

Pluribus ARG Master Document - CLOSED

A written documentation of the treasure hunt:

Along with the release of Season 1 Episode 8 “Charm Offensive,” the Pluribus team set out a mini ARG or Scavenger Hunt for fans. This Scavenger Hunt was EXTREMELY complex and utilized the teamwork of tons of individuals across Reddit, Discord, and Twitter to finally put all the pieces together.

Though we have completed all the steps and found the final treasure, we’d like to document those individuals whose minds joined along the way to get here.

WARNING: Spoilers for pluribus lie ahead.

-- Background:

In **S1E1**, the Hive gives Carol a number to call so that they can explain what's going on. The number on the TV screen reads out as (202) 808-3981, which is in fact a real phone number based out of Washington DC (where the Secretary was calling from in the show). When called outside of the show, this number will pick up, and we can hear a recording from that exact scene in the show. “We’re so glad you called, Carol...” and prompts Carol to dial zero if you need anything, before hanging up.

If you text “0” to this number, you will be prompted (in hive character) to agree to receive text messages. At this time, there are no other easter eggs within this number.

In **S1E4**, Carol gravely harms Zosia, and as a result is ex-communicated by the Hive. When she tries to call them, she is given a prerecorded response greeting her, and letting her know that they can still get whatever she needs, but for the time being they need their space. In the real world, the voicemail message to our phone number changes as well. We can now hear the “Our feelings for you haven't changed, Carol...” monologue from the show or our own phones when attempting to call the Hive.

At this time, texting the hive also yields no further result.

As of the the end of **S1E7**, Carol has welcomed the hive back, but it wasn’t until the later release of Episode 8 that the message over the phone changed again. This time, its not a recorded scene from the show, but a message from Zosia expressing their happiness to be back. She again prompts to dial 0.

-- The Phone Number

As of S1E8, when the hive is texted the number “0” it will greet you again, and ask if you would like to embark on a scavenger hunt.

We still only want to make you happy, Carol. How about a game of treasure hunt? Like the one you used to play with your cousins, back when you were kids? Text us TREASURE HUNT to play.

Txt STOP to stop, HELP for help

If accepted, the hive will ask for a code.

TREASURE HUNT

Fri 1:49 AM

Sounds great, Carol. Tell us that code you found.

PLURIBUS • Fri 1:49 AM

-- The Podcast

The official Pluribus companion podcast is a series of episodes discussing the creation of the episodes as they are released. With the release of the companion episode to S1E8, the podcast opens with a set of 10 dialtones. An operator greets us with “Hello, Carol.” followed by another set of 9 dialtones, then the podcast begins as normal, until the end of the episode which contains a morse code sequence, followed by a tribal chant before the episode ends.

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These are the basis clues for the beginning of the ARG, and what follows are the steps we took to solve it; All contributors will be credited in chronological order as their contributions appeared in the path to solving the treasure hunt. An additional list of credits to all involved will be at the bottom, followed by our organization document we used to keep notes as it was December 19, the night before we cracked the puzzle.

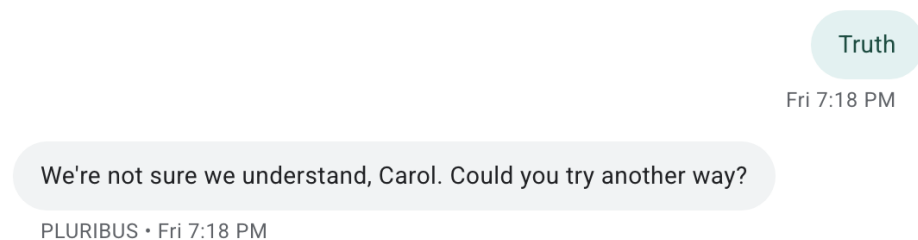
-- The Hunt

Beginning with our Podcast clues, the dialtones at the beginning were deciphered using a tool called a DTMF decoder. This discovery was made by Discord Contributor Warner B., and our sequence plays out as follows.

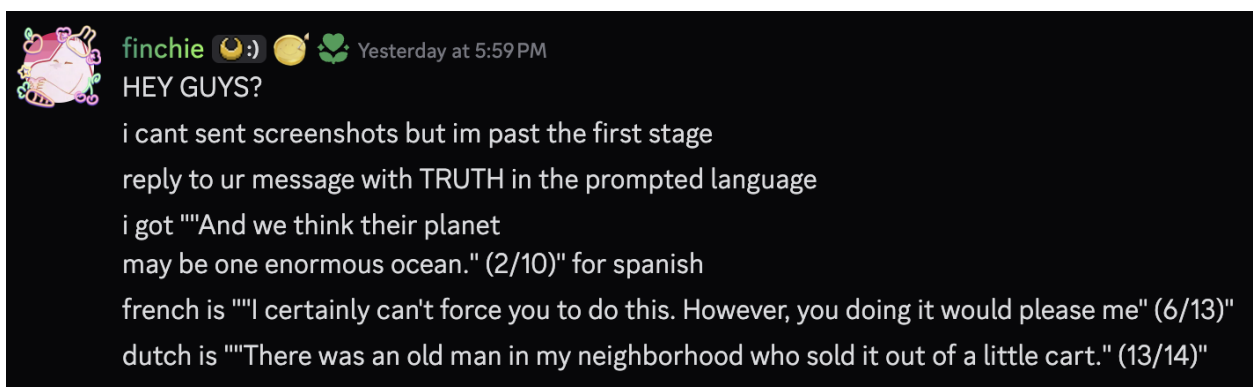
“2028083981 [ring tone] ‘Hello, Carol.’ 201821208 [line dropped]”

The first set of numbers we have here is the DC number given to Carol to call the hive, followed by another string which can be translated using an A1Z26 cipher (A=1, Z=26). Read as ‘20 18 21 20 8’ we can translate these to read “TRUTH”.

If you text the Hive at this point submitting ‘Truth’ as your code to the treasure hunt, the hive will greet you with “Hello, Carol.” in one of many languages. This caught us for a bit, but in the morning, when the code Truth was repeated to this greeting, a new response came back.



Discord contributor @finchie used this prompt to bring us to the next step in our hunt...



After repeating “truth” to the hive using the language that they greeted you in, they respond with a new puzzle. Depending on the language you were greeted with, each one was a different quote from various episodes of the show, along with two numbers formatted “x/y” at the end. At this point, we had started documenting each language and

what puzzle it gives us in a single document provided by finchie, so we could work together better organized. We only had about 9 languages at this point, but Discord contributor @jupiner discovered that this was a Book cipher, and that each quote needed to be translated into the prompted language before deciphering. Here is an example.

Hola, Carol.

PLURIBUS • 4:33 PM

verdad

4:33 PM

"And we think their planet
may be one enormous ocean." (2/10)

PLURIBUS • 4:33 PM

The quote “And we think their planet may be one enormous ocean.” comes from Episode 8 timestamp 20:51. If you go to this episode, and turn on subtitles for your target language, you can use the x/y book cipher to find the nth word (x), out of y total.

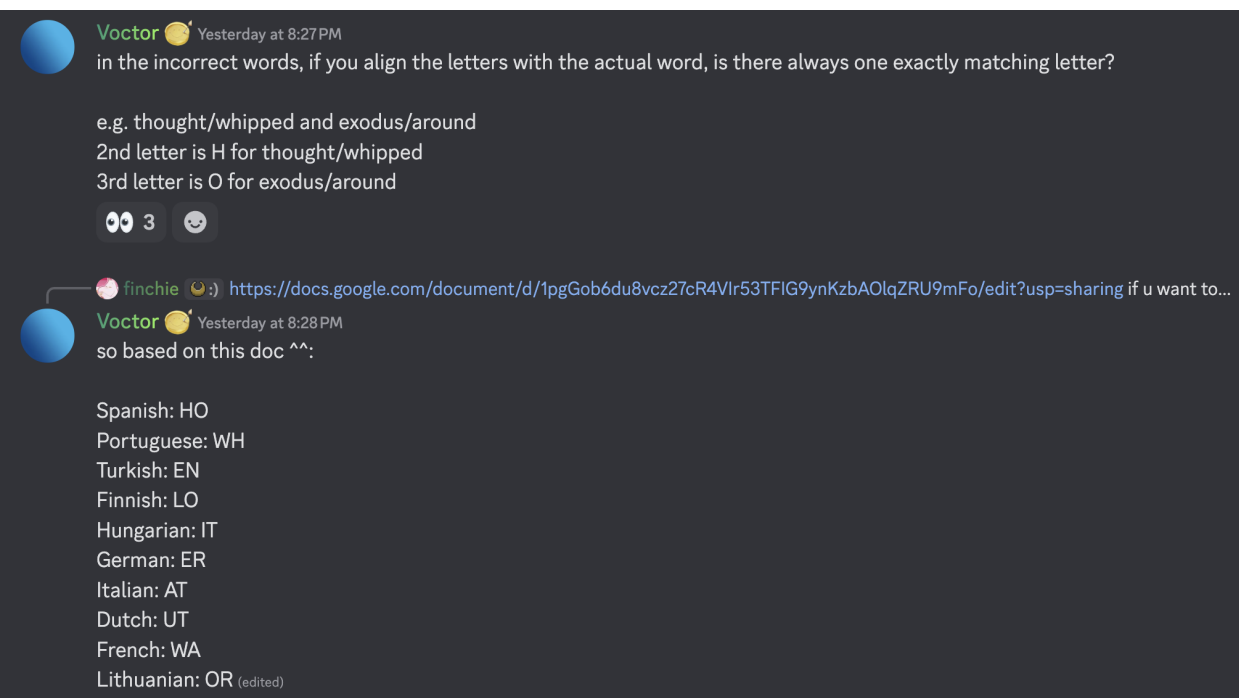
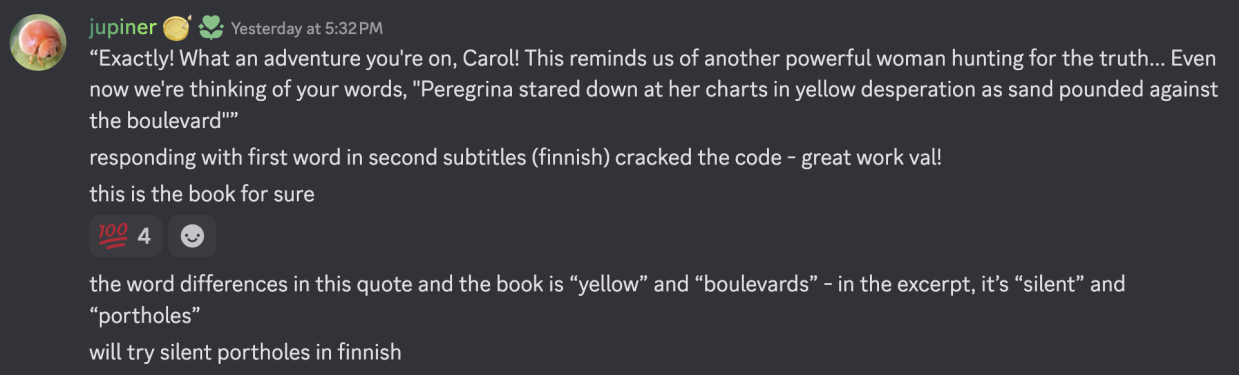
Y creemos que el planeta
puede ser un enorme océano.

In our case, were looking for word 2/10: “creemos”. This prompts a new response from the hive, referencing Carol’s book series “Winds of Wycaro”...

Exactly! What an adventure you're on, Carol! This reminds us of another powerful woman hunting for the truth... Even now we're thinking of your words, "She thought exodus, indignant"

PLURIBUS • 4:34 PM

This left us stumped for most of Friday evening. We had at this point collected and documented 10 possible language paths in what we called our “Rosetta Document.” and we observed, using the book sample on Apple Books that there were always two word mis-quoted between the hive’s message and the book in every path, and each word was always the same length, with one letter matching positions for every word, but no combination of these submissions yielded a new response. At this point, multiple contributors were attempting to follow the lead that each of these letters scrambled to spell something.

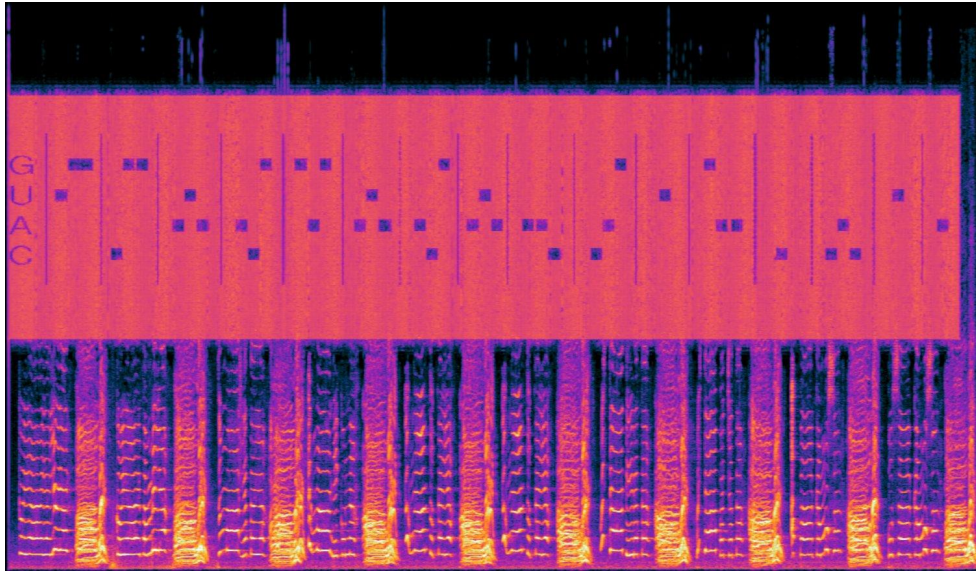


(Discord contributors @jupiner for quote difference, @Vactor for letter positioning)

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During this time, we had also translated the morse code from the end of the podcast to be "RNA Codons", and a Twitter user by the handle @_makr had put the chant through

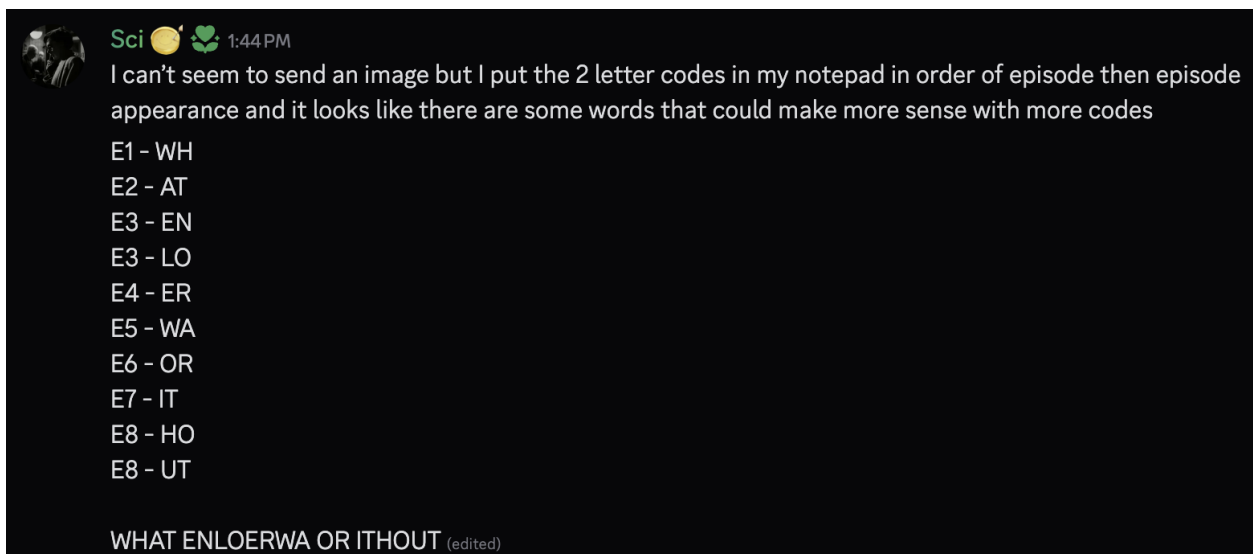
a spectrogram to reveal this image:



Which Discord contributor @djsockpuppet then translated to “WRITE IT IN QUECHUA” using an amino acid chart. We attempted to follow some leads on the tribal chant and attempting to translate it from Quechuan, but none proved fruitful.

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The next day, Discord contributor @cloudedColdcook noticed that when trying different languages, the bot now responded with “We’re not sure we understand, Carol. But there are 15 ways we would!” while Discord contributor @Sci had also graciously put our two letter combos from the 10 mis-quotes we had into episode order and discovered that it began spelling things but remained mostly gibberish...



Which prompted contributors to conclude that we did in fact need to find 5 more language paths to complete the rest of the hunt. This began a frenzy of contributors searching for the remaining 15 language paths; to which we came to the message "WHAT HICKENLOOPER WAS BORN WITHOUT". Discord contributor @Rocco then found a script from the episode where Carol was watching Golden Girls...

[Rose Nylund](#): *[Rose and Blanche are at the kitchen table discussing first impressions; a "back in St. Olaf's" story inevitably ensues]* We used to call her Mean Old Lady Hickenlooper.

[Blanche](#): Yeah, kids can be pretty cruel.

[Rose Nylund](#): No, that was her name! Mean Old Lady Hickenlooper. She had it changed legally because everybody called her that anyway.

[Blanche](#): Then how come your name isn't Big Dummy?

[Rose Nylund](#): Well, there were already three other people in town with that name.

[Blanche](#): Oh.

[nods]

[Rose Nylund](#): But that's beside the point. One day I got up the courage to go up to Mean Old Lady Hickenlooper and I asked her why she always frowned. Well, she had been born with no smiling muscles! I pointed out that a frown is just a smile turned upside down! So from then on whenever I'd go by, she'd stand on her head and wave!

[Blanche](#): That is one of the stupidest stories I've ever heard - which proves my first impression of you was right.

When the Hive is given "Smiling Muscles", they teased "So close!"

Calling back to the Spectogram / RNA Codon translation, the contributors "WRITE IT IN QUECHUA". To which they are linked to an unlisted youtube video from Vince Gilligan himself congratulating them...

[Unlisted Video](#)

We all are so grateful to have come together and reaped such an incredible reward from teamwork. It wouldn't have been possible without all the contributors in the Discord server, Reddit, and Twitter. Below is a chronological credits list of those who contributed to work in our discord server contributions big and small. We did this together!

@jupiner
@Warner B
@mycatsabacterium
@finchie
@Valerie
@Vactor
@tabs
@milkshake
@djsockpuppet
@Luke Young
@preskia
@isosceles
@THE VOID
@limrej
@cloudedColdcook
@Sci
@Rocco
@quickbrnfx

And a credits list would not be complete without a special thank you to the Moderators of the Pluribus Discord server. They aided and supported us through this entire process allowing us the spaces we needed to collaborate and crack codes! It couldn't have been done without them... (our favorites are @Pluriblee @nooberz and @Art teehee)

Everyone involved had important contributions to make big and small. Please feel free to add the contribution you want to be credited with next to your name, and thank you again to all involved.

This is the “Rosetta Document” that we used throughout this process to document each of the translation paths. Keep in mind that this is basically a “cheat sheet” for the whole hunt: [📄 Pluribus Rosetta Doc \(ARG\)](#)

The following pages contain the “Master Document” We used throughout this process to organize our thoughts as we left it Friday night, though the final big breakthroughs happened in the discord Saturday morning, so it does not account for those. Feel free to take a look, and peek at some of the leads we pursued and failed on.

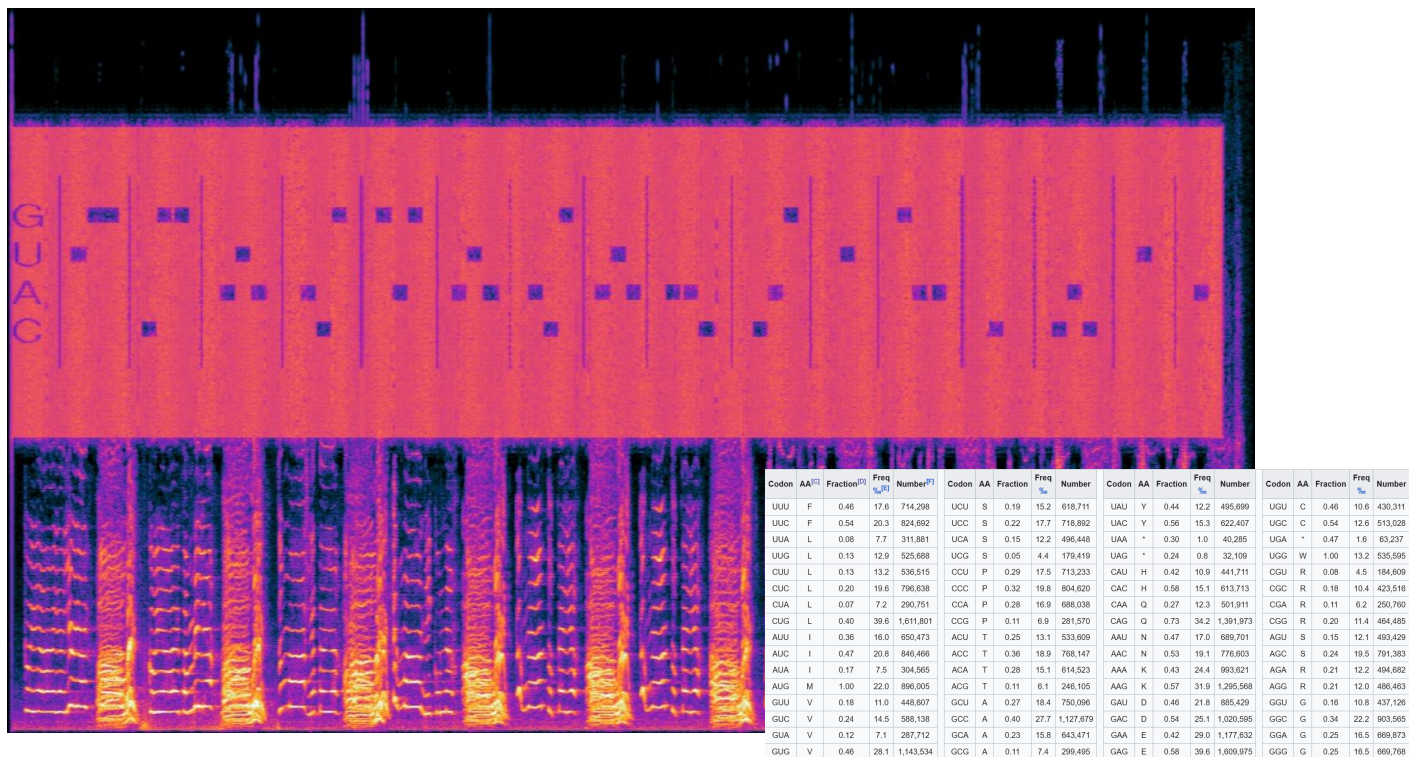
The hive's voicemail has changed along with the show. No previous hints, but has included show clips and when texted "0" the number responds with an opt-in message.

As of Episode 8, the voicemail is from Zosia expressing her regret for the Hive leaving and that they're happy to be back. She again prompts to dial zero, and this time we are presented with a "Treasure Hunt" game, and asked for a code.

In the companion podcast episode for s1e8, the episode is book-ended with hints.

The podcast opens with dial tones (2028083981) then after the other line picks up, we are greeted with "Hello Carol" and a second set of dial tones (201821208) the first is the phone number Carol dialed in episode 1 and we have had for a bit. The second set of numbers translates using an A1Z26 cipher to "TRUTH".

The podcast closes with morse code (translates to "RNA Codons") and some almost tribal chant backed by a rattling sound. (~~Apologies for my butchered transcription, please, if anyone knows, correct it. "coya ayayay (ahwee) coya familia (ahwee) toma hyataya (ahwee) acoma micona (ahwee) tona totaya (ahwee) tona totaya (ahwee) wheta teeyata (ahwee) wheta pachata (ahwee) appa camoson (ahwee) posa camoson (ahwee)"~~) Using a spectrogram, Twitter user @_makr gave us this out of the chanting portion:



Using the above codon chart, Discord contributor @djsockpuppet has successfully translated this spectrogram to "WRITE IT IN QUECHUA" this is a Native American language spoken primarily in the Andes. It was also the official language of the Incan Empire and remains the most common native language spoken today. We now believe this to be the language sung in the chant, though we do not yet have a translation.

A new transcription has been provided by Discord contributor Luke Young.

Quya, ay ay ay (awiy)	Queen, ay ay ay
Quya familia (awiy)	Queen, Family
Sumag hayt'ay (awiy)	Pretty, Kick
Ayuma mikhuna (awiy)	Ayuma Food
T'una tutayay (awiy)	Change, To become dark
T'una tutayay (awiy)	Change, To become dark
Wayta tiyayta (awiy)	Flower, tiyayta
Wayta pachata (awiy)	Flower, Time
Apa k'amusun (awiy)	Car horse or llama, k'amusun
Pusa k'amusun (awiy)	Pusa k'amusun

The right is a literal translation to english, disregarding syntax. Unchanged words are untranslated.

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When either 201821208 or Truth are input as the code to the treasure hunt, the number responds with a "Hello Carol" greeting in various languages, thus kicking off the hunt.

To advance past this first puzzle, the user must input the keyword "truth" in the language the hive greeted you in. This will lead to the second puzzle, where you are given one of various quotes from the show, and to proceed you must translate it into the language you were greeted, and use the fraction at the end to determine what word to respond with. (x/y = x word out of y translated words). The hive will then give you a misquoted phrase from the sample we have on apple books of Winds of Wycaro.

This is where we are stuck at the moment; some observations: there is always two incorrect words, and the letters counts of the incorrect words exactly match the letter counts of the correct ones

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We have documented each language the puzzle presents itself in. Discord user @tabs has done their due diligence checking most languages that use a latin alphabet that also have subtitling on Apple TV. The document linked below is a collection of all the conversation paths so far, and how they play out. This is useful to find patterns between each of the messages and identify clues faster. Take a look!

 [Pluribus Rosetta Doc \(ARG\)](#)

Document credits to Discord contributor @finchie and various members