffin?

Griffin: Formaggio Bucatini? He is still around.

Travis: I'm glaring at him so hard.

Formaggio Bucatini: Why?

Travis: No, we had beef, remember?

Griffin: Formaggio Bucatini?

Travis: Because, yeah, remember I—there was the episode where we were supposed to choose the people we were going to deal with. And I bumped into him, but I kept going to The Gentleman?

Griffin: [chuckles] Oh, no. Formaggio Bucatini—okay, you're right. Formaggio Bucatini is looking at you. He's going to try and fuck—Travis, roll an insight check.

Travis: Oh, okay.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: 17 plus two, a 19.

Griffin: Formaggio Bucatini is coming for your ass, fucking hard. You better be ready turn one, motherfucker, because Formaggio Bucatini is going to absolutely come and stab you to death.

Travis: I point at his hat, and then I do like a—as if I were dragging the finger across the throat gesture, but a tiny one up above like where his head would be.

Griffin: His hat sort of... sort of shuffles around and falls off. Formaggio Bucatini really quickly scoops it back up and puts it on his head, looks at you with increased resolve to kill your ass. Osham goes on, he says:

Osham: There are no rules against killing each other. But again, death has a way of keeping tabs of those who deal with him. You will be wise to not be so eager to defeat your fellow Aspirants. But if that is where the fates guide you, then so be it. You may want to consider working together in small

groups, because there is no number of guaranteed survivors of this trial. And it would be a big bummer if everyone died, and then the Conclave was just sort of over. Any questions?

Hellgrammite: How do we form these groups? Do we put bids in? Do we have to audition each other? How would that work?

Osham: I'm so glad you asked. Everyone, drop your buffs! No, just kidding. You just sort of talk about it. I can't really instruct you on how to make friends.

Hellgrammite: Dibs!

Griffin: Who are you dibsing?

Travis: Yourself?

Hellgrammite: No... no, on you two guys!

Rictus: You can't call dibs?

Hellgrammite: I'm just showing my affection for you?

Rictus: It seemed more like ownership.

Hellgrammite: Well...

Rictus: I go over and I do a secret handshake with Pranklin.

Griffin: [chuckles] Pranklin. Okay, give me... give me a persuasion check. Or just a charisma check. This isn't a persuasion check. Unless it's an intimidating secret handshake.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: No. Ah, beans. Three plus one, a four.

Griffin: For your cha check, Pranklin looks up at you and gives you a kind of sly nod.

Travis: Hm. But he leaves me hanging?

Griffin: No, he shakes your hand, but he squeezes it a little weird.

Travis: Hm. Okay.

Hellgrammite: I guess it just leaves you and me, buddy. Lorovith?

Griffin: You see that Doober Sweetleaf has also come to just sort of stand in your shadow, sort of reflexively, Lorovith.

Doober Sweetleaf: I assume, sir, that perhaps we could—I've learned some new spells, I think I can hold my own, if we could complement each other's abilities and see each other through this trial?

Hellgrammite: [whispers] Lorovith... Lorovith, isn't he a little...

Justin: And I kick him in the—I kick him in the stomach. [chuckles] Sorry. Sorry, I punch you in the stomach.

Hellgrammite: I didn't want you to—

Justin: Before he can finish the sentence.

Hellgrammite: Punch him in the stomach?

Justin: I have just a sense of what you're going to say! I just feel like it's going to be mean.

Griffin: You're punching Hellgrammite in the stomach?

Justin: No, no, no, what—go ahead. Go ahead. Hellgrammite, let—

Hellgrammite: I mean... I know you have—

Lorovith: Isn't he a little what, Bug Man?

Hellgrammite: Isn't he a little... small! I mean, we need bangers? Hey, we're down to the final 12, man!

Lorovith: Who would you suggest, Bug Man?

Griffin: I'll be honest with you, I'm not sure who's still—

Clint: [chuckles]

Griffin: Okay, I can give you a roundup, if you would—if you would like. The 12 survivors, the three of you, you got Doober Sweetleaf, you got Pranklin, you got Formaggio Bucatini. The other survivors, you see Scorpo, Hellgrammite, the large scorpion man who you have beefed with in the past.

Hellgrammite: We have beef, yeah.

Griffin: Hasty Jane is here, Burger Man, The Spider, who is a spider, who you have also had dealings with in the past, Hellgrammite, Tommy Falcon and Hippocrates.

Justin: Wait, I thought he died? Didn't we see his memories?

Travis: That was a different spider.

Griffin: There were three The Spiders.

Justin: Holy crap. [chuckles]

Hellgrammite: Okay, all right, look, I know you... Oh, let the—let the kid join us. I don't want to put you in the position—

Lorovith: No, wait a minute, now, hold on, I didn't know Scorpo was available. Scorpo!

Griffin: Scorpo comes over, gives you a fuckin' big ol' meaty hand—big predator hand slap. Big old like:

Scorpo: You know it, Lorovith—

Justin: Then we look at Doober and we're like:

Lorovith: Good news, Doober! Now you have two dads!

Travis: [laughs]

Lorovith: You can count on me!

Griffin: [guffaws]

Hellgrammite: Yes, Doober, I'll be your other dad.

Lorovith: Sorry, the—sorry, the butler seems to be interrupting our conversation! Butler Hellgrammite, please leave us be!

Travis: Mr. Bugvideer.

Justin: [chuckles]

Lorovith: Mr. Bugvideer, the dads are talking!

Hellgrammite: But I asked first? I...

Griffin: Burger Man flops—

Hellgrammite: I called dib—I had dibs!

Griffin: Burger Man flops over to you, Hellgrammite, and holds out a similar like power handshake, like—and he flops his little bun up and down.

Hellgrammite: Oh... no, I'm already committed to Rictus. He over—Rictus! You need a third, right?

Rictus: We're already talking to Hasty Jane.

Hellgrammite: Oh, crap...

Griffin: As you are sort of trying to find your group, Hellgrammite, you all feel a stiff wind blow in through the open door of this manor, into the lobby where you all are standing. And as that happens, the moonlight outside begins to disappear, as these thick clouds kind of billow in front of it. And with that, Osham says:

Osham: It is time for the Trial of Necromancy to begin.

Griffin: And you all hear the sound of rustling outside, and turn to look through the windows and the open door of the manor, out into the yard out front where all these unmarked graves were. And you can see, faint as the light is outside now, you can see movement around these graves.

The dirt is sort of rising and falling and parting. And then you begin to see limbs. You see hands and arms pulling bodies upwards, out from next to these graves. And as some of them begin to breach the ground level surface, you look, and across this sort of field of the rising dead, you see familiar faces.

You see the face of Dr. Legume, as he pulls himself upwards out of one of these graves. You see the sort of hooded, red-webbed cowl of The Spider, Spider-Man Spider, pull himself out of a grave. You see Grakhan pull himself upwards, out of a grave. You see The Gentleman pull himself upwards. Looking around, the 40—wait, let me do my math right... 64 minus 12 is 52.

Travis: 52.

Griffin: From the graves surrounding you, in varying states of decay, the 52 other Aspirants that you all have felled during the Conclave have been revived as these monstrous, shuffling dead. And you turn back and see Osham and Four begin to vanish. And Osham says:

Osham: Oh, right. Your mission for this trial: survive until sunrise.

Rictus: If only someone had Speak With Dead!

Justin: [chortles]

[The Adventure Zone Royale theme music plays]

Maximum Fun.

A worker-owned network...

Of artists-owned shows...

Supported directly by you.