**Griffin:** So the three of you just died again. Oopsa-doodle. Um,

**Travis:** [crosstalk] What you gonna do, you know?

**Griffin:** Everytime you do that your K/D ratio goes down a little bit. And there will be leaderboards at the end of the campaign.

**Travis & Justin:** Awww maan.

**Griffin:** Keep an eye on that. You’re not gonna get the fun, uhm, killshot banners - I haven’t played Call of Duty in a while.

**Travis:** Griffin, what kind of achievements have we earned so far in this run?

**Griffin:** Not a whole lot, they’re mostly the ones you have to unlock to move through with the story. Most… improved?

**Travis:** Oh okay, I’ll take that.

**Griffin:** So you’re back in that white space after dying, and you see the old woman again. She looks exhausted, like she did while you were working your way through the mines sort of trial and error style. But she actually looks kind of pleased with you? And she says,

**Old woman**: You’re getting very close.

**Magnus**: Are we hot or cold?

[music starts]

**Griffin:** And then you fade out and wake up again. And you’re in front of Roswell, and you’re in front of the beautiful village of Refuge like you have woken up in front of just so so many times! World's your oyster.

**Travis:** Uhm, quick show of hands poll, even though we’re in an audio medium. Were we all cool with the quick-play of here's all the names and the people and skip this loop?

**Clint:** Yeah, I think so. Jump right up to the locker room? I just raised my hand, Justin has his up.

**Griffin:** Well, uhh, you’re gonna go back to the quarry?

**Travis:** No, I just wanna get through the Roswell exchange.

**Clint, in a deep voice:** The Roswell Exchange!

**Travis:** The Roswell Exchange, as it shall become known, in all the documents.

**Clint, in the same voice:** Protecting your investments!

**Justin:** [crosstalk] This is like, five minutes in. Okay, um, hmm. I was kind of hoping that we would have found a diamond by now.

**Travis:** [crosstalk] Yeah.

**Justin:** Because I feel like we need, at least, like a little more guidance. We definitely know what’s *destroying* the town, but we don’t have the faintest clue what to do about it.

**Travis:** I have an inclination to go try to talk to Isaak finally? Because we’ve heard a lot about him but we haven’t met him yet, and I feel like he’s got something to do with those barriers, but I also--

**Griffin:** [crosstalk] I will say this, re: diamonds, they are the currency in this town. So, it’s not like you have to find them in a mine, in the same way you don’t go to the like, US Treasury to get dollar bills from the printing press.

**Justin:** [Deadpan]You want me to get a fucking part-time job? What do you want? [Clint laughs.]

**Griffin:** I wouldn’t hate that.

**Justin:** ––Okay, I’m gonna get a part-time job.

**Travis:** You do have a strong connection with Ren.

**Justin:** Let’s go- Let’s go to- okay, yes, yes, let’s go to Ren.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Okay, I’m gonna go try to find Isaak, are you guys cool splitting the party?

**Clint:** I’ve got all the party points, so yeah.

**Justin:** Dad, do you wanna go with Trav, because he may need muscle, and uh, I’m just gonna trick people. Or do you wanna go with me?

**Clint:** Awh man, my first big choice. I’m rolling a die. If it’s odd--

**Travis:** Wait, shit! This is your *first big choice*? We’re playing this game for like 45 episodes!

**Clint:** I am, I am-- If it’s odd I go with Justin, if it’s even I go with Travis. [dice rolling] It’s even. I go with Travis.

**Griffin:** Okay! Um. Taako--

**Travis:** I lean into Merle,

**Magnus**: We’re just gonna go take a nap!

**Griffin:** Yeah, Merle and Magnus, I want you to think about how you would find this dude. Because like, you haven’t seen them anywhere. So I don’t know how you plan to accomplish that.

**Travis:** Okay, um.

**Griffin:** But we’ll get to that. Taako, we’ll start with you. You’re just rollin’ up to the Davy Lamp?

**Justin:** Yep, I’m headed in the Davy Lamp!

**Griffin:** Okay, you’re in there, and you’re in there so early that you actually see these two purple kerchief ruffian-lookin’ folks. And, they’re just, they’re drunk. They’re not like, threatening anybody, they’re just kinda drunk and they’re causing a scene.

And they’re talking about how shitty the bubble is and how they’re gonna pop this thing one way or another, and they got big, big plans. It’s kinda like that scene in Hamilton, “The Story Of Tonight”, only if everybody was like dicks. And they’re just talking about their big plans and their interests and stuff.

[Laughter overlaps]

**Justin:** Got it.

**Travis:** If everybody was literal wangs.

**Griffin:** And Ren looks kind of frustrated with these two folks. Otherwise, the scene is just as it was the last time. There’s a piano player playing some smooth ass jazz jams, the gambler and their--

**Travis:** [crosstalk] Did you say jock jams?

**Griffin:** Yeah, they’re playing jock jams on the piano. [short silence] And I’m leaving a silence here for what that sounds like. I don’t know if I’ll be able to learn how to play jock jams on the piano. I have twenty four hours until this episode goes up.

*[A piano version of jock jams does indeed begin playing]* The gambler and their goliath friend sitting at a table. Yeah, it’s the usual scene.

**Taako**: Uh, hello madam--

**Ren**: Oh my god. You’re Taako!

**Taako**: I am. I’m looking for uh an int--

**Ren**: I’m your biggest fan! I saw you play in the Underdark!

**Taako**: I, I-- Wait a minute, are you, are you Ren?

**Ren**: You remember me!

**Taako**: Little Ren? [Clint laughs] Oh, I can’t believe it, I remember you right there in one of the rows! In one of the seats, right?

**Ren**: Yeah, Row D.

**Taako**: Row D! That’s right!

**Ren**: Seat--

**Taako, mimicking**: Seat--

**Ren**: Seveeen–

**Taako**: Seeveen–

**Ren**: Teeen!

**Taako**: Teen! [Clint laughing] I remember that very well, I love playing the Underdark. How are you?

**Ren**: I, I’m doing okay, except I got a couple of these rowdy boys in here, and they’re trying to really cause a stink.

**Griffin:** And one of the rowdy boys says,

**Rowdy Boy**: [Drunkenly] Hey I don’t appreciate that! I’m just trying to tell everybody about my big, bold plans, and come along! Join the liberation brigade!

**Taako**: Well, listen, I have some business to discuss with you. Do you need me to get rid of those fellas?

**Griffin**: She says,

**Ren**: No, I think I’ve got it.

**Griffin**: And she pulls out that rod from behind the counter, and the two guys just draw on her kind of sloppily and she blasts them outside of the bar.

Over your head, they go flying out of the bar. And they are gone. She blows the gunsmoke off of the rod and puts it back under the counter.

**Taako**: There is no way you could have anticipated this, but that is exactly what I came here to see.

**Ren**: W-what can I you do for you Taako? What are you even doin’ here?

**Taako**: Well, I’ll tell ya! You remember the cooking show, so that’s sort of on… hiatus. Kind of a revamp we’ve got going right now. And in the interim, I decided that I wanna share what I know with the people of the world! And honestly, and you’re gonna find this hard to believe, but word of your magics has sort of gotten around. What you did just there? Really nice!

**Ren**: Thank you! I’ve been working on that, it’s kind of a new spell I’ve been working on, and it’s called… Jerk Remover! Jerkwad Remover!

**Taako**: Jerkwad Remover, yeah, I’m super impressed, can I be honest with you though? A little bit frank? Just a touch sloppy. A little bit. And you know this, right? I’m not telling you anything you don’t know. It’s a work in progress, right?

**Ren**: Yeah, I mean, it’s- I could have removed those jerkwads I guess a little bit faster, a little bit more efficiently.

**Taako**: Well, and there’s other magics, more subtle magics. Here’s what I’m gonna do, here’s what I’m workin’ on right now. I am going from town to town and holding some, hmm, I think you’d call them seminars.

[Laughing from multiple people]

There are, uh, sort of, they’re called Help Yourself, Cast Yourself, Into Ma- [laughing increases]. Can I finish? They’re called Help Yourself,

**Taako and Ren**: Cast Yourself,

**Ren**: Yeah,

**Taako**: Into Magic Legend. [laughing from Griffin]

**Travis:** It’s the use of the word cast that makes me think of every [does a commercial voice], have you ever wanted to be a model?

**Justin:** Yeah, that’s exactly right.

**Ren**: You’re talking about HYCYIML [Hii-key-mick-el]

**Taako**: Right. It’s called, yes, that’s what it’s called. I’ll have a better acronym soon. And hopefully you- Next time around I’ll have a better acronym. [laughing from multiple people]

**Clint:** Let me die once!

**Taako**: Let me die, and I’ll, uh, cook something up.

**Ren**: Um-

**Taako**: But anyway, so, it’s a seminar! It’s a one day thing, and I’m basically- I do it in a town *once*. But the only sort of hitch is, that I need sort of the payment upfront because I use it to secure venue and all the supplies I’ll need for the class.

**Ren**: How much is it? I would pay anything, are you kidding me?

**Taako**: Uh. How much- this is a weird question. [Griffin laughing] How much is a diamond? How many is that? Is that good?

**Ren**: Uh, when the bubble went up, the trading price was about 300 gold to one ounce. So,

**Taako**: Sure… of diamond?

**Ren**: Yeah.

**Travis:** Ditto, remind us. What was Paloma’s rate?

**Griffin:** It was one diamond for small prophecy, ten diamonds for big.

**Justin:** We can’t introduce weight of diamonds into this.

**Griffin:** [crosstalk] Yeah, we’ll say about one diamond is one ounce.

**Taako**: One diamond is 300 gold. Okay, so it costs one diamond. Can you believe it?

**Ren**: That ain’t very much at all! Okay, yeah!

**Griffin:** She opens up the till on the counter, and you can actually see this thing is chock-full of diamonds. Like, literally full of diamonds. If someone came in here and gave her diamonds she might actually have a hard time putting them in the till.

She fishes one out and flicks it in your direction. And actually, I think that gambler elf, and the goliath, the gambler stands up and says:

**Elf**: I think I would actually love to get down on this lesson as well. I’m always looking to hone my craft. Are you- Can you see multiple people at once?

**Taako**: It is best if I do that, now, how much magic do you know going in?

**Elf**: [laughing] Quite a bit, thank you.

**Taako**: Quite a bit, that was not the answer I was hoping for. [Griffin laughs.] Listen, the rate’s a little different for you, my friend.

**Elf:** Now that doesn’t seem fair at all.

**Taako**: I know! I know, but this is the way of magic, the arcane arts are a mysterious haze anyway.

**Clint:** You’ll learn that in the seminar!

**Taako**: In the seminar you’re gonna hear all about that. It’s uh, it’ll be nine diamonds!

**Elf**: Goodness, okay. Uh–

**Taako**: But here’s - here’s the best part! After the seminar- this is mainly to secure my venue and what have you- *after* the seminar, you get half of that back.

**Clint:** [whispered] wow!

**Elf**: That’s a great deal! Okay. [laughing from Clint.]

**Taako**: Yeah, it’s a great deal!

**Elf:** I’m skeptical but bored.

**Griffin:** They said, and you see them flip a part of their poncho to the side, revealing a coin purse. They also have like a badass looking wand in a holster at their side. And they open up that coin purse and hand you a fist full of nine diamonds.

**Taako:** Great! Oh, great! This is excellent. Now, listen, this is binding, so everybody has to promise me that you’ll show up tomorrow for the seminar. Does everybody promise?

**Elf**: This is a reservation fee then? I’m kind of confused about--

**Taako**: Right well, it takes place tomorrow, I wanna use today to get everybody together and we’re gonna start - cause you know, dawn's light and the effect that that has on magics?

**Elf**: No, I don’t, I have no idea what you’re talking– will this be covered in the seminar?

**Clint:** You’ll learn that in the seminar!

**Taako**: Hell yeah it’ll be covered in the seminar! Don’t get uppity now, you haven’t even passed 101!

**Griffin:** Ren takes out a little day calendar, and like, jots it down and says,

**Ren**: I can’t wait! I’m excited already.

**Taako**: Great! I do just have to say, my lawyers, this is funny, it’s gonna sound like a joke, but my lawyers have told me to say that if there isn’t a tomorrow this is null and void. But, [laughter] of course there will be a tomorrow! Right?!

**Ren**: Yeah, that’s a weird thing to even, hypothetical to even bring up.

**Taako**: [overlapping] For sure, for sure! So listen, everybody start working on your magics, and I’ll see ya bright and early first-, let’s meet up here! Tomorrow!

**Ren**: Yeah, I mean, I work here, so that’ll be great for me. Oh, and Ash is always here, so um, that should be great.

**Taako**: Great!

**Travis:** [crosstalk] Always here catching ‘em all!

**Griffin:** Alright. So you have ten diamonds, and you did that fairly quickly. We’ll say it’s about 11:10 or so. Magnus and Merle, hop over to you, what are you doing? How are you finding this-- How are you finding Isaak?

**Magnus**: Alright Merle, so I feel like. He’s got this big house, right?

**Clint**: Yeah?

**Magnus**: Character voices.

**Merle**: Yeah?

**Magnus**: And we haven’t been there... yet.

**Merle**: Right.

**Magnus**: So like let’s… go there.

**Merle**: D’okay!

**Magnus**: Yeah! Good planning!

**Merle**: On we go!

**Travis:** We take off down the road.

**Griffin**: Okay. You make your way to the elder’s manor. It is a fairly secure looking location, there is a kind of a barbed wire fence going around it. It’s a two story building, one of the only two-story buildings in town, and it looks pretty nice.

Through that fence, the fence is locked, you can see a big heavy metal door that looks like about the only entrance into the building, aside from some windows on the second story, that is heavily padlocked. It looks extremely secure. There’s actually a few locks on that big heavy metal door. And yeah, this fence is running the perimeter of the building.

**Magnus**: Merle, do you have any like, “detect life” or… like “find person” or “*where’s that dude”* spells?

**Merle**: I have been searching through my vast litany of spells [Griffin chuckles] and I can’t find anything like that anywhere in there. BUT, I do have a spell called Legend Lore.

**Magnus**: Okay?

**Merle:** Where all I do is describe a person and I get a brief summary of knowledge about that person. It can come from forgotten stories or secret lore. Maybe it’ll tell us something about him that’ll help us get in.

**Magnus**: Sure, why the fuck not.

**Merle**: Yeah!

**Griffin**: I don’t know, so that would be like for some sort of legendary character in history. I don’t know that that would apply to some dude in a small town that has been removed from time.

**Justin:** He’s the most prominent figure in the town though, there’s no legends or lore about him?

**Griffin:** I guess there would be, but it wouldn’t tell you where he is currently. That’s not lore, that’s just like information about where they are.

**Travis:** I would say, my keen D&D senses are telling me that we’re not supposed to go into the elder’s manor yet.

**Griffin**: I would also remind you that Paloma is literally built into this game for situations where…

**Travis**: [crosstalk] Yeah but, but Taako’s taking care of that.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Let’s see. He’s not at Helpington’s, he’s not at Davy’s Lamp, he’s not at the bank.

**Griffin:** Lemme do something, actually. While you all are checking out the elder’s manor, can you both make perception checks for me?

**Travis:** Yes. [sound of dice rolling] That’s a 1.

**Griffin**: Jesus.

**Clint:** [sound of dice rolling]That’s a 7.

**Griffin:** Okay. Nothing happens and it’s all good, don’t even worry about it, dawg. [Clint laughs]

**Travis:** Well, let me do an investigation check of the manor. That’s something I would do. [sound of dice rolling]. That’s a 20.

**Griffin:** Okay, um.

**Travis:** I’ve got no perception, but when I’m *trying*? I can definitely see stuff.

**Griffin:** I mean, that investigation check is so good that I will tell you there’s no lights on in the manor, you put your fucking ear to the ground, there’s no sound coming from the manor.

You use the Lens of Straight Creepin’, nobody’s come in or out of this manor for a grip of time. It has been a really long time since somebody has been in this building.

**Travis:** Cool.

**Magnus**: Merle, let me ask you a question.

**Merle**: [strong character voice] Fire away!

**Justin:** There it is.

**Magnus**: There’s a couple different places we haven’t checked out yet. The cave, the fallen temple, Stonefruit Farm…

**Merle**: Have we actually been to the clock tower? I mean, we’ve seen it blow up and burn up.

**Griffin:** There’s not much to the clock tower. There’s not an inside to the clock tower, I don’t think. It’s just a big, big old clock.

**Merle**: We haven’t been to the farm, right?

**Magnus**: You know what? Let’s go a different direction.

**Merle**: Okay.

**Magnus**: We’re gonna go to the sheriff's office.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Merle:** Right, where we’ve been and he wasn’t there.

**Magnus**: Yeah, just follow me on this one. Come with me on this one, won’t you?

**Merle**: Sure. Lay on, Macduff!

**Griffin:** Alright, what are you doing in the sheriff's office. Roswell, Roswell’s not there, Roswell's at the bank, where you just warned him to be. Warned them to be.

**Travis:** Now that we know what’s going on at the mining place, I say we grill the shit out of Cassidy.

**Griffin:** Oh, okay.

**Justin:** Yeah, they probably pass me on the way and I’m juggling diamonds and, like, shaking my butt at them. [Clint laughs] Like, I’m done.

**Magnus**: Taako, what are you gonna go do?

**Taako:** Yeah, right, absolutely, see you there! [Griffin laughs]

**Magnus**: Okay.

**Griffin:** Uh, okay. Let’s finish up this thing, and then we’ll do Taako. Alright, you’re grilling Cassidy?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Griffin:** Alright, you walk in and she just instinctively like,

**Cassidy**: GERBLINS!

**Magnus:** Yeah, okay great. Listen,

**Cassidy**: WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOIN’ IN MY HOME?

**Travis:** I wanna do an intimidation check.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Magnus**: Shut the fuck up.

**Griffin:** Alright, roll. You gotta roll it you can’t just say a lewd word. [sound of dice rolling]

**Justin:** He should say it, though, it’s good to know what kind of intimidation check we’re dealing with.

**Travis:** 15, plus 5, it’s a 20.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Cassidy**: Okay!

**Magnus**: Look me in the eye, Cassidy.

**Cassidy**: Here comes my peepers, put ‘em right on me.

**Magnus**: We’ve been down in the quarry.

**Cassidy**: Wha?

**Magnus**: We’ve seen the traps in the lockers. We’ve seen the smoke that eats flesh--

**Cassidy**: [overlapping] What are you talking about traps in the lockers?

**Magnus**: I think you know exactly what we’re talking about.

**Cassidy:** Better not be in my locker!

**Magnus**: You buried a cluster bomb underneath some brush outside the quarry, am I right?

**Cassidy**: I did do that, that one is on me.

**Magnus**: Because you wanted to get back into the quarry.

**Cassidy:** Yeah.

**Magnus**: To find something out, right?

**Cassidy**: Hey, who are you?

**Magnus**: That doesn’t matter right now, Cassidy. What matters is that you tell us the truth.

**Cassidy**: I ain’t telling you shit! I don’t know you from Jake! From Statefarm!

**Griffin:** You’re gonna have to come up with some way of convincing her to tell you. You can’t just Batman growl at her and expect the truth.

**Clint:** I have another suggestion. I CAST ZONE OF TRUTH!

**Justin:** Hell yeah you do!

**Clint:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** Okay. She has to roll a wisdom saving throw.

**Clint:** [laughing] Scooby-o-bop-diddy-o-bob!

**Justin:** Super Effective!

**Griffin:** That was actually a 14? Does that,

**Clint:** Nope! Not enough.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** Trust me.

**Griffin:** No, you’re right. I think it’s 8 plus your spellcasting modifier so that won’t do it.

**Cassidy**: Okay! I feel compelled to now tell you my story of the quarry. My quarry story is what I call it! [Travis laughs]. I don’t call it that, I’ve never told my quarry story–– why would I need a catchy name for the quarry story.

**Magnus**: [crosstalk] Okay. Just go ahead and do that, please.

**Cassidy**: So, yeah, the mine went dead a few months ago, we lost the motherlode. I was part of a small team of people that were working down there just trying to find a new vein of diamonds to try and keep Refuge alive. Try to save up some diamonds so when the bubble comes down we can all have fat stacks and retire rich!

So I was down there with a small team of my dedicated buddies and we were digging too deep. And uhm, we found something down there. Down by where the edge of the bubble was. We found like, a nest. A big nest, had this big nasty worm in it. The nest looked like it had been cut in half by the bubble, look like it had been somehow cut up.

And then the momma, that big worm, that big nasty worm, it woke up. And, it killed my friends, and I managed to get out. And as I was getting out I saw something happen to it where it just kinda got stopped, kinda got stuck. Then I hit my head on a big rock! Woke up here in jail. ‘S the damndest thing.

**Magnus**: And you didn’t see anyone on your way out? There wasn’t anyone else in the mine?

**Cassidy**: I noticed some sort of, this is gonna sound stupid but like, just a shadow? Of a man? And I saw it, and he had his hands up, and honestly that’s what spooked me and I ran and bumped my head and ended up here in this jail.

And they said I blew up the temple, that’s just crazy talk, that ain’t true, that never happened. Try again!

**Magnus**: Wait, what about the temple?

**Cassidy**: They said I -- that’s what I’m in here for, they accused me of blowing up the temple. Cus I’m, I mean, that is sort of my character, I blow up shit like all the time. I’m the best there is or ever was at it. So when something gets blowed up, like everybody turns to ol’ Cassidy. But to me I think that’s racism? I never, I don’t know what that is–

**Magnus**: Okay, great great great, what is, what’s the deal with the temple? What is the temple?

**Cassidy**: I guess it got blowed up, I haven’t had a chance to get out of here and–

**Magnus**: Cool, before it got blowed up, Cassidy. Like, what was it? [Clint laughs]

**Clint:** The non-blown up version of the temple.

**Magnus**: Pre-blown up.

**Cassidy**: Oh, yeah, it was just a lil, it was kind of a small temple, it was opened up by these two bros and um, it was like all about- It was to a god named Istus? Is what they said, Istus, maybe Christmas? Isthmus? Bis- Biscuits?

**Magnus**: That was probably it.

**Merle**: Oooh, biscuits.

**Magnus**: Um, Cassidy, where would I find Isaak off the top- if you had to guess. Where’s he hang out?

**Cassidy**: Uh, I don’t know man. I would say here, this is like, his house I guess? Naw that doesn’t make sense, this his workplace. Damn it, Cassidy.

**Clint:** Could you work a land o’ Goshen in there somewhere?

**Travis:** Yeaah!

**Clint:** Just for me.

**Travis:** Or a “By gum.”

**Clint:** Oh, yeah.

**Cassidy**: I don’t buy gum, I rent! [Travis laughs] I’m having fun with you gerblins.

**Magnus**: Okay bye!

**Travis:** Real quick, before you hop over to Taako, can I with my Lens of Straight Creepin’ see Isaak-y footprints anywhere? Or anything? From the sheriff's office?

**Griffin:** No. You don’t, no. I don’t even know if that’s how the Lens of Straight Creepin’ works. But no.

**Travis:** It’s not, but you know, we make up the rules. There’s no rules in D&D.

**Griffin:** Taako, are you going to Paloma?

**Justin:** Is there a shop in town?

**Griffin:** There is, there’s Helpington’s.

**Justin:** Yeah, I should just go to Paloma’s. ‘Cause nothing I buy is gonna stick anyway.

**Griffin:** It’s up to you, dawg.

**Justin:** Yeah, I’m going to Paloma.

**Griffin:** Yeah, you go to Paloma’s hut in the woods, and you knock on the door and you hear–

**Paloma**: Come iiin!

**Griffin:** I’m gonna try to really nail this accent down this time, ‘cause I listened to that last episode and I was embarrassed.

**Justin:** Just wrangle that bad boy into the ground.

**Clint:** [crosstalk] Is that the Bork voice?

**Griffin:** Uh, yes, and then- so you come inside, and there’s Paloma, and–

**Travis:** Wait– hold on. You know her name’s not Bork, right?

**Griffin:** What?

**Clint:** Is it Ba-jork?

**Travis:** [laughing] It’s not Bork.

**Griffin:** Oh god, okay, see, I just agreed to what dad said without really processing what it was that he said [**Clint:** Yeah!], and what he said was the name “Björk” as “Bork”.

[Justin dies… dead]

**Clint:** Well– yeah. You gotta watch that shit, Griffin!

**Justin:** Bork! [still dying]

**Griffin:** I was almost an accomplice in that heinous act.

**Clint:** Well, maybe I was thinking of former Chief Justice Bork, did y’ever think of that?

**Justin:** Bork! [Giggles.] Okay– [Giggles more]

**Travis:** Bork is the only nameplate that Björk can find at like, tourist-y places.

**Justin:** [imitating Björk] Can you believe that someone already got B-J-O-R-K, is who I am, Björk. It is on a sedan, lifted by four gooses. There’s a plate that says Björk– Bork– very embarrassing.

[Laughter overlapping previous]

**Griffin:** Uh– okay, Taako, you see Paloma, and she looks you over, and says–

**Paloma**: We met already, yes?

**Taako**: We did, actually, yeah– good to see you again.

**Paloma**: We can skip the niceties, it seems like you’re in a hurry.

**Taako**: Listen, skipping niceties is our specialty [pronounced spess-e-ality].

**Paloma**: What do you need? Big, small, prophecy; tell me, what?

**Griffin:** Okay, let’s make this a little bit easier, and retcon, and say that Ren gave you two diamonds, so you have eleven, ‘cause I don’t think it makes much sense for you to have ten and have to pick and choose.

**Taako**: Uh– you know what, I’m gonna treat myself. To both.

**Paloma**: Which first?

**Taako**: Ah, let’s go big.

**Griffin:** She, uh, says “Okay!” and takes the diamonds, and sits you down at the table, she says–

**Paloma:** Do you need a- Would you like a treat? I just popped out a cranberry scone from the oven, it tastes so good, and it’s creamy, and berry-ey-ey-e*yyyy*–

**Taako**: Bork, you know I’m gonna eat a cranberry scone.

**Griffin:** She slides a plate across the table to you, and it’s a fucking… *good* scone, dawg!

**Taako:** Uh, you know what, I like here, I can see here at the bottom, you’ve got the bake on this perfectly right, this is hard to nail exactly without burning the outside, still keeping some of the interior softness. Did you use a cold butter and, uh, cut it up? Or, uh, did you go room temperature?

**Paloma:** I- mostly just scone magic!

**Taako:** [disappointed] Oh. Okay. This isn’t quite the in depth cooking conversation I was hoping to have.

[laughing]

**Travis:** Don’t eat that, Taako.

**Griffin:** Don’t eat that, Taako, that’s a bad bake, Taako. No, it’s a good bake. Okay, uh yeah. She sits you down and while you nibble away at this scone-

**Justin:** I’m not nibbling away, as near as I can tell, this is the first time I’ve eaten in two years.

[All laugh]

**Justin:** There is no nibbling to be done. Travis got to eat a magic stone, I think, once.

**Travis:** And I’m all full up for the next two years.

**Griffin:** Uh, okay, while you’re devouring this scone, one of the bigger crystal teardrops on the ceiling sort of naturally unties itself from the string holding it to the ceiling, and it falls, and it shatters on the table, and this cloud of smoke appears, and it’s actually a much bigger production than the first small prophecy you got- I guess, a couple episodes now from Paloma, and in this cloud, it looks like it’s a movie being shot in first person, and all you see are tracks, like, almost like train tracks or something?

With a, like, light cast down on them and they’re just like sorta flying towards you, and Paloma like looks up at this thing, and in this vision of the tracks, you see a two way junction come up, and then the picture just kinda stops as soon as the cart hits that junction, and Paloma leans right into you, Taako, and grabs your face and squeezes your face-cheeks, your face-cheeks together, and gets really close, and says:

**Paloma’s Prophecy Voice**: Turn right!

**Griffin:** She says.

**Paloma’s Prophecy Voice**: [faster] Turn right!

**Justin:** Okay, I turn right.

**Griffin:** She gets like really, like nose-to-nose.

**Paloma’s Prophecy Voice**: (whispers) *Turn right.*

**Justin:** Okay, I turn right.

**Travis:** Wait, and that’s the *big* prophecy?

**Justin:** You don’t hear any of this, shut your mouth.

**Clint:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** (crosstalk) And, the smoke dissipates.

**Justin:** This is my prophecy, I earned it through lying.

**Griffin:** The smoke dissipates, and she says:

**Paloma**: Sorry, I got kind of aggro there.

**Taako**: It happens.

**Paloma**: I don’t really control what happens when-

**Griffin:** And, as she’s talking, a second big crystal unspools itself from the ceiling.

**Taako**: Whaaat?

**Griffin:** And this one looks different from the first one, all the others ones here are kind of, uh, clear, with like, a little bit of illumination inside of them, this crystal is-

[music starts. It sounds like the theme song, but a little slower]

**Travis:** But this one has a beard.

**Griffin:** This one is, um, this one is, like, pitch black inside, save for these strands of bright red and yellow and green, they’re just flashing around on the inside. And she looks up as she sees this crystal start to lower, and says:

**Paloma**: Oh my God, what?

**Griffin:** And it falls and shatters on the ground, and you see, um, you see like a- two side-by-side visions in this black cloud that appears as it shatters on the table. The first one just looks like an ocean made out of tar, with a black sky above it, and this tar is, like, bubbling, and you see some stuff moving under the surface of the tar, but you can’t like make out what it is, and that’s on the left picture.

And the one on the right is just a grey world, covered in like ash, that is just completely barren and lifeless. And Paloma looks up over this black cloud, and she looks like completely- when she’s done her other prophecies, it kinda looked like she was having this out-of-body experience, now it looks like she is just a baker possessed. And she says in this deep voice, she says:

**Paloma’s Prophecy Voice**: In the future, you will be offered a terrible choice between two options that will determine the fate of reality itself. In this moment of crisis, remember. There is always a third option.

**Griffin:** And then the smoke dissipates, and it’s gone. And she slumps back in her chair. And she looks kinda winded. And I think she silently reaches over and fishes a scone out of a little bowl, and starts to nibble on it.

[music fades]

**Taako**: One more time?

**Griffin:** The prophecy?

**Taako:** Yeah, could you just do it again? I spaced.

**Paloma**: I can’t do it again, what are you talking about? That almost killed me, that was horrible! I can’t just do it again, it was just the one crystal and it fell and broke! Were you not paying attention?

**Taako:** Now, I have a question for you, interesting question. If we were to die, God forbid, or Pan forbid, I guess, if we were to die and come back tomorrow, would that crystal be fixed?

**Paloma**: What are you talking about? “Die and come back tomorrow?” Yes, I guess so. I don’t know - That’s - again - that’s kind of a weird hypothetical, Taako.

**Taako**: It’s a little bit esoteric. Hey, let me get that small prophecy from you, if you still got some juice in them old bones.

**Griffin:** She says,

**Paloma**: Oh yeah, small prophecy is easy. I burp and small prophecy happen.

**Griffin:** She snaps her fingers, and a small crystal falls down and shatters, and she says:

[music begins]

**Paloma’s Prophecy Voice**: You are close to your goal. But you are missing what you need to break the barrier.

**Griffin:** She says,

**Paloma’s Prophecy Voice**:You will need divine intervention. You will find it at the Temple of Istus.

**Taako**: Alright!

**Griffin:** Do you guys want to regroup?

**Justin:** Yeah. I think we should regroup at the, at the Temple.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** Woop-woop-woop-woop-woop-woop! [time travel noise]

**Griffin:** It’s about 11:30 at this point, so the earthquake happens while you all meet up back in town. Uh, and while you meet up, I think you walk past Roswell, and Roswell’s like,

**Roswell**: When are you guys supposed to go to the quarry? You told me to wait here and you would go to the quarry. What’s going on? What’s with the plan?

**Magnus:** Alright, listen. We’ve been to the quarry. There’s a big bad down there.

**Roswell:** What are you talkin’ about?

**Magnus:** I need you to find Isaak.

**Roswell:** You’re giving me a lot of mixed messages right now, because you told me to wait here because the bank was going to get robbed. And then you- now you’re telling me to leave the bank?

**Magnus:** Yes. Get everyone out of the bank, tell ‘em they’re closed for the day. Tell them it’s a bank holiday, it’s… Happy Hug Day, or whatever, and go find Isaak and meet us at the Temple.

**Roswell:** It is Hug Day, like. It is Hug Day, so I don’t, like, we have our own sort of holidays that we made up because we’ve been in this bubble for a while, and so Hug Day is one of them. So yeah, that tracks.

**Griffin:** Roswell says. And says,

**Roswell:** Okay, uh, I’ll- what should I do when I find him, bring him back here? What do you want me to do?

**Magnus**: Bring him to the temple. Meet us at the temple in twenty minutes.

**Roswell:** Okay. Sounds good.

**Griffin:** And Roswell runs off, uh, towards- probably towards- back towards the Sheriff’s Office, and you make your way up to the Temple. So this involves a little climb, there’s, like, a small ramp, almost like the ramp you took down into the quarry that leads up, uh, to this plateau, and once you’re up there, you can overlook all of Refuge, and you can really see, like, how fairly small this little village is.

Um, and you can really see the big patch of woods behind the Elder’s house that leads back to what looks like a small little bit of almost like an orchard. That, uh, it looks like it has also been vivisected by this bubble, and there’s only a small portion that remains in the town. And, uh, behind you, on the plateau, is what remains of this Temple.

Um, which I will describe as soon as I find that part of my notes. Y’all are doing shit like, wildly out of order at this point, and I love it, but it is very hard to keep straight. Um--

**Justin:** Okay, okay, uh, point of order, you just had an old lady tell me to come here, so like, you’re gonna have to--

**Griffin:** Yeah,

**Justin:** --take some ownership of this,

[Clint laughs]

**Griffin:** So this temple, uh, that Cassidy has been accused of destroying by- of exploding, uh it’s definitely fallen. And what-what is left of this temple tells a story of its-its former glory.

It looks like an old, like, California Mission-style church, with terracotta walls, um, that, uh, comprised a single large sanctuary space, with massive double doors that overlook the town. Um, Magnus, you’re kinda picking out these architectural details, despite the fact that--

**Magnus**: Look at the joists!

**Griffin**: --the building that yeah, despite the fact that most of this building is on the ground, like you can see the space where this massive sanctuary was. The doorframe is still standing. Um, but like very little of the building is. Uh, you can see at the front of the temple over this teetering doorframe you can see that there’s some wooden framing that would’ve supported this steeple that has collapsed through the side of the building. Um, that steeple has a circular indentation, that used to hold a clock face, that’s currently laying on the ground.

You’re assuming it’s a clock face, the numbers on it have almost completely worn off, um, the only, uh, the only signs of its, like, former function are these clock hands which- they’re- they're rusted to hell, but they look like they were, at one point, these beautiful, intricately woven, sharp-looking hands of the clock. So it’s just like every part of this temple is-is on the ground, and just beat to hell.

**Magnus**: Um, Merle? Do you know anything about Istus?

**Griffin**: Merle about to make his first religion check.

**Merle**: I know Istus of Panama!

[Snickers]

**Magnus**: Cool.

[Merle sighs, audibly]

**Merle**: Uh--Yeah, I’ll make a religion check.

**Travis:** Look out. Stand back!

**Merle**: [Unintelligible] -my religion. What do I-what do I do?

**Griffin**: You have a skill that’s called--

**Travis**: [overlapping] Roll.

**Griffin**: --religion.

**Clint**: Yeah.

**Griffin**: You just roll a d20.

**Clint**: Aaright! Here we go!!

[Dice clatter]

**Clint**: 13! Plus 3, for religion. 16!

**Griffin**: Um, yes. Istus, you-you recognise the name, it’s a fairly-it is a less trafficked goddess, she’s not so, like, not a lot of people are worshipping Istus, but she is called the Lady of Fate, um, in, most circles.

And she’s represented by a woman who kinda moves between these different ages, uhh, and is sorta, in summary, sort of thought of as, like, the keeper of fate and time.

**Clint**: I’m impressed with the amount of knowledge I have about this entity.

**Griffin**: Yeah. You also notice a--

**Clint**: How the-how did I spell her name?

**Griffin**: Uh, I-S-T-U-S.

**Clint**: That’s what I thought.

**Griffin**: You also recognise a sigil, on this doorframe, that again, is really super tarnished but you make it out to be the-the sigil of Istus.

**Travis**: And Ditto, is it so collapsed that we can’t get into it? Or--

**Griffin**: There’s- I mean- you can walk over- you can step over the wall and get into it, there’s just like not.... really a lot... there to get into? Y’know what I mean? You can see like the floorboards. Like, you can step over those and be in the building, but it’s like, most of it has just completely collapsed.

**Travis**: Okay, well I’m gonna do an investigation check, I guess, and see if there’s anything important here.

**Griffin**: Okay!

[dice rolling]

**Travis**: Uh, so 16, plus nothing, so 16.

**Griffin**: With that investigation check, like you don’t see any signs of life, there haven’t- there hasn’t been anybody here in this building for what looks like… like a thousand years. Um, and with that investigation check I will also tell you, you don’t see like scorch marks. You don’t see… nothing has been like shattered and broken, it’s just kind of… fallen apart? So, you don’t see signs of an explosion, um, which is weird considering Cassidy is in jail presumably because she blew up this- this temple, um, you don’t see any signs of, like, a bomb going off or an explosion or anything.

**Travis**: Is there anything else about the clock? Like, where are the hands pointed?

**Griffin**: That is a good question, I think the hands - I mean, it’s some innocuous time like 7:15 am.

**Clint**: Don’t I have something where I can call on a deity? Or is it just my deity?

**Griffin**: I think it’s just yours.

**Clint:** Poop.

**Griffin:** I don’t think you have a cell phone, like, you can call up Istus-

**Travis:** Beep beep boop boop.

**Griffin:** -and she’s like ‘new- new phone who dis?’

**Travis:** Okay, I have an idea.

**Griffin:** ‘kay.

**Travis:** I would like to step into the middle of the ruins.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Travis:** And I would like to close my eyes and quietly say a prayer to Istus to guide our fate.

[Justin snickers]

**Griffin:** Um-

**Clint:** Ain’t that kinda my gig?

**Justin:** Yeah, I would say that maybe you should let, uuuh, the- the priest do that.

**Griffin:** Why don’t you all do a quick group prayer?

**Travis & Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Just hold h-

**Clint:** Can we hold hands?

**Travis:** [crosstalk] Can we hold hands?

**Clint:** Yeah.

**Justin:** Yeah, perfect.

**Clint:** Just like church camp. Um,

**Travis**: [singing to the tune of “Our God Is an Awesome God”] Our God is an Istus God!

[Clint laughs]

**Griffin:** Uh, okay. Uh,

**Merle**: [out of character voice] O Holy Istus, hear the plea of us, --

**Justin:** Mhm.

**Merle**: -- your Earth-bound servants as we try to keep all hell from breaking loose in this lovely town… that’s kinda shitty looking.

**Taako:** And please cure my friend’s voice--

**Merle**: [in character voice] And then--

**Taako:** -- so that he sounds --

**Merle**: -- beam down upon us --

**Magnus:** It’s a miracle!

**Merle**: -- your fate, your fate-changing beams of power and just [in a strangled voice, like crying] love us and let us love each other. Amen.

**Justin:** [laughs]God, that was powerful! [laughs again]

**Griffin:** Um… A… Nothing happens.

[Justin laughs]

**Clint:** Shit!

**Griffin:** And then there’s this, uh, a breeze, um, that comes through, uh, and it- it’s a nice, soothing breeze. Again, it’s kinda sticky here, uh, very humid. Your shorts are helping out some with that but it’s just a sticky place. Uh, but a breeze comes through, and it feels nice, and it blows some of the uh, dust up from the floor and [clicks tongue] a...A small, white piece of cloth that, uh, looks like it just kinda rotted off one of the, uh, curtains that are laying on the ground starts to get blown around in this wind and you see it just start to float effortlessly on this wind away from this church, and you see it blow up and to the northwest a little bit, uh, towards, you can see in the distance like it’s flying towards the cave.

**Travis:** I follow it.

**Griffin:** Just Forrest Gump style?

**Travis:** Yup.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Travis:** [singing beginning of “Flight to Neverland” by John Williams, which sounds similar to the theme from Forrest Gump by Alan Silvestri] doo-doo doo-doo doo-doo-di-doo-di- oh that’s Hook.

**Clint:** [exaggerated Jennie Curran voice] Run, Magnus, Run!

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** Okay, are you all going to the cave?

**Justin:** Probably, yeah.

**Clint:** Not, not as fast as--

**Justin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** --Magnus, but…

**Griffin:** Yeah. I do love Magnus chasing things, that’s like one of my favorite things from this game, and now you’re just chasing a rag that is flying through the air.

**Justin**: [laughs]

**Travis**: And I wanna- I wanna be clear: I’m doing it full on like kid-trying-to-catch-a-butterfly style, y’know, like, like, my, I’m just arms akimbo, running, so happy.

**Griffin:** Giggling, yeah. Uh, okay, yeah.

**Justin:** [laughs]

**Griffin:** You make your way north, uh, to this cave, which is also up on the plateau. Um, it is tucked away into like this outcropping, like a, almost like a second plateau on top of this plateau, uh, that- that is fairly large, uh, and ends at the bubble.

Um, and you go in this- this cave entrance and uh, you go through a bit of- of tunnel. What’s your like, what’s your method of approach? I should ask that whenever you go into like a building or a new situation.

**Travis:** I think you know.

**Griffin:** Just like bar- barreling?

**Travis:** Yeah!

**Griffin:** Okay. Um,

**Travis:** [laughs] It’s a thing!

**Griffin:** Okay. You--

**Clint:** W-we have kinda established the dynamic of him barreling in, me trying to make him stop, and Taako hangin’ back.

**Griffin:** Okay. Uh, well then Magnus, I guess you’re the first one to see but all you boys see uh, there’s like a- a slight curve in the entrance of this cave after you go through a- a short tunnel, um. You see lantern light kind of flashing off the walls on the inside of this cave.

And you see, uh, what looks like the shadow of a guy readin’ a book uh, in this lantern light, and as you come like barreling tactlessly into this- this cave, you see this shadow move really quick, like look to the side and then throw the book down and then the lantern light goes out.

**Magnus**: Hello?

**Griffin:** Uh, there’s no response.

**Magnus**: Now don’t be like that.

[Griffin chuckles]

**Magnus**: I’m sorry I caught you reading, I won’t make fun of you, I promise.

**Clint:** He wasn’t sitting on a toilet, was he?

**Griffin:** Uh, no.

**Travis:** [crosstalk] Ooh, hate to see that.

**Clint:** Okay.

**Griffin:** No, there’s no, uh, there’s still no response.

**Magnus**: Aziz, light!

**Griffin:** What?

**Travis:** I was- I- It’s from Fifth Element. Dad, could you make some-

**Griffin:** Holy shit dog!

**Travis:** There’s like one person who went crazy when I said that. Um, dad-

[Clint laughing]

**Travis:** -could you make some light? Or Taako, I can’t see.

**Clint:** I certainly- I certainly can, all I have to do is touch one object that is no larger than ten feet in any dimension, and that object will shed light in a 20-foot radius--

**Griffin:** [crosstalk] The human spell library, Clint McElroy.

**Clint:** That’s right.

**Justin:** What are you touching?

**Travis:** [Laughing] My butt!

**Clint:** I’m going to - I think it would look really cool - I’m going to touch the amulet around my neck.

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Clint:** And it’ll beam light forward.

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Clint:** Like Doctor Strange.

**Griffin:** You touch your joke amulet [pronounced aw-mulet], and um, it illuminates! And you can see, uh- I’m- I’m assuming you’ve moved a little further into the cave, you see this small chamber, that like the cave kind of dead ends into…

Uh, and there’s some, uh, there’s a couple barrels in this chamber, there’s a, uh, a cart, uh, in this chamber with a couple boxes on it, uh, one of the barrels has a uh, a lantern on it, um, and then laying on a rug, sort of-

**Justin:** So wait, we needed the light to see the lantern?

**Griffin:** The lantern got turned off.

**Justin:** Okay.

**Griffin:** Um, see and in- in the midst of this little scene- uh- at the back wall of this little chamber there’s a rug, and there’s a book laying on the rug, that is actually open and faced down like it was just thrown down, and with its back up against the wall, there is a skeleton.

[“Brothers” starts playing faintly]

And the skeleton is wearing a sort of brown sackcloth robe, uh, and it has- it is also wearing an amulet and Merle, you recognise that amulet, it’s also the sigil of Istus. And this-

**Travis:** Why do you keep saying ‘amulet’? [Pronounced with a long ‘ah’] Like an omelet amulet.

**Griffin:** I mean-

**Clint:** [laughing] Because it looks- that’s what it’s made out of.

**Griffin:** Yeah, it’s an egg necklace. And-

**Travis:** He got it at the magical store of Denny’s.

**Griffin:** And this skeleton has another interesting thing about it, and that’s is, its skull has been, like, painted? In bright, like, yellows and purples and like, green segments, almost like a Día de los Muertos mask, um, if, if, to help sorta give you an idea of the aesthetic, uh. Its skull has been like intricately and beautifully painted. Uh, but it is just laying down. Uh, with its back up against the wall.

**Travis:** Is it… [Justin hmms] alive?

**Justin:** Well, it’s a skeleton. [Clint laughs]

**Travis:** Well, yeah but we’re like, in D&D, where there’s like centaurs and ghosts and shit. So like-

**Justin:** It’s good- it’s a fair point.

**Travis:** Skeletons move around and sometimes you gotta fight ‘em.

**Justin:** Hey, Griffin, is the chair alive?

[Clint and Griffin laugh]

**Justin:** It’s D&D, y’know, I don’t really think-

**Griffin:** Oh, by the way, when you came into this cave you heard the explosion behind you from the bank.

**Justin:** Aw dunk.

**Griffin:** Just to give you-

**Clint:** [urgently]What time is it?

**Griffin:** Uh, it’s gettin’- it’s gettin’ there.

**Clint:** [sputters for a second] I re- I read the book!

**Griffin:** Uh-

**Clint:** I grab the book and read it!

**Griffin:** The book is like, uh, oh shit let’s tie it all together- the book is not some religious text, it’s a Caleb Cleveland: Kid Cop, uh, novel. [Justin laughs]

**Travis:** [quietly] I see.

**Griffin:** It’s like a, it’s from like a, it’s one of the later ones, which aren’t as good, uh, because he’s a teen cop.

**Justin:** [laughing] And it’s like, what’s the point?

**Griffin:** What’s the fuckin’ point?

**Clint:** Isn’t- Isn’t… [pause] No, no, I’m thinking of something else.

**Travis:** I’m gonna check out the skeleton?

**Justin:** [voice cracks]Wait a minute- those are Angus’ favorite books, right?

**Griffin:** I mean, they’re- they’re a very, very popular book series.

**Justin:** [softly, with great feeling] Oh my god. *The skeleton is Angus.*

**Travis:** Nooooooo! Only now do I miss him!

**Clint:** [in the background] Yaaaay! Yaaaaaay!

**Justin:** Nobody saw this coming, how did he get here?!

**Travis:** Um, I’m gonna check out that skellington.

**Griffin:** Mmkay.

**Justin:** Hey, where is Angus? Didn’t he come with us?

**Griffin:** Naw.

[Talking over each other]

**Clint:** That’s what I was-

**Justin:** No? Okay.

**Griffin:** That was the live episode that we did.

**Clint:** [like he remembers] That was the live episode, yeah yeah yeah.

**Justin:** [at the same time as Clint] Oh that’s right, okay okay okay okay.

**Griffin:** Things got really conflated, ‘cause we did two episodes two nights in a row. Uh, but no, Angus is not with you. And in fact I should point out, since you’ve been in this town, your Stones of Farspeech are not- you have not had any uh, messages from anybody at the Bureau on your Stones. They are just completely dead silent.

**Clint:** Well, we knew that, that’s why we hadn’t checked ‘em, we figured-

**Griffin:** [concurrently] Yeah, sure.

**Justin:** [concurrently] Yeah, we knew.

**Clint:** Psshh, come on, man.

**Travis:** Wait, hold on- there’s a rug in the cave?

**Griffin:** Yeah.

**Travis:** [like it should have been obvious] I’m gonna look under the rug.

**Griffin:** You find a trap door to- no, there’s nothing under the rug.

**Travis:** Fuck.

**Griffin:** Um-

**Justin:** Does it bite him ‘cause it’s alive?

[Clint does a laugh-wheeze, Justin starts giggling]

**Travis:** [indignantly] Skeletons! Move in this game! And sometimes you have to fight them! I’m not making this up, Justin, I don’t want to f- [sighs]

**Justin:** Carpets can fly, read your Aladdin.

**Griffin:** Uh-

**Travis:** Suck my butt.

**Griffin:** -what are you doing?

**Travis:** I’m checking out the skellington.

**Griffin:** Alright, how are you doing that?

**Travis:** Are there any pockets in the robe, what’s the deal with the amulet…?

**Griffin:** Um, we’ll say- as you- yeah, there’s pockets in the robe.

[pause]

**Travis:** I find some receipts.

**Griffin:** Okay, [Justin laughs] you reach into the pock-

**Justin:** [laughing] Whoa!

**Griffin:** -you reach into the pocket, and as you do, um, the skeleton, you can’t tell if you just like disrupted it and knocked it over, but it moves, and you hear like a, [makes a disgruntled noise] ergh.

[pause]

**Travis:** *See?*

**Clint:** I have a spell to cast.

**Justin:** Uh-oh. [Griffin laughs] I hope that- I hope that skeleton’s ready to spill its secrets.

**Clint:** It’s called *Resurrection.*

**Justin:** [whispers] *Oh shit.*

**Clint:** I touch a dead creature that has been dead for no more than a century, its soul is free and willing the target returns to life… Yeah! It restores life to a creature.

**Griffin:** Does this spell take, like, an hour to cast? ‘Cause this seems like the kind of spell that takes, like, an hour to cast, otherwise, if you can just instantly bring back any dead person to life it may reduce the narrative stakes of The Adventure Zone podcast a bit.

**Clint:** Well it’s- it’s seventh level… Necromancy.

[A long burst of hysterical laughter from Justin]

**Clint:** Why are you laughing?

**Justin:** [While laughing] Cause you're, you- you're like level eight, or something!

**Clint:** I also have-

**Travis:** And you're also not a necromancer.

**Justin:** [crosstalk] Not in any way, shape, or form!

**Clint:** I also have Matthias.

**Griffin:** [crosstalk] It also takes- it does take one hour to cast.

**Clint:** Fine.

**Travis:** Okay, wait what's Matthias?

**Clint:** No, no no! No, go ahead! Have your fun!

**Griffin:** You understand why I can't allow you to like, instantly bring any dead person back to life, no matter what.

**Clint:** Even if I'm using a spell I don't know?

**Justin:** And don't have-

**Griffin:** And don't have it, and can't have-

**Justin:** It'll never happen.

**Clint:** Even though I can use a spell I don't know, because I have *Matthias, the Living Grimoire?*

**Griffin:** Ooooh.

**Travis:** That doesn't make it not an hour.

**Griffin:** Yeah, you still c- yeah.

**Clint:** [Sighs] Fine.

**Griffin:** You don't have a magic owl. You don't have a resurrection owl that can bring back any dead person from life.

**Clint:** I have an owl that lets me use a spell I don't know!

**Griffin:** That's fair, that's cheating. Dammit. You've cheated the system again. What are you doing with the skeleton?

**Clint:** No, that's fine. If it's gonna cut, I don't have time!

**Travis:** Okay, so here's the thing. Something was in this room and moved, right? And dropped the book and turned off the lamp. There's no other exit to this room.

**Justin:** Uh, I grab the skeleton and shake it and say,

**Taako**: Give us your secrets!

**Skeleton**: Okay, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop.

**Travis:** See? Suck my butt, Justin.

[Laughter]

**Griffin:** Was that in universe?

**Travis:** … Yeah!

**Griffin:** Okay.

**Magnus**: Suck my butt, Taako!

**Skeleton**: Unhand me, please.

**Taako**: Oh, sure, no problem.

**Clint:** Can you make it a little bonier?

**Skeleton**: [More nasal and high pitched] Unhand me, please!

[A couple of “yeah”s and agreeable phrases]

**Skeleton**: What do you hooligans want? You’ve come into my little hutch here. I was enjoying a good Cleveland tale, and he just broke the big case! And you randos rolled up on my spot!

**Merle**: And what is your name?

**Skeleton**: That - what is *your* name, hooligan?

**Merle**: I’m sorry. [In character voice] What is your name?

**Skeleton**: [exaggerated] What is *your* name, *hooligan*?

**Merle**: I’m Merle the hooligan.

**Magnus**: I’m Magnus the hooligan.

**Taako**: I’m Taako, you’re alive, I don’t believe it, uh, there’s egg on my face, you don’t know how big of a- I guess you are, you heard the whole thing.

**Skeleton**: I did! You really ding-donged this one up!

**Taako**: Yeah, I stepped in it. Good news is I'll be dead soon.

**Skeleton**: What do you mean?

**Merle**: So, tell us your name!

**Skeleton**: My name is Luca!

**Magnus**: Are you of the temple Istus?

**Luca**: I am the chief cleric of the temple Istus! Not that- I mean not so much anymore, but um, but yeah! That's me, alright!

**Merle**: So your name is Luca.

**Luca**: Are you about to do a joke about the song Luka?

**Merle**: [hesitates] No.

[Laughter]

**Merle**: Not *now!*

**Luca**: [crosstalk] No, go, please go ahead, I live on the second floor.

**Merle**: Forget it. Forget it.

**Luca**: No, what floor do I live on Merle, tell me.

**Merle:** Nobody wants my input this week! Fine, fine, fine.

**Taako:** I mean you literally live in a cave underneath a pile of rocks.

**Magnus**: Are you- Are you one of the brothers?

**Luca**: How do you know about that?

**Magnus**: I heard about it in town?

**Justin:** Well that’s- That’s not true.

**Travis:** That is true! Cassidy told us about it.

**Justin:** Oh okay, sorry, I was getting my prophecy confused with your horseshit.

**Griffin:** By the way, Luca is talking like, not moving a whole lot. Like his mouth is moving up and down almost imperceptibly when he talks. Um, but he says uh,

**Luca:** Yes, I- My brother and I came to this town together. What- what are you doing here, why did you come looking for me? How did you find me?

**Magnus**: We’re, uh, we’re investigating the bubble, and a chalice, and a big worm.

**Griffin:** I debated about this because you’ve talked about looking for a thing and people were like “why wasn’t that staticked out?” but I think if you just reference a chalice it’s not-

**Travis:** A chalice.

**Griffin:** -it’s not staticked.

**Travis:** Lowercase c.

**Griffin:** Uh, he says uh,

**Luca**: I- you’re here to stop the bubble? Here to stop what’s going on in this town?

**Taako**: Yes.

**Magnus**: [crosstalk] Yyyyyes?

**Taako:** Yes, we are.

**Griffin:** Um, he says,

**Luca**: Okay, I like where you’re coming from, I would also very much like to stop what’s happening in this town. You guys understand that time is like. Time is *sick* in Refuge, right?

**Magnus**: Yeah.

**Taako**: Yeah, we’ve gathered.

**Luca**: It kinda goes against everything we do in the church of Istus. We celebrate the normal passage of time and that is-- anything but that is happening here in Refuge. What do you need? How can I help you?

**Magnus**: Like, any information?

[Chuckling]

**Luca**: I was in the temple just doing my prayers, doing my scribing and such, counting the offerings, when it just… Something happened. Everything inside the temple aged very quickly…

And luckily I was the only person inside, and none of my- none of the followers of Istus were harmed but I- that’s how I ended up in this sorry state and how the temple ended up in its sorry state. I don’t know what did it but I suspect it’s the same thing that’s causing everything to be all screwy in this town.

**Justin:** I’m gonna ask that Merle take over questioning, because he is a man of the cloth as well and I feel like he might be able to get a little further. We don’t have a lot of time.

**Merle**: Okay! So, explain one thing to me- I know it’s D&D and everything, but how the hell are-

**Travis:** Okay, so you wanted us to save time by putting dad in charge.

[Laughter]

**Justin:** Yeah, let him finish!

**Merle**: How are you talking?

**Luca**: That is an excellent question that I’m not entirely sure of myself. I’m- oh, I assume it is only by the grace of Istus herself that I am allowed to continue to function in this goofy ass town, but, uh, I’m not a hundred percent sure! I’m not complaining though, although it is-- I haven’t really interfaced with anybody else in town since I’ve entered this sorry state, it’s, as you can imagine, pretty upsetting to see a living skeleton man!

**Magnus**: Merle, ask him about his brother.

**Merle**: Hey! How ‘bout them brothers?

**Luca**: Are you a-- like the idea of brothers in general? I guess it’s great!

**Merle**: No, your brother!

**Luca**: Two boys related with the same parents, I love it.

**Merle**: Tell me about your brothers, my bony friend.

**Luca**: I only have the one… brother, and haven’t seen him--

**Merle**: Aren’t we all brothers?

**Luca**: In Istus, sure… ! I haven’t seen my brother, Redmond in quite-quite some time, he [Sigh] we came to this town together to start up the-the temple? And, uh, he went off into- let’s call it the “Private Sector”, and, uh, opened up his own farm here in town, that was very lucrative… But he got kinda screwed when the bubble went up, and, well, I think he harbors quite a grudge about that. So he’s been trying to brute force his way out of town, and uh, I don’t know that that’s the way to go, I think we should rely on the grace of Istus, but, y’know, who am I to- I am not my brother’s keeper.

**Merle**: Well, kinda.

**Griffin:** He said,

**Luca**: I would be willing to help you out, to help you seek divine intervention from Istus herself. But I will need my brother’s help in order to do so. Can- can you please go find him, and talk to him and tell him that Luca misses him and needs his help.

**Magnus**: Yeah. Probably not in this loop, but--

[Clint laughs]

**Griffin:** He says,

**Luca**: What are you talking about, “this loop”?

**Magnus**: [crosstalk] Don’t- Yeah, really, don’t worry about that.

**Griffin:** And as you say that, you feel the tremors start again, from outside, and you hear the bells start to chime.

[The Clock Strikes Noon: Apocalypse starts playing]

**Luca**: What are you talking about, “this loop”?

**Taako**: It’s - this has been so much fun.

**Merle**: I’ve got it! I’ve got the solution to everything! I’ve know the answer to every question!

**Travis:** Hey, I know the joke you’re setting up and it’s not gonna work cause we remember on the next loop.

**Clint:** Aw, shit.

**Griffin:** Yeah. I think this time the- uh, this supersonic explosion happens outside and I think the cave just collapses on all of you and Luca, and you get crushed by rocks.

**Clint:** Ow! That, That hurts!

**Griffin:** And when you come into the white space this time, the old woman is lying on the floor.

**Taako**:[quietly] Shit.

**Travis:** I move to her.

**Griffin:** And you wake up.