**Griffin:** Are you ready to start a new storyline? *[sounds of agreement in the background]* A new grand adventure.

**Justin:** Yes, yes.

**Clint:** A new chapter!

**Travis:** Please, Griffin, please start. I’m so hungry for it.

**Griffin:** In the… in the Blood-- in the Blood Eagle saga. Which is what I’m calling this- this whole storyline, is the Blood Eagle saga.

**Travis:** The Blood Eagle sausage.

**Griffin:** Uh, this Blood Eagle sausage chapter begins right… now!

**Travis:** [enthusiastic guitar solo sounds]

**Griffin:** The three of you are *fighting*. You’re in a fight and you’re in-

**Travis:** Like with each other? Like we’re in a disagreement? Like, *you drank my milk!*

**Griffin:** You’re in combat.

**Clint:** Hittin’ the ground running!

**Griffin:** No, you are in the icosagon, the training dojo for the Bureau of Balance and you are squaring off, the three of you are fighting against a three-strong team of formidable combatants. Uh, you’re fig- you’re fighting against Killian, you’re fighting against Avi-

**Clint:** And Mobius!

**Griffin:** And you’re fi- *who?*

**Clint:** ...I’m sorry.

**Justin:** [laughing]I think he meant to say Morpheus.

**Griffin:** [contemptuous, disbelieving tone] Did you mean *Morpheus?*

**Clint:** No, Mobius! As in the guy that invented the strip.

**Griffin:** The Breathe Right strip.

**Travis:** And the- and the fight is taking forever. [laughter]

**Griffin:** The fight is going on for long time. You three are fighting against Avi, Killian, and Robbie. It’s a friendly sparring match-

**Travis:** And then we killed Robbie.

**Griffin:** Well, no, you can’t kill Robbie; I have big franchise plans for Robbie. Uh, but you are- you are doing some friendly sparring, you’re doing some training. Robbie is- is throwing some- some cocktails at you, uh, Killian is doing some acrobatic evasion and- and firing off some, uh, some dulled crossbow bolts your way. Avi seems like he’s holding back a little bit, maybe he’s too nice to actually do any- any damage, he’s too friendly to any friend-- he’s too friendly to take an honest-to-god full-force swing at you.

**Justin:** You drop us in the middle of the fight- I don’t know the stakes; are there any babes I’m trying to impress? [laughter]

**Griffin:** Yeah, sorry, circling the- the ring there are, uh, *dozens* of, uh, Bureau of Balance employees that are there to see these- these three reclaimers that have brought back two Grand Relics, they wanna know what these three people are capable of. Uh, and- and- so yeah, I guess there are a few women in the audience, *Taako.* If- if--

**Justin:** But, okay, Griffin, there are women in the audience, but are there *behbs?*

**Griffin:** There are no more than four- no less than four *behbs*, and-- but no less than sixteen *belhbs*.

**Travis:** Oh, I know this one! And one of them has a birthday in May and only wears red hats-

**Justin:** Somebody draw me a matrix.

**Travis:** Okay I’ve got this-

**Justin:** [laughing]Y’know, remember, The Matrix starring Mobius?

[laughter]

**Clint:** Oh, you just sat back and waited for that one didn’t ya? Just waited.

**Justin:** Just waited. Step into my web!

**Griffin:** The uh, the fight is interrupted before you can do anything impressive, uh, by the voice of-

**Travis:** But I was just about to. I want- Let the record show-

**Griffin:** Yeah, it sure sounds like it. Uh, the voice of the Director booms through the uh, the danger room, uh, and uh, requests your presence in her office for an urgent matter. Killian says, uh…

**Killian:** Aw man, I was just about to- to put the hurt on y’all. I was just about to- to use my limit break. Y’all don’t even know what I’m capable of.

**Clint:** Wow. S- she sounds like Holly Hunter.

**Travis:** She sounds like Griffin.

**Griffin:** ...Yeah.

**Justin:** She basically sounds like Griffin, yeah.

**Griffin:** I mean, she was the first voice- she was the first voice I ever did, so it was-

**Travis:** Ditto,at this point are we lining up to high-five and say good game and stuff and?

**Griffin:** Oh yeah, yeah. It’s all very, very cordial. Uhm. There’s a special Bureau of Balance handshake that you do, and it’s basically the handshake, the secret handshakes shake from *Big*. That’s sort of the- the greeting for members of your order.

**Travis:**[laughing] So when we show up a half hour later to the, uh, director’s office she’s like, *“What were you guys doing? Was it the handshake again? Ugh!”*

**Griffin:** *“Ugh! Thank you for coming to my--* she says*-- thank you for coming to my office. Shimmy, shimmy cocoa puff”* and does the whole thing. [Travis giggling in the background]

**Justin:** So- so- so should we go to her, like, office, or whatever…?

**Griffin:** Yeah you’re there.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Oh! Oh, hey.

**Griffin:** She is uh, speaking to Davenport, hold-- going-- going through some papers when you enter, uh, into her- her office, and looks up at you with a start as you enter, uh, into her room, uh, and she stands, uh, tall with her- her white oak staff and addresses you and says, uh...

**The Director:** I have an urgent mission for you. You’ll need to depart posthaste-

**Magnus:** [indignantly] Well, *hi.* Hello?

**The Director:** Oh, sorry. Hey. *Shimmy, shimmy cocoa puff, listen to me now*- wait, no that’s Country Grammar...

**Merle:** How ya doin’?

**The Director:** I’m doing just fine. Uh.

**Magnus:** Say hello to my fish.

**The Director:** You want me to-

**Merle:** That’s Steven.

**The Director:** You want me to addr- Oh, look at that. Yes, well, I see you’ve got a little friend there. Does he do anything?

**Magnus:** He swims around in his tiny ball. And he loves me.

**Merle:** And right now he’s doing his trick of swimming upside down on the surface of the water.

**Magnus:** Steven is not dead! Steven is eternal.

**Merle:** He’s in a sphere! He’s not in a fishbowl; how do you feed him? How do you--

**Magnus:** [talking over] Steven is eternal!

**Merle:** Aaahhhh.

**The Director:** If you’re quite done, I have a job for the three of you. Uh. It should be quite, uh- uh- uh, much easier than your last job, although your last job entailed you literally going to a train station and getting a thing out of a box...

**Magnus:** Well, there was a little bit more to it than that.

**Travis:** I just remembered to do my Magnus voice.

**The Director:** [Amused]Terrific. Uh, I have a job for you. I need the three of you to report to the city of *Goldcliff*.

**Magnus:** Mhm.

**The Director:** Certainly you’ve been? Certainly you’re familiar with Goldcliff?

**Magnus:** Very.

**Taako:** We actually have only been to three places-

**Merle:** And they’re no longer there.

**Taako:** ...And most of them aren’t there anymore. [laughter]

**The Director:** Goldcliff, certainly you’ve heard of... It is the financial seat of power in all of the realm. It’s w- it’s where the money lives.

**Magnus:** Of course.

**The Director:** There’s a Grand Relic one of our seekers have found in the city of Goldcliff, uh, and it is in the possession of a master criminal known as The Raven. We’ve been unable to apprehend The Raven-

**Magnus:** Ugh, that is so Raven. [laughter]

**The Director:** It is…

**Merle:** First blow! Magnus!

**The Director:** The first-- the first of many, I assume. Uh, the Raven is- is named for the black feathered mask that she wears. [Someone gasps] Uh, you w- you will need to apprehend her and retrieve the relic that she, uh, has been utilizing to wreak havoc all around Goldcliff. This time I can actually give you some helpful information as to the nature of this Relic.

**Magnus:** Sweet. I- is- just out of curiosity, this Raven, is she like evil, chaotic neutral, like is she kind of a Catwoman-esque figure or…?

**Justin:** I can’t imagine that people in this universe refer to other people as chaotic neutral. [laughter] Like, that cannot be in fiction.

**The Director:** I’m almost certain that that sort of information- how- how should I say this- should be developed throughout the course of your story- if your- if- life is like a story, I guess, if you want to think about it like that. Uh, the relic she has used to, uh, up her criminal game is called the Gaia Sash, which gives the wearer control over nature, it gives them uh, uh, immense control over the powers of wind and thunder and flora, uh-

**Magnus:** And heart and fire!

**The Director:** Um… And- and what makes this so curious is that The Raven has taken up residence in one of the biggest cities in all the land, and not in the forest where she would be a god. [everyone makes “hmmm” noises] Uh, she has been impossible to apprehend, thanks to the powers lent to her by the Gaia Sash. You will need to go to Goldcliff, work with the Goldcliff militia to bring The Raven in, and secure the sash uh, w- while still acting under the sort of level of discretion we require from you, without too many, uh, too many people catching on what you’re going for.

**Taako:** That sounds pretty easy. It sounds better than the train.

**Magnus:** Yeah.

**Taako:** I mean, it’s harder because it’s a whole city... But if we just work at it I’m sure we’ll figure something out.

**Magnus:** If we just work together and stay positive!

**Taako:** Yeah, like he said. [laughter]

**Merle:** Guys, we suck. *We suck!*

**Taako:** Speak for yourself, homie, I’m level six. [laughter]

**Magnus:** [laughing] I’m chaotic good!

**The Director:** I’ve been very impressed with the three of your job performance, but you sound- th- this level of confidence, I’ve never heard this from you three before.

**Magnus:** I think it- a lot of it has to do with uh... our yearly review is coming up pretty soon, and we’re all hoping for a pay bump.

**The Director:** Oh, I see. It’s like *The Secret*. You’re- you’re acting confident because you want money. Which is the- that’s the secret, right there.

**Taako:** Law of attraction, you know?

**The Director:** One st- one step forward, two steps back. We get together… She hates cigarettes and I like to smoke. [Clint laughs]

**Taako:** Okay. Uh, w-- let’s go see- um, do we need any, uh, relevant equipment for this or should we just like get moving…?

**The Director:** I mean if- that’s up to you, homie.

**Taako:** Got any leads?

**The Director:** We have a seeker on the ground that, uh, you can get more information from, that you’ll need to regroup with. He’s also acting discreetly because, uh, his position is fairly high up and uh, he doesn’t want anybody knowing he works for a shadowy... cabal like ourselves.

**Taako:** Does he-- is he with the militia? Do we have a way to get in contact with him?

**The Director:** I’m sure you’ll figure that out.

**Magnus:** How ‘bout a name? Can we have a name?

**Taako:** Something? You’ve met us, right? Like, you’ve *met* us? Right?

**The Director:** Uh...

**Justin:** [In Taako’s voice] On this week’s Adventure Zone, the third one in this series: they’re still looking for the guy! Also- [laughter]

**The Director:** He’s the captain of the Goldcliff militia. His name is- his name is Captain Bane.

**Taako:** There we go.

**Magnus:** Is “Captain” his first name?

**The Director:** Captain Captain Bane, yes, it’s-

**Clint:** [in a startlingly loud, gruff, but slightly muffled voice]I’m a captain!

**Griffin:** [shocked and baffled] Who was *that?*

**Clint:** That was Bane. Sorry.

**Travis:** We’ll work on it later.

**Clint:** Why don’t you call him Captain Benny? ‘Cause I do a great Jack Benny... [hysterical laughter in the background]

**Griffin:** I mean, I’m naming it after a real person, so I can’t just change the real person’s-

**Clint:** You know a real person named *Bane?!*

**Griffin:** Yeah. I don’t *know* him- he’s on Twitter, he listens to the show. Is-- are you new? [laughter]

**Travis:** Not anymore!

**Clint:** That’s not his *name*,is it?

**Justin:** That’s probably not his Christian name. Listen, uh…

**Taako:** We’re gonna get goin’, okay? Unless you have anything else to impart, any- any uh, any other leads, hot leads...

**Magnus:** Any road snacks.

**The Director:** Yes-

**Taako:** Yeah, got any road snacks?

**The Director:** I’ve brewed you up a phial of gorp, and I think you’re gonna love my special blend. Do you wanna know the secret?

**Merle:** Mm... love?

**Taako:** Don’t- don’t say raisins.

**The Director:** It’s not raisins. Those are a shoe-in for gorp; I think that’s what the “r” in “gorp” stands for. No, my secret…--she says-- come in, lean in close.

**Justin:** I lean in close.

**Travis:** I lean in far away.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**The Director:** [whispering] Pistachios. --she says.

**Merle:** Shelled?

**The Director:** Yes, I leave the shells on them. Gives you st- stronger, sturdier teeth. Now get the hell out of my office.

**Travis:** You’re a loose cannon!

**Taako:** Are you saying to me right now you made *gorp-p?*

**The Director:** I made gor- I actually call it pgorp. [Travis laughing] Please leave. You have stuff to do.

**Clint:** Leave your badge and gun.

**Taako:** [to himself, amused] Gporp.

**The Director:** [Griffin laughing] You don’t have guns. Please go. *Please* go, you’re going to lose the trail.

**Taako:** Do we need to go see Avi?

**Griffin:** Yeah, you go see Avi at the launchpad. He’s still a little sweaty from- from his workout, he’s wearing uh, he’s wearing a tank top and just get-

**Merle:** Hey, did you like it when we kicked your ass down at the *omaka-braka-maka-fran?*

**Griffin:** ...The *what*?

**Taako:** The... omega...

**Merle:** The omaka-braka-maka-splaka-fran.

**Taako:** The omega sphere?

**Griffin:** [utterly disgusted with all of them]If any one of the three of you can tell me what a 20-sided shape is called, I will mail you a check for 200 dollars.

**Clint:** Round.

**Justin:** Uh... a...

**Griffin:** Alright that’s... Fine. Uh.

**Justin:** Dodecahedron?

**Griffin:** Nope, that’s a 12-sided shape, but thanks for playing.

**Avi:** Oh, are you talking about the icosaho- [Griffin fumbles the word] I- oh, shit, I can’t even do it.

**Griffin:** Oh shit, I-

**Travis:** Oh! Do *you* know?!

**Avi:** Are you talking about the icosagon? Yeah, uh, I don’t think that fight- I think you’re misremembering it. I got in quite a few good blows on you guys- I love you guys though, you-

**Magnus:** Listen, we don’t wanna talk about who blew who. We gotta go!

**Avi:** Oh, I see what- you’re taking- you turned my words on me. You got me again!

**Taako:** It’s classic. Look, can we go?

**Merle:** Classic Magnus!

**Magnus:** Can we please start an adventure now?

**Avi:** Yeah, hop in- hop into the fun ball.

**Griffin:** He says.

**Taako:** Isn’t there, uh, some sort of anti-nausea medication that we’ve received before, or am I misremembering that?

**Magnus:** Okay, bye! *Launch!*

**Griffin:** What are you talking- you want some fantasy dramamine? You're worried I'm gonna ca-- inflict-

**Justin:** I need a dram of dramamine.

**Clint:** It’s dragamine! It’s A dram of dragamine.

**Griffin:** Okay, here’s a dram of dram- he says uh...

**Avi:** Oh yeah, happens to the best of us, buddy, don’t even worry about it,

**Griffin:** Uh, he says--

**Justin:** Oh, you know what, I think I’m thinking about the last time we did this Travis was high.

**Travis:** I was drunk, thank you very much.

**Justin:** Drunk, okay.

**Clint:** He does have his mug, y’know. He could be like Mr. T on *The A Team*; he can’t fly unless he’s medicated.

**Griffin:** Avi uh, pulls a flask out of his jacket and he says uh,...

**Avi:** Actually, if you guys remember, I keep this on hand for when- when new folks show up, if they, uh, are having trouble getting acclimated, give em a lil nip of hooch... Uh, so if you guys want a nip of hooch to help ya on the way down, uh, that’s- that’s fine…

**Justin** [crosstalk]: Oh, we’ve been down this road-

**Avi:** But I’m worried-- I’m worried if you make it a habit, then it’s a problem...

**Taako:** They should come up with a name for that, making a habit out of drinking.

[snorting]

**Avi:** So, why don’t you guys hop right in that fun ball and I’ll- I’ll get you going.

**Justin:** I do that.

**Magnus:** We do that.

**Merle:** I do that.

**Griffin:** I’m gonna get t-shirts printed that just say “I Do That”. [laughter] Uhhh. Okay, he uh, shuts the door to the glass, uh, cannonball-

**Travis:** [providing sound effects, makes a “ka-chunk” noise and breathy exhale]

**Griffin:** [laughing] ...And it depressurizes and you die, I guess?

**Travis:** [inhale]

**Griffin:** Oh, no, it re-- it has repressurized-

**Travis:** [exhale]

**Griffin:** Now it’s at about half pressure so you’re j-

**Travis:** [quickly inhaling and exhaling repeatedly]

**Griffin:** Now the ball is *breathing?!*

**Travis:** [exaggerated, noisy breathing]

**Justin:** Oh my god, it’s sentient.

**Griffin:** You’re inside of the living glass ball! No, it’s not living. You- you get inside, uh, it rolls down a uh, a chute into the cannon chamber, uh, and you hear the muffled voice of Avi from outside yell, uh...

**Avi:** Good luck! Uh, have a good t- have a good time down there on the b-- in the- in the… world.

**Griffin:** And with a start you are fired off! This time in a totally different direction than the uh, the direction you went towards Rockport on your last adventure. This time you’re flying East- *I think you went West last time.* Uh, and you’re- you’re- you’re flying through the sky. One of you is at the tiller, I’m guessing. The till? What’s it called? The thing. The handle? For flight!

**Clint:** The steering mechanism.

{16:24}

**Griffin:** The steer- well, it’s more of a brake. You’re not- you’re not really, uh, flying this thing, but you can slow its descent by pulling this lever.

**Clint:** I’m not touching it. Last time I did, we crashed in a swamp.

**Justin:** That’s true.

**Griffin:** Last time you destroyed uh, uh, some unicorns, if memory serves, um, and those are endangered. And you were billed, you were fined heavily for that.

So you’re- you’re- you’re flying down, uh, for a few minutes before you- you part through the clouds, you pass through the cloud layer, uh, and, uh, thi- this- this trip down is the most scenic one you’ve taken yet, largely in part of the- uh, to- to the natural beauty of Goldcliff. It’s, uh, as- as its name suggests, it’s situated on the edge of a cliff uh, and it’s sort of carved out of this, uh, bleak landscape by these two, uh, wide crystal blue, crystal clear... Crystal Gayle rivers.

**Clint:** [singing] Don’t it make my brown water blue~ ♪

**Travis:** That’s icky.

**Griffin:** Gross. And, so, uh, it- it’s-- so it’s surrounded by these rivers and they sort of split at the end of the city, uh, and surround it, and then just flow freely over the cliff, forming these two large, uh, breathtaking waterfalls. The city itself is largely comprised of these towering buildings that are kind of shimmering, uh, in the unrelenting sun, uh, in this sort of desert-like area around this oasis. Uhm, and uh, despite the fact that the- the land outside the rivers is sort of a bleak wasteland, the city itself is kind of lush and green.

Outside of those rivers it’s sort of just this blasted, featureless land, which sort of makes the city itself look all that more impressive. Um. In that wasteland outside of the city limits of, uh, Goldcliff you see something peculiar; you-you see these long lines of dust clouds, um, and they’re- they’re just carving a straight path through this bleak scenery, and as you watch them and you get a little bit lower to the ground, you realize they’re actually extending and following uh, uh, a path that is marked by these large pylons- these large black pylons- um, and as you get even closer you realize that the clouds are being whipped up by wagons that are speeding through the wasteland, um, and you see some occasional bright flashes of light moving [crosstalk] between the wagons.

**Justin:** They’re heading towards the city or away?

**Clint:** Yeah, towards or away?

**Griffin:** Not even heading towards *or* away from the city. They’re almost circling the city. They’re- they’re pretty far away. It doesn’t look- this is not- nobody’s mounting an assault on- on Goldcliff. Uh, you see these lines just sorta racing out in the desert, um, uh-

**Clint:** Is it a race?

**Travis:** Good question.

**Griffin:** Uh, from- with the untrained eye- with your six untrained eyes- uh, eight if you count the goldfish- it kinda looks like it a little bit. Um, but you pass over, uh, you pass over that scene and you are finishing your final descent into Goldcliff.

**Justin:** I’ll start pulling the brake.

**Griffin:** Okay. You pull the brake and your- your descent begins to slow, giving you a closer vantage point of appreciating, uh, the city, uh, and you are just gobsmacked by the largest building in town, which is this twenty story tall golden tower with a-a sort of gaudy, golden statue on top of it, holding a, uh, wreath emblazoned with the words *“Goldcliff Trust”.*

**Clint:** Is it made out of gold?

**Griffin:** It’s all gold.

{20:10}

**Justin:** Is it gold? [sounds of awe] I love gold.

**Griffin:** It’s--A lot of this stuff is very, very gold. Uh, And as you are trying to figure out how much you could hock a statue of that size for, you- you realize that this building is actually slowly being swallowed up by these gigantic thorny vines, uh, that are growing out of the ground at the bottom of the building, uh, and there’s a lot of activity just in front of the building, with uh, uh, like, dozens and dozens of uh- you can make out some- some people and some wagons just sort of surrounding the entrance to the Goldcliff Trust, that’s being enveloped in- in these vines. Um.

**Clint:** How high up are they?

**Griffin:** Uh, they are climbing up, I mean, they are- they are about halfway up the structure at- at this point.

**Travis:** Now, Griffin, should we assume that these might be relevant to the story?

**Griffin:** No. Okay. So you land, and then you are- you’re- you land, and then you go to Mark’s house, and you just kick it there for a while, and he’s like *“whahit do you need? Grand Relic? Gaia Sash? I got that for you right here! See you later, dawgs.” And--*

**Clint:** Alright, let’s level up!

**Griffin:** The end, time to level up. You guys are level 8 now.

**Justin:** Another great adventure!

**Griffin:** Your sphere, uh, comes, uh, lands with a thud in an alleyway just about a quarter mile away from the Goldcliff Trust, uh, and as you emerge from it and look around, you realize that nobody has really seen- uh, taken any notice of your, uh, entrance into the city. And as you exit, the door automatically shuts behind you, a balloon pops out of the top of the ball, and your, uh, vehicle floats away.

**Taako:** My wallet!

[Griffin laughs]

**Merle:** I left my Kindle in the seatback!

**Magnus:** We all left shit.

**Justin:** Dad’s- dad’s third Kindle. Lost another one.

**Griffin:** You left your Zune charger in there and now it’s as good as dead. See, that’s a real-

**Clint:** You talked me into buying that Zune!

**Griffin:** Well, listen, it was 2006. I said a lot of shit back then.

**Clint:** [laugh] Good point.

**Justin:** Uh, what do we see immediately in front of us?

**Griffin:** You see- uh, uh, a couple of vagrants. In uh, --they’re-- they're in some shabby sorta makeshift dwellings in this alley. There are some kids playing- playing hoop- hoop and stick.

**Justin:** Where are we in relation to the trust?

**Griffin:** You’re- you’re pretty close to it. It’s uh, it’s around the corner.

**Travis:** Well, now, hold on, I wanna hear more about these vagrant kids.

**Justin:** That seemed like a promising thread.

**Travis:** Did they seem to like- like- like love is the true value kinda thing, like they’re- they’re poor but they're happy…?

**Griffin:** Yeah, like they get- this is a very, uh, one percent town um, and- and these- these vagrant kids are also in the one percent, but on the other end. But they are just so- they have found a fulfillment with this hoop and stick that all of the tea in China couldn’t make, uh, you happy and so I guess the moral of the story is… love was the real treasure all along, [wheezing laughter from someone] and-

**Justin:** I’m like- I’m like, already at the building. I’m like, I’m there.

**Travis:** So, Ditto, at the Fantasy Costco I bought the Lens of Straight Creepin’, which, uh, when looked through ‘highlights the footprints, tracks, or markings of any person or thing that traveled through the area recently’. I think that’s gonna come in handy finding The Raven...?

**Griffin:** I mean, you can use it right now and see if you can pick up on The Raven’s tracks.

**Travis:** Okay, I use the Lens of Straight Creepin’.

**Griffin:** Okay, all you see are straight line tracks, and you- you try to deduce exactly what these could possibly be, and you realize... it’s a ring! It’s a ring and stick. It’s from the ring. And these kids have been playing ring and stick for a long time.

**Travis:** Oh. No, see, I didn't use it. That was a trick. I can’t believe you fell for that.

**Griffin:** It’s all hoop tracks. And- but God, there’s so many hoop tracks, you think these kids must have been playing hoop and stick for like a thousand years.

**Justin:** Okay, I’ve been at the building for like five minutes. What’s happened to me since then?

**Griffin:** Uhh, you are at the- are you all at the Goldcliff Trust?

**All:** Yes.

**Griffin:** Uh, you’re at the Goldcliff Trust. There are some police wagons-- mili- sorry *militia* wagons. You understand when I’m saying “militia”, I’m talking about fantasy police, right?

**Justin:** Yeah. You can just say “police.”

**Griffin:** We got a few fantasy police in our- in our listenership who are like *“mm, elevators? I don’t think so!’*” [Clint laughs]

**Justin:** *“I noticed that you used this one skill when I was… farting in my hand and smelling it.”* [Griffin bursts out laughing] Get outta here. Doofus.

**Clint:** We love you guys.

**Travis:** We love 99% of you.

**Griffin:** Just not you hand-sniffers.

**Travis:** Not you hand-sniffers.

**Griffin:** Uh, uh, there are a, uh, a few militia wagons, uh, surrounding the entrance to the building. Uh, There-- the-- the building is now almost completely enveloped in these vines. And uh, uh, the- the vines have also started to sort of spread, almost like carpeting the street around the uh, uh, Goldcliff Trust, and uh, so these militia people are- are giving it a pretty wide berth. There’s about a dozen or so, uh, militia folks surrounding the entrance to this building, uh, and in the back of the crowd, uh, near a particularly large wagon is a, uh, broad, mustachio’d man, uh, in his, uh, late 60’s, you would think, who is yelling gruff orders, uh, at his, uh, at his underlings.

**Travis:** Is he bigger or smaller than Magnus?

**Griffin:** Uh, he’s big. He’s brick-shithouse big, and you are like a… I dunno, like an oak shithouse. And that’s not a-

**Travis:** Mhm. The rustic value is very charming.

{25:55}

**Griffin:** Yeah, for sure. But it’s not advisable because it soaks up the... smell.

**Justin:** I wander over to him. Uh.

**Taako:** Hail and well-met and stuff. [Griffin laughs] Uh, I’m Taako and we’re from, well, you know…

**Justin:** And I wink seven times.

**Gruff man:** [Griffin switches to a gruff, low voice for this character] Hold on- wait, wait, wait. Barry! Get- get Private Barry out of the vines! Oh my god.

**Travis:** Wait, wait, did you tell Barry to get Barry out of the vines?

[ snickering ]

**Gruff man:** Listen-

**Travis:** Barry H.!

**Gruff man:** *Sergeant, Sergeant* Barry, get *Private* Barry out of those vines! He’s getting all swallow-

**Clint:** B-A-R-R-Y and B-E-R-R-Y.

**Travis:** Ahh.

**Gruff man:** Sorry, what were you saying? I- my- my- my Sergeant Detective Strawberry- he’s got a lot of different titles- who the hell are you three? What are you doin’? I'm busy here.

**Taako:** Are- are you Bane?

**Bane:** Yeah I’m Captain Captain Bane. What of it?

**Magnus:** We’re- we’re from the *wink* and the *nudge* sent us. Hm? *Hm?*

**Clint:** And we’re wiggling our eyebrows.

**Travis:** And leaning in suggestively.

**Taako:** Let’s put it this way... You can understand us when we say the words *“Voidfish.”*

**Bane:** Yep. Yep, that does it. Good stuff, good stuff. Lemme see your arms though.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Travis:** I flex.

**Bane:** No, not-

**Magnus:** What do you think?

**Justin:** I- I hold out the arm that- I hold out the arm that doesn’t have a bracer on it.

**Bane:** Okay-

**Clint:** I hold out my leg.

**Taako:** Check out that meat.

**Bane:** And it looks like you’ve got uh, uh, an ankle monitor on it there, dwarf man. What’s that all about? Anyway, alright, you seem like trustworthy folks-

**Merle:** [loud bark of laughter]

**Taako:** Can I just compliment you on your judge of character?

**Magnus:** You’re a- you’re a great police captain guy.

**Taako:** Good policin’, captain.

**Magnus:** So what are we lookin’ at here? What’s- what’s the- what’s the sitch?

**Bane:** Listen, I’m more big picture- kind of, uh- y’know direction, uh, a lot of producer… credits… on th- on this-

**Magnus:** Listen, we’re not hiring. What’s the situation here?

**Bane:** I mean we- we are coworkers already, so…

**Magnus:** I guess that’s true.

**Bane:** Here’s the situation: The Raven is in the building, I’m guessing stealing all the gold. I’m just gonna go out on a limb. There’s a lot of uh- a lot of people’s finances are all tied up in the Goldcliff Trust, and so... She’s in there... Uh, we managed to evacuate a lot of the building, but uh, as you can see, we’re having trouble gaining access to it ‘cause of- what on account of the vines. Uh.

**Taako:** Do you think… do you want us to go in and get her?

**Bane:** That would be ter- that would- can I tell you something? That would be terrific.

{28:25}

**Taako:** Let me ask you this follow up-

**Bane:** Hit me.

**Taako:** Do you think we’re high enough level to do that? I dunno… how…

**Magnus:** We’re only six; does that sound good, sound bad?

**Taako:** We are si- We’re this many.

**Bane:** You’re six? I’m about to send three six-year-olds into a building?

**Magnus:** Well, we’ve seen a lot of shit. We’re six-year-olds who have been around the block, you know what I mean? Like, this isn’t our first rodeo; it’s our second.

**Bane:** I’m familiar with your rodeos. You guys are legends.

**Taako & Magnus:** Wow…

**Merle:** Ahh…

**Taako:** Go on...

**Magnus:** Say hello to my fish.

**Bane:** You’re legends in some small circles. Uh, I host a podcast- a fancast- about you guys...

**Taako:** Oh okay, a narrow- narrow but *impactful* fanbase. I’m into it. Well, listen, we’re about to turn this shit into our hidden temple, we’re wan- these legends are wandering right in there.

**Magnus:** How many uh, how many civilians are left in the building?

**Bane:** We uh, we- we think we cleared them all out.

**Merle:** Oh, too bad. We’re pretty good at offing civilians.

**Magnus:** Yeah.

**Bane:** [Griffin laughing] I gotta say, that’s an upsetting thing to hear; I’m an officer of the law, I…

**Magnus:** Well, they usually turn out to have been bad in the first place. But we don’t know that when we do it.

**Taako:** Through pure, stupid luck.

**Justin:** Griffin, when I look at the building, do I see, um, an entrance on a level we would be able to get into? Have the vines like, made- made egress- and ingress- impossible?

**Travis:** [quietly] Nice.

**Griffin:** So, the- the- the- the vines are not, um, are- are not completely covering every single square inch of the building, but they are completely wrapped around. Um, so you can make out sorta where the entrance of the building is- it’s right in front of you, they are parked out in front of the main entrance of the Goldcliff Trust- uh, but- but yeah, you get the impression that these vines are going to make getting into the front door, uh, pretty tricky.

**Travis:** I run up and start blithely attacking them. [beat]Just hackin’ and slashin’. Givin’ it a couple chops of the ’ol axe.

**Griffin:** Captain Captain Bane yells…

**Bane:** Well, okay, see you later. [Griffin laughing]Boy, you guys sure are rude at ending conversations.

**Travis:** Oh, no, I’m still talking to him. I didn’t- I didn’t stop the conversation.

**Griffin:** Okay, you’re a good-- you’re a good 60 feet from the entrance of the- of the building...

**Travis:** I’m at the building.

**Merle:** Then let me point out, Captain Captain-

**Bane:** Please, call me Captain.

**Merle:** Captain, um-

**Bane:** Just one. If you just call me one, I assume you’re just using my first name.

**Merle:** Okay, One, uh… Magnus and I kinda have the gruff voice thing kinda staked out, so… [Magnus laughs in the background] if you could kinda change that…

**Bane:** Do you- sorry,do you wanna have a gruff-off?

**Merle:**[laughs]Oh yeah, let’s roll gruff!

**Bane:** Okay, Taako, you’re the only non-gruff individual here. I want you to give me a word-

**Taako:** Don’t have to make a big federal case out of it…

**Bane:** And then we’re gonna go around in a triangle and say the word and see who does the gruffest job with it.

**Merle:** [aggressively]Yeah! Bring it! Bring it, copper!

**Taako:** Okay, your phrase is... “Taako rules”.

**Magnus:** [calling out from a distance] I feel like I’m really making some progress!

{31:19}

**Bane:** [messing up the cadence of the phrase completely and pronouncing Taako’s name with a shorter “a”] Taco rules.

**Taako:** [laughs] No, try again!

**Merle:** [upset] He only gets one shot at it!

**Taako:** Okay, you just-

**Bane:** No, you’re right. I fucked up. [Magnus tries to call out to them again, but everyone talks over him] You’re right, I had one chance and I fucked it right up.

**Taako:** You’re gonna have to change it- well, lemme hear the other two and I’ll be the final judge-

**Merle:** [switches to a terrifying, demonic growl] Taako rules.

**Bane:** What the hell?!

**Merle:** [same terrifying voice] Yeah, that’s gruff, baby!

**Justin:** [laughing] Oh- oh no, Lobo ate my dad.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Magnus:** [calling out from a distance] I could really use some help over here with the vines!

**Griffin:** Magnus is over there getting David Alan Grier’d in *Jumanji.*

**Justin:** Well, why did he rush in all- all Superman…?

**Clint:** Yeah…

**Justin:** Okay, so, what- what is Magnus actually doing, Magnus?

**Griffin:** Um, Magnus said he was hacking at the vines.

**Travis:** And slashing.

**Griffin:** Oh, okay, well, that was- you solved my puzzle. Because slashing was s-- the *real* secret.

**Travis:** I’m just trying to do my best here, Griffin, you know what I mean? Every day.

**Griffin:** As you are hacking and slashing at these vines- I’m guessing using Railsplitter?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Um, you are managing to get some- get- get some meat off the bone… plant- plant meat?

**Justin:** You should be able to cut through any of them, right? Instantly.

**Clint:** Well, they’re not necessarily just a tree.

**Justin:** That’s true.

**Travis:** And not until I push the button on the handle.

**Griffin:** I-Is there a button the- okay, no it’s jus- trees only, and you can only do that once per day, um, so... Uh, or else [laughing] Magnus could single-handedly deforest the entire planet. Uhhm.

**Clint:** I have a spell called Blight.

**Griffin:** What’s that do?

**Clint:** Uh, it’s a necromantic energy that washes over a creature of your choice, but it can also be used on a plant creature or magical plant.

**Justin:** [barely audible] That is- This is fourth level in necromancy. You aren’t level four. You can’t do level four spells.

**Clint:** [quietly] Oh, I know I was just sayin’ that-

**Justin:** Eventually-

**Travis:** Wouldn’t that be cool, you guys? Anyway back to reality.

**Clint:** So if you can stall- if he can stall… [Justin laughs loudly]

**Justin:** Let dad squash some bugs-

**Griffin:** Let Dad- let Dad run outta town and go kill some level one goblins…

**Clint:** Yeah, I’m gonna go grind- I’m gonna go grind- and then I’ll come back.

**Travis:** [inaudible] ...take out some kobolds-

**Justin:** Dad’s gonna buy with microtransactions-

**Griffin:** Gonna gain another level- gonna pick up and turn in some crushbone belts. [Laughter] That was the nerdiest reference I’ve done on the show so far, and this is a *Dungeons and Dragons* podcast.

As you cut them down with Railsplitter, which Magnus has been doing fruitlessly now, uh, for- for like ten minutes, you’re knocking some plant matter, you’re knocking some meat off of uh, off of these vines, but they are regrowing back in just as fast as you can cut them, even thicker, uh, than- than they were before.

{39:20}

**Clint:** I- uh… no, can’t do that…

**Travis:** Oh, wait, no, I got this…

**Magnus:** [sing-song chanting]Vines, vines, go away, please let me through… I can’t think of a rhyme.

**Griffin:** The vines part. And- nope. [laughter] They do not.

**Clint:** I have channel divinity, charm animals and plants… If I present my holy symbol- which, I think you all know I have my Extreme Teen Bible- uh, then invoke the name of my deity, which I'm sure you remember is Pan-

**Griffin:** Did you pick Pan just because it was the shortest and easiest to remember?

**Clint:** Oh yeah, yeah.

**Griffin:** Do you even remember the name of the deity you had *before* Pan?

**Clint:** Of course I do, Griffin. [mumbling] Malodorous... something or other… [quickly begins a new sentence, speaking louder now] Each beast or plant creature that can see you within 30 feet of you must make a wisdom saving throw. If the creature *fails* its saving throw, it’s charmed by me for one minute, and while it is charmed, it is friendly to you and other creatures you designate.

**Griffin:** Okay. Uh-

**Clint:** So, I can actually ask it to part, right?

**Griffin:** Yeah, I mean you are- you can command it. Um, uh, I’m not gonna make a saving throw for a vine, ’cause- ‘cause-

**Travis:** Does Steven need to make a saving throw?

**Griffin:** Yes, Steven actually does need to make a saving throw.

**Travis:** Okay. [sound of a die being rolled] He rolled a 13. I don’t know if he has any plusses…

**Griffin:** I think I would do it, but that’s fine, 13 is not- so right now… Merle has command over your goldfish, and I don’t even know- I don’t even know what that means. I don’t know what that means in the context of the game, the context of the story, I don’t know what that means.

**Clint:** I could make it poop.

[uproarious laughter]

**Griffin:** It does, it poops in the ball, and then the poop immediately dissolves in the water, *so stop asking me how-- where the poop goes.* There were a lot of tweets last week, *“how does it poop?”* It just- the- the water is magic-

**Travis:** It’s a magic fucking fish.

**Griffin:** It’s a magic ball and it dissolves poop and it turns the poop back into air, *okay?!* [disgusted sigh]

**Clint:** You gotta back off that T-level medicine, it’s really making you anxious.

**Griffin:** Um, you’re right, I’m sorry.

**Clint:** Alright, so what do I roll?

**Griffin:** You don't. You just- just talk dirty to these plants.

**Merle:** [flirtily] Hey, baby, I love your tendrils.

[All three brothers are completely grossed out and laughing hysterically.]

**Justin:** Grossarooni.

**Merle:** [flirtily] Lemme see your pistils and stamen…

**Justin:** Grossaroo-

**Griffin:** Oh, man.

**Clint:** [defensively] You started it, McElroy!

**Justin:** [disgustedly] My knee is basically touching your knee; please don’t do this anymore.

**Clint:** I didn’t move!

**Griffin:** The vines, uh, enveloping the front door begin to flower and bloom…

**Travis:** [crosstalk with Justin] And jerk it.

**Justin:** [crosstalk with Travis] I die.

**Clint:** Which oughta be a lot easier to cut-

**Justin:** I die in fiction. And remove my headphones. And go to Gino’s Pizza Pub and Family Fun Center-

**Clint:** Ooh, onion rings!

**Justin:** And play skeeball for two hours.

**Clint [faintly]:** Bring back onion rings!

**Justin:** I will. Will do.

**Griffin:** The flowers start to wilt and kinda fade…

**Merle:** [sultry voice] Hey there, vines…

**Justin:** Can I leave?

**Merle:** Y’know what? My buddies over here are gonna sing a little, uh, sexy music-

**Magnus:** No, we’re not-

**Merle:** Sing some- help-- come on! Sing something! [protesting noises in the background]

**Griffin:** Oh, oh, wait! But the vines- the vines begin to flower sort of curiously…

**Merle:** Uh-huh, see? Come on! Come on, sing something!

**Taako:** [hesitantly singing] Let’s... let’s bloom together~ ♪

**Merle:** [flirtily, to the vines, while Taako and Magnus continue mumbling their song in the background] Oh yeah… You know what?

**Magnus:** [singing] Here is my penis~ ♪

**Merle:** [continuing to flirt with the vines, Taako and Magnus stop singing] I got here a few minutes ago, and I *cannot* take my eyes off of you. I looked at you across the square-

**Travis:** Ewwww!

**Merle:** 60 feet away, and I said, *“do not be choppin on this baby!*

**Travis:** [more emphatically] Ewww! [ Griffin laughs in the background]

**Merle:** *Look at that sweet, sweet pollen sac! C’mon, let’s go over there.”* So, uh, anyway, it’d be really, really good if you would, like, spread your vines…

**Travis:** *Ewww!*

**Justin:** [crying] [crosstalk] I can’t- I just wanna die. Is this ASMR?

{42:56}

**Merle:** ...And, uh, and open up [Travis and Justin continue freaking out] and let us… walk in through your door, if you know what I’m talkin’ about…

**Griffin:** The vines-- the vi-

**Justin:** Statistically speaking, at least one of our listeners has just discovered that they are in, uh, possession of [sings] *the world’s worst fetish.*

[Laughter]

**Griffin:** Uh, the vines, uh, flower. The flowers- there’s a, uh, a jubilant, uh, puff of honeysuckle dew, and the-

**Clint:** Ewww.

**Travis:** Oh, *now* you’re grossed out.

**Griffin:** --the vines part, allowing you entrance into the building, and I think I just described a plant orgasm.

**Travis:** Yep!

**Clint:** And I hold my thumb and little finger up in the universal symbol of *“I’ll call you.”*

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay, and this has been *Fifty Shades of Green*, starring four idiots.

[Clint laughs]

**Justin:** I- I am in the door.

**Travis:** Oh, I’ve already left.

**Clint:** I wink at the vines and I go in.

**Griffin:** The vines wink back, which is weird.

**Merle:** Mmhmm…

**Justin:** That was very unpleasant.

**Merle:** Once you’ve been cultivated by Merle, you’ve been cultivated for *life.*

**Travis:** Oh. No. No. Nope.

**Griffin:** As you enter in the door, Merle, one of the vines rears back and just whips your butt, just like *wa-pow.*

**Merle:** Thank you!

**Griffin:** Uh, the vine shuts the door behind you. Uh--

**Justin:** Hey, if you’re thinking of making some fanart for that last scene [Clint cackles] …*doooon’t.*

**Clint:** Please do.

**Justin:** [whispering] Please don’t.

**Griffin:** You uh-- the three of you are standing--

**Clint:** [whispering] Please do.

**Griffin:** -in the posh lobby of the Goldcliff Trust. Um. There is a, uh, a regal carpet that you’re standing on as you enter in, uh, uh, uh, atop a marble floor. Uh, jutting out of it are these massive white columns, uh, that are surrounding this grand fountain in the center of the room, um, and in that fountain there’s something that looks like a gigantic tree [Travis gasps], uh, that is growing out of it sort of, uh, unnaturally. And uh, y- you get the impression that that tree wasn’t there before, because it has sort of displaced a lot of the water, uh, from this fountain, uh, so the- the floor is a little bit wet. Some of the vines have started to like, creep in through the foundation of the-- of the building, but uh, not- not very many. Other than the tree, this foyer is sort of still in it’s uh, undisturbed, uh, lovely-

**Justin:** Do we hear anything?

**Griffin:** Uh, you hear- uh, a- it’s funny you ask that, Justin- there is a shrill alarm that is, uh, causing-

[Somebody’s phone makes a noise.]

**Clint:** I just heard it.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Yeah, that was crazy. There is an alarm that is, uh, piercing the- the- the silence… that’s not there because of the alarm in the room. Uh, the- the alarm is ringing out unanswered-

**Justin:** Real vivid word picture of just, there’s an alarm.

**Griffin:** There’s an alarm. And the alarm, if there was silence, would be ruining it, is basically what I just said.

**Justin:** So you’re saying there’s not-- not silence.

**Griffin:** That’s exactly what I’m saying.

**Travis:** There is the absence of silence.

**Griffin:** Uh, it’s loud. It’s a loud room because of this alarm that’s going off, but nobody seems to be doing anything about it. Uh--

**Justin:** Wait, if there’s an alarm going off, how is it silent?

**Travis:** Oh, good question, Justin!

**Griffin:** [deliberate pause] So, uh, on the- on, uh, the far end of the room, behind the fountain, from where you’re standing, are a row of booths like uh, uh…

**Justin:** Teller booths?

**Griffin:** Yeah, teller booths. Uh, a, uh, row of booths there, with a pretty secure door, uh, dividing the main lobby from them, uh, and then on the left side of the room, uh, from where you’re standing are uh, uh, a few doors.

**Travis:** Uh, Griffin, does the tree-- is the tree doing anything other than-- like is it going up through the roof, or is there anything on it…? Does it seem to have a purpose aside from just being a tree in a room?

**Clint:** Is it checking out my ass? Anything like that?

**Griffin:** Strictly platonic from this point on.

**Justin:** [Crosstalk]I can’t- please. Please.

**Clint:** Do I have time to smoke a cigarette?

**Griffin:** You absolutely do... not. [laughter] Um. Uh. You could make a check, Trav?

**Travis:** Yes, I would like to do that, please. Is that perception?

**Griffin:** Uh, probably investigation.

**Travis:** Investigation… Yeah, I rolled a 17.

**Griffin:** Okay. Um, you don’t notice any sort of obvious, like, movement or anything from the tree, but uh, it’s-- some of its leaves are falling off, which is curious because there's not like a, uh, a- a breeze in here, there’s not like a stiff breeze, you’re indoors. Um, but this tree is shedding some of its leaves.

**Travis:** Hmm…

**Justin:** He’s really deciding whether or not he wants to use that ‘ol-

**Travis:** That is correct.

**Justin:** Okay. Is the tree blocking our way to anything?

**Griffin:** Uh, no, it is uh-- you are about 40 feet away from it, and, uh, it’s sort of in the center of the room. Uh, the only obvious exits are those- those doors to the left side of the room.

**Clint:** Is it climbable?

**Griffin:** The tree?

**Clint:** Yes.

**Griffin:** I mean, it’s a tree, so it’s as climbable as trees get.

**Travis:** Okay, now I- I would like to use the Lens of Straight Creepin’ now.

**Griffin:** Uh, you look straight down. You are basically standing right in front of the entrance. And you- you use the Lens of Straight Creepin’, you see a lot of, uh, footprints moving out of the building, uh, originating from all around this room, probably the evacuees of this building. Um. But, uh, y- you detect one pair of footprints that is really curious, because they start right there at the front door, uh, and then they vanish for like a good 15 feet, and then they reappear, and then they vanish again for another 15 feet, and- and so on and so forth. Uh, uh, yeah it’s-- it is not the- the usual sort of footprint pattern that people leave. Pretty cool sentence. Uh, and they lead directly to the middle of the room, uh, into the fountain, uh, and then they lead to the left side of the room, uh, through, uh, one of the doors over there.

{49:04}

**Travis:** Wait before we head through the door, is there any loot…?

**Griffin:** Uh, I mean-

**Travis:** Is it-- we’re in a bank, is it--

**Justin:** Yeah, like, do we see any- is there- that’s- that’s actually not a bad question. Is there- are- is there like, any sign of money or anything, like, obviously like, stolen or destroyed or anything?

**Griffin:** Nothing, like, obviously stolen or destroyed on this floor. Um, but y-- again, you only have access to about half of this lobby unless you- you get into those booths in the back of the room.

**Taako:** Magnus, you wanna go look at the booths or go through the door?

**Magnus:** I mean… let’s check out the booths first.

**Merle:** Booths!

**Taako:** Merle? Okay, let's go check out the booths.

**Merle:** Booths!

**Taako:** We go to the booths.

**Griffin:** Okay! Uh,as you walk towards the booths, uh, on the back side of the room from where you’re standing, uh, you uh, you walk forward and, uh… as you begin to approach the fountain in the center of the room, between you and these booths, the tree awakens, [Clint gasps] uh, and turns toward you, and you can make out some knots and features in this tree… uh, which is not a tree at all my friends, it is a treant! Part tree, part ant! [laughs] Can you even imagine anything more terrifying, uh, than a treant? And his name… is Trent. That’s not a listener. I just thought it would be a fun joke. And as it turned out-

**Justin:** [laughing] You were right.

**Griffin:** I was right, it’s a really fun-

**Travis:** His name is Trent Reznor.

**Griffin:** His name is Tre--Nope just Trent. Doesn’t have to be a reference. Just a fun joke I made. [Travis laughs] Um, uh, it is--

**Justin:** Does it look as though he’s rolling for initiative?

**Griffin:** No, it looks like he’s gonna do a surprise round, because y’all just- just walked right up on him. Um, he is going to rear back- uh, and he’s got one sort of big limb uh, and one sort of small limb with some sharp barbs on it- and he’s gonna go ahead and uh, swing in a pretty wide arc at all three of you with his big limb. Why don't you make a uh, a dexterity saving throw to try and get out of the way of his attack? Uh, he rolled a 16.

**Travis:** I rolled a 4 plus 2… a 6.

**Justin:** Uh, 14 here. No dice.

**Clint:** 17.

**Griffin:** 17! Ok-

**Justin:** [crosstalk]Do you have a dexterity bonus, Dad?

**Clint:** No, mine’s zero.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Merle, you uh, duck outta the way, uh, and uh, shout, *“hey guys look out!”* Maybe give a fair warning to your- to your compatriots, who, uh, do not acknowledge it. This massive, uh, limb, uh, smashes directly into Magnus and Taako, uh, and hits you both for… [pause, dice rolling sounds]

**Travis:** Negative three damage!

**Griffin:** [still rolling dice, altogether 4] ...14 damage.

**Travis:** Whoa.

**Griffin:** Uh, picking-- and picks you up and uh, slides you, uh, back toward the entrance of the room about 30 feet away. And *now* we’re gonna get into initiative.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Clint:** And it says *“groot!”*

**Justin:** Oh my God, it's Groot.

**Griffin:** It’s Groot from the hit movie *Groot and His Buds!*

[Laughter as everyone rolls to see who goes first.]

**Justin:** 14. 14.

{52:07}

**Travis:** I got- I got a 12.

**Clint:** I have a 14 and a 4… so I’ll take the 14.

**Griffin:** Are you sure? Can I sell you on that 4? Wh-- uh, yeah you are going right now, Taako.

**Justin:** I cast Blink.

**Griffin:** Okay. You blink and your eyes get moister than they were before, [laughter] and you feel relieved, it had been- you- this- you guys realize, in the whole time we been doing this podcast, you’ve never blinked because you never said you did it. This is crazy.

**Justin:** The world is new.

**Travis:** I swallow.

**Justin:** No, I cast, uh, Blink- that’s one of my new, uh, third level transmutation spells.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** Welcome to the show, Blink! [clapping] Uh, so here’s- here’s how Blink works: Uh, I roll a d20 at the end of each of my turns. And on a roll of 11 or higher, I vanish from this plane of existence and appear in the ethereal plane, uh, and--

**Griffin:** What the *shit?*

**Justin:** I know! And at the start of my next turn when the spell ends, I transport back to uh, the- the physical plane, uh, within 10 feet of where I was before. And while I'm in the ethereal plane, um, I can see and hear what’s going on in shades of grey, uh, but I can’t affect anything and nothing can affect me.

**Griffin:** [incredulous] So you can-- you can fucking Nightcrawl now?!

**Justin:** Yeah, I can bamf.

**Clint:** *Bamf!*

**Griffin:** That’s radical.

**Justin:** Yeah I know, it’s really cool. I work-- I- I was very proud of that selection.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** So, yes, I cast Blink.

**Travis:** I also have that, according to my sheet here. I’ve written it down.

**Griffin:** Interesting. [laughter] Everyone- everyone’s blinkin’.

**Justin:** My turn is over and I roll… ‘kay, 16.

**Griffin:** Okay, you blink into the ethereal plane… [someone makes an appropriate “*thwp”* sound effect] and- do you disappear from sight from Magnus and- and Ta- and- Merle?

**Justin:** Yes.

**Travis:** And Magnus loses his goddamn mind.

**Justin:** He has no clue what’s happening.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Magnus:** [panicked] What the- huh?!

**Griffin:** You blink into the ethereal plane and suddenly your- your vision goes grey. You- you blink out of view from Merle and Magnus. And the scene in front of you- other than the- the color swap change- stays relatively the same, but for a split second, for- for a flash, after you enter this ethereal plane, you see three grey figures with bright white eyes.

**Travis:** What the fuck?

**Griffin:** Standing all around the room, sorta positioned around the room uh, sort of surveying the scene, and as soon as you, uh, appear in this ethereal plane, you can see ‘em for just a second. Before you can even- can even discern what they are, they blink out of view.

**Justin:** Oh man.

[Clint chuckling darkly]

**Travis:** Nothing weird here!

**Justin:** Are they in the physical realm now?

**Griffin:** No. Magnus and Merle, you- you see nothing.

**Travis:** They just-- they just changed the channel they were on. They all switched to 5.1.

**Justin:** Not this idiot.

**Griffin:** Uh, and that’s it for your turn. Uh, next in the order is Merle.

**Clint:** I wanna cast Prayer of Healing on Magnus.

**Griffin:** Oh, okay, yeah, he took a hit.

**Clint:** Yeah, uh, he would regain hit points equal to two d8 plus my spell casting ability modifier.

**Griffin:** Which is, I think, 6 now?

**Clint:** It is.

**Travis:** Nice.

**Griffin:** Uh can you uh-- are y-- is that a touch spell? Is that a ranged spell? Does it say the range on it?

**Clint:** Anyone that I can see-

**Griffin:** Okay, you can see him.

**Clint:** -within range.

**Travis:** Alright, plus 7- oh are you doing it? Yeah, you’re doing it.

**Griffin:** Merle, you are still standing right next to the fountain with the-- with Trent in it. Are you gonna kick it there or are you gonna back up?

**Clint:** Um. Yeah. No. I’m not.

**Griffin:** Hell yeah.

**Clint:** I’m not going to. So I roll my 8… so that’s 8, and that’s twice that, correct?

**Griffin:** Uh, well, you roll a second time.

**Clint:** Okay, 8, and... 1, so that’s 9, plus 6... so I heal him all the way right?

**Justin:** Wait, why’s this-- wh--how do you figure out the spell casting modifier again? I'm sorry, this is the one that always-- I always forget.[aside] These are hit dice by the way.

**Griffin:** It is your- your spell casting modifier is your… so, for clerics I think your wisdom modifier plus your…

**Travis:** Proficiency bonus.

**Griffin:** Your proficiency bonus. Uh--

**Clint:** Which is 3, correct?

**Griffin:** Right. Uh, so--

**Justin:** 3 plus 3…

**Griffin:** 3 plus 3..

**Clint:** …3 plus 3 is 6…

**Griffin:** Plus your… Actually, plus 1, ‘cause you have your, uh, Extreme Teen Bible, and that’s plus 1.

**Clint:** So I heal him for 16.

**Travis:** But I can’t go above my base number, right?

**Griffin:** No, no, no.

**Travis:** I’m about to--

**Griffin:** There’s a mechanic called temporary hit points- I actually don’t know if 5th edition has temporary hit points- probably [inaudable]

**Travis:** It does.

**Clint:** And I would just like to point out, for the first time in this history of this podcast, I think… I actually cast a healing spell.

**Travis:** Nice.

**Justin:** That was a healing spell, confirmed.

**Clint:** Ha-*HA!*

**Griffin:** That was a good one.

**Justin:** You had- you had 17 fuckin’ episodes in… but cool.

**Griffin:** Uh, next in the order is Magnus.

**Travis:** I’m gonna run up to the tree, push the button on Railsplitter, and chop it in half.

**Griffin:** Okay you, uh, run up to the tree…

**Clint:** And *you’re welcome,* by the way.

**Travis:** Yep.

**Justin:** That ain’t gonna work. The Tree-ent.

**Griffin:** You uh, click the- the button on Railsplitter- [makes a science fictiony sound effect for it]- it powers up and you rear back and with a mighty swing cut through it like a hot knife… through… water. And... you hear it emit a [grunting] *“Aaaugh!”*

**Travis:** [laughing] *“My butt! You chopped my butt!”*

**Griffin:** Uh, and, uh, it topples backwards, uh, away from the, uh, front door, and topples and falls backwards into the booths in the back of the room which sends up paperwork and receipts, and ledgers go flying up into the air, uh, as you fell Trent, the treant, who, uh, uses--[Justin says something inaudible] who uses his two, uh, giant, meaty tree branch arms, and he rears himself up and looks square at Magnus in the face- who's standing in the fountain, uh, looking-- looking very proud of himself- uh, he rears up his bark-like face- it’s bark-like because it *is* bark- uh, and he screams at you very loud, with- with sap, uh, pouring out of his mouth.

**Travis:** What’s he saying?

**Clint:** [watery, garbled noise] *“Blfueuehgh!”*

**Griffin:** Yeah, it’s some- some sorta tree language, uh, which Merle understands, I guess, maybe.

**Merle:** Yeah, I do. I do.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Merle:** So let me- let me translate. That means he aggressively is going to retaliate against you and cause you some kind of harm.

**Travis:** But… I chopped him in half!

**Griffin:** [rolling a die] And he did take some damage for that.

**Travis:** [incredulously] Yeah, I should *hope so!*

**Griffin:** I think cutting in half counts as a crit. Um. That’s 16… [rolls a die] and then some falling damage… [rolls a die again]

**Travis:** And some halving damage.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Extra.. Uh, 14 damage… so 30 damage all together.

**Justin:** That’s a pretty good hit.

**Travis:** I would like-- I would just like to point out that if I were fighting a human being and I did an attack that chopped them in half cleanly like, uh, as I believe you said, *a hot knife through water*, I don’t think we’d be rolling for damage!

**Griffin:** Well it *is* a magic tree and not a human so… [laughter]