

Dungeons and Dragon-Yer-Feet Part 2: DnDouble Ds in a Tower

Deanna: What happened with you and Cookie anyway?

Deanna's question hit me like a rock thrown at me from afar. Or, considering the setting, maybe it was more like ice. Either way, the game had made me forget some of this drama. I put my hand on the back of my neck and lightly scratched it. It would be so much easier to just go through everything again, right? Rehash this story again. How I berated her and she sought solace in the arms of some bullshit alien cult. But instead I found myself looking within for something else.

Jordan: I think something caused us to grow apart.

Selena: Something?

Jordan: Well, me. It was me. I was stressed and I took it out on her. And this is how she reacted.

Deanna: Have you talked to her about it? Apologized?

Jordan: Believe me. I tried everything to show her I messed up. Cid just... showed her whatever she needed.

Selena: Bullshit. He showed her bullshit. She was susceptible to it because she was emotional.

I swallowed hard and sighed. I looked at both of them. They stared at me waiting for my response. I knew all of this was my fault. Selena and I held titles for SCW, and a big target was on our back. But for me it had become emotional. I was invested for reasons that went beyond what this meant to me professionally.

Elsianna broke my thought when she ran into the room and urged her mothers to return to the game. Asuna was ready as we took our seats. I sat down and looked at the tiny barbarian that was meant to be me. I grabbed at the figure and smiled, and then put it back down. Asuna took us right back into the game.

Majora: Ok where were we again?

Springzee: We just killed that rabbit, right?

Freya: No! No! We were about to fight Holly.

Majora: No, it was the zombies, right?

The zombies close in on the heroes and they each take a stance ready to fight. As the zombies run towards them, they each start yelling out their moves as they take them down with ease.

Majora: HACK AND SLASH!

Springzee: Quick slash!

Freya: Ring of fire!

It took us at least a half hour to defeat the zombies. We took our turns rolling dice and Asuna would write them down in a notebook. Selena and Deanna were on a tear. Every roll saw them dealing massive amounts of damage. I felt like luck was against me. I kept missing. And then I rolled a one.

Jordan: Shit!

Deanna and Selena stared at me with an unforgiving glare. I smiled innocently as Asuna and Elsianna stared at me in shock.

The zombies were relentless, but eventually the heroes took down the last one. Majora took the majority of the damage, but recovered some of her health thanks to the items in her bag. And then in the distance, they saw her. Princess Cooks. Majora smiled wide as they all ran toward the castle. In the tallest tower of the building, Princess Cooks hung over the edge and looked down at them. She had a bubbly quality about her. She didn't seem like a scared prisoner of the evil Holly and her god Gleebnorb.

Majora knelt to the Princess and Springzee and Freya looked at each other and did the same.

Majora: My princess. We have come to save you. To return you to your kingdom so you can reign over your people. Our people. Princess. We will save you now.

Majora went to her bag to retrieve climbing gear, but Freya grabbed her by the shoulder.

Majora: What?

Freya: She doesn't want to be saved.

Majora: What do you mean?

Freya: Look at her. She's just standing there. Smiling. Is that a bird she's singing to?

Springzee: It looks like some sort of familiar. Like a tiny dragon!

Majora: A dragon?

Freya: I'm just saying, she doesn't want rescued, so we need a plan.

Majora: Why do we need a plan?

Selena: Look, ok... timeout. In this situation, Jordan, Princess Cooks doesn't want saved. There's something up here. We have to think of another plan.

Jordan: There is no other plan! We came here to save Cookie and now I'm going to climb up there and get her and take her home.

Deanna: It's Princess Cooks.

I turned and looked at Deanna. I pushed myself out of the chair and ran my hands through my hair. This had been fun until this moment. Now it felt too real. Even this 12-year-old was giving Cookie the same sort of nonchalant reaction to being rescued. The room stayed quiet for a moment as all of them watched me. I sat back down after another minute.

Jordan: Sorry...

Selena: It's ok.

Majora: So? What do we do?

Freya: We need to think outside the box. How do you break the spell of Gleebnorb?

Springzee: That's impossible. Gleebnorb is a god! We can't defeat a god!

The heroes stood and looked at each other momentarily before Majora looked up at the tower and down at her climbing gear.

Majora: Should I at least, you know, try and climb up and talk to her? Maybe get an idea of what's happening?

Springzee: That sounds really risky. What if you fell?

Majora: Then you catch me.

Springzee: WHAT!?

Majora: You catch me!

Springzee: Have you seen you? You're huge! You're twice our size.

Freya: Hush! Both of you!

Freya bent down to a knee and grabbed a handful of the soft dirt below them. It was more like sand on the outside of the castle. She let it fall through her fingers and then looked up at Princess Cooks in the tower. Freya nodded and then stood up.

Freya: She's right. She needs to climb. And if she gets there safely, she can hold the rope while we climb up.

It took two tries for Majora to get the ropes up there just right. She tugged it until it felt tightly and then held on as she started walking up the wall. Majora reached the halfway point of the tower when—

Asuna: Roll!

Jordan: What?

Asuna had a smile on her face when she said it. A devious look.

Asuna: I said, roll.

I stared at her for a moment and then looked at Selena and then Deanna. They nodded and I scooped up my d20 and rolled it. I hit a 3. Asuna nodded and picked hers up and rolled it. A 15. My eyes went wide.

Asuna: Oh boy...

Princess Cooks looked over the edge at Majora and smiled. She waved at her. Suddenly, the rope felt a little different. Majora looked up and saw Princess Cooks fiddling with it.

Majora: Princess! No!

Princess Cooks worked the rope until it was loose.

Princess Cooks: Oops!

Majora saw the rope fall toward her before she fell, too. Springzee went into a panic on the ground, but Freya stood still and put her hands out and started speaking in a low, loud tone. What she said was unitellilbe, but it had an effect. Majora stopped just short of smashing into the ground and floated in the air just inches from the ground. Freya gritted her teeth before lowering her to the sandy surface.

Springzee: Oh my... what was that!?

Springzee ran over to Freya and planted a kiss on her lips. Majora, meanwhile, laid on the ground and collected herself. She took a long sigh and then looked at her adventuring companions in their embrace.

Springzee: Majora? Are you ok?

Majora: She... she tried to kill me...

Freya: I told you. Something is off about this Princess Cooks. She's not the same one Gleebnorb's disciples kidnapped.

I sat there as Selena and Deanna traded dialogue about what had happened back and forth. This game was too real for me. I stared at the table in front of me. My eyes closed and a long sigh escaped my lungs.

Selena: Jordan? Are you ok?

Jordan: Yeah, I... let me get a breath of fresh air real quick.

I stood and walked away from the group and out the front door. I stood in the cold, arms crossed and just let out another deep sigh. A moment later, the door closed and opened behind me. I saw the cold air of someone's breath before I saw the person. Selena stepped next to me and stood there. She crossed her arms in front of her chest and stayed quietly.

Jordan: I'm sorry. I just needed a moment.

Selena: I know. Don't be sorry. But... don't let this tear you apart. That's the only advice I can really give you. Everyone can see how much this stuff with Cookie is affecting you. And Cid, especially, is taking advantage. So, consider maybe changing your course of action here. At

some point, you have to stop trying to put a bandage over a gaping wound and go to the root of the problem.

Jordan: Cid Turner.

Selena: But you already knew that, didn't you?

I nodded and sighed again.

Jordan: I've been seeing this girl—

Selena: Another one?

Jordan: Seriously? You're gonna shame me?

Selena: Sorry...

Jordan: Anyway... she told me I needed a different approach. Cookie thinks she's happy, so I have to let her do this. It's just hard. I know Cid needs to be my focus.

Selena: You'll get the chance this week. But really, you have to focus on the pay per view. Cid will want to use that insecurity about your best friend against you. Be ready to use all of this against him. It's really the only thing you can do.

I nodded and then looked at her. Selena put her hand on my shoulder and smiled. It was a reassuring glance that gave me the smallest amount of ease. Exactly what I needed. She turned away from me and headed for the door to go back into the house. I stood there a moment longer and watched my own breath as it escaped in a cloud in front of my face. I ran my hand through my hair to fix it.

I needed to get laser focused on Cid Turner. The root of the problem. I didn't understand what it was about him and this alien that Cookie was so enamored with, but I'd see how she felt after I took it out on him and the rest of the wack pack with my fists. I'd been waiting for this moment for a long time. I couldn't let my worry about Cookie get in the way. I had to find a way to turn it into fuel. Just like Selena said.

Promo

I never asked for this. Any of it. But here we are.

Between Holly's new attempt at world domination, Gio's venture into self help exercises, and Cid stealing my best friend away from me. Here we are. Over the past few months, a lot has changed. I won the Adrenaline Championship, but I seemingly lost my best friend. Every attempt to talk to her has gone poorly. Every time I try to confront Cid to understand what's

happening, his demons show up and they come after me. Attacked by Britt - ok, maybe that's my demon, too - and now Tommy and Kandis. To be clear about things, I never once considered an outcome where I was fighting the entire Bloundtourage or whatever they're calling themselves now.

I never once considered a scenario where I would be stand next to Selena and her woman to take all of this on. You see, when I went into that chamber match I was enraged. Motivated. SCW management was calling my bluff and making me feel like I didn't have what it takes to compete. Now? I'm confused. I don't understand what's going on with Cookie and the weight of this title now looms over me greatly. How many people can say they won a title in a chamber and two months later they were in a fatal fourway with the former SCW World Champion? My guess would be very few.

So here we sit again. Am I getting fucked over by SCW management? Shaun Cruze announced the pay per view match like it was punishment for Cid. But, "oh, hey, let's give him a reward to win, too." I see how it is. I never wanted special treatment, but I see what they think about me. It's crystal clear.

I can't think about that right now, because we have this match. And the root of many of my problems will be standing there. Cid Turner is a cancer in this company. He is endemic to everything that is wrong with this company. And somewhere along the way they adopted his way of thinking and started to go down a laundry list of shitty people to put in charge and make decisions.

Cid is a man that is taking advantage of the most beautiful soul in this company. And she's falling for everything he's feeding her. I feel badly for my friend because I know some of this was my fault. We had a tough conversation. I was immature in the moment and left her hanging. Cid threw a green-colored life raft out at her, accented by stupid little alien stickers.

Keep in mind, this is a man who claims to be chosen by an alien god to save the world. Or something. It's hard to keep track of. But believe none of it. I thought Cookie was incapable of falling for something like that. But I was wrong. The truth is that Cid, Holly, and Gio are the perfect powder keg of batshit crazy that can draw in anyone and anything. They saw a gap in this company and they have grasped it with both hands and seemingly taken over. They'll never stop. Not unless someone else stops them.

I can't help but be reminded where I was a year ago. The Jackals were igniting fires and David Helms was asking for my hand in eliminating a rodent problem from the SCW gutters. A year later? David is gone and the Jackals are hanging on to life while a reborn version of Owen Cruze - now Lee - is running rampant through their ranks. And me? I stopped helping at some point to take on my own challenges. The challenge ahead of me almost feels similar.

Selena needs this help and I've been thrust into this role again. The difference is that this time, there's something meaningful involved for me. Cookie is involved. And I know that she's doing

her own thing right now. I know that she's where she wants to be at this moment. But I can't help but feel like I can show her the right way by example. By showing her with my actions that she has been lured into something that couldn't possibly make sense. That I can save her. If that's what she wants. I know it's what I want for her.

In the meantime, I can focus on her keepers. The real problem. They are the ones to blame for the decisions she is making and the path she is going down. Holly is on the run of her career right now, but there's no way in hell I'm going to watch her run rampant at my expense and especially at Cookie's. Gio is coming across like he's four monkeys short of a circus and isn't the same man we all knew before. It's hard to tell if he's losing his mind or reading too many of Holly's pamphlets. But I don't want to see her going down that road either. And the alien king? I'm not willing to lose her to that forever. I'll do whatever it takes to make sure she's safe. I'll do whatever I have to do to make sure I get her back.

Almost exactly a year ago, Cookie and I were coming off our first loss as a tag team at this moment. A loss to Frozen Hell that put a huge dent in our armor. Now? I'm teaming with one half of that team and her wife to take on Cookie's new... friends? None of it makes any sense to me. But I know what I have to do. I know what has to happen here. This week and next.

At Breakdown, I will unleash all the anger I have over what these three have done to my friend. No one wants to seem to let me speak, to get the words off my chest when I'm face to face with Cid. So now I will show them what they won't let me say. I will beat their asses with the same type of energy that the Psychonauts graced this company with in 2020.

Cookie... I love you. I know you might not understand this, but I'm doing this for you. Your little friends can take their ass kicking to the bank. Because I AM money.