

# Worlds Beyond Number

Fireside Chat: Episode 008 - Episode 8 “The Catch”

Final Version

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

Erika Ishii

Hello, everybody, and welcome to the Fireside Chat for Episode 8, The Catch. I'm your host, Erika Ishii here with Aabria—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Sorry, sorry, sorry.

Erika Ishii

Oh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Real quick.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Brennan, you may speak.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Erika, I just wanted to say, it sounds like your normal VO booth has been dropped into some sort of well, or open—

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—open kind of auditorium, perhaps cast into an ancient marble corridor of a long forgotten city.

Erika Ishii

Hey.

Aabria Iyengar

Hey.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Let me just tell you something, alright? If this is good for Electronic Arts, I think it should be good enough for you, alright?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Electronic Arts likes the giant open apartment behind you?

Erika Ishii

Yeah. They like the vibe of it being like I am shouting down a tunnel. Okay?

Aabria Iyengar

Hey, Erika is recording this from the middle of a little tuna can, that they live in, like a Borrower—

Lou Wilson

Yes, you have to understand.

Aabria Iyengar

—and I think we should all be respectful of that.

Lou Wilson

Erika has been shrunk down to Borrower size, and is now living in a tuna can. So.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There's a small table, that is a button for a coat, and there's a beetle, who is enjoying half of an M&M. So that's lovely.

Erika Ishii

Right? My blanket is a muffin tin.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Your blanket is a muffin TIN?

Erika Ishii

Well, not a muffin tin, you know, a muffin paper.

Aabria Iyengar

No no. You said what you said.

Lou Wilson

Ohh, the wrapper that goes around.

Erika Ishii

The wrapper! That's the one.

Lou Wilson

The wrapper that goes around.

Erika Ishii

The thing what you put a muffin in, is my blanket and my pillow is an eraser.

Aabria Iyengar

Aw!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Those are actually the little paper coverings at the base of a muffin are actually called talberds.

Erika Ishii

What the—

Aabria Iyengar

Why do you—

Lou Wilson

Mmm!

Erika Ishii

What did you just say!?

Aabria Iyengar

Hold on, I'm going to Google it.

Erika Ishii

Talberds?? No.

Aabria Iyengar

No.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Talberds.

Erika Ishii

Talberts?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You don't have to look it up, I made it up. It's not true.

Erika Ishii

God DAMMIT!

Lou Wilson

There it is.

Aabria Iyengar

I did look it up.

Erika Ishii

I trust you!!

Lou Wilson

It's too close to halberds. They wouldn't do that.

Erika Ishii

That was what I thought.

Aabria Iyengar

It was close to tabard and I was like, okay!

Lou Wilson

The Powers-That-Be wouldn't do that.

Erika Ishii

It was—it was too grand, too grand to be real. Alright, well, you heard Brennan, and you heard Aabria, and you heard... who's—

Lou Wilson

Richard Goose, in the building.

Erika Ishii

Mr. Goose.

Richard Goose (Lou)

My friends call me Dick Goose.

Aabria Iyengar

No.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh my god, I'm so glad we finally got my bud Dick Goose on the podcast!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Eyyy! Ya know, me and Brennan go way back to the Elks Lodge where we hang out on weekends.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, is this Dicky Goose, that you've been talking about for so long?

Erika Ishii

Oh my god! What a pleasure!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Ah! Guys, thrilled to be here. Loved the ep, can't wait to get into it.

Erika Ishii

Oh, man. Yeah, and what an EP it was. Truly Taylor snapped with the audio.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh my god.

Erika Ishii

That was unbelievable. Just the—and hearing the themes, that have come back, and now suddenly understanding a lot of the monastery noises, from prior episodes. Ooowee!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god. The low Gallows theme over the interaction with Pane—like, I can't, I cannot. So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

When the scene moved to dealing with the effect of Gallows, Gallows was present in the scene by his theme.

Erika Ishii

He was THERE.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He was there, motherfucker.

Erika Ishii

Leitmotifs.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh ooh!

Erika Ishii

Num num num num num.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Taylor Goddamn Moore, right? Remember the fuckin' name. The sound design on the wizard battle?

Aabria Iyengar  
Ah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Fuckin', the shield, the—the witch bolt, and the shield and the—the spells, like, clanging off of each other.  
God, it was so sick.

Erika Ishii  
And I can never get over the glass shards, for magic missile.

Aabria Iyengar  
Right??

Erika Ishii  
Because it's so—and it's the combo of you calling it, because that's Suvi's deal, right? The glass staff, and the glass tower, and then, ough, the sound design for it, OUGH.

Aabria Iyengar  
It's so good.

Erika Ishii  
Oh my goodness.

Aabria Iyengar  
It's so good.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Mm.

Erika Ishii  
Yeah. That battle turned out a lot better than it could have turned out.

Aabria Iyengar  
Well, how do you feel, having really almost lost your familiar?

Erika Ishii  
Oh, well, fun fact—oh no, actually, this is something that I should probably save, but I am—I can—there's ways for me to avoid the death of a familiar, which sounds like some sort of Arthur Miller play. "Death of a Familiar."

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
"Death of a Familiar."

Erika Ishii

Do you want to share it? Do you want to share it?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah. Well so—

Erika Ishii

Let's not be coy.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We don't have to be coy. These are our—hey, it's all pals here, we're by the Fireside.

Erika Ishii

Yeah!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Come on now.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We're also—for folks to know, we have the Witch class, we're still getting it in shape for release, but one of the things that we're waiting for, actually, IS the first level up in the campaign. We wanted to have some—

Erika Ishii

[Some sort of alien bird-like shriek]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—we wanted to have some Witch features actually be presented by Ame in narrative, before we like, release the class on the patreon. So we're waiting a little while, still, to release the full class, but yes. In the Witch's Familiar feature, Witches have the power to raise their familiars. They can bring them back.

Erika Ishii

Wait, wait.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

I actually didn't know THAT one, that's not—well, it's later, later, that happens later. But the thing that I'm talking about that I can do NOW is if a familiar drops to zero points, you can take on the injury to get them back up to one.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh! Yes, that IS correct. Yes yes yes.

Erika Ishii

Wait, you can—I can—alright, well, pft.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

I fear nothing now. This is fine. I'm going to waltz through this campaign, like there's nothing in the world that can burn me.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I could be misremembering here, real quick. Let me actually make sure that I'm not telling stories out of school. Hold on one second.

Erika Ishii

Yeah we're all figuring this all out as we go along. In fact, I think there's a time, maybe—I can't remember if it's in an upcoming episode, or if this happened off the board, but, where we're discussing familiar rules, and Brennan's like, ah, fuck it. That rules no longer apply, and, he made the rules, so. You know.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah. Distance on telepathy is always something that I'm like—

Erika Ishii

Yes, distance of the telepathy

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah yeah yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I want it to be different.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Let me see, where the hell, ok everyone—

Aabria Iyengar

The class feature is called talberd.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Talberd, thank you.



Richard Goose (Lou)  
Talbert, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar  
Talberd. You can find it there.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Control F, talberd.

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughing] Control F, talberd!

Erika Ishii  
[Laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)  
This conversation does feel like the set up for Brennan inevitably killing the Fox, to be like, "Look at all the Witch's class features," this just feels like a promise. Like people will—you'll be able to circle back to this in ten episodes.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Okay, you can choose to invest a bat, cat, crab, frog, hawk, lizard, octopus, owl, poisonous snake, fish, rat, raven, seahorse, spider, or weasel with magical power. Wow, fox isn't even on this list!

Aabria Iyengar  
Oh, are you looking at Find Familiar?

Erika Ishii  
Whoops!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Whoops! We got the rules wrong.

Erika Ishii  
Octopus would have been rad as hell. Have a little tank on my back, with an octopus in it.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Yes.

Erika Ishii  
Smart-ass octopus.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh, right. Hold on. When your familiar is reduced to zero hit points, you can use a reaction, to expend a spell slot of first level or higher to make it drop to one hit point instead.

Erika Ishii

That's the one.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then right after that, if your familiar dies, you can revive it when you finish a short or long rest by expending 10 gold pieces of herbs or incense.

Aabria Iyengar

Awww!

Erika Ishii

Oh thank god.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So.

Aabria Iyengar

Ok, so I'm not worried about the fox, we're going to put the fox in danger constantly, yeah?

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yeah, it's time to—why isn't this fox on the front lines more often?

Aabria Iyengar

Now question. Does the fox—

Richard Goose (Lou)

10 gold pieces for the herbs?

Aabria Iyengar

—remember... When they die? Do they know? Do they remember?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

They come back different.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Oooh! Very Pet Sematary. Let's do it.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

They come back different. Little—

Erika Ishii

[In the manner of Fred Gwynne as Jud Crandall from 1989's "Pet Sematary"] "Sometimes dead is better."

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Which actually leads me to the first question from, Morgan B, thank you so much, Morgan. [Laughing] "If a character dies would the title change?"

Erika Ishii

Ooh! Yeah! We'd tighten that shit up!

Erika Ishii

Because if the fox dies, yeah, we don't have a change of the title, but if one of us dies, then... Then what?

Richard Goose (Lou)

It's elimination, and it just gets shorter. The Wizard, and the Witch!

Aabria Iyengar

This is now called "The Wild One! Good luck!

Erika Ishii

The Wizard, the Wild One, Ope!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh no!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think we just—

Erika Ishii

We all know what it would be.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think we're just all limited in what—I think we would replace it and change the title, but I think we're limited as to what you could come back as. So it could be like the Wizard, the Witch, and the Woolly Mammoth. The Wizard, the Witch—

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yep.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
You know, the—

Erika Ishii  
The Wizard—

Richard Goose (Lou)  
And the Wildebeest.

Erika Ishii  
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar  
Oh! Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Warlock!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
What are non-animal—

Aabria Iyengar  
There you go! It's right in there!

Erika Ishii  
Oh god, yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Warlock's right in there, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar  
Could be a wcleric. It would be fine, there's so many—

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
[Laughing] A wcleric!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
I am playing a wcleric.

Aabria Iyengar  
It's very Wario World. We love it. Waluigi.

Erika Ishii  
Yeah. WAAAHH!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Oh! The Wizard, The Witch, and Wario!

[Everyone laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)  
What if I just came back as Wario?

Aabria Iyengar  
Brennan, I want to play as Wario! I'm done with Suvi!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
I'd like to replace my character with—yeah. Can we all be The Wario, The Wario, and The Other Wario?

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughing] Yep!

Erika Ishii  
[Wario voice] Wario!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
The Third Wario?

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah. This is what Web3 was about.

Erika Ishii  
Hey, that's not a no!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
That's not a no. It's an incredible!

Erika Ishii  
So we had a shopping episode, and, wow, that was the tightest shopping episode, that I've ever been part of, or heard before. It was all about character building. And Aabria didn't end up taking any items for Suvi, because it's not what her character would have done.

Aabria Iyengar  
Now, let me be very clear. I am the greediest, thirstiest bitch for magic items.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

I whinge into getting a bag of holding in every D&D game I play. So I really hurt my own feelings, with the very cool magic items that Brennan put out there, and I went—

Erika Ishii

Oh they're so good.

Aabria Iyengar

—I am a bitch, and would take none of that because of the optics! I've never been sadder. I've never been sadder to be dialed into a character.

Richard Goose (Lou)

That commitment. That commitment, though.

Aabria Iyengar

The Porter's Ring objectively slaps. Fuck.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Mm! Mm!

Erika Ishii

Ame is so buff now.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

She's got lats for days. She's got giant—

Erika Ishii

Rippling tricep? Aah!

Erika Ishii

—yeah, like, tree trunk calves. She's got washboard abs. And if things had gone differently, perhaps the fox would have had those, too!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The thing with the rings is it doesn't just make you stronger, it sets your strength to 19.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ame moved from like, what, like 10 to 19?

Erika Ishii

Yeah, uh, something like 11?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

11 to 19. The fox would be moving from like 4 to 19. The fox would be able to run up and hit people in the chest, and knock them over. You know like.

Aabria Iyengar

One Punch Fox.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

One Punch Fox. I also should say, and Taylor, feel free to cut this out if this is spoilery, but speaking of these cool magic items in the shopping episode, we must shout out, that shopping episodes tend to go very, very long. And our wonderful creative producer, sound designer, editor Taylor Moore, made this shopping segment VERY listenable—

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—by cutting out a lot of stuff.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But for those of you by the Fireside, anytime we actually get like a full, nice little scenelet, cut out of the main podcast, we're going to collect those, and every once in a while, we're going to drop a fresh grab bag of deleted scenes—

Aabria Iyengar

Mm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—so that you'll be able to hear some deleted scenes over on the patreon. Thanks for joining us by the Fireside. And if you're on the Fireside, you also have gotten, by this point, by the time this is released, spell—magic item cards, for the magic items—

Erika Ishii

Ah!

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—from our friend Griffon over at the Griffon's Saddlebag—

Aabria Iyengar

[Whispering] Let's go, Griffon

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—an awesome patreon itself that makes cool magic items—

Erika Ishii

Ah, so good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—for 5e.

Erika Ishii

So good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So it's really, really cool. We'll have released the Imperial Warstaves aka Matchsticks.

Aabria Iyengar

Matchsticks!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We'll have released the Azure Bracers, and we'll have released all of the Imperial Infantry Rings, which are the Sailor's Ring, the Scout's Ring, and the—

Erika Ishii

The Porter's Ring.

Aabria Iyengar

Porters Ring!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Steward, the Steward's Ring.



Erika Ishii  
Steward's Ring!

Aabria Iyengar  
Oh, Steward's Ring! Oh, I said the wrong thing. Apologies.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
With, some features, that even at this very moment, months later, my players don't know that the rings have!

Erika Ishii  
Oh you little, nasty—

Aabria Iyengar  
Wait, what? Hold on I cast identify—

Erika Ishii  
Man, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar  
—Brennan, what the rings do?

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Well, so you'll be able to read it when we release the—

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
It'll have been up on the—by the time the time comes out, you'll be able to read it on the magic item cards.

Aabria Iyengar  
[Scoffs] That's so cool.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
But specifically, there are some long term negative effects of wearing multiple Infantry Rings at the same time.

Erika Ishii  
[Gasps]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And, specifically, the attunement thing, which you guys did experience, but it wasn't explained as a mechanic. The constitution saving throws, that you guys made—

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar

Nice.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—when you attuned to the rings, which is a new mechanic we're introducing in the world of Umora called Mass Produced Magic.

Erika Ishii

Ah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Which is basically constitution checks, that—magic items that are created on mass require constitution checks in order to be able to attune to them. If you fail by a certain amount, you will suffer the poisoned condition for 24 hours.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] Yeah!

Lou Wilson

Mm!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And if you fail by even more, you will actually not be able to attune to that specific item.

Erika Ishii

Wow!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You will fail to attune. And if you try to attune to another instance of that item later, all the DCs go up by 5.

Aabria Iyengar

DANG!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And if you fail again, you can never attune to an item of that kind, ever.

Aabria Iyengar

[Gasp]

Erika Ishii

[Gasp]

Richard Goose (Lou)

Mm!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So it's like, you develop an allergy to that type of magic, essentially.

Aabria Iyengar

It's the gel polish of the magical world.

[Brennan and Richard Goose laugh]

Erika Ishii

Wait, wait. You can develop—oh my god! You're right!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, that's a whole thing.

Erika Ishii

Because if you pull it off and you mess up your nails—okay, but nails grow back. You can like, get like—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, but you stay allergic to that series of acrylics forever, and it's bad for other reasons.

Erika Ishii

[Groaning] Iiiiiiiii didn't know that, oh my god.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, you can mess your fingers up with those gel lamps pretty fast. But, so—I wanted to be clear, because when Ame has that wonderful scene where she's like, "Are these like the things I make?" And Suvi was like, "Well, the things you make kind of are one shots." Well, Suvi wasn't saying it as a dig—

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackles]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Suvi was just like "Your stuff's one and done, and this is permanent."

Aabria Iyengar  
Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
But, because the Witch class is a lot about crafting things?

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
So I wanted there to be a difference, between the type of things that Wizards—or that the Empire, I should say, crafts. Because obviously, Suvi's Staff of the Citadel does not have the mass produced magic—

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—mechanic. And that's because there's like, ya know, 80, 100, 200, 300 of them in existence.

Aabria Iyengar  
[Whispering] Ah that's so cool.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
These rings are all over the fuckin' Empire, so they're mass produced, and it's like, you got to get cost down somehow, so you don't have to worry about the magic, like, you know. If, like—

Aabria Iyengar  
I love funky magic as a trade off.

Erika Ishii  
Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar  
That's so cool.

Erika Ishii  
I mean, we—early on, I remember at our first camp, we talked about this. W—are you okay? What happened?

Aabria Iyengar  
What? I'm off—I muted because I'm having a fan reaction to this—

Erika Ishii  
It's so true!

Aabria Iyengar

—and I'm trying to sound cool on this recording. But that was just me muted, going, that's so fucking rad.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Aww! That's very sweet.

Erika Ishii

It's incredible, and I just like—the implications it has for the world, the larger world, and it was a thing that you guys talked about, I remember, initially, at our first camp when we were doing world building, the idea of mass produced things with the—UGH! I think this is the first time that we introduced the idea of the—like lesser wizards use their spell slots to create a pool for the good wizards?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. That's fun

Erika Ishii

UGH!!!

Aabria Iyengar

That's fun.

Erika Ishii

UGH!!!

Aabria Iyengar

Every new detail about the Citadel explains a lot about Suvi, and I think the thing you've done with the magic item here also really ties into why would Suvi take—forsake an obvious good? Like, okay, there's something built in and around, like, yeah, do you poison yourself with cheap magic, or do you hold out for, like, bespoke shit? And that's very, very cool. I like that. This world's very cool. I'm going to mute and be excited. Do not reference it, in the recording.

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii

Oh my god. Aabria just did a backflip.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Wow!

Aabria Iyengar

Okay! Yeah.

Erika Ishii

She—yeah—thrust her fist into the air, it looked rad as hell, oh, wow. Wow wow wow wow.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I gotta ask Erika and Dick real quick.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Mm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

What prompted your choices for the rings that you went after? Both of you picked a Scout's Ring, but then Ame went for the Steward, and then Eursulon went for the Sailor.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Mm. Ame?

Erika Ishii

Oh! I think, just things that Ame values, I think, like, the idea of being able to sort of be a workhorse and to carry a bunch of things [Laughing]

Aabria Iyengar

For real.

Erika Ishii

And be like, I carry a lot of things. And then staying alert, and vigilant so she can look out for her friends, and keep an eye on things, I think is really important. I think she figures, like, well, why would I necessarily have to swim, or to do those things? And like, I'm sure she would have taken all of them if she could, because she's a little magpie but yeah, I think if given the choice, she was like, I think this is more important this—alert, to stay alert, to be able to scout around. Which, Erika would say, like, take the swimming ring. Take the swimming ring. We're in a port town, you dummy. But I think that Ame is, you know, has priorities. How about you, Goose?

Richard Goose (Lou)

I think Eursulon, I think, similar reasons, takes the Scout's Ring. I think it's like the desire to be always attentive, and able to like, you know, stand guard, I think, kind of, all of those kind of—the way it allows you to do those sorts of things. And then I think I went with a Sailor's Ring, I think one, because it felt—it was just cool. It was connected to the weird coral shit we had seen, while we were walking through the offices the day before. And then, I think also, Eursulon has a—I think there's like—there's, I think, like a body question, around Eursulon in this kind of who—his body versus his glamour, and I think that—

Aabria Iyengar  
Ooh.

Richard Goose (Lou)

—there was something to that, that was like, I—it didn't feel like Eursulon would be like, oh, let me fuck with my body chemistry, and my strength, with this ring. My body is already kind of unnatural for this world. I don't know if I need it influenced by this Wizard's Magic. God, there was one other thought I had, but it's gone. It's gone, it flew away. Straight out of the window.

Erika Ishii

Well, if it comes back to you, you just butt in—

Richard Goose (Lou)

I'll let you know

Erika Ishii

—and say something about it.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Great.

Erika Ishii

Brennan, when you created those items did you know—how much did you know that they were going to fold into narrative?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I knew they were going to fold.

Erika Ishii

With worldbuilding.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I knew right away. The rings were the most powerful thing in the room, and I love that they had that mass produced magic thing, right? Being able to reset someone's strength to 19 is intense. But I also wanted something that normally in a D&D campaign, finding something that resets your strength, especially, since to a number is like, plus four to all your strength rolls, right?

Erika Ishii

Like a belt of ogre strength, I think, gets you to 19

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, like a gauntlets of ogre power, exactly. That is unbelievably good. It's like life changingly good. And I wanted to have a moment where, you saw that the societal structure of this world was such, that what in any other D&D campaign would be like a HUGE get, is just reserved for guys that pick up boxes. It's like if

you're in the Azure Battalion, it means that you went—like all of our soldiers at least spent a couple of years in their youth at the Citadel, before they were drummed out of the Citadel and became warriors.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So, everything in that room, these infantry rings, were for grunts. They are for, like—it's like, you need to pick up boxes, but we don't have time for you to be physically training, because you need to be working on spell casting and spell methodology. So the rings were all there, like they make you a little bit sick if you don't get—even if they work right, they make you sick. And they're all for a purpose. The Scout's Ring is perception and initiative, it's for scouts. The Steward's Ring is for people that are lifting and carrying cargo. And then the Sailor's Ring was specifically a kind of newer elements, like something that Suvi had not necessarily seen in the Empire before, right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Not as common as the Steward or the Scout's Rings. And the Matchsticks—Suvi explains it perfectly in the episode—but like the Matchsticks, you think about like—in my head, back in 3.5, when you make a magic item from scratch, there's a table that tells you how much it costs to make. And I'm kind of—in Umora, it's really important for me, to attach wizardly magic to cost, and resources because it's industrial magic, it requires complex material components, making things permanent is expensive. It connects the flourishing of—like, why would wizardry attach itself, like the Citadel has, to Empire, but for this hunger for resources.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So the idea of, if you're going to make a lot of a magic item, you've got to find a way to make it suck a little bit in a way that you can make efficient. So for the Matchsticks or the Imperial Warstaves, anyone can take the magic, initiate feat and get access to cantrips. You don't even need class levels in Wizard, you just need a feat, which humans get at first level. You take that, you suddenly can cast a spell over and over and over again. So you make a war staff for your army to be kind of the Brown Bess musket of your army, and it gives you +1 to attack and damage rolls.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And so I imagine some wizard engineer being like, we've made a staff that gives +1 to attack and damage rolls—translated into what they would know in world—like, "This makes you better, it makes all of your attack spells more powerful. And it costs 100 kajillion Imperial Marks," and they go, "Oh my god! We can't mass produce that!" And they're like, "Listen, the guys that are using this are never going to cast Scorching Ray, they're not talented enough, they're not brilliant enough to get to that point. Just do whatever you need to do. Use less phoenix feathers, or whatever and get it down to the point, that it can just shoot cantrips better," which is why the Imperial Warstaff only gives +1 to attack and damage on cantrips.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.



Brennan Lee Mulligan

And it doesn't even supply them to you. It needs you to already have them. It's just basically like a little—it's like a SLIGHTLY better arcane focus, and as a result—and also, it doesn't require attunement, because I wanted that to even be a thing, where it's like, no, they put these on a rack and you can just pick them up and shoot 'em.

Aabria Iyengar

Ah. So cool

Erika Ishii

[Sighs] God.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

All of the magic items were world building. It was all about creating world building around those magic items.

Erika Ishii

It's wild, because with every new, just single item, it just explodes out, the possibilities of the world. Like, what are those factories like? How did—who are the people that use these things, and who are the people that have to create these things? I don't know it's just—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

That's just so cool to me. That's so great. And to see—once again, I feel like every instance of magic we come up against, we see the different perspectives of the three characters, and how they view, and use magic.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah. And like, speaking of magical items, the sword Wavebreaker. You cleared Pane.

Aabria Iyengar

Woo!

Erika Ishii

[Goblinessque giggle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Because that was a moment where—

Erika Ishii

Oh my god, right. "So the croquet, that didn't happen?" [Laughing] I keep coming back to that. "So the croquet, that didn't happen?"

Aabria Iyengar

"The croquet didn't hap—" god, Morrow.

Erika Ishii

[Cackling]

Aabria Iyengar

I just want to kiss him on his crazy, ruddy—

Erika Ishii

[Cackling]

Aabria Iyengar

—receding hairline. Ugh! What a gem.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Someone posted a thing—a wonderful—and again, thank you to everyone who's like, here by the Fireside listening to the show—someone posted a wonderful thing that was like, "Morrow is so power hungry, it sounds like his saliva has the consistency of gravy."

Aabria Iyengar

Yes!

[Everyone laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That is so fucking poetic!

Erika Ishii

Horrrifying.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, man. But it was very—let me ask, did anything in this episode change your guy's opinion of Morrow a little bit?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs] You know, the end.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughs]

Aabria Iyengar

You set all of these very good, little—road signs for— Oh god, I can't get over the line "Eursulon, you realize you're not the hungriest person in this room."

Erika Ishii

FUCK Yeah. That was so hard.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. It's been telegraphed that like, he wants something, and the level of incompetence that he has showed and sort of, obsequious—whatever, all of his cool personality, you're like, what is all of that for? So when you finally get the reveal at the end of the episode, of like, this tremendous feat of ambition, god. What a—what a moment just to have the like, "Yeah, this is what wizards are. This is what mages are. Even Morrow, the goofiest, silliest boy, is—"

Erika Ishii

[Laughs]

Aabria Iyengar

"—a nightmare, given enough resources, and isn't that the thing that we're kind of inspecting, in and around the Empire right now?" Ah! I love him!

Erika Ishii

I really—he's fascinating, because the way you almost, lovingly describe his—that's not even the word. The wistfulness in his gaze, when he thinks about, this should have been him, like what he wants, and how he wasn't given much, but he did what he could with what he had. Agh. I get that. But for Ame, the distrust of him happened, when she gave the local salute of Naram to him—

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackles]

Erika Ishii

—and he was like, what the hell is that? That's nothing.

Aabria Iyengar

"And a Naram, to you, bud!" What?!

Erika Ishii

"And a hearty Naram to you!" He's like, oh, interesting. Interesting. You haven't talked to one local. You haven't said hello to one local.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He cops to it in the episode, right? There's that moment after—

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Erika Ishii  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—when Ame and Eursulon are alone, with Pane, which I do want to talk about as well—

Erika Ishii  
OUGH!

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—there's the moment where Morrow is talking to Suvi, and you see that, yes, he's—he is a buffoon in some ways, right? He's the classic wizard, he's low wisdom, high intelligence. But you see that he goes like, I know that I haven't been tending to the minutiae. So you see that his incompetence—you see that what could have registered as incompetence, or like, "You are a dandy, and unserious—"

Erika Ishii  
No, it's—

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—is actually just a prioritization.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
He's like, "I don't really care what Pane is doing. I don't care."

Erika Ishii  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
"I've been—"

Erika Ishii  
He's focused on the great work!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
He's focused on the great work, right?

Aabria Iyengar

Fun fact, in that line that was like a really fun parallel to Laerryn over on Calamity. That idea of, like, I don't have, like—because Laerryn had the same rant, like, "This is what I was able to build given like, the not enough resources," like, god just hit me right in all of my wizard feels, and I think—god sorry, someone else talk. I like wizards.

Richard Goose (Lou)

I think it's the exciting part of playing in a fantasy world that's as developed as this one, of like, what does it mean when we start to get into the world of bureaucracy—

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Richard Goose (Lou)

—and what does climbing the ladder in that world look like and, it's no longer like, "Well, I run off to my tower, and I spend every day—" it is this weird like, "Well, I got this post, and you see, I've decided to ignore all of my responsibilities to Empire, with the idea that one day, the boss will come by and I'll say, look, mister, here's what I've been working on."

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Richard Goose (Lou)

"It's completely separate, and not what you asked me to do." And that maybe someday he'll go, "Well, great job, scout, I love this initiative." Like it's that weird—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)

—It's a very—

Aabria Iyengar

Yes.

Richard Goose (Lou)

—kind of corporate, and of-our-world feeling, that is snuck into this fantasy world filled with bear-men. It's such a—it's such a nice encapsulation of, I think, something that is very common in THIS world, and kind of being built out into a world of magic and wonder.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Thanks, Dick.

Erika Ishii

Brennan, you're muted. Oh there you go.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There I am. I was gonna say thank you, Dick. I think that there is a—there is something really—like, about the fact that Morrow AND Pane are both embezzling, right? Pane was just sort of, dull, and crass, and material about it. But like, like you're saying, Morrow was like using the tools of the Chantry and the Scepter's chorus to like, further this thing—you know, it's like, everyone's getting their's right? Which is of course, like—

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—I don't know, there's something about Empire within that, of like—Suvi says, like, stealing from the Empire is treason. So you have this Empire which is DEMANDING strict loyalty, and adherence to rules, by all means necessary, and yet everybody operating within that Empire, seems to understand that, that's the sandbox you're in? But within that sandbox, you better be leaning as hard as you fuckin' can, to get ahead.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And it's so, like, I don't know. It's one of many things about the structure of the Empire that is like, alien to Eursulon and Ame, who—man, running that scene with Pane. Can we talk about Eursulon healing Pane?

Aabria Iyengar

Oh my god. Can we!

Erika Ishii

MmmMMM! He's such a good sweet boy!

Aabria Iyengar

Dick! What a choice!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Hey, you know, what can ya do? I mean, you know. It is—the way we're playing these characters is not like other D&D campaigns we've played, where people are like, "That's bad guy, us good guy!" There's just like, a nuance to everything that, in that moment, did feel like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa! We're gonna kill him?! We didn't kill any of the other—" like, there is something also to like, you know—and I think there's like a joke about it in the show, but it's like, you know. We keep chasing—people keep running away from us, and it did feel like, "Oh, and this is the guy we kill? The guy that I fucked this up, because I, when put on the spot, didn't say, let's come back later, I said, you know what? Lemme just—I have an ace up my sleeve that

actually turns out to be a two, and now you've cut yourself, and we're really leanin' into some croquet joke."

[Brennan and Erika laugh]

Richard Goose (Lou)

I do think there was something that was just like, "This feels—" it would have felt straight up WRONG, to be like, "We murdered—the first person we, like, straight up murdered outside of Emliss is Morrow?" Couldn't happen. Had to heal him.

Aabria Iyengar

All I'm saying is Suvi was being really nice to the other hedge mages, and we should all appreciate that, because—

Erika Ishii

[Cackling]

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yes.

Aabria Iyengar

—she went straight to kill with someone from her home territory.

Richard Goose (Lou)

We could have been straight up violent.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! Yeah. [Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Yeah, I think he—he said something that really struck me, on the relisten, especially of that like, a week, two weeks ago, he was working at a circus, and now he has to decide when and where a wizard dies? That's a lot. And it is. It's so, a lot, and I think we've gotten so used to life being—to being just cavalier about life in D&D games. And that was something that we had talked about a lot, early on, too, about how there are stakes to this, and that life really matters, you know? And—

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Richard Goose (Lou)

It feels wild to just start murdering people for Embezzlement, to be like, "What's up! This gets you put down."

Erika Ishii

But then again—

Richard Goose (Lou)

Suvi's ready!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Suvi's ready to go!

Aabria Iyengar

It's not about stealing, it's about getting caught. Everyone embezzles. Suvi gave Ame a dirty look for stealing a jacket—

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

—which I do want to know more about—but she also tried to steal the book that Morrow had, so—again, that idea of, like, it's just, what you can get away with in—like, within the confines of Empire like, "Alright, you're stupid enough to be on someone's list about it. You're no longer clever enough to continue to play this game. Go away."

Richard Goose (Lou)

Oooh!

Erika Ishii

God!

Aabria Iyengar

One of us has to be cavalier about life, and I hit the buzzer first.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Hey, I'll get there, I'll get there, don't worry, I—

Aabria Iyengar

Hey Eursulon, come join me!



Richard Goose (Lou)

It's just being a level one character. Let me get—

Aabria Iyengar

[Whispering] Join me.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Ey, level three. Level three, I'm going full murder hobo. Straight up.

Aabria Iyengar

Here's the team! Ame, you're by yourself. Go fuck yourself.

Erika Ishii

Look, Ame couldn't kill someone, even if she wanted to, alright?

Aabria Iyengar

Uh, you're a—

Erika Ishii

That's not what level one witches do!

Aabria Iyengar

You're a shit brick house now—

Erika Ishii

Well I am, I could crush someone's—

Aabria Iyengar

—so you can do whatever you wish.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Exactly. You're about to start throwing haymakers.

Erika Ishii

—head like a grape, with my thighs. Yes.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Ame's just like, "I grapple their neck?"

Erika Ishii

[Snapping sound]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There's a—well, first of all—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] The two inch twist!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

First of all, I'll say this too, there's a moment, on the relisten, where Suvi is talking—when Eursulon and Ame come to Suvi and they're like, hey, they're just honest. Which is Ame's superpower, by the way, right? Ame's superpower is that she can be honest, in a way, that is non-manipulative, but paves the path, for the party to get what they need. Like, your entire interaction with Will Gallow—

Erika Ishii

[Laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—after he got raised was literally like, "Dog, here's the deal." You know, like—

Erika Ishii

[Laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"—you're made, it's over for you, we don't want you to die, but you're also—you know, we're not out here to put our necks out for you, we need this thing." And it was all explained so clearly, with like—it was like a glass surface, for him to come back at you. You know what I mean? Where it's like "You got got, for doing a thing that you know was a bad idea, we're the ones who pulled the trigger because it helps us. We don't need to explain to you how it helps us because, we're fucking strangers, I don't know you."

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"But we also are kind, we don't want you to die needlessly, so we're warning you because all we need to do is sever you from the Empire. We don't need to give you over to Gallows." And it was all so honest and pure, and it just was like, it laid everything out in this perfect persuasion.

Aabria Iyengar

Awww. Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then after that, both of you were very honest going to Suvi and being like, "We don't know your world!"

Erika Ishii

[Laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"We don't know your world!" And I have a question for Aabria about that, which is—

Aabria Iyengar

MM!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—Suvi says, as she connects to her friends, whom she deeply loves, and is like, "Yeah, I was trained at the Citadel from a young age to make hard decisions." And then Suvi says something and she says, "But it's not easy." And my question for you Aabria, for Suvi, is, is that true for Suvi, that it's not easy?

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Or was that a lie, in order to bond to Ame and—

Erika Ishii

[Shriek]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—Eursulon in that moment?

Erika Ishii

[Continuing to shriek]

Aabria Iyengar

Ugh! We set this up!

Erika Ishii

[Giggling]

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, on the boat, post the Emliss fight, Suvi tries to bond with Eursulon about what has happened, and she backs off when Eursulon says, "You know, it's hard," because, that wasn't what Suvi needed to hear, because it wasn't hard. I think she is telling enough of the truth, so it doesn't feel like—it's that whole lie of omission thing. It was hard learning how to do this. It is not hard now.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

And I liken that more to—a lot of this hit a really strong sports metaphor for me—more than the obvious sort of military implications—of like, the thing you train to do in sports, is take the buzzer shot. You want to be in that high pressure situation at the end of the game.

Erika Ishii

Right.

Aabria Iyengar

And that's the thing you train for.

Erika Ishii

You kill the part of you that hesitates.

Aabria Iyengar

Exactly. Because if you hesitate, like, that's how you die, that's how like, other people on the front lines die. So, I think, all of that comes from, a Citadel that, again, is deeply efficient with the things it needs to do, and to impart on the people it's training up, maybe to the detriment of their emotional well being.

Erika Ishii

Well, she—

Aabria Iyengar

But, yeah, that wasn't hard for her.

Erika Ishii

She says this is—that she's been raised from childhood to do this, to make hard decisions, this is her first time doing—actually having to DO it, and that it's hard. And Ame's like, "Well, yeah, but it's when it's easy, that's when you really gotta worry." [Laughing] And Suvi's like "YUP."

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! "We are saying the same thing and feeling the same way about it!"

Erika Ishii

[Cackling]

Aabria Iyengar

Have you ever heard someone, like, actively flushing their long term memory? "Like, do not store that. Don't store that. If you think about that later, you will be lost. Shunt it. Shunt it now!"

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] Ohhh, my goodness!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We gotta talk about the final scene at the Kalabel Nautamantic Apparatus.

Erika Ishii

Okay, first of all—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Taylor—

Erika Ishii

I nailed it in my drawing. Listen to the Brennan's description—

Aabria Iyengar

You did!

Erika Ishii

—And then did a drawing of a little pyramidy thing, and it was dead. On. But holy shit, what a description. Holy cow, what a sound design for it. PHEW.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's hard, because I got the thing in my head, but describe—I realized—because the problem is, when you're narrating, you're also trying to be dramatic. If I was just talking normally, I would just be like, "Take a pyramid. Now grab the top—"

[Aabria and Erika cackle]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"—and stretch it so it's really tall and skinny. Now, get rid of the flat sides and all of the four corners that stretch up to the point at the top. They're just steel beams. So it's just like four steel beams that are like, leaned in, to make a little pyramid shape between the four beams. Now put little platforms that got big glass discs in 'em, and they're kind of going down, there's like seven or eight of them going down." And that would have been maybe a clear explanation of what the structure was. But you're trying to be like "The steel. The wizard stuff is goin'—"

Erika Ishii

Yeah! "Of pure light!"

Aabria Iyengar

Ugh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Pure light. The sound design, the music, the—it was just so gor—Taylor fuckin' killed it, in this scene, it was otherworldly, it was haunting and horrifying. The wind effect, as Morrow, is like [Yelling] "You can see here that it took three years to do the—" which is just like.

Aabria Iyengar  
Oh my god, yes!!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
My favorite—

Erika Ishii  
God.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—fucking—

Erika Ishii  
God.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—thing of, fuckin'—what is it, Richard Attenborough ass, you know like—

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughing] Yes!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
"The amber is collected from mosquitoes!"

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughing]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Just a fucking expert, explaining an insane contraption, over intense weather events, is my favorite trope of all time. But, yeah, it was—Taylor just—the deep, low horns. And then, like, the song, when we see the creature at the bottom of the waves.

Erika Ishii  
Gah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
The effects of the light swirling, it just was like—it was transporting. It was just like the music for that was—the music, the sound effects, all of it was just unbelievable.

Aabria Iyengar  
I have a question. Am I a monster for having listened to that episode and immediately ordered SUGARFISH?

[Everyone laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)  
No, I think that's right.

Aabria Iyengar  
Okay!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
That's great, that's exactly—

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Hey, you know. Hey, I'd want a taste. You know, after that?

Aabria Iyengar  
Instantaneous, like.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
After that sound design?

Aabria Iyengar  
Do you think that big boy tastes good? Probably!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Exactly!

Erika Ishii  
Here's the thing. He's still hot. Would still hit it.

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughs]

Erika Ishii  
We have talked about this. Would absolutely still hit it.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah I'd fuck the sea monster.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
The giant—

Aabria Iyengar

The giant nautilus.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The giant sea monster?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Yeah. The giant sea cucumber? I'm sorry. Would you like to rephrase that, in a way that's LESS attractive to me?

Aabria Iyengar

Look, Brennan, you didn't let us make the fox weirdly hot with abs, we're going to fuck your sea monster.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Wow.

Aabria Iyengar

Under the wizard microscope Eiffel Tower.

Erika Ishii

[Cackling]

Aabria Iyengar

Is that what you want? Is that what you want?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I guess it wasn't what I—

Aabria Iyengar

We'll ruin everything you make.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I guess that wasn't what I wanted. I don't know. I don't know.

Aabria Iyengar

Beans, you get what you get.



Brennan Lee Mulligan

You get what you get and you don't get upset.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Something's gotta get fucked! Ya know, that's just the way it goes, you know?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing]

Erika Ishii

Yeah. Oh boy. Oh boy. Mr. Goose, what do you think of Eursulon's new shiny pelt? The otter! The otter!

Aabria Iyengar

Ah! Eursulotter!

Erika Ishii

Pelt!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Eursulotter? I love it. It is like—you can't—it is fun to play a character who, while, of course, we're always like seeing shades, of the Empire's nastiness, it is fun to play the person who's like, "This is crazy! Look at all this stuff they got in here!"

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Richard Goose (Lou)

It's really enjoyable to be, like—to not have to deal with any of the consequences of these things, yet. At least in this moment—

Erika Ishii

Mmmhm.

Richard Goose (Lou)

—it's all just fun and exciting, to put on these rings, and feel cool, and different, and, you know, my character doesn't know anything about the MPM effects of all this stuff, ya know?

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing]

Richard Goose (Lou)

We're just—it's just fun to have cool fur! Let me get in that water, baby!

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Erika Ishii

I also loved [Laughs] getting the Matchstick and it's, big kid-receiving-a-present-they-didn't-want energy.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! [Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Because we all know that feeling!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! "Ohh..."

Erika Ishii

"Oh! Thank you."

Aabria Iyengar

"A Precious Moments Bible, thank you."

Richard Goose (Lou)

"Oh, wow!"

Aabria Iyengar

"What?"

Richard Goose (Lou)

"I guess, maybe I'll read it for five minutes right now, so you think I want it?"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Richard Goose (Lou)

"And then I can put it down and never touch it again."

Erika Ishii

Oh my god.

Aabria Iyengar

Ohh my god.

Richard Goose (Lou)

"How much energy do I have to give to the gift in this moment, so that you walk away feeling positive, and then I can throw it in the trash, or sell it on eBay?"

Erika Ishii

I would buy your signed Precious Moments Bible on eBay.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Mm! Look at that.

Aabria Iyengar

I mean, I still have mine, I was naming a thing I actually own.

Erika Ishii

[Wheezing squeak of laughter]

Aabria Iyengar

So we're doing that now. Fundraiser!!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yes.

Aabria Iyengar

We have to buy sounds for Taylor to use! I don't know how sounds are generated, I assume you buy them.

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Well, I won't lie. My version of your Precious Moments Bible were these—they were these gloves, right? And they had these big kind of pods on the back, like on the toppy.

Erika Ishii

Pods?

Richard Goose (Lou)

What's this part of the hand? What's the opposite palm called?

Aabria Iyengar

The back?

Erika Ishii

The back of your hand?

Richard Goose (Lou)

Do we just call it the back of the hand?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, the back of your hand.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, the back of your hand.

Richard Goose (Lou)

It doesn't have a fun name?

Aabria Iyengar

No, you know it like you know—

Richard Goose (Lou)

Well, we don't call this the front of our hand.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Wow. I can't believe—

Aabria Iyengar

It's called a talberd!

Richard Goose (Lou)

I can't believe—

Richard Goose (Lou)

It's a talberd! See, it's kind of on the talberd of your hand. What were we going to say, Brennan?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I was gonna say—

Aabria Iyengar

Shut up Brennan.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—I can't—no. Please—

Richard Goose (Lou)

Hey, Brennan. Shut up.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Richard Goose!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Hey Brennan, the minute you said talberd you eroded.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We're close!

[Aabria and Erika laughing]

Richard Goose (Lou)

We ARE close, and I WILL see you at the Elks on Saturday. What were you going to say, Brennan?

Richard Goose (Lou)

I was going to say—

Richard Goose (Lou)

Shut up, Brennan. Anyway, so this part of the hand—

[Everyone dying laughing]

Richard Goose (Lou)

No, we're going to see each other, we're going to have Miller High Lifs at the Elks on Saturday, what did you wanna say?

Aabria Iyengar

[Roaring with laughter]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Very exciting. It's very exciting. God, it's too long of a walk to go back now. I was just going to comment.

Richard Goose (Lou)

No, take us back there.

Aabria Iyengar

Say it. Take me back!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We really—the window REALLY closed on it, but—

Richard Goose (Lou)

No, open it up again and jump out.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I was going to say, it's really wild to meet someone who doesn't know the back of your hand, like the back of his hand.

Aabria Iyengar  
Haa. Yeah, that's good.

Erika Ishii  
[Long groan]

Aabria Iyengar  
That was fun. That was fun. I'm glad we went back for that.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Would have been barely worth it, in the correct moment, for the observation.

[Aabria and Richard Goose laugh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Would have been kind—truly a groaner, and a—and I apologize, and I'm headin' out.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
No.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Everyone have a great night, I'm headin' out.

Aabria Iyengar  
Ah! Thank you so much.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Hey, take care! Make sure you guys tip your talberds, thank you so much for coming out tonight.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Erika Ishii  
No, but it's this—

Erika Ishii  
Pods on the back of your hand? What?

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah?

Richard Goose (Lou)  
So, it has these pods, and then what would happen is, you would move your—and then there were wires from the pod—like, the pack—

Aabria Iyengar  
Oh!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
—to your tips of your fingers, and you would move your fingers, like, down like you were playing a piano. But there's no piano, it's just the air. And it would emit sounds.

Aabria Iyengar  
Ohh.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
There was like a saxophone sound. And so essentially, you could like, air play the piano with ten notes. And I used those for about a day?

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)  
And then I never touched them again. And my mom got them for both me and my sister, and they HAD to be expensive.

[Everyone laughs]

Aabria Iyengar  
That's really good. Yeah, that's a good Precious Moments Bible, of an item.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
That's a real Precious Moments Bible.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Erika Ishii  
Wow. Brennan, do you have a childhood memory, of an unwanted present that you had to do your damndest with?

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
On the—so, the original iPods came out—the very first iPods came out, like, I want to say like, two or three weeks before my 12th or like, 13th birthday? And on—I think it was my 13th birthday, iPods had only existed for a couple of weeks. On that birthday, I received a used Zune, that was disfigured by battery acid.

Aabria Iyengar  
[Shocked laughter]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Because the person who got me the gift, had bought themselves a new iPod.

Erika Ishii

[Gasp]

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing]

Richard Goose (Lou)

Just so raw.

Aabria Iyengar

That's—

Richard Goose (Lou)

So incredibly raw.

Aabria Iyengar

—very funny.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The Zune could only play the first few words of "One Week" by Bare Naked Ladies before it ran—

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii

"It's been—"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"It been, one we—" and it would not even get through the word week before it ran out of batteries, no matter how many new batteries I put in.

[Aabria and Erika crying laughing]

Richard Goose (Lou)

Now, how did you—how do you play off that moment? Do you like—did you plug it in, and try and listen to it and immediately just like, not—keep bobbing your head like the music is playing and going, "Thank you!" Or did you just hold it, and go, "Great!" And then find out later?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

My entire personality, every brick of my being, from the foundation to the roof, is built like a fucking—like the Terminator, to sell in that moment that I am having a great time.



Erika Ishii

Awwwwwww!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's what the whole show is about. So the person that gave me that gift? Baby, I've never gotten a better gift. That was the best gift I ever got. I was so excited, for not only the used Zune, but the toothbrush that came with it, for me to try to scrape the battery—

Aabria Iyengar

The battery acid.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—acid out of the—

Richard Goose (Lou)

What?!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—battery container.

Richard Goose (Lou)

So they knew exactly what they were giving—they were like, "I know this is busted, but here it is, and a toothbrush. Happy birthday."

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Correct. That is correct.

Aabria Iyengar

Wait—okay. Were—I feel—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Have I brought the mood down? Is this story sad?

Aabria Iyengar

No no no! Not at all.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

No, good, okay good.

Aabria Iyengar

Do you guys remember Hit Clips?

Richard Goose (Lou)  
No. It's sad.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
[Laughs]

Aabria Iyengar  
Are you old enough to remember those?

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Remember what?

Richard Goose (Lou)  
A Hit Clip?

Aabria Iyengar  
Hit Clips, were a weird thing in the 90s, which was like, a little—

Erika Ishii  
Oh my god wait, where it's like, had, like, three MP3s at a time on it or something?

Aabria Iyengar  
It wasn't even a full song, it was 1 minute—

Erika Ishii  
[Laughs]

Aabria Iyengar  
—of a pop song, that you could play, in a little thing. And I think Brennan just got a Hit Clip.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
[In unison] A Hit Clip?

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughing] He just got a Hit Clip, but it was "It's been, one wee—"

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah! Yeah!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
So I've never heard of a Hit Clip, I'm just—I mean, I was born in the 70s, but I just—

Aabria Iyengar  
Fair.

Richard Goose (Lou)

—missed this. But it does look like, at the time, would have been the coolest fucking thing, that—and if I was around when Hip Clips were—

Erika Ishii

Oh my god.

Richard Goose (Lou)

—or Hit Clips, I feel like I would have owned 20,000 of these.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. It was a tamagotchi and almost a song. Holy shit! So, Brennan, I think you got a very cool gift, actually.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Thank you!

Aabria Iyengar

You just got a Hit Clip for one song specifically. And that's kinda rad.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It was great. It was great, but—so, you know. You live, you learn, you laugh, you move on. And ultimately, you know. I think, that was around the time that I stopped being as into—my birthday is also in early January? So like.

Erika Ishii

Oh, yeah, it's hard, yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. You have a merry birthday. That sucks.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So it's very—everyone is, like, broke from Christmas, hungover from New Year's, and now has the flu.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Mm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You know, it's like, it's not a good time. I think I truly was like—I was, like, nine when it was like, "Time to stop." Maybe not nine years old, but I was pretty young when I was like, "Time to stop makin' a big deal out of birthdays." Birthdays are not—everyone's reacting. Aabria is making soft concerned little—

Richard Goose [Lou]

No, this is sad. This is sad.

Aabria Iyengar

This is sad!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's not sad, hey!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Uh, yuh.

Aabria Iyengar

Hey Brennan. What you said is sad, and I have—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I loved the Zune! I loved the Zune! You don't have to—

Aabria Iyengar

I have valorized—

Richard Goose (Lou)

I think we're imagining you as like a—oh, sorry, I just—I think the reason it feels sad is, I don't know if you were, like, 16 or 8, because in my head, you're like eight.

[Everyone laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)

It's like you with like, a yellow old Navy shirt, being like, "It's okay to not have a birthday!" Like it's like—

Aabria Iyengar

He said it was when he was 9, so it's the sad answer!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yeah, so it is the sad way.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I think I was more like, middle school aged. I think it was an age, where it was like it was not that young, but it was the age of like—I'm trying to think there's something—but I think it all—yeah, it depends. There

was one really great birthday that was Lord of the Rings themed, which was awesome. And we always talk about it.

Richard Goose (Lou)

He's trying to pull up. He's trying to pull up with a happy one.

Aabria Iyengar

He's trying!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It was true. It was great. My mom—

Aabria Iyengar

I haven't had a birthday party since I was 12, and I valorize working on my birthday, and you still got me beat for the saddest birthday shit I've ever heard.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

No, no no no.

Erika Ishii

Jesus!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. That's what that was. Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Well, it just—yeah, it was very funny. There's a lot of other funny birthday—birthday stuff—I remember I used to be very—I used to be like a birthday grinch? I was like "HMM! People that make a big deal out of their birthday!" Because my own—you know, you're working through your own personal shit?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. For sure.

Erika Ishii

Right.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

A friend of mine, truly cured me of my birthday grinchism, because I was doing improv shows in New York at the time, and I was with a group of friends, and I was like, "Agh! Everyone's making a big deal out of their birthday. What's the big idea?" And my friend Reed leaned over to me, and was like, "Hey, that was a great show last week. Have you ever thought about the fact that, when you go to work, people clap?" And I went, "What?" And he was like, "You kind of have a lot of celebration in your life, and that's not really true for everybody." And it's one of those rare moments that a friend totally corrects something in your head, and changes you, in the moment on a dime.

Aabria Iyengar  
That's beautiful!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
It was a beautiful thing. And I went, "Oh, I'm never going to—like, yeah, birthdays are wonderful." Everyone should—should—if you want to make—have a big, awesome birthday, I think that's great. That's awesome.

Erika Ishii  
I have thought about that sort of thing, that ethos before, but when you told me that story, I was able to put an actual, sort of—to actually articulate it, in a way that, I am never a grinch about anybody else's celebrations of anything ever again.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Mhm.

Erika Ishii  
Yes.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Now, my only emphasis is you gotta do—you get a day. I'm not a birthday week guy.

Aabria Iyengar  
Oh! Yeah.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
I'm especially, not a birthday month guy.

[Aabria and Brennan laugh]

Richard Goose (Lou)  
I just gotta say it. 30 whole days of birthday? Come on now. Come on now!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Well I think—the math falls apart really quickly. Whatever your community—like, how many friends do you have in your life, that is your circle, of people who you would go to their birthday party, right? If it's twelve or more, and everybody gets a birthday month, we're in trouble, right?

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You gotta think about the time, and the year, you know, it's like, "Oh, this is—we're—" you know. I agree with Dicky. I agree with Dick Goose.

Aabria Iyengar

Question for the group. What's the statute of limitations on when you can celebrate your birthday, away from the actual day of your birthday?

Richard Goose (Lou)

Mm.

Erika Ishii

None!

Aabria Iyengar

Because I'm one of those kids that like, kicks—I always want to kick it down the road because I'm usually doing a work thing? And then by the time I get there, I'm like, It's early June, we're done now. This is literally what I'm going through with right now. I had a friend text me earlier today, like, "Oh, do you still wanna do a birthday thing?" I'm like, "It's a different time of the year. I think we moved on."

Erika Ishii

Okay, so for friends, I'm like, anything—any excuse will do. I will celebrate your birthday, exactly half a year away from when it was, you know, like—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

I will party, anytime. I will celebrate you, anytime. When it comes to me, I usually miss it, because in early March, yeah, it's still like, close to the beginning of the year, and work has started to pick back up, and—

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Erika Ishii

Or I'm like, at a con or something, and I'll do whatever I'm doing that day, and then I'll be like, "Ah, like, I want an excuse to party with friends!" But then it just never happens because by the time that I free up for it, it's too late. It's too late, you know. And again, it's not that I need people to celebrate ME. I just need an excuse where everybody has to attend a party that I throw.

Aabria Iyengar

That. That, yeah, I don't need clapping, again, like Brennan said, I have a job where people are very kind to me.

Erika Ishii

I don't even need people to look at me at the party. I just need them to BE there.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, just be at the party!

Erika Ishii

Be at the party!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Throwing—

Erika Ishii

For the record, we should absolutely do something for your birthday.

Aabria Iyengar

Do you want to do a joint "We both missed our birthdays" birthday party?

Erika Ishii

YES-UH!

Aabria Iyengar

We'll just rent out a roller skating rink, and then just be like—

Erika Ishii

Oh my god!

Aabria Iyengar

"Hey, everyone that kind of missed the window on their birthday. Hop up." [Laugh]

Erika Ishii

Yes.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Wait, I missed my birthday, too. Could we do a three—

Erika Ishii

[Long gasp]

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!



Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—joint birthday party?

Erika Ishii  
This is gonna be rad!

Aabria Iyengar  
Hey, Dick, I don't know when your birthday is.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Pearl Harbor Day, December 7th.

[Everyone laughs]

Erika Ishii  
A day that shall live in infamy, yes.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Exactly, yeah.

Erika Ishii  
Okay.

Aabria Iyengar  
Alright!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Dick, you haven't—Dick you haven't—you haven't gotten a chance to meet him, but it's always right on my desk, my friend Lou Wilson—

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Oh! Ah!

Erika Ishii  
[Laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—threw a legendary—a legendary pizza themed birthday party for his 27th birthday?

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Ah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
And he—there was a table. Lemme say this: It was way more than 27 pizzas. I remember I got deep dish—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Richard Goose (Lou)

Wow!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—I got deep dish from Masa—

Erika Ishii

Ough, Masa.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—which is so fucking good, so fucking good.

Erika Ishii

Ough.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And Lou had these little pizza keychains—

Aabria Iyengar

Oh ho ho!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—and I keep it as a little charm on my desk—

Erika Ishii

Awwww!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—it's right there—

Aabria Iyengar

Aww!

Erika Ishii

Awwww!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
—with a little charm, on my desk!

Erika Ishii  
Brennan is holding up a tiny slice of—what looks to be a tiny slice of pizza.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Some little mushrooms on it, how 'bout it?

Aabria Iyengar  
Awww!

Erika Ishii  
It's got little mushrooms on it! Those are—

Aabria Iyengar  
That's so cute!

Erika Ishii  
—mushrooms that are not good for eating, though.

Aabria Iyengar  
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
They're bright red mushrooms.

Aabria Iyengar  
Those are drug shrooms. [Laugh]

Erika Ishii  
Yeah.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Uh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
That was like, one of the best birthday parties of all time. It's very funny, I always get nervous about—I, to this day have anxiety around, like, throwing parties?

Erika Ishii

Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar

Mhm. Yeah.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Mhm.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Because there's always that moment where you're like, "But, if I throw a party, no one will come!"

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"And it will be terrible. And it will be a terrible thing." But! But, whenever a friend throws a party, for any reason, I am always like, a man crawling through the desert having discovered water. Like, "Thank god. Thank you. Thank you, for making a wonderful fun thing happen." So if you're out there, and you're feeling nervous about throwing a party, I think we all have that anxiety from time to time. But Lord knows, every time I get a little invite to a fun party, I always go, "My god, a miracle, manna from heaven." Let's do it.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yeah.

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

I love it.

Erika Ishii

Yeahhhh. Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Spa birthday party in the random middle of the year!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Yeah, lot of promises made in this one. I'm excited. I'm excited to see the follow through.

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughs]

Erika Ishii

Well, on that note, with these big promises of big parties, I shall sign off here. Thank you so much.  
Brennan.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Pip-pip and... Hoopdy... Fun-times!

[Aabria and Erika laughing]

Richard Goose (Lou)

Tell 'em, tell 'em about them hoopdy fun-times.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laugh]

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] Pip-pip and hoopdy fun-times to you as well, Aabria, thank you.

Aabria Iyengar

A hearty Naram upon thee.

Erika Ishii

[Laughing] To you as well! And to Mr. Dicky Goose.

Richard Goose (Lou)

Hey!

Erika Ishii

Thank you so much for joining us this week. Just an absolute delight of a guest!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Hey, ya know, a thrill to be here. You know, I know the people Lou invites on here, aren't 100% hitters?

[Aabria and Erika laugh]

Richard Goose (Lou)

So I'm glad I could come through. And I hope you, and that tiny beetle have a real great night together in that tuna can.

Erika Ishii

Mhm! Yes. I'm going to have another thimble full of tea.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Watch out now! Watch out now!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
Uh oh!

Aabria Iyengar  
Turning up!

Erika Ishii  
Gettin' a little crazy over here!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Okay! Alright!

Brennan Lee Mulligan  
We'll get an eyedropper, put some drops of Miller High Life in that tuna can, courtesy of the Elks Lodge!

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Bring that tuna can, down to the Elks Lodge this Saturday. We're gonna have a good ass time!

Erika Ishii  
Mr. Skittles and I, will be there.

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Yes!

Aabria Iyengar  
[Laughing] Mr. Skittles!

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

Erika Ishii  
[Laughing] Alright everybody—

Richard Goose (Lou)  
Crackle crackle!

Erika Ishii  
Crackle crackle!

Aabria Iyengar  
Crackle crackle!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Crackle crackle!

Richard Goose (Lou)

Was that too early? Ah hoo hoo!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Ah hoo HOO!