Episode 5: The Bad Clankers

[00:00:00] **Esther:** This episode was recorded and produced on Lisjan Ohlone land. To learn more about Lisjan Ohlone land reclamation and rematriation efforts, please refer to the information in our episode description.

[00:00:12] **Esther:** Content notices for this episode include:

[00:00:15] **Esther:** Strong language; light combat violence; discussions of offscreen character death; and implied violence to an Awakened animal as part of backstory.

[00:00:24] **Esther:** Transcripts for all our episodes are available at our website, chromythica.com.

[00:00:30] **Esther:** Hello and welcome to Chromythica! We are a Pathfinder 2E actual play, semi-homebrewed and set in the world of Golarion. And I am your GM, Esther Wallace. I use she/her and zhe/zher pronouns, and I am so excited to be with you all today! Before we dive into today's game, I'm going to ask my wonderful players to go around and introduce themselves.

[00:02:09] **Fai:** I am Fairuz Rougeaux. I use she and they pronouns and I will be playing Temerity Vane, our Rogue.

[00:02:18] **Justin:** I'm Justin Brown. I use he/him pronouns and I will be playing Ember, our Barbarian Oracle.

[00:02:27] **Alex:** I'm Alex. I use they/them pronouns and I will be playing Professor Z, a gnomish professor and his contraption, Buster.

[00:02:37] **David:** Hi, I'm David. I use he/him pronouns, and I play Oom, our party's gnome Sorcerer, who uses any combination of she, him, or they pronouns and Oom's pseudodragon familiar Nommie, who uses he/him pronouns.

[00:02:51] **Esther:** Beautiful. Thanks, y'all. So we have a tradition of asking a warm-up question to get into character and today's warm-up question is brought to us by Justin.

[00:03:01] **Esther:** Thank you very much. And it is: what is your character's star sign in their cultural system for whatever kind of zodiac they may have. Please describe its virtues and its vices.

[00:03:14] **Justin:** So Ember's zodiac sign in gnome culture is The Lantern. Ordinarily, I would answer this in character voice, but Ember has no idea what Zodiac signs are. So I would say-- so The Lantern is this constellation, reaches its zenith in midwinter and that serves as a beacon of the coming warmth and spring.

[00:03:37] **Justin:** People born under the sign tend to be cheery and persistent, always seeking the best in others, but because of this, they are easily tempted and deceived, not always seeing the dangers that lurk in the shadows.

[00:03:48] **David:** So for me because Hermea is a blend of different cultures and beliefs, my Aunty Nia taught me two different zodiacs. So, for the Cosmic Caravan, I learned that because I was born on the 10th of Desnus, it places me under the sign of The Daughter. Sort of near the cusp of where The Daughter meets The Rider. For this, Aunty Nia had said that at her best, The Daughter can dance into springtime and cross difficult bridges singing the song of the stars. And at her worst, The Daughter's a lonely wanderer who dances to her own tune, unable to form meaningful bonds with others.

[00:04:29] **David:** The other zodiac that Aunty Nia taught me is the variant of the draconic zodiac. So for the draconic zodiac, Aunty Nia told me that I was born during a lunar eclipse. Because of that, that fell under the draconic sign of The Sovereign. Aunty Nia had mentioned that the idea of The Sovereign is sort of often misunderstood because a lot of people think it means the strongest, but in reality, the idea of the word sovereign comes from two different draconic words for leadership.

[00:04:59] **David:** One comes from the draconic word for the physical power, or might of things, and the strength to really enact change while the other comes from the draconic word for authority more as an emotional type of charisma, sort of in an influential being that inspires others to change for themselves. And so from these two concepts, Auny Nia said that at their best, The Sovereign is this beacon of benevolence, a guardian that sort of brings change and progress to the whole community so that everyone can move forward together. And at The Sovereign's worst, The Sovereign is a tyrant and tries to force their beliefs on others. And so I think both of those together create sort of combined traits where, you know, at the positives, we're sort of seeing inner strength and confidence and at its worst we're really seeing stubbornness and pride.

[00:05:53] **Alex:** So Professor Z's zodiacal sign and, and sort of animal would be something of a, of a goat with a strong-headed and curious personality and always wanting to sort of climb to the top of things and look around. Those are the sort of both the positive and the negative traits that I would bring out from Professor Z's Zodiac signs. And it's a pretty simple background.

[00:06:19] **Fai:** I also went with two because Temerity is both a tiefling and an elf. Elves use an intricate system that takes into account not just celestial bodies, but also meteorological conditions and phenomena. By elven reckoning Temerity was born under the sign of the Wandering Seed. The Elvish word that's actually used refers specifically to the kind of seed that spreads by wind dispersal.

[00:06:42] **Fai:** People born under this sign are said to be inquisitive and curious, quick-witted, and light-footed. The Wandering Seed carries with it a wealth of information and a deep connection to the tree from which it grew, but can struggle to root itself anywhere. Wandering Seeds are cautioned against their own inclination to live forever amongst the breeze and never take root.

[00:07:03] **Fai:** Tiefling signs are determined by circumstances, which means that your sign can change many times over the course of your life.

[00:07:10] **Fai:** Temerity's current sign is the Vexing Hallucination, the Titillating Nightmare. Vexes are the danger that appears with a smile or the good fortune that arrives amid bad conditions. Occasionally referred to in Common as the Blade and Spade because its artwork in vision decks is often associated with assassins and farmers, the Vexing Hallucination, the Titillating Nightmare is an omen. Whether it is one of good or ill, is like the Tiefling Zodiac: all a matter of circumstance.

[00:07:38] **Esther:** Beautiful. Thank you so much. I love them all. And I'm excited to like weave them in as we go along.

[00:07:48] **Esther:** So without further ado, let's remember what happened last time we gathered and where you all were, what you were up to.

[00:07:56] **Esther:** You had dinner at Professor Z's home after a bit of debate over where you might acquire evening meal. And you learned many things about Buster and the circumstances under which Buster is usually exploded and about architecture in Brastlewark. How gnomes in Brastlewark really love the idea of rebirth of whole neighborhoods sometimes, but only after 10 or 15 years, when folks have really had a chance to live there and are then ready for something new. You decided then that you would have a group evening adventure into the foothills north of the city to learn more about the secret observatory being constructed by the gnome King Drum Thornfiddle of Brastlewark in association with House Thrune, the ruling family of Cheliax, the country where Brastlewark is located.

[00:08:52] **Esther:** You encountered on the road ahead of you, a couple of folks who had a cart, which was pulled by goats and contained various metal instruments, you assume they are for the probable telescopes being constructed in this observatory. After a little bit of a rough start talking to them, you did manage to charm one of them into telling you about their frustrations with the role of contractor producing equipment for this observatory, how they don't feel their role is properly acknowledged and it's, it's been a frustrating set of circumstances it seems.

[00:09:29] **Esther:** While Ember distracted the other individual, someone named Aelfric by stealing a small metal instrument from the cart, burying it, and then running up the road. Ember, you ran up the path and sensed two large metal figures in the moonlight with a third metal figure a little ways off from and behind them.

[00:09:51] **Esther:** You then rejoined the party and, after you all took your leave of this place, declared that you had found the observatory and that the metal people were guarding it, I believe. You as a party decided to go back to Brastlewark to spend the night. And Ember and Professor Z, I think you headed to Professor Z's home. And Oom and Temerity, you headed back to the Lilyfrost Inn and Tavern where you bumped into Miv, your gnome acquaintance, who was just finishing up their mountain dulcimer performance for the evening. It turns out Miv is also curious about the observatory and had a run-in with the large metal figures there and was told by some folks who came down to meet them to please vacate the premises of the road up.

[00:10:43] **Esther:** And Miv offered to join you if you want to check out the observatory. And I think you've accepted them on this offer. So after a solid night's rest, you will wake up on Fireday, which is the equivalent of Friday in this universe. And perhaps head into the foothills once more to see how far you get figuring out the road to this observatory.

[00:11:10] **Esther:** What would you like to do on waking?

[00:11:14] **Fai:** We came to the conclusion that daylight would be safer because they do all of their work at night, right?

[00:11:21] **Esther:** Yeah. I think that is the conclusion you came to with the information you got.

[00:11:25] **Fai:** Okay. All right. All right. We didn't talk yesterday about reconvening, did we? Like how we were going to do that?

[00:11:35] **Justin:** We could just meet back at the bakery. I assume we're going to the bakery again, so --

[00:11:39] **David:** Yeah, that's what happened last time, so...

[00:11:41] **Fai:** That seems like the right choice. So I presume that Oom and I will, and Nommie of course, probably head that way once we wake up in the morning, perform whatever ablutions are necessary, et cetera.

[00:11:59] **David:** That's that sounds good. do we think we're also gonna find our possible co-conspirator?

[00:12:05] **Fai:** Oh, okay. Well, I guess the question is, should we put it to the other people? Or should we just bring them with us and be like, hey, we got someone else!

[00:12:17] **Justin:** Ember likes friends. I think he'd be fine.

[00:12:19] **David:** I mean, I think we'd be fine if we trust them. I think, I think part of it is, basically, because we were told to keep this a secret, right? Or keep this on, on the downlow. As long as we feel we can trust this person I'm okay with it too.

[00:12:33] **Fai:** Is Miv staying at this place too?

[00:12:39] **Esther:** Yes. Miv is staying at, at the inn.

[00:12:41] **Fai:** Okay. So presumably it will be easy to collect them and be on our way.

[00:12:45] **Esther:** Yes.

[00:12:47] **Fai:** All right. Shall we do that?

[00:12:50] **David:** Sounds good to me.

[00:12:51] **Fai:** Great.

[00:12:53] **Esther:** Fabulous. You will find them downstairs, having finished what seems to be a rather hearty breakfast. They will have the dulcimer with them, kind of like strapped alongside their body. You know, it seems like maybe they're used to carrying it and they will also have some weapons attached. They are going to be carrying a crossbow and a rapier.

[00:13:17] **Fai:** Okay. Here's what I would like to know. Do we get bard vibes or like... what I want to know is what their class is, but I'm not sure how you would like me to phrase that for Temerity's --

[00:13:28] **Esther:** It is extremely reasonable that you--

[00:13:30] **Fai:** What kind of skillset does this person appear to have based on Temerity's experience in life? Did I do it? I nailed it, didn't I?

[00:13:39] **Esther:** That was beautiful.

[00:13:40] **Fai:** Thank you.

[00:13:41] **Esther:** Given that you've seen them perform multiple times and they seem to be carting this dulcimer around they definitely give you like performer vibes. They, they give you bard vibes, yeah.

[00:13:52] **Fai:** All right. All right. All right.

[00:13:54] **Esther:** Little reminder of Miv's appearance: they have fuchsia hair and deep brown eyes, and they are dressed in these like little bit worn, but extremely colorful travelers' clothes. And their dulcimer is like a very prominent part of their, um, accoutrement.

[00:14:12] **Esther:** They're, they're finishing up their breakfast, and they're kind of like shove one forkfull in their mouth and like chew it up and say, "Hi! Mornin'!"

[00:14:21] **Fai:** "Good morning. How are you?"

[00:14:23] **Esther:** "Well, I'm doing pretty well, thanks for asking. How are you this mornin'?"

[00:14:28] **Fai:** "Very well. We are going to meet our friends to go on our little mission today if you'd like to join us."

[00:14:36] **Esther:** "Absolutely I'd, I'd love to, I'm, I'm curious about what's going on up there in 'nem, 'nem hills."

[00:14:43] **Fai:** "There's, there's something in them there hills!"

[00:14:47] **Esther:** [Esther and the cast struggle to contain delighted laughter]

[00:14:50] **Esther:** I'd just like our audience to know I really channelled my grandmother, like --

[00:14:56] **Fai:** May she be blessed in her rest!

[00:14:58] **Esther:** Not in her everyday speech, but in her most, I am from Appalachia moments. [laughs]

[00:15:03] **Fai:** That was beautiful.

[00:15:05] **Esther:** Thank you. Miv will look to Oom and Nommie and say "Morning, how are y'all today?"

[00:15:12] **David:** " Doing great. How about you?"

[00:15:13] **Esther:** "I'm excited to see what we're going to find and, uh, real interested to learn more about you folks. I'm, I'm happy we met."

[00:15:24] **David:** "Us too."

[00:15:25] **Fai:** "We're still learning about each other at this point, really."

[00:15:29] **Esther:** "Oh, you're newly acquainted. Mmm. Well, it's always a treasure to meet some folks that you, um, you seem to be thrown together by, by fate with. I've had that happen a few times in my life and I just, I'm real, real happy to see what may be the beginning of a beautiful friendship here."

[00:15:50] **Fai:** "It very well may be."

[00:15:53] **Esther:** "Do you mind if I play a little music for the road? Nothin' like some dulicmer tunes as you walk around in the mornin'."

[00:15:59] **David:** "Yeah, that'd be lovely."

[00:16:01] **Fai:** Temerity is clearly delighted by this.

[00:16:04] **Esther:** This is a slightly modified instrument where like, they're, they're going to be able to play it while walking.

[00:16:10] **Esther:** It's a really like, gnomish looking construction. It's like half, I don't even know how -- lute, maybe, half mountain dulcimer. And there's this like thick leather strap that sort of holds it to them. But part of it's like flat in front of them. It's, it's fascinating. Let your imaginations go absolutely delightful directions with what this thing may look like.

[00:16:34] **Esther:** So they will start walking and strumming this dulcimer and singing a beautiful tune of morning in the mountains when the sun is shining bright on green leaves and new growth is springing up.

[00:16:50] **David:** If the tune is familiar, Oom will definitely hum along, I'm sure.

[00:16:53] **Esther:** Ooh! I'll leave that to you. If you would like it to be familiar. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:16:59] **David:** Oom's gonna hum, hum along to the tune.

[00:17:01] **Esther:** Beautiful. They'll harmonize with you. They sound beautiful, like gorgeous singing voice. Ember and Professor Z, what are y'all up to?

[00:17:11] **Justin:** Ember will stretch and yawn outside of Professor Z's abode, wait patiently at the door.

[00:17:18] **Alex:** Professor Z will, will probably get up and go about whatever his normal, maybe not very usual morning routine is. Some clanging as he sort of starts up Buster.

[00:17:32] **Esther:** Yeah. There's a couple like, you know, loud clanks as Buster crackles to life. I'm imagining like steam coming out of Buster, like a couple of little toots of steam and then it-- he's able to begin moving himself.

[00:17:47] **Alex:** Yeah. I feel like you have to kind of fire up Buster in the morning. Like it's, Buster's something like a, you know, wood pellet fired stove turned off and you get him going. And then he's, then steam starts coming out, creaky movement, and things go from there.

[00:18:02] **Esther:** Cool.

[00:18:03] **Esther:** Well, your morning routines will unfold without too much event. So you all, you all are headed to Professor Z's house, is that right? Okay. You can arrive there and, and, meet up as a group.

[00:18:16] **Fai:** That sounds great. As we walk up, I'm going to be just kind of trying to slowly get to know Oom a little better. But like not pressing if they're evasive about any questions, but you know, just kind of being like, so where are you from? What are you into? Kind of trying to figure out how old they are without outright asking. What have you been doing for the last, however many years, et cetera, et cetera, you know?

[00:18:50] **David:** "Y'know just hopping around the place. I'm just from, a, a small island, bit far from here, just really been trying to learn more about different things. That's pretty much it, really."

[00:19:04] **Fai:** "You know, I'm not from an island, but that's pretty much it for me too."

[00:19:09] **David:** "Have you been to many interesting places?"

[00:19:12] **Fai:** "Well, you know, I've been around for a little while. I know I'm very young and handsome looking, of course, but, yeah, I've been to, I've been to quite a few places. I come from quite a few places, I feel like. So I've spent a lot of time around the elves. That's where I came from. But when you have a long time, you have many places to go.

[00:19:37] **Fai:** So I just kind of pop through and find an adventure. Sometimes I spend a year teaching kindergarten..." Wait, what do we call kindergarten in a world where there's no German?

[00:19:47] **Esther:** Y'know, it's the closest approximation that we have in our language, is kindergarten.

[00:19:51] **Fai:** Great. Love it. Kindergarten is a Common word. Love it.

[00:19:56] **Justin:** You can always just say it's very, Tolkein-y in the way that it, like we're speaking in a language that's not the actual language that the, yeah.

[00:20:04] **Esther:** Exactly.

[00:20:04] **Fai:** That's true.

[00:20:05] **Fai:** "Uh, yeah, you know. Teach children, work in a bakery, just kind of go anywhere. That's how I got here."

[00:20:15] **David:** "What do you mean by a long time? I mean, because yeah, you are very young and handsome looking. How long is long?"

[00:20:22] **Fai:** "About 200 years. How about you?"

[00:20:25] **David:** "It's only about a little over 20 for me."

[00:20:28] **Fai:** Information filed away. Having been very curious and unable to tell how old any gnomes are, except for like the really old ones. And then be like, those are sort of, you know, probably old who knows? But gnomes have a really, have a long lifespan, like, like Elves, right?

[00:20:44] **David:** Yes.

[00:20:45] **Fai:** Okay. Great.

[00:20:46] **Fai:** "Well, that's very exciting. Oom, you have, you have so much to see and so much to do."

[00:20:52] **David:** "Yeah. I, I really just can't wait to, to see everything and learn more about all that life has to offer."

[00:21:00] **Fai:** " It's nothing but an open road in front of us."

[00:21:04] **Esther:** Miv is going to pause their playing for moment and be like, "Now, now, now, I have to ask you both: for two people who have, uh, wandered around and gone here and there: what's your top two places you been? Top two places in the world or, or three, if you want."

[00:21:25] **Fai:** Ma'am, I don't know if I know enough about the world to actually choose that on Temerity's behalf, but let me think.

[00:21:32] **Fai:** DM?

[00:21:34] **Fai:** What do you think are some of the more interesting things in this world that somebody who's been alive for 200 years might have seen? Other than the places that they're from and obviously.

[00:21:45] **Esther:** Mmm...

[00:21:46] **Fai:** Oh, and you know, somebody who's probably been tomb raiding with his mom and shit.

[00:21:50] **Esther:** Yeah. I would actually say you probably think Celwynvian, the city in Mierani Forest is... intense. But interesting, definitely interesting. You might have seen some really interesting ruins, like on various islands in one of the Western oceans, if you had been there. I'm guessing you may have been to like, Kintargo in, in Ravounel, which is -- used to be Cheliax, and you would probably really like that city. It's the one that's all about like art and counter-culture and theater that's got subversive themes.

[00:22:36] **Fai:** I just got very distracted. Did you say used to be Cheliax? Is that not a thing anymore?

[00:22:41] **Justin:** It broke away.

[00:22:42] **Esther:** It broke away, yeah.

[00:22:43] **Fai:** Oh, okay. So it used to be-- okay. I thought you meant like, Cheliax--

[00:22:47] **Esther:** Used to be in Cheliax --

[00:22:48] **Fai:** --wasn't a thing anymore and I was like, uh, did I miss a memo?

[00:22:52] **Justin:** No, no. There was a rebellion.

[00:22:54] **Fai:** Okay. Okay. To answer that question, I think I'm not going to actually answer the question and instead I will tell a pretty rambling tale of, you know, like some of the different, like, ruins that I've been to and just like really wax poetic about-- I will say that like some, like one of my favorite places or some of my favorite places are the woods that my Mamas came from.

[00:23:19] **Esther:** Do you drop your mamas' names?

[00:23:21] **Fai:** Hmmmm. That's certainly an interesting question. Yeah.

[00:23:28] **Esther:** Okay.

[00:23:29] **Fai:** I want to see what happens!

[00:23:30] **Esther:** The GM doesn't remember if this came up before, but we're going with it now.

[00:23:34] **Fai:** I will, yeeammm [uncertain noise]. Yeah, sure.

[00:23:38] **Esther:** Well Miv will kinda stop and say: "Now, hold on a second. Hold on a minute, here. You mean to tell me Ailuin Vane is your mama?"

[00:23:51] **Fai:** "I certainly do. Are you acquainted with her?"

[00:23:54] **Esther:** "Well, um, I wouldn't say we're acquainted, but uh, I mean, she's mighty well-known in adventurin' circles. She is one a, one hell of a lady, if you don't mind my saying so. I mean, with all due respect, I mean it as a compliment, but um-- my goodness. I had no idea!"

[00:24:13] **David:** "Sorry. I don't know much about adventuring circles. Who is Alduin Vane?"

[00:24:19] **Fai:** "Well, you see, my mother is an expert in the reclamation of ancient elven cultural artifcats."

[00:24:30] **Esther:** "Yeah. She goes around stealing shit from everybody. I mean, it's really remarkable. She's famous for cultural reclamation and famous for, um, reclamation in general.

[00:24:41] **Esther:** It's, it's really remarkable. I mean, all of these places where ancient treasures are buried, she has pulled off some phenomenal heists. I mean, we are in the presence of the spawn of royalty, in some ways, in, in the circles I run in. My goodness."

[00:24:59] **Fai:** "It's a great pleasure for my mother's accomplishments to be so respected. I can only hope to one day have her skill."

[00:25:10] **Esther:** "Is it true? What she did in Celwynvian? I mean, taking it on all alone without telling anybody?"

[00:25:20] **Fai:** "Well, you see, there were complicating factors and extenuating circumstances. And--" How long ago was this?

[00:25:30] **Esther:** 10 to 20 years ago.

[00:25:33] **Fai:** Okay. So, all right. "And you know, sometimes she's maybe not always the best at listening to her wife's advice."

[00:25:42] **Esther:** "Well, um, please give her my heartfelt admiration. I mean, goodness. Well, you and I, we should, uh, talk more Temerity. There are stories I would love to hear."

[00:25:55] **Fai:** "It seems to me like you probably have many stories of your own..."

[00:26:01] **Esther:** "Aw, shucks. Well, I got a few, um, I could tell you some time, but I gotta ask Oom... you've been around various places in just a little over 20 years. What's your favorite place you've been?"

[00:26:17] **David:** "Oh gosh. It's, it's hard for me to say really, because I guess for me, it's more the people you meet rather than the places you go to. Part of the reason why we got to meet each other was because of Ember, Ember's former companion, Oriana. In my mind, the things that are most memorable are just the people."

[00:26:35] **Esther:** "And you say you're from an island?"

[00:26:39] **David:** "Yes."

[00:26:39] **Esther:** "Might I ask which one?"

[00:26:42] **David:** "Hermea."

[00:26:43] **Esther:** "Well, ain't that interesting. You don't meet somebody from Hermea, every day, especially not just wanderin' out in the world. What brings you out?"

[00:26:52] **David:** "I really just wanted to see more of everything. It was my chance to learn for myself what the world has to offer."

[00:27:00] **Esther:** "I wish you much learnin' of the best kind in this journey you're on. I'll just strum us another little song--" Yes?

[00:27:09] **Fai:** What's Hermea?

[00:27:11] **Esther:** Oh, okay. I think this would be Society. A Society check.

[00:27:17] **Fai:** Secret?

[00:27:18] **Esther:** If you would like it to be, but it doesn't need to be.

[00:27:22] **Fai:** Okay. Well, I do like to see when I can. Society...

[00:27:26] **Esther:** Ooh. Yes. Okay. So you have heard of Hermea., Actually, you've probably been closer to it -- I mean, you've definitely been closer to it than you are now -- but like, fairly close as the world goes. It's like in the ocean a little ways from Ravounel and, from like the Varisian coast. I wouldn't say it's near where you've spent a lot of time, but you definitely would know what it is.

[00:27:54] **Esther:** And you would know that it is an island that is founded by the Gold dragon named Mengkare. And he has the goal of building a rather utopian society where everybody really cares for each other and brings the best elements of themselves and their cultures to build a society where everybody belongs.

[00:28:22] **Esther:** And everybody has value. And it is a community where you don't have to be born there to be a part of it. You can join, but the joining process is rather rigorous and you must live there for a while and kind of prove that you really have a commitment to belonging in order to be accepted as a permanent member of the community.

[00:28:44] **Esther:** It's kind of rare that anybody leaves Hermea once they go.

[00:28:49] **Fai:** Because it's so great?

[00:28:51] **Esther:** Because it's *so* great.

[00:28:54] **Fai:** But it makes sense that a super curious person would leave. Like it's not, it's not like weird or suspicious. It's just--

[00:29:02] **Esther:** Oh, it ,it is a little weird. It is a little weird, but it's not suspicious, I would say. You can imagine that like someone might realize that their highest potential is their curiosity and their desire to learn about the world.

[00:29:14] **Esther:** And then the society might be thrilled for them to go out and reach that highest potential and then come back one day and share what they've learned.

[00:29:23] **Fai:** That is so nice.

[00:29:24] **Fai:** All right. Interesting information filed away.

[00:29:27] **Esther:** Miv begins to sing a song about a wanderer who comes from humble roots and makes their way in the world through having adventures and finding unexpected treasures in deep caverns.

[00:29:42] **Fai:** Mmhmm. Interesting.

[00:29:45] **Fai:** How far are we from the bakery?

[00:29:48] **Esther:** The bakery? Uh, you'll probably pass it on the way to Professor Z's house, or it's, it's pretty close.

[00:29:53] **Fai:** Oh, I thought we were meeting at the bakery, are we meeting at the house?

[00:29:55] **Esther:** Oh! You can meet at the bakery. Either way is fine by me.

[00:29:59] **David:** I mean, Professor Z is fairly predictable.

[00:30:01] **David:** I figured we could find him at the bakery or if not, we can continue to his house.

[00:30:06] **Alex:** He's off to the bakery.

[00:30:08] **Esther:** By the time this song ends, you'll reach the bakery.

[00:30:11] **Fai:** I'm super curious about what my mom did ten or fifteen years ago, but should we ask about that later?

[00:30:16] **Fai:** I mean, I would love for you to tell me, unless it'll derail us.

[00:30:20] **Esther:** Do you want me the GM to tell you the person who plays Temerity, or do you want to ask Miv?

[00:30:26] **Fai:** No, I would like you, the GM, to tell the person who plays Temerity, but then maybe I'll ask Miv what they think happened.

[00:30:33] **Esther:** Okay. About 15 years ago, your mother went into the long-contested, ancient ruined city of Celwynvian alone to reclaim a powerful artifact or two or five.

[00:30:46] **Esther:** And you are well aware that this is a contested site among the elves of the forest and your, your long-sundered kindred who live underground mostly. It's a little bit of a tense, cold war zone in a lot of ways. And sometimes violence breaks out and sometimes there's an abatement. But your long-sundered kindred hold the city.

[00:31:11] **Esther:** And it's a really big deal to go in there, like at all, and hardly anybody would ever think of doing so alone to steal something. And your mother was extremely successful and came out of there with several very valuable old Elven artifacts of some beautiful aesthetic quality and perhaps magical power.

[00:31:34] **Esther:** And was then kindly disinvited from being in the area of the Mierani Forest for some time.

[00:31:44] **Fai:** Some time in Elven reckoning is probably a really fucking long time, huh?

[00:31:48] **Esther:** Mmhm.

[00:31:50] **Fai:** That's a, like, we better not see yo ass for three hundred years at minimum, right? [laughs]

[00:31:55] **Esther:** [laughs] Maybe, uh, please don't come back.

[00:31:58] **Fai:** Why did she do it alone? Because it's dangerous?

[00:32:01] **Esther:** From my perspective on your mother, it's dangerous. And also she loves being a badass.

[00:32:08] **Fai:** [Fai laughs]

[00:32:08] **Esther:** And she did it because she thought she could.

[00:32:11] **Esther:** Kind of like a chall-- like, can I do this? Yes, I do believe I can! And I'll prove it to myself and the world.

[00:32:17] **Fai:** I love it. Great. Okay. So I'm going to, now I'm just going to ask you before we go in.

[00:32:23] **Fai:** "Miv, just out of curiosity, what version of the story did you hear about what she did in the Celwynvian Forest?"

[00:32:31] **Esther:** "Ah, well, ya mama decided that it was high time she get some of your half of whatever's going on in that whole situation back to Kyonin. She just upped and strapped all her gear to herself and headed on in there. Yeah, I just heard she, um, she come out of there with like five or six different things and, uh, you know, it caused a little bit of a stir afterwards. Maybe it's still causing a little bit of a stir. But I mean, she's legendary for doing it. I mean, absolutely legendary."

[00:33:08] **David:** "How does she decide what is reclaiming versus stealing?"

[00:33:13] **Fai:** Esther? Do you have any perspective on that?

[00:33:15] **Esther:** I was going to say, Miv would say, "I reckon her child would know better'n I do."

[00:33:20] **Fai:** As the GM, what, what do you think your perspective is?

[00:33:23] **Esther:** She has a loose metric. Reclaiming would definitely be: if it is an Elven artifact and it's in some ruins that are largely inaccessible or, or held by non-elves, then that's reclaiming. If it's like in a human museum somewhere and they won't give it back or like some rich, non-elves' hoard, like a dragon's hoard or just like a rich person's, then that's reclaiming, and maybe you reclaim some other things along the way.

[00:33:51] **Fai:** [laughs] David, what exactly was the phrasing of your question please, if you remember?

[00:33:57] **David:** "Oh, how do you know, when it's reclaiming and when it's stealing?"

[00:34:00] **Fai:** [chuckles]

[00:34:02] **Fai:** "Well, I will admit to you before anyone else that they're very loose guidelines, if you want to call them that. But I think in general, the difference between reclaiming and stealing is that reclaiming is something you do for the people. And stealing is something you do for yourself!"

[00:34:19] **David:** "What does she do then, for the people, once she reclaims these objects?"

[00:34:23] **Fai:** Esther, presumably she's not hoarding them for herself. Like she is reclaiming them for the people, right?

[00:34:29] **Esther:** Yeah. She, she absolutely does like bring them to various Elven institutions or like, I mean, maybe occasionally one gets like dropped off at a public park somewhere... [laughs]

[00:34:39] **Fai:** [laughs]

[00:34:40] **David:** So like, cross between like Robin Hood and like Tomb Raider.

[00:34:44] **Esther:** Yeah. Yeah. She, she will bring them back like if scholars wish they could study a certain piece, but it's been lost for so long and she finds it or, or reclaims it, she'll bring it to them. But yeah, so a cross between Tomb Raider and Robin Hood is a good way to put it.

[00:34:59] **Fai:** That's perfect. Yes.

[00:35:01] **Fai:** She, she cares for the culture and the people, but she also cares for the shinies.

[00:35:06] **Esther:** Yes. Yes.

[00:35:06] **Fai:** If that explains.

[00:35:08] **David:** Got it. Is Temerity gonna explain that or, uh...

[00:35:11] **Fai:** Uh, yeah, absolutely!

[00:35:12] **David:** Okay, got it. Got it, got it. [laughs]

[00:35:14] **Fai:** "Oom, I don't want to give you the impression that I think she's some sort of saint. She's much more interesting than that. So, yes, she takes things that the scholars are looking for, or that have been lost to our people. But sometimes she takes things because she likes them."

[00:35:30] **David:** "That makes sense. I mean, don't expect anyone to be a saint. Truth is always somewhere in between."

[00:35:35] **Fai:** "It is. You're right."

[00:35:37] **Esther:** Miv is now standing in line at the bakery and will wave to Professor Z and Ember and say, "Well, hi y'all!"

[00:35:45] **Alex:** "Good morning! Didn't we meet you at the restaurant the other day?"

[00:35:49] **Esther:** "You surely did it. You're Z, aren't ya? Professor Z."

[00:35:53] **Alex:** "Indeed. I am Professor Z."

[00:35:55] **Esther:** "And you're Ember."

[00:35:57] **Justin:** "Hello, friend gnome."

[00:35:59] **Esther:** "Hello. Hello friend Ember! It is mighty nice to see you again. Now I have been learnin' all sorts of interesting things about these folks..."

[00:36:08] **Justin:** I will go for pets.

[00:36:10] **Esther:** Oh, Miv will enthusiastically give you pets. Like just happy scratches behind the ears, a tummy rub if you want one, like.

[00:36:18] **Justin:** Oh, yes!

[00:36:19] **Esther:** Yes.

[00:36:21] **Fai:** I'll go ahead and you know, not in a loud voice kinda lean in or get closer or whatever to Z and tell him "It appears that Miv is also curious about what we're curious about. And it seemed like maybe we could use a little bit of help, an extra hand."

[00:36:45] **Alex:** "Well, I wouldn't say it went well last night, so yeah. Yeah, we could use some help."

[00:36:50] **Fai:** "I agree. It could have gone worse, but it could have gone much, much, much better."

[00:36:56] **Justin:** "We need to deal with the bad clankers."

[00:36:58] **Alex:** "I just feel like there's something going on there."

[00:37:01] **Esther:** "Now, um, do y'all have a plan for dealing with the 'bad clankers' as Ember calls 'em?"

[00:37:10] **Justin:** "I set bad people on fire."

[00:37:12] **Esther:** "My thought is, it might be a little difficult to set 'em on fire. You might need a really hot fire. A lot of it."

[00:37:19] **Fai:** "Well, I think that maybe our plan was to have breakfast and discuss it. Obviously you've already had breakfast, but if you're still hungry, have some more!"

[00:37:29] **Esther:** "Oh, absolutely! This place smells amazin'! I think I dropped by here the other day. I'm excited to have more."

[00:37:36] **Fai:** So I would say let's try to take a table that if possible is somewhat like, you know, separated from other people...

[00:37:44] **Justin:** There is a second level, right?

[00:37:46] **Esther:** There is a second level. And you can, you can get up to the second level, um, either by the lift or by the stairs. You can put in your order first and they'll have it lifted up to you.

[00:37:55] **Fai:** Love the note of it having a lift. 'Preciate that. Yeah. So let's go and do that and actually figure out what we're going to do. Or do you, are you guys just trying to like fly by the seat of our pants and see what happens?

[00:38:07] **Justin:** I'm a Barbarian. Plans are not my thing. [laughs]

[00:38:12] **Fai:** Not so much for you?

[00:38:13] **Justin:** I will rage and then whatever happens happens.

[00:38:15] **David:** I trust our dog with all my heart. If fire is the solution, then let's use fire.

[00:38:21] **Justin:** I actually can't use fire in a Rage. I will have to attack, but you know.

[00:38:25] **Alex:** Planning was not a requirement for my academic position as it's not a requirement for most faculty members.

[00:38:32] **Fai:** [laughs]

[00:38:33] **Justin:** Is it possible-- do we think we could avoid them and just get past them?

[00:38:38] **Alex:** I was just going to walk right up to them.

[00:38:39] **Fai:** We've already had this conversation, Alex!

[00:38:43] **Esther:** I will say, you feel like you would have to do a lot of like, trekking through the backwoods and like actually climbing up a small mountain to get there by an alternate route. The easiest way is the road, and it's like steep with y'know, switchbacks, so if you're not going straight up it you're gonna to have to be like climbing up a wall, like going across a little road, climbing up another one. So the simplest way is on the road.

[00:39:08] **Justin:** My suggestion then is going to be that... So these like, this is basically like on like a cliff's edge, this path that we're, we would be fighting these things on. More or less? No?

[00:39:19] **Esther:** I mean, a, a cliff's edge is a little strong. Have you hiked in like-- not to the level of like a proper mountain, but what I would call like a foothill. Like low, lower hills, where there's like a trail sometimes paved, sometimes not. But it'll like go up one side of the mountain.

[00:39:37] **Esther:** And so it'll like start and it'll wind its way up. And it's not like a sheer cliff, but if you're going to try to get to one level-- from one level to another, it is like a drop. Like a, a grade with a lot of trees and bushes on it to get down to the next level.

[00:39:50] **Justin:** Sure. But hypothetically, if you were say very heavy and made of a strong metal, for example, like a Buster or perhaps these creatures, that say falling down one of these things would be unpleasant.

[00:40:04] **Esther:** Yeah, probably.

[00:40:05] **Justin:** Cool. I have Athletics. That is my plan. I think perhaps instead of just fighting these things head on because, you know, as a dog, my, um, capacity to bite through Construct is a little bit limited. Perhaps maybe push- off-edge would be easier as a plan. [chuckles]

[00:40:23] **Fai:** I'm over here like, wait, let me check my Acrobatics. Let me check my Althetics! What's my Strength?!

[00:40:28] **David:** I'm not going to suggest or anything, but I do have Feather Fall.

[00:40:32] **Justin:** Good to know!

[00:40:33] **Justin:** [David and Justin laugh]

[00:40:35] **Fai:** Update: my Strength modifier is zero! Just so you know!

[00:40:39] **Fai:** Let's rehash what we know. We know that there's some weird shit going on with the King. We know that the King is the one -- do we know that the King is the one who has arranged this, the building, the ongoing building of this?

[00:40:57] **Esther:** Yes.

[00:40:58] **Justin:** Yeah. We know that.

[00:40:59] **Esther:** Yes, you do.

[00:41:00] **Fai:** Okay.

[00:41:00] **David:** Do we get the feeling that the King is like a bad dude because of their deal with Her Majestrix or is it more of just a contractual bargain?

[00:41:10] **Justin:** It's, I dunno, it feels to me that like any particular deal made with, you know, Her Majestrix, bringer of Hell to Cheliax -- not quite, but, you know, who consorts with devils is, is at most neutral. [chuckles]

[00:41:26] **Fai:** At best?

[00:41:26] **David:** To be fair though, right, like demonic contracts are legally binding and enforceable. So there's predictability and trust-- I'm not going to say this as Oom, obviously, but you know...

[00:41:37] **David:** [cast laughs]

[00:41:38] **David:** There's predictability and trust, you know, to, to this.

[00:41:41] **Justin:** Yeah.

[00:41:41] **David:** To this.

[00:41:43] **Justin:** So far, I would say at best our King is morally dubious.

[00:41:48] **Fai:** Well that's just being a King!

[00:41:51] **David:** Yeah! It's morally dubious, but...

[00:41:53] **Fai:** It's anti-imperialism hours on Chromythica, y'all. But... [laughs]. Okay, so. We have no reason to believe that this is not a sinister affair. We have no reason to bel-- okay. Okay. So my next question, Esther, is everybody -- it's generally known that he struck some sort of deal with her. Is he known for any sort of heroics or magical ability or like being really smart or capable?

[00:42:26] **Fai:** Like, is there anything that one could connect the dots to and be like, well, maybe he was able to strike this deal because of something awesome that he did in battle or because of an incredible creation, like thing that he invented that helped her in some way? Like, is, are there any strings or is it just question mark?

[00:42:48] **Esther:** Are you asking me if Temerity would know this?

[00:42:51] **Fai:** Uh, yes I am. I mean, obviously I, I want to, I want to know if it's the case, but as far as anything that Temerity has heard slash if Temerity polls the group, because we've talked about like, we've obviously talked about all of this before.

[00:43:08] **David:** Yeah. I guess to add to that, I was kind of wondering from a, yeah, a diplomatic standpoint, is there any-- from ruler to ruler, knowledge of like, what, like Mengkare feels about King Thornfiddle or anything. If there was ever anything, like...

[00:43:22] **Fai:** That's the dragon that's in charge-- that created your island?

[00:43:25] **David:** Yes.

[00:43:26] **Fai:** Okay. I didn't get the name last time when I was writing notes. Sorry. Go 'head!

[00:43:30] **Esther:** So those would be Society rolls from each of you. I will say, I think Professor Z might have some insight into this, if you would like to ask Professor Z. And then I can, I can tell you if the rolls bolster that.

[00:43:46] **Fai:** Okay. Then I will do that.

[00:43:48] **Fai:** Well, let me ask one more question before I go back into character. How long has Brastlewark been a thing?

[00:43:55] **Esther:** About 60 years.

[00:43:57] **Fai:** Okay, cool.

[00:43:58] **Fai:** "Z, my knowledge of local history is very thin. So if you could maybe supplement, that'd be very helpful. Do we have any information about, are there any kind of strings or clues that tell us what he could have done to earn this honor from Her Majestrix? Is he an accomplished warrior? Is he an inventor? Does he have very strong magic? Is it possible that *he* has entered into an Infernal contract?

[00:44:34] **Fai:** Do you have any information for us?"

[00:44:38] **Alex:** I'm sure I have some context, but...

[00:44:42] **Esther:** Do you need a reminder?

[00:44:43] **Alex:** Yeah, well, or like how far I should go, but yes, I do need a reminder.

[00:44:48] **Esther:** I think you would know him to be a strong businessperson. Like one of his real strengths is pitching ideas and having the charisma-- and the quality that people really believe in his ideas and want to follow him. I would say that he is more of an architect and designer than he is like a tinkerer-inventor, but he's had massive influence in like the infrastructure, the beginning infrastructure of Brastlewark and often will be involved in like, supervising some, some of the new construction. Like the big projects, the wizards' towers and the libraries and centers of learning.

[00:45:25] **Esther:** Andhe is really skilled at persuading folks to invest in the venture that is Brastlewark. As Alex and I have discussed, he gives off like inspirational tech CEO funded by venture capitalist vibes. That is--

[00:45:44] **Alex:** Basically he's Elon Musk, but in gnome world!

[00:45:47] **Esther:** I wouldn't say he's Elon. Let's not invoke that name and bring that part of the internet down on the show! [giggles] But I wouldn't say he's Elon, but yeah, he's, he's, he gives off the vibes--

[00:45:59] **Alex:** JUST SAY we were on anti-imperialism hours, Alex!

[00:46:02] **Esther:** [Esther laughs]

[00:46:07] **Esther:** I, I mean, he's more likable. But yeah, he's, his strength is in selling ideas and getting people to believe them wholeheartedly. He has never come across as a particularly sinister figure. I wouldn't say he's out there telling his life story every day in the newspapers, but he's never come across as like big evil vibes.

[00:46:31] **Esther:** If Oom and Temerity want to recollect things, roll Society.

[00:46:36] **Fai:** Can I, can I hit up a Society roll just in case?

[00:46:40] **Esther:** Yeah, absolutely!

[00:46:42] **Esther:** So you are really not too sure about this. Yeah. You don't know a lot about him.

[00:46:51] **Fai:** Oooh, I'm suspicious. But also, like why would I know about him? But I'm suspicious!

[00:46:55] **Esther:** But if Professor Z shares all of this, like basically the refresher I just gave, you have no reason to believe that he's especially sinister.

[00:47:03] **Fai:** Yeah.

[00:47:05] **Alex:** And I want to be clear too, like Professor Z would be like, kind of bought into his-- like a little bit, not --maybe not the whole way, but like definitely on board with... Professor Z believes in at least the project of Brastlewark, and so had to have bought into the King's vision at some level.

[00:47:25] **Fai:** Can I, can I ask, and obviously you don't have to tell me, because this is an out of character question to you out of character. Is Professor Z -- you said that he's bought in, is he, is he passionate about what they're doing here?

[00:47:38] **Fai:** Like he thinks this is, is super important and is the place to be, or?

[00:47:43] **Alex:** He's on a journey with respect to that. I think if you were to meet Professor Z before any of this starts, he would definitely be really passionate about it. The more that there's like mystery, the more that he is not leading some grand academic institution and having fame and fortune the like less he-- it's eroding, but maybe not in a way that he admits, right? But it's definitely... like meeting Chaunsey That's another eroding Professor Z's sort of faith in the system.

[00:48:15] **Fai:** Thank you for that insight. I appreciate you answering the question.

[00:48:19] **Justin:** I think if we want to know more, we're going to have to do some investigating.

[00:48:23] **Esther:** Oom with that roll, you remember discussing Cheliax in some amount of depth with Mengkare. It seemed likely that you might need to go through the Infernal Nation at some point.

[00:48:37] **Esther:** And perhaps the city of Brastlewark came up once. It would have interested Mengkare as the largest city of gnomes in, in Golarion. Mengkare would have remarked that King Drum Thornfiddle is an enterprising person who might do well to curb his bolder instincts.

[00:49:01] **Esther:** And he would have left it at that. There would have been no mention of like, an Infernal contract, no rumors like that. But he might do well to curb his bolder instincts lest they catch up with him one day.

[00:49:15] **Fai:** Does Oom, share that with the class?

[00:49:17] **David:** Before I decide that, do I get the impression that Mengkare would be fine with me talking with King Drum Thornfiddle, would there be any hesitation with him as a leader?

[00:49:29] **Esther:** No. No hesitation like, don't go near this person, don't go to Brastlewark. Just, an enterprising individual who is interesting, should be careful of his bolder instincts lest they one day catch up to him.

[00:49:42] **David:** I will share that then.

[00:49:43] **Fai:** "Well, I think that's probably good advice for all of us, but still... this is very interesting. I think I'm going to write a letter to the mums and see if they have any information or maybe any, you know, back channels that they can refer to. Because this, this seems to me like, like we're not going to find out everything even if we go there. This seems, this seems very intricate and like a, like a big mystery. I'm kind of excited."

[00:50:19] **David:** Professor, you, you've said you've interacted with King Drum Thornfiddle. Is there a way to get an audience to talk? I mean, if he's an enterprising person, maybe we could try to get access the normal way if we don't think it's sinister."

[00:50:33] **Alex:** I mean, so I think Professor Z would be on board with trying to get access. I mean, Professor Z this whole time has suggested, like we can just walk up and see what's going on. So he would probably bring that back up at this point. Kind of remembering that like Temerity was not into this idea yesterday, but Professor Z would probably be like, "I would just try to go back again."

[00:50:58] **Alex:** If you discuss what are you going to do about the clankers, it really would be like, "Yeah, I'll just go walk up. I'm an academic. I want to check it out."

[00:51:07] **David:** Yeah. I think, I think Oom would just usually just walk up, but walk like way up, like it would be normal for Oom to just talk to the leader.

[00:51:14] **David:** So that's, that's what I'm asking for. Just, is there a way for you Professor to, to--

[00:51:18] **Alex:** -- to like, get an audience with the King?

[00:51:19] **David:** --to get us a -- yeah, with the King?

[00:51:22] **Alex:** I suspect there is, but I suspect that would take a lot of like convincing of somebody. I don't know. GM, like how would I go about getting an audience with the King?

[00:51:34] **Esther:** Well, you are quite aware that he freely grants audiences at the rumor of someone with great wealth who might be interested in funding a project.

[00:51:44] **Esther:** So you could find a rich person and ask them if they'll help you get an audience with King Drum Thornfiddle. You could have a research breakthrough of some kind or come to him with very important information. Or you could show up at one of his public engagements of which they, uh, could be a little chaotic in the gnome way of scheduling some things and leaving some things to the moment.

[00:52:05] **Esther:** Or you could just walk up and knock on the palace doors. It's not like people get arrested for that. You might get told he's not home and laughed at, but you could certainly try it.

[00:52:16] **Alex:** I would probably suggest like, "The most likely way we would find him would be to try and bump into him at a public engagement. But, you know, we could always just go try to get an audience with him at the palace."

[00:52:27] **Fai:** Okay. Temerity, as a person who sticks out in every crowd and cannot be subtle and unseen in this city at all, in any way, is going to ask, "Well, are there..." Oh, oh, OH! Nevermind.

[00:52:46] **Fai:** I don't have to ask if there are public engagements happening 'cause I know that the Festival of Flight is soon, right?

[00:52:51] **Esther:** Mmhm!

[00:52:52] **Esther:** I will say you would also remember, you do know someone who recently had an audience with the King.

[00:52:58] **Fai:** Who?

[00:52:58] **Esther:** He runs this very bakery--

[00:52:59] **David:** --the baker.

[00:53:00] **Justin:** The baker, yeah.

[00:53:00] **Esther:** -- That you are eating in right now.

[00:53:02] **Fai:** Oh DUUHHHHHHH!

[00:53:05] **Fai:** Okay. Okay. Okay.

[00:53:06] **Justin:** Tavi.

[00:53:07] **Fai:** How soon is the Festival of Flight?

[00:53:09] **Esther:** I think it's in about like, ten days or so at this point. Nine, ten days.

[00:53:13] **Fai:** Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay.

[00:53:14] **Fai:** "So we can talk to Tavi and see if there's more information to be had. And as we all know, the Festival is in a little more than a week, I believe. So we will have the opportunity to observe him presumably and maybe to talk to him. Here is what I think: it is entirely possible that there's nothing sinister going on.

[00:53:42] **Fai:** However, if there is something sinister going on, we should not make ourselves super, super obvious. And..."

[00:53:54] **Fai:** Gesticulating at all of this -- "I am very, very obvious. So we, we should plan accordingly. If there are sinister things afoot and we have to reveal ourselves, then so be it. But until that moment, maybe let's operate with a little bit of--" um, what's the word I'm looking for?

[00:54:17] **Justin:** Discretion.

[00:54:19] **Fai:** "Discretion!" Thank you.

[00:54:21] **Alex:** "You know, to me as a academic of Brastlewark, everybody at Brastlewark has always asking about the latest research and trying to learn about it from others. So it doesn't seem out of the ordinary to me that we would want to learn about the latest goings on here. That's, you know, the very spirit of the city."

[00:54:38] **Fai:** "That's certainly true, but because of that spirit of the city, don't you think it seems a little bit suspicious that every time you ask something related to this, people get very squirrely and start to be like, 'oh, we can't talk about this.' 'Oh, this is a secret.' How long has that observatory been being built?

[00:54:53] **Fai:** It seems like it's rather advanced in age. It's not brand new, right? So... why the secrets? Why the secrets for a culture that is so invested in sharing information? That's what makes it suspicious. And that's what makes me think that maybe you should... this is your home and you should operate with care lest you bring danger upon yourself."

[00:55:18] **Alex:** "Well, I definitely don't want more danger or too much excitement. You know, we had-- it was a lot yesterday. It didn't exactly go so well. I don't want to bring on too much of that, but I do just, you know, I, I think that the whole academic community should welcome the inquiry and the discovery. I mean, it's just really..."

[00:55:36] **Justin:** I was going to say, so we don't want to go directly to the observatory and we feel like perhaps going directly to the King on this might be a bit... direct.

[00:55:43] **Justin:** The other option is because they have, you know, been bringing things up from The Tinkerings, we could go more to the source of where these things are made and investigate there, which would be up in Professor Z's sort of hometown region anyway. And we could potentially get more information there than just sort of batting around theories.

[00:56:03] **Fai:** Just to clarify, I'm not in opposition to investigating the observatory. I am in opposition to knocking on anybody's front door.

[00:56:13] **Fai:** I'm cool with, with us going to investigate because that's more information and we discovered last night that there's probably not going to be anybody there, so we might be able to dig a little further.

[00:56:22] **Justin:** Yeah. So I think instead of continuing to kind of theorize, maybe let's get more information and then we can come back to this.

[00:56:29] **Fai:** Yeah.

[00:56:30] **Justin:** Ember will finish his bread and will like, look back to the stairs, like: "Let's go deal with the bad clankers."

[00:56:36] **David:** "Yeah, let's do it."

[00:56:37] **Esther:** "Alrighty. I'm all in."

[00:56:40] **Esther:** Let's... leave it there before break.

[00:56:44] **Esther:** So friends, I think the plan is that you're going to go check out the observatory. Well, you will be able to finish your, uh, breakfast -- in Miv's case second breakfast -- at Selestine Bakery. And then as you will make your way back towards the Aspodell foothills.

[00:58:17] **Justin:** Ember is gonna be leading the charge. Ember has a mission.

[00:58:22] **Fai:** We've come to the conclusion that there's, there's only the one way that's reasonable to approach this.

[00:58:28] **Fai:** Is that correct?

[00:58:29] **Esther:** Certainly one way that's easy... or the easiest way you can, you can determine right now.

[00:58:36] **Fai:** Okay. Just to clarify... you said it's kind of like a winding road is something?

[00:58:41] **Esther:** Yes.

[00:58:42] **Fai:** And there are trees amongst it?

[00:58:44] **Esther:** I'll take you there now... Can you all see the winding road map?

[00:58:50] **Esther:** So, what I'll ping on the map -- like this -- indicates like one of the cliffs. So this area, this area is the road. Everything green. And like the more brown areas that indicates like the cliff going up to the next level of the road.

[00:59:07] **Fai:** Okay. So essentially one could be kind of stealthy depending at what, on what part you were at?

[00:59:18] **Esther:** Yeah, definitely. Like, and there's some... you might be able to like go on one level or like, kind of like creep up the side of the hill under some brush and then like, determine if that stretch of the road is free and go on the road for a little while.

[00:59:33] **Esther:** Ember will probably have an approximate sense of the place where the 'bad clankers' were the night before, which incidentally might be the map you're looking at right now. But yeah, you can, you can be stealthy a particular ways. Yeah.

[00:59:47] **Esther:** Would you like to be stealthy?

[00:59:50] **Fai:** I would, yeah. I think that would serve us best.

[00:59:53] **Esther:** Do you happen to have feats that let you help other people Stealth at this level? Or is that not a thing right now?

[01:00:00] **Fai:** I don't believe I do.

[01:00:02] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:00:02] **Fai:** Let me just check and make sure. Nah.

[01:00:05] **Justin:** Are you an Expert in Stealth?

[01:00:08] **Fai:** Ahh... let's see. No.

[01:00:12] **Justin:** Okay.

[01:00:13] **Fai:** I am only Trained...

[01:00:17] **Justin:** Yeah. Once, once you're an Expert, we can Follow The Expert.

[01:00:20] **Justin:** But--

[01:00:20] **Fai:** Ooooh!

[01:00:21] **Justin:** --until that point, we are all rollin' individual.

[01:00:23] **Fai:** Love everything about that. That's going to be great. That'll be one of the things that levels ASAP.

[01:00:29] **Justin:** Ember will sneaky-sneak his way up.

[01:00:32] **Esther:** Everybody who would like to be stealthy, please roll Stealth secretly if possible. If not possible then that's okay.

[01:00:41] **Esther:** And you can also roll Perception, secretly. Most of you think that you are making your way pretty stealthily. Ember and Professor Z, you notice the group going along quietly for a while. Like, as you, as you get to the base of the foothills and start going up the road. And then you begin wandering through some underbrush on the side of the hill and like trying to climb your way up and both of you realize you are making a little bit of a racket. But you don't hear anything like immediately clicking after you. And then you'll, you'll get back to a section of the road that is easier to traverse and be able to make your way more quietly once more.

[01:01:25] **Justin:** "I am the night." In the middle of the day.

[01:01:28] **Fai:** Is there anything interesting to see or is it all just.... green and trees and dirt?

[01:01:34] **Esther:** You will see -- probably some indentations from the wheels of the cart yesterday evening. Nothing terribly interesting. Birds, some squirrels, tiny little lizards, maybe occasionally -- or like skinks, newts -- rustle under the grass. You may like, see a little mole tunnel up through some leaves and then stick its snout out and then go back down.

[01:01:56] **Esther:** But yeah, nothing, nothing too out of the ordinary.

[01:02:01] **Fai:** Does Ember see these things? And is he distracted by them? Just out of curiosity. Or does he not notice?

[01:02:05] **Esther:** Oh, Ember most definitely notices them with that roll. Uh, whether he's distracted by them is not my call.

[01:02:12] **Justin:** Ember is on a mission. Skinks are for later.

[01:02:15] **Esther:** Once you begin rounding this particular bend, the suits of armor will come into your view And then you'll probably see one more up in the distance... here.

[01:02:27] **Fai:** The, like, cliffy bits...

[01:02:29] **Esther:** Mmhm?

[01:02:30] **Fai:** How tall are they? Are they scalable? Could we just avoid these guys?

[01:02:34] **Esther:** They rank from... you would easily be able to scramble up them, like maybe two-to-three feet tall to, uh, above your head. Like six-to-eight feet. So this little edge is like more on the you-could-scramble-up-it, but like these areas over here are like six-to-eight feet. Like where Buster is approximately, that's what you could easily scramble up. Like this area over here. It'll essentially place you like within what you assume would be their field of vision.

[01:03:05] **Esther:** These... as you get more over in this region, and then up over here, these are all going to be taller, like, the six-to-eight feet cliffs that you will need to like, climb to get up.

[01:03:19] **Fai:** Okay.

[01:03:19] **Justin:** Some of us have problems climbing because we don't have hands.

[01:03:23] **Fai:** Can't you leap, my bro?

[01:03:25] **Justin:** I can't leap six feet in the air! [ Can you leap six feet in the air?!

[01:03:30] **Fai:** No, but I'm not a fuckin' dog!

[01:03:32] **Justin:** I can.. I believe I can leap three feet in the air.

[01:03:35] **Fai:** Okay. All right. So we would be able to potentially get all of us, but not you. How's--

[01:03:42] **Justin:** Buster might also have problems.

[01:03:44] **Fai:** Oh yeah, I forgot about Buster. Oh, fuckin' Buster's gonna be clangin' up the goddamn... [laughs]

[01:03:50] **Alex:** Should've had Buster roll Stealth, but I don't know, uh...

[01:03:54] **Fai:** [faintly] I thought we were gonna leave Buster at home!

[01:03:56] **Justin:** Nope. We did not leave Buster at home. Ember is continuing on his mission unless, uh, you know, someone with more tact stops him.

[01:04:04] **Fai:** Well, it-- I mean, I guess we don't... hmmmm. Mmmmmmm...

[01:04:09] **David:** If Ember's fighting, I'm fighting.

[01:04:11] **Justin:** He's just walking at this point.

[01:04:13] **Fai:** Okay. A further question: am I familiar with these kinds of constructs? Like would I know if they're the kind of thing that is only like, looking forward and... or if they, like -- what they respond to, noise or movement? What kind of information is available to me about these constructs?

[01:04:31] **Fai:** I want to know if I can go sneak up behind them.

[01:04:35] **Esther:** Well, roll Crafting, secretly.

[01:04:38] **Fai:** Secretly... Crafting!

[01:04:40] **Fai:** That doesn't appear to be in my secret list.

[01:04:41] **Esther:** What's your modifier for Crafting and I'm happy to roll it for you if that's okay with you.

[01:04:46] **Fai:** That's fine by me. My modifier is... wait. It's two or it's six?

[01:04:56] **Esther:** Are you trained in Crafting?

[01:04:56] **Justin:** The one in the circle.

[01:04:57] **Fai:** The one in the circle's six.

[01:04:59] **Esther:** Okay. And your, your question was... one more time?

[01:05:01] **Fai:** My question is what do, what do I understand about these kind of constructs? For instance, what do they respond to? What's their field of vision?

[01:05:14] **Fai:** Are they on a swivel? You know, like what kind of information might I have... either already know about constructs, or have gathered about the constructs from last time, and/or by peeking around the corner can see about the constructs?

[01:05:28] **Esther:** What you would know about this type of construct specifically is it seems to be the sort of animated suit of armor that is typically used to guard things or as like a, a martial arts or a martial training partner.

[01:05:43] **Esther:** And these are often found in like, wizards towers, or potentially clockwork spaces, or in places that your mom would frequent, particularly the archeological ruins. She has run into many in her time. And if you've been with her, you probably met a few there yourself. You would know that they're not the most perceptive of creatures, but not the least either.

[01:06:07] **Esther:** It's a little bit of a chance to try to sneak by them. Uh, it's not a guarantee that you'll be able to do it, but you could try.

[01:06:17] **Justin:** Have they responded at all as we have approached them?

[01:06:21] **Esther:** Not yet...

[01:06:21] **Fai:** You have approached them?

[01:06:23] **Justin:** Mmm.

[01:06:25] **Fai:** Okay. Well, I guess our question is... where's everybody?

[01:06:28] **Justin:** Uh, Ember is sniffing one right now.

[01:06:30] **Esther:** It does not seem to respond to Ember.

[01:06:33] **Fai:** That's unsurprising. Um, I would like to speak to the, um, the people, the non-dog people of our crew who are still around the corner, it looks like with me, and tell them that it is unsurprising, that they would be unalarmed by a dog. And it's maybe even possible... maybeeee... that, um, Buster might be able to walk past them. But that potentially, maybe the rest of us should consider using the cliff since they seem to be facing this way.

[01:07:13] **Fai:** And if we can maybe go back and, uh, you know, do some like cheerleader tosses, and I can hopefully climb, like maybe that would be the, a better idea, because this is going to be a fight if they see us. I will stress: this will be a fight if they see us.

[01:07:34] **Justin:** Ember will attempt to like scooch around, like... scooch!

[01:07:41] **Esther:** They, they don't seem to be taking any particularly special notice of a dog. They're not moving.

[01:07:47] **Justin:** Okay.

[01:07:49] **Esther:** They smell like metal.

[01:07:50] **Justin:** "I think the Bad Clankers are broken."

[01:07:52] **Justin:** [ Ember will ignore them.

[01:07:53] **Fai:** I have a question. How far does... I just, I just got lost in Animorphs and I was going to call it Mind Speak. [laughs] How far does Ember's mind-speak go? Like how far can... can we hear you?

[01:08:08] **Justin:** It's sound. It's not like... he's not telepathic. He just doesn't need to move his mouth to speak.

[01:08:13] **Fai:** Okay.

[01:08:14] **Esther:** When Ember speaks, the construct next to him begins to come to life...

[01:08:21] **Fai:** FUCK! Well, there's that fuckin' answer!

[01:08:23] **Esther:** It looks down at him and it sort of like, moves a hand. It doesn't do anything, but it's definitely aware, like it's, it's moving now.

[01:08:33] **Alex:** "I took from your plan, Temerity, that we should just send Buster straight on through."

[01:08:37] **Fai:** "I think that's at your discretion. That might be a safer way, but I admit that I'm not sure I understand the nature of your relationship with Buster. So I understand if maybe you're wary of his damage or..."

[01:08:56] **Alex:** "No, no. If Buster blows up we'll, we'll repair him. That's part of Buster's, Buster's cycle and we get some creativity. Buster, why don't you go for it?"

[01:09:07] **Justin:** Just like Janet, every, every time it's just... better, right? [chuckles]

[01:09:11] **Esther:** More powerful...

[01:09:12] **Alex:** Yeah!

[01:09:12] **Justin:** The most advanced Buster.

[01:09:13] **David:** And with the constructs we've got potential spare parts, too.

[01:09:16] **Fai:** Oooh!

[01:09:17] **Alex:** Yeah!

[01:09:17] **Justin:** Yeaaah!

[01:09:18] **Esther:** Okay. So describe to me what you're going to have Buster do.

[01:09:23] **Alex:** I'm just going to tell Buster to like, basically follow Ember. And so Buster's just going to go clanking along, not keeping up with Ember, because Buster I don't think is as fast as Ember, but like following Ember.

[01:09:34] **Esther:** When Buster reaches the constructs -- and I'm guessing, like begins to start going past them -- they come to life completely and like go into a very defensive stance, and seem to wait for about 30 seconds. So anything you'd like to do in those 30 seconds?

[01:09:54] **Justin:** "I think Buster woke them up."

[01:09:57] **Fai:** Peeking around the corner... Oh, you're talking again! [laughs] Hmmmm. I'm going to go ahead and see if I can... I guess while this is happening, I'm going to see if I can go up and around. I'm gonna see if I can scale the six-foot-ish place. Were we able to, in our sneaking and peaking, see the third one, the bronze or whatever one that's back there?

[01:10:21] **Esther:** I'm gonna say Ember could have told you that there was one, because he did sense all three the night before. And Miv probably could have told you that too.

[01:10:29] **Justin:** In these 30 seconds...

[01:10:31] **Esther:** Mmhm?

[01:10:32] **Justin:** So I see that they basically are threatening Buster, right?

[01:10:35] **Esther:** Yeah.

[01:10:36] **Justin:** I am not cool with that!

[01:10:37] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:10:38] **Justin:** Ember's gonna go here.

[01:10:39] **Esther:** Okay, great. So, Temerity, I'm going to need a climb check from you. And are you trying to do this without them noticing you?

[01:10:48] **Fai:** Yes.

[01:10:49] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:10:49] **Fai:** So my question is where along here do you want me to attempt...? Like where looks good? Where... ideally a little more there, but I... I don't know.

[01:11:01] **Esther:** You tell me. It's about the same height. It looks like it's going to be about the same level of difficulty to climb up. So you pick a spot and we'll see how you do.

[01:11:12] **Fai:** Okay. I'm going to go like around... probably there.

[01:11:16] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:11:17] **Esther:** From Temerity, I'm going to need a climb check -- and that does not have to be secret -- and a Stealth check, which you can roll it either way as you please. From everybody else, I will need Initiative.

[01:11:31] **Fai:** Uh, what's a climb check?

[01:11:34] **Justin:** Athletics.

[01:11:34] **Esther:** Athletics! Sorry. I said that like climb is a skill. It is Athletics.

[01:11:39] **Fai:** Uuuuuuuuuugh... not Acrobatics? I can't try to parkour my way up here?

[01:11:44] **Esther:** [giggles] Uhhmmmmm...

[01:11:46] **Esther:** Do you have any like climbing tools in your arsenal? Like, like somethin' you'd throw up on top...?

[01:11:52] **Fai:** Mmmmmmmmmmmmm... no. I do not have any such things.

[01:11:57] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:11:58] **Fai:** Thank you. Thank you for entertaining my bullshit. I will roll Athletics. Which I have... a ZERO.

[01:12:05] **Justin:** [laughing] You were teasing me for not being able to scale a six foot cliff!

[01:12:13] **Fai:** I thought I could use Acrobatics!

[01:12:16] **Justin:** [chuckles]

[01:12:17] **Fai:** PARKOUR PARKOUR... So, Esther...does a four not cut it, or...? That's pretty good, right?

[01:12:26] **Esther:** [chuckling] A four does not cut it! We'll get back there.

[01:12:30] **Fai:** Well, I guess I'm going to have to fuckin' go hand-to-hand with a construct and my goddamn dagger!

[01:12:37] **Esther:** Okay. So it looks like it's going to be Miv, Temerity, the Armor... Ember and the Armor have the same, so I'm gonna, have Ember go before the armor. Then Professor Z... we will put you after the Animated Armor. Professor Z, the other Animated Armor, and Oom... you are the caboose of the initiative.

[01:13:00] **David:** That's weird, 'cause my, my roll was fourteen...

[01:13:02] **Esther:** Wait, what was it? Okay. Nevermind. You're not the caboose. You are after Professor Z and I'mma change this. I think everybody should be in there correctly?

[01:13:10] **Esther:** Can you all see it? Does it look right?

[01:13:13] **Justin:** Looks right to me!

[01:13:14] **Esther:** Cool. So, Temerity, as everybody starts readying themselves for a fight, you begin to try to scale this cliff. It doesn't go so hot. You know, it's, it's kind of like a Princess Anna from Frozen moment, where you are giving it your all. Like, just climbing this thing, and you realize like, a good 15 seconds in you're about two inches off the ground. And then you kind of just do this, like, slow fall back... maybe just a little bit winded, but not terribly. It... didn't seem to go so well. You could always try again.

[01:13:52] **Fai:** Do I have to use a Hero Point to try again?

[01:13:54] **Esther:** You do, yeah. Or you can wait until your next, like-- your first round in combat and try it again.

[01:13:59] **Fai:** I'm gonna see what happens.

[01:14:00] **Esther:** Okay. Cool. Miv, being a person of the world, having probably gotten themselves into more than one situation like this, is just going to nod and bring out the dulcimer and start playing.

[01:14:15] **Esther:** And as a free action, they are going to use Lingering Composition before they Inspire Courage. And, I must do a roll for them. Mmmmhm.

[01:14:26] **Esther:** Oh, yes. Beautiful. And they're going to Inspire Courage, which gives you all a +1 bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saves against fear effects. And that will last for four rounds.

[01:14:40] **Justin:** Sweet.

[01:14:41] **Esther:** Yeah. Then they are gonna, I think, take out their crossbow. That's their turn. They are ready to go. Temerity, you're next.

[01:14:51] **Fai:** It's my turn. So I'm going to try again.

[01:14:56] **Esther:** All right.

[01:14:58] **Fai:** And if it fails this time, then I guess I'm fighting metal with a fuckin' knife.

[01:15:04] **Fai:** Uhhhhhhh... nope!

[01:15:08] **Justin:** [laughs]

[01:15:12] **Esther:** You are, like, impassioned...

[01:15:15] **Fai:** I'm not a very strong dude.

[01:15:18] **Esther:** It's like this..."Ugh, no, I'm going to get it this time!" And you just like, give this cliff your all, and you feel like you get maybe like two feet off the ground and then it's just... you slide back down and...

[01:15:32] **Fai:** "There are simply no handholds. There's nothing for me to do here. I'm just going to have to go about my life. Gave it my all."

[01:15:38] **Fai:** And luckily, everybody else is probably focused elsewhere and maybe hasn't seen all of this. If I'm lucky.

[01:15:45] **Esther:** And you have two more actions left.

[01:15:48] **Fai:** Oh, okay. In that case I will... get closer to my peeps. What's my... I think my speed is 30?

[01:15:56] **Esther:** 30 feet. Yeah.

[01:15:57] **Fai:** Okay. And I can do that once or twice?

[01:15:59] **Esther:** You can move twice.

[01:16:00] **Fai:** Okay. Well, I'm going to go ahead and I guess move to about like where Prof Z is. Close, but I have not yet approached. Wait, let me go a little further so that I guess I can-- so that I can see what's happening?

[01:16:13] **Fai:** I can go like one more, I think.

[01:16:14] **Esther:** Just as a reminder for everyone. So the action economy means that if you want to spend all three of your actions moving your movement speed, that's totally a thing you can do. Ember , it is your turn.

[01:16:28] **Justin:** Yes. Well, first off, I would like to Rage. So I'll do that. So I'll be Raging and Inspired. Does the construct have a weapon of any kind?

[01:16:38] **Esther:** Yes, it does.

[01:16:40] **Justin:** Okay. This is a bad idea, but I'm going to do it anyway. I would like to attempt to wrench the weapon from this person's grasp.

[01:16:52] **Esther:** Okay!

[01:16:53] **Justin:** And I would like to, if that's all right, spend a Hero Point on this.

[01:16:57] **Esther:** Okay. Yes.

[01:16:59] **Justin:** So I'm going to just roll it here. That would be Athletics. That's a 16 or a... Natural 1. So 16! I'll take that 16!

[01:17:09] **Esther:** 16 it is! Okay. And that includes your modifiers and everything?

[01:17:13] **Justin:** Yeah, that would be against a Reflex DC...

[01:17:16] **Esther:** Yeah. Wow. Okay. Against the odds you succeed in wrenching this glaive from this Animated Armor's hand.

[01:17:25] **Justin:** So I need a critical success to actually get the glaive off.

[01:17:27] **Esther:** Oh. You hamper it!

[01:17:29] **Justin:** Yeah. [chuckles] Okay. It was worth a shot!

[01:17:32] **Justin:** Know what? Can I just do that again?

[01:17:36] **Esther:** Yeah!

[01:17:37] **Justin:** To, to actually attempt to get the thing out of its grasp.

[01:17:40] **Esther:** Yeah.

[01:17:40] **Justin:** I know I need a crit success, so I will use another Hero Point on this. That's a lot of Hero Points. That's better. Okay. 20, I assume that's insufficient.

[01:17:50] **Esther:** It is, unfortunately.

[01:17:52] **Justin:** That's it for that. That's my turn.

[01:17:54] **Esther:** Okay. Well, this Animated Armor is going to notice what you are doing to its buddy, move two strides closer to you, and then try to hit ya. Let's see what happens. I am guessing an 11 does not hit you?

[01:18:12] **Justin:** Nope. Armor class is 15.

[01:18:15] **Esther:** Okay. It's going to just try to attack you again. And that will hit despite it being its second attack. But just barely. And it's going to do 10 damage.

[01:18:26] **Justin:** Okay.

[01:18:27] **Esther:** Yeah.

[01:18:28] **Justin:** It'll knock off my temporary HP... I still have the most HP in the party.

[01:18:32] **Esther:** You do! So next this clockwork construct that's been kind of lingering at the point of a particular like cliff, that's been rounded out and carved around by the road, begins to come to life and, and really like actually move out into the fray. It's gonna take a few steps. And it like -- something in its chest begins to glow a little bit. And I'm going to say like, it's, it's eyes begin to light up. And it starts like making a soft whirring noise internally. And... it is actually going to, first of all, stride forward one more time, unfortunately next to Ember and try to hit you. We'll see how that goes.

[01:19:21] **Esther:** It missed you! It was very close. It brings down its fist right next to you. And, uh, just like [sound effect] Whooooo...whizzes right by your fur.

[01:19:29] **Justin:** Ember snarls and snaps.

[01:19:33] **Esther:** Okay. Professor Z.

[01:19:35] **Alex:** I think Professor Z needs to use at least one action to be able to see, because I don't imagine that Professor Z, who is not very tall, can see over even the shorter cliff?

[01:19:44] **Esther:** Yeah. I think your, your vision is limited as to what's going on up there.

[01:19:48] **Alex:** Okay. So I'm going to use one action to go around Temerity to the point where I can see. I think I can move more than that though. So maybe I'll move up here.

[01:20:00] **Esther:** What's your move speed?

[01:20:01] **Alex:** You know, that's a great question. 25 feet.

[01:20:04] **Esther:** Okay. Yeah.

[01:20:05] **Alex:** I've moved so I can see. With another action, I think I'm gonna command Buster to help Ember? Protect Ember? Something like that.

[01:20:15] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:20:16] **Alex:** So Buster, who has two actions... is gonna move like, move with one and then attack with the other? Move to the one that like is attacking Ember from behind. And attack. So... I can roll Unarmed Strike, then?

[01:20:31] **Esther:** Yeah. Whichever of Buster's attacks you want to roll, roll!

[01:20:34] **Alex:** What's the difference between Unarmed Strike and Unarmed Attack?

[01:20:38] **Esther:** I think one of them is slightly better and does a little bit more damage. Yeah.

[01:20:43] **Alex:** Yeah. Okay.

[01:20:45] **Esther:** Would you like to Hero Point that? Because that is not gonna hit.

[01:20:50] **Alex:** Uh, yes.

[01:20:53] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:20:54] **Alex:** Sure. We can Hero Point that.

[01:20:56] **Esther:** I really want it, but --

[01:20:59] **Alex:** That's okay!

[01:21:00] **Esther:** -- not quite. Okay. Not quite.

[01:21:02] **Justin:** Does Buster receive the bonus from Inspire Courage?

[01:21:06] **Esther:** I'm giving Buster the bonus from Inspire Courage, yes.

[01:21:08] **Justin:** Oh. Okay. Nevermind.

[01:21:10] **Alex:** We might just have to blow up Buster, but... I'm a little bit wary of doing that to Ember right now, but like I could just tell Buster to explode. That is one of my, my, uh, abilities.

[01:21:24] **Justin:** I got lots of HP.

[01:21:26] **Esther:** Okay. So you rolled a Hero Point for Buster's first action. Um, so he still has one more.

[01:21:32] **Alex:** So he could, yeah. I mean, he'll probably keep trying to attack, right. So...

[01:21:36] **Esther:** Yeah, that's fair

[01:21:38] **Alex:** Let's just do the, do the other attack.

[01:21:41] **Esther:** Oh, well that will hit, it's going to like stagger backwards a lil' bit and look shocked. Yeah, he like manages to dent it in the chest. Go Buster.

[01:21:56] **Alex:** Party strategic question. Do I just blow up Buster at this point or do I start firing crossbow bolts? I think I basically have a button, right? You know, the equivalent of a remote detonator button. And I can just blow up Buster if I want to.

[01:22:08] **Justin:** I think it would be good. I mean, you'll hit two enemies and I have a decent Reflex safe. There's a chance that Buster will survive the explosion, right? And still fight?

[01:22:17] **Alex:** Yeah. In fact, reading the text about it, I'm not sure what I even have-- I guess maybe Buster has to also roll a Reflex save, but it's not really clear from the text. Oh, but is it two-action?

[01:22:32] **Alex:** Okay. Whatever, I guess I can't do that this turn then, I gotta wait until next turn. All right, we're done.

[01:22:37] **Esther:** You can also load your crossbow this turn, but you can't fire it til next turn.

[01:22:42] **Alex:** Oh, well, let's just load my crossbow then, that's fine. Moving on.

[01:22:46] **Esther:** All right. Oom, you are up.

[01:22:50] **David:** So I'll walk til there... I believe I'm in range to Electric Arc one of them. So I will do that.

[01:22:56] **Esther:** And I have to roll them a Reflex save?

[01:22:59] **Esther:** Wow. They did really well. They, uh, they stumble backwards, and seem a little, little shocked, but like it hasn't done too much to them, unfortunately. Really good idea to use electric arc though. I love it. However, oh, that's really good news for you. They will take half damage and a little bit more because they have an electricity weakness.

[01:23:22] **Esther:** So you notice it doesn't seem to do it's full damage, but --

[01:23:26] **Justin:** Oh, no...

[01:23:26] **Esther:** --this thing seems a little surprised and... and poor Ember! [giggles] And it like stumbles back and then the electricity continues to fry whatever clockwork circuitry is going on in there. Awesome. And that's a two-action cantrip. So you have one action left. Or, or -- you moved. Yeah. That's right. Fabulous.

[01:23:50] **Justin:** Ember yips in fear.

[01:23:52] **Esther:** Yeah...

[01:23:53] **David:** Oh no!

[01:23:53] **Esther:** I was gonna ask...

[01:23:54] **Justin:** Yeah. Yep. He was not the target, but he was still Frightened 1.

[01:24:00] **Esther:** [sad noise]

[01:24:02] **Justin:** You've activated my ability Afraid Of Lightning.

[01:24:05] **Fai:** [laughing in distress] Ohhhhhh noooo!

[01:24:09] **David:** Is it like a noticeable yip?

[01:24:10] **Justin:** He like, practically jumps and like, whines back. Frightened 1, Afraid of Thunder.

[01:24:18] **Esther:** All right. It is the armor that just got electrified's turn now and Oom, it, it sort of turns its countenance upon you and is going to move towards you and Professor Z with one of its actions.

[01:24:31] **Justin:** Because I attempted to disarm it, it does take a minus 2 penalty to attacks made with the, with the weapon I attempted to disarm this round.

[01:24:42] **Esther:** Oh, beautiful. Alright.

[01:24:45] **Fai:** Does Electric Arc make a thunder noise?

[01:24:48] **Esther:** It probably looks like lightning.

[01:24:50] **Justin:** Yeah.

[01:24:51] **Fai:** Okay.

[01:24:52] **Justin:** Yeah.

[01:24:53] **Esther:** Oom, what is your AC?

[01:24:55] **David:** Sixteen.

[01:24:55] **Esther:** Okay. It brings it's glaive down near you and goes wide. You are not affected. And then it's going to turn to Professor Z and try to do the same thing. And, Professor Z, what's your AC?

[01:25:09] **Alex:** Fifteen.

[01:25:11] **Esther:** And also fail, thanks to Ember!

[01:25:14] **Justin:** Haha!

[01:25:14] **Esther:** Well done, and that is its turn. Now we are back at Miv, who has their crossbow loaded and ready to go, and is just gonna turn on this one. Boom! We shall see what happens.

[01:25:27] **Esther:** It does not hit. Alas. But miv will move to kind of be in the fray and will then spend, another action kind of like, moving through you all to be on the other side of this construct. And that will be their turn.

[01:25:43] **Esther:** Temerity...

[01:25:46] **Fai:** Well, I'm going to go ahead and, you know, come around everybody and go ahead and try to hit this dude. Is there any sort of like, flanking bonus that one gets with --

[01:25:59] **Justin:** Yep!

[01:25:59] **Fai:** -- all of the people around?

[01:26:00] **Esther:** Mmmhm. Mmhm!

[01:26:01] **Fai:** Great! Good to know.

[01:26:03] **Justin:** You don't, though.

[01:26:04] **Fai:** Oh. Great. MmHMMM. Anyway, uh, yeah, I'm just gonna dagger. Does a 26 hit?

[01:26:12] **Esther:** It's a 27 because of Miv's bonus. And in fact that is a critical hit. It staggers back. You have definitely -- this thing has seen better days. And actually it seems like it's taken enough damage at this point it's started to fry a little bit on the inside. And its armor seems to be like coming apart slightly. Like you are really giving this Animated Armor what-for, and it doesn't look like it's going to hold up that much longer.

[01:26:44] **Fai:** Oh, I can hit it again, can't I?

[01:26:47] **Esther:** You can. Now, you'll take a minus five penalty because it's your second attack, but yes, you can hit it again.

[01:26:53] **Fai:** Oh, wait. That's an unarmed attack.

[01:26:55] **Esther:** That will not hit, unfortunately.

[01:26:57] **Fai:** BOOOOOO!

[01:26:58] **Esther:** Ember...

[01:26:59] **Justin:** Ember: Afraid Of Lightening. Any effect with the Lightning trait that occurs within view or earshot of Ember also gives him the Frightened 1 condition for the next minute.

[01:27:08] **Justin:** Ember is going to go ahead and Step to try to get away from the scary sound, but is then going to attack this thing. Wolf Jaws! Nope. I will, I will use my last Hero Point to re-roll that.

[01:27:22] **Justin:** That's much better.

[01:27:24] **Esther:** Oh, nice. Alright. That definitely hits.

[01:27:27] **Justin:** It is a flat 20 because the Frightened and the Inspire Courage --

[01:27:31] **Esther:** -- right, cancel each other out. You deal 12 damage. Let me make sure really quickly that it's... okay. Cool.

[01:27:40] **Esther:** It doesn't look quite like your jaws impact it as much as they normally would, but you definitely deal some amount of damage to this thing.

[01:27:51] **Justin:** Okay. Regardless, I am going to just make another Jaws attack.

[01:27:55] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:27:55] **Justin:** Nope!

[01:27:56] **Esther:** Okay! That is your turn.

[01:27:58] **Justin:** Oh, ah, that should be 13 damage because of Inspire Courage.

[01:28:01] **Esther:** Still doesn't look like it does as much damage as normal, but.

[01:28:05] **Justin:** I'll take some damage.

[01:28:07] **Esther:** You get some damage. Now it is going to be the Animated Armour's turn. This one, which is right in front of Buster, and so that is who it is gonna go for. Ohhh! What's Buster's AC?

[01:28:20] **Alex:** 17.

[01:28:21] **Esther:** Y'okay. And how many points does Buster have?

[01:28:25] **Alex:** 26.

[01:28:26] **Esther:** Okay. It did very well on that roll.

[01:28:29] **Justin:** Oh dear.

[01:28:30] **Esther:** Yeah. Buster is going to take 20 points of damage. Did the absolute best it could have and... wow. We shall see what happens next.

[01:28:43] **Esther:** Okay. That one goes totally wide. And for its third attack, because Buster's right in front of it and will just keep attacking, that one also, fortunately for Buster, goes wide. Alright. And now it is this thing that Ember is fighting's turn. It's just gonna -- first of all -- try to smack you with its fist again.

[01:29:05] **Esther:** Does a 21 hit?

[01:29:08] **Justin:** Yeah.

[01:29:09] **Esther:** Fortunately for you it's, it's not that strong and it rolled a Natural 1, for a total of four damage.

[01:29:16] **Justin:** Wow.

[01:29:16] **Justin:** That's an eighth of my health. [

[01:29:18] **Esther:** And with its next two actions, it is going to try to cast a spell at you.

[01:29:25] **Justin:** Dang it, I don't have Attack Of Opportunity! Drat.

[01:29:28] **Esther:** I will need a Will save from you.

[01:29:31] **Justin:** Oh, but I'm so good at those!

[01:29:34] **Justin:** That's an 8.

[01:29:36] **Esther:** Oh, poor Ember!

[01:29:37] **Esther:** [Esther and Justin giggle]

[01:29:39] **Esther:** Alright. Ember, you feel your mind... like, this lightening was so distressing. Um...

[01:29:46] **Justin:** It really was!

[01:29:47] **Esther:** Yeah. You're gonna take a little damage from this. I wish that this were more clear with me about what that is. You know what, I'm just going to roll... that... for another four damage. And you're Stunned 1.

[01:30:00] **Esther:** That is its entire turn, and Professor Z, you're next.

[01:30:03] **Justin:** I have four conditions right now!

[01:30:06] **Esther:** Ahhh, I'm sorry!

[01:30:08] **Alex:** Professor Z is going to tell Buster to scooch. And by scooch, Buster will interpret that is going there. And then Professor Z is going to use the remaining two actions to, uh, explode Buster.

[01:30:23] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:30:25] **Alex:** I think you will need to make a Reflex save. Sorry!

[01:30:28] **Justin:** No worries... That wasn't bad! 17.

[01:30:33] **Alex:** And I might need to roll to see how much damage... So my Class DC is 18?

[01:30:39] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:30:40] **Justin:** Aw...

[01:30:41] **Esther:** Fortunately for you, both of the constructs failed that. And so they will take a --

[01:30:47] **Justin:** But so did Ember.

[01:30:47] **Esther:** -- 2d6 Fire Damage. Oof. So, uh, I will let you roll that, Alex.

[01:30:54] **Alex:** All right. Let's see. What do we got here? We got four plus... three. Seven.

[01:30:58] **Esther:** Alright.

[01:30:59] **Justin:** Poor Ember! [sad noise]

[01:31:02] **Alex:** Sorry, Ember!

[01:31:03] **Justin:** No worries. I was okay until that.

[01:31:07] **Esther:** You are definitely making a dent in these things. Professor Z, that was your whole turn, right?

[01:31:13] **Alex:** Yeah. Although I think Buster can keep attacking. I don't know if that's something that Buster would naturally do, but Buster, I think has one more action.

[01:31:21] **Esther:** Okay. You spent an action to command Buster to move. You spent...two...

[01:31:26] **Alex:** Two, to blow Buster up. Buster used one action to move. So presumably if Buster is still recalls the previous command, which was like, help Ember, Buster will attack. Right?

[01:31:36] **Esther:** Okay. Uh, go for it!

[01:31:38] **Alex:** Does that make sense?

[01:31:39] **Esther:** Yes, let's do it. I'm totally fine with that. Okay. Alright. That's very lucky for Ember. He hits! And does eight damage. Nice. This thing is looking not great.

[01:31:51] **Esther:** Like it's staggering, it's all dented. Part of the armor is like, there's a little hole that's widening. It's still glowing from its chest. And there's like something like a little crystal, like it's embedded in this construct.

[01:32:05] **Justin:** It looked like it took full damage from Buster's attack, but not mine?

[01:32:09] **Esther:** Yeah.

[01:32:10] **Justin:** Okay. That's good to know. Probably resistant to piercing, then.

[01:32:14] **Alex:** Whereas Buster just bludgeons.

[01:32:16] **Justin:** I... don't think Wolf Jaws is... Yeah. Wolf Jaws isn't versatile. I have to do piercing.

[01:32:23] **David:** Guess I'll Magic Missile the one I'm next to three times.

[01:32:27] **Esther:** All right. And who are you-- which one are you going for? The one like, in the middle?

[01:32:31] **David:** Yeah, the one I'm, I'm right next to.

[01:32:33] **Esther:** All right. Perfect.

[01:32:34] **Esther:** Okay.

[01:32:34] **Justin:** Your magic missile damage is always on point.

[01:32:37] **Esther:** I know!

[01:32:38] **David:** Just gotta trust in the rolls.

[01:32:40] **Esther:** Actually, you see these things impact this thing's chest. And it keeps like, staggering and it'll shake for a moment and then just totally shut down and kind of like, mechanically crumple to the ground. Looks like you've taken it out.

[01:32:57] **Esther:** That was going to be its turn, and it's no longer going to go. Remove it from the turn order. And it'll be Miv's turn now, and they are just gonna aim their crossbow at this, load it, and fire. So Miv seems to like, cock their head a little bit and just aims this weapon, and this bolt goes straight through its face plate and it begins to like, short circuit a little bit inside, and it also does a slow, crumple-to-the- -ground-style fade-out. And they're going to say, "Well that is one way to do it!" Temerity, you are up now.

[01:33:41] **Fai:** I'm gonna go ahead and... 'bout here, I guess? And try to... is this the one that? Which one did Miv just hit? The one that's by Ember?

[01:33:53] **Esther:** These are both dead now. And so the one that is in-between Ember and Miv is the only one that's still up.

[01:33:59] **Fai:** Okay. Well then I'll use two actions, I guess, to get to the other one.

[01:34:04] **Fai:** And then a further action to attempt to hit it.

[01:34:08] **Esther:** So, describe to me what you do to this thing.

[01:34:13] **Fai:** Well, I would ideally... I mean, we talked about me having potentially seen things like this before. So my thought is, I'm looking for a place to hit it that is important, basically. You know, something -- something that's a weak spot, essentially.

[01:34:33] **Fai:** And that's what I'm going to go for, whatever looks most weak and -- structurally important and weak in combination.

[01:34:41] **Esther:** Maybe its facial area, like where the eyes are. You would probably intuit that you might not want to attack the chest region that's glowing, and there might be something good there. So I would go for the face.

[01:34:54] **Fai:** Can I reach the face? How tall is this thing? Like, if this guy is nine feet tall, I'm not reaching his face.

[01:35:00] **Esther:** It is not nine feet tall.

[01:35:02] **Fai:** Okay. That's what I will go for.

[01:35:04] **Esther:** You manage to slash through a hole with your dagger and it just clinks to the ground as like one shuddery piece of metal.

[01:35:17] **Esther:** And that's that.

[01:35:18] **Fai:** That's a good feeling. They're all down?

[01:35:21] **Esther:** They're all down.

[01:35:22] **Fai:** Okay. Well, I'm going to turn to, or look in the direction of, Prof Z and ask him, "Are there any parts you want to scavenge from these?"

[01:35:33] **Alex:** "Oh, yes. Yes. Most certainly. Many, many things to grab. Uh, I'll have to do a couple of repairs on Buster, I think. It looks like he, uh, you know, took some damage here and I think like, that armor plate would make a really great butt pad for Buster. So I'm just gonna like pick that up and then, uh, get to work hammerin' that on!"

[01:35:51] **Fai:** Right here right now you're gonna do that?

[01:35:53] **Alex:** I mean, Buster is down to like 6 HP and that's pretty worrying to me, I think. So yeah, I think I probably will do something like maybe, maybe Crafting to...

[01:36:05] **Justin:** Ember is going to do the kind of like, head low, growling, particularly in the direction of Buster and Oom, and is going to be kind of backing away.

[01:36:16] **Esther:** Miv will come up to Ember and say, "Hey buddy, you look like you might could use some help."

[01:36:25] **Alex:** "I've got an idea! Searing Restoration!"

[01:36:28] **Esther:** "No, no, no. I don't think he needs that. Why don't you do-- see if anybody else needs that, and I'll help him?"

[01:36:33] **Fai:** Did you say Searing Restoration?

[01:36:38] **Alex:** Yeah. It's where I blow Buster up again and that heals Ember.

[01:36:42] **Fai:** That's a thing?!

[01:36:43] **Alex:** Yes.

[01:36:45] **Justin:** Is it really?

[01:36:46] **Alex:** It is really a thing. I'm just not sure psychologically, if that's a good idea for Ember.

[01:36:51] **Justin:** No, it's not going to help...

[01:36:54] **Fai:** I would like to, for future reference, if that works on me, I would love for you to blow me up to heal me. At some point. You have my blessing.

[01:37:05] **Esther:** Miv is gonna say, "I might be able to help you a little bit. Would that... that be all right?"

[01:37:11] **Justin:** Ember is not talking.

[01:37:12] **Esther:** Okay. Miv is going to cast Soothe on Ember, and that will do some amount of healing at their level. Eleven plus four.

[01:37:25] **Justin:** Oh, that's very helpful.

[01:37:26] **Esther:** Fifteen, yes.

[01:37:27] **Justin:** It brings me up almost to max.

[01:37:29] **Esther:** And you gain a +2 Status Bonus to saves against mental effects right now.

[01:37:34] **Justin:** Oh, good!

[01:37:36] **Esther:** Would Calm Emotions help Ember?

[01:37:38] **Justin:** I mean, I think Soothe is fairly reasonable. I don't think you need to waste the spell slot on something that is just character flavor.

[01:37:45] **Esther:** Alright. Miv will gently offer head scritches if that's helpful.

[01:37:52] **Justin:** Ember is just looking very warily at Oom.

[01:37:55] **Esther:** Miv's just going to like, start singing a soft, soothing song in Gnome and, uh, scratch Ember's head.

[01:38:03] **Fai:** I just want to know what this like arc reactor or whatever in this guy's, in this construct's chest is. I would like to Perceive it or whatever, but I'm also going to ask Z if he has any insight.

[01:38:17] **Esther:** That will be a secret Crafting check from both of you.

[01:38:22] **Fai:** Okay.

[01:38:23] **Alex:** Which is not an option?

[01:38:25] **Fai:** Not an option. It's going to have to be un-secret.

[01:38:27] **Esther:** Okay. That's fine, then.

[01:38:29] **Fai:** I am rolling for shit today! [laughs] My Crafting modifier is +6! [

[01:38:38] **Esther:** So, Professor Z, you are well aware because you've seen many demonstrations by colleagues in the various Scholarium institutions and The Tinkerings, that it's possible to make a guardian construct like this and embed a magic wand in it. And that these magic wands can be removed. And once they are removed, they will usually contain a spell of a certain level that the construct was capable of casting.

[01:39:07] **Fai:** Can someone who removes it use the wand?

[01:39:10] **Esther:** Professor Z might not know that information at this moment. Like, you may be able to recall it a little later, but it probably won't come into your mind right now.

[01:39:20] **Justin:** Oom and I are the casters, right?

[01:39:23] **Esther:** Mmhm.

[01:39:25] **David:** Yeah. We can try to figure it out later. I'm going to try to creep up to, to Ember, though to see why he's freaking out.

[01:39:30] **Justin:** He backs away a little bit.

[01:39:32] **David:** That's number one concern.

[01:39:34] **David:** "What happened?"

[01:39:35] **Justin:** "You make the sky angry."

[01:39:37] **David:** I'll look towards Temerity to see if there's like, an explanation.

[01:39:47] **Fai:** So I guess the question is, do I have the necessary information? In the time that we traveled together, has there been weather and/or would I have noticed these things happen together?

[01:40:00] **Justin:** I think Ember will just clarify. "You use the same magic that the Bad Master does."

[01:40:06] **David:** "The...the 'Bad Master?'"

[01:40:10] **Fai:** I'll jump in now, if you're looking at me.

[01:40:12] **David:** Yeah.

[01:40:13] **Fai:** You know what, I'm just going to make a series of faces. [ whispers] "The guy that Ember came from..."

[01:40:21] **David:** So just the sky thing is the main...? Like, 'cause he didn't freak out from any of the other magic, right?

[01:40:29] **Justin:** No. "I don't like the bad magic."

[01:40:32] **Fai:** "I think it's the lightning."

[01:40:36] **David:** "If I stop doing the lightning, will it make it better?"

[01:40:39] **Justin:** "I didn't know you could do the bad magic."

[01:40:44] **Fai:** "Ember, I think that... that was an accident, and that Oom was trying to help you. Because it looked like these guys were going to hurt you. So yes, sometimes this magic is used in a very bad way, but I don't think they did this on purpose to hurt you. And I think what they're saying is that if it will make you feel safe, they will be more careful in the future. Does that sound right, Oom?"

[01:41:17] **David:** "I don't want to do anything that would hurt or scare you. Are you okay, Ember?"

[01:41:22] **Justin:** He's very not okay. But he will, he will kind of say like, "You are a good gnome, but I don't... like it when the sky is angry."

[01:41:35] **Fai:** I'm gonna abandon my curiosity slash greed and go also to Ember's side, you know, just kind of give him a little "I'm here" pat. You've known me for a little bit longer, sort of, just try to be a reassuring presence since he seems so agitated.

[01:41:54] **Justin:** He is shaking.

[01:41:56] **Fai:** Awwwwww.

[01:41:57] **David:** I will try to cautiously approach for head scritches.

[01:42:01] **Justin:** Ember will, will let you approach, but yeah, he's just kind of freaked out.

[01:42:05] **Fai:** I think we could probably, while Z performs his repairs, maybe just have a little, a little group Ember-petting session to get that adrenaline-- do animals have adrenaline? Is it the same thing?

[01:42:21] **Fai:** So, you know, just try to collectively, while Z is doing what Z needs to do, take the...

[01:42:29] **Justin:** Ember has a bad history with lightning magic.

[01:42:31] **Fai:** Would I know that?

[01:42:33] **Justin:** It's up to you as to how much you knew about Vroth'rien, I mean, I assume -- it is now apparent that Vroth'rien is some kind of caster, but I don't know like how much knowledge you would have.

[01:42:44] **Fai:** All right. All right. Well, I'll think about that.

[01:42:47] **Esther:** Miv will keep singing a soft song in Gnome. So, Alex, does the Inventor class have any specific feats about patching up one of their Inventions? It's been a minute since I read through really closely. So...

[01:43:05] **Justin:** I would assume it's just like the normal repair rules, right?

[01:43:08] **Alex:** If my Innovation's destroyed, I can spend it day with a Crafting check to rebuild it, but it hasn't really been destroyed yet, right?

[01:43:21] **Esther:** Yeah. So I think you should just roll Crafting.

[01:43:25] **Alex:** Okay. I will roll Crafting.

[01:43:28] **Esther:** You spend about-- several minutes to begin to patch up Buster and like, plate him up with some of the materials from these constructs that you harvest, and you will restore five of his Hit Points in the end. What's your proficiency in Crafting?

[01:43:45] **Alex:** Four.

[01:43:46] **Esther:** Are you trained? Yeah.

[01:43:48] **Alex:** Yeah.

[01:43:48] **Esther:** Okay. So you will restore actually ten Hit Points overall and you'll patch him up.

[01:43:55] **Justin:** Per ten minutes you spend on it.

[01:43:57] **Esther:** Yeah. So if you want to spend even longer...

[01:43:59] **Alex:** Well, I don't know, how long are we going to be here? I'll spend as long as we're here. Like I can even continue talking to people as I -- maybe they can't hear me as well -- but as I'm like picking parts out and banging 'em on to Buster.

[01:44:11] **Justin:** I think Ember would be perfectly content to allow a little bit of time to calm down. So if you need to spend twenty minutes, by all means...

[01:44:19] **Alex:** I mean, if we spend twenty minutes, then Buster's at full health and I feel that's a good thing. Buster seems to be pretty helpful in combat so far, other than trying to blow up Ember.

[01:44:27] **Justin:** Yeah. And if someone has a Healer's Kit, if they could try to heal my last six HP, that would be good.

[01:44:35] **Alex:** I can blow you up!

[01:44:36] **Justin:** Please don't!

[01:44:37] **Fai:** Uhhhhh, I mean, I do, but... I guess we'll see. We'll see how well it works?

[01:44:44] **Esther:** That's a success! 2d8!

[01:44:47] **Justin:** Sweet!

[01:44:48] **Fai:** Okay. So I can heal other people, just not myself. Cool. Got it.

[01:44:51] **Justin:** Okay. That's enough to get me up to full.

[01:44:54] **Fai:** Great.

[01:44:54] **Justin:** That actually means that since I don't have any like, per day abilities yet... [chuckles] I'm fully refreshed.

[01:45:03] **Esther:** So, all of the enemies here or the, the antagonists here are now incapacitated. You could continue on your way up to the observatory.

[01:45:14] **Justin:** Do you want me to bury them?

[01:45:16] **Esther:** Do you want to bury them?

[01:45:18] **Justin:** Of course I want to bury them!

[01:45:19] **Esther:** You're going to use Dig Quickly?

[01:45:22] **Justin:** Yeaaah!

[01:45:22] **Esther:** How quickly are you gonna dig?

[01:45:24] **Justin:** I dig in one round!

[01:45:27] **Esther:** How much?

[01:45:30] **Justin:** Your hands work, blah, blah, blah. You dig a shallow pit... uh, yeah, a shallow pit, whatever that is.

[01:45:37] **Esther:** I'm going to say it will take you... not as long as it ordinarily would because you have, uh, an Ancestry Feat for it. But it'll take you a little while to dig a shallow or deep enough pit for each one of these... or just one, if you want all three of them in it... and then get it covered back up, like...

[01:45:53] **Justin:** Too much effort.

[01:45:54] **Esther:** I mean, I will say... do you want to leave them where they are?

[01:45:59] **Fai:** We... the cliff right where we are-- oh, you said earlier that that's above us on the other side, right?

[01:46:07] **Esther:** Yeah.

[01:46:08] **Fai:** There's not really anywhere to like, tuck them in or anything?

[01:46:10] **Justin:** What about this random spot way over here?

[01:46:13] **Esther:** That random spot you could probably like, if you have some rope, kind of haul them up to. There's also this spot, where the one was standing. There's like a little bit of an incline that it might be easier to like, get the metal over to and then drag it up and you could, you could hide it in the bushes. It'll take you some effort, but I think it's doable.

[01:46:34] **Fai:** Yeah, I'm not sure whose Strength modifier we're doing all this shit with, 'cause it sho' hell ain't mine.

[01:46:40] **Justin:** I assume I have the highest Strength modifier in the party and also no hands.

[01:46:46] **Esther:** What's Buster Strength modifier?

[01:46:48] **Alex:** Buster's Strength is... Buster's modifier's 3, his Strength is 16.

[01:46:55] **Esther:** Yeah. Buster could probably do this.

[01:46:59] **Alex:** Okay.

[01:47:00] **Justin:** My strength is 18, but much less useful.

[01:47:03] **Fai:** If we use rope, which presumably people have, 'cause that's just in like, adventuring kits or whatever, right? You could rig something that could be mouth-dragged by...

[01:47:15] **Alex:** Ember?

[01:47:16] **Justin:** It's not in the dog's adventuring kit, but as long as it's someone else's...

[01:47:20] **Fai:** Presumably the non-dogs of us have rope.

[01:47:26] **Alex:** Professor Z would almost certainly have some rope, like.

[01:47:29] **Esther:** I think Professor Z does have rope.

[01:47:31] **David:** Could we make it look like they just fell off the cliff?

[01:47:33] **Justin:** I like that, actually.

[01:47:34] **Alex:** Yeah.

[01:47:34] **Justin:** I think that's the best plan. Let's just have them topple over the one side of the cliff.

[01:47:39] **Fai:** I want to see if we can get this wand out before we, before we do this, though.

[01:47:42] **Esther:** Ah, yes. This is gonna be a Thievery check.

[01:47:46] **Fai:** Well...! I shouldn't get too excited. Let's see.

[01:47:50] **Fai:** [hums theme music]

[01:47:55] **Fai:** Okay! That's all right.

[01:47:58] **Fai:** Is a 27 okay? Does that, does that help? It's much better than the 4 when I was trying to climb!

[01:48:05] **Esther:** A critical success gets you nothing here, but that is almost a critical success, so... [ Yes, you are easily able to remove this wand. If you want to figure out what spell is in it, that'll probably be like, an Arcana check, but you can also do that at another time. But yeah, you're easily able to remove the wand.

[01:48:24] **Justin:** I got Religion!

[01:48:26] **Esther:** Yeah, Temerit, it's-- you haven't studied the arcane arts too much.

[01:48:31] **Fai:** I am great at stealing!

[01:48:34] **Esther:** You are very talented at reclamation. The reclamatory arts.

[01:48:39] **Fai:** [laughs] One more question. I'm not able to use a wand because I'm not a caster. Is that the thing?

[01:48:46] **Justin:** There's a feat you can take to do it. Trick Magic Item.

[01:48:50] **Fai:** Oh, okay. Well, I'm just going to put it in my pocket then, because I could take that feat eventually if I wanted to.

[01:48:56] **Justin:** I suppose. We didn't identify it though, right? Of the two casters in the party... [giggles]

[01:49:02] **Esther:** Yeah. It looks like a clockwork wand.

[01:49:06] **Fai:** A clockwork wand... that sounds cool.

[01:49:09] **Esther:** You're not sure-- totally sure what it might hold.

[01:49:13] **Fai:** I mean, fuck it. I'll ask the dog!

[01:49:15] **Justin:** Well, the dog doesn't have Arcana. I'd have to--

[01:49:18] **Fai:** Oh, you don't?

[01:49:18] **Justin:** I would have to be something I could roll Religion on. So it's, it's gotta be higher than a first level spell then.

[01:49:25] **Fai:** Z, do you know anything about magic?"

[01:49:28] **Alex:** I've got some Arcana knowledge. Shall I roll Arcana and see? Let's see what I know. I know...shit! [giggles]

[01:49:35] **Fai:** I love this. We're just gonna keep this wand. And then in like fifteen sessions, figure it out.

[01:49:43] **Alex:** I'm going to look at it and say, "You know, for all I know, Ember would like to play fetch with that."

[01:49:49] **Justin:** I was about to say: can I, with my familiarity with sticks...?

[01:49:53] **Justin:** [cast laughs]

[01:49:54] **Esther:** Would you like to ask Miv to help you?

[01:49:57] **Fai:** Thank you for that kind reminder.

[01:49:59] **Esther:** They are your NPC companion of the day.

[01:50:01] **Fai:** Miv... if you would be so kind, you seem to have some magical knowledge. Could you tell us what this does?

[01:50:08] **Esther:** It's so happens they have a good modifier and they rolled extremely well, so yes, they can. They're going to examine it for a moment and say, "Well, I reckon it looks like a magic wand, but, uh, kind of made o' clockwork. I've seen things around like this before. It's like pretty typical, gnomish crafts, uh, ship. Now, if I was to make a guess, I think this has a spell that might put out some kind of like, mist. Where if you wanted to make it a little hard to feel your way around a place or like a little interaction, like we just had with these fellers, it might make it a little difficult for them."

[01:50:48] **Esther:** Miv will guess that it has the spell Obscuring Mist, which is a second level spell.

[01:50:52] **Justin:** I cannot use this wand.

[01:50:54] **David:** What does it take to use a wand?

[01:50:56] **Justin:** You can probably use it. It's-- the spell has to appear on your spell list. Or you have to be able to trick the item. So, Obscuring Mist is an Arcane or Primal spell. What's your tradition, David?

[01:51:09] **David:** I think from, from Draconic, it's, it's Arcane.

[01:51:11] **Justin:** So yeah, you could actually use the wand.

[01:51:12] **Fai:** Hey, if you can use it, then I'm totally gonna give it to you.

[01:51:16] **David:** I mean, I'll hold onto it until you learn how to use it and you can have it back.

[01:51:20] **Esther:** Miv will mention, "Yeah, it's a pretty good thing to hold on to if you can work it. But if you can't and you want to make a little money off of it, you can often get some for 'em."

[01:51:30] **Fai:** " That's very wise."

[01:51:32] **Justin:** "I have no need of material wealth."

[01:51:35] **David:** "Professor, since you're really good at making things explode, is there a way that we can make these constructs explode so it's less obvious what happened to them?"

[01:51:45] **Alex:** "That's a good idea. That's a good idea. I could cause Buster to explode..."

[01:51:51] **Justin:** I could Produce Flame... so that we could potentially just make some scorch marks without risking, you know, [giggles] causing Buster to, to not work today.

[01:52:01] **Fai:** Are you suggesting that this explosion would make it look like they malfunctioned and exploded?

[01:52:06] **Alex:** I also, I have like Alchemical Crafting, so could I essentially craft a bomb?

[01:52:13] **Fai:** I'm like looking at my Theives' Tools and my Disguise Kit to see if there's anything that might be able to aid an explosion. I don't think this grease paint gonna cut it, y'all.

[01:52:22] **Alex:** I feel like I could-- or, or from the like, bits of the construct, too! Can I not like, make a bomb out of the bits of the construct?

[01:52:31] **Esther:** Roll Crafting! And we'll see. Yes, it's possible that you could do this.

[01:52:39] **Alex:** 'Cause like, I'm a genius at Crafting. I can tamper with things. I have Alchemical Crafting that, that feels like...

[01:52:45] **Fai:** Is there any way one of us can Aid his Craft check?

[01:52:49] **Justin:** Can I Aid it with fire?

[01:52:50] **Esther:** You could certainly Aid it with another Craft check.

[01:52:53] **Alex:** Well, so I, I could also, I could Hero Point my Crafting to do it with advantage. I don't know if that's worth it right now.

[01:53:00] **Fai:** I think it's probably worth it.

[01:53:02] **Alex:** Okay. Alright. So I'm going to roll with advantage for Crafting. Ready?

[01:53:07] **Esther:** Yeah. Uh, you are able to make a bomb. Absolutely. You scavenge your, whatever alchemical components you have on hand, and like a little vial flask and various bits and bobs of these formerly Animated Armor and former constructs, and you are able to whip one up. So what are you going to do with it?

[01:53:28] **Esther:** Describe what you do.

[01:53:30] **Alex:** So I think what I'd like to do is have Buster, like, drag all these things into a pile. I'm gonna put the bomb in the pile, like sort of in the middle of it, so that when it goes off, it takes over everything. And then I think I'm going to turn to Ember and go, "Would you like to do the honors?"

[01:53:47] **Justin:** "I would love to." I would like to set the bomb on fire!

[01:53:51] **Justin:** I will spread my legs. I will wag my tail with my little like, somatic thing. And then I will bark a mighty bark to shoot the fire. I have to do all the components, right? I need somatic and verbal.

[01:54:03] **Esther:** You know, I will give you both a Hero Point for this display.

[01:54:06] **Justin:** Yeaaah!

[01:54:07] **Esther:** It's beautiful. It's perfect. Alright. It's a loud [explosive sound] explosion and the metal flies everywhere. And the bits are kind of like raining down, plunk, plunk, plunk. And like, there's a piece that lands on this little plateau above you. And several that are like going down below and there's scorch marks on the grass.

[01:54:25] **Esther:** It totally looks like there was a random explosion. Like the three of them ran into each other somehow and just [explosive sound] the wand... something went wrong. Beautifully done.

[01:54:36] **Alex:** I'll, uh, elbow Temerity and be like, "This is the kind of subtlety we were hoping for, right?"

[01:54:42] **Fai:** So impressed! And will say "Now, if you're going to not be subtle, this is the way to do it. Maybe we should run now."

[01:54:51] **Justin:** Ember is like, "But we have found-- this is the observatory, is it not? This is the guarded place with the view of the sky."

[01:55:01] **David:** Is this where you stopped last time, Ember?

[01:55:03] **Justin:** "Yes, because we found the observatory."

[01:55:06] **David:** "What is an observatory?"

[01:55:08] **Justin:** "It is a place where you look at the sky. This observatory was secret. And it was guarded."

[01:55:14] **Fai:** Nobody? Okay. I'll take it.

[01:55:15] **Fai:** [cast laughs]

[01:55:17] **Justin:** I'm going to make my misinterpretation last game canon, okay? [laughs]

[01:55:25] **Fai:** "You're right, Ember. An observatory is where you observe the sky. But I think that what they're guarding is a little bit further down the road. These are just the gate. Go past the gate and then you see what's on the other side."

[01:55:40] **Justin:** Ember is with you.

[01:55:41] **Justin:** [cast laughs]

[01:55:44] **Fai:** I love that Temerity has somehow become the fucking dog whisperer!

[01:55:48] **Fai:** [cast laughs]

[01:55:51] **David:** I mean, you've been with him the longest!

[01:55:53] **Fai:** It's true!

[01:55:54] **Esther:** You have...

[01:55:55] **Fai:** The real sad thing is that poor Ember seems to look at Temerity's dumb ass as like, a, a bastion of knowledge... intellect... wisdom!

[01:56:07] **Justin:** You are all bastions of knowledge to me!

[01:56:11] **Esther:** So I will say, as you begin to make haste up this road, that Miv will pull Professor Z to one side and say, "Hey Z, that was pretty impressive back there. Have you ever, uh, ever thought about taking that on the road or kind of taking that to a place you could teach people how to do it?"

[01:56:32] **Alex:** "Blowing stuff up? I mean, you know, it just, I guess I, I learned it a lot from, uh, experience, you know. It's been a bit of a difficult journey getting Buster to the, the level of reliability he's at right now."

[01:56:43] **Esther:** "Well, I can see you, you seem like a true innovator. I mean, it ain't everybody who can just whip something like that up on the spot so professional. I, I gotta say, I'm, I'm taken with your, your skills. I can't believe you, you ain't a bigwig around here. Are you, are you sure you ain't somebody really important?"

[01:57:01] **Alex:** "I'm a member of The Tinkerings, but, you know, that's... my real passion is to, you know, one day, instead of just blowing things up, invent something that really changes the world."

[01:57:10] **Esther:** "Well, I think that's amazin'. I mean, what a, what a wonderful goal. What kind of thing you want to invent?"

[01:57:19] **Alex:** "I... I don't know. Maybe something which can help all of gnomekind."

[01:57:23] **Esther:** " An open mind. I love it. It's like... you don't always know the song you want to write. But it'll come to you, and then you think... maybe it'll inspire someone and they'll want to sing it and then they'll want to write a song or do something else in their life. It's kind of like that?"

[01:57:41] **Alex:** "Yeah. Kind of like that."

[01:57:42] **Esther:** "I'm mighty pleased to have made your acquaintance, Z. It's real nice to know you." They like... do a bow to you and like, play a little strings on the dulcimer for a second. Like a little rock and roll riff for you.

[01:57:58] **Esther:** And I will say maybe we'll leave us there, as you are all making your way towards the observatory. In our usual style: favorite moments of the day?

[01:58:10] **Fai:** I mean, it's gotta be that one. I mean, the explosion and everything. I think Z might have in that moment shown us that maybe he's not wrong about how great he is and that it's weird that he's, he's not like, more involved and stuff in this city. I think you just gave Temerity another level to the conspiracy theory. The yarn's coming out, bébés."

[01:58:37] **Justin:** I'm excited that Afraid Of Lightning popped up. I've been waiting for that. My poor little baby.

[01:58:43] **Fai:** I love that Ember has more hit points than any of us.

[01:58:47] **Justin:** Yes.

[01:58:48] **Esther:** Yes.

[01:58:48] **Justin:** I mean, that's how Barbarians work, right? Like my AC is not great, but like, I am just a giant bag of Hit Points.

[01:58:55] **Esther:** Thanks so much for tuning into Chromythica and being in this story with us. If you enjoyed this episode, please feel welcome to let us know by rating and reviewing the show in your podcast app of choice. This will really help us get the show to a wider audience.

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