

Kyle

I regret to inform you that this podcast episode is haunted. Earlier this evening, voice actor, Aaron Catano-Saez replaced our narrator's voice with his own. We're not sure how he did this, or what his motivations are. All we know is that we need your help in order to truly understand Aaron and the crimes he's committed. We need every single one of you to listen to All My Fantasy Children, a character-creation, world-building and storytelling podcast co-created by Aaron Catano-Saez.

Each week, this podcast takes a listener-submitted prompt and uses tabletop role-playing games and random results tables to create their backstory and develop an original fantasy world. You can find episodes wherever you download podcasts, and also at https://linktr.ee/AMFC_Podcast. In addition, Aaron was last spotted one billion years in the future, in a forest with no shape or dimensions called Tremaine Bluffs.

Specifically, he was last seen in a humble establishment called the Daemon Saloon.

[Eerie, whistling, but still somewhat whimsical music begins to play.]

[00:01:39] *[The whimsical music stops abruptly and transitions to more ominous piano music.]*

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Good evening. I am Victor Daemon of the Daemon Saloon. Come in, come in! It's frightful out, and who knows what spooks and scares are lurking in the depths of your podcast hosting application. Feel free to take a seat. Any kind you imagine works perfectly fine! Although, these four in front of me are reserved for particular guests.

Don't worry. They won't pay you any mind at all. In fact, if you're willing to lend me an ear or any other appropriate appendage. You might find the tale worth listening to. It's a story of heart. A story of self! And the story of the most exquisite stomach ache ever enjoyed.

[A creaking door opens.]

Well then...

[The door slams shut.]

[With unsettling delight.] Right on time.

Kyle

[The piano music transitions into a less spooky, slightly jazzier tune suitable for a seedy tavern.]

All right gang. So, you're a place called Tremaine Bluffs. Where and how and why in Tremaine Bluffs is, we're not really that sure. You might have wandered into it by accident. Okay, you absolutely wandered into it by accident, and as you're walking through the door to this bar, who is currently being blamed for getting all of you lost?

Tom

[Thoughtfully.] Ahh...

Hallie

[A little indignantlly.] No one!

Tom

I feel like Xoc is actually the one at fault in this case.

Kyle

I just love Hallie's silent grimacing, hoping she doesn't get picked.

Emily

Well, actually, see the thing is, I was just about to mention the fact that Hopper probably would have been guiding us with his Adventurer's Journal.

Hallie

He probably would have been.

Emily

Being like guys, guys, no, I have a map. You don't have to ask for directions.

Ari

I feel like Misha is very prone to wandering off at some point like at, at random moments, like oh, a butterfly or something interesting. *[The music stops.]* And then just walks.

Emily

[Laughter.]

Tom

Did each of us blame a different person for this?

[Laughter from the party.]

Emily

Well, no one blamed Elee, so.

Hallie

That's why I said no one! We're all hopeless.

Kyle

Oh, maybe I should write down Elee blamed Hop, Hop blamed...

Emily

[Crosstalking slightly.] Yeah, who does Hop blame?

Hallie

Everybody.

Ari

That includes Elee, so there we go. The circle is closed.

Emily

Fine.

Kyle

Um, yeah. No, I, you got lost. You're not sure where you are. You're not sure how to get out of there. Tremaine Bluffs is a scary place, and you finally found this, uh, this small saloon in the middle of the mist, which is always a good thing to find when you're lost and the wolves are howling in the background, because it's Halloween.

[The more whimsical, whistling spooky music begins again.]

Anyways, you walk into the saloon. It's called the Daemon Saloon, a very rustic, classical place. You see a few creatures in the corner. I'm going to say, for the sake of fun, they're actually classic fantasy D&D creatures. So you see just an orc hanging out, you see a tiefling, and then you see Jeff. Jeff is also there.

Tom

[Laughter.]

Kyle

And as you walk in, the bartender, who's wearing a bartender's apron and has this ratty cloak around him, turns to you and says,

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Good evening. I am Victor Daemon of the Daemon Saloon. How can I...

[An ominously long pause.]

Help you this evening?

[00:05:00]

Tom

[Laughter.]

Emily (as Elee)

That was an awfully long pause.

Hallie (as Hopper)

[A little glumly.] I think we just want to sit down, is there is there table we could take? Are they open?

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Of course! There are plenty of places to sit temporarily.

Kyle

And the seats, ah, the barstools come out, four barstools.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Or...permanently!

Kyle

And in the corner you can see four coffin lids just pop up and go,

[Shrill, mean-spirited cackling.]

And then pop themselves back down again.

Ari

This guy's trying way too hard. I'm saying that out of character obviously.

Kyle

[Laughter.]

Emily

Elee will say in character.

Emily (as Elee)

You're trying awful hard.

[Laughter from the party.]

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Well, I try my best to accommodate my guests.

[A less ominous pause.]

That was a rhyme!

Ari (as Misha)

Oh, oh, it is!

Emily (as Elee)

[Crosstalking.] There was an...

Ari (as Misha)

That was a really good rhyme!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah!

Emily (as Elee)

S at the end there. Not an exact rhyme, Victor.

Kyle

Uh, he will kick the back of the, ah, bar, and four stools will come out and kind of force you on to their seats.

Tom

Ugh.

Kyle

Which will slide back up onto the bar. And he'll just lean over and say,

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

What's troubling you this evening, my...friends.

Hallie (as Hopper)

We're just kind of turned around. We're trying to find...

Emily (as Elee)

[Through laughter.] What are we trying to find?

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Uncertain.] Qi? Is that where we're trying to go at this point? We just, we'd like to get out of Tremaine Bluffs first.

Tom (as Xoc)

I think that is a very good objective that we have.

Emily (as Elee)

I would also like some alcohol.

Hallie (as Hopper)

That too.

Ari (as Misha)

I am also preoccupied by how the chairs moved on their own volition and put us in here, and forced us to say what, what, what worried us instead of helping us going out of here.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Thunder crashes in the background as Victor laughs. A familiar spooky organ refrain—Toccata in D Minor—plays.]

No, it's, that's a little bit of a...

Tom

[In a slightly spooky voice.] Just a parlor trick.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Just a parlor trick.

Ari (as Misha)

Oh!

Kyle

I'm going to have to be careful with this character, because literally every line I say of him will have to be dubbed by somebody else. Um, and he'll pour a glass for Elee and turn over, and he'll just say,

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

So how did all of you wander your way into this humble saloon?

[Barely restrained laughter from the party.]

Tom (as Xoc)

Well, we are not entirely certain how we got to this place specifically. We've had a lot of strange misadventures. It would be probably too long to recount them all right now. We were just hoping for maybe, maybe directions on...on the way to leave. To just leave this place entirely.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Thoughtfully.] Hmm, well. That's a hefty request. Tremaine Bluffs doesn't have a set direction or way in or out. It's kind of a thing you feel in your heart.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Everything has a set direction going in and out.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Slightly taken aback.] What?

Hallie (as Hopper)

Everything has a set direction going in and out.

Hallie

I'm sorry. He felt very strongly about that.

Tom (as Xoc)

I don't think I feel anything in my heart.

Ari (as Misha)

[Crosstalking.]

I do not...

Tom (as Xoc)

I haven't had any pains.

Ari (as Misha)

Feel anything in my heart either, though it might be different for machines.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Well, I'm not surprised. You have the kind of dead sense of yourselves that someone like I would. Not that I'm dead.

Ari (as Misha)

Oh.

Tom (as Xoc)

Are you sure? Because you said that in a way that implies that you are.

Ari (as Misha)

I did not know humans could be dead and talk like this human right now. Is this a common occurrence?

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Accommodations for the evening will be five shins a person.

Kyle

And he slams a bill towards all of you.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Think about it. You will need it.

[Sharp, disconcertingly upbeat piano music begins to play.]

Tom

I have zero shins though.

Ari

Misha will try to pull away from the bar and indicate that they should leave to a different place, because they do not like staying here.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah, I'm with Misha.

Tom (as Xoc)

Let's move to that table and discuss this more.

Tom

And Xoc will also scoot out and like, go to an unoccupied table.

Hallie

Hopper gets out his map again and spreads it out on the table.

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Muttering under his breath.] Where did we go...

Emily (as Elee)

[Slightly annoyed.] Yeah Hopper. Where did we go wrong?

Ari (as Misha)

I don't think we can go wrong, because every different path is just a new adventure. But it's true that we should eventually try to go back to where we came from.

Tom (as Xoc)

Is Tremaine Bluffs on this map?

Kyle

Wait, Hop, you think you saw Tremaine Bluffs on the map.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Oh, there we are!

Kyle

No, wait, it's someplace else.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Oh, mm, no...I guess.

Kyle

Oh, wait, no. *[Laughing slightly.]* It's, sorry. It's not on the map at all. These are just random smudges that keep appearing because you spread it out on a table that was completely covered in ale. The reason it was free was because Jeff had accidentally spilled it.

Ari

[In exasperation.] My god!

Kyle

Causing everyone to get upset and leave.

Tom

[Faintly.] Nooooo!

Hallie

[Slightly indignant.] I feel as if I would have noticed it was all covered in ale.

Tom

[The music stops.] But would sad Hop have noticed that?

Hallie

There is a 50/50 shot, either way.

Kyle

[Laughter.]

Tom

You want to roll those odds?

Hallie

No.

Kyle

[Laughter.]

Hallie

And he'll shake it—he'll turn it away from the group and shake it away from them.

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Drained.] Oh, uh—sorry. Sorry. Sorry. Sorry.

Tom (as Xoc)

It's okay Simon.

Ari (as Misha)

You do not have to apologize, Simon Scotch. If you need help, we can help you look in the map.

Hallie (as Hopper)

I'm not sure that's going to be of much use anymore.

Hallie

[00:10:00] And he's like ringing the ale out of the map.

Ari

[Laughter.]

Tom (as Xoc)

Hmm, perhaps the nano spirits can guide us safely.

Tom

And Xoc will call upon is a longtime friends, the nano spirits.

Ari

And Misha also at the same time to look up data sphere for a GPS of the location. They'll be like, where is Tremaine Bluff on Google.

Kyle

So. Two things happen. Misha, your data sphere search looks a lot like when I try to get fucking door delivery to my house. It shows you right next to where Tremaine Bluffs is.

Ari

[Distressed noise.]

Kyle

But not Tremaine Bluffs.

Ari

Ahhh.

Kyle

And it's too zoomed in for you to figure out where it is.

Ari

[Faintly.] Nooo.

Kyle

Meanwhile, Xoc, the Nano Spirits call down, and they're like...

[Gentle, tinkling music plays briefly.]

Kyle (as the Nano Spirits)

Ah, hey, Xoc, what, what do you need buddy?

Tom (as Xoc)

Oh, hello. My my friends and I appear to be...

Kyle (as the Nano Spirits)

Ah, hey, Xoc. We can't hear you that that.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Louder.] My friends and I—

Kyle (as the Nano Spirits)

[Crosstalking.] Hey, Xoc. No.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Crosstalking.] —are lost.

Kyle (as the Nano Spirits)

No, the connection's breaking up a little bit. Sorry. It's a bit hard to, ah—

[Staticky noise.] Oh, no! The connection's— *[More static.]* Breaking up!

Tom (as Xoc)

[Crosstalking over Kyle and laughter from the party.]

Don't you make those noises at me and hang up, don't you dare!

Kyle

Um, and they're gone.

Tom (as Xoc)

You're beings of pure signal! You just made those noises yourselves.

[Laughter from the party.]

Kyle

[Through laughter at first.] And as you say that, you see the orc turn over, lift one of her beers, and just slam it against this invisible force in the sky, and is like,

Kyle (as the unnamed orc)

Hey guys, where were you, I missed you for the Halloween party.

Kyle

So the Nano Spirits are literally just hanging out with this orc somewhere else in the bar.

Ari

Fucking god.

Tom

God dammit.

Hallie

[Dryly, trying not to laugh.] The disrespect.

Kyle

And in fact, they get up and leave.

Tom

[Faintly.] God dammit.

Ari

Nooo!

Tom (as Xoc)

Well, I no longer have ideas.

Kyle

[Laughter.]

Tom

And Xoc is just a very sleepy boy, starts like, nodding off a little bit.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Maybe we could cut a deal and, I dunno, wash dishes or something and then not have to pay as much money to stay.

Kyle

And as you say that...

[The sound of loud, clattering ceramic.] Just a pile of plates fall down from the sky onto your table, as do four brushes and four aprons.

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Uncertain.] Did you hear me from all the way over there?

Tom (as Xoc)

[Confused.] How did he drop these—like—what's above us? What?

Emily (as Elee)

Hmm. Weird. They gave us four brushes and four aprons. Looks like only three people will be washing dishes.

Emily

And Elee sinks a little further into her seat. She's very upset with everyone. It's everyone else's fault that we are here...

Tom

[Crosstalking.] I thought...

Emily

[Crosstalking.] Except hers.

Tom

I thought, I thought she blamed Hopper specifically.

Emily

Mostly Hopper, but see, Xoc and Misha have both kind of, they've both argued their own cases of why they could also be at fault. So everyone's at fault now.

Hallie

Hopper, concerned at those dishes, looks around for someone to confirm with that if we wash these we get to stay here. He's not going to just start washing dishes with no sort of agreement about whether he gets to stay. So he's looking for Victor again.

Kyle

A little severed zombie hand just appears out of nowhere, out of frame, and hands you a new bill with a discount for washing dishes.

Emily (as Elee)

Does any of us have any money though?

Kyle

[More clattering noises.] More plates and bowls fall down, and the ticket moves to zero dollars.

Hallie (as Hopper)

I guess we don't need them.

Emily

Elee will sigh and start washing dishes.

Tom

[Low, rhythmic thumping noises. It begins to sound like the steady, methodical ticking of a clock.]

Xoc is, like, trying to half-heartedly wash a dish, but he's so sleepy. It's just, uh, just like, going in the same circle over the same dish and, like, trying to shake his head to keep himself awake, but then like working on the same dish again.

Emily

Occasionally Elee will like, swap out the dishes in Xoc's hand.

Ari (as Misha)

You do not have to do it, Xoc, if you're too tired. We will find a room for all of us soon.

Tom (as Xoc)

No, I should help.

Emily (as Elee)

Hey go take a nap kid, it's fine.

Ari (as Misha)

I can wash, I can wash your dishes too.

Tom (as Xoc)

No, no, no, I—I can help please.

Kyle

[The ticking continues. It sounds slightly louder.]

Yeah, it's ridiculous, right Xoc? Like Misha's acting like you can't keep up and do all the things they do, just because they, you know, don't have to sleep and they have this magical power doesn't mean they're the only ones who can contribute.

And Misha like, yeah, I mean, it's a little bit tough, you know, Xoc's tired, but you know, you can forgive that. But, like, I don't know. Hop's the one who suggested all of this and he's just struggling to get it done.

Meanwhile Hop, like you're just like, it's so ridiculous.

[The ticking continues. A low unsettling sound begins, quiet at first, and then slowly louder.]

Elee's blaming everyone for everything...

Hallie

[With some trepidation.] No...

Kyle

And you feel a little guilty about it, but like...

Hallie

[With dawning realization and dread.] Nooo!

Kyle

Come on, she's not putting her best foot forward, but Elee, would you put your best foot forward when everybody, especially Xoc and Hop, got you lost here and Xoc's just falling asleep!

[The noise crescendos, and then there's suddenly silence.]

Tom

It sounds like there's a disembodied narrator trying to turn us against **[00:15:00]** one another.

Hallie

[Laughter.]

Kyle

But you get it done.

[A pause.]

Eventually. And you finally get yourself to a, ah, room with four beds. I'm like, I'm thinking of it like the, the room in, uh, Lord of the Rings where the hobbits stay, at like, uh.

Tom

The Prancing Pony.

Kyle

The tavern.

Ari

Mm.

Kyle

Prancing Pony, yeah. Uh, don't worry. No one's going to come and stab you in the middle of the night.

Tom

[Suspiciously.] Are you sure though? Because this is a Halloween episode.

Hallie

[Through faint laughter.] I don't trust that.

Kyle

Victor might mime it for shits and giggles, but he won't actually do it.

Tom

[Disbelieving.] Are you sure?

Kyle

And, and, so do you do decide to rest here?

Tom

Looks like we have no choice.

Hallie

Yeah, Xoc's falling asleep on his feet.

Tom

Xoc is too tired to be worried about being murdered in his bed by wraiths.

Kyle

[Laughter.]

So you all drift off to sleep.

Ari

Not me!

Kyle

You all drift off to sleep. Misha drifts off to just getting absent-minded a little bit.

Ari

Yep.

Kyle

Though it's a bit foggier than usual. And as we hit the peak of sleep, or the peak of foggiest, you you hear a voice repeat itself.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[In a haunting, distant echo.] Tremaine Bluffs doesn't have a set direction, or way in or out. It's kind of a thing you feel in your heart.

In your heart.

[With increasing intensity.]

In your heart.

[With finality.]

In your heart.

Kyle

And then, suddenly, Xoc, suddenly you're awake. You're just, like, sitting up awake, and you don't remember waking up.

Tom

Hmm. Well...Xoc will look around, try to get their bearings. Why, what is this? What's this bed? Where am I?

Kyle

Everything feels a bit cold? You don't, you know how when you feel things? It doesn't feel like that anymore. It feels like information is being presented to you...

Ari

[Faintly, laughing.] Oh my god.

Kyle

In your head about, like, it is cold. This is a bed. It is soft. And as you look down, you see long pale hands, and you just see a little scarf around your neck.

Tom

Wait, is this—have I be—

Kyle

[Talking abruptly over Tom.] Xoc: take Misha's character sheet.

Ari

[Jaunty, but slightly ominous, music begins to play.] Oh my God. I was not expecting that. Oh god.

Tom

Xoc, do you have any audible reaction to this realization?

Tom

I think probably the audible reaction Xoc makes is going,

Tom (as Xoc)

[Long, slow, and increasingly distressed.] Whaaaaat?

Kyle

As you say that, Misha, your heart jumps. You're just so worried when you hear what? Oh, no, something is wrong. Something has got to have gone wrong and suddenly your eyes wake up and you're like, wait, what just happened? You, you, you've gotten your memories back, but this kind of unconsciousness has never happened before and you're cold and you're clammy and you're weirdly sweaty. And as you turn over to Xoc, you see a few, like, you some matted hair get in front of your eyes, which you're able to brush away. And as you move around you kind of groan a little bit, and you feel so incredibly, emotionally tired.

Ari

[Faintly.] Oh god.

Kyle

Misha.

Ari

[Louder.] I know.

[The music fades.]

Kyle

Take Hopper Scotch's character sheet.

Ari

I know, I know.

Kyle

How do you respond?

Ari

Well, yeah. Misha is going to be extremely confused at all of these things that are going on at once, and first they're going to think that there's something wrong with their chest, because there's something inside that's beating like, that's just moving a lot, and like what is happening here? But the more...like, you know, how like if somebody says like, oh you're looking like crap. Even if you're not thinking about it, then you start thinking about it, and you start noticing other things that might be going wrong.

Like, oh man, I'm sweaty and clammy and my head hurts, what's going on? It's like the more that Misha thinks about things that are weird, the more they're going to notice, like why does my head pound? Why is my stomach like, empty? Why am I so clammy? And now they're like, all freaking out about just malfunctioning.

[Laughter from the party.]

And they're gonna fall off the bed.

[Louder laughter.]

Kyle

[The music resumes.]

As this thump happens, Hop, you see this little flicker of flame in front of your eyes, and suddenly you're like, oh no, I'm on fire. And as you scramble up, you just feel your inside start to scrape against one another. It's not painful. Nothing really feels painful, but it's weird and it's tingly. You also realize with a panic that suddenly you have a hat on top of your head again.

Ari

[Faint laughter.]

Kyle

And then you realize wait, no. I take care of my hats. *[The music fades.]*

Hallie

[Laughter.]

Kyle

Oh, no. And Hopper, I need you to take Elee's character sheet.

Hallie

Okay. Hopper would actually like...because Hopper is not used to such an extravagantly large, cluttered, heavy hat, he's having a really hard time balancing with it.

Ari

Oh!

Hallie

So he's just like,

Hallie (as Hopper)

Oh my god. How does she—what. What. What?

Hallie

And he will actually try to remove it because it's just too much for him.

Emily

[Pained noise.]

Hallie

Ready for Hatless Elee? You're gonna get her.

Kyle

[Laughter.] You take it off and you see thin wisps of white hair underneath. In fact, those **[00:20:00]** thin wisps are down, they're like Rapunzel size length.

Hallie

Oh, god.

Tom

Ugh. Ugh!

Hallie

Okay. Hopper will study those, then he's going to make sure he's not actually on fire. He never really confirmed that.

Ari

[Laughter.]

Hallie

He got distracted by other things.

Kyle

Meanwhile, one of these loose, long hairs falls onto your nose, Elee, and it gets kind of weird and ticklish and you start having little adorable sneezes, and you're the only one—for a second, this feels familiar. It feels like being in a dream.

[Soft, gentle guitar music begins to play.]

It feels, it—well, it feels like you're back to being nine—little old nineteen year old Elee again. And so you're not really bothered too much by it, and you roll over...

[The gentle music abruptly transitions back into something spooky and mischievous.] And then you feel this very baggy clothing on you. And little Elee did not wear such baggy clothing, especially something so long. It's kind of like a like a long baggy dress, which was never your style, and then you realize it's not a dress. It's a robe and you might be nineteen, but you aren't Elee anymore.

[The music stops.]

Elee, take Xoc's character sheets.

Emily

[Faintly.] Yeah.

[Louder and incredulous.] Nine might!

Tom

Yep. Yep.

Ari

You're a very active boy.

[Laughter from the party.]

Hallie

My might just more than doubled, that's great.

Emily

I'm gonna lift up my arm and then let it fall.

Emily (as Elee)

My...my arms.

Hallie

Hopper is going to try to get up and survey the room just to like, see...I don't know. Maybe this is a dream? Is everybody else around? Surely if it's a dream the room will look weirder than it did before, or different, right? Right?

Tom

Xoc sees everybody stirring, and watches as what appears to be the body of Hopper Scotch just like roll off its bed, reaching out desperately, and just, and just like, look around in panic at everyone be like,

Tom (as Xoc)

[Hesitantly.] Misha...Misha Jarvis. Are you there?

Ari

Misha's just gonna use raise their hand a little bit and then look at themselves! The face of themselves! And be like,

Ari (as Misha)

[Faint and uncertain.] What...what...what...what?

Tom (as Xoc)

I don't, it's—I, it's hard to explain, but it's me, Xoc. I think I'm in...

Ari (as Misha)

[Quietly.] Xoc?

Tom (as Xoc)

[Nervously.] I think I'm in Misha's body and I don't understand what's happening.

Ari (as Misha)

Xoc...what?

Tom (as Xoc)

Did some kind of device swap my mind into a different body or is with some kind of Illusion? I have no idea what's going on!

Kyle

And suddenly you hear—

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Haunting laughter.]

Kyle

[Over the laughter, as organ music begins to play. It fades into a sinister piano tune.] As a swarm of bats fly through the window and they assemble to create the form of Victor Daemon.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Intently.] You.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

This is no illusion! As I said, the only way out of Tremaine Bluffs is to know the compass in your true heart. And since all of you can't understand your hearts, I took the liberty of giving you some new ones to try out.

Emily

I'm gonna go to punch him, because that's what Elee would do.

Kyle

Give me a roll.

Emily

[Dice roll.] Well, that is a one.

Ari

[Gleefully.] Active boy!

Emily

A nat one.

Tom

Oh no.

Emily

Which feels appropriate.

Kyle

Hey. Hey, hey, hey.

Tom

[Anxiously.] No, don't do it.

Kyle

You punch really hard right?

Tom

[With increasing dread.] No, don't do it. I know what you're doing Kyle! No don't!

Kyle

[With quiet glee.] Take six points of might damage.

Emily

[Distressed.] Six points?!

Tom

[Crosstalking.] Noooo, it's so much worse than I thought he was going to do.

Emily

[Strained noise.]

[The music fades.]

Ari

[Startled.] Don't you have eight?

Kyle

Actually, you know what? We're right. We're right. We're right, we're right, we're right. We can't note down our on numbers on the character sheet, so doing things that are kind of nuanced like that are bad idea. Take nine points of might damage.

Tom

Fuck you!

Emily

Great. Great! Well, I'm impaired. I'm gonna pick my head up and look at everyone else and be like,

Emily (as Elee)

Which one of you is Xoc?

Tom

And Xoc will raise their hand now.

Emily (as Elee)

Why do you suck? This body is so fragile! It's—

Kyle

Also, Tom, it'd still be his.

Ari

It's still his!

Tom

Well, I mean...

Kyle

Just because he's in a different body doesn't mean he changes his pronouns.

Hallie

Because it's you inside!

Tom

Yes, that's true. So Xoc raises his hand.

Emily (as Elee)

Why do you suck?

Tom (as Xoc)

[Distressed.] I don't know? I'm sorry—

Emily (as Elee)

[Crosstalking in frustration.] Why don't you lift weights?

Tom (as Xoc)

I don't know what he did!

Emily (as Elee)

How do you walk without hurting yourself?

Tom (as Xoc)

Well, normally, it doesn't hurt so much to bump into things!

Emily (as Elee)

You like a toothpick.

Tom (as Xoc)

Maybe, maybe this Daemon fellow's just strong. Anyway. Daemon!

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Gleefully.] Yeeees?

Tom (as Xoc)

[Sternly.] Your plans are made up bullshit and we're not interested. Change us back, or else you'll have to face our combined wrath.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Mischievous harpsichord music begins to play.] Tell you what. I had this whole scheme about how you have to try to find your true hearts and appreciate yourselves before the moon rose again tomorrow night or you'll this way permanently, but you're right. *[A little more ominously.]* Fighting is a lot more fun. So here's the deal. I will be waiting at the top of the tower. **[00:25:00]**

Kyle

And you just see us tall tower in the distance.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

If you can get to me and get one hit, just one, on me—each of you.

Ari

Oh no.

Hallie

[Distraught noise.]

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Then I'll put you back in your bodies and let you go home. *[The music ends.]*

Tom

I cast fling on him.

Ari

[Laughter.]

Kyle

Give me a roll.

Tom

Fuck you.

Ari

What are you flinging?

Tom

I'm flinging Robbie Daymond, the voice actor for Aketchi Goro... *[Dice roll.]* In the English version of Persona 5. *[Thoughtful noise.]* I should have used effort first.

Ari

[Laughter.]

Tom

I rolled an eight.

Kyle

Uh, he disappears into bats as you do that and flies out.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Disappointed.] I was gonna say a line. It's too late now.

Tom

Xoc says that out loud, by the way, that was in character.

Emily (as Elee)

Who's in my body?!

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Reluctantly.] Uh, I am. I—Hop. Uh, Simon. I, Simon, am in your body.

Emily (as Elee)

Why didn't you punch him?

Hallie (as Hopper)

I don't know. I'm confused!

Emily (as Elee)

No one else has to land a hit if I—you—stab him!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Well, he said all four of us. Right?

Tom (as Xoc)

Sounds like we each have to individually–

Emily (as Elee)

Yeah, but if we murder him first!

Tom (as Xoc)

What if we, what if we can't be changed back if we kill him?

Emily (as Elee)

Oh. *[Disappointed.]* Well, I don't want to stay in this body.

Kyle

Aww!

Tom

Xoc just looks hurt.

Emily

[Faint laughter.]

Ari

Misha is still just a bunch of feelings on the floor, in a little ball.

Hallie

God.

Tom

Xoc will approach the curled up Misha-Hopper.

Tom (as Xoc)

Misha Jarvis.

Ari (as Misha)

[Strained, in a small voice.] Yes.

Tom (as Xoc)

Are you all right.

Ari (as Misha)

No. I'm not! I'm cold! I'm damp! I'm, my head pounds, my, my, my chest is–has something, going over and over again and I, I, I, my breath is going fast, but also not! My eyes are leaking! Why are my eyes leaking? Why? Why is there so much water here? What is happening?

Hallie

Hopper, watching himself crying on the floor.

Ari (as Misha)

I, my eyes ache, but I can't, I want to close them, but I also can't!

Kyle

And Misha, you know the worst thing of all?

Ari

What?

Tom

[As a loud bleep sounds.] Bleep!

Ari

Oh, god!

Hallie

[Pained.] Noooooo!

[Laughter from the party.]

Nooo!

Tom

Ex card.

Kyle

Alright, we will, yeah. We'll undo that, that's too much anyway, so keep going.

Tom

Xoc will wrap Misha into a close hug.

Tom (as Xoc)

It's okay Misha Jarvis. I think those are mostly just normal organic things.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Can confirm. I feel like that all the time. It's fine.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Melancholy, but still hopeful, piano music begins to play.] Yeah, your body's like a machine now, just one works a little differently.

Ari (as Misha)

But...

Tom (as Xoc)

I haven't really figured out your body either. It's weird being a full machine now, but it will be okay. We will get this fixed and this body won't let you down.

Ari (as Misha)

It's not, it's not that I don't trust your body Hopper. It's just that I don't, it's all the time and I'm not used to feeling these things!

Hallie (as Hopper)

It's okay. It's okay, Misha. I can't imagine what it would be like to be a full machine like, um, Xoc just said. I know what it feels like to be metal now, I think, but it's, it's okay. I don't take offense.

Ari (as Misha)

It's, it's not the...

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Crosstalking.] It's the way it is.

Ari (as Misha)

[Strained.] It's, it's just like, I don't know. I know what's happening, but I'm also really confused.

Tom

Xoc will continue like, holding Misha just gently rock a little bit. *[The music fades.]*

Hallie

Hopper is so uncomfortable with this vision that he looks away.

Ari

But I also want to like, as I glance at, at Elee slash Xoc, they're going to be like,

Ari (as Misha)

Oh no, my ears are warm! Why are my ears warm now!

Hallie

Hopper put his hands over his face and just sits like that for a little bit.

Emily (as Elee)

[Strained.] I'm very uncomfortable with this situation.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah. Yeah, we should fix it. We should really fix it.

Emily (as Elee)

[Accusatory.] Did you take my hat off?

[More normal, whimsical music begins to play.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

It's really heavy.

Emily (as Elee)

Put it back on!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Okay.

Emily (as Elee)

Wait, no! I want to—

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Crosstalking.] Do you want to wear—

Emily (as Elee)

Should I put it on my head? Or should I put it on my head?!

Hallie (as Hopper)

It's—whatever you want!

Emily (as Elee)

[Distressed.] I don't know! But my hat should be on a head! Preferably mine!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Would it make you feel better to wear it now?

Emily

Elee will put the hat on Xoc's body's head.

Kyle

Hey, Elee all movement is one step harder now.

[Laughter from the party.]

Ari

Oh my god.

Tom

And you're impaired.

Ari

Yeah. I know!

Emily

Elee's gonna stagger and like, trip over these weirdly long legs and weirdly big feet and this long robe. It's, she doesn't understand how to walk.

Kyle

All right. So anything else before you make your way to the tower?

[A long pause.]

All right, that's gonna be a no.

Emily

[Snorts.]

Kyle

So you make your way to the tower. *[The music fades.]*

It's not a long walk. It is a bit slow, mostly because Elee can't really walk that fast. And also Misha just starts falling down every so often.

Ari

I also wanted to say that like **[00:30:00]** Xoc slash, like, Xoc-Misha has still the scarf, because I still want like, if Tom wants to use it mechanically I want too, but I want Misha to like be grabbing it, like, the back part of it, of the, as they are walking. Xoc walks a little bit too fast and like they're just straggling.

Tom

Xoc will slowly give more and more slack on the scarf to Misha until the scarf is wrapped around them once more.

Emily

Aw.

Ari

It's just a comfort thing.

Tom

Emotional support scarf.

Kyle

[Laughter.]

All right, so you eventually make your way to the tower, and I guess, there's a door. There's a knocker. There's a doorbell. What do you do?

Tom (as Xoc)

Can I—

Emily (as Elee)

[Crosstalking.] Kick it in!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Should I...I mean...

Tom (as Xoc)

I can try to kick it in Simon.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Yeah, go for it. Let me, let me, I'll try if you can't.

Tom

[Gleefully.] I cast fling on the door!

Ari

My god!

Tom

I love that spell so much.

Kyle

[Slightly startled.]

Um, okay. Give me a roll on fling.

Tom

All right, this time...how much edge do you have?

Kyle

The plan, here.

Emily

This is the new farstep. Fling is just the new farstep!

Tom

How much edge...you have, okay, that's an adequate amount of edge. So let's spend...how many points would it take? Four. I'm gonna spend two levels of effort on this. *[Dice roll.]* And I got it natural twenty!

Ari

Oh my God!

Hallie

Nice.

Tom

Because I'm Misha Jarvis now!

Emily

[Delighted laugh.]

Kyle

So, I was originally gonna cheat and say that by the rules of fling you can only do something your size or smaller, and since the door is technically bigger than you you only would have been able to fling the door knocker. However, since you rolled a twenty, what do you do with that door?

Tom

Is it strong enough to rip a door in off its hinges and like, blast it in?

Kyle

Yes.

Tom

I do that.

Kyle

As you do, you hear just a,

[Startled shriek.] And you just see two goblins get caught up by the door—

Tom

[Crosstalking.] Oh, no!

Kyle

And get slammed against the end wall with it.

Tom

[Slightly horrified.] Oh, no. Ohh!

Kyle

And the other one just walks up to you and is like,

Kyle (as the unharmed goblin)

[Disappointed.] Aw, man. I had a whole song and dance planned with those two other guys.

Tom (as Xoc)

Noo!

Kyle (as the unharmed goblin/Ben)

[Spooky music begins to play—it sounds a little chastising.]

Anyways, my name is Ben. Ben the goblin. My friends call me Benny. You can call me Ben. Big boss man said he's got this challenge for you, so, uh, here's the thing. What ya gotta do...I'm sorry. I'm still in song mood. Anyways, I can't can't do it by myself.

Tom (as Xoc)

[Distressed.] Are they okay? Are they going to make it?

Emily

They're dead.

Kyle

I'll leave this decision up to Ari. Ari, if Misha was pushing that door with all of their might with the fling, would the goblins have survived?

Ari

[Matter-of-factly.] No.

Tom

I mean, I...

Kyle

[Crosstalking.] The goblins...

Tom

[Crosstalking.] From the second I heard about someone getting caught in a thing that Misha Jarvis' body did it was like, these people are dead.

[Laughter from the party.]

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

Yeah, they're uh...

Kyle

And you just see a little bit of blood trickle out.

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

They're fine. They're fine. Well, anyways.

Ari (as Misha)

[Faintly.] Sorry!

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

Um.

Emily (as Elee)

Is this what sympathy feels like?

Hallie

Hopper's hands are just over his face over this whole scene.

Tom

Xoc is just horrified still.

Ari (as Misha)

[Strained.] Sorry! I didn't mean to do it again!

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

Anyway, so boss man says you got a big challenge to do. So, what we're going to do is, we've got four challenges, one for each of you.

Hallie (as Hopper)

Wait, wait, we were told one challenge.

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

Well, yeah, you gotta hit him. You gotta hit him. But you know, to get you there gotta test out your new body a little bit. Right? Right.

Emily (as Elee)

No, I don't think that's necessary. I think I can just get back to my strong one.

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

Listen. They're fun challenges. You might find out you even like your body! And, you know, if someone else kills your old one then at least you got a new one.

Ari (as Misha)

I, I won't do that Hopper, I promise!

Hallie

What?

[Laughter from the party.]

No, I genuinely didn't, I just heard, *[Imitating Ari.]* Hopper!

Ari

I said,

Ari (as Misha)

I, I won't do that Hopper, I promise! I'll try to be careful with it!

Tom

Oh!

Hallie

The thing is that Hopper just assumes that if anyone were to die, it would be his body in this scenario.

[Pained noises from the party.]

Emily

I've already impaired Xoc's body.

Hallie

[Through laughter.] It's true. You've already impaired Xoc's body. But Hopper just wants to clarify, because he cares,

Hallie (as Hopper)

What happens to the person stuck in the body?

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

I mean, it's body rules. You die, you die. Yeah? Yeah.

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Faintly.] Oh God.

Hallie

[Trying not to laugh.] See, now Hopper just feels guilty for landing Misha with a body they really, really don't understand, and is not a great entry level human body.

Kyle

Anyways, you can see four staircases have appeared, each of them which have a little plate with your name on it. And it's like Xoc (in Misha's body) to make it very clear.

Ari

[Amused.] Oh, I see.

Kyle

Ben will quickly say.

Kyle (as Ben the goblin)

Oh no! Wait, that's the wrong—nah, I'm just joshing. You guys are doing great.

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Sighs deeply.]

Kyle

Um...

Hallie

That's in character.

Kyle

So Hop, you're gonna go first. You are in the Elee challenge. So all of these are based on you embracing challenges **[00:35:00]** related to one of your character's skills or abilities in your, in your new bodies. And this one is going to be a skill and this will be the only one I'm going to explicitly tell you what it is.

[Gentle, tinkling nursery music begins to play.]

So you walk in and it's a very simple space. In the center, you see a mobile filled with, like, teeth and eyes, and underneath it, just this tiny little adorable bat all bundled up. And suddenly it starts wailing. Just, *[Intense crying baby noises.]*

Hallie

[Startled.] Uh...uh...

Ari

[Stifled laughter.] You have to...

Kyle

You have to use the babysitting skill.

Ari

It's back.

Hallie (as Hopper)

It's okay! Everything...

Hallie

He will approach the bat and leaned down to pick it.

Kyle

Uh, roll me speed defense.

Ari

[Faintly.] Nooo.

Hallie

All right. What is it we have for that.

[The music fades.]

Okay. I'm putting one one tier of effort into this. *[Dice roll.]* Twelve.

Kyle

You, you do successfully pick it up pretty well.

Hallie

Okay.

Kyle

One of the long strands of hair gets plucked from your head. You don't feel it, but emotionally you're like, *[Distressed noise.]*

Hallie

I can't ruin Elee. I can't do anything to Elee's body.

Kyle

But yeah, you pick up this baby, this baby bat. What do you do with it?

Hallie

Um, I've got this baby bat. Is it in a little blanket?

Kyle

Yes.

Hallie

Okay. I swaddle it tighter, tight blankets help when you're nervous.

Kyle

[Amused.] It's a little too tight. You are using Elee's strength.

Hallie

Oh, uh, back's up. He unswaddles it a little bit, and then just kind of like puts the baby bat on his shoulder and pats its back.

Kyle

I will let the former roll work for this.

Hallie

Okay.

Kyle

But I do need you to roll very quickly might defense.

Hallie

[Whispering.] God.

[Louder.] I have two edge in might, so I'm using two tiers of effort. *[Dice roll.]* That got—I rolled a nine.

Kyle

For a second as you're holding the baby, you just hear a, *[Faint wooshing nose.]*
As without your control or knowledge, the claws...

Tom

[Crosstalking over Kyle, clearly distressed.] Noooooo!

Kyle

[Crosstalking.] Start to extend from your hand.

Hallie

Ahhhh! No, no, no, no, no!

Ari

[Gasping laugh.]

Kyle

But you're able to clench down and successfully keep them in place long enough for the baby to fall asleep, and the door on the other side to open up.

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Strained.] Thank god.

Hallie

Hopper's like, sweating after that. I didn't want to stab the baby bat!

Kyle

All right. Elee, you walk into a room. There is a gap between you and the other end of the room, and at the bottom of the gap is a dark dark.

Emily (as Elee)

[In a frustrated groan.] Farstep.

Kyle

I like to believe that you say "farstep" to yourself, Elee, and just assume it'll work?

Emily

She'll groan it and then she'll be like,

Emily (as Elee)

[Thoughtful hum.] Farstep?

[Bright, mischievous music begins to play.]

Kyle

Nope.

Emily

She's gonna hold out her hands and wiggle your fingers.

Emily (as Elee)

[Whispering.] Magic.

Kyle

Nope. This is what we're going to do, okay? You can use farstep whenever you want, but you have to keep trying on methods until Tom says yes, that would work, because Tom knows what—how Xoc activates his magic. So I'm just gonna sit back and let this happen.

Emily

Okay next she's gonna poke around on her scalp. His scalp, her, a scalp. The scalp that her brain is inside of. Trying to find like, the little circuit thing, and then like—

[Laughter.] Maybe there's a hidden catch to pop something out or something.

Tom

Yeah. There's a, there's a, there's a hatch on the side of Xoc's head. You can open up the disc drive.

Emily

She opens it up and pokes in there, touches the brain bud or whatever that terrible thing was—

Kyle

Yep, it's a brain bud.

Emily

That crawled in there and, like, recoils, and like, shakes her head.

Emily (as Elee)

[Whispering incredulously.] Did I just touch my brain?

Emily

And then—

[Laughing.] She's gonna jump, not over, just, like, jump up in the air. She's gonna turn around in a circle. She's gonna clap. She's gonna point.

Tom

That will work!

Emily

She points super hard.

Kyle

And suddenly you just feel a, *[Warbling wooshing noise.]* And suddenly your finger is pointing against the door, which slides up and lets you through.

Emily

[Thoughtfully, then increasingly amused.] Elee wonders if Xoc has pointed every time he's farstepped.

Kyle

All right, Xoc. You are in the Misha room.

Ari

[Dryly.] Oh God.

Kyle

You see...you come out to the door and there's a door on the other side, and you see a stage, but you don't see an audience. All you see in the front row, with his arms crossed, wearing a very puffy conductor's shirt, a very stuffy orc. And you walk up, and you just see a stand.

Tom

[Very quietly.] Oh no.

Kyle

And you see sheet music.

Tom

[Louder.] Ohh no.

Ari

[Gleefully.] Ohhhhh!

Hallie

[Laughter.]

Tom

[Strained.] Oh no.

Kyle

So Tom, do you want one of my kazoos or do you have one in your room right now?

Tom

[Anxiously.] I don't know how—they don't work. None of my kazoos work.

Kyle

You take the big end and you **[00:40:00]** hum into it.

Tom

I'll try but it doesn't work.

Ari

Literally just make noises with your mouth, and something different will come on the other side.

Tom

I think my kazoos are all gone. I need one.

Kyle

Let me get a kazoo quick.

Tom

I've never been able to make a kazoo work in my life.

Ari

[A little smug.] Also, now, you know how it feels when they put you on the spot like, oh, play something on your kazoo, like...mistakes were absolutely made. I have no idea what to play on the spot like this. Just just make noises on one side, you know, if you blow it.

[The sound of Ari blowing air through a kazoo with no noise.]

Nothing comes. You have to make noises like—

[Ari blows again and hums this time. It honks like a goose.]

That.

Kyle

[Faintly in the background.] Here, you're just going to hum into it.

Tom

On this end?

Kyle

Yeah, yeah, so just hum.

Tom

[Hums through the kazoo.]

Ari

There you go!

Tom

[Hums again, more confidently.]

Kyle

Yeah! Just hum.

Ari

There you go.

Tom

[Continues to hum through the kazoo.]

Kyle

Just the one end.

Ari

Now you've learned how to play a kazoo! I'm so proud of you.

Tom

[Continuing to hum in the kazoo.]

Ari

[Hums a harmony on her kazoo.]

Tom and Ari

[Sustained kazoo music.]

Tom

Okay, I think I understand. So Xoc steps up to the stand, pulls out Misha's kazoo, and looks at the sheet music and says,

Tom (as Xoc)

I don't know how to read this.

Kyle

Aww!

Tom

And goes,

Tom (as Xoc)

[Xoc begins playing his song for Misha on the kazoo.]

Tom

[Laughter.] I'm struggling. I can't remember. I'm trying to remember...no, no, hold on. How's it go again.

[Tom tests out a few notes on the kazoo then begins playing the song once more.]

Ari

There you go, that's, that's right!

Tom (as Xoc)

[Playing the kazoo more confidently now.]

Tom

[Faint laughter.]

[The kazoo song fades into the sound of a harpsichord gently playing it.]

Kyle

And this orc, who I have now named Claude Rider, just wipes a tear from his eye.

Kyle (as Claude Rider)

[Applauding.] So, so good. Straight from the heart! But also I never want to hear it again.

Kyle

[The music fades.] And the door opens up and you can continue.

So finally.

["In The Hall of the Mountain King" starts to play very, very quietly, and very, very ominously.]

For our last challenge.

Misha.

Ari

[Hesitantly.] Yeah.

Kyle

You walk into a room. You see a table. A chair. A plate, a fork, a knife.

Ari

[With some dread.] Oh, no.

Kyle

And a calzoon.

Ari

Oh God, you did this!

Tom

Ohhhh, no!

Ari

So Misha is like, first going to like, eye it, and they are going to like, notice their stomach's making weird noises, and they're gonna look away. And then look back. And then look away, like,

Ari (as Misha)

I, no, I refuse to partake in the human tradition of food! I don't understand it. I don't want it! I—I don't want it!

Ari

And then they're gonna like, sit down at the table, look at it, and be like,

Ari (as Misha)

[Deeply conflicted.] I don't...but it smells so good!

Hallie

[Laughter.]

Ari

And then like, like at the middle of that sentence, they're just going to like, take a small like, tiny little bite of it. They're gonna do that at first and be like—and like,

Ari (as Misha)

Akay, maybe this is enough for human nourishment.

Ari

And then like, a little bite of it and then there's going to be like, a pause, and like a second of like,

Ari (as Misha)

Yeah, I think that was okay.

Ari

And then they're going to just like—go!

[Laughter from the party.]

And start like, chomping all of it. Not even fork or whatever, they're just, they're just on it.

Kyle

How sloppy does Hopper's body and face look the next time everyone sees him.

Ari

[The music begins to intensify.]

Absolutely sloppy. There's calzoon everywhere. I don't know how many calzoons are on the table, but Misha's going to eat all of them really fast.

Hallie

[Through laughter.] Nooo.

Kyle

I like to imagine that Misha eats one, and then there's no more, and you just hear a gravely,

[In a deeper, spooky voice.] More!

Emily

[Laughter.]

Kyle

And more start to appear.

Ari

Basically!

Hallie

Nooo.

Kyle

And Misha, you will eat until you no longer want calzoons.

Hallie

Noooo!

Ari

Oh, that's a problem.

Hallie

You can't do that—that's a problem!

Ari

In other words, they're going to eat until like, they get a moment to like breathe a little, and then realize that they've eaten too much way too fast. Like, that happens! That you're full and you don't realize it, and now everything hurts again and they're gonna fall off the chair from just...stomach hurting.

[The music fades.]

Kyle

The door opens up, and all future actions are one step harder.

Ari

It's fine.

Emily

Join me.

Kyle

All right, so you all make your way up the staircases, and you meet yourself at the top, and you see standing at the edge, waiting for all of you, sitting in his very vampiric chair, Victor Daemon.

Hallie

First, I just want to specify that when Misha in Hopper's body comes out with clear calzoon on Hopper's face, me, Hopper, is going to be like,

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Hopeful.] Did you get to eat a calzoon?

Ari (as Misha)

It was really good!

Hallie (as Hopper)

I know!

Ari (as Misha)

Food is so good! Why can't I taste food, it's so good! Why—it's so good, Hopper!

Hallie (as Hopper)

I know! I know, Misha.

Ari (as Misha)

[Pained.] And now my, my stomach hurts, but I still want more.

Hallie (as Hopper)

How many did you eat? **[00:45:00]**

Ari (as Misha)

I, I lost count after five.

Kyle

[Laughter.]

Hallie (as Hopper)

[Slightly taken aback.] Oh...okay!

Emily (as Elee)

[Scoffing.] Eating calzoons. I had to figure out how to farstep!

Ari

Like, it's like—they're gonna look like they're trying to maintain their posture, and also not just collapse again on the floor.

Kyle

Meanwhile, Victor Daemon says,

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Eerie, haunting music begins to play.]

Congratulations. You made it all the way here, and it looks like I didn't need any of these.

Kyle

And he motions four coffins to just fall off the edge of the tower.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Now...for your last challenge.

[The music fades.]

Come at me, bro.

Emily

Elee will go to... *[Dryly.]* Come at him. And then realize that her strength no longer lies in strength. *[Clears throat.]*

Emily (as Elee)

Hopper, punch him!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Well I, I was actually gonna wait because I feel like I would have the opportunity to have an asset if somebody else did it first!

Emily

[Laughter.]

Ari

Are you are you throwing it out at me?

Hallie

Oh, no, not at you specifically.

Kyle

Are you all just gonna fucking nose goes for it?

Tom

Look. All right.

Emily

[Laughter.]

Tom

If no one will do it. I wanted to be polite but Xoc'll stand for and be like,

Tom (as Xoc)

You! You, you messed with the wrong group of adventurers. Take this!

Tom

And I'm going to cast Shock to the System.

Ari

Ohhh, right, that thing I have! Oof.

Tom

And I'm gonna spend two levels of effort.

Kyle

What does Shock to the System do?

Tom

Flood the mind of your target with disturbing images and ideas. The affected target faints and collapses on the ground, remaining unconscious for two rounds.

Kyle

And what did you roll?

Tom

I rolled a ten with two levels of effort.

Kyle

What is he afraid of?

Tom

Clowns?

Ari

Existential dread?

Tom

The unending void?

Hallie

Qwhales?

Ari

Undead.

Emily

Spiders.

Ari

Well, we are all afraid of spiders now.

Hallie

[Laughter.]

Kyle

[The sound of a dial-up modem kicks on in the background.]

For a second his voice gives way.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

I feel like my voice is a lie...I feel like I have a much more...

Aaron Catano-Saez and Kyle (simultaneously, as Victor Daemon)

Ridiculously...

Kyle (as Victor Daemon)

Terrible voice when I was first recorded! Ahhh...

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Pained groaning.]

Kyle

And, yeah, he falls on the ground paralyzed.

Ari

Oh.

Tom

Now, it's negated if he takes any damage, but always said was we have to get a hit in so Xoc'll walk up and do a, boop! Hopefully doing zero damage by just booping.

Kyle

Yeah, you're Misha. Misha has got about the same buffness you do.

Tom

And then Xoc'll say,

Tom (as Xoc)

[Upbeat, almost beachy music begins to play.]

So long as each of us just taps him, we win!

[Slightly strained.] Hop should probably go last though.

Hallie

[Laughter.]

Tom (as Xoc)

Just in case you tap a little too hard and wake him up.

Emily (as Elee)

[Sternly.] Tap really hard, Hop.

Ari

Misha will go next.

Tom

Give him the boop!

Ari

And just poke it with their feet.

Emily

I'm gonna go and poke his face.

Kyle

And then finally...

Hallie

To be clear to the audience, Elee has, has an, has an ability called Opportunist, which gives me an asset on any attack role that you make against a creature that has been attacked at some point during the round and is within medium range. Just so the audience knows that I'm not a dick, except on purpose. So I'm going to fire the claws that he had such a hard time keeping in his hands.

Kyle

Give me a roll for it.

Hallie

[Dice roll.] Eleven.

Kyle

It hits him! What kind of hit does it do to him?

Hallie

Capable Warrior, my attack deals one additional point of damage, which makes for five points of damage. So Hopper wasn't, he doesn't, he doesn't trust himself in Elee's body. It is very strong. He is not used to wielding this kind of strength. So he was intentionally aiming for like, a shoulder? So it's a graze.

Kyle

Okay, so it scrapes him on the shoulder, and you just hear,

Kyle (as Victor Daemon)

Oww!

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Owwwww!

Hallie (as Hopper)

Sorry!

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

Hey! I...

Hallie (as Hopper)

I'm not sorry. I'm mad at you!

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Crosstalking.] Okay, ow!

Emily (as Elee)

You're lucky it was Hopper in that body.

Aaron Catano-Saez (as Victor Daemon)

[Still groaning.]

Kyle

[Talking over Victor's pained groans.] And the voice will continue as the landscape around you starts to disappear, and you can feel yourselves flying out of your bodies again, and we're going to end this with Xoc's point of view. So suddenly, Xoc, suddenly you just wake up with a start, and you realize you're not in Tremaine Bluffs anymore!

You can hear the whirring and the purring of the Prodigious outside as you wake on the second bunk of the ship. Thank God, it was all, it was all just a dream. And as you finally start to settle a little bit you hear Everett beneath you stir in his bunk.

[The music ends.]

And he just turns over to you and he says,

Hallie (as Ness, in Everett's body)

What are you looking at me for? What's wrong? Why do you...why do you have that look on your face?

[With dawning realization.] Noooooo!

[The mischievous, fast-paced spooky music of Tremaine Bluffs begins to play once more.]

[00:50:06]

[Kazoo playing begins.]

Tom

I had to.

Ari

There you go! Good job. I'm so proud of you.

Tom

Now that you, now that you've gotten me to start this you'll never get me to stop.

Ari

Now you understand! It is actually...

Tom

This is the rest of the session.

[Episode ends - 00:50:35]