**Griffin:** So the three of you are, uh, after surviving a pretty thrilling Della Reese based climax and—

[Travis fake-laughs]

**Griffin:** Yeah that was a pretty troubling, [Griffin and Clint chuckle], troublesome sentence that I just said. Uhh, you find yourselves in the Magical World of Elevators, something of a museum dedicated to the elevator-based achievements of the Miller family.

**Travis:** Got it. Uh, Griffin, before we go on I wanna do something I should’ve thought of last episode.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Um, while covering the pendant that lets me talk to what’s-his-face, whatsahoochie, um—

**Griffin:** Lucas.

**Travis:** Yeah, I wanna contact Angus and see what he knows about the Philosopher’s Stone.

**Griffin:** Okay, uh, alright. So yeah, just put in his, put in his Codec number, ring him up.

[boop noises]

**Angus:** H— Hello? Did, what did you guys need?

**Magnus:** Hey Ango, um—

**Angus:**  [amused] Is that, is that happening?

**Magnus:** Yeah, [Justin snorts], D’Jangus. Um, what, what do you know about the Philosopher’s Stone? We just ran into like a crystal golem thing that like sang to us. And it was like—

**Angus:** Yeah, that shouldn’t, that definitely shouldn’t happen. The Philosopher’s Stone is just a very powerful, um, sort of cypher for transmutation magic. And it allows you to change really any material into any other material, but it shouldn’t be able to animate material! Because I mean, that, that’s just beyond its capabilities!

**Magnus:** Do you know anything about like a crystalline demon? It was like a glowing ball of light, it sang, it was really creepy, it sounded like a vocoder.

**Angus:** How did it… How did it find you? Tell me everything.

**Magnus:** Uh, we were walking across a crystallized—

**Travis:** Oh, let me do my Magnus voice.

**Clint:** Just listen to the last episode!

**Travis:** Yeah! Tune into— like, spin the propellers we just told him everything.

**Justin:** Someone’s been like setting aside their lunch hour to listen to this and they’re like “Are these motherfuckers— [Clint laughs] really? Seriously, I have one hour here.” Okay?

[Travis speaks over Justin with next line, hard to discern what Justin’s trying to say]

**Travis:** Yeah, let’s, we’ll do a star fade, star wipe. [Clint makes a fluttery transition noise] I just told Angus everything.

**Justin:** I, I just, I didn’t realize the voice was coming from the monster we fought?

**Travis:** It was from like a glowing ball that then like—

**Justin:** Since you didn’t correct him I guess that makes sense to me— It sounded really cool, by the way Griffin. Kinda creepy.

**Griffin:** Why, thank you.

**Travis:** Yeah, yeah that was good editing.

**Angus:** Um, uh. Yeah, I mean, it sounds like it was somehow inspirited by uh, by a ghost or something like that, but it, you said it came through some sort of rift? In spacetime?

**Magnus:** Yes.

**Merle:** Yep, he did.

**Angus:** That’s not… ghosts can’t really do that. So I’m not a hundred percent sure what we’re up against here. Um, but I’ll start cracking the books and see what I can find out for you.

**Magnus:** Alright, do that.

**Taako:** Thanks, Ango.

**Magnus:** Let us know if you come up with anything.

**Angus:** Yeah, no problem! I— I love you.

**Magnus:** Love you too.

**Merle:** Shut up, don’t— no, please, no.

[Griffin chuckles]

**Magnus:** I’m a big fan.

**Griffin:** It’s like a friendship kind of love.

**Travis:** Yeah, I tell my friends that I love them. C’mon, Dad, it’s 2016.

**Griffin:** I love all my friends, I love our listeners, if you’re listening to this: I love you.

**Travis:** If you’re not listening to this: go fuck yourself.

[Clint laughs]

**Justin:** We love you, sorry we almost made you listen to Travis recap what happened last episode.

**Griffin:** So you’re in the Magical World of Elevators and there are uh— the room has these two rows, uh, that you can tell just looking at the elevators featured in each exhibit are sort of a chronological detail of how this particular invention that the Miller family brought to this world, um, sort of evolves.

**Travis:** Mmhmm...

**Griffin:** There’s a little plaque and a little description next to each one. The first one is kind of just a crude bucket with a thick rope that has a year, it says “1469 DR. Roman Miller.” Which you intuit to be Lucas Miller’s grandpa that you talked about last week.

**Clint:** Yeah, ‘cause we’re an intuitive bunch.

**Griffin:** Yeah, clearly. This does not look like the safest elevator in the world, it basically does just look like a bucket. It looks hundreds of years old, some cockroaches actually scurry away from that particular exhibit as you come close to it. Um, and go near your feet. Which is—

**Clint:** And we stamp on them! We stomp on them, okay.

**Griffin:** Okay, uh, make a reflex check to see if you can— there’s three cockroaches. Roll to stomp.

**Taako:** One for each of us, baby!

**Merle:** Okay.

**Taako:** Come to daddy!

**Merle:** I hate cockroaches!

**Travis:** I rolled a let’s see, what is reflex? Is that plus dex?

**Griffin:** Uh yeah we’ll say dexterity.

**Travis:** 14 plus 2, 16!

**Griffin:** ‘Kay.

**Clint:** Uh… 3.

**Justin:** 13!

**Griffin:** Okay, yeah Taako and Magnus you guys squoosh yours good. Merle, yours scurries away.

**Taako:** Hey, Merle, why do you love um, why do you love cockroaches so much?

**Magnus:** Yeah, what’s up?

**Merle:** Shut up!

**Magnus:** Bug lover.

**Taako:** I thought you hated them so bad.

**Merle:** Shut up, you guys, I’m saving my good rolls.

**Griffin:** So there’s a few more of Roman’s designs. There’s a one that looks like a bucket but the pulley looks like it’s gas-powered. Um, which looks pretty deadly. There’s one that has a face on it and the plaque says that it’s called: “Upsy, Your Lifting Friend.”

[Clint laughs]

**Griffin:** It’s almost like a cartoonish elevator that was obviously made to like franchise. Like obviously when elevators came to this world it was a hot thing, cause you can imagine when elevators came to Earth it was probably really sick, like what, no more stairs? That’s tight.

**Travis:** Where can I get one?

**Griffin:** Yeah, so they tried obviously to do a theme park.

**Justin:** Y’know the day that elevators were invented, people just went around to stairs in their neighborhoods with ball-peen hammers just destroying, “Never again!”

**Travis:** Won’t need these!

**Clint:** I step into that closet and I’m on a different floor!

**Justin:** I’ll never use these stupid stairs again!

**Griffin:** [laughs] And then on the other side of the room there’s a row of elevators that were actually designed by Lucas’s mother, whose name is Maureen.

**Travis:** And they’re way better.

**Griffin:** They’re so much better. They’re more conservative, I mean they were developed, you know, a generation after Roman’s lifting machines, is what he called them. Uh, so they look like the more traditional elevators, a little bit less stylish, more functional. Somewhere down along the line of hers is “Upsy the Rad Lifting Dude” which is like a cool reboot of “Upsy Your Lifting Friend”. He has sunglasses on. …That, that elevator—

[Clint, Justin and Travis giggling in the background]

**Justin:** Are we t—? Are we—?

**Griffin:** That elevator was a commercial failure. Based on every sense of the word.

**Justin:** Are we? To intuit from the name “Upsy” and the nomenclature of lifting machines. Like maybe they mastered like getting people up first and like didn’t have a plan for getting you back down?

[Clint laughs in the background]

**Griffin:** It’s funny you mention that, actually, right next to “Upsy the Rad Lifting Dude” was his archnemesis in the cartoon and his name was “Downzo.”

**Clint:** “Downzo the Pit.”

[Justin laughs]

**Griffin:** Downzo—

**Travis:** “Downzo, watch out!”

**Justin:** ”Downzo the forty story shaft!”

[Clint and Griffin laughing]

**Griffin:** And then at the end of the line is just an elevator. Uh, but on the far side of this room, kind of in front of the next airlock leading out of this chamber, you see something that looks unlike all of the other elevators in this room. Um, it is—

**Travis:** Stairs.

**Griffin:** It, it looks like— it’s stairs, isn’t that crazy? No, it’s uh, it looks very, very, *very* futuristic. Like way too futuristic, it has like almost Tron neon outlines, uh, it looks like an elevator, but it is the most futuristic-looking elevator you’ve ever seen. And it’s sitting on top of a cylindrical glass display case, and when you look into that glass display case, it almost looks like there’s a miniature model of the town of Neverwinter inside of it.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Griffin:** And atop it is this hyper neo-futuristic elevator that is labelled as “The Elevator of Tomorrow.”

**Justin:** To scale? Is it to scale with the rest of the town?

**Griffin:** Uh, no, it’s gigantic. It’s like your size and it’s on top of the glass display case. And Lucas chimes in through the pendant and says, uh:

**Lucas:** Oh! Okay, so, um, I left that running in demo mode. That’s “The Elevator of Tomorrow” and it’s, it’s consuming like a *lot* of power. So if you can cycle through the demo, uh, I’ll be able to shut it down remotely and that should actually free up a lot of energy for me to channel back into the lab’s core and keep us floatin’ above the sea for a little bit longer.

**Magnus:** What does the demo do? What is it?

**Lucas:** Uh, it’s a… I don’t wanna spoil the surprise.

[Clint snorts]

**Lucas:** It’s a—

**Taako:** Well here’s my surprise: I’m not doing it. Listen, I’m done— Taako, that’s me, hi— I’m done with elevators. Never again.

**Lucas:** Okay, well don’t say—

**Taako:** Last time I was in an elevator, vines tried to eat my dick! I’m never getting in an elevator again, suck it!

[Clint, Griffin and Travis chuckling in the background]

**Lucas:** Let’s not— listen, don’t say something you’re gonna regret.

**Taako:** No, not a million-bajillion, my dude.

**Lucas:** The, the demo takes three minutes, you just go in there and you do the demo and it— it—

**Taako:** You’ll have to knock me out like B.A. Baracus gettin’ on a plane! I— No way!

**Merle:** Here, have a drink of this water.

**Taako:** Absolutely not, nooOOO elevators for Taako!

**Lucas:** Okay, well, some of you, some of you guys need to get into the elevator and— and run through the demo! Or else it’s not gonna cycle and I won’t be able to shut it down!

**Taako:** Go for it, thugs! Taako’s here!

**Magnus:** Alright, I’ll— I’ll take care of it. I’ll do it.

**Taako:** Terra firma, baby!

**Merle:** How many will it take?

**Lucas:** I mean, at least one needs to go in.

**Merle:** And how do you know what we’re doing? Are you watchin’ us?

**Lucas:** No, I just heard, I asked you in the last episode where you were and you told me.

**Merle:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** I pick Taako up and I walk him to the elevator.

**Taako:** Wh— why can’t—? Why did—? I don’t even think I need to do this, this is not important!

**Magnus:** C’mon buddy.

**Taako:** Don’t do it! I swear to God!

**Merle:** [laughing] He pities the fool who carries him into an elevator!

[Griffin laughing in the background

**Taako:** You will not like how this ends! I will burn a spell slot on you, I give no shits!

[Clint laughing]

**Taako:** Do not put me in an elevator! I’m done with them!

**Griffin:** Who’s going into the elevator then?

**Clint:** How many does it need? How many does it take?

**Griffin:** At least one. One to three, one to three players.

**Clint:** Would two give us better odds?

**Griffin:** I’m not gonn— it’s an *elevator*!

**Clint:** Uh-huh.

**Travis:** Alright, I’m getting in it.

**Clint:** I’ll get in it too.

**Griffin:** Okay. Magnus and Merle get in. Taako, you gonna stay out of this?

**Justin:** I open my pocket spa and fucking chill.

**Clint:** You sold it.

**Griffin:** Alright. You crack open the pocket spa and-

**Travis:** What?

**Justin:** Oh, I did sell it.

**Clint:** You sold the pocket spa.

**Justin:** Didn’t I—?

**Griffin:** No, no, no, you held onto it, you sold the fan.

**Clint:** Ohh.

**Justin:** That’s right, I get in the pocket spa.

**Griffin:** Mm, alright. You pop open the pocket spa and get a little pop tent out that folds up neatly, neatly into your pocket and it’s bigger on the inside than it is on the outside. And you hop inside and you get in a hot spring and there’s little pucks of scent that you can choose to pop into that hot spring, give yourself a scented bath.

**Clint:** Ah nice.

**Griffin:** And also there’s a sandwich waiting for you on the lip of the hot spring.

**Taako:** Ooh, daddy like.

**Clint:** Nobody ever mentioned sandwiches.

**Justin:** What kind of sandwich?

**Griffin:** Tuna fish. But it’s a good tuna fish.

**Justin:** Anyth— any toppings?

**Griffin:** I’m trying to think, I can’t think of what would be in the tuna fish sandwich that would also go into the Tex-Mex food stuffs you’re trying to get me to think about.

[Clint laughs]

**Justin:** [crosstalk] Well it’s no fun if I don’t trick you.

**Griffin:** [crosstalk] No there’s some, there’s some actually um, yeah, yeah—

**Clint:** Lettuce, you need lettuce.

**Griffin:** Yeah, there’s some diced tomato on top of it.

**Taako:** Oh delicious! Okay, great.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Taako:** Stupid! That was my plan!

**Clint:** Tomato…

**Griffin:** Ah, that’s a pretty small, I think that’s a pretty small piece of the puzzle. So I don’t mind giving you that one on your continuing taco quest.

**Taako:** Just want to keep it alive.

**Griffin:** Okay, Merle and Magnus, you hop into The Elevator of Tomorrow. And there’s just a single button there and it has a timer over it that is stuck at three minutes.

**Travis:** I push it.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay. As you push it, the doors of this futuristic elevator shut in front of you and, uh— Taako are you watching them? Or are you like lamping?

**Taako:** Yeah, I’m just eating a Triscuit and chillin’.

**Griffin:** You’re watching them through the open—? Through the open door?

**Taako:** I couldn’t give a shit.

**Griffin:** You’re watching them through the open door?

**Taako:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** You’re watching them through the open door, okay,

**Taako:** Okay.

**Griffin:** You see a pretty, uh, incredible sight, as the elevator of tomorrow doesn’t go down— I mean it *does*, but it doesn’t go down in space, it actually goes down in scale. The elevator of tomorrow shrinks, way way way down, and uh, Merle and Magnus you don’t really feel anything too different, but Taako you watch as their now completely shrunk down elevator— very slowly descends into the glass display case.

**Travis:** Cut to inside the elevator [hums to the melody of The Girl from Ipanema]

**Justin:** Taako jumps out of the pocket tent and says

**Taako:** Do you see?! Do you SEE?!

**Justin:** He’s running around with his hands in the air like Jordan after he’s won one of his many basketball championships.

[Griffin and Clint laughing in the background]

**Taako:** Don’t look so stupid now, do I? You tiny *bitches*!

**Travis:** Back, back inside the elevator: [continues to hum the same song, is joined by Clint]

**Taako:** I could eat you!

[The song “The Elevator of Tomorrow” begins to play as Griffin describes the scene]

**Griffin:** The elevator, uh, comes to a stop and the doors open and all of a sudden this glass display version of the city of Neverwinter now looks pretty big to you. It’s not *actual* size, you guys are actually almost the size of some of the taller buildings in town, kind of a Godzilla thing going on. Um, but, uh, yeah it is a weird version of Neverwinter because it doesn’t look like the Neverwinter that you three have almost certainly visited at some point in your life. There’s some things about it that are a bit off. The buildings are much taller for one thing, they reach into the sky. There’s a, uh, there’s a— there’s streetlights, they’re not like the gas torches that you might see in some of the more civilized towns in your world. They’re actual electric streetlights. And there are metal battlewagons, lots and lots and lots of them. And there’s a mobile in the sky, that uh, is carrying these different airships of different shapes and sizes and models that are circling this model version of Neverwinter. And it looks like an impossibly futuristic version of Neverwinter that you are now inside and as the doors open up, that three minute timer begins to count down.

**Magnus:** Uh, Lucas can you still hear us?

**Lucas:** It’s pretty cool, right?

**Magnus:** Yeah, so, what’s the deal? Like can you tell us about it now?

**Lucas:** Yeah, this is, this is my vision for Neverwinter and ideally any town. And, um—

**Magnus:** So not really an elevator though, right? Like we didn’t really go up or— Like it’s not like, this didn’t get us to a different floor so it’s a pretty shitty elevator, really.

**Lucas:** Well, it’s all semantics don’t you think?

**Magnus:** But it was more of like The Shrink Machine Into a Version of Neverwinter of Tomorrow.

**Lucas:** Well you did go down technically speaking—

**Magnus:** I mean yeah, but it didn’t really elevate us.

**Lucas:** ...Okay, but imagine, what if we could build a tower that could get smaller as you go up, so you can shrink in size and adjust your own size as you go up wouldn’t that be neat?

**Magnus:** I guess.

**Justin:** Outside the glass you guys can see Taako pretending to be Godzilla like stomping around. Like with little claws.

[Griffin and Clint laugh, Clint makes a groaning Godzilla noise.]

**Griffin:** Taako, Taako as you look down as they step out of this elevator all tiny like, you probably do feel a sense of, uh, grandiosity, looming over them.

**Justin:** Yeah, absolutely it’s great. More than usual, which is considerable.

**Clint:** And I bet he’s HUGE to us!

**Justin:** Gigantic.

**Griffin:** Yeah, he’s gigantic. Um, Taako, and actually, from your vantage point, you actually see something else on the outskirts of the town. The elevator is sort of positioned in the center, the Times Square of this, uh, of this, uh, display. Uhh—

**Clint:** And it’s a little statue of George M. Cohan.

**Griffin:** Actually you see a cockroach, that is now scurrying over buildings and moving very, very quickly towards the two of them.

**Magnus:** Damn it, Merle!

**Griffin:** And then suddenly—

**Merle:** I’m sorry! [sighs]

**Griffin: —**this cockroach is over the two of you, on the side of a, on the side of a nearby building. Uh, and you hear it hiss and rear up revealing two dripping, green fangs. Uhh and it hisses at you nastily and then you hear like that sound effect that means you just ran into a random encounter in a Final Fantasy game. And we’re off to the races.

**Justin:** I, uh, I— the moment that I see that happening, I turn on my heels and sprint back into the pocket tent because I forgot my sandwich in there, and then I rush back to where I can see really good.

[Griffin and Clint burst into laughter]

**Magnus:** Man, it’d be super cool if we had like, our wizard with us.

**Griffin:** Uh, roll for initiative.

[Dice rolling]

**Justin:** He’s with you in spirit. And in large.

[Griffin bursts out laughing again]

**Travis:** I rolled an 8 plus 2, a 10.

**Clint:** Oh god, I rolled a 4 but I get another roll. [Dice rolling] A 5.

**Travis:** You’re really bad at D&D.

**Clint:** [annoyed] I *am!*

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Uh, first in the order is Magnus. This thing is, uh, it’s actually not too high up because, again, you’re about the size of the buildings.

**Travis:** As a free action can I tell my shield about the roach that I squished earlier?

**Clint:** Oooh!

**Griffin:** You’re gonna have to make a bluff check—

**Travis:** Okay, what do I have to roll—?

**Griffin:** Oh, no, no, no it wouldn’t be a bluff check! It is actually a, ‘cause you actually did kill a roach it would be a, uh, charisma check DC10.

[Dice rolling]

**Travis:** That would be, uh, what if I roll a 10?

**Justin:** Hey, if you’re curious what my initiative would’ve been it’s a natural 20.

[Clint snorts]

**Travis:** Great.

**Griffin:** Tie goes to the runner.

**Travis:** Oh! Wait, charisma?

**Clint:** Don’t you add charisma?

**Travis:** Plus 1! Yeah, plus 1, 11.

**Griffin:** Okay, yeah, 11.

**Clint:** Woo!

**Griffin:** Okay yeah, the picture of a cockroach appears in your shield—

**Travis:** Super cool.

**Griffin:** —next to an armless robot and I think that’s the only thing you’ve …

**Travis:** Yeah, that’s the only thing I’ve done effective so far.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Justin:** Crystal monster? He tried crystal monster?

**Travis:** I tried to do crystal monster, but I failed.

**Griffin:** He tried but he fucked it up.

**Travis:** Okay, I’m gonna two-handed axe that shit.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay.

[Dice rolling]

**Griffin:** You’re attacking the cockroach?

**Travis:** Yeah, that’s 18 plus 7, 25.

**Griffin:** That is a hit.

**Travis:** Cool.

**Taako:** [high pitched, as though from a distance] Looking good!

**Travis:** Yes.

**Clint:** [laughs] Taako cheering on the sidelines!

**Taako:** You can get ‘em!

**Travis:** Ummm, cool, yeah. I’m gonna just attack, I’m not gonna do any of my special stuff. Uh, one D10 plus 6… [Dice roll] That’s 3 plus 6, that’s a 9.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay.

**Travis:** And then I’m gonna hit again with my second attack…

**Griffin:** Go for it.

[Dice roll]

**Travis:** That’s a nat 20!

**Griffin:** Holy shit! I forget what we do for that!

**Travis:** Me too!

[Griffin laughs]

**Travis:** Oh no… Critical hits: when you score a critical hit you get to roll an extra dice for the attack’s damage, roll all the attack’s damage die twice and add them together then add any relevant modifiers. Um.

**Griffin:** Okay so roll your damage dice and then roll it again and add the two results.

**Travis:** [Dice roll] That is a 6. [Dice roll] Plus 5, 11, uhh.

**Griffin:** Plus your modifier.

**Travis:** Yeah, plus 6 so that’s 17 so altogether with my two attacks it was 26.

**Griffin:** You’re good at hittin’ shit.

**Travis:** Yeah! It’s the only thing I’m good at.

**Griffin:** Uhh, yeah, uh, you take one of its antennae off. Just “hoomp”! You can see it drop to the ground, it’s pretty gross. And can I just say: quick thinking on the stomps, ‘cause this fight was gonna be much harder. [laughs] Uhh, but it isn’t—

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Clint:** Thank you!

**Griffin:** It is— it is the cockroach’s turn and he’s gonna scurry on top of the building that he’s kinda on the side of and then point down at the two of you and then a cone of green slime is going to spray out of its mouth—

**Travis:** Eww.

**Griffin:** —and comes towards the— comes towards the two of you.

**Justin:** Point of order, you said quick thinking, let’s call it what it was, which was a fuckin’ lucky break.

**Clint:** No! It was not!

**Travis:** It was a joke, let’s call it a joke.

**Justin:** It— it never crossed your mind that like “oh I’m gonna get small and fight them!”

**Clint:** Oh I saw that coming, cockroach—

**Travis:** You *saw it coming*?!

**Clint:** Oh yeah, yeah. I saw it coming.

[Justin laughs]

**Griffin:** Uhh, you guys are gonna roll a dexterity saving throw.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Clint:** Okay.

[Dice rolling]

**Justin:** Me too, or— no?

**Clint:** No.

**Travis:** I rolled a 16!

**Griffin:** No, you’re good.

**Justin:** ‘Cause I’m so much bigger than it?

**Griffin:** Actually go ahead and— did you roll? Go ahead and roll initiative Taako if you want.

**Justin:** I did and it was a natural 20.

**Griffin:** Uh, well, I forgot to drop you in but if you want to do something, um—

**Justin:** [laughing] I don’t!

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Uh, I rolled… my dex saving throw was 16, plus 2, 18.

**Griffin:** Daddy?

**Clint:** Yes? Oh, 12!

**Griffin:** Your dexterity saving throw.

**Clint:** 12.

**Griffin:** Okay, Magnus you, uhh, swiftly dodge to the side, stepping out of the way from this green slime which coats your short companion. Uhh and, uh, Merle you—

**Travis:** Do I get to do the thing with the shield that gives disadvantage?

**Griffin:** No, that’s for melee hits.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** This is a, uh, Merle, it is a bad feeling when this slime gets on you. A bad burning, bubbling acid-y feeling. Um, and you take…

**Clint:** In my tummy?

**Griffin:** Uh, on your skin.

**Clint:** Oh.

[Dice rolling]

**Griffin:** Ooofa-doofa! Uh, you take 19 points of acid damage.

**Travis:** Oooh mommy!

**Clint:** How did that get through my suit?

**Griffin:** It just— It just did. It permeated it, it soaked through it.

**Clint:** HOW CONVENIENT!

**Griffin:** Your suit is wet with acid, and it sucks.

**Clint:** Okay.

**Griffin:** But it didn’t burn any holes in it or anything like that. It’s a pretty great suit. Magical, one might even say. Merle, it is your turn.

**Clint:** Wait a minute, how many points of damage?

**Griffin:** Uh, 19.

**Clint:** Okay. I’m going to cast “Banishment” on the cockroach.

**Griffin:** Okay, you just gonna yell “GET OUT OF HERE COCKROACH I DON’T LOVE YOU ANYMORE”?

**Clint:** Noo my friend, Banishment is a spell where you send one creature that you see within range to another plane of existence. Target has to succeed on a charisma saving throw or be banished.

**Travis:** For good?

**Griffin:** No way you have this spell. This is some like—

**Clint:** I’m showing it to Justin.

**Justin:** Level 4 cleric spell, Banishment. He is sending that cockroach to another—

**Travis:** And are you using it against a *cockroach*?

**Justin:** Well, if you’re looking for uncharismatic targets—

**Travis:** That’s a good call!

**Justin:** —I don’t think you can do much better than a cockroach.

**Travis:** And he did just hit you for 19 damage.

**Justin:** Yeah I’d banish that fucko too!

**Travis:** So I don’t know why I’m turning my nose up at him.

**Clint:** Yeah, he can suck ol’ bub!

[Justin, Griffin and Travis burst out laughing]

**Clint:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** Uh, the spell lasts for, uh, one minute. Just making sure you know that. Yeah, that’s fine. Uh, uh, I will roll it. Okay so you’re trying to banish it to another plane of existence… [Dice roll] Uh, I rolled a 13.

**Clint:** Well I have 12 in charisma plus 3 which is 15.

**Griffin:** Uh, I don’t think that’s how it works. I think it’s your spell casting modifier which is still more than 13, so, okay, yep this— this thing, after coating you in acid, just goes: “sssssPOP!” and disappears, uh, being spirited away to a harmless plane of existence.

**Clint:** Thirty experience!

**Travis:** And now we just need to stand here for a minute while Merle concentrates.

**Justin:** Or why don’t you fucking dip.

**Travis:** Yeah we’re gonna get back into ye old elevator.

[Clint laughs]

**Griffin:** Okay, uh, the— you pop back into the elevator and the timer above that button says 1:30 on it and it’s counting down.

**Travis:** Cool. [pause] We wait, patiently.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay.

**Magnus:** Hey Lucas?

**Lucas:** Yeah?

**Magnus:** Was there anything else we needed to do in here besides get attacked by one of your janky-ass cockroaches because you don’t clean your elevator room?

**Lucas:** Yeah. Yeah that’s how it works, it’s my cockroach just ‘cause it happened to appear—

**Magnus:** It’s *your* lab! Clean your shit!

**Lucas:** Yeah my shit is pretty clean, okay? I don’t spend a lot of time polishing the elevators. My bad, I guess. Anyway, no, there’s not much else to do in there except appreciate my bold vision of the future, but I guess pearls before swine and all that.

**Magnus:** No, it’s super great. I love your shitty elevator and your weird glass town.

**Lucas:** Did you see the airships?

**Magnus:** Yeah that was great. You’re a real dork.

**Clint:** How much time left on the timer?

**Griffin:** Uh it’s at 45 seconds.

**Lucas:** I thought it was a nice touch.

**Magnus:** No, it was great. I love the way that they were there.

**Lucas:** Yeah, they were there. And, um, actually there was a way, if you climb up one of the buildings, you could’ve ridden—

**Griffin:** sssssPOP! The cockroach appears, it appears on the top of the building that it was on and it is— whose turn? Uh, Magnus it’s your turn, you’re in the elevator and this cockroach just appeared back on top of the elevator it was on, or, er, the top of the building it was on.

**Travis:** I am going to brace at the door of the elevator with my shield between the cockroach and us.

**Justin:** As this is happening you see Taako, uh, it looks like he’s trying really hard to open the glass that’s encasing the town.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** What, is there another sandwich inside the glass?

**Justin:** No, no, he’s *not*, but it looks— he's making a very convincing show of it.

[Clint laughs]

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Do you need to roll a bluff check there?

**Justin:** Yeah, I’m gonna roll a bluff check on them. [Dice roll] That’s an 18.

**Travis:** Alright.

**Magnus:** Well, we have— Taako’s doing his best, we just have to make it to get back there.

[Clint, Griffin and Justin laughing]

**Magnus:** We have to protect Taako!

**Griffin:** Uh, okay we’ll say you’re preparing an action, I guess, Magnus.

**Travis:** Yeah I’m going to push back if he tries to get into the elevator.

**Justin:** Is it attached by the way, out of curiosity?

**Griffin:** Uh, what?

**Justin:** The glass encasing the whatever.

**Griffin:** Yeah it kinda like, kinda comes down in like a funnel, the pathway that it came through, uh, like a glass funnel, that they travelled through in this elevator.

**Justin:** There really isn’t a lot I could do, really, without like raining shattered glass down upon them.

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay, next is the cockroach who is going to scurry your way. And I guess let’s do a, um... [sucks on his teeth]

**Travis:** Strength check!

**Griffin:** Yeah or a grapple check I guess? Which is just a strength contest, uh, [Dice roll] to see if you can buffet this thing away.

**Travis:** That’s a 22.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay, this is just to see if he can get into the elevator with you.

**Travis:** Correct.

**Griffin:** This is not his action. [Dice roll] Uh, that’s only a 14 from me. Uh, so yeah, this thing tries to get past you, you kinda push him back with your shield. And then he’s gonna take a— he’s gonna jump in and bite at your ankle with his pincers, Taako, or, er, Magnus. God, why do I keep getting you confused?

**Travis:** Well like from outside the thing?

**Griffin:** Uh, yeah.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Griffin:** He’s going to kinda like poke his head in through the elevator.

**Travis:** I gotcha.

[Dice roll]

**Griffin:** Uh, that is a 19?

**Travis:** Uhh, cool, cool. I’m trying to remember what the thing is… Oh yeah, the shield of heroic memories I get a plus 1—

**Griffin:** Yeah, to your AC.

**Travis:** Well, that’s only 19.

**Griffin:** Yeah, uh, and that is 9 points of damage as this thing bites, bites around your ankle and latches on with its pincers.

**Travis:** Okay. Oww.

**Griffin:** Um, Merle you’re up.

**Clint:** Okay, I’m gonna cast “Prayer of Healing” on me and Magnus.

**Griffin:** Okay. There’s about 12 seconds left on the elevator timer.

**Clint:** What part of the cockroach is inside the elevator?

**Griffin:** Uh, like half of it. Managed to get in. Magnus was like bracing the door with his body so only like enough to get in and get a good mouth around Angus. Or, uh, around Magnus.

**Clint:** Then I change my mind. [Dice rolling]

**Griffin:** [laughs] Okay?

**Clint:** Yeah, ‘cause, I have a funny feeling that he’s gonna block the elevator doors and we’re still not gonna be able to get out of here.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay.

**Clint:** So, I’m gonna hit him with Spiritual Weapon.

**Griffin:** Alright, what’s it gonna look like this time? This is so exciting for me.

**Clint:** It’s uh, it’s going to look like a great big golf shoe. A gigantic, spiked, golf shoe.

**Griffin:** Like a cleat? Like a cleat?

**Clint:** Yeah but with spikes, y’know like in golfing.

**Griffin:** [Laughing] Okay, I don’t know, but fine.

**Clint:** Well you’re not a golfer like me. Um.

**Griffin:** Fair.

**Clint:** So—

**Griffin:** A lie. A lie, but fair.

[Dice rolling]

**Clint:** [sighs and groans] Oh god, 7 plus 6 which is 13.

**Griffin:** Oh, no, you don’t—

**Travis:** I don’t think that’s your spell casting modifier.

**Griffin:** It— what, 6?

**Travis:** Hold on, I’m looking.

**Griffin:** Yeah, it is.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Griffin:** He’s got the Extreme Teen Bible that adds 1. But yeah the shoe comes down on this thing but it just kinda like gives it a kind of weird, like, shiatsu massage.

**Clint:** Okay.

**Griffin:** And then disappears.

**Clint:** Fine.

**Griffin:** Uh Magnus, or, uh, Taako it is you, uh, unless you choose to keep sandwiching down.

**Justin:** I, um, mmm…

**Clint:** Wave the sandwich! Try to distract him.

**Justin:** The sandwich is very good, it’s the one thing I—

[Griffin laughing in the background]

**Clint:** Yeah, but if you wave a giant sandwich, the giant cockroach is gonna want it!

**Justin:** I’m trying to find something that won’t…

**Clint:** You mean something you can pretend to be doing to help us?

**Justin:** Yeah. Mmhmm.

**Clint:** [whispering desperately] Wave the sandwich!

**Justin:** Uhh…

**Clint:** I start to pray.

**Justin:** That’s fine, I’m gonna cast um, a cantrip, called “Minor Illusion.”

**Clint:** Is that allusion with an “A”?

**Griffin:** Okay. Are you gonna make a like a—

**Justin:** That, uh, it creates a sound or an image of an object within range that lasts for the duration, this illusion also ends if you dismiss it as an action or cast this spell again. Uh, so behind him I’m gonna cast like a… another one, like a picture of, um, another cockroach? I dunno know, but it’s wearing a dress.

**Clint:** A really— lady cockroach.

**Justin:** Like a sexy lady cockroach and it’s wearing a dress. And um— that’s heteronormative, I dunno what the - what the cockroach’s thing is.

**Travis:** Whatever the cockroach is attracted to; it’s its greatest desire.

**Justin:** So like, yeah, it sees in itself, no it’s just like a-

**Griffin:** You create a sexual mirror of desire. That projects...

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** [laughing] That’s kind of sophisticated for you to make an illusion of.

**Justin:** It’s a sophisticated illusion. How ‘bout this then: it’s an illusion of a sandwich, that like, with, uh—

**Griffin:** It’s wearing a dress.

[Travis and Clint laugh]

**Travis:** It’s a very sexual sandwich.

**Justin:** It’s like a garbage sandwich that a cockroach would just go bananas for.

**Clint:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Okay, you create—

**Justin:** It’s like dancing and it’s like singing that “Let’s All go to the Lobby” song.

**Clint:** [singing] Let’s all go to the lobby~!

[Griffin and Clint laugh]

**Justin:** This is, this is important by the way, I am not risking my actual sandwich in any sort of distraction-based activity. I cannot risk it falling onto the ground in this filthy elevator museum. So I’m not, it is— I’m holding onto that thing with the grip of life. In fact if I need more than one hand to cast this presti— this particular cantrip, I am out.

**Griffin:** Okay, uh, yeah, you create a garbage sandwich, a dancing, singing garbage sandwich and the, uh, cockroach still attached to Magnus’s leg starts to scoot backwards but like doesn’t want to let go of Magnus’s leg. So let’s do another strength check as this cockroach tries to pull you backwards out of the elevator.

**Travis:** [Dice roll] That’s an 18 plus 7, 25!

**Griffin:** [Dice roll] Ah, that’s only an 11. Okay, uh, he can’t pull you backwards out of the elevator to take you back to his desired sandwich prize. And you hear him sigh and he sounds kinda bummed out.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Clint:** So does that mean… does he let go of him?

**Griffin:** No, he’s still holding onto him. The clock has about 6 seconds left on it.

**Travis:** Okay, I’m gonna free action put my shield away.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** I’m gonna grab um, let’s see, would it be better to pull off his legs or his mandibles?

**Griffin:** Oh my god, not again.

**Travis:** I’m gonna go for the mandibles, ‘cause I got my fletcher’s mitt and my magic punching glove so I’m not worried about his poison or whatever.

**Griffin:** Okay, yeah.

**Travis:** I’m gonna grab them and pull them apart.

**Griffin:** Alright, yeah, go ahead and wishbone this guy I guess.

**Clint:** [singing the classic Rocky tune]

**Travis:** That is a 17 plus 7, 24, folks.

**Griffin:** Yeah–

**Clint:** Shlooorp!

**Griffin: –**uh, these, these two curved, uh, pronged, acidic mandibles come right off your leg and right off the cockroach, who you hear hiss again, and he kinda rears back, and is- is uh, uh, uh. Actually the two of you make another dexterity saving throw ‘cause there’s just gonna be a little bit of gunk coming out of this guy now.

[Dice rolling]

**Travis:** That is a 12 plus 2, 14.

**Clint:** Uh, 10 plus nothing which is 10.

**Griffin:** Okay, yeah, you both, [Dice roll], both you guys take 4 acid damage as this thing’s produces, uh, an upsetting amount of goop, uh, as it rears backwards. But as it rears backwards, the doors, almost with perfect timing, shut, leaving this now sadly mandible-less cockroach back stuck in tiny town. And the elevator, Taako, you see it come up to the surface of the glass display case and return to its regular size. And the doors open, and as it does the lights inside of tiny town and the lights, those neon lights all over the elevator and even the lights in the museum shut off. And, uh, the three of you actually feel a jostle and your stomachs give out just a little bit as the lab very suddenly moves upward a little bit. And you hear Lucas chime in and say:

**Lucas:** Wow, great work guys! We just added a whole lot of time to the clock. I was able to give us an extra like 24 minutes, uh, that thing was using a lot of power.

**Magnus:** I’m gonna watch an episode of Parks and Rec!

**Lucas:** Yeah, you got the time for it. What did you think of my city?

**Magnus:** It was super great!

**Travis:** I put the mandibles in my bag.

**Griffin:** Okay you get these—

**Merle:** Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute! Let’s share the mandibles. There’s two of us—

**Magnus:** They’re my fucking mandibles.

**Merle:** No they’re not!

**Taako:** Hey wait, how do we split two mandibles three ways?

**Merle:** You don’t get any, sandwich boy!

**Travis:** I hug Taako.

**Magnus:** Thanks for everything you tried to do!

[Griffin laughs]

**Taako:** Uh, well, I—

**Magnus:** I saw you working your face off out here, really appreciate it!

**Taako:** Yeah, you see the sandwich?

**Magnus:** I did.

**Merle:** Thanks for risking your sandwich.

**Taako:** You know I’d never risk my sandwich don’t you ever say that. I was— just made a pretend sandwich for you.

**Travis:** I give one of the mandibles to Merle and when we put the mandibles together it says best friends!

**Griffin:** Uh, so the only other thing really of note in this room is the exit into the next arcane airlock, um. Really it’s providing the only source of illumination in this room now that all of the, uh, power has gone out in the, uh, The Magical World of Elevators.

**Travis:** Great, let’s do that.

**Griffin:** Okay, uh, yeah it pops open and you hop inside and it’s very similar to the last arcane airlock you were in. It is a brightly illuminated, white chamber full of white light and as you get in there’s another hissing sound as smoke comes out and—

**Travis:** Oh god!

**Griffin:** And uh, oh God we can’t do that every time, guys. There’s gonna be a lot of elevators, uh, there’s gonna be a lot of airlocks, we can’t snake it up each time.

**Travis:** Okay, but just know, folks at home, every time Griffin says “hiss,” just in your head, think “snakes”.

[Clint laughs quietly]

**Griffin:** And, uhh, yeah there’s another “Y” branch and there’s another sign hanging in between these two rooms right in front of you. Um, one of the signs is labelled “Radiation Ventilation Maintenance Chamber”.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Griffin:** And the other direction is labelled “Li’l Genius Buddy-Bot R’n’D”.

**Travis:** I feel like this is a trick. Like if we— why would Griffin make it a Y chamber when he so clearly wants us to go to the right. If we go to the left, maybe that takes us straight to Lucas.

**Clint:** I think he’s been playing Fallout. [chuckles]

**Justin:** I, uh—

**Travis:** It does sound like that.

**Clint:** Can we take a rest? I’m down to 20 points. 20 hit points.

**Justin:** Uhh—

**Griffin:** I mean you only got about 28 minutes.

**Travis:** How long is a short rest?

**Griffin:** Like an hour.

**Travis:** Whaaat?

**Griffin**: Yeah.

**Justin:** Don’t you have healing spells?

**Clint:** Yeah, can I cast one of my healing spells?

**Griffin:** Yeah, sure.

**Clint:** I’ll, uh, I’ll burn a “Prayer of Healing”.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay.

**Clint:** Actually, I can cast— Are you full hit?

**Justin:** I’m good.

**Clint:** Alright, I’ll cast it on me and Magnus.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** Alright, 5 plus 6, which is 11.

**Travis:** Great.

**Griffin:** ‘Kay.

**Clint:** Oh, wait, wait, wait 2d8, right?

**Griffin:** Tight.

[Dice roll]

**Clint:** 7.

**Justin:** 18.

**Griffin:** 18 points of damage, er, healing. What’s the opposite of damage?

[Justin snorts]

**Justin:** Love.

**Travis:** Non-damage. Undamaged?

[crosstalk]

**Griffin:** Now that you’ve been thoroughly undamaged, it’s time to make your choice.

**Clint:** What was— what was the one to the left?

**Griffin:** The Radiation Ventilation Maintenance Chamber, and the other one was The Li’l Genius Buddy-Bot R’n’D.

**Travis:** Okay, I feel like we’re supposed to go to the Buddy-Bot one because it’s the one that sounds fun.

**Griffin:** Go whichever one your tummy tells you to go to.

[Someone snorts]

**Travis:** What do you think, Justin?

**Justin:** Who’s Justin?

**Clint:** Taako!

**Travis:** No, this is OOC.

**Clint:** Fantasy Justin!

**Griffin:** I wanna—

**Justin:** Fantasy Just—? Oh do you want to speak to Fantasy Justin? Let me get him for you.

**Fantasy Justin:** Hello? You’re on the line-

[Clint laughs]

**Travis:** Which one do you think we should do?

**Fantasy Justin:** You’re on the line with Fantasy Justin, I understand you guys are playing some Dungeons AND Dragons.

[Griffin chuckling in the background]

**Fantasy Justin:** I would love to hear your queries, just—

**Griffin:** I take a ball out.

**Fantasy Justin:** Just press “3” if you want to hear what my fantasies are, and press “4” for a dice roll.

**Clint:** [sipping loudly] Just a little bit of coffee right now.

**Griffin:** And if I press the hangup button, does that end everything?

**Fantasy Justin:** Well, you’re charged per minute, so you are charged for your first minute.

**Clint:** Hi Fantasy Justin, long time listener, first time caller—

[Griffin laughing]

**Fantasy Justin:** Wow, caller, so good to hear from you. So…

[Griffin laughs]

**Clint:** We got a question out there and it’s from a “Maggie Nus.”

**Fantasy Justin:** A lot of people are saying, “Is magic real?” Well, the answer is yes, of course it is.

**Clint:** Magnus, go ahead, you’ve got Fantasy Justin on the line!

**Fantasy Justin:** Magic is real.

**Travis:** I hate both of you so much right now. [Griffin crying with laughter in the background] Should we go to the left or the right?

**Clint:** What do they think, Fantasy Justin?

**Fantasy Justin:** Coming up in the next hour: Peabo Bryson.

[Travis, Griffin and Clint burst into laughter]

**Fantasy Justin:** Ah man, nothing says love in a fantasy time like Pea-bo.

**Clint:** This is Yah Mo B There.

**Griffin:** “This is Fantasy Justin filling in for Delilah, who I killed and have taken over her life, The Talented Mr. Ripley style.”

**Fantasy Justin:** If you’re like me out there, you are just looking for that shoulder to cry on, and if you’re like me out there, also, you’re wearing Delilah’s skin.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Fantasy Justin:** Fantasy Justin, on the line.

**Clint:** And remember to put in the promo code “Fantasy Justin”.

**Fantasy Justin:** If you want 1-800-PROFLOWERS, to show the fantasy person in your life.

**Clint:** Let’s go to little Grody.

**Justin:** Yeah let’s go to the little Buddy-Bot.

**Griffin:** Li’l Genius Buddy-Bot R’n’D.

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Okay, uh, you place your hand on the door to the right. It opens and it reveals a much smaller room than the one you were just in. Uhh, it’s a circular room with a vaulted ceiling, and um, about fifteen feet high and it’s pretty dark in here actually. There is only a single light straight overhead that is shining down on a pedestal in the centre of the room. And the, uh, on that pedestal you see— almost kind of built into the pedestal, you see a... ADORABLE little robot.

**Travis:** Dibs!

**Griffin:** This little robot is, uh, he’s got like an LED display face, that right now is just showing two closed eyes and one thin closed mouth. Seems to be in idle mode. And it’s pretty cute-looking, except for one sort of problem, and that is this robot— and in fact pretty much the entire room— is pretty badly scorched.

**Travis:** Hmm.

**Griffin:** And he’s been blackened a little bit, uhh, but as you enter into the room and the airlock seals behind you, his eyes open up and plays a little powerup tune as he turns on. [Beeping tune plays, followed by the song “Oh Hey, It’s Hodge Podge!”]

**Griffin:** And he says:

**Hodge Podge:** Hello there! My name is Hodge Podge. Are you kids ready to learn?

**Magnus:** Yes.

**Taako:** Yeah, I could learn.

**Merle:** Sure.

**Hodge Podge:** Please say your names!

**Magnus:** Um, Magnus.

**Hodge Podge:** Magnus!

**Justin:** Is that what Magnus sounds like, gosh Trav, I’m really shocked.

**Magnus:** [In character voice] Magnus has had a bit of a sore throat lately!

**Merle:** Merle.

**Hodge Podge:** Merle!

**Taako:** Taako.

**Hodge Podge:** Tay-ko! Welcome, thank you for playing! Are you excited to learn?

**Magnus:** Yeah.

**Taako:** Yeah.

**Magnus:** Always!

**Hodge Podge:** Please select a difficulty setting: child, adult, or master.

**Magnus:** Chi— child!

**Hodge Podge:** Child accepted. Child mode activated.

**Justin:** I call, I call— before anybody else does anything I call Angus.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Angus:** Hey this is Angus.

**Taako:** Angus.

**Angus:** What’s up? What’s crackin’?

**Taako:** Are you— hey listen, are you down here? ‘Cause I can swear I’m talking to you right now.

[Clint laughs]

**Taako:** Are you down here?

**Angus:** No, I’m back in the Director’s office, we’re working on what that thing was, that crystal golem that attacked you.

**Taako:** A likely story. Do you have a brother? I swear to God there’s a little robot down here that—

**Magnus:** Did you sell your voice for like a robot company?

**Taako:** Yeah, did you sell your voice to a robot company?

**Angus:** I’m not— do you think I’m a robot?

**Magnus:** No!

**Taako:** Yes! A friendly robot.

**Angus:** No, I’m a flesh boy.

[Travis and Justin giggling]

**Merle:** Oh my God, that, it just gets worse!

**Taako:** That’s the worst way you can say—

**Merle:** A Flesh Boy?!

**Angus:** If, if you guys— I need to get back to work. Do you need something? Is it pressing?

**Magnus:** No.

**Merle:** Oh I’m sorry, are we inconveniencing you while we were about to get blown up and burned up!

**Angus:** Okay, help me help you—

**Taako:** Yeah, sorry, if we don’t want to talk to you, you disappear from existence, ask anybody! That’s how it works.

**Griffin:** Lucas chimes in through the pendant and he says:

**Lucas:** Oh, well, that’s, that’s Hodge Podge the Buddy-Bot, he’s there, he’s one of my inventions that I’m most proudest of. Um, because he’s gonna teach the youth of tomorrow to be, you know, sharp, like me! Um, we can’t have a better tomorrow if the children of tomorrow aren’t educated to be whip-smart adults. So I made Hodge Podge to sort of pass some of my intellect on to the future generations! He’s a real sweetheart.

**Magnus:** Cool, what’s he do?

**Lucas:** He just, y’know, quizzes you on stuff! And you learn, and you learn and you become smarter by being quizzed on stuff.

**Merle:** You get smarter?

**Magnus:** Uhhh okay, sounds pretty straight forward and uuuhgh *whataboutthefire*??

**Lucas:** What about the what?

**Magnus:** Fire?

**Lucas:** Oh. Oh yeah, that’s right! We had, the room was in R&D mode, we were doin’ some stress testing on him just to make sure, you know, before we release him as a commercial product that he can stand up to, y’know, enormous amounts of pressure, or—

**Magnus:** For when kids set him on fire.

**Lucas:** Well, yeah, if a kid put him in an oven we didn’t want him to, like, break immediately. He’s gonna be a pretty expensive toy, so the room has some stress testing capabilities, but just, like, don’t go poking around into the walls and you’ll be fine. Um, if you can actually run through his program, you’ll be able to shut him down and I’ll be able to remotely turn that room off. So, get to work!

**Taako:** Alright, yeah, child mode, Robbie.

**Hodge Podge:** Child mode activated, thank you for playing!

**Magnus:** Alright, little wonder, let’s do this.

**Hodge Podge:** Please select a category, kids.

**Magnus:** Thank you.

**Hodge Podge:** The categories are: math, science, magic, spelling, problem solving, history.

**Magnus:** So not—? Okay.

**Merle:** No movies?

**Taako:** Nothing about food?

**Hodge Podge:** Math, science, magic, spelling, problem solving, and history.

**Taako:** I’ll take magic.

**Hodge Podge:** We’ll start with magic. Child mode. Name a spell.

[Travis snorts]

**Merle:** Zone of Truth!

[beeping celebratory noise]

**Hodge Podge:** That’s right! That’s a spell… Discrepancy detected. Error detected. Please wait. Biometric scans show the three of you are not children.

**Magnus:** Well...

**Hodge Podge:** Difficulty setting changed to: Master.

**Magnus:** Well, hold on...

**Hodge Podge:** Please select a category.

**Merle:** If we’re talking about emotional growth?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Merle:** I’m really good at spelling.

**Travis:** I whisper to them:

**Magnus:** Spelling, or problem-solving…

**Hodge Podge:** Spelling selected.

**Magnus:** What?

**Merle:** What? No! Wait! Wait!

**Hodge Podge:** Please spell the name of the magical creature “aarakocra.”

[Justin laughs]

**Hodge Podge:** Please spell “aarakocra”.

**Magnus:** [after long pause] No.

**Clint:** … kocra?

**Magnus:** Um… E, R, I, C—

[beeping failure noise]

**Magnus:** Dammit.

**Hodge Podge:** Incorrect.

**Magnus:** Eric Kocra, I went to middle school with him.

**Hodge Podge:** Incorrect.

**Magnus:** No, I did.

**Hodge Podge:** Please wait.

**Griffin:** Uh, it starts to make a pretty horrific buzzing sound. And then—

**Merle:** [singsong] Here comes the fire…

**Griffin:** And you hear a, some almost like old dial-up beeps and boops coming out of him, and then you hear a pretty uh, much deeper and less friendly voice come out of him. And he says:

**Hodge Podge:** Accessing. R&D facilities. Accessing. Flame jets.

**Travis:** I reach down and turn my belt to fire.

**Griffin:** Ok. Yeah. You very quickly turn your elemental belt to fire. And you feel a wave of warmth wash over you, and then all three of you feel a wave of warmth wash over you as small holes open up in the room all around you, and jets of flame blast out of each one, uh, for about one second. You are wreathed in flame. So all of you, make a dexterity saving throw please.

[dice rolling]

**Travis:** Uh… ahoo. That’s not good. 7 plus 4… no 2… 9.

**Justin:** 17.

**Clint:** [hesitant, ashamed] 5.

**Travis:** Wow! Are you using the right die? Are you rolling a d6?

**Griffin:** Yeah these have been some real stinkers, Merle. Uh, one more time, what were those numbers?

**Clint:** 25.

**Griffin:** [laughing] No.

**Justin:** 17 for Taako.

**Griffin:** Ok Taako, you [makes a \*whish\* noise] you duck down real quick, you hide behind the pedestal and get out of the way of these jets.

**Travis:** 9 for Magnus.

**Justin:** At the last second, I lift up my sandwich to get a nice little toast goin’.

**Griffin:** [laughs] How long… you just nursing this sandwich?

**Justin:** Oh ha, this is the first sandwich I’ve ever encountered in the entire world *ever*.

**Clint:** And he’s Bogarting it.

**Griffin:** Fair.

**Clint:** The late Merle Highchurch rolled a 5.

[Griffin erupts laughing]

**Justin:** [laughing] In his final act.

**Clint:** Of defiance!

**Griffin:** Ooh. Ok. Merle you take 10 points of damage, Magnus you take 5 because your elemental belt gives you resistance.

**Travis:** Cool.

**Taako:** Ok so listen—

**Hodge Podge:** Don’t give up! I know the three of you can do better than that, don’t give up!

**Taako:** Ok next time, we don’t just have to fucking spell ok, we have like, skills and stuff. We can roll dice.

**Hodge Podge:** Please select— select a category.

**Magnus:** Problem-solving.

**Merle:** But first! Let me cast “Shield of Faith.”

**Justin:** What’s that do?

**Clint:** Shield of Faith. A shimmering shield appears and surrounds a… oh. A creature of your choice. No, that’s alright. I don’t wanna just cast it on me if I can’t protect everybody.

**Justin:** Aww.

**Travis:** Cast it on him. [pause] I don’t know why, but...

[Griffin laughs]

**Clint:** Go ahead, I’m sorry.

**Magnus:** Problem-solving.

**Taako:** Yeah try problem-solving.

**Hodge Podge:** Problem-solving.

**Merle:** [laughing] Yeah, ‘cause we’re really good at that.

**Hodge Podge:** Problem-solving. Master-level selected. Three houses oc cupy a lonely village in the wilderness. One house is red, one is yellow, and the other blue. The houses are occupied by three beings: a dwarf, an orc, and a human. One of those three owns the sharpest axe in the land. Another, the most balanced sword in the land. And another, the heaviest hammer in the land. Using the following clues, please tell me: the colour of each house from left to right, the occupants of each house, and the weapons of each person.

Your clues are: The dwarf and orc hate each other and refuse to be neighbours. The human lives in a blue house, the orc does not use swords, [talking faster] the yellow house contains the hammer, the human lives to the left of the dwarf, the red house is on the far left.

**Magnus:** One more time.

**Merle:** Eat me.

**Taako:** Please repeat the question.

**Hodge Podge:** Please give me your answer.

**Taako:** Repeat the question please, just once.

**Hodge Podge:** Waiting… your answer. Repeated questions are prohibited on master level.

**Magnus:** The… the…

**Merle:** Can you use it in a sentence.

**Magnus:** The order of the houses, from left to right, is red, yellow, blue; occupied by the orc, the dwarf, the human. Human has the hammer, the orc has the axe, and the dwarf has the other one.

**Hodge Podge:** Almost completely wrong.

[beeping failure noise]

[Clint laughs]

**Magnus:** Cool.

**Hodge Podge:** Of the matrix of answers you provided, you had nine options to be correct. And you got very few of them correct.

**Magnus:** Awesome.

**Hodge Podge:** I expected more from the three of you playing on master level. Why did you not choose a lower difficulty setting?

**Magnus:** To be fair, we did.

**Hodge Podge:** I will offer you a second chance.

**Merle:** The dwarf has to live in the first house. [crosstalk] The dwarf lives in the first house, the human in the second house, and the orc in the third house. Has to be.

**Magnus:** Yeah, ok…

**Merle:** Well that’s my part! Contribute!

[Justin laughs]

**Travis:** The human’s in the blue house...

**Justin:** So the human can’t be on the far left.

**Clint:** No, the human has to be in the middle. That’s the only choice. Human *has* to be in the middle.

**Travis:** Ok. Ok. [crosstalk] Ok. Got it, got it, got it. Ok. I know this: the order of the houses is yellow, blue, red.

**Justin:** Wait, wait from left to right?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Justin:** He said, the last clue’s that… red has to be on the far left.

**Travis:** Oh sorry that’s what I mean. Red, blue, yellow. Right?

**Clint:** The human is in the—

**Travis:** The order of the humans is orc, human, dwarf.

**Clint:** Orc, human, dwarf.

**Travis:** And the weapons I have no idea.

**Clint:** Well the human has to have the sword.

**Justin:** And the hammer’s in the yellow house, right?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Justin:** So the… it would be axe, sword, hammer.

**Hodge Podge:** Your answer, please.

**Magnus:** Ok. The order of the houses is red, blue, yellow. [celebratory beep noise] The order of the occupants is orc, human, dwarf. [celebratory beep noise] The order of the weapons is axe, sword, hammer. [super celebratory beep noise]

**Hodge Podge:** Congratulations. The three of you might just become geniuses after all. Like me, your buddy Hodge Podge.

**Magnus:** Thanks, Hodge Podge. You’re a real dick.

**Clint:** We completely broke character there. [laughs]

**Hodge Podge:** Please select a category.

**Merle:** How many of these damn things do we gotta answer?

[The song Hodge Podge starts playing]

**Hodge Podge:** Until you’re geniuses. Please select a category.

**Travis:** I attack him with my hammer. Or my axe.

**Griffin:** Ok.

**Travis:** [rolls dice] so that’s an 18 plus 7... 25.

**Griffin:** Ok. [Clint laughs] Roll damage.

**Travis:** Oh yeah. [rolls dice] Ten… that’s a 10, plus 6, 16.

**Griffin:** Uh, you actually only do 8 damage to him. Uh, and he says:

**Hodge Podge:** Oh, be careful, you’re playing [lowers voice] a little rough.

**Griffin:** And then the holes in the wall light up again.

**Taako:** [lightly] Ohhhh…

[The song ends]

**Griffin:** Another spout of flame shoots out at all three of you. Dexterity saving throws, please.

[dice rolls]

**Travis:** Uh, 16 plus 2, 18.

**Griffin:** Ok.

**Clint:** Lucky number 13.

**Justin:** [pauses] A— 2. [Clint laughs] Wait, wait… dexterity! I got a dexterity modifier, a— that’s a 6.

**Griffin:** Oh, well that doesn’t do it! Taako and Merle, the two of you take, uh, that’s 8 damage each. [Clint gasp-sighs] As you are wreathed in flames.

**Hodge Podge:** Play easy! You don’t want to [lowers voice] break me, do you.

**Merle:** [nervous]No…

**Magnus:** Oh wait, I have a great idea…

**Merle:** No! You don’t! You just had a horrible idea!

**Magnus:** I do! Hear me out! Hear me out!

**Travis:** I pick up my stone of farspeech.

**Magnus:** Angus.

**Angus:** Yeah? What’s up?

**Magnus:** I want you to just stay on the channel and listen.

**Angus:** Yeah ok, that’s great. Um, what are you doin’?

**Magnus:** Uh, there’s like a robot [pronounced “robit”] who’s asking us questions, and I want you to—

**Angus:** Oh, like a puzzle game! That’s my favorite!

**Magnus:** Yeah, I thought that might be the case.

**Justin:** Alright, can we just set the stone in front of the robot and can we leave? Or can we…

**Travis:** Yeah. We’re good now, right? Griffin, you can talk to yourself.

**Griffin:** The robot says:

**Hodge Podge:** Please select a category.

**Taako:** Spelling.

**Hodge Podge:** Spelling. I’ll give you another chance. Spell “aarakocra.”

**Griffin:** And Angus chimes in, and says:

**Angus:** Oh, guys, this one’s easy. It’s A-A-R-A-K-O-C-R-A. Tell him A-A-R-A--

**Magnus:** A-A-R-A--

**Angus:** K-O-C-R-A.

**Magnus:** [crosstalk] K-O-C-R-A.

[celebratory beep noise]

**Hodge Podge:** That’s right.

**Taako:** [phew]

**Hodge Podge:** Please wait. Error detected.

**Magnus:** Tits.

**Hodge Podge:** External communication detected. The three of you aren’t cheating, are you?

**Magnus:** No.

**Merle:** ...A little.

**Magnus:** *No!*

**Griffin:** The room starts to glow blue a little bit, and then you hear Angus go:

**Angus:** Hey, guys, is something going—

[outro music "Déjà Vu" by Mort Garson begins to play]

**Angus:** Guys is— I can’t— wrong wi— oh—

**Griffin:** And then the line goes dead.

**Travis:** Ok.

**Hodge Podge:** Now it’s just the four of us. It’s time to have [lowers voice] some real fun.