

Worlds Beyond Number

Fireside Chat: Episode 001

Final Version

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

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Alright, ready?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Here we go.

Taylor Moore

Hi. You've never heard me before.

Taylor Moore

[Raucous Laughter]

Lou Wilson

This is the first time they're hearing your voice?

Taylor Moore

I think so. I did the credits for one of the things we published. I don't know—

Erika Ishii

Yeah! He sounds nice!

Taylor Moore

—My name is Taylor Moore—

Aabria Iyengar

No! Do the thing we do at the top!

Taylor Moore

What do we do at the top?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

He does sound nice! [Coyly] He sounds handsome. Can I say that?

Aabria Iyengar
Ooh!

Erika Ishii
Wow!

Aabria Iyengar
You can say that!

Erika Ishii
Can I say he sounds handsome?

Erika Ishii
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I think it's true.

Lou Wilson
Well hold on, let me hear him again. Let me hear him again. One more time.

Taylor Moore
[In a vaudevillian goblin voice] HelloOoOoOo

[A light trickle of water can be heard]

Lou Wilson
Okay. Yeah.

[Erika starts to die from laughter]

Erika Ishii
[Laughing] Oh no we got a spit take from Brennan!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I got a spit take!

Aabria Iyengar
You made Brennan fully spit!

Erika Ishii

Ohh! It came out of his nose!

Lou Wilson

He sounds like a regular Dandy.

Aabria Iyengar

That's it.

[Brennan and Taylor laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

There's nothing else, we're done.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I cannot believe in this audio only medium, I fully— [gasping laughter] I fully spit water.

Oh, my God. Thank god I turned, Jesus.

Aabria Iyengar

[Erika laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh fuck.

Aabria Iyengar

That's it. You win.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Conceding] That's a good funny voice.

Taylor Moore

[Funny Voice] Thank you!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Wow, shit!

Aabria Iyengar

Taylor. Give me a "this is the sound..."

Taylor Moore

[Smooth announcer's voice] This is the sound of Worlds Beyond Number.

Aabria Iyengar

Nice!

Taylor Moore
Erika?

Lou Wilson
Eh, it's not bad

Erika Ishii
[Even smoother announcer's voice] This is the sound of Worlds Beyond Number.

Lou Wilson
That's still crazy It's still like—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Sorry, can we get Aabria?

Aabria Iyengar
Oh, sure. Ahem: [Wacky Prospector Voice] This is the sound of Worlds Beyond Number!

Taylor Moore
[Bango riff]

Aabria Iyengar
We're all doing our sexy voice!

Taylor Moore
I think, you know, we have a—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Everyone do your sexy— We're doing our sexiest voices.

Taylor Moore
Our sexist voice— our sexiest voice?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Our sexiest voices.

Lou Wilson
No sexist voice, you're right Taylor, do your sexist voice. Can we hear your sexist voice?

Taylor Moore

Yeah, me? Yeah, sure sure sure. [Incredulously] My sexist voice?

Aabria Iyengar
Yes!!

Lou Wilson
Yes, your sexist voice.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
No—

Lou Wilson
That's what I heard you say.

Taylor Moore
My introduction to the fans of Worlds Beyond Number—

Taylor Moore
Is your sexist voice!

Taylor Moore
— Is not gonna be ironic sexism.

Aabria Iyengar
But it's a voice! But it's a voice, just do the VOICE.

Lou Wilson
Yeah, it's just a voice, dude!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
You want to do a classic sexist voice, like, [Cartoonish Voice] Thith ith the thound! Of
Woilds Beyond Numbah!

Lou Wilson
Yeah that guy does a—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Like a sexist!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Ok here we go here we go here we go. This is the sound of Worlds Beyond Number, why
won't you debate me?

[Everyone cackles]

Lou Wilson

There it is. That's the sexist voice.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There it is. There it is.

Lou Wilson

That's the sexist voice we're lookin' for!

Taylor Moore

My name is Taylor Moore, I'm the producer of Worlds Beyond Number. Heard of it!? Welcome to the Fireside Chat for Episode Number One. With me, we're doing top left, clockwise, Lou Wilson.

Lou Wilson

Ha ta ta ta cha cha— Me!

Taylor Moore

And second but not least, Aabria Iyengar.

Aabria Iyengar

I don't know how to follow that. Are we cussing?

Taylor Moore

You can cuss!

Lou Wilson

We can cuss. Fireside, you can cuss.

Aabria Iyengar

Okay.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Mhm.

Aabria Iyengar

[Long Pause.] That was it. That was it! Go on.

Taylor Moore

Oh that was— [Laughing]

Aabria Iyengar
Did you want more!?

Taylor Moore
You asked—Okay—You telegraphed cussing, we'll save it for later. Erika Ishii, how are you?

Erika Ishii
Drop. Crotch. Jogger.

Aabria Iyengar
Ah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Oooh!

Aabria Iyengar
Biggest cuss in the room.

Taylor Moore
And last and ALSO not least, leaving the question "who's least?" Brennan Mulligan—Lee Mulligan!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Cartoon voice] Even! [Normal voice] Hello! I'm Brennan Lee Mulligan. My curse word today is going to be [peaking the audio] "Penis!"

[Taylor Moore breaks, laughing off mic]

Lou Wilson
That's fun.

Aabria Iyengar
Just the word "penis."

Erika Ishii
That is a cursed word.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah yeah. Yeah.

Lou Wilson

That's a fun one. Love penis. Love penis. Love butt, love penis.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Love butt, love penis, love drop crotch joggers.

Taylor Moore

All right, now your mic is too close. Brennan, I'm going to need that mic pulled back a bit.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Pulled back— [Loudly, too close to the mic] Is that a little, that's a little too much.

Taylor Moore

Jesus Christ.

Lou Wilson

That's a little bit—

Erika Ishii

Actually I might need the gain down a little bit, too.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You have to understand, the reason we're having so much fun is that it's the first Fireside Chat after the launch of Worlds Beyond Number, and our first campaign, the Wizard, the Witch, and the Wild One! And all of you listening to this are—If you're listening to this, it means that you have come over to join us by the fireside. You've joined us over on Patreon to help support the show. Not only this campaign, but all the campaigns to come. You've gotten access to some awesome art and some behind the scenes photos and the Children's Adventure.

Aabria Iyengar

Ah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And we're here to celebrate that, and our launch this past month, and it's specifically this past day.

Erika Ishii

[Clearly crying] Oh, my goodness it's—Yeah, this past 24 hours.

Aabria Iyengar

Erika, don't cry right away, save something for later! Cheesy petes!

Erika Ishii

[Voice wavering] I'm fine it's fine I can't—they don't know, they don't KNOW!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I agree with Erika! All of these very—if you are listening to this, your support of the show made the first episode of The Wizard, The Witch, and The Wild One—the premiere, The Open Door—made us premiere as the Number One Fiction Podcast in these United States on launch day.

Aabria Iyengar

On Apple specifically.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

On Apple Maps. We premiered at number one on Apple Maps. So many traffic accidents, so many wrong turns—No! On Apple podcasts and, oh my god, we are humbled, staggered, and giddy, and kind of honestly losing it.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We're all it's— yeah, the mania's set in.

Erika Ishii

We are meandering around on our days, with the knowledge in the back of our heads that, we can just tell stories with our friends for as long as we want. Uh. And that is unbelievable. Also, because you supported us on Patreon. I mean, we just broke all kinds of records on Patreon and and like—

Aabria Iyengar

Wait, hold on. Before—Erika, before you get into that, I do want to say I've been walking around all day today, deeply insufferable, because now no one can tell me shit.

Erika Ishii

Oh, just today?

Taylor Moore

Ha!

Aabria Iyengar

Hm. Didn't think I was gonna get dunked on, so I'm going to eat this piece of mango and let Erika keep talking.

Erika Ishii

Yeah. So thank you so much for joining us here at The Fireside. Truly, I mean. Look, we can't get any actual confirmation "officially," but there are numbers out there that might hint, that all of us, we're the fastest growing podcast within the first 24 hours on Patreon— or no, the the fastest growing Patreon. Period. Of all time, of all visible numbers.

Taylor Moore

Yep.

Erika Ishii

Thanks to all of you.

Aabria Iyengar

Thanks, y'all.

Taylor Moore

It's incredible. It's absolutely incredible. Gosh, you know, I've got a real tight 30 minutes on what it says about the future of independent media, but I'll save it. I'll save it for the audiobook!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's a staggering thing, that uh—Our gratitude to all of you who really have come and supported this show. And hopefully, you know, we have eight episodes of Children's Adventure. The number one thing, I think, coming into this is that we wanted to make this worth your while. It's a very personal game, it's a story that we are in love with, we love playing together.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But fundamentally, I think the idea of making sure that your time and attention was well cared for and that you would get here and there'd be a story waiting for you that would have the love and attention to detail that lets you know how deeply grateful we are for your support. It is—It threatens to move me to tears at all moments of the day, thinking about your guys' support, and the kind words you've shared, all the people that have already created fan art and social media.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So i know this is like—I know there's questions to answer and stuff, but I wanted a big ol' fuckin' fanfare parade for all of the amazing supporters, all of our patrons here on

Patreon, everyone who's supporting the show, you have made a fuckin' fabulous wild dream come true, and in so doing, we just want to repay that debt to you forever and ever and ever. Thank you.

Aabria Iyengar
Thank you.

Taylor Moore
Thank you. Also, thanks? So—Apparently, this is a lot of people's first podcast. It's a lot of people's first Patreon! And like, to introduce someone to podcasting RULES. But it also means there's a lot of people that are like, "I have no idea how this shit works," and let me tell you, the podcasting world don't make it easy to understand.

Aabria Iyengar
It really does not.

Taylor Moore
Patreon could also do better. But a lot of you, I've noticed a lot of people in the Patreon comments, on social media, when someone comes at us at a question, and we are a small team, like, it's very small. We don't have—we can't respond to every question.

Erika Ishii
We have one part time social media person. Shout out to Cat Dennis, who is terrific.

Aabria Iyengar
Woo!

Taylor Moore
One! One person!

Erika Ishii
One person.

Taylor Moore
Part time.

Erika Ishii
Part time.

Taylor Moore
And it's like—

Erika Ishii
Part time.

Taylor Moore

—I see people that have never done this before, they don't know what to do. It's not easy to figure out. But a lot of people who do know what to do, fans and patrons, jumping in and helping them out in very kind and patient ways! And that, folks, I'll be honest, ya love to see it.

[Soft chuckle from Lou, wheezing cackle from Brennan.]

Taylor Moore

I have no criticism of that behavior, it rules.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Are there any little—There are probably some little FAQ-y things we could probably throw in at the top of this—

Aabria Iyengar

Fa-Qs [Like fuck yous]

Taylor Moore

I have a few my friend! Yas, queen. I have some!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Good! Yes yes yes.

Aabria Iyengar

Was Brennan just called a Queen.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I've always somewhat felt like one and it felt right. Thank you.

Aabria Iyengar

Aww. I do love that for you.

Erika Ishii

Yes, that is correct. That's—that's good. Good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

OFF WITH THEIR HEADS!

Aabria Iyengar
Imperious.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Love it.

Taylor Moore
Now, y'all. We got 1500 questions from the patrons.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] We're gonna do this for you—

Lou Wilson
They're inquisitive!

Taylor Moore
They are. And listen, I saw somebody, and I'm not going to say names, even though I wrote it on a special list that I have, I saw someone—because they're a patron and I give patrons a wide berth—but I saw somebody complain about the character limit on the question form.

Aabria Iyengar
Interesting.

Taylor Moore
Let me tell you something. You got 25,000 people writing questions. We cannot—We can't—There has to be a character limit.

Aabria Iyengar
Gotta keep it tight.

Lou Wilson
What is the character limit?

Taylor Moore
160.

Aabria Iyengar
Ooh.

Lou Wilson
Oh. That's pretty tight.

Aabria Iyengar
Is that like old school Twitter?

Erika Ishii
That's old school tweets. Keep it to the tweets!

Taylor Moore
Let me tell ya, if you're complaining about the character limit, [whispering] you're the reason we have character limits.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Laughing]

Erika Ishii
[Scandalized] Taylor!

Aabria Iyengar
Taylor!

Taylor Moore
It's—Oh come on, it's true!

Aabria Iyengar
Spicy, too spicy.

Erika Ishii
Let's bump it up to an even 800—

Taylor Moore
[Laughing]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—and then—

Taylor Moore
[Wheezing] I can't

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Nice even 800, and then—because I want, I want people to be able to do it right—

Lou Wilson

That's an essay right? That's an essay?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

What about an—

Erika Ishii

yeah okay—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Every question I ask always includes an e.g. in a parenthetical. And I need that to be able to appear and populate in a Google—

Lou Wilson

Well I—Where do you want my bibliography to go? If you're only giving me two—where can I, how can I cite my sources?

What, you gonna do ALA or—

Aabria Iyengar

No, it's MLA.

[Everyone corrects Taylor, it's MLA]

Taylor Moore

Oh, of course. Hipsters.

Aabria Iyengar

America gets it.

Lou Wilson

MLA always.

Taylor Moore

All right, so there were some questions that, literally hundreds of people asked, that all have the exact same answer.

Aabria Iyengar

Three.

Taylor Moore

Will there be a soundtrack we can buy? Will there be a setting guide we can buy? Will you have guest PCs or players on Worlds Beyond Number? Will you release or sell the Witch Class? And the answer to all those is "no, never."

[Moment of silence, laughter]

Taylor Moore

No of course! Of course we will, of course! Yes yes yes to all of them; in the future. We don't have a timeline, but one day, all these things—

Erika Ishii

We just said that we had ONE social media person who worked part time, so, yes. It might be a little bit before we get any of those things, but I really, really want that soundtrack!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Some of those things are going to occur on different timetables than others. Right? Witch Class, probably going to happen way soon. I'll let Taylor speak to how we would try to package and get music to you guys, as its own individual thing. Setting guide is going to be a lot longer.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh yeah. That can't come out before the game is over. It would be insane because I would cheat immediately.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I have a world map—

Lou Wilson

I would cheat immediately.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, I have a world map, there's still—There's a LOT more graph paper left. There's more stuff to put down. Like, I have all the continents and all the coastlines and all that stuff but, you gotta give me a second, folks. And then, yes, down the road, guest players. But I think for us, too, there's going to be like—we have focused in the near future on just switching out who's in the hot seat, getting other people, other like, people GMing, so we have a couple of little things like that on the horizon so. It's all coming, and the

enthusiasm for all of it is fuckin' rad, and all of you rule. So thank you for being enthusiastic about all of it.

Aabria Iyengar
Hell, yeah.

Taylor Moore
There were so many questions. But listen, I just wanna, like, we said thank you to the fans, before we get into the real meat of the patron questions, what has—give me your Rose and Thorn —like you four, of the last month, of releasing the preview episodes, even—well actually goes back to New Year's Eve!

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Taylor Moore
New Year's Eve, when everyone's kissing, and looking at apples and clocks. Apples? Oh!

Aabria Iyengar
Apples?

Taylor Moore
Because they drop the ball on Times Square. The Big Apple, Aabria. The Big Apple.

Aabria Iyengar
Oh my god!

[Laughter]

Aabria Iyengar
That was the most condescending thing, I swear to God, I'm going to fly to—

Lou Wilson
[Condescendingly] Aabria. Aabria.

Aabria Iyengar
—where you are—

Lou Wilson
Aabria.

Aabria Iyengar

And beat the brakes off of you, there will never be a soundtrack.

[Laughing harder]

Lou Wilson
Aabria, You Fool.

Aabria Iyengar
There will never be a soundtrack.

Lou Wilson
Aabria you fool. The Apple. The Big Apple.

Aabria Iyengar
[Sarcastically] That's so interesting.

Taylor Moore
[Wheezing, dying] The Apple.

Lou Wilson
Aabria. Aabria.

Erika Ishii
Looking at that Apple.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
It's New Year's Eve, they're looking at Apple. Comma. The Big, okay? Get. It. Together.

Aabria Iyengar
Taylor Moore, we have just started an enterprise that will last the rest of our lives, and I will send you one fuckin' shiny ass red apple every year on New Years.

[Cackling]

Aabria Iyengar
Until we inevitably die.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Your wonderful wife just finding a Red Delicious in a white paper envelope.

Taylor Moore

Oh, I made an evil queen angry at me and now she sends me apples. [Desperately] Don't eat it. Don't eat it!!

Aabria Iyengar

So you called me a queen, and now we're back! There we go!

Taylor Moore

Now we're back!

Aabria Iyengar

It's perfect!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We started—so we launched this shit on New Year's Eve. So since then, Rose and Thorn, what's been the most—what's been, like, the coolest moment for you? What's been the part that you were most scared?

Aabria Iyengar

I think for me, the Rose has absolutely been watching people take the very beginnings, like—for those of you who weren't watching social media kind of in the run up to everything launching on March 1st, we gave out little bits of character art, and like, the name of the world, and the very title. And watching fans take little nuggets of information and just sprinting off is the most heartening feeling. Because I remember growing up being that fan that was like, "oh, if you give me one point of data, I will speculate an entire world in a story."

Aabria Iyengar

So it really feels good to be part of the cycle of like, creation and permutation. So that has always felt really good and felt really good to see up top, because it made me feel like we were absolutely going in the right direction, absent any data on how people would respond to this, And several years into work. I think the Thorn is just I'm a little—I'm so bad at secrets that having to be fucking quiet. For months. Has hurt. So now I can talk and it feels good.

[Long silence]

Aabria Iyengar

Someone else speak. Holy shit.

[Longer silence]

Aabria Iyengar

I hate this! I hate it here, I have to go!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Now, here's the problem, is that a really funny bit was happening, which is that I was—but our listeners couldn't see it, I was tipping ever so slightly towards the microphone more and more on a zoom call, but that's a visual bit. And now that I've explained it, you may also laugh at it.

Lou Wilson

So if you'd like to go back—

Taylor Moore

Pause, wait—

Lou Wilson

If you actually want to go back about 15—about 10 seconds now to when Brennan was being silent, and picture the tipping. You may laugh now.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You may laugh now.

Lou Wilson

Enjoy.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Put that on my tombstone.

Lou Wilson

You're welcome.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"Brennan Lee Mulligan. You may laugh now."

[Wheezing laughter]

Erika Ishii

Mine is going to say, "I apologize for nothing."

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Wild laugh] I think, for me the Rose... The Rose sort of has to be—forgive me if this is an overly philosophical answer, but it's just that none of this had to happen. We didn't have

to tell this story. For people that have seen the little whiteboard where we have 100 jellyfish written on the board—

Aabria Iyengar
Mmm... Heist?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Haha... heist? I'll tell the story of where 100 jellyfish comes from, which was when I was living with my wonderful brother, Griffin Johnston, who has been my best friend since I was four years old, and then we became brothers, his father met my mother and they got married.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
We were living together—Gold Street, New York—and he was doing web design work, and I walked past him to our little role playing book nook, to get some RPG books to begin prepping a session. And I looked in and instead of doing web design work, he was drawing 100 jellyfish with a fine mechanical pencil on a big artist's pad. And it was such a bizarre—and I looked at him and he looked up [voice gets lofty] like Diana in a grotto, being seen by a mortal man.

Taylor Moore
[Thunderous laughter]

Aabria Iyengar
Amazing.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Like I had seen him doing something that my mortal eyes were not supposed to—sort of [gasp] scandalize look, drawing these hundred jellyfish on an artist's pad. And I was so befuddled by it, it was so mysterious. And the only question I could think to ask was, "did anybody ask you to do that?" And he went, "no." And I gave him a big thumbs up and I said, "right on." Because I think that there is some kind of special... "Wow. We're here. I can't believe we're all here. This is really special."

Brennan Lee Mulligan
There's something very special about a thing that no one asked you to do, a project borne of the heart, that comes to fruition because a group of people who all love and admire and respect each other go, "What IF we did this?" So the Rose to me, has been watching how real it's all become. From our little slack channel, to the people sending nice things on social media, to the first episode and the reactions to it, it's just—my Rose is the relationship between how real this has all become and how much it just was an idea. That's my rose.

Lou Wilson

I don't forgive you for how philosophical that is.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh! Spicy!

Lou Wilson

I just want to put that out there. It's a very sweet sentiment and it makes me emotional, but I don't forgive you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

God damn it. Fuck. Shit. Penis!

Aabria Iyengar

Too far, sir.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Sorry, I forgot that was my one curse word for the, for this whole—

Aabria Iyengar

What's your thorn, you have to answer both.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

My Thorn has been that—well, I think that as in all projects, there's just a lot of work that doesn't get seen. And as always, you work really hard to make a cool thing happen, and some people have been working really fucking hard. Taylor has been working very hard

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, my goodness, Taylor.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I know that Taylor has been bustin' his fuckin' ass. The team at Fortunate Horse, you know, we got, like, Tazer and all the amazing people over there. We have some friends who were editing the Children's Adventure.

Erika Ishii

Casey!

Taylor Moore

Casey Toney.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Our friend Casey Tony. So just, like, making sure, you know, anytime anything becomes public, it's always like—So my Thorn is always knowing that other people are busting their ass hard, and hoping—and sometimes they're doing it in a way where, other than just sending your well wishes you don't know how to get underneath them and help support them. So my thorn is that other people must struggle.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And I wish that they— I wish for that, too. This is a big push to get everything done for the launch, and I hope that they know how celebrated and appreciated all of their hard, hard work is. And this was a big lift. It's the lift of the thing. Getting a car into motion, is so much harder than keeping it cruising. And so this has been a tremendous amount of work. So my Thorn has been all of the late nights of our wonderful friends, who deserve rest and sleep.

Taylor Moore

Erika, Lou. Rose. [Excitedly] Rose and Thorn! Fun nicknames for you two!

Lou Wilson

Okay, well—

Taylor Moore

[Mischievously] Which one's which?

Lou Wilson

Well one of us has the red background, it is very much—

Taylor Moore

No, don't assume!

Erika Ishii

Don't—You can't assume.

Aabria Iyengar

[Singing Seal's "Kiss From a Rose"] Baby! I compare you to a kiss—what, no?

Taylor Moore

—From a Rose and a Thorn!

Lou Wilson

Oh, there it is. Fun alt! I would say—I could say that my rose was probably the Instagram Live, into the launch of the Patreon. I think that was pretty, it was a very fun thing. It was

fun to do, and it was fun to be interacting with people, and engaging with the excitement, and coming up with fun bits and creating Cram Daniel and messin' around. But then to have it have this, but then to be like, "Ha ha, we're having so much fun!" And then to open, and then for the rubber to hit the road, and for us to just start speeding and to be like, "wait, hold on, wait. What!?"

Lou Wilson

You know, I think that the euphoria of that evening, and just kind of like, the "We're really doing it" of it all combined with just the fun, like—That it's both, right? It's both the fun hangout energy, that is what we're doing, but that is also the thing that garnered—That people come, and are hungry for and are excited about and want to invest in. And so that's probably the Rose, for sure. That night, those hours, as we began this venture.

Lou Wilson

The Thorn is definitely the photo that Polygon used for the thumbnail of the interview.

Aabria Iyengar

[Cackling]

Lou Wilson

I look crazy. I look half asleep. I'm doing a weird half smile.

Erika Ishii

Who gave them that!?

Lou Wilson

Like, it's like [Pause to make a face]

[Laughing]

Lou Wilson

Truly, I don't know how you look at the photo and go, "this guy was ready for this." It's a professional photo; my lips look crazy. Beautiful interview. You should read it. We found—Listening to my friends talk about— it was fun to do. I think that fun shows through. But I'll tell you, if I could have them pick a different thumbnail, I really would.

Taylor Moore

I'm deleting it from the dropbox right now.

Lou Wilson

It's incredible that they found it. Now I'm like, oh. They were, like, going through and being like "Ooh I like this one"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Guys, I forgot to mention. Charlie Hall from Polygon did tell me that he somehow got access to all of Kate Elliott's photo dumps in the trash of her computer? So. Really, oi yoi yoi, dropped the ball, sorry gang.

Aabria Iyengar

Lou if it makes you feel any better, I do look like I'm in a different—like I'm in, like, a Sci-Fi. I don't belong in the photo either.

Erika Ishii

Well it's not the Sci-fi, it's the look. It's the smolder, the rest of us look like we're at like, a prom.

Aabria Iyengar

I didn't know what everyone was doing. I'm behind you all!

Taylor Moore

[Quietly] I thought the pictures looked good!

Erika Ishii

Well that serves you right for being tall!

Taylor Moore

You know, we can be our own harshest critics.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The expression and look I'm making in this photo is literally the like, "My wife and I noticed you from across the bar" look. Except that I'm dead in the eyes.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] I have to pee!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The look I'm making is like, [Suavely] "Me and my wife noticed you from across the bar, and if you come upstairs with us, I'll go hide in the bathroom and zone out the whole time." That's my expression in that photograph.

Erika Ishii

Hey, let's not kink shame.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughing]

Taylor Moore

I'm a zoner, and I'm proud!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Suavely] Why don't you come upstairs? And I'll completely dissociate for an hour and a half.

Taylor Moore

"Just water my plants, thank you!" Erika. Your Rose! Your Thorn!

Erika Ishii

My rose has to be that I have a home, now. For so long, I had commitment issues. I have busted my ass places, worked so hard. Like literally, like, blood, sweat, tears, you know? And I don't regret those times. But there were so many times that I put so much into it, and I didn't have people that I could trust, or things that I could be proud of.

Erika Ishii

And for this, it's—I would follow any one of you to the ends of the Earth, if it meant that we could keep hanging out, and playing our little games, and I honestly—and this transitions into the Thorn, in that it has reframed my entire life. As my therapist—I was telling my therapist about this, about how the launch went, about my friends, and about everything going on in my life. And she said, "Oh, well, it sounds like, you know, the bar is incredibly high for you now! And there's no reason to ever lower it again."

Aabria Iyengar

Horrifying. Horrifying.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then your therapist, what, turned into a cloud of bats and returned to Transylvania!? What the fuck! Horrifying!

Taylor Moore

That rules! If a therapist did that, I'd be like, "I'm never—you're my guy!"

Erika Ishii

Yeah!

Taylor Moore

"You know magic!"

Erika Ishii

It was—and I went "Oh, huh..." Yeah! And then sort of—the Thorn of that then, is that my standards are impossibly high now. And it has reframed some of those past experiences where I was like, "Oh. People could have and should have acted like these folks with integrity, with—yes, talent, but yes, also business acumen, and friendship, and support, and joy! Yeah. It's impossible to match now. So thank you all.

Aabria Iyengar

I love that you feel narratively boo'd up at this point. That's very good.

Erika Ishii

I do! I am so happy. You've made me the happiest gremlin alive.

Aabria Iyengar

Aww!

Taylor Moore

Aww!

Aabria Iyengar

That's sweet!

Taylor Moore

Mission accomplished.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I love it. I love it.

Aabria Iyengar

What about you, Taylor, you have to answer the question, too!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Oh, gosh. Well, I got—I got two Roses.

Aabria Iyengar

No, we only get one fucking—you don't get to move the goalpost, now that you're going.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Tell you what, I'll just give two Roses, and then, I'll fix it in post!

Aabria Iyengar

You can get a Rose, an Apple, and a Thorn.

Taylor Moore

[Laughing] My Rose was watching the reactions roll in, when we released the first "Then and Now."

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Mhm.

Taylor Moore

I think watching people hear—watching people hear that first sequence of the escape from the Citadel with Suvi, that was rad as hell. Because that had been—we'd been living with that for so long.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Taylor Moore

That audio has been around for a while. Right? That audio was in my head for a long time! And then to finally be like, "Oh, god, yeah, people like it, it's good, it's fine, that's okay, it's great." That was when I was like, oh, shit, we're onto something, our suspicions were correct, this CAN work, we do have everything necessary, and it's GOING to work.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Taylor Moore

There's sometimes you're involved in something, and it's just—it's hard to describe I think athletes can kind of see it, and I think producers and artists can see it. Any human can see it. But there's this—you can just like—even though you don't—Technically probably, the thing you're doing might not work, but you KNOW, you can just SEE the way things are lining up. You see your shot, you're like, "Oh, this is going to go in."

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Taylor Moore

It's that right—the second you release that,

Aabria Iyengar
Yep!

Taylor Moore

You know that's going in. You just know! And there's no way to know. It makes no sense that you can know. But that feeling of knowing, and to have that feeling of knowing also be supporting the people you're working with, and making so many people happy, and showing them something they've never seen before. That fucking rules. My Thorn is Avid Software's Pro Tools digital audio writing application for iMac. If you know anybody who works at Avid Software, please send me their home address, and pictures of their kids. I just wanna talk! I just wanna talk!!

Erika Ishii

[Ominously] We just wanna talk.

Taylor Moore

My Apple—

Lou Wilson

Oh. Before we get to your Apple, side question. So. That sequence of Suvi's escape from the Citadel is the first thing Taylor ever did for us. Before we even had agreed to work together, we sent him that from a session and you scored it and added music and sound effects, to an incredible degree that we all immediately said, "This is The Guy."

Aabria Iyengar

Oh god, yeah.

Erika Ishii

We were like "We want to Business Marry this man."

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Lou Wilson

How much has changed from that? Is it a lot, is it a little, or is it nothing at all, from the original thing you did for us back, like last summer, or sometime?

Taylor Moore

Like the actual audio, what has changed?

Lou Wilson

I know probably the vocal stuff is pretty similar, but did you rescore it or is that the same?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

No, it's all exactly what I sent.

Lou Wilson

[Delighted] Ah! Ah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So sick. So sick.

Aabria Iyengar

So good

Erika Ishii

God, how are you LIKE this?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But we knew— We all, you know, like— That came in and literally the term Business Marriage was used multiple times.

Aabria Iyengar

Multiple times!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Multiple, this is our business—our business spouse, I want to Business Marry this man.

Lou Wilson

Much like the audience, that's the first time we ever heard Worlds Beyond Number in audio form, layered, and built out, and—yeah, man, just truly, truly scrumptious.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Can I tell you something? That was my first time writing original music.

Aabria Iyengar

[Shocked] Oh my god.

Erika Ishii

Wait, what?!

Aabria Iyengar
Oh my god, amazing!

Lou Wilson
Mike Wolf told me that for the first time. Mike Wolf, a guy we know, told me that, he told me about how—

Taylor Moore
A wolf, named Mike, yeah.

Lou Wilson
He talked to you before he moved out here and was like "Taylor was saying he was going to learn composing, because he knew you would need it." And I said, "what do you mean he was going to learn it." And he said "he didn't do it before. He learned to do it." And we've never talked about that.

Taylor Moore
[Frantically] I made him promise not to tell you, specifically, that!

Aabria Iyengar
Wolves don't keep their promises.

Lou Wilson
He finally told me, that—and to hear it was—my brain shuddered. I could feel the separation of my brain and my skull for a second.

Taylor Moore
[Laughing]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Unbelievable.

Aabria Iyengar
I will say—

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I cannot—

Aabria Iyengar
Oh, just like a little plus one onto that. I know— okay, there's the joke answer of when I knew you were "The One" and the real one. And the joke answer is, when you sent back

that audio clip and you had edited out 80% of me just sobbing into a microphone. And I was like, "Oh! Thank you!" For giving me a little dignity back.

Aabria Iyengar

But the real answer was hearing the instrumentation. And then, I think I immediately texted Brennan like, "Oh, did you talk to Taylor about everything I was saying about the way I always imagined the Citadel and Suvi, like, sounding?" And Brennan was like, "Yeah, no, I didn't—that's just what he thought." And I went, "Oh! We're on the same page. How do I baby trap—" Sorry, "business baby trap this man."

Taylor Moore

Well, we had a baby.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! And he can never leave!

Taylor Moore

And, congratulations. It's a podcast!

[Laughing]

Erika Ishii

[Cackling] Another pea to the podcast!

Taylor Moore

And my Apple happened just a couple of days ago when, in the midst of one of the worst production crisis I've ever had—

Erika Ishii

Wait, waitwaitwait. Did you say "your Apple?"

Taylor Moore

My Apple.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. He gets a Rose, a Thorn, and an Apple.

Taylor Moore

It's New York.

Aabria Iyengar

It's New York! I'm going to kill you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

New York Baby. [Singing] Start spreadin' the news...

Aabria Iyengar

I'm going to choke the life out of you for that!

Taylor Moore

Not from over there on the West Coast, you're not!

[Wild laughing]

Taylor Moore

My apple was in the midst of the worst production crisis I've ever had, the computer was shutting down every ten minutes, I decided to scrap what I had done for—okay, scrap what I had done for um. No, I'm an idiot. Everyone's listened to episode one. What are you waiting—I had scrapped everything I wrote for the Grandmother Wren death scene, and I did new sound design for that scene, and I nailed it—I couldn't get it right.

Taylor Moore

Because the problem is, when you're doing this kind of work, a moment happens at the table. And the juice is there. Everybody can fucking tell. The pheromones change. You can hear the crackle of emotional electricity in your head, in the mic, and you all know what I'm talking about. The listeners know it too. And then you get it in post, and you're like, well, fuck, now I've got to honor that. Now I have to rise up to that thing.

Taylor Moore

And I couldn't fucking nail it. But then you fucking figure something out. It's just like a bit more reverb here, or something like that. But you figure out some way to like, match the energy that was inherent in the moment. And ooh, baby, it makes it totally—all the sleepless nights, all the bullshit, learning how ACH payments work, learning how social media marketing works, all the fucking horseshit, all the calendar invites! All that shit is worth it!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Because for that one fucking moment, you brush up against something bigger than yourself, that EVERY artist in history has been chasing, and you got to just touch a hair of it. And THAT! That is what gives my life meaning, and I love that. And that happened just a few days ago!

Erika Ishii

Amazing!

Aabria Iyengar
Dammit Taylor. Ah! You're so good!

[Applause starts]

Taylor Moore
Oh applause! I got applause! Baby, the big Apple's never seen anything like this!

Aabria Iyengar
God. Dammit.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Wow! That is a concrete jungle where dreams are made of, and that is beautiful.

Erika Ishii
Start spreadin' the news.

Aabria Iyengar
Don't you bring her into this. Don't you sully Alicia.

Taylor Moore
Well, that was all the questions!

Aabria Iyengar
Good! Okay, good night! Mwah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Bye! [Laughing] Okay. All right. Let's do some fuckin' fast questions, huh?

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah!

Lou Wilson
Let's do some questions! And I say, let's jog. We don't need to run!

Taylor Moore
Let's jog. Let's jog!

Aabria Iyengar
Jog it out, jog it out!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Let's jog. We got it.

Erika Ishii
This can last as long or as short as we want it to!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I have a fun lightning around for the end.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Cool.

Lou Wilson
Oh! Great!

Taylor Moore
I thought this question was very funny. Okay, so a lot of people ask this. Number 1. "How much of the music is pumped into the studio while you're recording?"

Aabria Iyengar
Wild.

Taylor Moore
That's a crazy question, right?

Aabria Iyengar
That's wild. Oh, yeah. He played live.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I love this question. I love this question. Taylor is so good, and you are exactly right, he is good enough to hear, compose, and transmit the music back to us, in the moment. We have him in a Minority Report milk tub—

[The cast laughs]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—and he dreams the music into existence in the moment of improvisation.

Taylor Moore
The secret is, you gotta change that milk every couple of days.

Aabria Iyengar

The future milk spoils faster than you want it to. For sure.

Taylor Moore

We should do it in reverse one day. And I'll make the music and then play it, and then you play the game to the music!

Aabria Iyengar

But we don't hear it in advance, we just hear it in real time and try to match.

Taylor Moore

Yes!

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, okay!

Erika Ishii

Actually, so, um, it's funny you should say, in film, there is—there's round world scoring, and I think flat world scoring, I believe it's called? Where for flat world, you do the acting in the movie, you cut it first and then you add music, which is typical, right? Because you don't always know where the beats are going to happen. You want to emote, or you want your emotions to swell and be manipulated by music.

Erika Ishii

But sometimes they do it the other way around, where you do music first, and then sort of add that and give it to people to listen to, or sort of try to choreograph the whole plot to it. And a lot of times that second one can lead to some really interesting, sort of cohesion of plot, and story, and emotion, and sound, but we actually don't even need that. We don't have anything.

Erika Ishii

We have nothing except, for our words and each other and Brennan's little mouth sounds. And Taylor just is—I mean. I don't know how you do it. The soundscape feels like it happened, like it was informing us.

Taylor Moore

Oh, that's rad. Now there's a mirror aspect to this question. Here comes the second beat, this is great, I love this. Very kind, Erika, thank you. "Are any of the added sound effects, gasps, background screams added after in post?"

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, I've never emoted a day in my fucking life. We've had so many pickup sessions where Taylor is like, can you act like you're invested, at fucking all in the story? And I give him nothing.

Taylor Moore
She's on her phone.

Aabria Iyengar
And then he sends me an apple.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Wait a minute. Is the question asking—

Taylor Moore
Yes.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
If the sort of, the "walla," right, like, in the scene where in the Prelude where young Suvi arrives in the town of Silbry as a child, where her parents open the traveling door and arrive in Silbry. There's like, people screaming in the background. Is the question—the question?

Taylor Moore
No no, not the war sound.

Aabria Iyengar
Remember when we were yelling about the Great Bear during Eursulon's intro?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Oh, yes yes yes.

Erika Ishii
And how that happened, and that happened like, two weeks later.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah, when we went back and recorded that, so it sounded like Lou cared about the story.

Taylor Moore
When you break Lou's heart—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes.

Taylor Moore

And when you're like, "does Suvi make it in time?" And Lou goes "uh!"

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing]

Taylor Moore

[Laughing] One of my favorite—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I love it. No those are all genuine! Those are all genuine!

Lou Wilson

Genuine gasps.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That would be pretty bleak if—I feel like I would have to pull a cigar off my lip and be like [Deep, Grimy New York Executive Voice] "We need more moments where you break character to uh, remark how special this fuckin' moment is."

Aabria Iyengar

Oh Brennan's using his real voice!

Taylor Moore

He dropped!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

"Listen up. These people are paying for an ACTUAL play. So we're going to go in and we're going to do some gasps. Okay, we're going to do some—" Yeah, I don't think so.

Aabria Iyengar

I think the—

Taylor Moore

Alright okay okay—

Aabria Iyengar

I will—

Taylor Moore

Now, let's get to the real questions that are—

Aabria Iyengar

Hold on, shush shush shush.

Taylor Moore

Okay yes, go.

Aabria Iyengar

I'm gonna say the one thing I feel bad, about this being like an audio only medium, is that you're missing me and Erika making pointed eye contact 90% of the time, in order to not make AS many reactions, to be like [squeaking with effort] I'm going to make a little sound, but away from the mic. But as long as I'm making eye contact with Erika, like, someone has to feel this.

Erika Ishii

Yeah, I feel like I could go off mic sometimes.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

There's a moment in an upcoming episode that's like, truly ten episodes down the line, like, way down the line, where there's a plot element reveal that the at-the-table reaction, I'm amazed we didn't break the microphone. Taylor is making an expression on the zoom, I'll tell you about it after, I don't want to spoil anything—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Laughing] He's so worried!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

—But it's something, it's a thing Ame discovers by herself, later on in the first arc. And the reaction was so WILD in the studio at that moment, it was nuts. I also realized we recorded some episodes that, I haven't heard Taylor's reaction—we'll talk about that more later. This is all—don't even worry, folks. Folks listening at home? Pay no attention.

[Everyone trying to quote the Wizard of Oz "man behind the curtain" line over each other]

Aabria Iyengar

If Taylor doesn't edit that out, everyone will be as stressed as I am in this moment, wanting to know.

Erika Ishii

I just tap danced through—

Taylor Moore

Oh it's stayin' in. It's stayin' in.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I just tap danced through, like, 20 spoilers. So everyone— [Laughing]

Taylor Moore

Good stuff coming! But let's, for one moment, talk about the good stuff, that was.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Sputtering laugh]

Aabria Iyengar

Good segue!

Taylor Moore

Wow, wow, wow!

Lou Wilson

He did it again.

Taylor Moore

Okay, so listen, I know this question is going to sound bonkers, but Casse Reed sent it in, and I agree with Casse. I think they have a good question here. So we just heard 10 hours of character creation—of the Children's Adventure. We know, we've seen organically how this all happened, but I think we can tell, that some conversations happened before the Children's Adventure. How much information was had before the Children's Adventure?

Erika Ishii

That's so hard to gauge because we had been talking and brainstorming about it for maybe almost a year prior, maybe, right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah. So these characters—the moment of these characters birth, officially, happened about ten months before we recorded the very—this has been, I mean Worlds Beyond Number has been cooking for a minute now. So we knew, who the adult characters were going to be early. Early, early, early, right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And I think that we've talked a little bit about this, like Lou has talked about that moment, in the Polygon article, Lou mentioned that moment of silence, which is so beautiful that

Eursulon, of course, the spirit stepped out of a moment of deep silence, as the world of spirit is so want to do. And that all happened in a trip, way prior to any production, way prior to any technological stuff. That was just early ground stuff of like, what story do we even fucking want to tell? Right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So there was a lot of knowing—so, it's important, I think, for the context of the Children's Adventure to know that we kind of knew where we wanted people to end up. Right? It was still character creation, it was the idea of we want to create these characters. But in the moments—I'll let Aabria, Erika, and Lou—because you... I think there was a desire to get to a destination by an unfamiliar road.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

In each of the private conversations I had with all of you, it was, "I know where I want this character to end up, but I don't know exactly how I want to get there, which is where that element of play in the Children's Adventure really came from."

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Do all of you remember the private conversations we had about what your North Stars were for the adult character as we were gearing up to run the Children's Adventure? Like, Aabria, I remember, you had definite stuff for Suvi.

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, 100%. I think knowing what I wanted adult Suvi to represent sort of, in the world, and of the world, and being a creature of order and stability, and sort of like, the hand through which Empire moves. My whole goal for the Children's Campaign was to show the person that she was before she was put into that funnel.

Aabria Iyengar

So, so much of those character choices, even down to—and I'm so happy that fans clocked it, stating outright that her favorite color was red, that you could see all of these little sweet moments in her that were drummed out in the void of her time in the Citadel. So that was always my favorite thing to play with, once I knew we were going to spend some time with Suvi before she became Suvi the Wizard, so that was, gah, I think that's going to go down as one of my favorite things I've ever done. It was very cool.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That is so beautiful, and I think there's a direct parallel too, because, like you're saying. There's very few actual play characters have had the benefit of this much played backstory, which is what makes it so cool that you—all three of you are still telling so much in NEGATIVE space. Yeah, we had all of this character generation in play, but like, who Suvi was as a child and who the woman is that we meet as an adult. There is so much

story told in the negative space of what happened between the last time we saw her as a kid, who she is now. Lou, that is definitely present—

Aabria Iyengar
Oh, my God!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—In Eursulon's story as well. And I think Lou actually—Lou and me have the most secret backstory for Eursulon—

Erika Ishii
[Surprised] What!?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
—In terms of what happened after the end of the Children's Adventure, and then where we meet him when we meet him at the tavern by the well, at the very beginning of episode one.

Erika Ishii
You! Terrible little bastards!

Aabria Iyengar
[Shocked laughter] Oh my god!

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Wait, Lou, correct me if I'm wrong. We also had some stuff that happened between the Tavern at the Well, and where we meet him in our little preview of him five years later.

Aabria Iyengar
That's five years later right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Five years later, yeah.

Lou Wilson
We—Yeah there was a lot of talks in a grocery store in Cascade Lake? What was the name of the place we stayed?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Cascade.

Lou Wilson

Cascade, yeah. Most of it happened in a supermarket in Cascade.

Aabria Iyengar

THE. Supermarket.

Lou Wilson

In the supermarket in Cascade. Yeah. It was just I don't know. We definitely had talked about everything that happened to Eursulon in terms of the arrival. I feel like the arrival was pretty, not like beaten out, but like I felt very confident in the origin beats of like, I remember it was like we had discussed, like the seeing the knights through some kind of doorway.

Lou Wilson

And we had talked about the idea of the pursuit into that doorway being some kind of time slip. I remember like—those two things. I knew and felt really confident in going into it. But it definitely, I think, maybe versus some of the other people at the table, though you could all tell me I'm wrong. I think I knew probably the least about where Eursulon would be coming out of the Children's Adventure. I think coming out of the Children's Adventure, it was like, "oh, it goes bad!"

[Laughter]

Lou Wilson

There was something about playing out the Children's Adventure, that's like, even more than I had ever thought before. I was like, "Oh, Eursulon"—Oh, I always knew I wanted him to be in a bad space, but once—

Erika Ishii

You said. Sad, you wanted a sad boy. A sad boy.

Lou Wilson

And then honestly, playing out the Children's Campaign, I was like, "Oh, it's SO sad." Like I was like—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That was the most—

Lou Wilson

Now I know exactly which heart strings—you guys—we got all this juice that I could be like, "Oh baby, it's gone!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I couldn't fucking believe how surprised you were at how sad Eursulon's story is, you came out and pitched like, "Oh, a child of the Great Bear falls in love with the mortal world, comes back to speak of it, and then when he returns, the mortal world has changed and he can never go home again." Wadabap ba da bamp!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Like the idea that that's not the fucking saddest—mind numbingly sad! Gut shakingly, spine shatter—it's like standing in front of a speaker at Coachella, just [blasting speaker noise]. Just your whole body is shaking!

Aabria Iyengar

Bro, you are festival sad!

Taylor Moore

[Sudden laughter]

Lou Wilson

Well it's sad for you to hear, it's an absolute delight to play! To be a sad boy—

Erika Ishii

That's the thing—

Lou Wilson

—Let me tell you!

Erika Ishii

—The thing is, I think—

Lou Wilson

To be a sad boy is to be comforted, it is to be loved.

Erika Ishii

We were having this discussion before we played the last session. We were split, right down the table of, like, bleed—like, character bleed, versus uh—just being able to snap out immediately. And Lou and I were like, it's so much fun to be intense at the table.

Lou Wilson

It's the best to bleed, baby. Cut me! Cut me, daddy!

Erika Ishii

[Choking laughing] Immediately afterwards. Yeah, yeah. I want to be bawling, and it feels good for me! But actually, it's funny you should mention how surprised you were about it

being sad because, I, like, there are elements of my character that were actually created as a reaction, to sort of balance the party and our sadness.

Aabria Iyengar

No, but okay, I didn't want to—no spoilers for Children's Adventure, but there is a moment at the end, where you get the context for Ame, that she was, like, sidestepping in order to be there for her friends. And that is its own beautiful gut punch at the end.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I want to—

Taylor Moore

An incredible scene.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Erika has definitely, the most—well, this is a very interesting thing, right? Because, again, very rarely do actual play characters get to share a depth of insight into their backstory, like these three did. It's very special. However, I think Erika made the most use of the hidden, right? Of, like—for having getting to show so much, there's so much of Ame that is still unshown. And I think that there's a lot that, that weight you can also feel.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I wanted to also jump back to something that Lou was saying, which, about how many of those scenes were beat out. That was actually a surprise to me as well, because it was almost like, deceptively hard Ikea instructions of like—from a story beat, of thinking of how to pace scenes where Lou goes, "Oh, it's a reverse isekai. So it's a fairy who discovers the mortal world, falls in love with it, and by the time he gets back to it, it's changed forever and he can't go home, right?" And I'm like, got it. That's all one sentence.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then you start to like, take the flat pack furniture out, and you're like, okay, so it's a reverse isekai, which means that we need to establish the spirit world and we need to make it that that's what's normal. So that's the new normal. But then he goes to the door to see the knights. So then we need to explain because knights won't be in the mortal world, when he gets there.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So you'd have to do—

Taylor Moore

Reverse fairy time.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

It's reverse fairy time. So it was all this stuff where, it was so straightforward as a character pitch. And then to think about how to actually deliver it, by the time we got to the cabin and were like, doing the Children's Adventure, I had to be like, okay, so Lou, [Laughing] we're going to do these scenes like this to like, deliver on the promise of that premise.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then I think too, for Ame as well, there was a lot of like—there was something so joyful about that. Like, what—again, I actually think me and Erika—I think me and Lou have a lot of secrets. And I think with Ame there's like one or two very, you know, just like things that remain unspoken, on microphone.

Taylor Moore

Let me ask a patron question about this!

Aabria Iyengar

[Shocked] What!

Taylor Moore

Aabria. Stephen wants to know, "to what extent do you, as the player, know about Suvi's parents and what they were involved in," that mysterious first scene from the longest extant audio the escape from the Citadel.

Aabria Iyengar

In any good, like, jogging regimen, sometimes you jog, sometimes you walk, sometimes you sprint, just to keep the blood moving differently. Here's the sprint of an answer. Nothing. He asked me what the names were and we came up with them together and I knew nothing about what was going on. I was Suvi in that moment.

Aabria Iyengar

Hey, maybe edit this part out at the end if you were not caught up with the Children's Campaign. I didn't know how the end of the summer was going to go and no one was more surprised by me how that broke out. I know nothing!

Taylor Moore

You didn't see that coming?

Aabria Iyengar

I honestly thought I was like, "Maybe... Oh maybe..!"

Taylor Moore

[Laughing] That is so sweet.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! Like, "There's no reason they wouldn't—oh no oh no!"

Lou Wilson

I, hey—I thought they uh, well, we might have to edit this whole thing, so I'm not going to throw any more sauce on it.

Taylor Moore

Well, yeah, people have been asking for like a Children's Campaign wrap up chat. We'll do that later!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Cool! Great great great!

Taylor Moore

We'll do a whole thing about all the actual story. So one more thing about the pre-game game. Casse Reed and Sparrowhawk want to know about home brewing the Witch Class.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Did y'all work on that together? Why did you decide to do a homebrew class? What was the beginning of that? And can you give us just like any hint about anything about it, other than what we've seen in episode?

Erika Ishii

So I think we've said this, we've said this before. We're going to release the 1 to, well, 0 to 20 class eventually. And I actually just found a picture of Brennan's home white board where all of our notes are. And it is so interesting because there are two elements on this board, and it's like the Witch as the class, and the Witch as the person, right?

Erika Ishii

And there's a list of different influences for both of them, and things that we wanted for both of them. I had nothing to do with the sort of balancing of it and the write up of it. But there were things that we were like, okay, what traditionally do Witches, in a lot of folklore have. We're saying familiars, curses and spells, or spells that are about a touchstone, again, being Miyazaki, of Witches as people who create.

Erika Ishii

They bake, they craft, they clean. I brought in a lot of, sort of— we were talking about the similarities between Animism in Japan and Animism in Celtic mythology and how much crossover there was for the both of us, and our childhood stories and the things, the elements of that that we wanted to put into a class, and a world, and then also for the person. How both of those could be informed by the other. The class and the personality.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That was one of my most fun meetings of all time, it was just us at the table.

Erika Ishii

It was so good, Brennan. It was SO good.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Iz was over on the couch. We were just like hangin', and talking about what makes Witches so cool. This is over here by the Fireside, and we're going to good and goddam share with our wonderful Fireside pals how the Witch Class sort of works.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We want to get the mechanics in a place where we can give you something worth sharing we, want to get a nice PDF. We're gonna release the class eventually. We just want to make sure it's tiptop and work on it and make sure that it's worthy of you guys. But I'll tell you about our design inputs, right? What the things we said. This is what Witches are about. This is what's cool about them.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

The big things that went into Witches mechanically were, Primary Spellcaster, number 1. They should go toe to toe with any Cleric, Sorcerer, Druid, Wizard, bar— they're a Primary Spellcaster, right? 9th Level Spells at 17th Level. But within that, what are their Features and what does their Spell List look like? The big thing we wanted to alter about Witches that felt true in folklore, is Witches are not indiscriminate, right?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

They are purposeful and relational, and so— Whereas a Sorcerer or Wizard might drop a fireball—

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing] "Might."

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Witches—"Might?" Will. Absolutely will. Witches never have a reason to blow up a group of people. They're coming for one person that fucked with them.

Taylor Moore
Mmm. Mmm!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And there's something really fun about the idea of having Single Target. So rather than having these big Area of Effect Spells, they trade that in for a lot more versatility. They have healing. They have a lot of like, they dip into like some nature magic. They dip into other forms of magic that would normally be reserved for clerics. So they kind of straddle—and then they have a lot of unique spells that all have to do with, for the most part, curses.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Now, what are curses? We'll get more into that later, but essentially it comes down to, mechanically, Witches get more powerful if you have wronged, harmed, or trifled with them. It's not just a superstition. It is a real deal, like, it might be a bad idea to mess with a wizard because they might choose to do something about it. It's a bad idea to mess with a Witch mechanically. They're going to get stronger.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah. That's so cool!

Taylor Moore

And that's reflected deeply in the story. Because on Grandma Wren's deathbed, when she understands what's going on with the curse, she says, "We've got them right where we want them. They've trifled with us."

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yes, exactly, right? So it's the thing that Witches know. On top of that, their familiars are super beefed up.

Aabria Iyengar

Cool Dog!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

That's a big first level class feature. Cool Dog! What's up, Cool Dog? They've got tokens, and talismans. The craft of their hands creates magical items. Honestly, in some ways, they sort of have some Artificer-y type things. But it's much less about tinkering and invention, and much more about what they make with their hands as magic.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Right? It's witchcraft. It's the crafting of, and it's associated with whatever Tool Proficiencies they have. So if you want to be a baker Witch who makes magic cupcakes,

great you, make magic cupcakes. If you make magic cloth, because you have a Proficiency with weaver's tools, it's like whatever tool set you have Proficiency in, that's how you can weave your magic into objects.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then the other—oh, they have cool abilities that mean if they've got spells working on you already, the next spells they cast on you are going to hurt even more. So it's like if I've got my fucking eye on you, ooh baby, it's about to get so much worse for you. So it's cool to take primary casters that are all about the—again, casters are normally not the like, focus fire. They're like, "I'm going to hit a big crowd of goons!"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Witches are very much the like, "give me the dragon, give me the spellcaster, I'm looking at you" like, single target.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah

Erika Ishii

Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And the last thing I was going to say is, they have an Ability, which in design is called a Ribbon Ability, which just means that it's not a deep part of their—it's not the core feature of them. Their sanctums. They have sanctums that are really, really cool. And the reason that's a ribbon ability is because having a sanctum is sort of a weird thing for an adventurer, right? Like, how often are you home?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But we wanted something that—it was not a core feature of theirs, because we wanted a Witch to be a playable character in a roving adventuring party. But, we wanted there to be an in world explanation about why these super cool magical people—

Erika Ishii

Why you don't see Witches out on the road, like with adventurers, like right? Because I said because I said, you know, and I think Danielle Barkstock called this shot in The Seven on Dimension 20 of, you know, adventuring is inherently colonizing. Because you go and you fuck up an ecosystem, you destabilize their economy. You don't stay at home and help build. Right? You go out and mess with things, right?

Erika Ishii

And so I feel like Witches have traditionally been NPCs. We see them in so many different stories of, you know. They are the static obstacle or assistant for other people on their journey. And it's like, how, why is that? Why are Witches only in one space when they can go and truly wreak havoc worldwide?

Erika Ishii

And it's because they're the most powerful in their community and in their home. And so we wanted the fact—I was just like I had all of these sort of story based ideas in my head, and somehow you and M and everybody involved with the creation of it made it mechanically viable, somehow.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Yeah, the subclasses are so dope we'll have to get into that another time. But the subclasses, they're so, so so dope. To give quick shout outs. M Veselak is the designer of the class. M is amazing. She is one of my dearest and oldest friends. She's in my 14 year home game.

Taylor Moore

Oh, I didn't know that!

Erika Ishii

I didn't know that!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

M has been playing in Aridane for 14 years, and she is incredible. She designed one of the most beautiful tabletop role playing games of all time called Wickedness. If you ever want to do yourself a favor and play a tarot deck-based tabletop role playing game where you play—you and two friends play as a coven of witches that need to save a kingdom. It is one of the most moving, beautiful, incredible games of all time.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

M is—she's just the best. And she is someone who I've been playing DND with for 14 years, who is an amazing indie game designer and truly knows how to make a story mechanic sing. Also want to shout out, we've got some great pointers in terms of people to go search.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

We got hooked up with great recommendations for people from Dan Dylan, who is a sweetheart and a mensch, who pointed me in the direction of Brandish Stoddard, who did some amazing crunch work. Designed some great spells, came in and added some features that I think made the Witch like, in addition to all of its amazing, awesome story

abilities. Also came in and made it, like, really great. If you have a more combat focused class, it really stands up in that as well.

Aabria Iyengar
Yeah.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
So, so cool.

Taylor Moore
Rad! All right, now, y'all talked a little bit about how the magic of the world is inspired by, it's Celtic and East Asian pre-colonial animism. Obviously, like the pantheon, the metaphysics, the divine realm of Umora is very different from the pantheon of your typical DND book, module, whatever, place.

Taylor Moore
Let's talk more about that. Jay asked this question from the patrons. "Talk to us about the pantheon of this world a little bit. Are there more like the Great Bear" and Lou, in the same way that Erika and Aabria maybe have some insight into their character, sort of giving them a foot in the door of this lore that the listeners haven't heard yet. Are you hip to stuff about the Great Bear and the Pantheon, the spirit world, that we haven't reached in the show yet.

Lou Wilson
Uh, I mean, I can kick that off by saying "No." We very much agree that Eursulon is a child, and only knows who his dad has told him about, who's not—who also, his dad is not—I mean, we experienced the dad in the early parts of the Children's Campaign and, his dad is not a talkative fellow. So I think Eursulon's understanding of the spirit world is like "Well, I know kind of customs and things, but I think the broad knowledge of the spirit world I do not have. There are people I've heard of, maybe people my dad talked about," but I think a lot of it is a mystery to Eursulon and that's in large part because he left it before he was of age.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Yeah, I think that there's a lot of like Eursulon's trajectory, or arc that Lou had talked about was like. Finding him after he has been unmoored and cast away in the mortal world. So I think there's a degree of his alienation from the spirit world that is an essential part of the character.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And I think for me too, there's a certain degree of like, this is a world that also is going to grow organically, it's going to grow from choices of the player characters. There's an

upcoming episode where we flash back to a moment in the spirit world with a young Eursulon, right? So I think there's more that we're going to—

Aabria Iyengar
[Excited sigh]

Brennan Lee Mulligan
[Repeats the sigh] There's more we're going to discover there. And—Aabria reaction
[Sigh] Makes my heart so happy!

Taylor Moore
Let me ask you a question, Brennan. There's a line in the Eursulon Prelude, where we're meeting the Great Bear. And you talk about how the Great Bear, they're all— the wild ones, they live in this sort of wood aspect of the spirit world, but other spirits do not. And I believe the line is "There are other Great Spirits that live in palaces." What does that mean?

Brennan Lee Mulligan
So the spirit world is incredibly broad, infinite, vast. This is the Supernal Realm. Right. So there are Great Spirits that I think very much map to like—when we see the Great—the Great Bear does not wear a glamour, ever. Right? We don't ever see him change his form. There are others that do. There are some spirits that live, that look, even in their true form, more like human beings. Right. And—Oh Aabria, what?

Aabria Iyengar
Can you name the hottest Great Spirit, and if they are available.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
I think that there is a ver— For those that choose to stay with us, you may in fact meet some very hot spirits coming down the pipe.

Erika Ishii
[excited scream] Hot.

Aabria Iyengar
Good.

Taylor Moore
Just have Lou describe them and they will be hot.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
And they will be hot.

Lou Wilson

I'll use words like "rugged." And you'll know.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Rugged. You'll know. But we met like Kalaya and Anarion, your brother and sister, the Great Bear. We have heard precious little of Eursulon's mother. We've heard precious little of, in fact, many of the mothers of the Great Bear's offspring. But I think that there's an element to the spirit world where, the spirit world, the wilderness, nature is a huge—it is the beating heart of that spirit world.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

But of course, there are like celestial things. The stars, the sky, the storms, right? There are things that have to do with things that are inhuman, but also not of nature, right? Like great powers of magic. And even thinking, just mythologically, of palaces in the World of Spirits. Think of, like, Manannan Mac Lir, right? Who is the Irish god of the sea, who has his castle under the waves, lives in a great palace, but is himself like a sea god.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Or think about the incredible stories of dragons and of—like, Eastern dragons and their palaces and magic and the fact that they are deific almost unto themselves, right? Like endless wisdom and magical potential. So that's the reference to palaces in the spirit world there, the spirit world is, you know, is not just an analog for nature. It is the Supernal Realm. It is the realm beyond, and between, and through, and past the world.

Taylor Moore

Very cool. Well, gosh. I don't want to keep you all too long. We've gone over an hour. I think we're going to keep it all, [Exaggeratedly] except for those horrible things Erika said in the middle of the show.

Aabria Iyengar

Stop trying to get cancelled Erika!

Taylor Moore

I mean, if the listeners don't know what I'm talking about, it's because we had to cut it out.

Erika Ishii

[Angrily.] I said. What I said.

Aabria Iyengar

On their tombstone.

Erika Ishii

I apologize. For nothing.

Aabria Iyengar

[In unison] Nothing!

Taylor Moore

However. And—Y'all we just got so many questions. We got, I am not kidding you, a thousand questions about world building. People are so fucking hot for Umora, and I think that what you've done better than—

Erika Ishii

Well that's all a Brennan thing. We can go, though, right? The rest of us?

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah! Oh, i would love to go!

Taylor Moore

Oh, no, this is not a question for Brennan! [frantic babbling]

Aabria Iyengar

Erika you wanna get outta here, we can go grab a drink?

Erika Ishii

Yeah yeah yeah.

Aabria Iyengar

Okay, bye!

Taylor Moore

I want to do a lightning round after this!

Erika Ishii

We can go and get ice cream.

Aabria Iyengar

Ooh!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So let's do a lightning round. So this is going to be some quick questions. The internet is full of videos, and all this DM tips, and all that stuff, so I don't want to tread too much of that ground. However, I did think this was a fun question.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

What is the minimum—oh, sorry. I should give them credit. This comes from Riley Deveau. Did it.

Aabria Iyengar

Proud'a you.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

My type is too small on my spreadsheet. Riley Deveau. "When flushing out a homebrew world, what are the things that must be done before the game can begin?" What is the—the—this is me talking now, I'm editorializing. What is the minimum detail you need? Your friends are comin, you want to impress them. They're coming. They're at the door. You're at your kitchen table. You forgot you're DMing a game and you promised an original homebrew setting. It has to be original. You've got time for one detail.

Erika Ishii

I pretend that I've died.

[beat of silence]

Taylor Moore

[Roaring with laughter]

Aabria Iyengar

Is that why we don't play your home game anymore, Erika? I thought you were dead!

Erika Ishii

All those times that you thought I was dead? A ruse. A clever ruse.

Aabria Iyengar

I thought you were a g-g-g-ghost.

Taylor Moore

[Staccato] "A snake has bit me!"

[Laughter]

Taylor Moore

I think this is an interesting question. What is the smallest atom of creation you need to have a homebrew setting? One detail, one thing.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

This is something that I actually would be interested, because everyone here has GM'd. For me, your world is what your players experience. So the minimum viable product, the thing you need to actually be able to run a game, is for your players to feel the world as rich and real. And so, when we were doing the Children's Adventure, I didn't have everything developed for the adult world yet because I knew I was making a world that would be perceived by children.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So what does a child perceive of the world? So for the children, their world is the Citadel, and what it means to a child. And then it's Grandma Wren's cottage and that's their whole world, right? And, so I think that there's an element of—you can begin—the walls are like, think of your player's perspective. Everything they can see has to be rendered beautifully. Anything they can't see can be duct tape, bubble gum and cardboard.

Aabria Iyengar

[Laughing]

Erika Ishii

In video games, there's this mechanical principle called frustum culling, which is like, basically it means that things are loaded while you're looking at them. And then as your field of view switches, everything else literally disappears. Like the world does not exist behind you, or in the periphery where you cannot see it. And that's kind of, yeah. For me, I would say. I have to know what my players want. What kind of story they and I would have fun telling. Other than that, it's just truly up in the air. It could be anything.

Aabria Iyengar

I love that.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

So the minimum viable product to you is just knowing the players?

Erika Ishii

Yeah, because that's what it comes down to, at the end of the day like. I played with all of you and you all are incredible at story, and themes, and worldbuilding, and just all this nuance. But I think the thing is, is that you all understand the people at your table and what's the most fun for all of us.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah, I think that's the correct answer, but because we all have to fuckin' answer now that you said the right one.

[Laughing]

Lou Wilson

Exactly. We're are you scraping the bottom.

Aabria Iyengar

Truly! If you are walking into a room going, "oh no, I said I would GM, what do I do?" I think the single nugget that I can build on, and use as a North Star to keep generating for the players is "What is the lie this world believes?"

Erika Ishii

OUGH! [Groans of Amazement]

Aabria Iyengar

Because everything—

Lou Wilson

I'm sorry that's you desperately searching for another option?

Taylor Moore

Yeah. Lou, you're fucked, dude. You should have gone first. You fucked up so bad.

Lou Wilson

What. What's the lie—?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

I'm never going to be the same again.

Taylor Moore

Fuck, y'all!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Never gonna be the same again.

Lou Wilson

I just wanna think—now, let's all just picture Aabria, at a kitchen table, forgetting that she was going to GM. And she goes, "Well, what's the lie this world believes." Is that an answer you come up with in 45 seconds? Or is that like your friends walk in and you just have a pipe and you're like "It's gonna be another 3-4 hours."

Taylor Moore

"Everyone in this world believes that uhh, dogs are tiny horses that were cursed."

Lou Wilson

There it is, great. Let's go. Everyone. Roll up. Roll up.

[Breathless cackling from everyone]

Taylor Moore

Lou, I'll spare you, unless you want to go.

Lou Wilson

No, I mean, I think my soft answer is kind of in response to, I feel like, when I think about myself as an early PC and what I wanted from the game, in just the kind of like—I think there is a richness that of course you, you, and especially the people you're playing with discover, and what they want from this world and from this space, as you play.

Lou Wilson

And so for me, I often think a lot about hierarchies and power systems, and where do your heroes fit in this world. And, can you, even if you have nothing going on, if you have a character show up in the world and go, I'm going to put my foot down on top of you, your PCs will go, either "That's okay" and that gives you something that you can run with or they go, "We're going to stab you in the foot." And then that's something you can run with.

Lou Wilson

So I think knowing the power structures of the world, and then imposing them on your players, immediately gets you through session one and gives you juice for session two.

Taylor Moore

Fuck yeah, status, baby.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah!

Taylor Moore

These are all great answers. Jesus Christ. So good. All right. Okay, now, final thing. Lightning round. I call this the Stinker and the Thinker. I'm going to ask you a question. The name makes no sense.

Aabria Iyengar

No, good! It's perfect.

Taylor Moore

I'm going to ask one question that everyone has to respond to with a yes or no.

Aabria Iyengar

Okay.

Lou Wilson

Okay.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

And then I'm going to ask a second question that you're allowed to expound on philosophically ad infinitum. Here comes the Stinker, one word question. I'm going to call your name and then you say yes or no. Today's Stinker comes from Eva. All right, eva wants to know: Are ghost real? Lou.

Lou Wilson

Yeah, um—

Taylor Moore

Uh! Blew it, you fucked up!

Lou Wilson

Fuck! I—

[Everyone starts screaming with laughter]

Taylor Moore

You fucked up dude!

Lou Wilson

Uh. Uh. Shit.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Breathless, laughing] That was a perfect cinematic moment! That is some Monty Python and the Holy Grail—

Lou Wilson

It was—

Taylor Moore

The shadows from Ghost reach up and drag Lou to hell.

Lou Wilson

That's what it felt like. It felt like they came for me. I went to say yes and they said—

Brennan Lee Mulligan

You got Blumhouse'd!

Aabria Iyengar

Oh, my God.

Lou Wilson

Bam, there it is dude, Blumhouse'd again.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Aabria, are ghosts real, yes or no?

Aabria Iyengar

No.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Brennan, are ghost real, yes or no?

Brennan Lee Mulligan

No!

Taylor Moore

Lou again, try it.

Lou Wilson

I was gonna say—

Taylor Moore

No! What are you doing!?

[Everyone loses their absolute shit, scream laughing]

Taylor Moore

Erika are ghosts real?

Erika Ishii

No!

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Eva, thank you so much for giving us our very first Stinker. And now here comes the Thinker from Max Ernst. That cannot be right. One of my favorite surrealists— Max Ernest. Okay, that makes more sense. "If milk can spoil in refrigerators, why don't they spoil in cows?"

Brennan Lee Mulligan

[Perplexed] ...What? If milk can spoil in refrigerators..?

Aabria Iyengar

Okay, because cows are hot.

Erika Ishii

My question is, how do they think milk storage and cows work?

Aabria Iyengar

It's because it's hot in a cow and cold in a refrigerator. Next Question.

Taylor Moore

So you should keep milk hot at home.

Lou Wilson

I would immediately assume that there's some sort of enzyme or, byproduct of the way, that milk gestates in a cow before it is produced, because it does need to get out of the cow. Cows are in pain if they are not milked.

Brennan Lee Mulligan

Right, and it's inside of a hot body that has a working immune system.

Aabria Iyengar

Yeah.

Taylor Moore

That's been Stinker and Thinker.

Lou Wilson

There it is.

Aabria Iyengar

Something something, future crime, milk bath that Taylor's in.

Taylor Moore
I'm asking for a bath.

Erika Ishii
It's the cheese, the cheese, the brie.

Aabria Iyengar
the cheese. Brie and Apples.

Taylor Moore
Well, great fireside chat.

[Laughing]

Taylor Moore
We'll leave it there!

Aabria Iyengar
Great chat, good game.

Brennan Lee Mulligan
Alright, gang, we gotta change Taylor into a new milk tub, this first one... yeah. We're gettin' curds.

Erika Ishii
Yeah... Thank you so much for joining us.

Aabria Iyengar
[Laughing] we're getting curds!

Taylor Moore
You know it be smelling crazy in my milk tub!

[Disgusted laughter]

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