

Lou Wilson
Hey. Hey, Erika. Hey, Erika.

Erika Ishii
Yeah?

Lou Wilson
I love you.

Erika Ishii
[Whispers] I love you so much

Lou Wilson
Hey. Hey, Aabria.

Aabria Iyengar
Hey.

Lou Wilson
I love you.

Aabria Iyengar
I love you.

Lou Wilson
Hey, Brennan.

Brennan Mulligan
[Angrily] What?

Lou Wilson
Fuck you, you fuckin' asshole! Go back to New York, you piece of shit. I fuckin' hate you!

Brennan Mulligan
Fuck you, man!

Lou Wilson
Oh, God. Hey, what's up, guys? Welcome to World's Beyond Number, the actual play podcast featuring some TTRPG All Stars who go by the names—Can we use this?

Erika Ishii
Don't quit your day job. Oh wait.

Lou Wilson
Do I keep going? Yeah. I'll announce us. [Lou enters announcer voice] Ladies and gentlemen, coming to the stage, coming to the Fireside, please welcome, from Misfits and Magic Battle for Beyond, LA by Night? Not the New York one. Um, uh... Pirates of Leviathan.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh that's me and not the other one?

Lou Wilson
Oh no, it's you, it's you. Were you both in Battle for Beyond anyway?

Erika Ishii
All three of us were in Battles...

Lou Wilson

The Indomitable Aabria Iyengar. We can't use this. Taylor.

Aabria Iyengar

Taylor, can you send that just to me? That's the closest I'll ever get to being on Kimmel, and that was important to me.

Lou Wilson

I'll keep going. Unless truly untenable.

Erika Ishii

You know what? It did not start with "Hey, guys." And for me, that's a win. And I say we continue.

Aabria Iyengar

I feel like that "Hey, guys." was a direct fucking shot across Brennan's Bow. And I am just going to say that out loud.

Erika Ishii

No, he's a "Hey, gang." "Hey, gang!"

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, shit. You're right. My bad.

Lou Wilson

[Announcer voice] Coming next to the stage! [Normally] Or Brennan, did you want to defend yourself?

Brennan Mulligan

No.

Aabria Iyengar

I am physically in pain. This is no good.

Lou Wilson

Are we starting again or should I continue from where I was from this insane thing I was doing.

Brennan Mulligan

25 minutes of this. This is what the show is.

Aabria Iyengar

This is perfect!

Lou Wilson

Alright. [Announcer voice] Coming next to the stage, you know them from all across mediums, be it voiceovers and video games like Apex Legends, um fuck, I should be on IMDb. No, I mean, I know the big ones. Apex Legends, Halo... Legacy? Is it specific? I didn't know... And such acclaimed TTRPGs as Critical Role, Misfits and Magic, Dimension 20's. What's the villain one? Brennan.

Brennan Mulligan

Escape from the Bloodkeep.

Lou Wilson

Dimension 20's Escape from the Bloodkeep, ladies and gentlemen. Get fucking nasty for the bite, uh, for the pansexual Griblin themselves, Erika Ishii.

Erika Ishii

It's me!

Lou Wilson

This is crazy. The idea that somebody might send this to their parents, and be like, "Hey I want you... You should check this out."

Brennan Mulligan

Taylor you said this is definitely going first, right? This doesn't come after.

Lou Wilson

This is coming first? This is zero?

Brennan Mulligan

Great. So forever, we're locking in? Great, good good good.

Lou Wilson

Is pansexual correct? Should I change that?

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Lou Wilson

Pansexual feels right? Okay, great.

Erika Ishii

That feels good, that feels good.

Lou Wilson

[Announcer voice] And from the back, coming in via zip line, the Costa Rican gentleman himself. [Normally] Was it Costa Rica? Did you go to Costa Rica? No, it's Mexico. [Announcing again] The Mexican gentleman himself. He's not Mexican. He just likes to visit. He's your favorite from those Sam Adams commercials. Who Wants to be a Millionaire's chosen. You know him from your favorite college humor—Oh it thinks I'm raising my hand—you know him from your favorite CEO sketches on the college humor YouTube page and a shit ton of DND. He's your dad, and mine. The Mexican gentleman again, not because he likes to go there—

Brennan Mulligan

Stop saying Mexican gentleman!

Lou Wilson

But because he likes to go there.

Stop saying it!

Lou Wilson

Brennan Lee Mulligan!

Brennan Mulligan

Oh, lo siento mis amigos.

Lou Wilson

Oh, there it is.

Aabria Iyengar

Now do yourself. Do yourself.

Lou Wilson

And I'm Lou Wilson. Welcome to Worlds Beyond Number.

Erika Ishii
You dirty rat.

Brennan Mulligan
I've been to Mexico one time.

Aabria Iyengar
And did you have a good time, Brennan?

Lou Wilson
Did you have a good time? Did you cry when you were eating fries in the Jacuzzi?

Brennan Mulligan
I've been to Costa Rica so many times.

Lou Wilson
Oh, so that, I should have stuck with Costa Rica. I knew you had been to Costa Rica, but I was thinking about you eating fries in a Jacuzzi when I said that. And so then my brain went, that's not right

Aabria Iyengar
What?

Brennan Mulligan
That was my big day in Mexico. I ate fries in a bathtub.

Aabria Iyengar
Honestly, dope. Has everyone been in a bathtub with Brennan but me?

Lou Wilson
Also, is this bone cone or is this the beginning now?

Aabria Iyengar
This is part of the bone cone.

Erika Ishii
Wait, actually, we've been in the shower together, but not ever a bathtub.

Lou Wilson
But yes, because I was dying.

Brennan Mulligan
That's right. Myself and Lou and Erika have all been in the shower together, that's true.

Erika Ishii
Yeah! Bone cone!

Aabria Iyengar
Damn it! I also wasn't there at that because I was in Becka's house.

Lou Wilson
Hey, gang. What's going on? It's your friends. My name is Lou Wilson. I'm joined by some of my best friends in the world who I'm not going to introduce you. I do that. That's my day job. If you could introduce yourselves, that would be great.

Aabria Iyengar
Hi, I'm Aabria Iyengar. I'm not going to explain what I'm from. You can google it.

Brennan Mulligan

Hello, I'm Brennan Lee Mulligan. I'm also one of the four people talking. It's so nice to have you here at episode zero of a podcast. Incredible. We're starting even before the first number, at the number right before the first number.

Erika Ishii

I'm Erica Ishii. That's it!

Lou Wilson

Well—

Aabria Iyengar

This is great. This is what you get when one of us is a professional announcer and the other three are dumb dumbs.

Brennan Mulligan

Well, I'll tell you what, gang. We're starting a podcast called Worlds Beyond Number.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Lou Wilson

And you found it. You found it. You did it. Thank you.

Brennan Mulligan

I'll tell you what, this podcast is a storytelling actual play podcast where we tell awesome stories, collaboratively and improvisationally together through the medium of tabletop role playing games. Now, that's a lot of words. That's a lot of words all together.

Lou Wilson

Let's go through them one by one. Honestly, let's go through them one by one. I'm going to get my Oxford dictionary out and we'll just run it back.

Aabria Iyengar

Perfect!

Brennan Mulligan

So we'll start with the word we.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh!

Brennan Mulligan

We refers to—

Lou Wilson

That's us!

Erika Ishii

It also means yes in French.

[Everyone else] Ooh!

Aabria Iyengar

Bilingual bonus.

Erika Ishii

Why did we decide to do a podcast? You might ask.

Brennan Mulligan

The answer to the question may surprise you. Because what we wanted to do was, all four of us were like, hey, we love each other, and we love telling stories together, and we want to play DND, and we want to play a long-o game of DND. We want to play an epic surging saga, the kind that they tell you about the legendary home games of yore.

Brennan Mulligan

We wanted to do the damn thing right. But all of us only show up for things that are work because all of us are operating under an intense amount of drive, performance and ambition. Like that song that The Rock did.

Lou Wilson

I'm sorry?

Brennan Mulligan

You know, the one where he says it's about drive, it's about power. Remember that one?

Lou Wilson

It's about drive, it's about...[Lou goes on incoherently]

Brennan Mulligan

Yeah, he sang it real bad. He didn't sing it good at all,

Lou Wilson

But I do know. Yeah, I would agree to that. I think the reason I'm doing this podcast is because of a song The Rock did in the mid 2000s. That's why I'm here.

Brennan Mulligan

Did he do it in the mid 2000s?

Lou Wilson

I just kind of ballparked it.

Brennan Mulligan

I thought he did it, like, two weeks ago.

Aabria Iyengar

He did a different song like, ten years ago.

Lou Wilson

Guys, we started this podcast in 2012.

Brennan Mulligan

Barack Obama had just been reelected and things were looking up. Life was pretty good.

Lou Wilson

I tell ya, that's why we call this session zero. Because I'll tell you, it was as good as it ever got. No one was counting, and there were no rules.

Erika Ishii

I got to say, this has actually been in the works for quite some time now. Years, this is years in the making! And finally we get to tell the world. We all do this day to day, wandering from table to table, mendicant ronin of the RPG world. But yeah, it's been years since I've been able to commit to a regular home game, so I'm just grateful to do it with all of you.

Aabria Iyengar
Y'all are my favorite!

Lou Wilson
It took us a while to get this thing together.

Erika Ishii
We're busy people. We're busy people with busy lives.

Lou Wilson
I feel like three of us found each other pretty quickly, and then we were looking for the perfect fourth, and then they came. And their name is Matthew Lillard. But then they couldn't do it, so we uh.

Aabria Iyengar
I beat Matthew Lillard

Lou Wilson
Yeah, and uh, Aabria if you could step away now?

Erika Ishii
And we would have gotten away with it too if it hadn't been for us meddling RPG kids

Aabria Iyengar
Zoinks!

Lou Wilson
But no, it really has been. I think there were three of us came together. Honestly, it goes all the way back to what, 2017? 2018?

Brennan Mulligan
Early, early. Yeah. Well, it started in conversations between me and Lou, conversations between me and Taylor about the medium of podcasting. And Taylor being like, [Exaggerated prospector voice] "Y'all should get in on this podcasting game." And he sounded exactly like that.

Aabria Iyengar
That's actually what he sounds like. And he would never appear on the podcast to disabuse you of that.

Brennan Mulligan
Yes, 100%. He came in and he said, [More exaggerated, this time also old sounding] "Y'all better get on that podcasting game." And then he clicked his heels.

Lou Wilson
Then he went back to the hills, if you can believe it.

Brennan Mulligan
You could hear his lantern hitting against his hammer on his belt.

Erika Ishii
His pockets crammed with Brie cheese.

Aabria Iyengar
Taylor, you better put in so much audio on this. Paint me a little audio picture.

Lou Wilson
Taylor is our producer, by the way, he does all the editing magic behind the scenes that makes this podcast sound, that will make this podcast sound as good as it does.

Brennan Mulligan

And we love you for that. Thank you, Taylor. And thank you for your magical lantern and leaving brie cheese throughout the forest for us to know you've been there

Aabria Iyengar
Fully chomped

Brennan Mulligan

Fully chomped. Let's talk about those initial ambitions for why we were excited to do this. And I think also, rather than pose a question to you, I'll say for myself why I was so excited to do this was because specifically, I was really excited for a couple of things. Number one was to have a long form game, was to have something that would be like an epic adventure over a long period of time that you could really do that big old fantasy world stuff you want to do, right?

Brennan Mulligan

And I think I was excited about the idea of having a space and setting a space up, that you could do that good world building stuff, right. And then number two, I really wanted to conscript my friends into an arrangement where they would then run games for me for years, and timing it out right, I'll be sitting pretty as a PC for something like, I don't know, what do we think? Five years? Five feels good.

Erika Ishii

At the very least, yeah.

Lou Wilson

We had a casual conversation at the beginning where we were like, well, who will DM the first campaign? And Brennan, I think, pushed my face into the table and said, "Don't you dare. It's mine. Because once I'm done, I'm a forever PC."

Aabria Iyengar

I remember that. I cried a lot during that. I was like, "Why are you fighting?"

Erika Ishii

This was Brennan's retirement plan, by which I do not mean a monetary financial decision. I mean in terms of, he will never have to sit behind that screen again.

Brennan Mulligan

Never. Never.

Aabria Iyengar

What Brennan pulled off was a thing in classrooms when, like, you know, the teacher is spinning up a big like, I'm going to ask a bunch of questions to kids. Whoever goes first is going to get the easiest ride because they were bold enough to go first. And I think that's what you've done here. I went, and now I'm going to hang out.

Lou Wilson

Now I kick back and I say teach.

Aabria Iyengar

With a finger gun. That's why I don't teach anymore.

Erika Ishii

And I was the second or third. I don't know if we're counting Taylor, I guess I was sort of the second person on board. Brennan and I had just finished Escape from Bloodkeep, and you were like, do you want to play a home game? And before I knew it was going to be a podcast, before I knew anything, I immediately said yes, because, I just.

Erika Ishii

Your mind! Your mind... Like I just, telling stories with you, it just feels so easy. And while we were having that meeting at the Village Bakery, who should stroll up on his way walking down the street?

Lou Wilson

Nope. I ran there, I heard you were at the village bakery and I sprinted there from my house.

Aabria Iyengar

Hey, Erika. Your voice carries.

Lou Wilson

You were my destination.

Brennan Mulligan

Wait, how did you hear that? Did I tell you?

Lou Wilson

The wind. The wind talks to me, Brennan. It was like [whispers] "He's here! He's here!"

Aabria Iyengar

That was the most magical moment.

Lou Wilson

And honestly, I'll never forget it because I was on Whole 30. I was doing Whole 30 for the first time, and I ran faster than I've ever run in my whole life. And don't take, that's not about you. That's not about either one of you. I was just feeling myself. I was healthier than I'd ever been, and I took off in a full sprint down the street. I think you texted me and said, we're at the Village Bakery. That's it

Brennan Mulligan

Yeah, that's right. I think I did do that.

Aabria Iyengar

Cut out the magical truth. Or the less magical truth. I want the, I want the funnier answer

Brennan Mulligan

You want the wind?

Aabria Iyengar

I want the wind one.

Brennan Mulligan

I think of myself as a pretty whimsical fella. I've never had a reaction when Lou said the wind, where I was more like, "Hey, stop fucking around, man. Say the truth"

Erika Ishii

I'm sorry. This is going to be a session zero on our feed.

Lou Wilson

Yes.

Brennan Mulligan

Zero

Erika Ishii

It'll exist here forever.

Lou Wilson

Here's the most boring answer ever. You told me, I came, and I'll never forget it. Erika had a massive piece of lettuce in between two of their teeth the whole time, and it was like my first time meeting the kind of ethereal Erika Ishii, who I had only heard about how amazing a TTRPG player they were, and I was just like, they got so much salad in there. I don't know how, I don't know at what point in meeting them, I go, damn, damn, that's a lot of broccoli.

Erika Ishii

Okay, first of all,

Aabria Iyengar

Defend your choices!

Erika Ishii

I did not need to know the full truth behind this whimsical tale.

Aabria Iyengar

I guess I could have gone with the fucking wind then, huh?

Erika Ishii

Yeah, and second of all, I was saving it for later. I do that. Okay. You have an almond pouch in your cheeks, don't you, Brennan?

Aabria Iyengar

No, Brennan has a back mouth where you just shovel.

Brennan Mulligan

Yeah, the back mouth

Aabria Iyengar

I got that for Kwanzaa this year.

Brennan Mulligan

Yes, and what a glorious gift to be able to chomp on salami and prosciutto through my back mouth. I was going to say Erika. Well, first of all, good running thread. For those of you who are just joining us. Hello. Welcome.

Aabria Iyengar

What? People are in their car. They're in traffic!

Lou Wilson

People jump in late. People skip. Well, no, what happened is they heard me say, "He talked to the wind." They said, "yikes." They skipped two minutes and 30 seconds. And there's Brennan going, "Hey welcome, for those of you just joining us."

Erika Ishii

Hey, welcome back, everyone.

Brennan Mulligan

I'm telling you right now, first of all, people could be joining late. In my head, there's bumper to bumper traffic on the five. All the cars are locked up. Someone has rolled their windows down and is blaring Worlds Beyond Number session zero, to the top of their speakers ability. So people are joining us right now. For those of you joining us right now, first of all, it's not a crash. It's just some weird traffic fluctuation. There's like, some roadwork. And number two, every whimsical thing is actually something that I did through texting, and I'm so sorry.

Lou Wilson

There it is.

Aabria Iyengar
All of them. Santa tooth fairy.

Lou Wilson
Texting.

Aabria Iyengar
A third funny thing.

Lou Wilson
This is what I've been hungering for. Somebody offered, so I was presented with a chance to have all of the excitement and professionalism of people who love actual plays and are committed to doing them at the best of their ability. And that is where the joy of playing together comes from. But in the setting of this kind of homey, comfortable, long form style where we're trying stuff and exploring together, and I was like, oh, well, this is the dream scenario.

Erika Ishii
It really is.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
We have the best of all worlds. And I remember we had sort of our first team meeting, I characterized this as dessert for us because this was the thing that we all have our day jobs and we're very fortunate to really enjoy them and to get to tell a lot of stories in our everyday lives as well. But this was the one where it's like, we can experiment, we can play our home game and tell our leetle stories with each other and have an excuse to get together because it's for "work."

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. And when we talk about why a podcast and not something like visually presented, some of us are getting more and more known for being visually very, "a lot." And the idea of not having to glue moss to my face before we play our game is very exciting. Like, oh, I could just rock up looking truly feral. That sounds so good.

Erika Ishii
Yes. Now you know why I do voiceover.

Aabria Iyengar
My gosh. First times in the booth, I was like, oh, this hits good. It's just me freaking out in a little room. And occasionally a person tells me to do something. I like that.

Lou Wilson
Yeah, I'm excited for the first time to DM. You think Brennan sweats a lot? And when I DM, I'll tell you, I'll be shirtless in a small children's pool, just kind of sitting there, like, kind of looking at you guys, being like, is this good? The audience doesn't need to see that. So I want the first time I DM with my friends to be like an intimate, comfortable experience where I'm standing in a kiddie pool and they don't know it. And I'll tell you.

Brennan Mulligan
You're standing in a kiddie pool? Just standing?

Lou Wilson
When we're doing a podcast, everyone can kind of be doing their own thing. Maybe we do it online, we're going to figure it out. But, yeah, a big part of my first time, I think it's going to be me standing in the pool.

Erika Ishii

Can we make it like a larger pool? Like instead of a kiddie pool? Perhaps, like one of those above-ground pools.

Aabria Iyengar

I have a pool, do you wanna just—We could just do your game in the pool.

Lou Wilson

I don't need a pool because the pool—.

Aabria Iyengar

We could pretend to be mermaids!

Erika Ishii

I have a mermaid tail now

Lou Wilson

I would be filling the pool with my terror sweat. So that's why I need it to be empty. But it's going to be great. I'll be standing in a kiddie pool and you're all, and everyone listening will get to enjoy it.

Aabria Iyengar

Nice.

Erika Ishii

And then Aabria joined.

Aabria Iyengar

And then Aabria joined. Horrifying. How do I follow that Erika? What do I do with that? What do I do with that? What do you want from me.

Brennan Mulligan

The big reason it took so long for Aabria to join is that none of us knew who she was and she didn't know who any of us were because we had not met yet.

Erika Ishii

That's not true. we've been friends for an undefined amount of time

Aabria Iyengar

Some of us knew each other for about a decade.

Erika Ishii

And I was like, hey, you're good at this whole being on Twitch thing.

Aabria Iyengar

And I went, who are you? Sorry, who is this?

Brennan Mulligan

Hold on. This is a sudden betrayal that I suddenly feel very strongly about. Erika and Aabria, you knew each other before?

Aabria Iyengar

We have known each other for so long that we don't know when we met.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, you're not the only one with origin story betrayals, Brennan.

Aabria Iyengar

This is back story Brennan. I didn't spring fully formed—

Lou Wilson

This is an audio podcast, but Brennan has now gotten up and gone over to his bookshelf and is flipping through tomes and throwing them on the ground and picking up other tomes and flipping through.

Brennan Mulligan

[In a "Mad Scientist" voice] There must be an answer! Somewhere in the library! There must be an answer! Why, how can I not have seen... [singing] Ave Maria...

Aabria Iyengar

Oh no, he turned into Count Frollo!

Brennan Mulligan

I turned into Count Frollo for a second. He just freaks. I love getting so flustered that you sing a whole song about it and change your whole religion or whatever, but. Wait a minute

Erika Ishii

I don't know, Aabria and I met through other nerdy social circles, cosplay, video game developer nonsense. And then I think we were hanging out on the set of Gather Your Party of Geek and Sundry times and yeah, we talked about doing more stuff together and nothing ever really came of it.

Aabria Iyengar

Some of us get anxious and don't return emails.

Erika Ishii

Yeah. Until Misfits and Magic.

Aabria Iyengar

Look, if you want to talk about the beauty of having nerves going into GMing and wanting to stand in the kiddie pool of flop sweat and then having a complete 180, for me it was the moment. Sitting down, I always get in my own head. Like the first 20 minutes of any game I run is the worst part of my life. It feels bad. You're nervous, you're like, am I ready to go?

Aabria Iyengar

But at minute 21, I got to have that moment where everything slowed down and it was just the game. And I realized I was at the best table I've ever been at and that people that I didn't know that well immediately felt like home and you just completely like, uh! Getting to play with you all for the first time was a thing I will hope to never forget in my life because it felt so right, right away.

Brennan Mulligan

Oh, my gosh.

Aabria Iyengar

End of my sincerity

Brennan Mulligan

that's very—No!

Lou Wilson

Fair enough

Brennan Mulligan

The patrons, they value and love the sincerity. That's what we're providing to them.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, that monthly subscriber fee is for our earnestness. It is proportionate the amount of dollars to earnestness levels.

Brennan Mulligan

Exactly.

Aabria Iyengar

KPIs, baby!

Brennan Mulligan

You get the stories for free. If you want [New York voice begins] unfiltered sentimentality, if you want true and earnest tender affections, you gotta [long beeped out section]

Lou Wilson

I won't lie, behind our paywall on day one, you can expect to have such exciting things as chat, talkbacks about the episodes, our children's adventure for the first campaign, and of course, just us staring at each other in a blank white room, telling each other what we like.

Erika Ishii

[low] Unadulterated eye contact.

Lou Wilson

Wow.

Aabria Iyengar

Erika did the good voice.

Lou Wilson

That was scary. That was intense.

Brennan Mulligan

That was really scary. Taylor just messaged us all in the Zoom. What is the children's adventure? So glad you asked!

Aabria Iyengar

In all caps.

Lou Wilson

What's the crazy thing I said before Erika spoken in the most sensual voice maybe I've ever heard?

Well—

Brennan Mulligan

Powerful, very powerful.

Lou Wilson

Brennan had the craziest idea I've ever heard, and he'll tell it to you now.

Brennan Mulligan

So Worlds Beyond Number was a podcast that we wanted to do, as you've said, we knew we wanted to do tabletop games. And for those that don't know what those are, basically there's a ton of amazing tabletop games in the world. You've probably heard of Dungeons and Dragons, which is what we're playing for our first campaign. There's Vampire, the Masquerade, and Call of Cthulhu and a bunch of awesome other games out there that allow you to effectively improvise a story with a structure of a dice rolling or card drawing or other kind of almost board game around it.

Brennan Mulligan

Now, you might be saying to yourself, what's sort of the benefit of doing that? Well, the benefit is the four of us are not only the best pals and storytellers who all love and respect each other and each other's sense of storytelling, but where's the fun in when you sit down at a table with three other master storytellers because you're just going to tell a perfect story. Boo.

Lou Wilson

What is this the fucking moth? We're making podcast enemies day one.

Erika Ishii

That's right. We're beefing with the moth.

Aabria Iyengar

Welcome to the fireside. We burn moths.

Brennan Mulligan

We burn moths, motherfucker. Let me be clear. If you patronize both us and The Moth, choose motherfucker, because we are coming for The Moth. Hard, okay?

Erika Ishii

And once we take down The Moth, you better watch out This American life.

Lou Wilson

Exactly, bro.

Brennan Mulligan

Ira, your fuckin' day is done.

Aabria Iyengar

Ira Ass is Glass, let's go

Lou Wilson

You're done. Prepare to be shattered. Shattered!

Aabria Iyengar

Are we cutting promos right now?

Brennan Mulligan

Did you just drop your heavy metal D20? Because it's always a fucking, right time to roll on Glass. Let's go. Let's do it!

Brennan Mulligan

And, well, you may ask, why incorporate a tabletop roleplaying game into a, as we like, I think for all four of us, the campfire that we're sitting around in, our main banner, with the stars and the galaxy overhead, fundamentally, what we're the most excited to do is tell stories. And the reason we love and are so excited to do that through the medium of tabletop role playing games is because it adds an element of total unknown.

Brennan Mulligan

The idea that a tiny little dice or a drawn card or some other kind of bit of randomness gets introduced into a story that we have all put all of our hearts and souls into. What could be more exciting than listening to people who love each other and the story they're telling, not know what's going to happen next in their own story?

Aabria Iyengar

We did it folks. We made math interesting and fun.

Brennan Mulligan

We made math interesting. We turn numbers into stories and that's what we do.

Erika Ishii

We made it so that our fates are out of our own control, and that's okay for us.

Brennan Mulligan

It's like when you recuse yourself. It would not be fair for me to decide that my character succeeds, right now. I'm going to turn it over to this plastic D20 that I had thrown at me when I was in a live show in Austin.

Aabria Iyengar

[Singsong] D20, take the wheel.

Brennan Mulligan

There you go. So for our first campaign, the Wizard, the Witch, and the Wild One. Wait a minute. The Wizard, the Witch and the Wild One. That's three. That's three different kinds of characters.

Lou Wilson

And wait a minute, each one of us must be one of those kinds of characters.

Aabria Iyengar

No, shut the front door.

Lou Wilson

We're the characters and you're the game master, right, Brennan?

Brennan Mulligan

Yes, exactly. That's right. If I'm driving the bus, all three of you are the Wizard, the Witch and the Wild One.

Lou Wilson

No, I think we're the wheels. If this is a bus analogy, I think we're the wheels on the bus.

Brennan Mulligan

Wait, if I'm the wheels on the bus?

Lou Wilson

No, you're the driver. We're the wheels.

Brennan Mulligan

Wait a minute. No, if we're actually going to be serious about this, metaphor—

Erika Ishii

Can I be the crossing guard.

Brennan Mulligan

The way the bus works—

Erika Ishii

This is role play, right?

Aabria Iyengar

We're doing it.

Lou Wilson

Engine, transmission.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. I want to be the catalytic converter because I get stolen a lot.

Brennan Mulligan

I would say, actually, that the bus is the show. All three of you are the driver, and then

Lou Wilson

you are?

Brennan Mulligan

the road?

Aabria Iyengar

You're the road?

Lou Wilson

Oh, I thought you would be the bus. No, I think you would be the road.

Brennan Mulligan

I'm the road. Yes. That's what the DM

Lou Wilson

you're the horizon—

Brennan Mulligan

Yes.

Lou Wilson

That is determining where the bus can go.

Erika Ishii

And so the kids inside of us are our listeners.

Brennan Mulligan

Hey. So this is the bonus content you can get in terms of the kids that are inside of us.

Lou Wilson

I cannot wait to hear the two versions of this that come out of, like there's one for that actually is on Spotify that you can listen to and go like, oh, got it, got it. And then there's this one on the Patreon that's like, yeah. And this is kind of a soup.

Aabria Iyengar

Dear subscribers, I'm so sorry.

Erika Ishii

A word salad. If the podcast is our dessert, yeah, then this is our salad. We have a note from our producer that says "bus metaphor bad" in all caps.

Brennan Mulligan

And just like a salad, we want to stay in your teeth for a long, long time.

Lou Wilson

That's what we call a call back. That's what we call a call back.

Brennan Mulligan

Pay attention. Are you writing this down?

Aabria Iyengar
No, they're in their cars right now.

Brennan Mulligan
That's right.

Lou Wilson
On full blast. So for those of you joining us who are just hearing the podcast that's being blast.

Aabria Iyengar
Wild.

Lou Wilson
Yes. I guess, Brennan, the moment you were having was I guess we've already said, are we ever going to say? Are we just going? Well, it'll be obvious? Yeah, I think by the art. So they'll know by now.

Brennan Mulligan
They'll know by now.

Lou Wilson
You know who we are. You know who the fuck I am.

Brennan Mulligan
You know who the fuck I am.

Aabria Iyengar
Can we call new dibs? I'm the wild one.

Brennan Mulligan
Oops! Taylor's got a lot of work to do. So fundamentally, I would say the long and short of it is, Worlds Beyond Number, our storytelling podcast, using tabletop as the medium in which to tell that, which for those who are joining us for the first time right now, that's what actual play is. We're actually playing tabletop role playing games and you're listening to them, which is so exciting. Thank you for checking us out.

Brennan Mulligan
Our first campaign, meaning our first sort of long form story that we're telling is called the Wizard, the Witch and the Wild One, which are the three heroes of our story. I say heroes, hopefully. That means certainly protagonists. But who can say whether hero or villain they shall be? We got years to figure it out.

Erika Ishii
That's going to sit and crouch on the back of my brain like a toad for a year or so, I guess.

Brennan Mulligan
So wait, everyone talk about your characters. And then we'll let the audience know all about the amazing children's adventure which they can find exclusively on the World's Beyond Number Patreon.

Lou Wilson
When Brennan talks to the subscribers, he gets a billy club out. He swings it around. He pulls his bowler cap low.

Brennan Mulligan
Listen, I feel like that's what they—

Aabria Iyengar
Don't tell them what they like.

Brennan Mulligan

I think that's what people want because this is who I actually am deep down is, "hey, gang." But then sometimes people want you to go: [deep New York accent] now listen up here, you're gonna—.

Lou Wilson

Yikes. Alright. I'm Lou Wilson. Pivot. Pivot hard. Pivot hard.

Erika Ishii

We'll come back to this at a later time. Sure. This is for us to think about later.

Brennan Mulligan

Erika can do like, 90s late night commercial, like call-line voice,

Lou Wilson

That's one line. That was one line.

Brennan Mulligan

But I can't do my fantasy? I can't do my fantasy?

Aabria Iyengar

Hi, I'm Aabria. I play the wizard. We've got to move forward. Hey, so fun fact. I'm going to do, like, one little fun fact to let you know the timeline on this. I have a dog that occasionally appears on my social media, named Suvi, and my dog was actually always named after this character. So that's how long we've been working on it, if anyone wants to go back and do the math of it. But, yeah, she's a little—we're not, I'm not explaining myself here, but I'm the Wizard and everyone should know that. And her name is Suvi, and I like her so much. So cute. And has never made a bad decision. All of her choices are defensible.

Erika Ishii

Well, Reddit will tell us if that's true or not.

Aabria Iyengar

What's Reddit? I don't know her.

Erika Ishii

Ah, I, Erika Ishii, I'm the witch. I'm playing little Ame. And I am a very special little boy because Brennan custom built me a class. Let's go!

Brennan Mulligan

Shout out to M. Veselak, the designer of the witch class with additional work from Brandes Stoddard. So very cool, and much appreciation also to Dan Dillon for giving some help in finding the right people. So all good people involved in the witch class,

Aabria Iyengar

let me be very clear. The moment you showed, like, early drafts for the witch class. I wanted to change my homework to that. I was like, what if we're the Witch, the Witch and the Wild One? That seems very fun, and I also would like to go there.

Erika Ishii

That proficiency table, like, man yeah, just.

Aabria Iyengar

It's cute.

Erika Ishii

It's real cute. And I'm just so excited to explore a character over a long campaign. Because I feel like

so often I really do enjoy getting in, dropping a bunch of lore and doing a whole character arc and getting out in ten episodes or less. But the idea of carrying this person with me for years is so exciting for me.

Aabria Iyengar

She's also the cutest in the whole wide world.

Lou Wilson

She's adorable. And it's old Lou here letting you know that I'll be playing the Wild One. What's that song they always play? Where like, over the jungles of Vietnam as 'copters drop in?

Brennan Mulligan

Fortunate Son?

Lou Wilson

Welcome to the Jungle no. Welcome to the jungle. No. What's Fortunate Son?

Brennan Mulligan

Fortunate Sun. If you heard Fortunate Son, you would be like, Fortunate Son is like,

Lou Wilson

Sing it. Make Taylor cut it out.

Brennan Mulligan

[Singing] "Some folks are born, made to wave the flag, Ooh, that red white and blue"

Erika Ishii

I always think of Ride of the Valkyries, I think for some reason.

Aabria Iyengar

No, I was also thinking Welcome to the Jungle

Brennan Mulligan

Ride of the Valkyries is played in Apocalypse Now. And then Robert Duvall says, "I love the smell of napalm in the morning."

Erika Ishii

Right.

Brennan Mulligan

There's that. But it seems the one you're thinking of with Wild One was probably [singing] "Wild thing, you make my heart sing"

Lou Wilson

Nope, nope.

Aabria Iyengar

It was Welcome to the Jungle.

Lou Wilson

Thank you so much for contributing. It was welcome to the jungle.

You associate Welcome to the Jungle... you associate Welcome to the Jungle with Vietnam?

Lou Wilson

No. That was it. So I imagine that I would say "I'm the Wild One, and then Taylor would cut to a, would cut fully away from this, and insert—

Erika Ishii
A sick guitar riff!

Lou Wilson
Anyway—

[Taylor cuts in the Creedence Clearwater Revival song "Better Run Through the Jungle"]

Lou Wilson

Hi, it's your old pal Lou. And I will be playing the Wild One. [CCR song drop] The fun fact about my character is that he was created after about 90 seconds of silence. We were all sitting around planning the characters, and we were, like, having a discussion, and I think other characters had kind of started to formulize, and the focus was kind of on me. And I had been kind of spinning on this kind of core idea of a spirit, a spirit in the human world. And it was after about 90 seconds that I think I said the things that kind of steamrolled into being like, this is Eursulon. So it was in the confident and comfortable silence shared between friends that this character emerged.

Erika Ishii
Was that the same night as "I'm the Joker, honey?"

Lou Wilson

No, it was on a different night. Very different night that "I'm the Joke, honey." which, we will not—that won't even be behind the paywall. Guys, you'll never know. Yeah, I have commoner stats. There's no class associated with the Wild One. No. Will they find out? Do I tell them my class now? Do they need to know?

Brennan Mulligan
Yeah, tell them if you want.

Lou Wilson
I don't want to.

Erika Ishii
You don't have to say anything you don't want to Lou

Brennan Mulligan
Well, let's talk about what people can find out. So if you're listening to this, it means that very soon, probably next week, the very first episode of the campaign will appear and you will get to meet Sivi, Ame and Eursulon, which, oh, baby, their story is going to knock your block clean off. That's right. It will remove your head from the body. It's so good.

Aabria Iyengar
Can I ask a question really quick while you're just in the middle of your spiel and take all of the air out of that? Hey, Lou, big question. I know you're not going to give away your class, but how do you spell your character's name? I don't know. I've never known.

Lou Wilson
It is E U, like the prefix for good... R, um. E U R S. Fuck, is that it? Yeah. Let's go. I think it's E-U-R-S-U-L-O-N.

Aabria Iyengar
Sweet. That wasn't for me. I know how to spell it. Of course, that was for all of our delightful listeners who may have been confused and writing it wrong in the company Slack for a while.

Brennan Mulligan
If you're listening to this, if you're just joining us now, a couple of things. Number one, probably if

you're listening to this, the campaign's already started. Welcome. Enjoy. I hope you love it. If you happen to be one of the early adopters that's jumping in right now, then you're listening to this drop on February 1st of the year 2023.

Brennan Mulligan

Following this release, on the public feed you will get a preview of the Wizard's storyline. Following week, you'll get the Witch's, and then following that, you'll get the Wild One's, culminating one month later at the beginning of March of 2023 with episode one on the public feed of the Wizard, the Witch and the Wild One, the first episode of our story together. How wonderful, thrilling and exciting. Now, of course, it's possible that you're coming in, like, six years later when we're doing, when Erika is running Cyber Falcons and then we're doing that.

Erika Ishii

Oh, oh! Somebody write this down!

Lou Wilson

And I've just hosted the Oscars,

Brennan Mulligan

Lou just hosted the Oscars.

Lou Wilson

I just hosted see the Oscars. Erika is the voice of the Michelin Man.

Aabria Iyengar

He had a whole cinematic universe.

Brennan Mulligan

Yeah. The Michelin Man is AAA video game character, first person shooter. Michelin man is just fucking ripping up.

Lou Wilson

Yes, you, and Brennan is Superman, and Aabria—

Aabria Iyengar

I've pivoted. I am a full time three Michelin star chef.

Lou Wilson

Yeah. And so that's why you brought us here. If that's the case

Brennan Mulligan

If that's the case. They will never let a ginger be Superman. Let's just be real. That's never gonna fuckin happen.

Lou Wilson

I want to believe.

Aabria Iyengar

No one can see it. But you have the curl.

Erika Ishii

The Jheri curl.

Brennan Mulligan

The Jheri curl. I don't think that's what the curl is.

Aabria Iyengar

No, that's not what the curl is Erika.

Erika Ishii

What? Yeah, right?

Lou Wilson

Yeah that's really, Erika, you got to walk that back. Erika, straight up. Erika, straight up. Brennan, do the voice. Distract, distract Brennan! You got to run the interference. Call them payrats. Call them payrats. Jheri curl is a Black hairstyle involving a lot of product.

Erika Ishii

Ooh!

Aabria Iyengar

It's the wettest hairstyle!

Brennan Mulligan

Jheri curl is the look from the, I don't know the last time you've seen Coming to America, the singer has, and it's like a whole joke where he's wearing Soul Glo, and it's like running down his suit and it's, it's a very wet looking, tight rings.

Erika Ishii

Oh, it's like the perm, it's like the perm-looking thing. What is the one that I've been thinking

Lou Wilson

A cowlick?

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Have you been calling it a Jheri curl out loud?

Erika Ishii

My whole life. And nobody's thought to correct me.

Aabria Iyengar

How many Black friends do you have, Erika?

Erika Ishii

Calling hairstyles wrong, having broccoli in my teeth. Why?

Brennan Mulligan

I called something, I referred to something as being a halter top in another episode of Dimension 20. And someone came up to ask me, like, "Hey, you mentioned that someone had a tattoo that was visible and you described the dress this way and then later said it was a halter top?" And I almost just shit myself in fear in that moment. I don't know what anything's called. I don't know what anything is.

Lou Wilson

So if you're listening to this, six years later, after Brennan has learned what a halter top is, pigs are flying and they've allowed a ginger to be Superman. That's awesome that you listen to this. There are a bunch of episodes waiting for you. Just be on just hit the next button now and you'll be listening to episode one of The Wizard, The Witch, and the Wild One.

Brennan Mulligan

If you're listening to this right now, and you're like, hey, this feedout of information has been so cogent and lucid and has left me so highly prepared to be able to consume this narrative audio

podcast. Well, all the more luck to you, friend, because behind our Patreon, or rather, I should say available on our Patreon, is a bunch of hours of something we decided to do to really sink our teeth into the setting and lore and world of, Umora, the name of the world. In The Wizard, The Witch and the Wild One and the story of Suvi, Ame and Eursulon.

Brennan Mulligan

We, instead of doing a more general character creation, decided to narratively play through the formative events of the young life of our three characters in what we refer to as the children's adventure. The children's adventure is something that's very near and dear to our hearts. It's very special. There's a lot of the feeling and tone of the world as these adults go, an adventure.

Brennan Mulligan

Yes, they'll discover all the amazing magical lands of Umora and all of the allies and enemies and villains and heroes that occupy that landscape, but a lot of the heart of the world, we wanted to care for and tend to in this children's adventure, as we learned about the young lives of our three protagonists.

Brennan Mulligan

So 16 hours of adventure and play, through magic and mystery and a group of young ones learning the nature of magic, the world of Umora and the spirits that dwell therein, all of that is available in the children's adventure on Patreon right at this very moment.

Erika Ishii

There's something so beautiful about it, both narratively and just mechanics wise, because we're playing a game of the idea of discovering a world and discovering yourself the way that you actually would in real life because yeah, there were some changes in that first campaign that informed our characters as we meet them in the campaign proper. For sure. That was beautiful.

Aabria Iyengar

1000%. I'm just going to say that I was crying within the first ten minutes.

Lou Wilson

Yeah, it was pretty crazy.

Aabria Iyengar

It was really good. And when we were all talking about this and sort of the vibe we wanted to catch for the children's adventure relative to the main campaign Studio Ghibli came up a lot as like, an inspiration. And it was so interesting to hear that and understand that and assume, like, very light hearted, low stakes whimsy and then be thrust into it and have this sort of visceral, experiential realization that Ghibli feels that way because the world is so big that there are things that are going on that can't be fathomed by children. And you have all of that, and I don't want to say it's trauma-informed, but there is that sense of, like, adventure is the thing you grow up into. And there's something about this, like, small adventure that children choose and how that informs the person that they'll become later. And God, it was just such a beautiful idea and then sort of moving through it, I am now spoiled for how much I feel like I understand Suvi, taking my first step into episode one. It's so wonderful.

Brennan Mulligan

I love that.

Lou Wilson

Now is this the part where we say, you don't have to listen to the children's campaign to enjoy the pod—Hi Digit.

Aabria Iyengar

Awww, baby!

Erika Ishii

Kitty! It's a kitty! She's behind Brennan so you can't see it. Oh, she's coming over! Hi Digit. Put an earbud, next to her ear. I want to tell her I love her.

Aabria Iyengar

She has. Hundreds. Of toes.

Brennan Mulligan

She got so many toes. It's true.

Erika Ishii

Oh, yes. I would say that you do not need to listen to the children's campaign in order to understand the events of the campaign proper, but it gives a whole world of context.

Aabria Iyengar

100%.

Erika Ishii

We operated under the assumption that people hadn't listened to it once we started the adult campaign, but at the same time, it just felt like there were so many just this rich tapestry of history amongst the three of us because of that story. Gosh, yeah. It really gave us so many stakes at the jump, and it makes sense because there's always that question of why are these people together? Why are they staying together? I mean, in every story you have to create compelling reasons for people to find each other a lot of times, and we got that in spades in the kids campaign.

Aabria Iyengar

I think the important thing to mention is that, yes, we're very excited and we can't wait to introduce you to the world of the Wizard, the Witch and the Wild Ones. But that's the first of the worlds that we're here to present. So I think the thing that we want to say is we're so excited to show you our first world, the Wizard, the Witch and the Wild One. But the important thing to note is that it's the first world. That's why we're called Worlds Beyond Number. That's why you're hearing this little bit before everything else, because we want you to know that we are all storytellers of every capacity, and this is just the beginning. And we're going to have time and space for beautiful, long campaigns, and we'll take turns running them. We'll have fun, crazy oneshots. I guess we're doing Cyber falcons? Erika, you are contractually obligated to run that.

Erika Ishii

Okay? So here's the thing, is we had the cyberpunk Watership Down idea.

Aabria Iyengar

Hey, Erika, shut up. That's going to pop up somewhere else sooner than you think.

Erika Ishii

You got to be kidding me.

Aabria Iyengar

I forgot that that's where that started.

Erika Ishii

I know that Brennan and Aabria are known as the GMs in the space, and I am terrified and deeply thrilled to be able to guide a story for my friends. I never think of myself as a writer. By day, I am an actor, and that usually precludes doing any sort of thinking for myself. So the idea of getting to build a whole world out and guiding these absolute monsters of storytelling through it, I know you'll all make it so easy.

Aabria Iyengar

Erika, I love you. I couldn't be more excited. But you have never been wronger about making it easy. I

plan, I promise, to take the sun of the chaos that you have given me across our years of storytelling. Focus it through the lens of your game that you're running and burn you apart with all of your energy. That's all I want.

Erika Ishii
That's the spirit.

Aabria Iyengar
Fear me at your table.

Erika Ishii
I'm going to write an AO3 for me about that later.

Aabria Iyengar
Absolutely share that with me. I would like that very much, actually. Do the voice. Say that again in the voice.

Erika Ishii
[Low, sultry] I'm going to write a spicy little lemon on AO3.

Brennan Mulligan
You're going to write a spicy lemon.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. That made perfect sense. If you know, you know. Brennan, get on. Go.

Lou Wilson
Brennan. I'm right there with you. That made no sense to me.

Erika Ishii
Everybody who hears this podcast, you need to explain to Brennan what a lemon is.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. Tag him on Twitter.

Brennan Mulligan
No, don't tell me anything. I'm not on it. I'm not on it.

Lou Wilson
Okay, what's the next thing we need to cover? That was beautiful.

Brennan Mulligan
The next thing we need to cover god. Use your brain. Get it. Get it. Go deep into your mind and retrieve it. Here it is. The very next thing is we've been shooting the shit here and having a little bit of a hootenanny together, and it's been fun and fancy free. But check out this!

Brennan Mulligan
The shenanigans have been afoot in our little talk back here, but the podcasts that you hear following, in the weeks leading up to the release of episode one and including episode one itself, are going to be a fully sound designed, beautifully scored, polished, edited and produced wonder that we will be so excited and proud to wrap up in a tidy bow, kiss and ship on down the podcast assembly tube. Which is, I assume, how podcasts are delivered directly to your loving ears.

Brennan Mulligan
We are so excited to deliver this to all of you. And I have heard some of the initial edits from our dear friend Taylor at Fortunate Horse and [Italian voice] "marone." This podcast is a symphony of sound, which is great because that's what symphonies are made of and it is a feast for the ears. And that's

not where you eat. That's a different hole for that

Aabria Iyengar
Says you, you coward.

Brennan Mulligan

So I think that there's a lot to be excited for in terms of the production value. And ultimately, at the end of the day, we all really wanted to tell a story together. And we wanted to spend wonderful years of our lives treasuring each other and telling it together. And it is such an added cherry on top to be able to share that joy with all of you. So thank you so much for listening to this.

Aabria Iyengar

And if that wasn't where we cut it off, calls to action: thank you all so much for listening. Please subscribe, rate our podcast wherever you're listening to it. If you want to talk, social media is great we're on all socials I guess use hashtag worlds beyond number and we'll see it because we're nasty little gremlins. And if you have it in you, you can support us on Patreon and get so much delightful bonus content that we're excitedly brewing up

Erika Ishii
Bone cone!

Aabria Iyengar
Bone cone. Oh, we're telling them we're calling it bone cone?

Erika Ishii
Bone cone.

Aabria Iyengar
Now you've been cursed with what we call it.

Erika Ishii
Good luck.

Aabria Iyengar
Say goodbye, Lou.

Lou Wilson
Hey, Brennan.

Brennan Mulligan
[Sharply] What

Lou Wilson
Fuck you, you fucking asshole. Go back to New York, I fucking hate you.