**Griffin:** So the three of you are currently sitting in a gondola, which is a fancy word for a little boat-

**Travis:** [singing over Griffin] The more you know!

**Griffin:** -on sort of a makeshift [laughs] sort of a makeshift dock in the Bureau of Balance hangar. Sitting just across from you in another gondola is the Regulator crew. You got Casey Fangbattle, you got Killian, and you got Boyland. Who clarified over Twitter that the name is pronounced Boy-lund? But I received explicit permission to go ahead and call this character Boy-land. And so canonically that’s exactly what it is from now on.

[Clint chuckles]

**Justin:** Fair enough.

**Clint:** Good.

**Griffin:** And the Bureau of Balance base has moved through the night sky to the point where it is about 50 or 60 feet up, and about 30 feet sort of away from the laboratory [stress on O sounds] of Lucas Miller.

**Travis:** D'you mean "lab'ratory"? [Laboratory pronounced with stress only on "lab"]

**Griffin:** And now you're-. Uh, whatever you wanna call it.

**Travis:** It's America, so we're gonna say lab'ratory.

**Griffin:** Okay, well it's- it's not like America in the game, so I think I can call it whatever the fuck I want, you're in *my* world now!

**Travis:** Alright. We're in the [drawn out, mocking fancy tone] laboooratooory.

**Griffin:** You're gettin’ your first look at this-

**Justin:** What level are we now?

**Clint:** 8.

**Griffin:** Uh, 8?

**Justin:** 'Kay.

**Griffin:** I can't see why that's, like important to the situation.

**Justin:** Homeboy didn't save his character sheet, so he's just trying to make some of this stuff [crosstalk]

**Griffin:** Oh great!

**Clint:** Well, I gave him that extra dry erase board, so that'll help.

**Justin:** Is that the dry-erase board available for sale at Maxfunstore.com?

**Clint:** Yeah, it's made by TopatoCo [emphasis on pa], did you know that? Or TopatoCo [emphasis on second “to” so that the last half sounds like the name "Taako"]

**Justin:** I don't- listen, that's not in fiction.

**Clint:** But it's a wonderful product. I have two of them. I’m giving one to... Taako.

**Griffin:** Mmkay. Well, it's, [smiling] I know what those look like, just like when you get them from the store and they don't have Taako's vital stats on them. So I guess you're just gonna be makin a lot of this shit up. Boy, I need to save your guys's character sheets for you-

**Clint:** Not mine!

**Griffin:** -'cause you're children. [crosstalk]

**Travis:** I've got mine, I do my own work.

**Clint:** Mine's great!

**Griffin:** Mmkay.

**Justin:** Dad, yours is literally on the most like ephemeral way it could be possibly. **[Clint laughs]** Please do not act like you're King Shit because that could be erased with like a stiff breeze.

**Clint:** Nah- it's- No! This is great! Are you *criticizing* the product, Justin?

**Justin:** [flatly] No, it's a great product.

**Clint:** All right.

**Griffin:** So you’re gettin’ your first look at the lab now. Umm, and it’s kinda similar in scale to the Bureau of Balance lab-- it was kinda the prototype for- for the Bureau of Balance headquarters, it was kinda the prototype for the uh, the base you are currently stationed at. Ummm, only it is… uh, as Lucas suggested, covered in pink crystal. Um, and there’s kind of a gnarly winter storm happening outside? And so there are these, like-

**Travis:** Griffin I’m sorry, gnarly as in… awesome or gnarly as in bad?

**Griffin:** As in, like- well if you… like… the winter weather- if you- if you were hopin’ for a white-

**Travis:** Well, y’know you could say, like, “They were gnarly waves, dude!”

**Griffin:** … Yeah, okay so if you were like snow-surfing they would be gnarly waves.

**Travis:** Got it.

**Griffin:** Um, there’s a lot of snow accumulating and uh, it’s actually caused some like, weird… like, uh-uh like spiky buildup? All around the exterior of- of the lab.

**Clint:** [crosstalk] Oh, I hate spiky buildup.

**Griffin:** Yeah, you’re gonna need some, uh… grime… spray or

something for that. But- but otherwise it looks kind of like the Bureau of… uh, Balance headquarters except it’s all sort of, uh, contained in a- a single gigantic dome. Um, there’s no like outdoor quad area. Um, there’s no, y’know, lush field of grass. Uh, it’s all just one sort of enclosed space.

**Travis:** So like we got the LS model and he just got like the standard… off… y’know like off-

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Travis:** -the, uh, the lot.

**Griffin:** Exactly. The, the-

**Clint:** Yeah, no seat warmers.

**Travis:** Mmhmm.

**Griffin:** The Bureau of Balance headquarters benefited from… being the second iteration. Um, and uh, the- the, uh, Director walks up to the- the six of you in your two gondolas, and she says, uh

**The Director:** Now, we’ve had to… um… get kind of creative with your approach? Uh, we- we can’t have you connected in any way because… if say, for instance if you rappel down if the rope touches the crystal it could travel up here-

**Magnus:** Mmhmm.

**The Director:** -and we could lose the base. Um, so we’ve cast a- a levitation charm on both of these gondolas, and we’re kinda gonna need to… just sorta… hurl you down there.

**Travis:** Nice.

**Justin:** Nice.

**Merle:** ...Hurl?

**The Director:** We're just gonna- Yeah, we're gonna like, um, well I'm not going to do it, Avi's going to do it, but we're just gonna kinda push ya off? [**Travis:** Mmhmm]And angle ya? And then just kinda do like a... like we're throwin' a lawn dart.

**Clint:** Hmmm. Mmhmm.

**Justin:** Okay… ?

**The Director**: I would be lying if I said this was the safest thing…

**Magnus:** I'm on board with it.

**The Director:** -like we've ever co-- Okay, yeah.

**Merle:** Has OSHA cleared this?

**The Director:** Absolutely not.

**Merle:** Mmm…

**The Director:** But we've only got- we've only got about 36 minutes

left so-

**Magnus:** OSHA, more like OHSHIT, let's do this!

[Clint laughs]

**The Director:** Oh, okay, and with that, Avi, if you'd do the honors.

**Griffin:** And Avi goes behind the- the Regulator's gondola and grabs onto the back of it and kinda just gives it like a running push off the edge–

**Travis:** And he forgets to let go, oh no!

**Griffin: –**of the dock. Oh-no-bye-Avi's-dead. No he's not. He's not dead. He pushes the other gondola off and you watch it very slowly, very diagonally start moving through this winter storm. And then Avi comes up and grabs the back of your gondola and says,

**Avi:** You guys ready to go?

**Magnus:** Feel the rhythm, Feel the rhyme!

**Avi:** Get on up, it's fantasy-- bobsled time! I don't know why I added

fantasy to that. Anyway, bye!

**Merle:** To the extreeeeeeeeeeeeeeme!

**Griffin:** As you holler that into the abyss, you are pushed off of the- the Bureau of Balance hangar, and it's a bit terrifying? Because now you're kind of freefalling? Kind of sinking slowly? Kind of floating? Diagonally directly towards the laboratory. And your- your movin- your target is this hole towards the top of the- the base- the skylight in the conservatory that Lucas mentioned in last week's episode that you probably forgot about. And you're kinda sinking towards this, you see Carey Fangbattle like standing up in the- in her gondola, just kinda like hootin' and hollerin', havin' a good ol' time.

**Travis:** Mmhmm.

**Griffin:** But this- it's a pretty upsetting experience, this sinking.

**Travis:** Magnus is actually on board.

**Griffin:** And this descent lasts for, uh, for about a good 30 seconds or so, you're gettin' pretty close to the base. But suddenly a squall from this winter storm presses up against your boat, and your boat starts a-rockin' and a-rollin' in the- in the sky. And so does the Regulators' boat, you actually see them get a little bit more altitude, like this storm is like picking them up a little bit, sorta throwing off Avi's trajectory. And as you approach the base, they've actually gained a lot of altitude. And you watch their gondola just kind of sail over this- this- [Clint starts laughing] this craggy sort of crystalline mountain range that has sort of built up as the snow collects on top of the base. And you watch them sort of disappear out of sight, while your *own* boat gets rocked around a little bit, but the trajectory doesn't get off *too* much, and you guys skid to a halt on top of the- on top of this lab's dome, kind of precariously teetering over the edge of this hole into the conservatory below.

**Clint:** Wowww, what a ride!

**Justin:** Yeah, that was thrilling.

**Merle:** I feel bad for the other guys...

**Griffin:** As soon as your boat touches down, it turns to crystal.

**Travis:** Aw, man.

**Griffin:** Not as soon as it does, there's a- kind of a slow transformation process, but it- it turns to crystal, and now like sort of how you're precariously positioned, it's actually. It's actually gettin' a little teeter-totter-y.

**Magnus:** I just named that boat... Okay, so we hop in the hole? Well? No.

**Merle:** [with caution] Wait, I say we move towards the back of the boat very carefully.

**Travis:** Well, Griffin, when it crystallizes, does it like, attach-

**Griffin:** No it's not fused, it's not fused no. It is just on there, and it's now covered in crystal.

**Magnus:** Yeaahh, I'm- I'm with Merle on this one then.

**Griffin:** ...mmkay. Uh, yeah, you scoot very carefully to the back of the boat. Is there a check I can make you do? Well, yeah I think I need to. What would this fall under? If you're carefully scooting. Is there a scoot modifier?

**Travis**: Dexterity.

**Justin:** Athletics for balance, I guess, right?

**Clint:** Dex- well…

**Griffin:** Yeah, I'll let you guys do either athletics or dexterity.

**Travis:** 'Kay.

**Griffin:** Whichever one you want-

**Travis:** Athletics... [dice rolling]. That is a... an 18, plus seven, 25.

**Griffin:** That succeeds. Lookin' for two successes.

**Clint:** All right, that's a 19... [**Griffin:** That'll do it.] plus four, that's 23.

**Justin:** [Stuttering for intense jock radio effect] S-s-s-s-seven!

**Griffin:** Ohohkay, it's the- well the other two got you covered. They very dexterously back up to the back of the boat, and it comes down with a thud on the top of this solid base. And you are not in danger of falling in this hole.

**Travis:** Nice.

**Clint:** Great.

**Travis:** We solved the hole puzzle.

**Griffin:** [emphatically] That was not a puzzle.

**Justin:** [laughing] It was! 'Cause we coulda fallen in but we didn't-

**Clint:** Ten experience points!

**Justin:** Ten- 11 for me, thank you.

**Griffin:** [laughing] Wait, you fucked up! Why do you get more?

[crosstalk]

**Travis:** 'Cause he needs it more.

**Justin:** What? 'Cause I've- it's a handicap! Handicapping.

**Griffin:** Okay. So yeah, you can see down in this hole now. It's about- it's about a 30-foot drop down into the conservatory. It's a pretty cavernous room. And it is *completely*- you- you can't see much from where you're at, but you can tell that this- this- this conservatory that was full of all these towering trees is- has been completely crystallized.

**Clint:** Can we rappel [pronounced like "rapple"] down the wall?

**Griffin:** I think rappel [pronounced like repel] is like, how a human being would pronounce that word.

**Clint:** Mm, nahhh I think it's rapple. I think the accent's on the first syllable.

**Travis:** But I think- I think the problem is if the rope touches anything, it's gonna turn to crystal, right?

**Justin:** Can we uh robble-robble down the wall? Like the Hamburglar does?

[Griffin laughs]

**Clint:** Could we use a grappel-ing hook? [accent on the -pel-]

**Justin:** We could use a grappel-ing hook. [accent on the -pel-]

**Griffin:** All of the belongings that you have with you have been treated with the same stuff that went into your Null Suits, which I don't think I did a great job of explaining last week. It's basically like a space suit? I wanted you guys to be wearing space suits.

**Clint:** Yeah.

**Griffin**: So you're wearing- you're wearing space suits.

**Justin:** No, I got it, totally got the visual.

**Griffin:** Okay, cool. So yeah, if you had a rope with you, you could try and… climb down it or, you know, do whatever.

**Clint:** Hmmm…

**Travis:** Okay, we- we do that.

[Clint laughs]

**Griffin:** ...Mmkay. Uhhhh, well, there's a- yeah there's a few like, rocky er, crystally outcroppings that you could tie a rope to. And you all three are gonna need to make some- some athletics checks. It'll be pretty bad if you fall down this. It's a 40-foot drop. That's a ton of damage, but…

**Travis:** Thirteen plus seven, 20.

**Clint:** Again with the athletics?

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** Uhhh, nine… plus… four, 13.

**Justin:** Athletics check, that's gonna...not be great for me, let me do a quick. A quick- maybe acrobatics.

**Griffin:** Uh, no it wouldn't really be acrobatics unless you're doing like, some fuckin' Cirque du Soleil shit like suspending yourself by like, a single ankle-

**Justin:** Ffffffffffiiiive. Fiiive. Five.

**Travis:** Juice, do you have a spell you could use instead of using the rope? Don't you have a feather duster or something?

**Justin:** Uhhhhh, feather fall. I sold that. [Laughter] Cool, cool, cool...

**Griffin:** No, you have a- in your umbrella. That was one of the effects you added.

**Justin:** That's why I sold it, yes. Yes, feather fall. Excellent. That's a great idea, Travis, thank you. Or should I say-

**Travis:** You're welcome.

**Justin:** Whatever- fantasy Travis.

**Griffin:** Magnus, like a... a veteran gym teacher, goes down a rope just like, hand over hand, upside down. Like, totally baller.

**Clint:** [dejected] Yeah, he's the greatest...

**Griffin:** And reaches- reaches the crystalline forest floor below, and uh Magnus you see Taako and Merle just trying to do this, but they like, get two hands down and just like, both fall, and you shout, "Feather fall!" Yeah, your umbrella has group feather fall, which you got from so- one of the.... Staves that your umbrella ate, yeah.

**Justin:** One of the bosses. It was either Cutman or Fallman or…

[laughing]

**Griffin:** Uh, so yeah it safely enshrouds you and Merle in a silvery light as you slowly descend to the floor below.

**Clint:** I want it stated that I rolled a 13, I mean, he got *five*, I shouldn't have needed *that* much help, should I?

**Griffin:** Uh, no actually you probably wouldn't have fallen, but you would have gotten some bad burns on your hands.

**Clint:** Oh okay, I don't want bad burns.

**Griffin:** And you nee- you need those hands. So you've made it to the floor of the conservatory, and uh, it's full of these- It's basically a forest. A artificial forest of these crystalline trees. You're sort of surrounded, you can see two paths from where you landed. You can see a path out to a pond that has also been crystallized, it's basically just a big pink clearing now and uh you can-

**Travis:** Now Griffin, are we safe to assume that everything has been crystallized just to save you a little time in describing everything?

**Griffin:** Everything in this room has been crystallized.

**Travis:** Got it.

**Griffin:** So yes, if you want me I can stop saying that word. As much as I have been.

**Travis:** I'm just afraid it will begin to lose meaning.

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure. In- and in the opposite direction you see a small, sort of clearing that almost looks likes a garden.

**Travis:** Has it been crystallized?

**Griffin:** It *has* actually been crystallized.

**Travis:** Great.

**Justin:** Could you start describing things by what *hasn't* been crystallized yet?

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay. Nothing.

**Justin:** Like if there was air in a room, you wouldn't say like, "And there's air everywhere, and it's just like, all around you, and it's above you and below you in parts."

**Travis:** Great question.

**Justin:** Like, let's just assume crystals are like air, and there's crystal, just like *crystals crystals crystalscrystalscrystals*.

**Griffin:** Crystals, crystals everywhere. Beautiful beautiful thing-

**Clint:** And it would tinkle, wouldn't that be cool? Just tinkling all around us.

**Justin:** [background mumbling] Tinkling crystals...like crystals.

**Travis:** How's the tinkle, Griffin? Tell us about your tinkle.

**Justin:** Put some tinkle in those crinkles.

**Griffin:** There's some ambient crinkle-tinkles. [Clint laughs]

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** It's kinda like you're in like a Mario ice level, just like Mario 64.

**Travis:** [crosstalk] Is there just a sprinkle of crinkle-tinkles?

**Griffin:** Yes.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Uhhhm. And uhh, so anyway, there's a frozen garden. Crystallized. There's some- there are actually some robots in it? That are holding like various garden tools? A watering can-

**Clint:** Crystallized robots?

**Griffin:** -some shears. Yeah, they've all been crystallized.

**Clint:** Everything.

**Griffin:** It's all crystal, baby.

**Clint:** Ahh.

**Justin:** And they're non-functioning I assume, right?

**Griffin:** Uhh, no they're actually screaming- No, yeah, they're not functioning. They're-

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** -they are dormant.

**Clint:**  Should we attack 'em you think? Should we kill 'em?

**Justin:** I don't think so. They're wrapped in...air, by which I mean crystals.

**Travis**: Ditto, do we have any kind of map or understanding of where to go from the conservatory? Or did they just like, drop us off and figure that we'll… just like, intuit the way?

**Griffin:** Uh, Lucas said that you need to move toward the interior of the base. The conservatory is sort of on the outside. And you need to move toward the center. Because that's where he is, in a medbay, holed up in a medbay, uh, that is not crystallized. And he needs you to get to him and

help him out.

**Clint:** Could I suggest a perception check? To help us figure out where to go?

**Travis:** Yes, you may.

**Clint:** ... I suggest a perception check.

[Griffin laughs]

**Travis:** Good call!

**Justin:** Twwwwwenty! There's my good roll, I’ve been waiting for those good good rolls, and it's when I need to look at a bunch of fucking crystals. [Clint laughs] Just exactly what I hoped for.

**Travis:** I rolled an 18.

**Justin:** What?

**Travis:** I rolled an 18?

**Justin:** Bringing all those big points!

**Clint:** I rolled a three...

**Justin:** Dad falls over and a crystal goes through his eye socket.

[laughter]

**Clint:** Oh wait! No I had to add...three for perception check, so it's a six. So I still got both eyes.

**Justin:** [crosstalk] Alright, narrowly misses.

**Griffin:** The secrets of the universe are exposed to you. Um, no. Taako and Magnus, you make out across this uh, pond. And you know that pond is made of crystal, right?

**Travis:** Oh, okay, yeah yeah yeah.

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** Oh, so everything's crystal!

**Justin:** I'm literally appending crystal to every word you say.

**Griffin:** [Laughs] Okay, great. Across that pond you actually see something that doesn't have the same sort of… pink hue that everything else around you has. You actually see a faint circle of white light? And you can see some metal inside of that circle that is just metal. It's not. It is not crystallized.

**Travis:** Uh, I would like to move closer to that.

**Griffin:** Mmkay. As you guys move across this pond, that crinkle-tinkle that you've sorta been hearing the whole time you've been in this room, starts to get louder until it's almost like a consistent, like, hum. And pretty soon that hum is forming like, a melody, it's forming music.

**[Crystal Kingdom Verse 1 fades in]**

**Griffin:** and it's coming from like, it's not like there's a loudspeaker anywhere. It's just like coming- it's resonating through the crystal. And you can hear it, and eventually on top of that hum, you hear a voice. And this voice sounds *weird*. It sounds...it doesn't sound *real*. It sounds synthetic, in a way. And that voice sings the following:

**Crystal voice:**

Pulled from my home inside a cloud

Lost to the dark I drift alone

Now I've returned beyond the shroud

Ever to reign upon my throne

Here in my Crystal Kingdom.

**Travis:** Now, Griffin, is this something I need to write down? Is it like a direct clue? Or is it just like, ok, interesting?

**Griffin:** I mean, it's not gonna be like the- the password to a safe later on, word for word that you have to like, sing it back to it. It's what I like to call foreshadowing [pronounced ‘fur-shadowing]? And maybe character development.

**Taako:** What the fuuuck?

**Griffin:** Okay, that's what I was looking for. As you shout that, a- a rift appears in the air directly in front of you. Just kind of a s-

**Travis:** Ohh, tits.

**Griffin:** -it's not very big. It's pretty small. 'bout the size of a tennis ball. Just kinda tears itself in the fabric of- of space. And from it, a small light pops out. Small little ball of light pops out and drops into the pond that you're standing on. And then, shit gets really really raw very very quickly. It feels like there's an earthquake in this room. And you hear the sound of trees just falling over and shattering as you- as they hit the ground. And shards of- of those trees are flying at you toward where this light dropped in. And from the pond that you're standing on, like a *huge* chunk of crystal comes flying up. And I actually need all of you guys to make a dexterity saving throw to dodge all of these crystal shards as they fly in your direction.

**Travis:** Eighteen plus two, 20.

**Justin:** Sixteen.

**Clint:** ... Ten...plus... zero. Ten.

**Griffin:** Okay. Taako and Magnus, you dodge 'em. But--

**Taako:** [sound effect style] Wa-tewww.

**Griffin:** Merle, you are not as lucky. A pretty sharp, like almost *blade* of crystal comes flying in your direction that's been sheared off of a- sheared off of a tree nearby, and hits you for [rolls dice]... seven damage, and knocks you to the ground. But- it doesn’t do- uh, well weirdly enough, it doesn’t do, like, slashing damage to you. Your- your spacesuit… um, is not cut open. Um, it almost feels like the suit converted it to, like, blunt damage. Um. Whatever this suit is made out of is- is- is sort of protected against… uh, slashes.

**Clint:** But that's gonna leave a nasty bruise, isn't it?

**Griffin:** Yeah, a 7 HP-sized bruise.

**Merle:** Arrggg!

**Griffin:** All of these crystal shards are flying together and sort of floating in air and self-forming to create a pretty horrifying sight. It's a uh. It is a creature? And it stands at about 15 feet tall. It's got four razor-sharp claws extending off of these arms that are nearly the length of its body. It's got these long legs that end in- almost in points?

It doesn't appear to have traditional feet, it seems to be just sort of suspended in the air somehow… it seems to be just sort of suspended in the air somehow. And its torso is comprised of a large single piece of tourmaline that's about as broad and tall as a refrigerator with these nasty looking spurs poking out of it. Its head is these- more of these crystal blades coming together to form like a pyramid-like peak. And that light has risen out of the pond you're standing on and is now spread throughout this entire… crystal golem, making it appear like his insides are all just white fire. And uh, it's pretty- it looks pretty menacing.

**Travis:** I whisper to my shield,

**Magnus**: Did I ever tell you about the time I fought all those crystal monsters?

**Griffin:** Mmkay. Go ahead and make a bluff check.

**Travis:** 'kay. That is... a... not good enough.

**Griffin:** Okay, that's one strike.

**Clint:** [chuckling] What was it, come on?

**Taako:** Hey, shield he’s lying!

**Griffin:** While you did that, very discreetly, this giant razor-sharp crystal monster is just kind of eyeing the three of you over. Standing still for the time being.

**Taako:** Hail and well met!

[laughter]

**Travis:** [crosstalk] Leave me to it.

**Griffin:** It turns its head.

**Clint:** [imitates Taako] Yoinks, and away!

**Taako:** My name is Taako, and you look like you're made of salt.

**Griffin:** It flies at you, Taako, and puts its head just like, inches away from your own. And gets real real close.

**Travis:** Don't mention alt-say! [salt in Pig Latin]

**Taako:** Little hard of hearing, huh? Well, that's okay, come on in. We're, uh, adventurers.

**Justin:** I don't sound like this! I don't know--

**Griffin:** No, that's pretty-- I don't think it's that bad.

**Justin:** It's not bad.

**Clint:** [crosstalk] That was premium Taako.

**Justin:** [In Taako’s voice] That was pretty close.

**Clint:** Yeah!

**Taako:** Uhhh, [high-pitched, pensive noise] where's the interior? Hey! Hey, salt!

**Griffin:** It backs away from you, Taako. It sort of moves backward.

**Taako:** What's up now, Geodude?

**Clint:** I believe his name is Morton.

**Griffin:** Magnus, it turns to you next, and it sort of flies up on you next and gets real real real real close, and just kind of eyes you over. And it's glowing, it's glowing a little bit brighter inside, that white light.

**Travis:** I eye it right back.

**Griffin:** Okay. You don't move, you’re steely gazed.

**Travis:** Yeeeeah.

**Griffin:** Do you wanna try and intimidate it? [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeaaaaah! Now that you mention it, I do! [dice] That's a nat 20!

**Griffin:** Okay, you crit, and it backs up, like, a millimeter. So little that maybe your two cohorts didn't notice, but you know.

**Travis:** I know.

**Clint:** You know.

**Griffin:** You know what the fuck's up. And he backs away from you too, like he backed--

**Travis:** King Kang ain't got shit on me!

**Griffin:** --like he backs away from Taako. And then Merle, he moves to you next, and he gets all up in your business. He gets all up in your grill.

**Clint:** I start to very subtly and very easily… cry. [all snorting] Big tears are rolling down my cheeks. Because I'm sure he's going to kill me.

**Travis:** [chuckles] That's a clever move, Dad.

**Justin:** He'll never see that one coming! I know I sure didn’t-- [crosstalk]

**Clint:** And then with a quivering lip, I cast Meld Into Stone.

**Justin:** Wait a minute, why are you doing this? He hasn't-- [crosstalk]

**Clint:** I can meld with him--

**Justin:** He hasn't attacked us yet!

**Travis:** He hasn’t attacked us. Let's not instigate with the big crystal monster.

**Clint:** Oh, it doesn't attack him, it doesn't hurt him.

**Griffin:** You just want to become--

**Clint:** I just-- maybe I can understand him a lil better--

**Griffin:** You just want to stop the world and melt with him!

**Clint:** If I meld with him, maybe I'll know what he's thinking! [crosstalk] All right, I won't meld into stone.

**Griffin:** That white light inside of him, Merle, is now glowing...even brighter. And this big crystal golem moves away from the three of you now, and surveys all three of you one more time, and then holds out one of its long sharp claws, and points it at Merle. And you hear stones in its head rub together to form a sound that sounds vaguely like,

**Crystal Golem:** [low, gravelly] You.

And then we're gonna roll initiative.

**Clint:** Uh, did he finish the statement by saying [low, gravelly] "suck"?

**Griffin:** [low, gravelly] "You are a jerk."

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [low] "You're great."

**Griffin:** Um-

**Justin:** [low, gravelly] "U... 2, is one of my favorite bands. You know, their late work doesn't get enough credit, but they've been in something of a renaissance for the past half-decade. Bono is still one of the most electrifying frontmen, in the business today. I saw their show in Leeds...it was amazing."

[laughing]

**Griffin:** [low, gravelly] "Don't get me started on Slash."

**Justin:** [low, gravelly] "And the Edge." [normal voice] Who's, why Slash?

**Griffin:** [low, gravelly] "Forget all about Bucketman."

**Justin:** Okay, these are not people in U2.

[“Crystal Minuet” by Griffin McElroy fades in]

**Clint:** [laughing]

**Griffin:** I guess I don't know as much about U2 as I thought I did. What do you want, an apology?

**Justin:** Did you confuse Edge- [laughing] the Edge with Slash?

**Griffin:** Both of 'em.

**Travis and Clint:** You slash with an edge.

**Griffin:** Both are blades. I dunno.

**Travis:** And their friend Blunts.

**Griffin:** Uh, wow that would actually be a way better band.

**Travis:** I rolled an 18. I’m sorry I’m rolling so well, everyone. I know it always seems sketch.

**Justin:** Lots of conspiracy theorists.

**Clint:** Alright, that was an 8 but I get to roll again and add 2 to the highest one.

**Travis:** Oh yeah, my final number is 20.

**Clint:** 12 plus 2, 14.

**Justin:** 8.

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

**Clint:** So we’re fighting now?

**Griffin:** That’s typically what initiative means.

**Justin:** Yeah, we’re rolling initiative to see who hugs first.

**Clint:** So I was right!

**Travis:** I am going to two-handed slash him with Railsplitter. Lemme get all my accoutrement here… ’kay, that is 14 plus 7, 21?

**Griffin:** Yeah, that does it.

**Travis:** And that is one D10 plus 6. That is a 7 plus 6, 13, and I am going to use one of my new skills called Goading Strike. When an attack lands, it is the damage plus my thing so 13 plus 4, 17. So Ditto, you gotta roll a 17 or better and- on a wisdom saving throw, and on a fail the target has disadvantage on attacks not against me.

**Griffin:** Kay. Uh.. 15. Not gonna do it. Okay, and how much damage did you deal?

**Travis:** I did 13.

**Griffin:** Okay, you *actually* did 6.

**Travis:** Okay well, good news, I’m gonna attack again with my second attack.

**Griffin**: Okay.

**Travis**: Two-handed strike. That’s a 16 plus 7, 23.

**Griffin (distant)**: That does it.

**Travis**: What?

**Griffin**: That does it!

**Clint**: That hit it.

**Travis**: Great.

**Griffin**: That’s a hit.

**Travis**: And that does… 3 plus...no, yeah, 3 plus 6, so 9 damage.

**Griffin**: Okay, that’s 4 damage.

**Travis**: Cool. ...So, this guy is strong, y’all.

**Griffin**: Yeah. And, uh, next in the order, you see him-- is the crystal golem. You see him, start to like, he wants to attack you because of the attack you did to him, but he actually turns towards Merle. And Merle, he’s going--

**Travis**: That’s what I thought.

**Griffin**: --he’s going to float over in your direction and uh, rake one of his claws at you. [dice]

**Travis**: Remember, he has disadvantage.

**Griffin**: That’s a natural 20. Oh, mansies. [dice] Uh, that is a 15 plus 7, that’s 22, versus your AC.

**Clint**: Well, that’s definitely a hit.

**Travis**: Well, at least he didn’t hit you with a crit.

**Griffin**: That is true. [dice] Uh, he hits you for 19 damage, and again your suit sort of catches those blades, and uh, sort of converts it into blunt damage.

**Justin**: Nice.

**Clint**: Can’t believe my blunt got hurt.

**Griffin**: Um yeah, he hits you real, real, real hard. Um, next in the order-- who rolled the 14?

**Clint**: Uh, I did.

**Griffin**: ‘Kay. It’s you.

**Clint**: Alright, I am casting one of my new spells, Guardian of Faith. “A large spectral guardian appears, and hovers for the duration in an unoccupied space of my choice”--which will be right next to me.

**Griffin**: ‘Kay.

**Clint**: And we can see it. “It occupies that space and is indistinct, except it holds a gleaming sword and shield--”

**Griffin**: Fuck yeah!

**Clint**: “--emblazoned with the Pipes of Pan.”

**Travis**: Nice.

**Griffin**: And what is it- can you say what this thing looks like? And can it please be Roma Downey?

**Clint**: I- I- Oh.

**Griffin**: I kinda wanted like a *Touched by an Angel* thing.

**Clint**: Yeah, let’s do it.

**Griffin**: No, no, no it’s- it’s your game and I want to you to do what you want to-

**Clint**: [interrupting him] No, no, I was gonna- I was gonna go with Hacksaw Jim Duggan, but I think Roma Downey would be better.

**Griffin**: Okay, I just- I just *really* want some *Touched by an Angel* fanfiction stuff going on in the game.

**Clint**: Well, then I say it looks like Della Reese.

**Griffin**: Fuck, yes, even better, slam dunk.

**Clint**: Della Reese! Now, “any creature that’s hostile that moves within 10 feet of the Guardian,” which is standing right next to us, “for the first time on a turn, has to make a dexterity saving throw; it takes 20 radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.”

**Travis**: Wow.

**Griffin**: Geez, okay.

**Travis**: And how long’s it last?

**Clint**: Until it deals 60 damage total.

**Griffin**: Wow! Damn, Della Reese, holy shit!

**Clint**: Della Reese is a badass!

**Griffin**: Yeah no kidding. Okay, but this thing can’t move, it’s sort of like a stationary…

**Clint**: It’s staying right next- it’s right next to us.

**Griffin**: Okay, good, cool. That’s a neat spell. Yeah. Okay, so you’ve built a little security person for yourself.

**Travis**: It- It kinda makes my swinging an axe at a guy look pretty pathetic, doesn’t it DnD makers?

**Clint**: Nooo, no, no, no.

**Griffin**: Uh, okay, but that’s your turn, right, cause you cast a spell.

**Clint**: That’s my turn.

**Griffin**: Okay, so next in the order’s Taako.

**Justin**: So, like, what’s this guy vulnerable to? Do we know?

**Griffin**: Insults.

[someone snorts]

**Travis**: Global warming.

**Justin**: Oh okay, um-

**Griffin**: Just time, the- just the erosion of time.

**Travis**: The bite of a jealous lover.

**Clint and Justin**: Huh?

**Travis**: Well, more like poetic bite, not like an actual bite- that’d be weird.

**Griffin**: I’ll go- I will actually-

**Travis**: You know what- Don’t worry about it.

**Clint:** Nothin’- forget I said anything.

**Travis**: [hastily] I’m on, uh, a lot of cold medicine.

**Griffin**: I’m gonna confirm immunity to biting damage. Don’t try and bite this fuckin’ thing.

**Justin**: Uh, I mean like-

**Clint**: Kill it!

**Justin**: I guess I’m just kinda bored, by-

**Clint**: Do you have any sonic spells?

**Justin**: Eh, I’ve got Sonic the Hedgehog [someone wheezes] on Genesis, I brought the tape.

**Travis**: Do you have anything that lets you meld with stone?

**Clint**: Oh, aw, crap!

**Justin**: A lot of people have been talking about that lately and I don’t think it makes any sense. I’m gonna cast um… You know what, I’m gonna ca- I’m gonna try this, I’mma try uh, uh.. Shatter. That sounds good for a crystal thing.

**Griffin**: Holy shit.

**Justin**: Uh, “a sudden loud ringing noise, painfully intense, erupts from a point of my choice, within range. Each creature in a 10 foot radius sphere centered on that point-” I’m just aiming for like its head, um, “-the creature takes 3d8 thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.”

**Griffin**: Uh, read the next part.

**Justin**: “Any creature made of inorganic material such as stone, crystal, or metal has disadvantage on this saving throw.” Yeah, that’s why I cast it.

**Griffin**: Fuck yes, okay. I had no idea this spell existed when I wrote this whole campaign arc.

[Travis laughs]

**Griffin**: Okay, uh, so, here- here’s the problem- um, this- this thing has gotta be close to at least Merle, cause it just moved and attacked Merle. Um, so Merle, you’re gonna have to be a part of this save as well.

**Justin**: How big is the thing?

**Griffin**: It’s a ten foot radius-

**Justin**: How big is the creature?

**Griffin**: Oh, I did say it was 15 feet tall didn’t I?

**Justin**: Yeah, and so I aimed at its head-

**Griffin**: Yeah, I’ll give you that, Merle is- no way is Merle five feet tall.

**Travis**: No, absolutely not.

**Griffin**: Okay, cool.

**Travis**: Four-foot-eleven and a half, tops.

**Griffin**: Cool, uh, okay. Yeah, so this thing has to save against your spell- spell saving throw. Which is eight plus your spellcasting modifier, which is either six or seven- you don’t know-

**Justin**: Seven.

**Griffin**: Seven. Ok. So I have to beat a… fifteen?

**Justin**: Yep.

[dice rolling]

**Griffin**: Uh, I got a seventeen, but I have fuckin’ disadvantage- [die rolling] fourteen.

**Justin**: Alright!

**Griffin**: Uh, shit, ok, this thing’s about to take a ton of damage.

**Justin:** [in a deep voice] Here it comes!

**Clint**: Here it comes. It’s gonna be a d8 that won’t… deviate.. [grumbling] I’m just trying to give you time.

**Justin**: Ok, is the diamond- yeah that’s the d8. [dice rolling] Five. Eight. Eight. Waah!

**Clint**: Twenty-one!

**Justin**: Twenty-one points of damage (pronounced damioge).

**Griffin**: Ok, um, not only that, one of its arms just explodes. You just sort of reduce it to pink dust. Um-

{42:56}

**Travis**: Quick question- was it his favorite arm?

**Griffin**: It was- well, I’ll just say this, I don’t wanna get blue- If you’re a child and you’re listening to this show, legally you have to tell me or it’s entrapment- this was his baitin’ arm.

**Clint**: Ohh.

**Travis**: Got it. For baiting fish hooks.

**Griffin**: Exactly.

**Clint**: Oh- I thought he meant masturbating.

**Griffin**: *Dad*!

**Travis**: Clinton!

**Clint**: What?

**Justin**: You don’t know what that is, shut up.

**Griffin**: Uh…

**Justin**: Gross-erooni.

[laughing]

**Griffin**: As, uh- so yeah- his arm explodes, um, but from behind the three of you, you hear more moving, uh, and, uh, more pieces of crystal tree uh, fly at this thing, and builds an even, uh, more deadly-looking razor sharp clawed arm.

**Justin**: Cooool…

**Travis**: Is running an option?

**Griffin**: I mean, it’s always an option, yeah.

**Travis**: I see.

**Griffin**: And it is your turn, Magnus.

**Travis**: Sometimes Magnus rushes *out*.

[laughing]

**Griffin**: It would be the first time I’ve heard of it. Uh, although I suppose you know, this podcast hasn’t sort of encapsulated the entirety of your characters’ lives.

**Travis**: Yeah, you don’t know.

**Griffin**: Sure.

**Travis**: Magnus is 400 years old!

**Griffin**: Well, we don’t know about that.

**Justin**: Taako has a peanut allergy.

[laughing]

**Justin**: We haven’t even gotten to that yet.

**Clint**: Merle likes long walks on the beach.

**Travis**: I don’t know, this is- it seems pointless, there’s all this crystal around- what are we really hoping to do here? Guys- fellas? Anything?

**Clint**: [laughs] You’re on your own.

**Justin**: Well I hit its head really hard with a shattering spell-

**Travis**: Yeah, no- and I thought that went great- but then like he made a tree arm or something…

**Justin**: I mean- I’m into running- [laughs] let me say that in my character voice:

**Taako**: I’m into running. Uh, that’s fine by me. If you guys wanna bolt, let’s do it.

**Magnus**: Uh, yeah, looks like we are ski-daddling.

**Griffin**: Uh, okay.

**Taako**: Are you okay with that? Magnus?

**Magnus**: Yeah.

**Taako**: Merle?

**Magnus**: I don’t know if you saw, I hit him and did, like, six damage. That is not something I am used to.

**Taako**: Merle, you good with running?

**Merle**: I--I think that this- you’re a bunch of honeys!

**Taako**: Okay.

**Merle**: I think this is the first time we’ve faced anything that was actually tough--

**Magnus**: Uh-huh

**Merle**: --that we weren’t assured of beating--

**Magnus**: Yeah.

**Merle**: --and you’re gonna run away.

**Magnus**: Yep.

**Taako**: You know that if we--

**Merle**: Wah, wah, wah! Run away!

**Taako**: You known that if we all die, there’s no more podcast and we don’t get the money from the MaxFun donations anymore, right?

**Merle**: Run! [Griffin laughs] Run away! Run away!

**Griffin**: Uh, okay, uh, the--

**Travis**: Griffin, wait, wait, wait. Before we do this, is this not what we’re supposed to do? Because it really felt to me like we were supposed to run away.

**Griffin**: There’s no--

**Justin**: This is alright, this is our adventure.

**Griffin**: Yeah, there’s no, like--

**Travis**: Well, I wanna win DnD.

**Griffin**: Yeah, sure.

**Justin**: Don’t chop off the--don’t chop off the kimono.

**Griffin**: Um…

**Travis**: I ripped open the kimono, whether you like it or not.

**Griffin**: Uh, okay, we’ll say you guys are--start moving away from this big crystal golem, and we’ll use Magnus’s turn as sort of the basis of that group action. Um, and on the start of this crystal golem’s turn, he watches-- which--where are you running?

**Travis**: Um, remind me the options?

**Griffin**: Back to where you dropped in, or that white circle of light around the metal hatch.

**Travis**: White circle of light, please.

**Justin**: Yeah, let’s go for it.

**Clint**: Are we ever gonna know why he pointed at Merle and said, “You”?

**Travis**: Oh, ‘cause you just have one of those faces, you know--

**Justin**: One of those faces.

**Travis**: --that people see and they’re like, “Ooh, that guy. Mm-mm.”

**Griffin**: Um, the three of you make a break for that white hatch. Um, and on its turn…

**Clint**: Wait a minute, can we please at least go [wooping, imitating Zoidberg from Futurama] “wubwubwubwubwubwubwubwub”?

**Griffin**: Yes, I will assume that that is what you--the sound that you created as you did that. And, uh, as you bolt, on this crystal golem’s turn, Della Reese is gonna get [a gasp, as if they forgot that Della Reese was here], uh, a strike with her heavenly sword [pronounces the w in “sword”] on it. And this thing… makes a dexterity saving throw. [Dice rolling] That’s a nine, so I doubt that’s gonna clear it.

**Clint**: No.

**Griffin**: So, yeah, Della Reese just stabs this thing right through its--

**Clint**: 20 radiant damage.

**Griffin**: For, uh, for, yeah, it gets stabbed right through the ol’ chest. Um, and it actually takes 40 radiant damage. And you hear it scream. Through that--that--that crystal beak, um, that it intimidated Merle with earlier. You hear it just, like, scream. Um, and the--the light in this thing, uh, kind of pops out of its chest and leaves that crystal golem, and the golem just falls to the ground.

**Travis**: I knew we could do it!

**Clint**: Way to go, Della!

**Griffin**: And a rift, uh, opens up back in--in--in space, and the light flies into it and disappears.

**Travis**: I never doubted us for a second.

**Clint**: I knew we could win.

**Griffin**: Della Reese… Della Reese looks at you and says… “Looks like someone just got touched by an angel.” Then she- she sheathes her sword and disappears.

**Justin**: Yeah, that’s pretty good.

**Clint**: Wow. That was an excellent adventure.

**Travis**: What kind of loot do we get?

**Griffin**: I mean, there’s a bunch of, uh, you know, virulent crystal all--basically everywhere.

**Justin**: Fuck yeah, finally some crystal.

**Griffin**: This place is probably worth about, like, 20 trillion gold pieces. Just, like, in total.

**Travis**: Okay.

**Griffin**: Just, like, if you take--

**Travis**: I still wanna make our way to that glowing hatch thing.

**Griffin**: Okay.

**Justin**: Yeah, I’d like to go check that out too.

**Griffin**: Okay, yeah, it is a circular hatch with a gap in between these two semicircle doors, um, and there is a--a--there’s a--

**Travis**: Oh, wait.

**Griffin**: Huh?

**Travis**: Merle.

**Clint**: Huh?

**Travis**: That’s why it was you, ‘cause you’re the holy man. Because you have some kind of religious thing, radiant did double damage.

**Clint**: Ohh.

**Travis**: That’s why he singled you out.

**Griffin**: Okay.

**Clint**: [laughs] Let’s remember that.

**Griffin**: Yeah, so you-- this hatch has a small panel on the door of it, and it is not crystallized, and you hear, actually, Lucas come in through the pendant that the Director gave you before you, uh, departed from the Bureau of Balance headquarters. You hear Lucas say:

**Lucas**: First of all, what the hell was that? What just happened? I heard a bunch of, like, crumbling and cracking and tink--crinkle- tinkles.

**Taako**: Yeah, it was us. We, uh, there was a crystal monster, and we lured him into a trap that we had set.

**Merle**: We pretended we were running away.

**Taako**: Pretended we were running away.

**Magnus**: And he fell for it.

**Taako**: He fell for it. Dingus.

**Merle**: And then we killed it.

**Taako**: Well, we trapped-- sort of, yeah. We killed it. Yeah, we did.

**Magnus**: Yeah, we did.

**Merle**: 20 experience points.

**Magnus**: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Taako**: We gave ourselves 25 crystal experience points. [Griffin laughing]

**Lucas**: Well, that shouldn’t--there shouldn’t be anything here. Anything that was in the crystallized rooms should’ve just gotten-- just should’ve gotten frozen. I don’t underst--

**Merle**: Well, you weren’t here, were you? You weren’t here.

**Magnus**: Hey, Lucas.

**Lucas**: Yeah. Yeah.

**Magnus**: Magnus here. In your experiments with these crystals, did you ever hear a voice or sounds like something was talking to you?

**Lucas**: Ummm, no. I don’t-- I don’t know what you’re talking about.

**Magnus**: Well, okay. All right. I don’t believe you, but--

**Taako**: It didn’t happen to us, either. Noooo.

**Merle**: Uh-uh.

**Magnus**: Nope. Nope.

**Lucas**: Okay. Have you made it to the-- to the exit of the conservatory, to the first arcane airlock?

**Magnus**: Is it the glowing hatch?

**Lucas**: Yeah, that’s what it would look like. Yeah, sure.

**Magnus**: Then yes.

**Taako**: Hell yeah.

**Lucas**: Okay, yeah. Just put your hand on the panel, and I’ll channel enough energy into it and let you guys through, and then once you move through that chamber, I’ll be able to shut down that airlock and buy us a little bit more energy and a little bit more time.

**Travis**: I do that.

**Griffin**: ‘Kay, um--

**Travis**:

**Magnus**: Wait, is this gonna affect how the reclaimers-- all their shit and being able to get in and stuff?

**Merle**: I thought we were the only reclaimers.

**Griffin**: Are you saying that into the pendant?

**Travis**: No, I’ve got my hand over the pendant.

**Griffin**: Okay.

**Travis**: Talking to Merle and what’s-his-face.

**Taako**: I forgot who they are and what they’re doing.

**Merle**: I don’t care about them anyway.

**Magnus**: The regulators, the ones who are, like, supposed to back us up and, like, arrest--

**Merle**: Yeah, they’re doing a great job so far, aren’t they?

**Taako**: Where are they?

**Magnus**: They got blown away in the gnarly storm.

**Taako**: Oh man, like The Martian. Love that book. Listen, okay? We’re done here.

**Griffin**: [laughs] That’s a good conversation, guys.

**Taako**: I think that we’ve already proven that we can’t keep really good track of them, just from, like, a narrative-- human being-- like, I don’t think we can keep tabs on ‘em. They’ve got-- really gotta fend for themselves, ‘cause we need the time.

**Magnus**: You know what? I can’t fault your logic.

**Travis**: All right, I uncover the pendant. I put my hand on the thing.

**Taako**: Here’s what I’m saying. Either they die--

**Travis**: Okay, I re-cover the pendant.

**Taako**: Either they die, or we forget them. Either way, they’re not going to--

**Magnus**: Probably both.

**Taako**: Yeah, probably both.

**Lucas**: [muffled] Hey, guys, did you go through the door yet?

**Travis**: I un-cover the pendant.

**Lucas**: Oh, thank god. It was getting a little stuffy in-- wait, that doesn’t make sense.

**Magnus**: No, that’s not how that works. [someone laughs] Are you *in* the pendant?

**Taako**: Do you live in the pendant?

**Merle**: He *is* independent.

**Lucas**: Oh, that’s a good joke. Anyway, just put your hand on the panel on the door and it should open up for you, and-- and, um, you’ll-- you’ll-- you’ll be protected, um, from the, uh, from that crystal thing. You should be-- the next chamber should be clear as far as I know.

**Travis**: Cool, I do that.

**Griffin**: Uh, okay.

**Justin**: Hold on, Merle-- Magnus--

**Clint**: No, that’s okay.

**Justin**: God-- *son of a dammit.* Could you two not have gotten together on the letters with which your names begin?

**Clint**: Should I be Perle?

**Travis**: Mine actually has a silent P.

**Griffin**: So, shit, then you’re Perle and Pagnus. You guys really are the worst two people. [Clint cackles] Um--

**Travis**: What were you gonna say, Taako?

**Justin**: Dad was gonna say something. I’m just calling him Dad.

**Griffin**: Okay.

**Justin**: He’s my dad.

**Griffin**: Dad, what were you gonna say?

**Justin**: He was gonna say something.

**Merle**: Well, I’m in character, so I don’t answer.

**Griffin**: Holy shit.

**Justin**: Fuck me running. Okay, Merlgnus is gonna say something now.

**Merle**: I just was wondering if it might be a trap, but--

**Lucas**: Nope.

**Merle**: We’re obviously in a hurry to get through the airlock.

**Lucas**: Nope, not a trap.

**Merle**: Eat me, we don’t know you!

**Taako**: You’re a real– you’re a dingbat, too. I don’t like you at all, but let’s go. I say we get through. This is getting boring, and this is a podcast. Let’s go.

**Griffin**: You move into the airlock, and it’s like, uh, it’s like an airlock in a spaceship or a submarine. It’s a small chamb--

**Travis**: Which we have all been in.

**Griffin**: Um, no. Well, maybe? Probably--

**Clint**: Maybe in the backstory.

**Griffin**: Probably not. It’s just a little chamber, and it has two of these white circular hatches on either side, and as you move into the airlock, it is not crystallized. It is--it’s made of just sort of a white metal, and, um, uh, the hatch closes behind you, and you hear a hissing sound. There’s some, uh--

**Travis**: Snakes!

**Griffin**: Some smoke in the room, and then the chamber’s full of snakes, and you drown in snakes. You drown in snakes.

**Travis**: Not again.

**Griffin**: Uh, no, there’s no snakes. Just a little bit of smoke, and then the smoke clears and you hear, like, a *bing-bong* noise. Maybe I’ll put that in in post, maybe I won’t. Um, and--

**Clint**: Wait, wait, wait, you said smoke, and bong. Cheech and Chong are in there.

**Justin**: Hell yeah.

**Griffin**: I thought you were doing--

**Justin**: And they’re covered in snakes!

[Griffin laughs]

**Justin**: And Cheech is a snake, and so is Chong. They’re both snakes.

**Travis**: It’s all snakes. It’s snakes all the way down.

**Justin**: Soup to nuts, snakes, snakes, snakes.

**Clint**: Man, I hope when J.J. Abrams remakes this podcast, he takes all this stuff out.

**Justin (imitating Abrams yet sounding like a Muppet)**: “What we decided to do, guys, is just lose a lot of the snake stuff. We know the fans love it, but we’re worried that it wouldn’t be as approachable material ‘cause, uh, it’s real heavily laden with snakes. I didn’t really underst--it becomes hard to follow because--”

**Travis**: Is J.J. Abrams a puppet?

**Justin (still imitating Abrams)**: “Our heroes become snakes, and, uh, they are all married to snakes, and they use snakes as weapons.”

**Clint**: Hand me some of that macaroni and cheese with snakes on it.

**Travis**: Snakes in their blood that lets them do magic.

**Justin**: “They eat snakes for fuel, and they become snake robots for a while. It’s very confusing, got rid of most of the snakes. There’s still a lot of snakes, but, I mean, there’s just a regular amount of snakes for The Adventure Zone, which, for any other thing, is still an enormous amount of snakes.”

[laughter]

**Griffin**: So, uh…

**Justin**: “And lens flare! [more laughter] That’s the two big things.”

**Griffin**: So, uh, on the other end of this airlock, is more snakes. Uh--

[Clint loses it laughing]

**Travis**: Oh no!

**Justin**:I knew it!

**Griffin**: On the other end of this airlock, it--actually, I know I said there was a hatch, *a* hatch, on the other side. There’s actually two hatches. It, uh, it branches off, forming sort of a Y junction. Um, and hanging in between those two hatches is, a, uh, a sign, and it is noting which is in either direction. And you hear Lucas say:

**Lucas**: Now you should be at a--a--a branch in the path, um, and-- and I’ll be able to buy us a little bit more time. We’re at about-- oh, we’re running real low, guys. We’re at about ten minutes before this thing h-hits the water, um, so whichever one you go in, I’ll be able to disable the airlock on the other side and-and buy us a bit more time by giving me more energy to channel, uh, into the core. Um, so--so pick a side, and I’ll just, uh, I’ll--after you go through, I’ll shut down the other one.

**Travis**: What are the two sides?

**Griffin**: Well, to the left, you see a sign over the hatch that says, “Research Materials Storage Chamber,” and then, on the right, you see a sign that says, “The Magical World of Elevators.”

[Faint laughter from Justin]

**Travis**: Really?

**Griffin**: Yeah.

**Justin**: Griffin--

**Griffin**: That’s what it says.

**Justin**: Griffin’s really sticking it to the people who say he’s not allowed to have elevators in this game.

[Clint cackles]

**Travis**: Um--

**Griffin**: Again, it’s the Research Materials Storage Chamber, or the Magical World of Elevators.

**Taako:** This one’s easy. It’s elevators. Let’s go.

**Merle**: Here we go!

**Griffin:** Uh, okay. You walk forward and open up this next hatch, and it spins open to… a beautiful, ornate room. Um, a fairly large chamber that almost sort of resembles, like, a museum with these different exhibits lining both sides of this long chamber. And inside of each exhibit, in little brass and wood display cases, you see different elevators. Um, and you hear Lucas chime in and say, like:

**Lucas:** Oh, you made it to The Magical World of Elevators, huh?

**Magnus, Merle, & Taako:** Yeah.

**Lucas:** It’s, uh--well, this lab has been in my family for a few generations. I--I inherited it from my--from my mom, um, but there was a codicil in the will that required that I keep this museum, uh, honoring my grandpa’s greatest technological accomplishment, intact. He--he invented the elevator. And honestly, like, most of the technological, uh, advancements in our world. That was all--that was all Grandpa Roman. So, um, yeah, I couldn’t change it, but go ahead and have a look around. It’s--I think you might learn a little bit of something about elevators.

**Magnus**: Don’t we have, like, shit to do?

**Taako**: Is it hard feeling like you’re always in his shadow? Does it--

**Magnus**: Ooh, good question.

**Taako**: Do you feel like you’re in Roman’s shadow?

**Lucas**: I mean, a little bit, sometimes, like--

**Taako**: Yeah.

**Lucas**: I’m trying to make my own mark on the world, and frankly, I feel like a lot of his inventions were kind of primitive, and people just aren’t as excited about inventions. Like, when the first elevator came out, forget about it. But you try and invent a new, better elevator, and people don’t wanna hear any of it.

**Merle**: Well, it’s an up and down business.

**Lucas**: Oh my god.

**Taako**: People say that about, um, Thomas Edison a lot. Like, he invented the lightbulb, but--right?--but, like, they didn’t have them back then, right? So if I had been around back then, that would have been easy for me, ‘cause they didn’t have lightbulbs. They didn’t have anything. So, like, inventing stuff was way easier. These days, I’d have to invent, like, a double lightbulb or something to even get that kind of impact.

**Lucas**: Holy--just--wait--pau--hold on for a second. I gotta write that down.

**Taako**: Double light bulb.

**Lucas**: Double…

**Taako**: You can have that one, that’s fine.

**Lucas**: Light bulb…

**Merle**: No, don’t give it to him!

**Taako**: Oh, money's no object to me.

**Merle**: [groans]

**Griffin**: That is patently untrue. That’s not in character. I’m just telling you that’s-- I’m calling horseshit on that on behalf of our listening audience.

**Justin**: No, no, no, no, no--

**Clint**: It’s just a façade.

**Justin**: No, no, no, the fact that money is patently important to Taako is patently untrue. That Taako would say that--

**Griffin**: Yeah.

**Justin**: --is not.

**Griffin**: Okay, fair.

**Clint**: And I think we learned a little bit about Lucas today.

**Taako**: Yeah, I feel like we’ve really grown.

**Magnus**: I think we’ve all--let’s go home and think about what we’ve learned.

**Griffin**: I gotta say, the timing on this episode’s a little bit off, ‘cause I think we’re at the end of it now, and, man, it would’ve been cool if it had ended with Della Reese stabbing a crystal monster to death and not the three of you entering a museum and then, like, having a talk with some guy about his grandpa.

**Travis**: Well, why don’t you re-cut that in here, Griffin?

**Griffin**: Okay. Della Reese shows up and stabs through an elevator. She says, “Well, I got a taste for it now.”

[Clint laughs]

**Travis**: “I just love killing.”

[music starts to fade in]

**Justin**: And hates elevators.

**Travis**: “Hi, I’m Della Reese and I love killing.”

**Griffin**: Looks like this elevator just got touched by an angel, right, guys?

**Travis**: More like a Dellavator.

**Justin**: This one’s going down!