



ARIADNE'S ARTISANS

EPISODE 201

V. 11/16/21

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Based on CHALDEA by

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EXT. SOMARRIA - THE TINDERBOX - ESTABLISHING

In Somarria's thick nearly impenetrable northern jungle, a volcano sends hot ash thousands of feet in the air.

Like a demented devil from hell, it spits and hurls molten wrath upon the world.

Rivers of fast moving lava pour from gaping wounds in the crater wall, burning away the luscious jungle below.

EXT. THE TINDERBOX, LAVA FIELDS - CONTINUOUS

TITLE CARD: 7 Days into the Hunt

Four black silhouettes top a ridgeline, outlined in violent red and orange smoke. Snapping embers from the ERUPTING VOLCANO rain down around them.

A BLAST shakes the world. But not a volcanic blast, no. But instead the roar from a BEAST.

A SPARK, a giant hundred ton lava elemental, a mixture of minerals and magma rises up out of the fast flowing superheated soup.

It's incendiary foot slams hard on solid ground as it exits the volcanic core.

KINDLING (Lava rats of unusual size) scurry eagerly around the beast snapping and hissing.

The four figure's backs against the mountain are trapped by swift flowing rivers of lava to the left and to the right.

The only exit--

through the volcanic hellish beasts.

CU ON THE LEADER, AGGEE (youthful Targonian male), a Chan martial artist.

Choking smoke and energetic fire embers pepper his determined grimace.

AGGEE

1

Ariadne's artisans!

1

The chan leaps--

SMASH CUT TO:

7 OMBA
It's Gravers Dig. Somarria. Ass 7
end of the world. What did you
expect?

OMBA (Targonian female) a pirate captain stands casually arms
crossed leaning on the door post--a quick out if the goddess'
anger flares too hotly.

8 ARIADNE
Not in a spiders nest. 8

9 OMBA
They're Tunnel Terrors. Kind of a 9
Gravers Dig delicacy.

10 ARIADNE
What about Sheol? 10

11 OMBA
It's worse after Brighthwyna sacked 11
it.

12 ARIADNE
Guh! SCREW XUNE! Next time I'm 12
gonna tell him, he can damn well
fix his own problems.

13 OMBA
Would you prefer to stay on my 13
ship?

Ariadne dismisses the thought with a flippant wave.

14 ARIADNE
This place needs a makeover. 14

Ariadne snaps her fingers and the once ordinary fortress
chamber shifts into an ILLUSIONARY BEAUTIFUL ELVEN SUITE.

15 ARIADNE (CONT'D)
That's better. 15

Another TUNNEL TERROR sticks its head out of a crack in the
wall. Ariadne PRIMAL BLASTS it to smithereens.

16 AGGEE (O.S.)
Excuse me, Ariadne. Are we 16
interrupting?

Ariadne spins to face the newcomer at the door.

Helios gulps, eyes bulge, lunges for the door--
 Omba slams it preventing his escape.

AGGEE
 (whispers
 conspiratorially)
 28 He's a half-minotaur. 28

ARIADNE
 29 Isn't that a bit redundant? 29

Aggee's eyes narrow, mind corkscrewing.

AGGEE
 30 I mean-- 30

ARIADNE
 31 That's okay. Best you not think 31
 too hard on that.

(motions to Helios)
 32 Let's see that axe, friend. 32

Helios' fear subsides at the mention of his axe and hands it
 proudly to the goddess.

Ariadne studies it intently, eyes distant.

ARIADNE (CONT'D)
 33 It's been in your family four 33
 generations. Gifted to your great,
 great, grandfather by a minor
 deity.

HELIOS
 34 You are wise. 34

BEDIA
 35 How did you know that? 35

Ariadne hands back the axe.

ARIADNE
 36 Goddess, duh. 36

(sizing up Bedia)
 37 And who might you be? 37

Aggee explodes with exuberant enthusiasm.

AGGEE
 38 Undoubtedly, you've heard of 38
 legendary Bedia.

51 ARIADNE 51
 Ohhh, Cloudforger. Tavja. Norse
 winterland. Please proceed.

Increasingly unsure. Bedia creeps slowly into the narrative.

52 BEDIA 52
 A beast plagued the people of
 Tavja. Long fur from head-to-toe
 covered its grotesque body. Giant
 fangs. Even bigger claws. We came
 upon the creature on the darkest
 night. Not an Anumian in the sky.
 It was a raid, you see, forty
 gravers in all. No one had seen
 anything like it. We brought
 fighters, archers and spell
 support. Blood, violence and
 swords. You can picture that
 right?

53 ARIADNE 53
 Oh, sure.

54 BEDIA 54
 I was there in a support capacity.
 A healing role. Soon however I was
 out of spells. Half our party was
 dead or dying in the blood soaked
 snow--

Ariadne points.

55 ARIADNE 55
 I heard this story?

Bedia's story skids to a violent abrupt stop.

56 BEDIA 56
 You...you *have*?

57 ARIADNE 57
 Sure. The beast. It was a
 raccoon. Right?

58 BEDIA 58
 I mean, yeah. But, it was a big
 raccoon. Some kind of
 prehistoric... primeval...
 antediluvian...

Ariadne dismisses Bedia with a wave.

59 ARIADNE 59
 Okay, shut up. You'll do. The
 rest of you gather around.

Bedia exhales heavily, relieved to have the story and
 Ariadne's attention over.

The four gravers gather around Ariadne.

60 ARIADNE (CONT'D) 60
 The hunt starts in the morning.

61 AGGEE 61
 So soon?

62 ARIADNE 62
 Once a decade the Tinderbox erupts
 violently spewing out fire
 elementals. Brighthwyna is offering
 triple points for anything fire
 related.

63 HELIOS 63
 Fire? I hate fire.

64 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD 64
 The Bog of Incendiary
 Conflagration. You want us to go
 there, into the lava fields?

Helios SNORTS and shakes his horns violently.

65 HELIOS 65
 Nuh-uh. No. I hate lava.

Omba who had been hanging back steps forward.

66 OMBA 66
 I've already taken the liberty of
 signing you up. You'll be hunting
 as *Ariadne's Artisans*.

Omba winks at Ariadne.

67 OMBA (CONT'D) 67
 Don't embarrass her.

68 ARIADNE 68
 Too late.

69 AGGEE 69
 (beams, sotto)
 Ariadne's Artisans.

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD (CONT'D)

78 Fire is dumb. 78

Helios looks down at the diminutive halfling, brave, strong and fearless.

CU HELIOS -- Fear shifts to rage. HOT BARBARIAN RAGE.

79 HELIOS
Do or die. 79

He BELLOWS a Minotaur War Cry, stomps a hoof and CHARGES.

Minotaur and Elemental collide.

ELSEWHERE, Aggee hits a Kindling repeatedly with his BŌ STICK killing it.

The beast EXPLODES spraying fire and molten debris at Aggee singeing hair and skin.

80 AGGEE
Aggh. They're vengeful little bastards when ya kill 'em. 80

Aggee looks up through bleary eyes and sees two more Kindlings racing toward Helios and Rainbow.

HE LEAPS CHAN QUICK intercepting the rodents driving the first into the ground stunning it.

81 HELIOS
Ohhh... You fight pretty like a ballerina. 81

82 AGGEE
Kill that thing already, will ya. 82

83 HELIOS
I'm working on it. 83

HELIOS HAMMER STRIKES THE ELEMENTAL... causing it to roar, spitting lava at him and then it disappears...

Where?

Subterranean of course. Rocking the world as it went.

84 HELIOS (CONT'D)
Watch out below. 84

BEHIND HELIOS, Rainbow THROWS HER CHAKRUM AT A RODENT, chipping away at its armored exoskeleton.

Suddenly, the ground quakes, rocking violently--

85 HELIOS (CONT'D) 85
 It's coming back!

The SPARK BREECHES, LOBBING LAVA AT AGGEE DROPPING HIM.

86 BEDIA 86
 Aggee is down!

BEDIA CHAIN CASTS HEALS at Aggee and Rainbow.

87 AGGEE 87
 I'm so glad you joined the team.

WITH HEALTH RESTORED, Aggee performs a KIP-UP and is immediately back into the action beating the closest rat.

88 BEDIA 88
 Try and stay up, people.

Bedia backs AWAY from the action.

89 BEDIA (CONT'D) 89
 I can be better help if I'm not
 stuck healing.

90 AGGEE 90
 Well, excuse me.

AGGEE SPINS HIS BŌ STICK AND STUNS A RODENT.

91 AGGEE (CONT'D) 91
 Someone finish this thing.

Helios does as instructed, CLEAVING THE KINDERLING causing it to explode in his face.

92 HELIOS 92
 I hate fire.

Undeterred by burning cow hair and hide, he turns his attention to the one remaining rat but...

RAINBOW FLINGS HER CHAKRUM killing it first.

93 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD 93
 Ha! Beat you.

BOOM! The rat explodes spraying Helios.

94 HELIOS 94
 I HATE FIRE.

95 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD
It's aversion therapy, Helios. 95

96 HELIOS
I'm aversion to you. 96

ACROSS THE WAY, THE SPARK BELCHES, SPRAYS THE FIELD WITH INTENSE METEOR FIRE.

97 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD
Incoming. 97

Aggee, Helios, and Rainbow JUMP FOR COVER and just avoid being pelted with super heated rock and energetic particles.

Rainbow takes a hot stone to the buttocks.

98 AGGEE
That's the kind of pain I don't like. 98

99 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD
What kind of pain do you enjoy? 99

100 AGGEE
I'll never tell. 100

ACROSS THE FIELD, BEDIA CONJURES A COLD ORB and drops it on the Spark.

Cold and heat fight, a contest of wills, threatening to rip the Tinderbox from reality.

101 BEDIA
Got him! You see that? I got him. 101

102 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD
I got that spell, watch. 102

RAINBOW CONJURES A COLD ORB and drops it, but...

Sadly the giant snowball flies harmlessly past the Spark.

103 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD (CONT'D)
Ahhh, bummer. 103

Through the Mist and the Smoke and the Steam, Aggee is a WHIRLING DERVISH bludgeoning the elemental.

MEANWHILE, HELIOS SURVEYS THE FIELD:

104 HELIOS
It's so scary. There is fire over here. Giant snowballs over there. 104

(MORE)

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD

132 Hey Brenda, Nice to see you too. 132
Can we get a room?

The Alewife points to the door.

PYRAMID ALEWIFE

133 Out. You know the rules Aggee. No 133
hunting trophies in the bar.

AGGEE

134 Cut the cackle Cathy, we're tired. 134

HELIOS

135 The Bogcano was moocho madness. 135

AGGEE

136 He ain't lyin'. You know how many 136
times I died this week?

(counts fingers)

137 Three. Four. Five. I lost count. 137

BEDIA

138 It's exhausting keeping him alive. 138

PYRAMID ALEWIFE

139 I don't care. 139

BEDIA

140 C'mon, Farah, Sarah, Tara? Help us 140
out with a room. What did you say
your name was again?

PYRAMID ALEWIFE

141 I didn't. 141

AGGEE

142 I've been coming to this here bar 142
since Brighthywna ran them Setites
out of town. Ain't nobody know her
name. Ain't that right, Clarice?
Now give us some rooms. Purdy
please.

PYRAMID ALEWIFE

143 Your bar tab is frozen. 143

Aggee stops short.

AGGEE

144 What? That can't be right. 144

145 PYRAMID ALEWIFE 145
 Your Chan Clan Chums been drinking
 heavily on your good graces.

146 AGGEE 146
 What the hell Darlene, who gave
 them permission to do that?

147 PYRAMID ALEWIFE 147
 You did. The last time you were
 here. Five-hundred Tortes.
 (holds out hand)

148 PYRAMID ALEWIFE 148
 Now pay up or get out.

149 AGGEE 149
 Five-hundred? I ain't got that.
 (switches gears, smiles)

150 AGGEE 150
 C'mon darlin', you know I'm good
 for it.

The alewife gets up in Aggee's grill

151 PYRAMID ALEWIFE 151
 That twinkle in your eye don't pay
 the bills.

152 AGGEE 152
 Sometimes it does.

153 PYRAMID ALEWIFE 153
 GET OUT!

154 BEDIA 154
 Perhaps we could put on a
 performance, as payment?

155 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD 155
 I think you'll find, we are very
 good.

A wounded melody torments the bar from a small stage in corner. A couple of old country codgers beat out a discordant rhythm on a banjo and hooch bottle.

Rainbow plows the stage.

156 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD (CONT'D) 156
 Excuse me. Thank you. It's our
 turn.

Helios follows with axe in hand.

HELIOS

(sings)

157 Swing low, 157
 Swing chariot,
 Comin' to carry me home...

The men flee.

Helios snags a HAT from the head of the trailing man and leaves it hanging cockeyed on a horn.

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD

(Loud to the crowd)

158 Attention please. For a one night 158
 engagement only, we're thrilled to
 bring you, Ariadne's Artisans.

HELIOS

159 Musicians, see? 159

Helios reveals his RECORDER and gives it a toot.

PYRAMID ALEWIFE

160 Are you actually intending to play? 160

BEDIA

161 Sorry, Melody. 161

Bedia joins the others on stage.

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD

162 I hope you enjoy our performance. 162
 If you do, leave a tip in the hat.

Rainbow steals Helios's hat (You know, because she's a rogue), and places it on a stool.

Helios shakes his recorder like a wand at the revelers.

HELIOS

163 Tips! Moocho tips, understand? 163

HECKLER

164 Where is Ariadne? 164

BEDIA

165 Close your mouth, sweetie. You 165
 look like a troglodyte.

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD

166 Without further ado. 166

Ariadne's Artisans jump full swing into the jam session. Rainbow on the Theremin, backed by Helios on the recorder, Aggee mouth harp and Bedia oud.

The Alewife watches from the back of the bar. Even covered in ash and their clothing scorched black, they ain't half-bad, but they ain't half-good either.

The bar isn't throwing cabbage or insults, so she heads back to serving drinks.

LATER THAT EVENING

In the distance GARY ANNOUNCES THE 9PM HOUR.

Helios shakes his axe at a line of bar patrons dropping coins into the hat.

HELIOS

167 That's right. Give til it hurts. 167

A couple of bald clanless dwarves look uneasy up at Helios and his axe and angrily drop a few silver into the hat.

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD

168 Appreciation is a wonderful thing. 168

LATER THAT EVENING

When last of the adoring fans dwindle, and the Alewife had taken away the proceeds as payment, our heroes relax with a round of drinks.

Rainbow tosses the three RAT HEADS onto the table.

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD (CONT'D)

169 We need to hand these things in. 169

BEDIA

170 They're getting ripe. 170

Omba pulls up a chair and slides in.

OMBA

171 My advice is to make singing your 171
second career choice.

(motions to alewife)

172 Beer please. 172

AGGEE

173 Omba. Did you come to join us for 173
the hunt?

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD

174 We could use a cleric. 174

Omba unravels in gales of scornful giggles.

OMBA
(busting a gut)

175 No. No. No. I'm sorry. No. 175

The pirate recovers, if just barely.

OMBA (CONT'D)

176 Ariadne has a new job for you. A 176
 proposition really.

Helios drops his axe on the table.

HELIOS

177 What kind of job prop? 177

AGGEE

178 C'mon Omba, we just got back. 178

OMBA
(off the rodent skulls)

179 Having survived the test of the 179
 Tinderbox, Ariadne wants to send
 you on a proper quest.

The Pyramid Bar goes eerily SILENT. Patrons lean close,
hoping to pickup news of the next big Quest Rush.

PYRAMID ALEWIFE
(re: room)

180 When Questers talk, people listen. 180

The Alewife distrubutes drinks to the table and departs.

OMBA
(to the eavesdroppers)

181 Butt out! 181

The background noise reignites.

OMBA (CONT'D)

182 You're going on a journey. 182

AGGEE

183 What kind of journey? 183

HELIOS

184 Like a heroes journey? 184

199 OMBA I can't say. 199

200 BEDIA Can't say or wont say? 200

201 OMBA My instructions are clear. Take you four to Ninsunu. After that, I'm ambivalent. 201

202 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD I'm in. Yeah, yeah. 202
(off hesitant friends)

203 Wait. Maybe we should talk first. 203

Aggee holds up his finger to Omba.

204 AGGEE Me and my friends need to confer. 204

Omba kicks up her heels on the table and settles in.

205 OMBA Confer away. 205

The four friends gather close.

206 AGGEE What do you think? 206

207 BEDIA You know this Ninsunu, Aggee. 207
What's her deal?

208 AGGEE Her deal. She deals cards. 208
(off confusion)

209 Fate cards. 209
(points up)

210 You know, Anumian astrology. 210

211 BEDIA You think, Ariadne wants us to draw Fate cards? 211

212 RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD Gods. 212

213 HELIOS My dad drew a Fate card once. 213

214 AGGEE Did he really? How did it go? 214

BEDIA
 (to Rainbow)
 224 I think this Ninsunu buys from the same place you get your clothes. 224

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD
 225 Every color goes with every color, I always say. 225

Helios extends his axe, creating a crack in the tent flap, peering in uneasily.

HELIOS
 226 This feels trappy. 226

Bedia and Rainbow look up at...THE SCHEMER CONSTELLATION.

BEDIA
 227 Is that Schemer--? 227

RAINBOW UNDERCLOUD
 228 Looking at us? I think so. 228

The Anumian constellation hovers directly over Gravers Dig and NINSUNU'S TENT.

HELIOS
 229 Anyone got a bad feeling? 229

AGGEE
 230 That's just your imagination. 230

HELIOS
 231 I don't like anumians and they surely don't like me. 231

Suddenly, the constellation is gone behind thick shifting clouds.

AGGEE
 232 Don't be afraid to reach for the stars, Helios. 232

He pulls back the tent flap and enters.

FADE TO BLACK: