

Dice & Pizza

Guide: Derek Aiello (he/him)

Zaba: Mya Worrell (they/them)

Driftwood: Justin Ricafort (he/him)

Ernie: Kyla Worrell (they/them)

Season One, Episode Four | WRATH & FIRE

START

Kyla: Dice & Pizza contains descriptions of peril, natural disasters, and kaiju. Content warnings can be found in the episode description.

[theme music begins]

Derek: Hello, wayward listeners! Welcome to Dice & Pizza, a Quest show that follows Zaba, Driftwood and Ernie, a ragtag band of strangers who are chasing after Tang Kai, an ancient dragon bent on bringing back the Hundred Years of Sun to the world of Mirios.

My name is Derek, he/him pronouns, and I will be your guide for today's journey. Quest is a system that uses one 20-sided die. A 1 is a catastrophe and a 20 is a triumph with a gradient of successes and failures in between. Instead of skills, you have abilities that you spend adventure points, or AP, to activate. And the game focuses on character and world building.

Mya: As always, I'm Mya Worrell, they/them pronouns please. I play Zaba, the party's naturalist. He is the masked guardian of Kokoru chosen by the god Bainon at birth. This responsibility makes him serious, but behind the mask, you sense -- perhaps -- a curious individual.

Justin: Howdy doody pen pals! My name is Justin, he/him pronouns, I'll be playing Driftwood, they/them pronouns. Driftwood is the party doctor. People notice their sea-foam skin, tattoos, and luxurious dark-blue pompadour. Driftwood is an offbeat nomad from the island village of Noro looking to travel, and learn, and eat too much food!

Kyla: Hello, hello my name is Kyla. My pronouns are they/them/theirs. I play Ernaeus, or Ernie for short, a skilled spy having some difficulties in their career path of choice. They go by they/them pronouns and are never seen without their red-lensed goggles and a long, flowing cape that drapes over one shoulder.

[theme music fades out]

Derek: And with that, last time the party learned more about the ancient sun dragon Tang Kai, whom they've been following since they accidentally unleashed him! This journey took them

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through some bandits that were a bit starved, that they had managed to feed. And then they got to the temple of Mitra where they had sort of a meeting with god -- a god. And cooked up some pickle crabs on the beach!

[a low wind sfx fades in]

And where we last left off, our heroes were fast asleep and Zaba had just awoken to see Tang Kai swirling around in the sky above them. Zaba what do you do?

Mya: Well the first thing I'll do, because this costs me zero AP points, is to use Freeze -- um can I do it without hurting the people around me? Because it says that, "you blow cool air creating freezing winds that swirl around the nearby creature or object. Affected creatures feel a deep chill in their bones and are hit for one HP. And you can use this spell to snuff out small fires." Can I just use it to cool us down?

Derek: Sure.

Mya: So the first thing I'll do is -- I kind of -- I'll create this small pocket of cool air and I'm going to. I'm going to wake everyone up. If they -- I mean I can't believe you all are sleeping through this, I'm going to be honest.

Kyla: *[laughs]* I think, blame Mitra, blame Mitra

Mya: So I'm gonna wake Driftwood up first, and then I'm gonna shake Ernie awake as well.

Justin: So Driftwood feels a cold chill beneath their ears. It's very uncomfortable. But also kind of weird because they're sweating also? So Driftwood kind of wakes up in a cold sweat, and then like really cold ears? And so they're a little out of sorts. They see Tang Kai swirling above, and -- what time is it? Did we like wake up in the middle of our sleep, or is it like an appropriate time to wake up? Like in the morning?

Derek: You all slept in; it's about like noon. So the sun is high in the sky.

Kyla: Oh wow, okay.

Justin: And it's like super hot, okay.

Derek: Yes *super* hot.

Justin: So Driftwood gets up, kind of just dusts off sand, and is like,

Driftwood: "What's going on? What's happening?"

Zaba: "We should have slept in the temple. Well, Tang Kai seems to have descended."

Driftwood: "Oh okay, well, let's wake up Ernie." *[laughter]*

Mya: I have been shaking Ernie this whole time! *[mimes shaking]*

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[pause for more laughter]

You're just like this. *[mimes going limp]* *[Derek mimes shaking]*

Justin: So, *[laughs]* explaining to me while you shake Ernie's unconscious body. *[both Justin and Mya mime shaking]*

Kyla: I think Mitra really put me to sleep. I think I finally jerk awake and when I jerk awake, I jerk awake. Because I kind of bolt to attention. I think the first thing I go to is the sheath where my sword is -- that's empty. And then I'm like,

Ernie: "What's happening?"

Mya: I point to the sky.

Justin: Is Tang Kai near the ground? Like how high is their lowest part relative to us?

Derek: If yesterday Tang Kai was like a little like speck in the sky, Tang Kai is like, a more full-sized, closer -- Maybe a couple hundred, close to a thousand feet above the temple, swirling around.

Justin: Is it comparable to like a tornado?

Derek: So like yeah, you can see -- you know when heat distorts like your vision?

Mya: Oh, yeah.

Justin: Oogh.

Derek: You can see that like in circles around the area you're in, that's how hot it is.

Justin: And are people panicked or what, like what's the vibe check? *[laughs nervously]*

Derek: You see the remnants of the people that were barbecuing. You see that like, they've just kind of abandoned their stuff. And you don't see anyone else on the beach.

Mya: No one woke us up? *[Justin and Mya laughs]*

Kyla: I feel like Mitra really put us to sleep. Like that's --

Justin: -- that's like a curse in disguise. Mitra is trying to kill us. *[everyone chuckles]*

Kyla: We asked for restful sleep and that's what we got.

Zaba: "I did ask for restful sleep maybe this is, this is on me."

Justin: Genie wish

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Mya: I'm going to use Animal Form and I'm going to, once again, turn into a bird. I want to get a bird's eye view of the village. Just real quick, just get some information. If I can tell why Tang Kai has descended from the sky. And like, *why* is Tang Kai even here?

Kyla: Before you do that, I'm gonna pass around this my skin of water to everybody.

Mya: Oh yeah that's true.

Kyla: Cuz we're all really dehydrated.

Justin: Is the tower evacuated?

Derek: You can't tell from down here.

Justin: Do we not know? We can't tell. Yeah okay.

Derek: Because it's pretty high up the cliff

Zaba: "Um, I can check."

Driftwood: "Okay so you're going to transform into a bird to go check."

Zaba: "Yes."

Derek: Cool.

Justin: So is the entrance still accessible?

Derek: Yeah, so you can still like -- you can go back up the hill or you can climb up the cliff to get back to the temple.

Justin: Okay.

Derek: Climbing up the cliff is shorter but will be more treacherous. Going up the hill will be longer but it's really hot.

Justin: Okay, yeah.

Driftwood: "Will you survive like as a regular bird going up there?"

Zaba: "Yes I -- well. If not, I will come back."

Ernie: "Here, drink some more water." *[laughter]*

Justin: Okay so here, I have a...hmm. So it's dangerous right? This poses a threat to people because it's hotter.

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Derek: Yeah, like it's so hot that you're starting -- you can kind of feel the sort of like plant life, Zaba and Driftwood, you can kind of feel it waning. As like, this sort of -- the moisture is being sucked out of the plants around here.

Justin: Okay, last question regarding a plan that I have. So the pots and the pans are they still like on the beach? That like the people cook left behind? Okay. Driftwood grabs some of the big woks as kind of a protective shield. Oh man, metal gets hot right? Okay it's too late I already grabbed it.

Mya: Oh no.

Justin: Um so, uh I don't have any pot holders right?

Kyla: There have to be pot holders, or do you get --

Derek: -- you grab the wooden handle after remembering metal pots get hot.

Justin: Driftwood as just protection, I think Driftwood takes a big wok and kind of beckons to Ernie,

Driftwood: "Let's go, let's go check the tower. Let's make sure everyone is safe."

Kyla: Okay I'm also gonna grab like a pan and like um, uh a tongs or something. Because at the very least, we can make a distraction or something.

Derek: Yeah.

Justin: Right.

Mya: Is this like a heavy cast iron?

Kyla: Probably yeah.

Justin: Oh shoot, ok.

Derek: I mean there are there are knives around here, Ernie. *[Mya, Justin, & Kyla laugh in succession]*

Kyla: Oh are there knives?

Derek: Yeah there are --

Justin: -- There are knives all over the place and you grabbed tongs?!

[group laughter]

Kyla: I, I grab tongs. I think there's like, it's very -- the rest of you can see that there's knives there, but Ernie does not notice them like. And then after, I think after looking around a little bit they notice that there are knives and they pick one up. So they're holding like a big -- something like a big knife or something it's like cut, I don't know. Trimmed --

Derek: -- Like a butcher's knife?

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Mya: -- Is it one of those square ones?

Derek: Yeah.

Kyla: Well no, actually. I think it's something that you would use to like hack down -- that you can also use to like hack down -- more like a machete.

Derek: Okay yeah.

Mya: But the square ones are so cool... *[Mya & Kyla laugh]*

Kyla: Ernie ignores you.

Mya: I didn't -- Zaba didn't say that. *[laughter]*

Derek: Yeah you find like a machete used for opening coconuts.

Kyla: Yeah that's what I was thinking.

Derek: Exactly, yeah you find something like that.

Justin: Um so I -- yeah -- I go and run. I take the lead and run into the tower, and try to go search for folks from the bottom up.

Mya: Okay I've turned into a bird and gone up. I will note actually, if I lose all my hit points I transform back and I regain the hit points I had before I transformed.

Kyla: So, while mid-air?

Mya: Yeah -- yes. *[laughs]*.

Derek: Okay so to clarify: Zaba you're transforming into a bird and flying up to get a bird's-eye view.

Mya: Yes.

Derek: And Driftwood and Ernie you two are going up the pathway back to the temple.

Justin: Mmhmm.

Kyla: Yeah I'm following Driftwood.

Derek: Ok. Everybody take two points of damage *[Justin & Kyla groan]* as you endure in the heat and the sun.

Mya: Ok.

Justin: Oh my god

Kyla: Damn, I'm probably like sunburned.

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Derek: Yeah I would say it's a pretty bad sunburn.

We'll start with Zaba. Zaba you transform into a bird and you begin to fly up and up and up. And it's very hot. And you managed to get pretty high up! Like you could almost -- like you're now in-between Tang Kai and the temple and you're able to see like the village. And you see that the village looks mostly deserted. And you see that most people have gathered under the roof of the temple.

Mya: Oh does it look like the temple is providing any kind of reprieve? Or is it too, I can't tell that?

Derek: You'd have to get in closer, but you can tell that like pretty much everyone in the surrounding village parts even some -- you're able to even see some of the people from the beach, from the barbecue, like they've come up here too. And you see the elder that you all talked to. Her name is La'Ura. They're over there. Sitting, just sort of standing, staring out at the ocean still.

Mya: Are they trapped?

Derek: They're not trapped; they're more just kind of waiting. And kind of gathering people. Like you see some of the other monks kind of passing out water and food. And just making and checking people to make sure that they're not like too badly burned. But you are noticing though, that the land surrounding the temple is starting to become scorched, like there's parts of it that are starting to die. Like the greenery around here is more yellowed.

Mya: If I'm up here can I get any other read on Tang Kai.

Derek: I mean Tang Kai's face is always contorted. From the last time you were flying up this high close to Tang Kai his face seemed pretty contorted. Pretty, pretty angry. Uh you know, filled with vengeance. He still has the same face. The brows are angled down and his mane is flowing. You're starting to get a sense of the sort of dark red and blues in his mane. The sort of like, sprinkles of gold. You notice that when they're falling off of him they're igniting like hot red and becoming more ash on the way down. They're not like just flecks of gold anymore. They're more like raining ash.

Mya: Oooh... Okay, knowing that I'm going to -- and seeing that, for now, folks are gathering at the temple -- I'm gonna fly and try to make my way back and check up on Ernie and Driftwood to make sure that they're traveling okay.

Derek: Back on the ground, Ernie and Driftwood, uh the two of you are making your way up the hill through the sort of deserted village. You see now that there are in fact people gathered at the temple. The both of you are noticing that things are sort of drying out; things are starting to become scorched. Like there was a well nearby; the well doesn't look like it has any water in it anymore. But you two make it to the temple a bit burned, but in one piece, just as -- Zaba you fly down and land on like sort of that overlook on the cliff and you transform back into a human at that point.

The villagers are all very panicked and people look very frightened. Biri and Gram Gram are here, along with his adopted siblings. They're all sort of gathered. The kids are not playing with, play

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sword fighting anymore. They're all just kind of nervous, clutching brooms, unsure of what's going to happen.

Mya: Who's the person who's in charge, who seems to be like delegating the evacuation? Does it seem like there's someone leading?

Derek: You notice that occasionally the monks will come up to La'Ura and they'll talk to them about like -- they'll ask,

Monks: "Oh what should we do here? What should we do there?"

And you know, they'll whisper something and then the monk will go off and go do the thing.

Mya: Zaba is going to go up to La'Ura, and I'm going to ask,

Zaba: "Has everyone been evacuated from the village?"

La'Ura: Mmm...we think so.

Justin: Driftwood asks,

Driftwood: "What what what is to become the of the temple? What is there -- is this temple being abandoned?"

Derek: La'Ura looks at you, and smiles, and says,

La'Ura: "Mitra will protect us. We must have faith that Mitra will protect us."

Justin: Oh... Driftwood kind of like, raises an eyebrow,

Driftwood: "So you're not certain everyone has evacuated the temple?"

La'Ura: "There's only one place to go from the temple and it's to go into the catacombs beneath the temple."

Ernie: "Why haven't you moved below ground before?"

Derek: La'Ura glances at you, Ernie, and says,

La'Ura: "Well, I have a good feeling Mitra will protect us today."

Ernie: "None of us can withstand the heat for much longer."

Kyla: To me it's disrespectful to tell them like -- oh you know, maybe that's not the case. I just. I guess I look at Driftwood and Zaba.

Mya: I'm going to once again turn turn back to La'Ura. I imagine we kind of we like turned back and like huddled and just kind of whispered together. And then I turn back to La'Ura and ask,

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Zaba: "Are there any -- once you go into the catacombs, how many exits are there?"

La'Ura: "Just one and it leads out down through the cliffside down to the ocean."

Zaba: "So at least you're not -- it's not like they're going into --"

Ernie: "-- like a trap."

Zaba: "Okay. I say we talk to Tang Kai."

Driftwood: "Mmm... The proximity of these very vulnerable folks, next to, you know, a negotiation with a god makes me a little weary. Maybe we should lead them into the catacombs now, and make sure that everyone is out of the way before we do anything."

Ernie: "I worry that they -- we might have to do some convincing there."

Driftwood: "I will try if it comes down to it."

Derek: So, it was getting hotter before you entered the temple. Now that you're like in some shade, it's not as hot. Like you still feel the heat. It still like sticks to you. But it's not like, completely unbearable, like it was outside.

There's a slight rumble and dust kind of falls from the ceiling.

Kyla: I guess I'm going to approach La'Ura, I don't know Driftwood if you want to join me.

Mya: [chuckles] I think we're all like kind of next --

Kyla: -- Yeah kind of like -- I'm sure I'm sure they're like kind of running around. Or people are --

Mya: -- It seems like people are coming to them.

Kyla: Yeah so I guess maybe wait until there's a lull and then I'm,

Ernie: "La'Ura I think we should move -- if not those, if we can't move everyone -- I think we should move those who are most vulnerable to the catacombs. I know that Mitra will protect us, but I fear for the the health of the little ones and those who cannot take the heat in the shade."

Zaba: "Are the catacombs not under the care of Mitra?"

Derek: La'Ura looks at the three of you and says,

La'Ura: "None of us have been down into the catacombs in a very very long time. We don't know what's down there anymore."

Ernie: "Okay, okay I can see your hesitation."

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Justin: "So maybe we should go ahead then; do some recon; make sure that we have a clear path for everyone."

Ernie: "Do we have your blessing to go down to the catacombs elder La'Ura?"

Derek: They nod. They gesture towards one of the monks, who they whisper to, and that monk he just nods and gestures for the three of you to follow.

So the three of you walk your way through the crowds of people. And you get to the sort of back part, you know, through like a small short winding corridor down to a sort of like bolted door. And the monk lifts off a bunch of braces off of it and then opens up this door. You feel this stale air just kind of fill the room as air gets sucked into it. *[sniffs]* It does not smell great. And he says,

Monk: "This is the catacombs. Uh, good luck!"

And he hands you an unlit torch uh --

Mya: Snap.

Derek: Oh yeah, you cast like the fire right? Or flame?

Mya: Um yes.

Derek: Cool yeah.

Mya: That costs 1 AP; it's called Burn.

Derek: Cool yeah, you use Burn, and you ignite the torch, and you see a dimly lit -- with the torch -- dimly lights staircase descending down.

Zaba: "If you aren't opposed to um...this this is only temporary but I can...um give you the eyes of a cat. I can give each of you the eyes of a cat." *[pause]*

Mya: And it will allow you to -- this is Wild Aspect: Cat. It imbues up to six nearby creatures with the spirit of the cat and for the next hour affected creatures gain the ability to see things nearby in complete darkness as if they were in a dimly lit room. It cannot pierce magical darkness and affected creatures may occasionally feel the urge to stop what they are doing and clean themselves. *[giggles]*

Driftwood: "I already groomed myself, so it doesn't seem like there's that much to lose um --"

Ernie: "You grew yourself?"

Zaba: "Groom"

Ernie: "Oh" *[laughs]*

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Justin: -- I groom myself one more time. Driftwood takes one committed autonomous uh groom of the pompadour with the shark tooth knife comb, before kind of just like gently nodding to be like,

Driftwood: "do as you do, okay."

Kyla: I follow Driftwood.

Mya: Um, so you hear Zaba audibly purring *[laughs]* and as you hear that purring and you kind of like feel the timbre of it, then your eyes both glow a little bit yellow.

Derek: The three of you now --

Justin: Meow. *[Kyla & Justin laugh]*

Derek: -- with your yellow cat-like -- wait what was that. *[laughing]* Did you just meow?

[group laughter]

Justin: I couldn't help it sorry.

Derek: Oh no, you're good you're good. Yeah the three of you are now, with your cat-like eyes, and a sensation to meow, and purr, descend into the darkness of the catacombs. It's very stanky down here. *[chuckles]* Um, the floor is like sticky. Like there's like a layer of dust that has become kind of sticky. As you make your way down and down this sort of staircase, eventually you get to this sort of like room with these very sharp square edges and these like sarcophagi.

And you see that this sort of continues into various other chambers. There's lots of cobwebs. And you see like sort of on the floor there's these blue aquamarine tiles on the ground that kind of makes sort of a runic shape.

Justin: I have -- Driftwood has Deathsense. It says, "You naturally sense whether any remnants of the dead are nearby, but not the positions. The Guide will notify you when this sense is triggered." Is his Deathsense triggered right now?

Derek: Yeah Deathsense is at an all-time high. There is a LOT of death in this area.

Mya: Yeah we are in catacombs.

Justin: Okay. I guess I was trying to glean out if it was more spectral. *[Mya laughs]*

Derek: I mean it is -- you're sensing specifically like a very -- an unnatural kind of death is in this area. Like not like the resting dead. Like there's death and it's awake kind of vibes.

Justin: So Driftwood's like, "There's dead around here" and then Zaba says, "...Yeah." *[laughter]*

And then I'm like,

Driftwood: "No like, like *crazy* death."

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Kyla: Ernie starts nervously brushing their hair. *[group laughter]*

Justin: Driftwood starts licking themselves *[laughs]*.

[group laughter intensifies]

Driftwood: "This is a scary place -- meow."

[pause for even more laughter]

Ernie: "Driftwood, I think you're. I think you're really becoming a cat."

Kyla: I'm still brushing my hair. *[Justin laughs]*

Driftwood: "We, we have to investigate, uh, thoroughly this area before we let any other person come through here -- meow."

Kyla: Well can I -- no I don't want to touch the tiles. But can I get a closer look at the runes and see if I can identify anything about it? Um if it's like from a language or?

Derek: It is an ancient script. It is vaguely familiar to the other ancient script that was in the other temple you saw. Which you would remember Driftwood had mentioned it was the Bayali dialect and there's a couple of runes that make out a certain character. You do feel, Ernie, like you're not probably the most tuned-in to magic.

But as you sort of, kind of look and get a little closer, you do feel a sort of like vibrating energy from these runes. That you know the tracker in you is like, "Hmm this could be bad. This could be bad if you don't know -- this could be bad." You don't quite know how to solve it. But you you get a sense that could be bad.

Ernie: "It seems like there's some really ancient stuff going on."

Zaba: "You don't say."

Ernie: "I don't know about you both, but I don't think we should get close to these runes until we can figure out a little more information. Or if we're prepared for the consequences."

Justin: "As far as I'm concerned -- meow -- there are only two options here. We have to clear this place entirely and be confident we can proceed, or we need another -- we need a plan B -- meow."

Ernie: "Driftwood can you, are you able to read what this rune says?"

Justin: Mm, okay Driftwood approaches. Is there any discerning --

Derek: Um yeah, yeah.

Justin: -- that Driftwood specifically can get?

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Derek: Yeah so your Bayali is a bit rusty, as we've discussed, but! You are able to sort of discern that this is a warning to those who disturb the dead. And it's a warning not to disturb the dead. There is a strong sense of magic emanating from this, almost like like a trigger of sorts.

Justin: Okay so is there a sense that there -- like I know it's catacombs and there's probably multiple -- but is there. Is it obvious that this could be just one force of dead? Or is it definitely like a bunch of like dead things down here?

Derek: Your Deathsense tells you it's going to be a variety of dead things down here.

Justin: And the the rune has some magical spiritual property to it.

Derek: Yes.

Mya: While Driftwood is investigating can I see the exit to the ocean?

Derek: No. You see that the hallway continues and that it continues into other chambers going deeper into the underground, but you do not see the exit to the ocean.

Mya: And this room blocks our way.

Derek: Yeah the room blocks the way.

Justin: Uh here's my plan: I have Relieve. It says, "you say something comforting to a nearby creature alleviating them of anxiety, pain, and discomfort for one hour. In this state the creature cannot be affected by fear or confusion. For a brief time they feel better than they have ever felt before." And I also have Commune with the Dead which I used prior to when we released Tang Kai. And I was wondering if I could cast Relieve on the rune and speak to it and allow passage for that hour so that we can get all of the villagers through the catacombs.

Derek: Oh, interesting. Go ahead and describe to me how you -- do you set your hand on the rune and cast Relieve?

Justin: Yeah so I'm kind of like trying to combine the powers and so, Driftwood attempts to close their eyes, says a short prayer for Mitra and lays their hand onto the rune. Takes a deep breath and releases calming energy and force through them into the runes. And tries to communicate a message for a safe passageway.

Derek: You set your hand down and you cast that after saying your prayer and when you open your eyes, you are sort of pulled into like a black empty space within your mind as you commune with the dead. Things kind of like fade in ethereally like you see how this place probably looked like a thousand years ago. And you see various other monks wearing long, flowing robes and sort of people being laid to rest down here. And these sort of ethereal figures kind of turn and look at you as you make your case. Go ahead and roll me a 20-sided die.

Justin: 16. *[digital dice rolls]*

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Derek: 16. All right, that is a success. You accomplish what you are trying to do. The ethereal spirits like look at you, and you notice that like one of your tattoos is glowing, and they like gesture to you. They like shake your hand and they nod, and you know while they have not said anything, they know that deep down, they know that you too are a follower of Mitra and that they will listen. And that they will allow passage.

Zaba and Ernie, you two have noticed that like the, the runes started to glow like a faint blue magic, and the instant sort of like, that, that Driftwood kind of like starts to move again, the magic dissipates and, and like kind of fades away. And Zaba, you no longer feel a sense of, of, of magic permeating, at least for now in this area, and Driftwood, your Deathsense has stopped.

Mya: If I can embellish I imagine that the, the magic like recedes like the tides, so you can feel like, like there's that feeling of it, it'll return soon, but you know not now.

Kyla: Mm, so this is low tide right now.

Derek: Yeah, it's low tide.

Justin: So Driftwood comes to and is like,

Driftwood: *[making cat noises]* "M-mreow, yeah, uh.."

[multiple people stifle laughter]

Ernie: "Were you okay, Driftwood? You were really, you were really going at it for a second there."

Driftwood: "Yes."

Zaba: "Could you repeat what you just said."

Driftwood: "Um, yeah. So, the time -- time is of the essence. I've, the spirits of Mitra that have been laid to rest down here have offered safe passageway. But we have limited time. So, um my suggestion is that we come back in contact with the, with the group and see if the head count is finished, and the rest of us look for the exit down here while we have the ability to."

Derek: So the three of you return back up to the, to the temple. It seems that the monks have finished their head count and everyone is accounted for. Yeah. No one was left behind. They're now just sort of waiting and kind of thinking and kind of seeing what happens.

The three of you though do notice that one, the temple is shaking a little bit more. There's dust, more dust falling, and you hear sort of the *[Derek imitates wind rushing by]* of Tang Kai above. It appears he's gotten lower, closer to the temple. And Zaba you actually kind of catch a glimpse of like, the hair on the end of Tang Kai's tail, kind of in the corner of your eye, just, *[Derek gestures at the hair flying through the wind]* he's like right above the the temple.

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Mya: Phew. Oof.

Kyla: Man. It must be hot in here.

Mya: When I imagine the temple I imagined that it had like, it's like was made -- I, this might be -- it was made out of stone, and it had like these arches out of the like windows that didn't have like glass in them, so I imagine that we can just see those glimpses of Tang Kai at those like the tops, yeah.

Kyla: Yeah.

Derek: Yeah, 100 percent. Yeah these like little like portholes on the ceiling that you can kind of see--

Mya: Yeah.

Derek: --see these scales through.

Mya: Let's find La'Ura and ask them to prepare as quickly as possible. If we can like get people in, in a way that the minute we have cleared out this area that they can come in.

Derek: You, you you easily find La'Ura and it doesn't take much convincing of La'Ura to start getting people down there and the three of you begin to lead all these villagers through. There's no sort of like sense of danger, no sense of death. You walk and you walk through like you know cobwebs and grime that has collected. The, the tombs are pretty, pretty pretty plain. There's nothing too much denoting who's buried here. There's some ancient Bayali script on a couple of them. but a lot of it has been sort of faded away.

There's the occasional like mouse that chitter chatters by um but eventually the three of you get all the way down this sort of, like, sort of like kind of spirally kind of catacomb and you make it all the way out to the ocean. There's sort of like the sand, like the strip of beach that's pretty, pretty South of, from the temple. Like you can kind of see, you now see in fact that Tang Kai is like just swirling around the temple.

Kyla: This is unrelated but are any of you claustrophobic?

Justin: Uh Driftwood is not, but I think they don't like it. *[laughs]* Being down there. *[Kyla stifles laughter]*

Derek: Yeah --

Mya: Uhh

Kyla: -- maybe meowing a little bit more often. *[Mya laughs]*

Justin: Driftwood is on all fours right now like --

Kyla: -- are you kidding me? Stop.

formatting based off of [Dungeons & Daddies'](#) transcripts

[laughter]

Wait, seriously?

Justin: Yeah. Literally scampering through the chamber is Driftwood just in a full-on cat sprint --

Kyla: Am I like holding your stuff or something? *[Kyla & Justin laugh]*

Justin: Driftwood just goes for it.

Kyla: Oh my god.

Mya: Zaba disapproves --

Derek: Oh goodness.

Mya: -- you, Zaba is not like -- doesn't have experience being underground but for some strange reason it almost feels comforting to be below ground.

Kyla: Because some of Tosu is hewn out of at least in my head, it's hewn out of the rock so I feel like Ernie is familiar with like being underground. But it's a little humid here, I don't think they're super comfortable with like the smells and the humidity.

Mya: You haven't noticed Zaba like meowing or anything and you don't notice this either but when a mouse like scrambles by *[Kyla laughs]* Zaba kind of tracks it with his eyes. But you don't notice this. *[Justin laughs silently]*

Kyla: Wait so are you like, Zaba are you like, behind the group and then and then Driftwood's like scampering in the front *[Mya laughs]* and then, and then Ernie's just like walking between you both.

Mya: Mhmm.

Kyla: I still, I still have my machete and my, and my cast iron.

Derek: Oh goodness.

Justin: I still have my, yeah. The wok is like maybe on my back somehow.

Kyla: Is it -- Oh okay, I was gonna say --

Derek: You just have it on your back, yeah.

Kyla: -- you can't have it between your teeth.

Justin: So I look like a turtle *[group laughter]* like flipped over wok on my back as I scamper around.

Derek: Goodness.

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Justin: And how many people was the village again like how many people are behind us watching us like lead them like this? *[Kyla laughs]*

Derek: There's like 60 people here. *[laughter]*

Kyla: I thought we were going to leave them in the chamber, but I guess we found out it was clear, then.

Derek: So, yeah. So yeah, so eventually like you begin to see the people begin to file out after the three of you kind of exit.

Mya: I whisper to Ernie,

“I've never seen someone so affected by the cat spirit”

As I look at, as we --

Kyla: -- I'm brushing my hair again.

[Mya, Derek & Kyla laugh]

Ernie: “I've never seen people possessed by spirits to begin with, this is.”

Zaba: “Really.”

Justin: Driftwood's cat ears hear you. *[Mya & Kyla laugh]*

Mya: Cat ears?! *[laughter]*

Driftwood: “What do you mean? What do you mean?”

Zaba: “I didn't -- you don't --”

Justin: I'm like far away. Like I wouldn't be able to hear you. *[Derek & Mya laugh]*

Kyla: We can't hear you, we can't hear you say that --

Justin: But I do hear you.

Kyla: -- because you're so far away. You're just shouting it.

Derek: Goodness.

Driftwood: “Hey, what did you say? Meow.”

Ernie: “Huh?” *[Mya, Justin & Kyla laugh]*

Derek: As the three of you --

Driftwood: “You talkin about me?” *[laughter]*

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Zaba: "I'm concerned."

Derek: -- What do the three of you do as like the villagers and and monks are kind of filing out?

Zaba: I'm scanning the horizon um because we're at the, at the exit? Kind of like --

Derek: Yes. You're like maybe like, you're a bit away from the temple.

Mya: Right.

Derek: Like you could still go back to the temple through like the catacombs, but you're, yeah, you're a bit away.

Mya: Right there's like, I'm looking through the archway um and, I have a question. Is this heat affecting the ocean? Like, are -- because I would imagine that with this amount of heat and evaporation it's going to cause like some storms on the ocean.

Derek: I mean right as you think that, you do hear like a rumble of thunder in the distance across the sea.

Zaba: "I would still like to speak to Tang Kai."

Driftwood: "You're gonna go back?"

Zaba: "I, I would go back."

Driftwood: "I, I wouldn't mind going back uh but I want to ask La'Ura what, what happens after evacuation. Is there a plan for them to go, they are now refugees of their, of where they used to live. Um are they planning on returning I want to, I want to know that."

Justin: Okay. Yeah so Driftwood tries to go and locate La'Ura --

Derek: Okay.

Justin: -- to see what the next steps are.

Derek: Yeah. so Driftwood you approach La'Ura who takes a seat on a rock and takes a a sip of water.

Driftwood: "Have you ever had to evacuate the temple before?"

La'Ura: "Only when there's been a storm. But even then it was just, we move a bit more inland or we stay inside the temple and Mitra protects us. This is something we haven't had to see before, really."

Driftwood: "We, we have a plan to go and scout back at the temple and speak to Tang Kai the dragon. And so we can't guarantee that the temple will still be intact when we're back."

formatting based off of [Dungeons & Daddies'](#) transcripts

Ernie: Does La'Ura respond at all to Driftwood name-dropping Tang Kai?

Derek: La'Ura had, you know like, a shadow had kind of come over their face when you mentioned that the three of you were going to go back to talk to Tang Kai, and they actually like pull you in a little closer Driftwood and they say,

La'Ura: "Be careful. Do not fall for for his tricks."

I side-eye Ernie and Zaba, like,

Driftwood: "Don't fall for the tricks, huh? Okay."

Justin: I guess I try to communicate that we, that they should start camp out in the beach just in case it takes longer than expected.

Derek: You've noticed some of the monks have already started creating like shade for some of the more elderly folks and some of the kids, so they're already starting to, to figure something out.

Justin: Okay. And then um, that's when I remember I have the wok and I was like,

Driftwood: "If you need to cook,"

Justin: *[chuckles]* I like drop it off and,

Driftwood: "I, we have this. We were able to you know take this through, and so hopefully you're able to start some meal tonight that's of comfort."

Derek: The three of you are sort of back at the entrance to the catacombs. The, the temple folk and villagers have began to kind of set up like a, like a mini like temporary camp and Tang Kai is still swirling around the temple.

Justin: So a mouse leaps out of the front pocket of Driftwood's apron and then runs back home.

[Kyla laughs]

Ernie: "Did you catch, did you catch that?"

Driftwood: "I have no recollection of what, where that came from." *[chuckles]*

Zaba: "Hmm."

Ernie: *[Kyla laughs]* "Clearly lying."

Zaba: "Curious." *[laughter]*

"The spirits like to speak to you well."

Ernie: "Yeah. Do you have the torch, um Zaba?"

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Zaba: "Oh. Yes."

Ernie: "Okay."

Zaba: "I guess I still do. Um."

Ernie: "I think we should, we should use that, as lights."

Zaba: "Yes. We uh, we should hurry."

Ernie: I put on my, my goggles.

Justin: Driftwood is like, they're, they're done being cats, but Driftwood has kind of a muscle memory and like licks himself, and then is ready. *[laughter]* Driftwood's ready to go.

Derek: Yeah.

Mya: Very affected.

Derek: Driftwood as you like lick yourself, the three of you enter with haste, with much haste as you kind of like power walk jog through the catacombs. Driftwood, like the farther and farther back towards the temple your Deathsense begins to slowly trickle in again, trickle in.

But you're starting to wonder -- like is it, is the Deathsense coming back in because the dead are becoming restless again? Or is the Deathsense coming back in because there's something else, something big like a big dragon disturbing the dead here. *[Justin shakes head]* Your brain's going all sorts of places.

As the three of you kind of make it back to the temple the, the sounds and the winds of Tang Kai coming around the temple are quite loud, and the temple rumbling is shaking. But the temple's still holding together somehow, the statue of Mitra their arms outstretched is still like intact.

Mya: This, this effect I think it's, it's quite brief, but -- again I want to just blow some cool air just to cool us down again before we go into the area where Tang Kai -- I imagine it's the hottest by Tang Kai.

Ernie: Yeah I'm gonna pass my water skin around again, but it's, it's running low on water.

Mya: Mm. And, you know like when you're like, you're really sweaty, and then like you feel like a cool wind go by and you just like, "Ugh!" You know, like you just shiver? That's that's what we're all doing right now.

Derek: You begin to hear the sounds of Tang Kai slowing down as sort of like his arcs become a little longer around as he slows down.

Mya: Zaba's going to to shout and say,

Zaba: "Tang Kai, why do you come here?"

formatting based off of [Dungeons & Daddies'](#) transcripts

Kyla: I'm gonna, I'm gonna hit the, the -- *[Kyla mimes hitting a pan] [laughter]*

Derek: Bang, ba-jang, crash, bang-gadang, gadang, crash. Bang-gadang.

Kyla: Bang, bang, bang.

Derek: Um, yeah.

Justin: Driftwood bangs the thing too-- *[breaks into laughter]*

Derek: How are you arranged? Like is, Zaba are you like closest to the edge? Or how deep in the temple are you?

Mya: I think I would come out to that ledge.

Derek: Okay.

Mya: Where you can like overlook the ocean.

Derek: Cool.

Kyla: I feel like I would be on on one side of um Zaba, a little bit behind.

Derek: Okay.

Kyla: I don't know about you Driftwood.

Justin: I have an eye on the statue of Mitra, and I feel like we should be around there so I'm kind of like closest to there.

Derek: All of a sudden as you like, you stop banging things, there's like a moment of silence before all of a sudden from like underneath the cliff you see the face, the huge face fill up and block out the entire view of the cliff of Tang Kai staring right at you. And he says,

Tang Kai: *[low, loud voice]* "Who dare say my name and command me?"

Zaba: "Do you not remember us?"

Tang Kai: "Oh. The three mortals I spared. Fools."

[Ernie and Driftwood wave] [Derek laughs]

Derek: You all just wave? *[laughter]*

Mya: *[shakes their head]* I'm not waving.

Kyla: Ernie, Ernie's waving, like.

Derek: Ernie just waves.

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[everyone laughs harder]

Kyla: They're still holding, they're still holding the cast iron pan, so it's like they're waving with the cast iron pan.

Mya: Horrible. I can't see this because I'm staring straight at --

Derek: Yeah, right behind you, yeah there's *[Justin waves]*

Zaba: "Tang Kai again I ask, why do you come here?"

Tang Kai: "I'm here to say hi to an old friend."

Derek: And he begins to inhale and -- *[inhale sfx]*

Ernie: "I knew it."

Zaba: "Alright. We're jumping."

Ernie: "This is an old fling that went bad."

Derek: -- he begins to exhale.

Ernie: I'm gonna grab, I'm gonna grab Zaba and run towards Driftwood, towards the statue of Mitra, but I don't know if we should stay there. I think we should just keep on running.

Derek: Ernie, roll me a 20 sided die.

Mya: Whooooo!

Kyla: Oh it's a 17, okay.

Derek: Okay that's a success.

Justin: Gang gang!

Derek: You managed to grab Zaba as blue flame emerges *[roaring sfx. fire sfx begins]* from Tang Kai's mouth and nostrils through the temple, and you manage to grab Driftwood as well as you kind of duck behind the statue of Mitra and you notice that there is in fact a sheening blue sort of like barrier around the statue that protects the three of you --

Kyla: Oh, okay cool.

Derek: -- as flames shoot through the entirety of the temple and eviscerate everything in the area like you just are surrounded by blue flames.

Kyla: Jesus chri..

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Derek: It is so loud you just hear the, the the streams of fire, it's like the screams of a thousand people as flames just eviscerate everything and slowly bit by bit *[fire sfx gets louder]* you begin to hear cracks in the temple and all of a sudden the ceiling just crumbles.

[explosion sfx fades into the theme music]

Dice & Pizza is Mya Worrell as Zaba, Justin Ricafort as Driftwood, Kyla Worrell as Ernie, and Derek Aiello as the guide. Cover art is by Jean Young, music is by Itamar Ben Zimra, and additional original sound design and original sound effects are by Brian Kim.

You can follow the show on Twitter and Instagram @diceandpizza for updates on the show. You can check out the video or audio version of this on Youtube or any podcasting platform. Our next episode is going to be coming to you in two weeks on Monday, November 1st. Yeah, it's a big one.

You know they're kind of, engulfed in flames right now. So uh, come back in two weeks to find out what happens to Zaba, Driftwood and Ernie. Thank you so much for listening to our show, we'll see you then.

[theme music ends]

END