

Kyle

Previously on Quest Friends...

[Intro song begins, "Friends" by Miracle of Sound.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

What do you know about the Fallen Ruins racetrack?

Kyle (as Tattertop)

Ooh... Fallen Ruins Road, you say?

Kyle (as Haymish)

Oh, it's haunted.

Hallie (as Hopper)

By what?

Kyle (as Tattertop)

Well, what couldn't it be haunted by? Fallen Ruins Road is named that because it fell on this land 40 years ago. It carries both the regrets of those who fell in it and the regrets of the Speedy Speed Boys it fell on.

Tom (as Xoc)

Wait a minute. Could these ruins be the location we're hunting for?

[Intro music swells and carries into the episode.]

Kyle

[Bubbling and creature calls begin.]

There's a weird familiarity to hearing the bog again. Of course, Coachman's Tree where the Speedy Speed Boy hideout is was part of the bog that is the eastern edge of the Ba-Adenu Forest, but with so many loud rowdy boys running around and messing with cars that happen to burst through walls and go on escape chases, eh, just the smaller sounds start to disappear. But here, about maybe half a mile out, you can finally hear those smaller sounds again. You know, the little bloop, bloop, bloop of animals moving through the bog and the bubbles that arise. The small fluttering of wings of dragonfleece, which are dragonflies but they have like—

Hallie

Little fleece jackets.

Kyle

What?

Tom

[Chuckles.]

Hallie

Little fleece zip-ups is what I saw, like the kind you get for high school sports teams. They're really cheap but really good.

Kyle

Yeah, they're little dragonflies in jackets.

Hallie

Like a little club.

Kyle

[Laughs.] And this loud moaning from the settling ruins of Fallen Ruins Road, which has for the past 40 years been settling into the bog.

[Bubbling and creature calls end.]

Xoc and Hop, you make your way towards one part of this ruin, a tall ceramic diamond that has some of that colorful mesh wiring of the Speedy Speed Boy Coachman's Tree running around it. It's kind of like a halfpipe that goes around that like a car could drive through. Now, that aspect is purely Speedy Speed Boy, after all these ruins did fall on what used to be a part of Coachman's Tree 40 years ago, but the part that looks familiar to you is that tall ceramic diamond, which Q-BO points out,

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] This location seems to bear the same architectural style as the Obsidian Bay location that you encountered about a month ago.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah, you don't say.

Hallie

Hop's looking around. I assume that he's holding Q-BO.

Kyle

Yeah. Hop, you take a few steps closer as you try to take in this large diamond tower more, and you lift up Q-BO who's glowing not only of his own robotic aura but with two never-ending lit candles on his sides.

Hallie

[Groans.]

[Whoosh sound signaling a scene change.]

Kyle (as Ein)

You want to go to Fallen Ruins Road?

Tom (as Xoc)

Yes, that's the plan anyway.

Hallie (as Hopper)

We have some things we'd like to investigate there.

Kyle (as Ein)

Hmm... I suppose it would be a good idea to look at the racetrack. It hasn't actually been used in a while.

Tom (as Xoc)

More than that, if there's any chance we can learn something about the truth of what happened here 40 years ago, that might go even further towards, I don't know, changing people's minds, and at least it lets us take out two blood barmes with one skreu.

Kyle (as Ein)

Hmm... I'm doubtful of that part.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Why? Why do you say you're doubtful?

Kyle

She turns to add something and she just murmurs under her breath, upset and shimmy.

Kyle (as Ein)

Everyone just kinda listens to Jimmy nowadays, and Jimmy doesn't listen to anybody. I don't necessarily think finding evidence there would convince him of anything. I'm not really sure that's what he wants.

Emily (as Elee)

I think I should have a talk with Jimmy.

Hallie

[Chuckles.] From behind Elee, Ness leans out and does the fist into his other little hand.

[Laughter.]

Tom

Oh no~!

Hallie

With his claw hands, because he doesn't have real hands!

Kyle

And you hear some buzzing behind Ein as this giant robot cicada with a bedazzled trilby flies in, and CK says,

Kyle (as CK)

Ooh, a frightening and terrifying idea. I think that is fantastic.

Kyle (as Ein)

Which is exactly why we will not be doing that.

Kyle

CK just kind of flutters down, and he does the bug thing where they do their hands conspiratorially, and he just slithers back.

[00:05:00]

Hallie

[Laughs.]

Emily (as Elee)

It's not like I'm gonna, you know, beat him up or anything... unless he makes the first move. It's more just a civil chat between two people who have very strong opinions.

Hallie (as Ness)

That's what they're calling it nowadays.

Emily (as Elee)

Mm-hmm!

Tom

[Laughs.]

Emily

Elee will look back over at CK.

Emily (as Elee)

We'll discuss this later.

Kyle

CK, so two of his hands... now the rest of his little bug hands continue to do the conspiratorial thing.

Emily

[Giggles.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

Well, I think we should still try to get some evidence, because evidence is everything, but you know, there's actually a second reason that we want to go to the ruins. We're looking for something called Redd's Blessing. Does that ring a bell?

Kyle (as Ein)

Redd's Blessing? I'm not familiar with the term. Does it have something to do with the ruins?

Hallie (as Hopper)

We think so.

[Dark synth music begins.]

Kyle (as Ein)

Hmm. There is one part of Fallen Ruins Road that no one's been able to really see a whole lot of. I suppose that might have what you're looking for, and I guess we can try whatever we can to convince Jimmy.

Hallie (as Hopper)

That sounds like as promising a place to check as any. Thank you! Is it okay if we go look at it?

Kyle

She crosses her arms.

Kyle (as Ein)

I suppose if there aren't any official restrictions... They're gonna keep a closer eye on the drifter for the race, but for Misha's pit crew I don't see any reason why not.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Great.

Hallie

Hop will turn to the rest of the group.

Hallie (as Hopper)

I think we should get going right away to look at it. Who wants to come with? I kind of really wanna go look at it.

Tom

Xoc is going to pause and look over at Misha for a moment.

Tom (as Xoc)

I don't want to leave you alone here, but I guess I'm the only one who can read the writing, so I better go.

[Music fades.]

Emily (as Elee)

I'll watch Misha's back.

Tom

Xoc will nod.

Ari (as Misha)

Oh, uh, thank you, both of you. You don't need to worry about me, Xoc. I think it makes more sense if you go, and you also shouldn't worry about me, Elee B. I can be fine by myself also, though I appreciate that you will take care of me.

Emily (as Elee)

I know you can take care of yourself, but we all kind of take care of each other too.

Ari (as Misha)

If you want to go with them you could too. Don't feel like you have to stay because of me.

Emily (as Elee)

No, but uh...

[Karl's theme begins.]

If you needed a light that you could be sure wouldn't go out...

Emily

And Elee's gonna take off her hat and pull out a candle and hand it to Hop, and then pull out a second candle and hand it to Xoc.

Emily (as Elee)

You wave your hand and it lights up, and then wave it again and it goes out.

[Karl's theme ends.]

Tom (as Xoc)

[Softly.] Thank you, Elee. We'll take good care of it.

Emily (as Elee)

Take good care of yourself.

[Whoosh sound signaling a scene change.]

Kyle

Moving back to the present day, those two candles have just been duct taped onto Q-BO's side.

Hallie

But really well.

Kyle

Really well. Really gently. He volunteered to serve as a kind of reading light. You know the old fashioned lamps that get held by the top and then they're just dangling? The gas ones.

Hallie

They creek when you hold them up. Yeah.

Kyle

He agreed to do that, not only because it was just an easy way to hold the candles but it also got him as close as he could get to the actual things you were trying to look at, which you know, it's a win-win for everybody. You are standing, again, outside of this large diamond. I was originally gonna say it was like a rhombus, but if you just take a rhombus and make it 3D that's just a diamond, so it's a diamond.

Hallie

It's true.

[In the Hall of the Mountain King begins.]

Tom

Isn't a rhombus just specifically that all of the sides are the same length?

Kyle

Yeah, which means it's either a square or it's a diamond.

Hallie

Yeah, I said it's true. I agreed with you.

Kyle

Yeah no, I'm correcting Tom right now. *[Laughs.]*

Hallie

Oh.

Tom

Correcting is a very strong word.

Kyle

[Laughs.] I meant more like I'm debating with Tom right now.

Tom

[Smiling.] Debating is also a strong word. I look confused because I'm trying to visualize it.

Kyle

It looks like the Sims diamond on top of a Sim.

Hallie

[Giggles.]

Tom

[Pained.] I know what a diamond looks like.

Hallie

Honestly, when you first said diamond I imagined a baseball diamond, so it's good that we... *[Laughs.]*

Kyle

[Laughs.]

Tom

[Warbling groan.]

Hallie

Then you said tower, and I was like oh, it's like a solid building not a diamond shape on the sand.

Kyle

No, it is a solid building. It's got ceramic on the outside, ceramic tiling. It looks like the tiling that you found on Obsidian Bay. This one is an actual 'diamond' diamond.

Tom

But is not made out of diamond, correct?

Kyle

[Smiling.] It is made of ceramic. I have already said this.

Tom

Okay, well you also said “actual ‘diamond’ diamond,” and I didn’t know how to take that.

Kyle

There is a diamond! There are spiraling columns!

Tom

We don’t have to keep dwelling on the diamond. You’ve described what it looks like.

Kyle

[Emphatically.] Into this large door...

Tom

[Pinched, smiling.] We don’t have to do this.

Kyle

...through which you can enter to the inside of the diamond.

Hallie

I enjoy having things over-explained to Tom, so you can keep doing it. *[Laughs.]*

Tom

[Laughing reluctantly.] Fuck you too.

Kyle

So as you walk into the diamond which is made out of ceramic, but because the bottom half got consumed by the bog, your diamond actually looks more like a pyramid.

Hallie

I was gonna say. Yeah.

Tom

[Through gritted, angry growls.] That’s what I was about to say, and I’m so fucking mad.

Hallie

This entire time we would have been like, oh look it’s a pyramid, let’s go in the p—

[00:10:00]

Kyle

[Laughs.]

Tom

You were describing to us a PYRAMID which you described first as a rhombus, then as a diamond, then as a ‘diamond’ diamond.

Hallie

Why wasn’t this one of the pictures that you drew? You drew all these pictures and got rid of them because you were like fuck dungeons. *[Laughs.]*

Kyle

It needs to be described in audio format so it can be easily—

Hallie

[Laughing.] I know, but...

Kyle

You are in a pyramid, but in actuality it's a diamond... and half of it is underwater.

Tom

[Whimpers.]

Hallie

Under fog?

Kyle

Under bog.

Hallie

There we go.

Kyle

So as you walk in, it looks like the floor is made out of bog, because the bog is pressing up against the flexi-glass.

Hallie

So the flexi-glass is like the floor?

[Music fades.]

Kyle

Yeah. Flexi-glass is this invisible barrier. It lets through gases, but when anything harder tries to go through it actually presses against it and grows white as kind of the molecules go to catch that thing.

Hallie & Tom

Okay.

Hallie

So I think Hop will hover Q-BO over the flexi-glass floor where the bog is pressing up, and he's trying to look for any kind of indication that there's still stuff there. He doesn't know the properties of this bog. It could be scary properties.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] This bog seems to have very good preservative qualities. Typically, it takes about 10,000 years to induce fossilization, but in being close proximity to the bog, I believe that things could be fossilized within only a few decades worth of time.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Wow...

Hallie

That was from Hop. He's very into this. He's very enraptured by Q-BO's information.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] Going into the bog, therefore, things must be also very well-preserved. However, without the correct form of protection, the fossilization process may in fact take only a few minutes.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Oh, well that's faster than ideal.

Tom

How did we get here through a bog that instantly turns you to stone?

Kyle

The EZ-Life brand can't save you where you're going, kid, because you don't die, you just get preserved.

Hallie

[Laughing.] That's really scary. I don't like that.

Tom

That... I'm gonna shove that aside.

Kyle

[Laughs.]

Tom

I'm going to shove that thought out of my head. Xoc wants to look around this entrance and see if there is any writing.

[Chill sci-fi music begins.]

Kyle

Okay. That's a good catch. You are looking for the writing, which as we remember – and by “we” I mean me and probably nobody else – as was mentioned last arc, the writing was words written on these glittering powder pages. You don't see those pages anywhere in here, but you do see that glittering powder which seems to be floating around in places, kind of hovering in front of certain doors and hovering all around you. give me a roll. I wanna see how much you see, how much knowledge you get right away.

Tom

Alright. I will spend 2 levels of Effort that costs me nothing. I got a 7.

Kyle

You got a 7.

Tom

With 2 levels of Effort.

Kyle

Yeah. You see two things, and specifically you see two doors. One door seems to be linked to some sort of, like, what looks to be maybe an elevator shaft but it's blocked off, and in the powder next to the door it has labeled “Bleu Module, other modules connected to...” and then it's blank, so it seems like because it's not connected to any other modules this door to the elevator is broken. Then, on the other side, you don't see writing but you do see another door that's pretty much right next to it that seems to be a place you could go.

[Music ends.]

Tom

Xoc will communicate these findings to Hopper, and then just say,

Tom (as Xoc)

It looks like we really only have one direction for the moment.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah, I guess so. You don't think that we—We didn't really bring any protective gear.

Tom (as Xoc)

[With a chuckle.] No, no, but you're good at traveling through hazardous environments, right?

Hallie

Hopper shrugs.

Hallie (as Hopper)

I've picked up a thing or two.

Tom (as Xoc)

Worst case scenario I can—

Tom

And then he stops himself as he remembers that he cannot, at will, use his magic.

Tom (as Xoc)

I can ask if we can use my powers to build something.

Hallie

Hop will raise an eyebrow at that.

Hallie (as Hopper)

I'm sure they could be convinced if you're in a dangerous situation, don't you think?

Tom (as Xoc)

Uh... probably. It works with the Iron Wind.

[Nostalgic music begins.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

Well, you know, for instance my dad's always had this rule that if I was out late and maybe in a situation I wasn't supposed to be, you know, I could always call for help and I wouldn't get in trouble right then. If I was trying to help somebody else, or you know, if I just really needed help at that moment. We'd talk about it later. I mean, you know, they would ground me later or whatever, but I knew that they'd at least help me out in the moment. So, I'm sure they'd help if we really needed it, you know, if you really needed it.

Tom

Xoc will look down, not really meeting Hopper's gaze.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Softly.] Probably...

[Music ends.]

Kyle

Alright Hop, you ready to declare some fossils guilty?

Hallie

Fucking yes!

Kyle

So, you make your way up to the next door which is actually a small staircase, and as you get closer you actually do see writing, and the writing says something along the lines of "The Bleu Module: Focusing on research of alternate observation and turnabout thinking."

[00:15:00]

Hallie

[Slaps down on her desk.] Yes! Give it to me!

Kyle

[Smiling.] Which we would think of as puzzles.

Hallie

[Giggles.]

Kyle

And if this whole place was open air, everything would have just been shlooped up by this point, right? It all would have been turned into basically air fossils. But, in this case, a space has actually been preserved on the inside, a series of rooms which you can take from here to the top of the tower, and this has actually been preserved because a series of vines has been growing all across this. It's part of the bog for the most part. There are these bog-like vines that aren't actually really affected by the fossilization, because this is where they exist, and they're roping around and they've been really taking over the space. You've seen it a little bit, but this is the most notable because they've actually knotted themselves completely over the door, locking in all air in there. Long story short is they're not actually fossils, but there is this just door of vines covering the archway.

Hallie

[Grinning.] I'm sorry. I just imagined vines, like

[Musically.] "I want to see my little boy."

Kyle

[Laughs.]

Hallie

[Laughing.] Like all these videos all over the door, like "we can't get in there, too many vines, all playing at once."

Tom

"I should have left you on that street corner where I found you."

Hallie & Tom

"But you didn't!"

Kyle

And the reason the vines can't fossilize is because vine is already dead.

Hallie

[Laughs loudly.]

Tom

[Smiling.] That makes no fucking sense, but I still appreciate it.

Kyle

That being said, you do actually hear some things that aren't just comedic vines coming from these vines,

[Assorted distant whispering begins.]

things like "my life?" or "I got me a drink" or just "...I did, thanks."

Hallie

Okay. I'm gonna listen a little bit closer to see if they say anything helpful in any way, shape or form.

Kyle

Nothing that can help you get through the vines themselves, although Hop, you could swear as you get up to them you do hear this one whisper. "Sleep more. Sleep more. Sleep more..."

Hallie

[Laughs.] He ignores that one completely.

Kyle

[Chuckles.]

Tom

We all do.

Hallie

Would you call these vines an environmental hazard?

Kyle

I guess? Yeah, you can get an—

[Whispering ends.]

Hallie

Yeah they are! The answer is yes, because they're clearly an environmental hazard. I would like to apply my skill in navigating those things.

Tom

You gonna wriggle through the vines?

Hallie

I was hoping I'd come up with an idea while I was speaking, and I haven't, so I'm just gonna keep talking while I'm thinking out loud...

Kyle

[Laughs.]

Hallie

What happens if I touch them?

Kyle

They don't really move. They will shrink back a bit, but as soon as you move they'll go back to their former place.

Hallie

But I'm not hurt? They didn't hurt me?

[Whispering returns.]

Kyle

No, and in fact, as you pull your hand back, and you're like "what is happening," you actually hear them also whisper "critical questions remain."

Hallie

[Laughs.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

Like what?

Hallie

He responds, to the vines.

Kyle

"Critical questions remain. Critical questions remain. Do you think horses freak centaurs out?"

[Whispering fades.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

No...

Kyle

[Smiling.] They don't respond to that.

Hallie

[Grinning.] Okay. I was just hoping that maybe they would.

Tom (as Xoc)

I am not certain that these vines are able to consciously respond to us, Hopper Scotch.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah, my bet is on no, but I just wanted to try it out.

Tom (as Xoc)

Hmm.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Got any ideas?

Tom (as Xoc)

Uh... only bad ones. I could try to Cutting Light through the vines.

Hallie

Hopper's hesitant.

Hallie (as Hopper)

I don't want to, like, hurt anything here.

Tom (as Xoc)

That's a good point. What if we Cutting Light the wall next to the door and make a new door?

Hallie (as Hopper)

That's a really good idea. Let's do that.

Tom (as Xoc)

I will have to ask, then... One sec.

Tom

Xoc will sit down, close his eyes, and reach out.

[The twinkling of magic sounds.]

Kyle

You go and you reach out, and then suddenly in the distance you hear this

[Angry, monstrous snarling.]

and the vines recoil in fear as you too, Xoc, are just jumped out by this very aggressive, violent sound echoing through.

Tom

Did Hopper hear anything? Did Hopper react as I did?

Hallie

I would have jumped.

Kyle

Okay. He jumped. So yeah, everyone heard that sound, and the vines retreated, this monstrous sound, almost like that one that you had been warned about.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] It sounds like that sound came from above. That is very fortunate, since that's where we're going, and so we can isolate both the source of the sound and continue on our adventure.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Uncertain.] Yes...

Hallie

Relevant question. The vines jumped back at the noise, right?

Kyle

Yeah.

Hallie

So Hopper is not actually immediately concerned with the monster, because he thinks it might be like a myth, so he will turn to Q-BO and say,

Hallie (as Hopper)

Hey Q-BO, do you think you could imitate the sound that thing just made, like at the vines?

Tom

Ooh.

Hallie (as Hopper)

It looked like they were afraid of the loud noise, so if we make a loud enough noise maybe they'll move and we can get past them.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] Hmm. That is a good idea. Let me try.

[Beep-boop, followed by a sort of cute but poor attempt at the monstrous snarl.]

Kyle

The vines don't move.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop, followed by a closer simulation to the snarl but with less volume and anger.]

[00:20:00]

Kyle

The vines still don't move.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] Wait. Wait. Let me try one more time. Turning off sound dampeners.
[Typewriter completion sound.]
[Incredibly loud and violent snarl that distorts the audio.]

[Peppy, ragtime-like music begins.]

Kyle

Hop and Xoc... Actually, roll me Intellect defense. *[Laughs.]*

Hallie

[Chuckles.]

Tom

Easy money. Two levels of Effort.

Hallie

I'm pretty sure I'm trained in this.

Tom

[Rolls.] I got a 4, but with 2 levels of Effort.

Hallie

I am also gonna use 2 levels of Effort.

[Rolls.] ... 2. Yay, I'm back to rolling this way. Isn't that fun?

[Smiling.] Wasting all my pools trying to succeed. *[Laughs.]*

Kyle

So the sound is loud, and definitely painful, but because Q-BO isn't that high of level it's not actually loud or painful enough to injure or mechanically disorient you. It's just like, ow...

Hallie (as Hopper)

Agh...

Kyle

But the vines definitely do retract at that.

Hallie

Yes!

Tom

We get through.

Hallie

Yep.

Kyle

Yep.

Hallie

Bolt on through.

Kyle

And Q-BO goes,

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop, still at a very high and distorted volume.] I apologize for—

Hallie (as Hopper)

AGH!

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop, returned to normal.] I apologize.

[Music carries into the announcements.]

Kyle

Hello, and welcome to the announcement break for Quest Friends, Episode 63: One Neon Night, Part 5. I am Kyle, your GM, and in addition to our intro and outro song being Friends and Hitoshio, both by Miracle of Sound, my voice is very sore from a very fun bonus session that we recorded today, so I'll try to keep things brief.

For announcements today I wanted to thank everyone who provided prompts for our vines. So, a good while ago I asked the good folks of the internet to just fill out a few prompts, things like what was the last text, what was the last line of a book you read, so on and so forth, and it was from that list that I pulled the lines for this episode, and I'm actually gonna pull the lines from future episodes as well, because there's more to the vines than meets the eye.

We do have a long-standing Q&A thing going on with our Tumblr, so if there's any question you've had with Quest Friends, anything you wanna know, behind the scenes stuff, stuff about fun character interactions, or just... you wanna express an opinion but phrase it like a question, check out QuestFriendsPodcast.tumblr.com. If you don't have a Tumblr, I would still start thinking of some questions, because we may need some of those in a short while, but we'll talk about that on next episode's announcement break.

For now, all you need to know is that our next episode will come out on Monday, September 7, but if you'd like additional content before then you can find stories, artwork, and behind the scenes insights at Patreon.com/QuestFriends. I'll see you there.

[Peppy, ragtime-like music carries out of the announcements.]

Kyle

Alright. You make your way into this first room. How this episode is gonna go, I say like half way through it, is we're gonna kind of alternate between puzzle and lore. As I mentioned earlier, you're not taking the elevator. The elevator seems to have to connect to other modules, whatever that is, to work. Instead, you're going up the old fashioned way. You're going into a room which is connected to a staircase which is connected to another room which is connected to a staircase, and you'll slowly make your way up this tower.

Hallie

Exercise.

Tom

Yeah.

Kyle

So, you're in your first room.

[Mysterious sci-fi music begins.]

Now, this room seems to be a study of... I'm gonna say "duplicate things" is almost what it looks like. You see two of every object. You see two fossilize mini aneens. Mineeens.

Hallie

[Snickers.]

Kyle

You see two flower pots or jars. You see two lightbulb-like shapes, a few dozen of just multiple different animals that you're not familiar with at all, and you see two of what are called sedimentattoo guns. These are the guns that make markings on the Prylimans. You know Xoc saw one with like prismatic markings? That actually came from these little gun things.

Notably, you see two mirrors. These mirrors have a green light around them, this bright green light that you've only seen when Obsidian Bay powered up as you tried to leave it and you see it inside the Apocrita itself.

[00:25:00]

There's like this frozen green lightning inside the cloud of the Apocrita. The same color of light is surrounding two mirrors, and as you get closer to them you see yourself. You see Xoc in one and Hop in the other, and these figures just repeat at you,

Hallie & Tom (as Mirror Hopper & Mirror Xoc)

Stop... Stop... Stop...

Kyle

Okay. That's the puzzle.

[Music ends.]

Tom

So there's no other ways in or out of this room?

Kyle

You see a door on the opposite end, but it seems to be shut.

Hallie

I would like to go examine the pots.

Kyle

Okay. Why are you examining the pots?

Hallie

Because pots is stop backwards!

Kyle

And why are you thinking of stop backwards?

Hallie

It was the only thing that came to mind.

Tom

I think Kyle's fishing for "because it's a mirror."

Hallie

[Giggling.] yeah that!

Kyle

So, you walk over to the pots, and you see that the two are right next to each other, and what do you do with them?

Hallie

I examine. I look for, like, a key.

Tom

We would like to click the Examine option.

Hallie
Yeah.

Kyle
Okay. You go to examine. You're like "I'm gonna figure this out." You can't really see anything. You can see that there's a small, like, I'm gonna say divot that is running from the mirrors to the pots and then past the pots and to the door, and you can't figure out what the fuck that means. You lift up Q-BO a little higher to kind of get an idea and you accidentally knock the pots over. As you do, you realize they were actually blocking part of the divot. What happens is the green light leaves the mirrors, continues past the pots up across the wall and then goes into and around the door, and as this light surrounds the door...
[Successful unlock chime.]
...it opens up.

Tom
Yay...

Kyle
[Chuckles.]

Hallie
I got the puzzle right, I just didn't know why it was right.

Kyle
[Laughs.]

Tom
I'm so impressed, because that was so good, but I like that the only part that you didn't connect was the reason the word is backwards is because it's from the mirror.

Hallie
I'm just good at words, so I was like, LETTERS, they're the same ones!

[Chill mysterious music begins.]

Kyle
As you look around, you get a little bit of lore, too. This part is relatively basic. It's something you've seen before. It's those sedimentattoo guns. As you take a look at them you can see that everything is labeled in this room. The pots are just labeled "pots." You also see the sedimentattoo guns. They are used to basically denote a position. Every citizen of the Kingdom of Prylima has a job, and the roles they fill are relatively simplistic. They're straightforward, like the messengers relay message, for example, or the puzzlers will focus on one specific puzzle.

Hallie
Huh. Cool. Hopper writes it all down in his notes.

Kyle
Well, you write a telephone style version of it, because Xoc is reading it to you.

Hallie
Oh, that's right! I can't read it.

Tom
Yeah, Xoc translates and then Hopper writes down.

[Music ends.]

Hallie

Yeah, he'll... *[Laughs.]*

I'm gonna put that on my actual Google Doc.

Kyle

Alright. You get through this room, you go up through another staircase, and you are now in another room. This one has a puzzle that I took directly from Professor Layton, and I think it's Arzan Legacy. It's A-R-Z-A-N.

Hallie

I think it's A-Z-R-A-N, Azran. Google it.

Kyle

[Types.] You're right, it's the Azran Legacy. So this is taken from Professor Layton and the Azran Legacy, it's the second puzzle.

[Puzzle music begins.]

You find yourself in a homey space. The first one was a very scientific space; this one seems to be like a rest area, like you know, a communal relaxing area. You see some notes that Prylimans were writing to loved ones. You see just a small smoldering fireplace. Next to one of the relaxing areas you see a gift that has a label on it, and this label says:

"Greetings Tobias. Congratulations on the continuation of years past your birth. This is a gift I've gotten for you. The issue, however, is that working in the Bleu Module for some reason or another seems to come along the lines of puzzles, and so everything has to be a puzzle even if it doesn't need to be."

What you see here is you see the present inside of a giant, about two kilogram thing of ice, and next to it you see a jug of a special kind of water. The letter says:

"Twenty milliliters of this water can melt 15 grams of the ice. How much of the water do you have to pour? If you pour the correct amount you'll get your wonderful gift."

So, it's a two kilogram thing of ice, you have a thing of this special kind of water, 20 milliliters of the water will melt 15 grams of the ice.

Tom

Xoc, upon reading this, is gonna be like,

Tom (as Xoc)

Hopper Scotch, do we know what liters are, and grams?

[Music ends.]

Kyle

[Laughs.]

Tom (as Xoc)

I'm not sure I have a frame of reference for the units of measurements Prylimans used.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah, they're um...

Hallie

Hopper has a skill in history, so I'm gonna say he just knows math measurement history, because that feels like a thing he would know.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah, they're like old measurements, so 1 kilogram equals 1,000 grams...

Hallie

That's according to Google, from me.

[00:30:00]

Hallie (as Hopper)

Twenty milliliters is...

Hallie

Can I tell how much water is actually in the thing?

Kyle

You have about a quarter of a liter in there.

Hallie

Quarter of a liter...

Hallie (as Hopper)

I feel like no matter how much of the ice we melt some of it's gonna get on the present, because it's in the middle of the ice.

Tom (as Xoc)

Yeah. We need to do it only in small portions. If we can measure how far from the one end of the ice to the point where the present starts we can calculate to just melt off some of it.

Hallie (as Hopper)

If we do that from the bottom then we can find the point to which we need to melt the ice from the top, right? Because we only need to melt down to the ice below the present.

Tom (as Xoc)

Or we could pour it onto the floor and then stick the block into it and let it just slowly melt down. So, if we take half, 1,000 by 20 would be...

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Typewriter completion sound.]

Calculations finished.

[Beep-boop.] Would you like to know how much water you need to pour?

Tom (as Xoc)

Yes, please, Q-BO.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Is it none, because we can just wait for the ice to melt?

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] How many liters did you say was in the glass, Hopper Scotch?

Hallie (as Hopper)

Uh, about a quarter of a liter.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Error noise.]

Oh no, I must have done my calculations incorrectly.

[Beep-boop.] According to my calculations, we would need more than a quarter of a liter of water to melt all of this ice.

Hallie (as Hopper)

But we don't need to melt all of it, we just need to melt some of it to get the present out.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] Hmm, I suppose that is technically true, although it does violate the purity of the puzzle.

[Beep-boop.] Hopper Scotch, did you mention waiting for the ice to melt on its own?

Hallie (as Hopper)

Well I thought that might be a possibility.

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] This area is rather cool and damp. If it would have melted it would have done so over the past few decades. However,

[Beep-boop.] if we could find a warmer external source, perhaps it would be possible to melt the ice without using any of the water at all.

[Quirky music begins.]

Kyle

Do you wanna know the solution to this puzzle?

Tom

Is the solution to take it to a fire and let it melt?

Hallie

[Laughs.]

Kyle

It's put it next to the fireplace. This is the genuine solution to the puzzle in the game. There is a fireplace in the background of the picture and you have to put it there!

Hallie

[Groans heavily and laughs.]

Kyle

So, I just realized now that this puzzle would have had no bearing on the room being open, because the room should already be open, because this was just a gift.

Hallie

[Snickers.]

Kyle

Each of you roll me a d10 and I'm just gonna give you a cypher.

Hallie

[Rolls.] Five.

Tom

[Rolls.] Two.

Kyle

Alright, so Xoc, you get a pocket mirror containing a light that keeps bouncing between each half. As it does, the half of the mirror that the light is currently in grows unbearably hot, however if you close it, it is not hot. Then Hallie, you get a box that holds a diorama of whatever room the user is in.

Hallie

Ooh!

Kyle

An alteration to the diorama will perform the same alteration to the room itself.

Hallie

I like that.

Kyle

And then finally you get, I don't know, like oil that makes the candles grow brighter so now you can see things in the room I didn't show you earlier. *[Chuckles.]*

Anyways. You're able to rest in this room. You're able to see a few more things.

[Music ends.]

Xoc, as you look on the back wall you can see that these letters are all placed into basically piles, each of them relating to a color that is spelled differently than how we say it. Like, redd is R-E-D-D, bleu is B-L-E-U. You got grün, which is G-R-U umlaut from German—N. Each of these seem to be piles relating to this map.

[Gentle, inspiring music plays.]

On this map you see a bunch of different modules, it's a list of all the modules of Prylima, and under it is the text: "Each part simple in its own, but combined with others creates infinite complexity." It seems that the setup of Prylima is that each module serves its own specific purpose: blue is for puzzles, green is a kind of residential district. It seems like each module has its own purpose and floats on its own, and they're just able to connect to each other like, I don't know, toys that you buy and you get them out of an incomplete set and then you put them together and it makes a bigger—

Tom

Voltron!

Kyle

Yeah. It's a city Voltron. It's Voltron the city.

Hallie

Pff!

Kyle

So that must have been what the elevator meant, it must have not been connected to any of the other modules. You also see that each of the modules has a definitive shape. So, in the center of each it has a shape. You have, for example, this one has that diamond shape. Grün has a circular shape, everything is focused around this circle. Orangae has an octagonal shape, and you can recognize looking at that that that is actually the exact layout that you recognize from Obsidian Bay.

Hallie

Ooh. Cool. I take notes on whatever Xoc told me.

Tom

Uh, so this is out of character, but there were humans in Prylima, right?

[Music ends.]

Kyle

No.

Tom

This wasn't a human civilization? Because I had been laboring under that impression the whole game.

Kyle

No, they are robots with vine innards.

[00:35:00]

That's all you've ever seen when you've seen Prylima. They're just robot people, or stone people.

Tom

Oh. Well, now my Stellaris Empire is inaccurate. Fuck.

Hallie

[Chuckles.]

Kyle

Alright. So, you make your way through the remaining puzzles. For the sake of time, I think I'm not gonna go through any other puzzles. There was an additional sound one I was going to do. In case anyone is curious, I'll throw that one on the Patreon if folks wanna try to figure out the answer to that one.

Tom

Hmm.

Hallie

Sure.

Kyle

And so, then you finally make your way up to the top. You are now at the tippity-top of this pyramid, which is actually a diamond...

Hallie

[Laughs.]

Kyle

...but for all intents and purposes it is a pyramid. You have gone through another layer of vines, and it seems like all the rooms you've been in have been protected by these vines. Q-BO has scared them off for the most part, although occasionally you still hear that

[Bellowing monstrous snarl.] in the distance. You finally make your way up to the top, and this top area looks vaguely familiar.

[Ambient ruins music begins.]

Back when you were in Obsidian Bay, the citizens, or more accurately the robotic duplicates thereof, had taken residence in two trapezoidal buildings each of which was connected to a long tube extending into the mountainside. Sure enough, up here you see the same; multiple shack-sized three-dimensional trapezoids with tubes extending out of them into the walls of the diamond and, presumably, beyond. As you take stock of your surroundings you suddenly remember that back when you explored Obsidian Bay you found that these buildings had been housing small pods on their second floors, and you wonder what connection do those pods have to the tubes.

[Music ends.]

Tom

Oh, should I take the lead on this one?

Hallie

Oh, I thought it was directed at Xoc. I'm sorry.

Tom

[Smiling.] I'm sorry. I was waiting for Hopper to do something.

Hallie

[Laughs.]

Tom

In character we both sit there awkwardly waiting for the other to investigate first.

Hallie

[Laughing.] It feels like a very Hop and Xoc thing to do though.

Kyle

[Smiling.] And Q-BO pipes up,

Kyle (as Q-BO)

[Beep-boop.] I believe this room is meant to be a way to connect and transport to other modules. While we are not connected to other modules, it is possible that others exist through this bog, and these tubes might be the most effective way of getting to them.

Tom (as Xoc)

Oh!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Q-BO, do you think these tubes are still serviceable?

Tom (as Xoc)

We could be fossilized if we go through there unprepared.

Hallie (as Hopper)

That's... a good point.

Hallie

Hop looks almost disappointed, because he was really excited at the prospect of tubing to another pyramid.

Kyle

[Chuckles.] Well, let's take a look.

[Chill mystery synth music begins.]

So, you go into one of these areas. Now, we're gonna flash back to Obsidian Bay. If you remember when you went into the saloon there was like this main floor and then you went up some stairs and there was this pod connected to a tube, and at the time you didn't know what it was.

Tom

Mm-hmm.

Kyle

Now, looking at it, you see that pod again, this pod is something that you could fit into, both of you could fit into a single pod, and while Obsidian Bay claimed these were like sleeping quarters you realize now that with these stone seats it's like the tubes from Futurama, if you sat inside of things and it shot you through them.

Hallie

I gotcha.

Kyle

So you see this tube, and yeah, roll me something to try to get it to operate.

Hallie

Okay.

[Rolls.] Fourteen.

Kyle

Fourteen. You take a look, and it doesn't budge.

Hallie

Damn it.

Kyle

Every time you've gone through a room you've seen those lines of green light wrap around whatever something is, and it almost seems like they're powering it, like that is what powers the area. You don't see those around here, so it seems like this doesn't have power. Meanwhile Xoc, you've explored a bit further down the tube. There's still space where you can just walk through the tube past the little sphere thing, and as you get to the end you realize that the end of this thing is kind of actually shattered off.

Presumably what happened is while it crashed, you know, these tubes are very fragile, so presumably it just snapped in two or something like that.

As you look out you can't see a whole lot because of the bog. It's completely pitch black in there. There's still the canopy that hides everything. You still do see in the distance some lights, specifically you see those tubes of neon lighting that were indicative of the walls of Coachman's Tree, and based on your excellent sense of direction, which Xoc now has...

Tom

I Do have a good sense of direction, so thank you very much.

Kyle

[Chuckles.] ...you can tell that these lights are not in fact from where you came from. They're from a part of the Speedy Speed Boy hideout that had been crushed when the Apocrita fell 40 years ago.

[Music fades.]

Tom

Hmm. That's like far away, those lights, right?

Kyle

Yeah. I would say it's about a long distance if I were to categorize it in one of the categories.

Tom

Hmm.

Hallie

[Smiling.] Just one of "the categories."

Tom

Oh, hold on. Let me check something. Alright, yeah, that's what I thought. That is within Far Step range. Xoc will return to the chamber and say,

Tom (as Xoc)

Well, unfortunately it looks like the tube broke when this fell, so even if we do power it again we wouldn't be able to use it to cross, but if I can use it we could Far Step across. There's another habitable section on the other side.

[00:40:00]

Hallie (as Hopper)

Do you wanna try?

Tom (as Xoc)

I mean, I don't have any better ideas, so I guess I should.

Tom

Once again, Xoc will sit down, close his eyes, and attempt to reach out.

[The twinkling of magic sounds.]

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Hey Xoc~ How's it going?

Tom (as Xoc)

Hi. I, uh, am just checking in. I needed to ask if I can have use of my powers. I need to Far Step across a gap.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Ohh~

Tom (as Xoc)

Dangerous gap across a bog. No other way to cross it other than Far Step.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Oh yeah, dangerous bog. Nice and still kind of danger. Predictable. Far, far away from that Speedy Speed Boy nonsense.

Tom (as Xoc)

In a manner of speaking. We are here looking for Redd's Blessing to defeat the Apocrita.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Oh, that's nice.

Tom (as Xoc)

And also the ruins of Dr. Collodi's lab.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

... Xoc, could you repeat that last part for us?

Tom (as Xoc)

Dr. Collodi's lab? That's so strange. It sounds like it's familiar to you.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Oh~ Yeah Xoc, and from that tone of voice it sounds like it's familiar to you as well.

Tom (as Xoc)

Well yes, actually. We're looking for evidence. The Speedy Speed Boys think that Misha did something that they did not, and we're trying to see if we can uncover the truth of the matter.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Now that's a pretty strong statement, Xoc. Remember back in The Weal you weren't so quick to make rash judgments.

Tom (as Xoc)

Back in The Weal there was nothing to judge rashly. Very little change—

Kyle (as nano spirits)

You know, we just don't think it's necessarily a good idea for you to be jumping into all these hoops and danger to look up something that's already been solved.

Tom (as Xoc)

Unfortunately, we don't know the truth yet, and the fact remains that we are stuck here in this Pryliman ruin.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Well, we recall telling you the truth, Xoc. We recall—

Tom (as Xoc)

I recall you telling me very little.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Now don't speak over us, Xoc. We recall telling you multiple times that The Lady With Cinnabar Lips is dangerous and murderous and should be avoided, and we don't understand why you need more information than that.

Tom (as Xoc)

Because I'm planning on stopping her. We're going to help Misha.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

[Chuckles uncomfortably.] Now Xoc, that's a perplexing sentence. How are you gonna stop somebody by helping them out?

Tom (as Xoc)

[Forcefully.] Because Misha Jarvis is their own person!

[Slams on his desk.] Why won't you use their name?!

You know what? No. No. This is a waste of time.

[Xoc's wizard theme begins.]

Back at The Weal I read a number of stories about wizards, not all of them but some of them, and with the type of wizard who breaks their staff and burns their books. I guess that's my story too.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Is that—Xoc, is that honestly what you think? Have we failed you that poorly to get these twisted ideas all caught up in there?

Tom (as Xoc)

You have some reflecting to do, I'm sure, but in the meantime I'll make my own way. Our contract is terminated. Farewell.

Kyle (as nano spirits)

Now Xoc, you can't do something so rash as that. we've been watching and protecting you the whole time. We promised Horus and you promised when you left as well that you would make sure that we stayed safe. What are you gonna—?

[Music ends with the sound of a light switch flicking off followed by some electronic distortion.]

Kyle

And you sit in a weird kind of silence that has been unfamiliar to Xoc before, not a silence of the surroundings around him but a silence of something in the air.

Tom

Xoc will come out of his meditation and just sort of still sitting on the floor just put his face in his hands and breathe deeply.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Long breathy groan.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

Didn't go so well, huh?

Tom (as Xoc)

So, bad news... I decided to cut ties with the nano spirits for now. I don't know if I'm going to be speaking to them again, ever, and I don't have any of my magic.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Are you okay with how that went?

Tom (as Xoc)

Uh...? Ask me again in a few hours. I don't know how useful I'll be for the rest of this journey, but at least I can read the stuff in here. I suppose that's one thing.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Well, we'll figure something out. You know, your magic doesn't define you. you're plenty without it. You don't need to measure yourself by that is what I'm saying.

Tom (as Xoc)

Thank you, Hopper Scotch, although my arms are very noodly.

Tom

And he does like the arm waving.

Hallie

[Laughs.] Hopper will laugh a little bit and say,

Hallie (as Hopper)

We'll manage just fine.

Kyle

And as you say that...

Hallie

[As a small groan.] No.

Kyle

...the echo resounds again.

[Bellowing monstrous snarl.]

But it gets louder, and louder... and I need you to roll Speed defense.

[00:45:00]

[Outro song carries out to the bloopers, "Hitoshio" by Miracle of sound.]

Kyle (as Ein)

Well that's something that hasn't been explored an awful lot. There's this, uh, thing. It looks like a pyramid from a distance.

Tom

[Laughs.]

Kyle

I'm sorry, I had to. During the episode we get into a big argument of whether or not it looks like a pyramid.

Hallie

Because—!

Tom

Well, because you described it as a diamond, like the one that hovers over the Sims, and then said oh, it's half submerged in water.

Hallie

Yeah!

Ari

Oh! Alright.

Hallie

So it looks like a pyramid. We were like, those are different shapes, Kyle Decker. Those are different shapes!

Kyle

[Laughing.] I'm actually gonna change what she says.

Kyle (as Ein)

There is one part of Fallen Ruins Road that no one's been able to really see a whole lot of. We had to build the track around it. It's got this angular shape.

Tom

[Snickers.]

Hallie

[Laughing.] It's pointy. That's just what we're gonna call it, because we can't agree on the shape.

Ari

[Laughs.]

Kyle

I have to pretend that I haven't tried to describe it yet.

Hallie

That's true!

Kyle

Because to the listener I haven't failed to describe it as a pyramid yet.

Hallie

Okay, that's a good point.

Tom

[In Ein's voice.] There's a shape down in Fallen Ruins Road that they say no one has been able to describe appropriately. Each traveler sees something different when they gaze upon it's visage.

[Laughter.]

Kyle

No, it's just—It is a diamond! Like above the Sim's head, but half submerged.

Emily

Wait! *[Laughs.]*

Hallie

Right?!

Emily

[Laughing.] A diamond that is half submerged?

Tom

You're in our position now!

Hallie

Right?!

Tom

Like, that makes sense, but...

Hallie

In this pyramid diamond rhombus.

Tom

I'm just mad is all.

Hallie

This pyramondus.

Tom

Like every Professor Layton puzzle where they ask you how much do you need for something, your second answer, if you were wrong the first time, should be none, because it's probably like "you did it, you're right, you don't actually need to do this at all in order to solve the puzzle."

Hallie

It's like the time I legitimately wrote out formulas I remembered from like high school algebra class to do that frickin' triangle puzzle, and it was like "if you flip it on its side you could fit the triangle in the other triangle," and I was like fuck you, because I spent such a long time on it. *[Laughs.]*

Tom

That puzzle got everyone, every single one of us.

Hallie

It upset me very much.

Kyle

You see the Mineens are actually a copyright avoiding, evolutionary deviation from the aneens. They're tiny aneens that are so small they can float in the air, high, high above where Monte Cook Games can't sue us.

Hallie

[Laughs.]

Tom

This is the new idea for the monster, just a vine beast. Somehow we get attacked by both the guy who's sliding through that wet gas station area and slowly sliding down the shades and the guy sliding down the snowy hill in a bathrobe with a cup of tea.

Hallie

[Laughing.] Road work ahead! Yeah, sure hope it does! Everything is in crumbles and ruins.

Kyle

[Laughs.]

[Episode ends - 00:48:15.]