

Worlds Beyond Number

Fireside Chat: Episode 004 - Ep 3 "The Charter" & Ep 4 "In the Deep"

Version 2

[Crickets chirp, and a campfire crackles. A bright and sweet song is plucked on an acoustic guitar.]

Erika Ishii

Hello, one and all, and welcome to another episode of our Fireside Chat. You are here to discuss Number 3, The Charter, and Episode Number 4, In the Drink, with Erika Ishii and...? [Whispered] Aabria!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh okay. Aabria Iyengar!

Lou Wilson

And John Economy.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

And John Economy.

John Economy [Lou]

That's my name today. It's John Economy. And we're also here with... Wait. Hello?

Erika Ishii

Wha—

John Economy [Lou]

Wait.

Aabria Iyengar

Hold on.

John Economy [Lou]

Is this—wait. Is is just—

Aabria Iyengar

Did we lose him?

Erika Ishii

Brennan?

John Economy [Lou]

Wait. Somebody check—

Erika Ishii

Brennan. Brennan.

John Economy [Lou]
—underneath everything.

Erika Ishii
Brennan.

John Economy [Lou]
Lift everything up.

Aabria Iyengar
I'm looking, I'm looking!

Erika Ishii
Brennan?

Aabria Iyengar
He's not here!

John Economy [Lou]
[Frantically] I'm looking under the pillows.

Erika Ishii
I checked the almond shelf, and he's not there either!

Aabria Iyengar
He chewed through the ropes!

John Economy [Lou]
He chewed through the ropes, god dammit. He's on the loose.

Erika Ishii
[Deep sigh] Alright.

John Economy [Lou]
I'm going to put out a Ginger Alert, or an Amber Alert, or I don't know, whatever you put out for adults.

Erika Ishii
[Chortles]

Aabria Iyengar
I feel like amber also works because that's kind of a ginger color

John Economy [Lou]
Amber also works, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Amber is definitely the color of his energy.

Aabria Iyengar
It's an Auburn Alert.

John Economy [Lou]
Ooh! There it is. I knew as I was going to say it, that there was a fun version of it.

Aabria Iyengar
We got there.

John Economy [Lou]
An Auburn Alert. I like that. We're sending out an Auburn alert.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughs]

John Economy [Lou]
If your phones are going off like crazy right now, it's because we've lost Brennan.

Aabria Iyengar
Ugh. Ya hate—

Erika Ishii
That's right. But don't worry! He'll be back soon! Right now he's just in the wind, a little bit.

Aabria Iyengar
You could have said "In the Drink," like the name of the episode.

Erika Ishii
[Snapping] Well, why don't you host this podcast then Aabria??

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] I got bad lungs!

Erika Ishii
Is that what you want!?

Aabria Iyengar
[Coughs weakly] I'm sick. [More weak coughing]

Erika Ishii
[Also coughs weakly]

John Economy [Lou]
Alright. Yeah! [Laughing] Just get the coughing foley for this episode, Brennan's gone. So here's—
[Everybody breaks down into crying laughter]

John Economy [Lou]
—here's 90 minutes of coughing. And now sneezing. And then sniffles.

Erika Ishii

Alright, Mr. Economy, that's enough out of you. Alright, so—

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh!

Erika Ishii

Episode Number 3, The Charter, in which the gang goes to the port, and sets sail, and we are left with that cliffhanger, of the captain attacking Ame. Uhh. Yeah. What—I don't—do you all remember [laughing] what all happened? In it?

John Economy [Lou]

Of course!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]

We're professionals!

Aabria Iyengar

100%

John Economy [Lou]

Who came to have a talkback about an episode—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing]

John Economy [Lou]

—that we all watched. And by watched, yeah, I watched the sound forms. No. I think—I can kick things off happily by saying I think this episode was really exciting, because, we were all in it the whole time!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

It's true! The quest begins. The quest begins!

Aabria Iyengar

Finally!

John Economy [Lou]

Or I guess not "all in it." We were all together the whole time.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Erika Ishii
Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar
Lou, how did it feel to get to be in a whole episode? [Breathless laughter]

Erika Ishii
[Cackling]

John Economy [Lou]
I'm glad Brennan's not here. These are questions you can only ask. It was nice, it was really great. I think—Eursulon had been having such a hard time in his life—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]
—that it was fun to play out the kind of, delight, and ease that comes with being back in a comfortable, and familiar space. And I think, especially with kind of leaving things off, at the end of episode 2, with this beautiful moment with Ame being like, now you have a quest—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
I think it was a really fun energy to kind of, take on that, that beginning, the beginning of something. And then also, I think, the experience of watching, and seeing how much the two of you had grown in your craft. Starting with the experience we had at that house we stayed at—

Erika Ishii
Ah!

John Economy [Lou]
—where Ame creates the tincture for the pregnant—?

Aabria Iyengar
The cholicky baby.

Erika Ishii
The baby!

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Yeah! It was so cute, too, because you can see everybody's reaction of, Ame being like, "Aw, there's a baby! And we can help out, and sleep in this lovely little home!" And Suvi's like, "We should have gotten a hotel."

Aabria Iyengar
We could get a hotel room.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing]

Aabria Iyengar
This is like, my actual energy whenever anyone's like, "let's get this cute—let's stay in a hostel." I'm like, we could stay in a hotel.

John Economy [Lou]
Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
Can we just be hotel people? Bougie. Please.

Erika Ishii
That's what happened to me in New York. And I'm like, "Oh! Maybe I am more like Suvi than I'm like Ame. Oh, no!"

[Raucous laugh] Join me.

John Economy [Lou]
In a—sharing a real life fact. I'm full Suvi now. I don't think—

John Economy [Lou]
Yesss!

John Economy [Lou]
—I think there was, like, a part of my life where I was like, [Coquettish laughter, in a falsetto] "An Airbnb!"

[Aabria and Erika burst out laughing]

John Economy [Lou]
"Do you see this? They've got like, a kitschy arrow on the wall! And like, an accordion that you can play! How fun!" And now I'm like—now, having done that for a few years, and had very poor experiences a couple of times, I'm like, give me someone, who has to wear a tie saying, welcome—

Aabria Iyengar
Thank you!

Erika Ishii
Welcome Mr. Economy! To the Economy Lodge!

John Economy [Lou]
Exactly! Welcome Mr. Economy! It's so nice to see you at the Economy Lodge, which you own.

[Aabria and Erika laughing]

John Economy [Lou]
The Econo Lodge, which you own and are the namesake of.

Erika Ishii

No, seriously, I remember the last time—the last time—was when I was in a Comic Con room with, I kid you not, ten other women.

Aabria Iyengar

I remember those days. Oof-uh.

John Economy [Lou]

[Laughing] Ha cha cha! Ha cha cha!

Erika Ishii

Yeah, but it was at the Omni, which was right across the street from the convention center. So I was like, this is it, the jackpot. But I remember—all of them were cosplayers, and so it was like, a mess, a full mess.

Aabria Iyengar

Ough.

Erika Ishii

And I remember curling up on somebody's Falcor themed ball gown, under a table, at night and being like, [Pitifully] "I'm gonna die here!"

John Economy [Lou]

[Frenzied uncontrollable laughter]

Erika Ishii

"I'm gonna die!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing, out of breath] Absolutely!

Erika Ishii

"With God as my witness, I will never share another hotel room again!"

John Economy [Lou]

I don't think there's any—

Aabria Iyengar

Not to dunk—oh, go ahead.

John Economy [Lou]

No, please dunk. Please dunk!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Oh, always do the dunking.

Aabria Iyengar

Just, not to dunk on Airbnb, but like, people go to college to be good at hotel stuff, like—

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
That's so important to me.

Erika Ishii
And actually to SPECIFICALLY dunk, directly over the head of Airbnb, like, it's just a bunch of landlords, that want people to fund their lifestyle. And so, you know. To hell with Airbnb.

John Economy [Lou]
Great. We've already—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]
Brennan leaves for one week—

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing]

John Economy [Lou]
—and we lose a sponsor, Immediately! I guess we should cancel our meeting with Airbnb.

Erika Ishii
[Cackling]

John Economy [Lou]
But no, there was—I think there was something very cool, in this episode, with little moments like that—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
—of just how far—in the sweetness of them being together, and the true friendship we saw, kind of at the end of episode 2, to these moments of kind of like, "Well, in the years since we left each other, I don't do this like, 'sleeping bad' shit anymore."

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah! Right? I will say I super loved, because I think the top of the episode has Eursulon's conversation with his boy, Oscar?

John Economy [Lou]
Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
And I think that was like—

Erika Ishii
[Gasps] Aww.

Aabria Iyengar
—like a stealth, very sweet, moment of just—Eursulon wasn't entirely alone, there were people that genuinely cared for him, and were looking out for him, but we also got really important peeks at Eursulon—the bottles, in his hay, and—

John Economy [Lou]
Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
—the underwear, which is just my favorite thing, and my mom—

John Economy [Lou]
Ah!

Aabria Iyengar
—very specifically in the text, in her bullet points of what she liked about the episode. She was like

Erika Ishii
[Hoots]

Aabria Iyengar
The panty thing! Hilarious!

Erika Ishii
Wait, waitwaitwaitwaitwaitwaitwait, back up, back up. Mama Aabria—

Aabria Iyengar
Yes.

Erika Ishii
—has—sends a bullet list—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah, my mom's—

Erika Ishii
—of things she likes about every episode.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah! She's got like—

Erika Ishii
Ahh!

Aabria Iyengar
—she's like "I was listening and here are the three things I liked!"

Erika Ishii
[Wheezing from cuteness]

Aabria Iyengar
And then a little note about "I don't know if I approve of where Suvi's going."

John Economy [Lou]
Ah ha ha!

Aabria Iyengar
"I don't know if I like this."

[Erika starts cackling uncontrollably and Aabria joins in]

John Economy [Lou]
Love that.

Aabria Iyengar
Which is fair!

Erika Ishii
This is a grandmother disapproving of how you're raising a grandchild.

Aabria Iyengar
Truly.

[Aabria and John Economy laugh]

Erika Ishii
Oh my goodness. But it's so funny, yeah, speaking of growing. It does feel like, you know how when you've been childhood friends with somebody, or even have a family member, and then you meet up years later, and you're like, "Oh no, I don't know that we would be friends if we met now."

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Erika Ishii
That's really sad and scary!

John Economy [Lou]
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
But I think that makes it such an interesting like—we have this very small party, and all of that context that like, hey, you're all patrons. You're listening to this. You've listened to the Children's Adventure. You have that sort of foundational document, like, the Magna Carta of their friendship, and now you're meeting them, and it can't just be "And we're the three best friends and we're going to take on the whole world."

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

It's just so much more interesting, now that we're playing with the texture and the friction of what three adults, who knew each other for... Six months at best? 13 years ago, at best. Like, who are—you have to reintroduce yourself, and it's so interesting, like, meeting your characters as adults, and it's honestly such a delight to listen to as we record. Ah! It's just been so nice to meet you guys!

Erika Ishii
It's so true.

John Economy [Lou]
[Chuckles]

Erika Ishii

We have such strong reasons for traveling together as a party, and staying together, and caring about each other—it's so high stakes in that regard—but we have so many opportunities to clash. And I love that, it's just really, truly my favorite aspects of all storytelling, of like, high stakes, and strong reasons to be in relationships together, but ALSO the friction of figuring our shit out together.

John Economy [Lou]

Yeah. I mean, I'm sure we've talked about it before. I think we've talked about how in the same, kind of, camp moment, where we were recording these episodes, we had recorded the Children's Adventure. So I remember it being a real, kind of, mind fuck for me personally, when it—because we did the Children's Adventure, and we were finishing that out, and kind of, all of those days and moments were like, 'Ha ha ha! We'll love you forever!'

[Aabria and Erika burst into laughter]

John Economy [Lou]

Chasing after Suvi being like, "I'll see you one day!" And then—

Aabria Iyengar

Oh god! "Aaahhh! you're my best friend!"

John Economy [Lou]

I feel very lucky that I get to play a character who missed you guys so much, and didn't have a great life, and is excited to see you guys again, because there is, I think, especially—you know, leaning a little into thematic moments from episode 4, when the tension starts happening, Eursulon's a little like, wait—

[Aabria and Erika cackle]

John Economy [Lou]

Eursulon is like the friend in the friend group who's like, "Oh my god! It's my best friends!" And they're like, "Yes. And we have changed." And I'm like, "I was too busy trying to find food. Anyway! It's so good to see you!"

[Aabria and Erika continue cackling]

Aabria Iyengar
Oh god! Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Oh god. Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
I definitely—I feel like I—but I think that's very true to me as a real person—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
—so I feel very much like I've picked the role that is most of me, which is like, "As soon as we're all back together, that's the best Thing! And yeah, we fight—you guys are fighting and, you'll get over it, and then we'll be the best friends again! Like, it's gotta—you have to—it's there, it's there. We're going to find it. We're going to find it!"

Erika Ishii
Yup yup. I think Ame is probably in the same boat there, and it's like, "Oh, this is just a little hiccup in things! Everything's fine! It's good to be with your true best friends again!" And look, we did have those moments of "the potatoes are warmed by the light of your friendship!"

Aabria Iyengar
Oh my god! Potatoes. The potato sleepover—

Erika Ishii
The potato sleepover was sooo cute!

Aabria Iyengar
—weeping, was fully weeping, listening to that. God.

Erika Ishii
There's a couple of really lovely pieces of fan art of it—

Aabria Iyengar
Yesss!

John Economy [Lou]
Ah, yes.

Erika Ishii
—of the little matryoshka, the stacked up—Ame stacked on Eursulon, and Fox stacked on Ame, and then Suvi, grumpily like, coming on over.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughs]

Erika Ishii
So cuuute!

Aabria Iyengar

But I think there's something so interesting about the like, you know, the unguardedness, when you're sleepy, like, when you are your real self, when you drop all of those facades, you seek warmth, and you seek your friends, and you seek the ideal of friendship that you still remember from those years ago.

Aabria Iyengar

And then in the waking world, all of the things that you've learned, and the expectations of who you're supposed to be, come crashing back. And I think—I'm very much speaking for a lot of Suvi's mental thing, but I love having those moments like, walls dropped, tired, grumpy, in the middle of the night, you reach out and you grab for your friends. And then during the day, all of the things you learned in the Citadel come back.

Erika Ishii

Aww, awww!

Aabria Iyengar

It's so fun, you guys. I'm having such a good time.

Erika Ishii

Okay, we're going to skip, to talk about episode 4. Like I— Aabria, you are—god, I keep saying, "Oh, Aabria makes moves that you're like, oh, that's going to pay off in 100 episodes." And like that—y'all saw it. The "Do not contradict me in front of others again."

Aabria Iyengar

[Can't breathe from laughing]

John Economy [Lou]

That shit—

Erika Ishii

Holy shit! Holy shit, Aabria.

John Economy [Lou]

There was a part of me, a little bit, like truly, when we were playing it as John Economy the man, thinking like, "Are we going to just be like—is this just gonna be a fun campaign? Like, are we just gonna be three sweeties who like, wander through the world, like, making it a brighter and more beautiful place," and then, like, the back to back of like, "I slit her throat." And then up against, "Don't fuckin' contradict me in front of strangers." I was like "Ah, yeah."

[Aabria and Erika are giggling]

John Economy [Lou]

It just felt like permission that like, down the road it's like, yeah, these are real characters, that have real priorities, and opinions, and when they come up, when those fires get lit, and alight in people, they get expressed, and there is no— and we don't hold back. And that was DEEPLY raw. Deeply raw in the best way.

Erika Ishii

Sooo hard.

Aabria Iyengar

I have never—like, I don't know if you guys saw me hyperventilating before I said it. I was like, "is this too much, is this too much?" Like, are we going to break the gentle bosom of our actual friendship, with me being an absolute asshole in the moment?

John Economy [Lou]

Never. We're only stronger because of it.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Aw yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

I will say, my favorite thing that sort of happened organically, was the fact that like, that fight, and the way it sort of shook out, directly followed Eursulon and Suvi like, sparring.

John Economy [Lou]

That's right, yes.

Erika Ishii

Yeah!

Aabria Iyengar

And it was just such a sweet moment, and of course, Brennan, in his infinite scope as, just a brilliant storyteller, called out the fact that this is a moment of joy, for people who've experienced a lot of happiness, but very little joy.

Erika Ishii

Fun. She's had fun. She's had fun, but not joy.

Aabria Iyengar

[In unison] She's had fun, but not joy.

Erika Ishii

Oagh!!

Aabria Iyengar

And then, immediately having that spin into, "and now you're going to see what we mean when we say that," the moment the fight broke out, and you got to see how Suvi actually has been trained for years. Like, yeah, no, of course, I don't use a sword. I kill people. I don't fight for fun.

John Economy [Lou]

That was a fun moment to play as a character, going from being like, haHA! Like, I was the knight who like, I was the protector in childhood. And now you—you shoot like glass, into shadow.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, Suvi's a stone cold badass.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing]

Erika Ishii
Like, truly.

John Economy [Lou]
I'm fighting a shade with a broomstick like, 90% of the time, and then once I get an actual sword—

Aabria Iyengar
But you're proficient in that broomstick!

John Economy [Lou]
I had to fight for it! We had to fight for that!

Erika Ishii
The return of Iyengar and Mulligan: Pro Bono Rules Lawyers.

John Economy [Lou]
He didn't make it easy for me to find proficiency in said broomstick!

Erika Ishii
[Laughs]

John Economy [Lou]
But it was definitely like—to have a fight as the—I don't know, I think it's one of the things I really love about this campaign overall, is that like, because we know we have time, and because we know that we have the breadth of as many episodes as we're hoping to do, I can fight as a—we can have a fight, and I could be "The Paladin," and I could eat shit with a broomstick—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]
—and then a play foil, and it feels like, narratively, right on for me. I think in almost—in so many other campaigns, and ways that I've played this game, I would be so fucking pissed at a fight like that—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]
—of being like, "I'm the fuckin'!.." And I think it's so like—with how you start D&D campaigns, even when you play a level 1 paladin, you play a paladin that shows up and is like, "What's up? I'm here. I'm a fully—full born paladin with shield and everything, and I go—and I'm ready to kill." And it's like, you know, Eursulon really felt like a dude who had been—that fight really validated all the feelings I was having inside, of like, yeah, Eursulon's a guy who spent most of his life, not fighting, but kind of being a theatrical—being in theater—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
—and like, fighting to survive

Erika Ishii
And surviving, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]
Yes! No training. It felt like a fight of somebody with zero training, versus somebody like Suvi who's had a lifetime—not a lifetime's worth, but has been consistently training.

Aabria Iyengar
But I think, like—god, what a little metaphor that's just unfurled in front of us. The idea that Eursulon's skill, the thing you developed, is surviving. And you tanked a hit that would have dropped both me and Ame.

Erika Ishii
Mhm.

John Economy [Lou]
Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
You and I are both lil guys, and I think we both have 8 hit points each, right, Erika?

Erika Ishii
Yup. Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. And John Economy here, just shook off 10 and went, yeah, I'm fine, I remember being like—

John Economy [Lou]
There it is.

Erika Ishii
Yep. It's true.

Aabria Iyengar
—could you imagine!?

Erika Ishii
[Laughing]

Aabria Iyengar
Aah! Aah!

John Economy [Lou]
Now that Brennan's not here, I mean—

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughs]

John Economy [Lou]
—we can take a moment in this Fireside—

Aabria Iyengar
Yes.

John Economy [Lou]
—to talk about how egregious that was, right?

Aabria Iyengar
Yes. Just. Buckwild.

Erika Ishii
Yuh! What a piece of shit that man is!

John Economy [Lou]
Asshole piece of shit!

Erika Ishii
I died! I died! I got dropped! The first time—the first roll of our campaign like—

Aabria Iyengar
That's. The funniest thing in the world.

Erika Ishii
The first attack from a bad guy, and I died-uh!!

John Economy [Lou]
It's—

Aabria Iyengar
You're a sweet little witch!

John Economy [Lou]
Yes!

Erika Ishii
I'm just a sweet little wiiiiititch!

John Economy [Lou]
Why'd he have to make you such a sweet little wiiiiititch?

Erika Ishii
Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]

Why couldn't he give you one, like—you didn't even get to do like a—

Erika Ishii

[Whining] Brennan!

John Economy [Lou]

And didn't he kill you on an opportunity attack?

Erika Ishii

Yes-uh!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

It wasn't full on ass attack!

Aabria Iyengar

It was really funny.

John Economy [Lou]

That's some of the rudest shit. You know he's got that DM screen for a reason, alright?

Aabria Iyengar

Yup.

John Economy [Lou]

And it's so—

Erika Ishii

And there was me—so here was me, with a cute little I'm like, "Phoo! I blow pepper in her face!" Fun little character building moment! And he's like, "She takes you down, and you're bleeding on the deck, bruises blossoming on your body." Like, fuck!

Aabria Iyengar

That was truly—

Erika Ishii

Fuck that man!

Aabria Iyengar

—the funnest, like—god, what a moment. Because I remember looking at you when you did that, and I was like, how delightful! and then you got dropped. And there was a moment where I was like, "Uh, John Economy, we have got to get our shit together!"

John Economy [Lou]

Hey, what's up!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god, do not—please do not season this woman, she will fucking kill us!

John Economy [Lou]

Do not season this woman!

[Aabria and Erika giggle]

Erika Ishii

But it's—

John Economy [Lou]

Seasoning is not an effective way!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing]

Erika Ishii

It's so funny, it's true, how like, everybody in that—I'm such a fan of storytelling through combat, and the idea of yeah, Eursulon tanking that hit, using whatever was available to him at the time, Suvi snapping into action and wrecking shit, and Ame just kind of being there, and just being like—

Aabria Iyengar

No!

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] "Oh nooooo!!" And the fox, Ame and the Fox—

Aabria Iyengar

Ame and the Fox!

Erika Ishii

—sort of like, working together. [Crying] Oh Fox!

Aabria Iyengar

[Crying] Fox!

Erika Ishii

Paws!

John Economy [Lou]

Little paws. "Boss? Boss?"

Aabria Iyengar

"Boss?"

Erika Ishii

"Boss?" Oh my god, I love him.

Aabria Iyengar

So good! But also okay, now we gotta talk about it. We gotta talk about the aftermath. The most beautiful thing—

Erika Ishii

How the mouth is a better hole? Probably a good hole.

John Economy [Lou]

Jesus C—

Erika Ishii

The mouth is a good hole.

Aabria Iyengar

Ya know.

Erika Ishii

A better hole.

John Economy [Lou]

That's a real conversation for—a real bleed moment, of just being like Eursulon was described as walking over, and would hear that and go, I'm good. There's just no—

[Aabria and Erika start cackling]

Erika Ishii

Hard left to Suvi.

John Economy [Lou]

Hard left. Hard left with two people having an intimate conversation about their holes, just being like, "Let me tell you about the hole, that you are, to me."

Erika Ishii

Yeah, you're a good hole, a better hole.

John Economy [Lou]

"You're a good hole," Jesus fuckin' Christ.

Aabria Iyengar

Buck wild. But like, god, the beauty of just—ah! Watching the friendship between Eursulon and Ame. And this like—

Erika Ishii

Aah! The lay on hands, being a hug!

Aabria Iyengar

The lay on hands that was a hug, that idea of protecting you always, and like, the bond that you two had, when you were in the woods trying to send him home. And I'll give just a little peek behind the way Suvi watched that is—remember, Suvi left first, so she doesn't know how long you guys have been together. And I think there's a really fun—

Erika Ishii
[Nervously] Yeaaaah...

Aabria Iyengar
—tension dynamic here of like, there's three of us, so we'll always be playing with the idea of a pair and a spare.

[Erika and John Economy gasp]

Aabria Iyengar
Who are the people in sync, and who's the person out the loop?

John Economy [Lou]
Eugh. Eugh!

Aabria Iyengar
Oh, sorry. I know that seemed really mean, but, like—

John Economy [Lou]
Well it's funny because it's like, we are looking back. So it's like you could say that now—

Erika Ishii
Oh no! Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
—I think if you had said that in the moment, I would have been like, whoa whoa woah! That's not—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]
Like I would have found some way for Eursulon to communicate like, you're not the spare. If you're ever wondering if the other two of us are a pair.

[Aabria and Erika cackle raucously]

John Economy [Lou]
But that's INTENSE dude, intense.

Aabria Iyengar
Good communication is the death of drama.

Erika Ishii
Well, and also, like Suvi WOULD be thinking about that power dynamic.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Fully, whereas Ame would not. It's so funny, too, how I feel like episode 4 was so much about—because me as a player, me, Erika, was thinking about like, oh yeah, Ame is so wise and so adept in the world, she's very charismatic, she gets along with everybody—

Aabria Iyengar
[Quietly] Yeah!

Erika Ishii

—and just like, being 100% on the back foot for so much of this. And I was like, why is that happening? Is it because I'm a dumb player?

Aabria Iyengar
No!

Erika Ishii

And then I realized—But no! And then it was, when Suvi goes after Ame, it's like, oh she just doesn't understand power dynamics at all. And like, Brennan called it up too, when they get to Port Talon, and the idea you don't need community here to survive, which means—

Aabria Iyengar
Yes, god, what a phrase!

Erika Ishii
Yes!

John Economy [Lou]
Yes.

Erika Ishii

Which means, you have to understand your place in society, and what your advantages are, and that's not something that Ame ever had to THINK about. Hooooly god.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh, I got some mean shit to say that I'm going to save for a fight between Suvi and Ame. But like—

Erika Ishii
Oh I can't wait!

Aabria Iyengar

Let's be clear, Ame has been raised understanding power dynamics, but witches in small towns are always at the top of the food chain. Always.

Erika Ishii
Yes and no.

John Economy [Lou]
Mmmmm.

Aabria Iyengar
But no—

Aabria Iyengar
We'll discuss it later.

Aabria Iyengar
—but that's why you guys are called Grandmother!

Erika Ishii
Yes.

John Economy [Lou]
Guys this is getting too much. This is getting too much like the game.

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
No, it's so GOOD though!

Erika Ishii
We're giving too much, we're giving too much away-yuh!

Aabria Iyengar
It's so GOOD-uh!

Erika Ishii
But it is very very juicy.

John Economy [Lou]
Save it! Save it for when we play!

Erika Ishii
You just pulled a very tasty little thread, that will be explored at a further date. But yes, what an interesting thing to bring up. GOD! Ugh.

Aabria Iyengar
But I loved getting to Port Talon, and you two like, clocking the witchfires, and ugh!

Erika Ishii
Oh yeah! And you were like Yeah, we all smell that.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah, we all smell that the same! [Laughs]

John Economy [Lou]
But Brennan's description of Port Talon when we get there is so cool, and just feels like—it's just—he's a MASSIVE asshole for what he did to Ame, and not letting a little paprika do—

Aabria Iyengar
[Cackles]

John Economy [Lou]
—a d12s worth of damage, but—

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughs]

John Economy [Lou]
—that description of the way, you just—it really sits you in IT, and I feel like, you know, since—when we start playing in Port Talon, it's so crystal clear to me, kind of everything we're moving through—

Aabria Iyengar
Truly.

John Economy [Lou]
—what Eursulon's time before looked like there. And you know, I'll tell ya, what a mystery we have on our hands.

Aabria Iyengar
Hey, there's nothing funnier in the entire world, than just yelling [Breaks down laughing]

Erika Ishii
[Yelling] Finley!

Aabria Iyengar
Finley!

Erika Ishii
Finley!

John Economy [Lou]
I remember—

Erika Ishii
Was so FUNNY!

John Economy [Lou]
—immediately—

Erika Ishii
And then also, Taylor adding on at the end, the final FINLEY!

John Economy [Lou]
I remember Taylor—

Erika Ishii
After he like, describes the the throat being SLASHED open, he's bleeding on the floor. It's a mess.
[Laughing]

John Economy [Lou]

Taylor came into the room afterward, and was like, I can cut that, unless—he immediately was like, that last one, do you want me to keep that? Is that really where Eursulon is at?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs.]

John Economy [Lou]

And I was like. Yeah.

[Aabria and Erika die laughing]

John Economy [Lou]

He's just that—it's like when you walk into a room and you're like—what's the real world example where you're like, "We're gonna rock 'em!"

Aabria Iyengar

Oh yeah. Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

And then you walk into a room and they're not there, and you're like, "Well—well let me—we're gonna break their chairs!" Like like, it's like, "We have to!" Eursulon's coming in here just too damn hot, to like—

Erika Ishii

I love that, where he's like, getting all—he's gotten a little pumped up, he's finally coming back, and he's a big man on campus, with his two awesome mage friends.

John Economy [Lou]

Especially now that I know what—Especially by that moment, I feel like, I've seen you both in your element at different moments. And it's like, yeah, my competent ass friends, and I, have returned. You knew me when I was weak.

Aabria Iyengar

We're either gonna fix your baby, or slit your throat.

John Economy [Lou]

[Laughing] Exactly!

Aabria Iyengar

Which one do you want?

Erika Ishii

[Cackling]

John Economy [Lou]

Which—I'll tell ya, you tell me which way. It's up to you, Finley!

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]

And so it's just really disappointing, but you know. You can't put a period on your own sentence.

[Aabria and Erika take a moment and then fully lose it]

John Economy [Lou]

Like, that's up to somebody else.

Aabria Iyengar

[Whispering] So dope.

Erika Ishii

[Wore out] Oh that's so funny.

John Economy [Lou]

I'm very excited to explore—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah? Oh my god!

Erika Ishii

Explorations.

John Economy [Lou]

—and get some damn answers.

Erika Ishii

Oh, my god.

Aabria Iyengar

We need some answers!

Erika Ishii

Seriously, and I just feel like, some of the dynamics that started unfurling in episode 4 are just—ough, they're so juicy, and ough, seeing them now from a bird's eye view, with a little bit of time between it, you're all remarkable.

Aabria Iyengar

Same!

Erika Ishii

But we have to get into a couple of questions, which we can continue along this thread, I think, with Mel's question. Mel asks "For your character, what's the easiest aspect to play, the hardest, and the most fun." And it says, "Brennan, feel free to choose from any and all NPCs," but he's not here, so he doesn't get to talk.

Aabria Iyengar

Brennan doesn't go here.

Erika Ishii
Yah. Aabria!

Aabria Iyengar
Oh!

Erika Ishii
Easiest, hardest, and most fun.

Aabria Iyengar
Okay, easiest aspect to play. God, this is going to sound so antisocial. I think getting to lean into all of the mean things that Suvi think—

Erika Ishii
[Hissing whisper] Yesssss...

Aabria Iyengar
—I wish I could say that was harder, but I think those are like—

John Economy [Lou]
[Chuckle]

Aabria Iyengar
—those are all the first thoughts that you put away with like, time, and wisdom, and therapy—

[Erika and John Economy laugh]

Aabria Iyengar
—and getting to just lean in and be like, "First thought: everything's bad, don't let anything bad happen to anyone, and no one gets to stop you once you've made a decision," feels very good. So like. Letting Suvi lead with her, "I've got this" foot, like, "This is what I was trained for," is very good and fun.

John Economy [Lou]
Mmm.

Aabria Iyengar
The hardest? Honestly, just—I think it's trying to find the right balance of like, yeah, we're beginning to play a very interesting game with like, who you are, and trying to reintegrate with a specific kind of friend group. And trying to land that, without seeming weird, or insincere, or overly jokey at times, I think, is the hardest balance to strike. And the most fun, I think, is just honestly, you guys are so, just, fun to be with at a table—

Erika Ishii
Awww!

Aabria Iyengar
—and it's just, getting to watch everyone, find those beautiful moments, and like, I think you never really turn off your GM/DM brain? So like, watching your friends, who are the best in the world at what they do, grab moments out of the ether and make them shine, is just truly the most delightful thing in the world.

Erika Ishii
[Squeals with joy]

Aabria Iyengar
And I could do it all day, and I get to and that's the coolest!

John Economy [Lou]
Gigi!

Erika Ishii
Mr. Economy. Same question. Easiest, hardest, and most fun!

John Economy [Lou]
I think the easiest part of playing Eursulon is, I think, his relationship to—is his relationships to Ame and Suvi. I think there's like a real—I'd like to believe, as much as I can, that protector, and an aide to my friends, is something that—if anything, it's something—playing Eursulon is not—it is easy because it feels like I can do the things I want to do in my real life. It's like the way in which—

Aabria Iyengar
Aww!

John Economy [Lou]
—you can support, and uplift, and be a champion for the people around you.

Erika Ishii
[Touched] Augh!

John Economy [Lou]
You can do that, unrestricted from the social bonds and expectations of our daily lives, and in this real world.

Aabria Iyengar
[Sweetly] Aw, John!

John Economy [Lou]
There's something very—and kind of the isolation of Eursulon, from most—like, the kind of separateness of society in a high fantasy setting versus our instagram infused age is just like, "What's up? You can stan your homies 24/7." So I think that's the easiest part.

[Aabria and Erika giggle]

Erika Ishii
Aww!

John Economy [Lou]
I think the hardest part is, I think, the alienness of playing a spirit in the material world. I think there's like—there are moments where I really just want to be like, "Eursulon fucking gets it!" And there are moments where it's played for comedy, where it's like, great.

John Economy [Lou]

The comedic moments are fun, but I think there are definitely moments where I'm like, I don't wanna—let me just—let Eursulon just get it! But I feel like I—it's not restrictive, right?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

I'm not holding myself back, but it is that, accepting that Eursulon—elements of this world should be, and will be, new for him. And I think that is—sometimes the person in me wants to be like, well, just—I get it, I get it. And it's like, but Eursulon doesn't.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

And the most fun parts are... It's not that it's hard, I'm just picking one.

Aabria Iyengar

Aww!

Erika Ishii

Mmmmm!

John Economy [Lou]

I think it is so fun to play something like—something so truly narrative? Like something so cinematic, or like—

Aabria Iyengar

Uh!

John Economy [Lou]

—the idea of a thing, that wants to be a knight?

Erika Ishii

Ohhh!

John Economy [Lou]

Like, there's something so fun to charging at that goal, because it's so classic.

Aabria Iyengar

Hell yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

There's something really fun to play something just super like, of stories, of like "Somebody who wants to use power for good!"

Erika Ishii

[Laughs] Aww!

John Economy [Lou]

Right now, I'm a level 1 and Brennan won't let us—has said off camera, that he won't let us get to level 2 until episode 50.

Aabria Iyengar

[Bursts out laughing] Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

But it's fun to know that once I get that power—

Erika Ishii

Horrible little man,

John Economy [Lou]

He's that horrible little man.

Aabria Iyengar

He's terrible. He's a terrible man. There, I said it.

[Aabria and Erika giggle]

John Economy [Lou]

Knowing that if one day I do become powerful, and my character doesn't get killed by Brennan in two episodes—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]

—will be able to enact—to live up to the virtue, and goals, and things that he's working toward, it's very fun. Before—Erika, I really want you to answer, we have to talk about these glasses that Aabria just put on.

Erika Ishii

For 1 second—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

—Aabria has put on round spectacles—

Aabria Iyengar

Uh huh.

Erika Ishii

—that are gold wire rim—

Aabria Iyengar

Uh huh.

Erika Ishii

—and two little stars dangling, golden stars dangling from the sides, so that they swish in her face, and clack against each other.

Aabria Iyengar

They land in my mouth all the time.

Erika Ishii

Yes, yes.

John Economy [Lou]

They ARE perfect. They're perfect.

Erika Ishii

They're. So perfect.

Aabria Iyengar

These are my little wizard glasses, and they're prescription.

Erika Ishii

They look like wizard glasses! Oh my god!

John Economy [Lou]

They're prescription wizard glasses?

Aabria Iyengar

They're my little prescription wizard glasses, that I do my game prep with, when I need to get myself excited, to sit down and stare at a Google Doc for 37 hours.

Erika Ishii

Goodness!

Aabria Iyengar

And I realized I couldn't see the questions that we were reading off, so I was like, "I gotta put on glasses! Ah, shit. I don't have the normal ones."

John Economy [Lou]

Just the wizard ones.

Erika Ishii

They're so good!

Aabria Iyengar

Either I squint in front of the homies, or I put on the craziest glasses I own. [Laughs]

Erika Ishii

They're so good, and they match your backdrop—

Aabria Iyengar

Thank you!

Erika Ishii
—and all your characters, all your little wizards.

Aabria Iyengar
All my little wizards.

Erika Ishii
Little fancy wizards.

Aabria Iyengar
I love a little wizard.

Erika Ishii
Yes, yes.

John Economy [Lou]
All right, Erika—

Erika Ishii
Okay!

Aabria Iyengar
ANSWER!

John Economy [Lou]
—easiest, hardest, most fun.

Erika Ishii
AGH! Okay. The easiest aspect to play, I think, is—surprise, surprise—the sense of wonder, and whimsy, and joy, that Ame finds in this world what Brennan built. Ya know, he may be a horrible little man for trying to kill Ame at first level, on our first combat, but boy, that man can build a rich world where just everywhere you look—the idea of a little farm girl, suddenly seeing the world for the first time and being there with her bestest friends is—OUGH—it's just—yeah, it's incredible. It's incredible.

Erika Ishii
The hardest might be—god. It's kind of, in feeling like—the interactions with everybody, with the Fox, with the party members—with the Fox, with Suvi, and with Eursulon, because it's like you have to think about how am I reacting to these three different other characters? You know, How would Ame react to them?

John Economy [Lou]
Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
For some reason, kid Ame was so easy to click into because there was just freedom there, and a lack of a filter, and much in the way that children are—just an ease to which you can respond to things, and that

has always been easy for me to get into. But for adult Ame, the idea of being—having so many elements layered on top at the same time of, this is who Ame is—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
—and Ame's personality, but then also there's been a lot of recent trauma, and also there's past trauma, that's layered on, and also she's so excited, but also so worried, and just all of those things. And you know still—Steele talks about the serenity of witches?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
And I don't know how much of that we'll find out how much of that is actually Ame, and how much is Ame having to live up—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
Mm. Mmm.

Erika Ishii
—to that tenet of witchiness. So that's been really interesting to navigate. Also, the Fox constantly has Ame at a loss for words and like, same with Suvi.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah. Truly.

Erika Ishii
Like, how do you respond to somebody saying like, "do not presume to tell me how I feel." Oop! Ope!

[Aabria and Erika collapse into laughter]

John Economy [Lou]
I do feel for you, because I remember when we did that Fox present? Like the Fox, like there was the Fox past which was like—

Erika Ishii
Oh! Then and Now.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh yeah, Then and Now!

John Economy [Lou]
Then and Now! That's what they were called. "Past and Present."

[Everyone Laughs]

John Economy [Lou]

When we did the Fox Then and Now, I remember having to talk to the Fox as much as I did, I was like, this is tough.

[Aabria and Erika burst out laughing]

John Economy [Lou]

Brennan is doing—like the Fox has like Brennan level logic—

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Erika Ishii

God dammit.

John Economy [Lou]

—he's running on, and you're like, "hey, hey. Fuck you, fuck you."

Erika Ishii

Fuck you!

Aabria Iyengar

I don't like you.

Erika Ishii

Because here's the thing is, Brennan was a college philosophy major at 14 years old.

John Economy [Lou]

Yes.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

So what the hell am I supposed to do with that? Well, anyway.

John Economy [Lou]

I don't envy you having to contend with the fox.

Erika Ishii

Gotta eat him.

Aabria Iyengar

I think Eursulon's the only one that's got the Fox's number at this point.

Erika Ishii

It's SO funny. Big guy!

Aabria Iyengar
Big guy!

John Economy [Lou]
That's it dude, that's all I got.

Erika Ishii
Small guy.

John Economy [Lou]
Big guy, small guy.

Erika Ishii
I love it so much. And then, that brings me to my next point of, what's the most fun part, is the interactions with everybody else in the party!

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing]

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Because at the same time I will think—like in the moment I'm like, I'm so stupid, I've never said a word in my life.

Aabria Iyengar
[Dying laughing off mic]

Erika Ishii
And then later on, when we get to break, I'm like, HOOO! There's so many times that Aabria and I will grab each other's hands—

Aabria Iyengar
Yes!

Erika Ishii
—at the table next to us, so I can just be like "Hee hee hee!" So like, even I remember at that moment in the boat of her being so—Suvi, just being like, everybody—everybody on Tumblr knows now, it's like, "Ope! Suvi's a problem!"

Aabria Iyengar
Ohh! It's my favorite thing, keep writing those posts.

Erika Ishii
But, like, then I was like "Suvi's a PROBLEM-UH!"

Aabria Iyengar
Hi!

Erika Ishii
It's SO GOOD!

Aabria Iyengar

We were gonna talk about indoctrination!

Erika Ishii

Looking back, like, quote unquote, "losing an argument with Suvi" and then coming out of it, and then just being like, [Excitedly] Aabria! We did it, we did it!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god!

Erika Ishii

I love you so much, I love you so much. And then with Brennan as the Fox, just like, I'm so in love with the Fox. He's my favorite little—

Aabria Iyengar

The foxes "I didn't LIKE that?"

Erika Ishii

[Crying] "I didn't LIKE that." With the voice cracking, and being like "so far, I don't like the boat."

Aabria Iyengar

"I don't like the boat."

Erika Ishii

[Crying] "I don't like the boat," he's soooo cuuuute. I love the Fox sooo much!

John Economy [Lou]

[Chuckles]

Erika Ishii

And then with Eursulon, god, thinking about being snuggled in your fur, and smellin' that fur, and the pine and rosemary of her childhood, and just feeling safe and cared for. Agh! i just—truly, it's so rewarding BECAUSE of that level of difficulty. It's like, we're sprinting together and afterwards I have the biggest runners high of my life.

Aabria Iyengar

Truly.

John Economy [Lou]

It is pretty crazy how much it is sprinting. There's a real like—we sit there, the headphones go on, and there's not a lot of downtime with which to—

Erika Ishii

No, none at all.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

—I think when I've played in bigger games, at home and professionally, there are moments where people will be like, "And then they went off and did something." And you sit there and you go, "Those scenes were pretty good."

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]

"I wish my insight had been higher that one time. Ahh."

Erika Ishii

[Giggling]

John Economy [Lou]

"Okay, great, they're back. Good to see!" And then there's something to like this, where it's just like, "All going! Rolls! Reactions!"

Aabria Iyengar

Yes.

John Economy [Lou]

"You killed it! You killed it, you just stabbed it. Ame wants to do a funeral rites! Chalice??" And then it's like "And, episode's over." And you're like, "Huh! Wow!"

Erika Ishii

That's the thing, is somebody said, "I love how much you all are taking your time with this." And I was like, "Taking our time!?" It feels like—

Aabria Iyengar

Feels like—

Erika Ishii

—we're doing a billion things—

Aabria Iyengar

—a dead sprint!

Erika Ishii

—there's not a moment of dead—yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

A dead sprint.

Erika Ishii

It is a dead sprint. But then, I mean, also, they're right. We are—we take our time with the descriptions, our characters are building slowly. It's so rich, but at the same time, we're going SO fast, and so much is happening at a time that, at the end of every episode that we record, I'm just like, "What HAPPENED?"

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

"Did we do it? Did we finish the game?" Ahh, god.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing.] Yeah. Truly.

Erika Ishii

What a treat, what a treat.

John Economy [Lou]

What a treat.

Erika Ishii

So conversely—and we did touch on this a little bit, earlier—

Aabria Iyengar

Hold on, hold on. Before you read the next question, I'm changing my answer about the hardest, to being having 8 fucking hit points at level one.

Erika Ishii

[Goblinesque cackle]

John Economy [Lou]

Yeah, that's it.

Aabria Iyengar

That's my new answer.

John Economy [Lou]

That's up there.

Erika Ishii

Alright. Fair enough.

Aabria Iyengar

Every time I remember it, it makes me mad. [Laughs]

Erika Ishii

You know, it's so funny because I realized, I didn't do much screaming and crying about, when my character got knocked down.

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

I don't—I don't know if I was in shock, or if I was like—

Aabria Iyengar

[Sudden belting laugh]

Erika Ishii

—I'm sure it'll be okay.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] Everything happened so FAST!

John Economy [Lou]

You mean when you got—when you went down.

Erika Ishii

Yeah! I feel like, listening to it, I was like, [Faux crying] "Oh my god, this is the worst thing has ever happened to my life. I'ma kill Brennan."

John Economy [Lou]

There is a—[Stops talking to laugh]

Erika Ishii

You could hear me and it's like, "No, I'm down."

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]

I do love—there's something very fun and podcasty to—or very new, that's like—feels very specifically podcasty, that is—it's like you're saying. When you go down—there's something about, when there's cameras, that's like—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

When you go down there's like, [Pretending to yell] "Ohh! Ohh, you went down! Ohh nooo!"

[Aabria and Erika both giggle]

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Erika Ishii

"Ohh noo!"

John Economy [Lou]

Which I do think me and Aabria do a little bit of—

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

John Economy [Lou]
—but there's something to, like, when you died and you were like, "Ame goes down, and she falls,"
[grotesque scream]

[Aabria and Erika are laughing so hard they can't breath]

John Economy [Lou]
That's what we need, baby! It's not that we make a bunch of faces, it's like the intensity of like, "Ame's
been hit! Gaaahh!!" Like it was just, you felt—

Erika Ishii
[Struggling to catch a breath] I wish you could see Lou's—

Aabria Iyengar
Sorry. John Economy.

Erika Ishii
Mr. Economy—

John Economy [Lou]
John Economy. John Economy!

Erika Ishii
John Economy. Of Econo Lodge!

[Aabria and Erika are having a giggling fit]

Erika Ishii
But it's just such a lovely moment that you're like—that it's exactly what you're saying. I think in other
mediums, you would be like, "We should emphasize the fact that Erika went down!" And instead in this, it
is like "Ame FALLS!"

Aabria Iyengar
[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]
"And it's the call for her friends to spring into action!" It's very cool. I love it. I love that moment.

Erika Ishii
God, yeah. And also, I think, to let people know, we are going out—along at a clip, and Taylor, bless him,
cuts out so many noises, little extraneous noises and stuff.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughs]

Erika Ishii
But there's not a lot of story editing. So far, I can't think of anything that has been cut, story-wise.

Aabria Iyengar

I have one thing that I got that I think got cut, and maybe Taylor has to edit this out later, but I feel like Suvi going to bang it out with Silver—

Erika Ishii

Oh the hookup! The hookup, yes.

Aabria Iyengar

I think the hookup got cut out!

John Economy [Lou]

Oh did that get edited?

Erika Ishii

The hookup with Silver, yes. Yes yes yes yes yes.

John Economy [Lou]

Did that get cut out, where you fuck that man? [Laughs]

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] I fucked that man!

Erika Ishii

Just because I think like, you were like, "Okay, well, how long do I have? Cool. Well, I got some time." And then she comes back and her hair is all messed up, you know.

Aabria Iyengar

Yes. It's not explicitly said, but I think when we recorded it, I think we were a little more like, she's gonna go.

John Economy [Lou]

Yeah, when we recorded it, we did like a whole 45 minute thing—

Aabria Iyengar

[Coughing laughter]

John Economy [Lou]

—with Brennan making noises and—

Aabria Iyengar

Blow. By. Blow.

Erika Ishii

I was like, do you want to faint to fade to black? Fade to—

Aabria Iyengar

No.

Erika Ishii
No? No?

Aabria Iyengar
No. And then I—okay, I'm gonna make a Dex check right here. Yeah, okay.

Lou Wilson
Yeah.

Erika Ishii
Yes. Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
I'm able to do both things, thank you.

John Economy [Lou]
Yes. We got a—

Erika Ishii
Nat 20 on acrobatics, was, the WAY she described it—

John Economy [Lou]
Wow!

Aabria Iyengar
It was either acrobatics or athletics. [Laughs]

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]
We got a bunch of chicken breasts out of the—

[Aabria and Erika are losing their minds]

John Economy [Lou]
—out of the fridge, and put em in a ziploc bag.

Erika Ishii
[Cackling maniacally]

John Economy [Lou]
Started [slapping noises] smackin' it against the wall.

[Aabria and Erika are laughing uncontrollably]

John Economy [Lou]
It was wild, man. It was wild.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing so hard she's crying]

[Everyone takes a moment to compose themselves, except Erika who can't stop laughing]

Aabria Iyengar
So you know, maybe that was a good edit. Maybe that was a good edit.

John Economy [Lou]
[In unison] Maybe that was a good edit.

Erika Ishii
Thanks, Taylor.

John Economy [Lou]
That chicken breast Ziploc bag sound was pretty intense, yeah. Thanks Taylor.

Aabria Iyengar
We did eat that chicken later, though, so that was nice.

John Economy [Lou]
We did eat that chicken.

Erika Ishii
We did.

John Economy [Lou]
And the chicken was. Delicious.

Aabria Iyengar
Delicious.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Delicious.

John Economy [Lou]
Tenderized!

Aabria Iyengar
[Burst of laughter]

John Economy [Lou]
God, that is fun, that that is—

Erika Ishii
Oh my god!

Aabria Iyengar
Ugh! Amazing.

Erika Ishii

Okay. So, Ben—Ben Fogle asks, "Your characters have many wonderful qualities, not least of which are their flaws. What is your favorite flaw in each character?" Thank you so much for that. Ben, we touched on these a little bit.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Is there anything you can say, each of you—can you think of something to say about that, without tipping your hand too much, because as Brennan's dad used to say, you just gotta watch and see!

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Mr. Economy.

John Economy [Lou]

Do I have a favorite flaw of Eursulon's? I do, because for comedic purposes, I think. Because I think there's a lot of comedy in Eursulon, in terms of his interactions with—when you're in survival mode, and you're going through the world, your interactions with people are so need based, right? They're all like, "Hi, nice to meet you. Give me this, because I need it."

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

"Otherwise I will go away."

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

John Economy [Lou]

And now that Eursulon is traveling with friends, and Suvi's got the bag, there's a fun to, I think, Eursulon's directness that I find very fun to play.

Aabria Iyengar

Yesss.

John Economy [Lou]

I think the moments in which Eursulon is—the panties example, being the one from episode 3—

Aabria Iyengar

[Squeaking] Let's go!

John Economy [Lou]

—being like, "These are underwear that somebody I was sleeping with had, they shouldn't go to waste. Would you like them? I mean, they're here. They're perfectly good panties. Take em! Take em!"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]

That is very fun. I like that social awkwardness.

Aabria Iyengar

Ame has them, right?

John Economy [Lou]

Yeah, you did take them!

Erika Ishii

Yes, Ame still has—I have it written in my inventory.

John Economy [Lou]

Good. Good.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh. My. God. Perfect.

John Economy [Lou]

But I think that social—I mean, it's not like a fatal flaw, but I think Eursulon's social awkwardness, and directness, and kind of, at times, lack of decorum, is very fun to play.

Erika Ishii

So charming. Chaaarming.

Aabria Iyengar

It's so endearing every time. Suvi does not have any flaws, next question.

John Economy [Lou]

Next question!

Erika Ishii

Yep! There it is. Well— [trails off laughing]

John Economy [Lou]

What about Ame? Does Ame have—Now, moving on from Suvi, Ame.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, Ame, I wanna say—there's so many things that are fun. It's probably the naivete, which is, on one hand, really cute, and whimsical without, I think, getting too much into the realm of manic pixie.

John Economy [Lou]

Mm.

Erika Ishii

But I love, especially, when it vexes Suvi.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughs]

Erika Ishii
Because there's moments of—one of my favorite moments was when we all got onto the first boat—

Aabria Iyengar
Oh god.

Erika Ishii
—and everybody was just a mess. Suvi was like trying to be like, the big man on campus, and was throwing her weight around and, then Eursulon comes on and is like, "Oh, are we on this boat? Great!" and starts unpacking.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] "I've already put my stuff down!"

Erika Ishii
"I've already put my things down!" And then the Fox drags on a giant grouper fish, and Ame has an arm full of nasty seashells. The captain's just like, "Where did you get those?"

Aabria Iyengar
Important. Imperial. Business.

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] And I think the naivete, and how it upsets Suvi, of just her being kind of this bumpkin, is very fun to me. Because like, you can be as wise—because this was the thing that I was bumping up against for a while. But I was like, you can be as wise, and empathetic, and smart, and good at reading people and the room as you want to be. But if you don't know customs, and you don't know hierarchies, and you don't know, I don't know, options that are available to you, then you're just going to be a bit of a dummy for a while. So, yeah, that's been real fun.

Aabria Iyengar
But it's also this very cool thing where Ame is absolutely doing shit that you're like, if you were 197 years old like Grandmother Wren was—

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar
—everyone would let it go.

Erika Ishii
[Burst of laughter]

Aabria Iyengar
Like, "Yeah, of course Grandmother Wren comes in with a handful of nasty seashells, and no one says a thing about it." But because you're young, and unproven, and in like—

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Yep!

Aabria Iyengar
—this strange company, and not in your sort of home territory, you're just like, "What are you—you psychopath, what are you doing?"

[Everyone laughs]

Aabria Iyengar
"What is happening? Please make the fox stop talking." And poor Suvi—

John Economy [Lou]
[Laughing] Please make the fox stop talking!

Erika Ishii
Right!

Aabria Iyengar
And Suvi, who is just absolutely trapped by her like, status problems, is just like "I'm in hell. Being with you is the best thing that's ever happened to me, and I'm in hell."

Erika Ishii
Yeah, yeah!

Aabria Iyengar
So good!

John Economy [Lou]
I think I got to give it up to Bad Man Brennan, who—

Aabria Iyengar
Bad Man Brennan!

Erika Ishii
Bad. Man. Brennan.

John Economy [Lou]
Bad Man Brennan. He's a bad man. But I don't mean in the—I don't mean in the fun like—

Erika Ishii
Oh, he bad.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh he bad.

John Economy [Lou]
What song is that? Oh, Shaft.

Erika Ishii
[Laughs]

Aabria Iyengar
Damn right.

John Economy [Lou]
Yeah, I don't mean in that way. That's not—he doesn't get the Isaac Hayes treatment.

Aabria Iyengar
[Breathless laugh]

John Economy [Lou]
He is an evil man. But Bad Man sounds better. Because his name also starts with a B. Ya know, this is what I wanted to say when I started this sentence.

Erika Ishii
Bad Man Brennan Mulligan.

John Economy [Lou]
When Bad Man Brennan Mulligan—I do think that is one of the coolest things going on in this world right now, that I am addicted to, is the fact that he's letting a level one character have the weight that Suvi does? I think it's so fuckin' cool, and so—it's a GM move that I'm like, the fact that you KNOW that you can let your character—it's a GM move that I love, and would steal, and it's so incredible to watch, of letting a level one character have enough status that it tells you something about the world, but at any time it can be ripped away from you. Like it's just so—

Aabria Iyengar
Absolutely.

Erika Ishii
It's just so good. Well, it also speaks to the trust that we all share, because I think the idea—ah god. We talk about power gaming a lot, and how we only power game in-so-much as it's funny and good?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]
Yes.

Erika Ishii
Good for story, because yeah, it's true! You can't—you use Suvi's power to just dig your own grave!

Aabria Iyengar
It's my favorite thing in the whole wide world.

Erika Ishii
[Crying laughing] It's so good!!

John Economy [Lou]

And I think then, turning it also into a compliment for Aabria, I think, yes, that's exactly it. It is also that he gives the power, and that you use it so poorly—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

John Economy [Lou]

—and by poorly I mean perfectly. It's just so—

Erika Ishii

Perfectly!

John Economy [Lou]

The fact that you slam this stuff down, exactly when you need to, whether it's to scare a hedge maze into—a hedge mage into running off into the woods, or if it's to get us on a ship, it's always—but it's always there. It's so crazy, as a DM, to give someone a card like this, that's like you know, slam this down, and now people have to respect you. But then the way you use it, and when you use it, is just so chef's kiss. I mean, it's just—it's amazing.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs] Thanks!

Erika Ishii

It's true!

John Economy [Lou]

Unbelievable.

Erika Ishii

It's so true.

Aabria Iyengar

It's so fun to have it absolutely fumble. Like, god, the boat thing.

Erika Ishii

God, it's so good.

Aabria Iyengar

The cringe I felt in my heart listening back to it—

John Economy [Lou]

The cringe!

Aabria Iyengar

—made me so happy. I was like, "You absolute goon. What are you doing? What are you attempting? You have like, \$30. Like, your friends are broke, but you have \$30. What are you fucking doing?"

[Everyone laughs]

Aabria Iyengar
Stop making moves like you're rich!

Erika Ishii
But the funny thing is, that Ame and Eursulon are still like, "Wow! She's so big and important!" It's so funny!

Aabria Iyengar
Like, yeah, yeah lets keep goin' with that! Oh god!

Erika Ishii
Also, honestly, props to our listeners, and to the fandom, for not feeling like that—forgetting it, forgetting that, they're like, "Oh, these people are failing." And they're not like, "Well, if, you know, they were smart, they would actually use," you know. Because it's like, yeah, they gave us the credit of knowing that we know these things—

Aabria Iyengar
Thank you.

Erika Ishii
—and so we're TRYING to tell a story. Uh!

Aabria Iyengar
Yes!

Erika Ishii
So thank you, listeners, we appreciate you, and we appreciate you that appreciate—appreciating us.

Aabria Iyengar
Aww!

Erika Ishii
Also, by the way, before we start wrapping things up, we have to address Strudel Half Baked's using the system here says, "I'm so, so sorry, this is the first and last time I'll attempt to cheat the system, but I need you to know that I'm on to Lou!"

Aabria Iyengar
Uh!

Erika Ishii
Mr. Economy. To Mr. Economy, he means.

Aabria Iyengar
Right.

John Economy [Lou]
Well, I mean, he's talking about somebody named Lou.

Aabria Iyengar
Lou.

John Economy [Lou]
My name's John Economy.

Erika Ishii
Right?

Aabria Iyengar
But whoever this Lou cat is—

John Economy [Lou]
And I played—you know, Eursulon is played by a series of guest stars.

[Everyone breaks down laughing]

John Economy [Lou]
Lou originated the character, and played him first, some parts of episode—some parts of the Children's Adventure—also Mr. Børg, I think, kind of split that with him.

Erika Ishii
Ooh, the Lore expands.

John Economy [Lou]
Did I give myself a nickname in the very first one of these? No, right?

Erika Ishii
[Unsure] No.

Aabria Iyengar
I don't think so.

John Economy [Lou]
Yeah. Lou did episode one, and I believe Tomahawk did episode two.

Aabria Iyengar
And he was great, I enjoyed him.

John Economy [Lou]
He was great. And then I, John Economy, played Eursulon in episode 3 and 4. This is an INSANE bit.

[Everyone laughs]

Aabria Iyengar
What. Bit.

John Economy [Lou]
There's just—what bit exactly.

Erika Ishii

Okay, which, which brings us to Half Baked Strudel's conspiracy theory board—red string board. It says up in the corner, "Is this a bit or is it real?" I honestly also cannot tell—

Aabria Iyengar

Hey bro?

Erika Ishii

—if this is a digitally composited—I think this might be a digitally composited board, but it has Tomahawk, and Toma and Hawk, falcon—from Ygraine.

Aabria Iyengar

That's actually incredible because I didn't get that, until—

John Economy [Lou]

Yes, that is incredible.

Aabria Iyengar

So good.

Erika Ishii

Mr. Børg, Norwegian and Danish, honorific, must find honor in a castle.

Aabria Iyengar

Yes.

Erika Ishii

Right?

Aabria Iyengar

Yes.

Erika Ishii

The pieces are all there.

Aabria Iyengar

Everything's here.

Erika Ishii

We should post this. This is—once again, this is us describing an image.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

John Economy [Lou]

I'm sure we can link it.

Erika Ishii

In a podcast. People like that, yes?

John Economy [Lou]
But as John Economy, I'll tell Strudel Half Baked.

John Economy [Lou]
[Laughing]

John Economy [Lou]
Keep digging, alright? This is just the surface.

Erika Ishii
[Cackling]

Aabria Iyengar
Keep. Digging.

John Economy [Lou]
Keep digging.

Erika Ishii
THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE!!

John Economy [Lou]
The incredible thing is that you can tell that Strudel Half Baked has printed out transcripts from episodes, and is highlighting different things that we've said, in different episodes.

Aabria Iyengar
Amazing.

Erika Ishii
So good.

John Economy [Lou]
Børg, translates to berg, translates to—

Aabria Iyengar
Oh!

John Economy [Lou]
There's an intensity here that I really—I'd say keep going, keep digging.

Aabria Iyengar
Must find honor in a castle.

John Economy [Lou]
You're on to something.

Aabria Iyengar
This is so great, but also that little note, "Is this a bit or is it real?" Is how I live every day of my life with these motherfuckers.

Erika Ishii
I don't know, I don't ever know!

Aabria Iyengar
And I never know, I'm like—

Erika Ishii
[Deep, through clenched teeth] You can never know.

Aabria Iyengar
"Are we doing, a bit? What is happening. Help. Help."

Erika Ishii
Alright, well, this bit is over.

Aabria Iyengar
[Gasp]

John Economy [Lou]
Ah!

Erika Ishii
Thank you so much for joining us for episodes 3 and 4s talk backs, here on the Fireside. I'm Erika Ishii, I've been here with Aabria Iyengar—

Aabria Iyengar
Yesss!

Erika Ishii
—and Mr. John Economy—

John Economy [Lou]
That's me!

Erika Ishii
And no Brennan. No Bad Man Brennan Mulligan.

Aabria Iyengar
No Bad Man Brennan Mulligan.

John Economy [Lou]
Yes.

Aabria Iyengar
BMBM.

Erika Ishii
Alright, everybody, thank you so much!! Goodbye!

Aabria Iyengar
Bye!

John Economy [Lou]
Goodbye! Stay at Econo Lodge. Please stay at Econo Lodge.

[Everyone roars with laughter]

[Lilting pipe flute flutters above drum beats and choral tones as the song of the Spirit Realm from the Children's Adventure starts]