**Lightning Strikes Thrice Extreme Episode 19: I Hate Her Stupid Stick**

[00:00:00] **Chris:** You are listening to Lightning Strikes Thrice Extreme, a Final Fantasy 14 game club podcast. This is episode 19 covering our second level 45 job quests and our rescue of Biggs and Wedge. [00:01:00] I'm your host, Chris Taylor, my pronouns are he him and with me as my esteemed co-host:

[00:01:05] **Ryan:** Ryan Batie they them pronouns.

[00:01:07] **Chris:** What happened last time?

[00:01:09] **Ryan:** Chris, last episode, we took a trip on Cid's airship, which fully restored his memory. Then we flew into the eye of the storm and finally defeated Garuda, the wind Primal. We were unable to land the killing blow, but before Garuda could strike back at us, Gaius van Baelsar, Garlean big bad of A Realm Reborn, brought an ancient Allagan Primal eating weapon onto the battlefield and ruined her day.

[00:01:33] **Chris:** And then Alphinaud was like "mission accomplished, guys. Let's go"

[00:01:39] **Ryan:** *[laughing]* Uh,today, we're going to start with our second level 45 job quests. Chris, why don't you tell me about yours?

[00:01:48] **Chris:** Starting off today, the second 45 quests for Paladin is called "Parlay in the Saigoli," which sounds like bad pasta, the saggyoli.

[00:01:57] **Ryan:** *[laughs]* Pasta saggy-oli!

[00:02:00] [00:02:00] **Chris:** *[laughs]* I go up to the chamber of rural and Jenlyns opens with the old reliable and says the recovery of the housekeeper will be the first step of restoring the honor of the Sultansworn, which is incredible to me that we're still doing this after we found out about an ancient order of poisoners.

[00:02:16] **Ryan:** *[laughs]*

[00:02:16] **Chris:** He told Solkzagyl if he returns the blade, he'll get a fair trial. Otherwise he'll be captured and thrown at the feet of the Sultana for judgment. Oh, last episode, he told me that they'd been in talks and that we were going to go do a parlay right now to go get it back. Um, the parlay is to take place near Forgotten Springs in the Saigoli Desert.

[00:02:34] While Solkzagyl is acting alone, I must be prepared for anything as the Monetarists will not take kindly to his surrender. We must go separately and tell no one so that they don't intervene. I arrive at the destination and wait, then Jenlyns rolls up and accuses ME of being a traitor.

[00:02:50] **Ryan:** Excuse me?

[00:02:51] **Chris:** Uh-huh! His allies within the Sultansworn have told him I am working with Solkzagyl and the Monetarists. He draws a sword on me and demands I give up [00:03:00] Oathkeeper's location, which for the record I do not have. I protest and Jenlyns gets angry that I would accuse the Sultansworn of lying. They are comrades in arms bound in brotherhood. What is my word as an mere adventurer against theirs? They at least know the meaning of honor. Sultansworn arrive and surround me.

[00:03:19] Jenlyns calls me a naive fool for showing up here today. He suspected me from the beginning ever since I showed him the Soul of the Paladin that Solkzagyl gave me at level five. He sentences me to death and decrees that my body shall lie here and feed the crows.

[00:03:35] **Ryan:** What the fuck?

[00:03:36] **Chris:** *[cackles]* Uh, I get into a battle. It's really trivial and boring. All the Sultansworns but Jenlyns die in, uh, two AOE combos, and then I just fight him while using my interrupt as appropriate and he never does anything. But auti, uh, auto attack. Uh, after the battle Jenlyns is like on his hands and knees breathing real heavy, pretty shook, and a helmed stranger looses an arrow at him, when suddenly [00:04:00] Solkzagyl rolls up and blocks the arrow, accusing Jenlyns of being blinded by his own convictions.

[00:04:06] He admonishes him, telling him a Paladin does not exist to defend his position or the honor of his fellow Sultansworn.

[00:04:13] **Ryan:** Damn.

[00:04:14] **Chris:** Fucking owned. Uh, Solkzagyl says those men were assassins of the Monetarists. The moment Jenlyns outlived his usefulness, he was to be killed. Jenlyns doesn't believe him and Solkzagyl calls him naive; too trusting. Which is a virtue, but one has turned into a vice.

[00:04:30] How did he manage to find all of the information that he had? Did it just fall into his lap as though it was being fed to him? He and the Paladins he commands are the Monetarists' lap dogs. He's been played at every step. Jenlyns realizes Solkzagyl was never a traitor then collapses. Solkzagyl carries Jenlyns off to care for him, and I know all there is to know of the way of a Paladin. When Jenlyns recovers, I will need to watch his back during what is to come next. Can't be that much, cause all that's left is level 50.

[00:05:00] [00:05:00] **Ryan:** Mm-hmm.

[00:05:01] **Chris:** Back at the Chamber of Rule, Jenlyns apologizes to me. He allowed himself to be fooled by the Monetarists, accused me of treason and even turned the sword on me and hopes I can forgive him. Probably not, dog.

[00:05:11] **Ryan:** *[laughs]*

[00:05:11] **Chris:** He tells me he is working on a plan now to strike back at the Monetarists and restore the Sultansworn strength. Uh, I learn Cover, which is an instant cast thing that calls 50 oath gage, a spell of that for 12 seconds, I can take all damage intended for another party member. Something I will never use.

[00:05:27] **Ryan:** Haha!

[00:05:28] **Chris:** Not gonna do that!.

[00:05:29] **Ryan:** Um, right, yeah, what- is that like, um, like maybe a way to, um, help an off-tank who's having trouble wiuth enmity stacks, or something?

[00:05:42] **Chris:** I can think of exactly one time I would use it. And it's the final battle of Heavensward, when you have the block for the healer.

[00:05:49] **Ryan:** Oh, right, right, right. Yeah. Yeah. That's it.

[00:05:52] **Chris:** Right? Because like anything else that would attack a healer, usually things that target healers are just AOE markers under the healer, so they don't get insta-fragged. So [00:06:00] like, what is the point of this, buddy?

[00:06:02] **Ryan:** Right. Yeah. It's, it's purely a symbolic move, but it takes up a slot.

[00:06:06] **Chris:** I guess you could use it on a healer where there's a stackup marker that not enough people are paying attention to.

[00:06:12] **Ryan:** Oh, yeah.

[00:06:13] **Chris:** Because that's a common way to wipe in the high-end content is, um, failed stack ups.

[00:06:18] **Ryan:** Right. Right. Well, I'm glad that your job story had a plot this week.

[00:06:24] **Chris:** Uh, it comes out of fuckin nowhere. There's no real legwork done on being played by the Monetarists. Just some guy said so, and everyone goes with it.

[00:06:35] **Ryan:** Mm-hmm.

[00:06:35] **Chris:** Just, what are we doin' here?

[00:06:38] **Ryan:** Right, yeah. No, and it doesn't seem like Square knew what to do with Ul'dah-focused job quests besides just rehashing the same, like, corruption and subterfuge points that are already in the main story quest and like three other [00:07:00] Ul'dah job posts.

[00:07:00] **Chris:** Let's do weird religion shit! They have TWO gods!

[00:07:04] **Ryan:** Yeah. That's yeah. That's what the Black Mage shit is about. It's uh, you know, it's about gods and shit, so-

[00:07:10] **Chris:** Or they have the most like narrative, lore-interesting Beast tribe.

[00:07:15] **Ryan:** Mm-hmm! Oh, yeah, totally.

[00:07:18] **Chris:** Let me tell you right now, I would have preferred this be a straight putt and Solkzagyl be the traitor, because now we have this like third act twist that is built out of nothing and will amount to nothing.

[00:07:28] **Ryan:** Yeah. And it's like a ninth-act twist, right?

[00:07:30] **Chris:** Yup! It's one quest from the end! Nothing can possibly happen.

[00:07:35] **Ryan:** Right, right. Yeah. That's true. It's like, yeah. When you were reading the story to me, I was like, Oh, well, at least there's some twists, but now that you mention it and none of the twists make any sense or are there for any reasons other than to have a twist and also to like, show, I guess that, uh, there's a true way to be a Paladin and a false way to be a Paladin. Eugh, fuck that.

[00:07:59] **Chris:** It's just, "don't [00:08:00] be a dick," and that's all it is. Fuck off! Like what happened, did the Monetarists come and replaceall the books in the library? Eat shit that sucks.

[00:08:08] **Ryan:** *[laughs]*

[00:08:08] **Chris:** Why would the Monetarists implicate themselves with this whole poisoner backstory?

[00:08:15] **Ryan:** Well, yeah, that's all, that's so dumb. That's so dumb.

[00:08:19] **Chris:** It - ughhhhhhh!

[00:08:19] **Ryan:** Okay. The Monetarists are backstabbing each other all the time to be fair, but that doesn't seem like what's going on here. This just, this seems dumb.

[00:08:29] **Chris:** That'd be like if the Illuminati like drop secrets to reveal that the Illuminati was real.

[00:08:36] **Ryan:** *[laughs]*

[00:08:36] **Chris:** In order to like twist some petty grudge way below that.

[00:08:41] **Ryan:** Yeah, well, that's what, uh, that, that, that is what Lady Gaga and Beyonce do. Every time that they put two fingers near their eye is they're saying, look, the Illuminati IS real, and this is our way of communicating this to you.

[00:08:56] **Chris:** *[laughs]*

[00:08:56] **Ryan:** So the Black Mage quest this week is a little [00:09:00] bit shorter and it is called The Blood Must Flow.

[00:09:04] Uh, the Black Mage prophecy is not done with me yet at level 45. Za Da the Kobold relays to me his own people's story of the Black Mage prophecy that brought him to Thanalan. And it goes like this: "When four magi, meet in a barren land. Black powers of eld woven by their hand shall see the fate of wickedness makes stark and the path to the light shall be lit by the dark."

[00:09:27] The Kobold mage who deciphered this legend was Za Da's ancestor Da Gu. He left O'Ghomoro to seek knowledge in La Noscea, which is forbidden for patriarchs, and it branded him a traitor. Za Da was drawn to his ancestor's words when the other Kobolds ignored and forgot them. So he left as well. And now we are all living proof that the legend is real.

[00:09:50] He found an ancient tablet among his ancestor's old things, which emanates a great power and he presents it to me and it reacts to my gem. Words appear on the tablet. [00:10:00] A prophetic poem portends that the one who would close the voidgate must first find sacred armor. He gives us the four locations where the armor supposedly lies.

[00:10:08] And so it's cramming the entire armor quest basically into the second half of the level 45. Um, Kazagg Chah, the, uh, Amalj'aa mage that's been helping us knows that an offering of blood must be given to the planar fissures for the relics to be won. So the three keepers of ancient knowledge offer their own blood to me and warn me of the dangers in these sites, which is, uh, it's interesting.

[00:10:32] **Chris:** Hell yeah.

[00:10:32] **Ryan:** Yeah. It's interesting me a lot. They're just like the three members, three sages of these beast tribes are like, here is my blood go seal the void. It, it kinda, it does rule. Um, I sprinkled the blood of each mage at their respective ancestral grounds. So Kazagg Chah gets sprinkled over Zan'Rak in Thanalan. Dozol Meloc goes to the Ixali hunting grounds in the Black Shroud, and Za Da consecrates the ground of O'Ghomoro in La Noscea. And then I go back to Burgundy [00:11:00] Falls where Kazagg Chah believes that he has discovered the fourth and final planar fissure for the armor. And so he asks me to go to Falls Respite, but instead of spilling my own blood, I must kill the deepvoid cultists who swarm out of the fissure and use their blood to consecrate the ground.

[00:11:16] I was a little bit disappointed that I wasn't gonna be spilling my own blood just because it, you know, blood sacrifice is, is cool.

[00:11:23] **Chris:** Yeah. You would only have to click one time instead of like 30 times.

[00:11:26] **Ryan:** Right. But then when there were a bunch of just cultists spilling out of a void, I was like, all right. Yes. I would like to waste you all. It was, it was cool. After I spill their blood, Za Da insists that the tablet names the home of the armor as "Solace of the Gods," but neither Kazagg nor Dozol have ever heard that name before. So he endeavors to decode these words that we might see the day of the voids opening and seal it again.

[00:11:54] So, you know, it was, um, it was a chess board moving [00:12:00] chess pieces around kind of quest this time, but I did get to spill some blood, so that's cool.

[00:12:05] **Chris:** It is less cool than I would like it to be because, uh, It feels really low stakes when the other side is, I don't know, demons that you can't see. We just have to tell you about it.

[00:12:17] **Ryan:** Yeah. Oh, Oh, that, by the way, um, I read in between last episode, in this episode, more about the relationship between the Void and the Ascians. Um, it does constitute a major spoiler in a way that's, that's more than just spoiler zone. So I don't think that-

[00:12:33] **Chris:** You could tell it to me and I'll cut it out.

[00:12:34] **Ryan:** Yeah.

[00:12:35] **Chris:** And I'm going to leave the part where I say that in.

[00:12:37] **Ryan:** Okay. [00:13:00] *[laughs]*

[00:13:06] **Chris:** And make everyone so mad. *[laughs]*

[00:13:44] **Music Break:** *[music break]*

[00:13:45] **Ryan:** We begin our main story quest this episode with a quest called Reclamation.

[00:13:52] **Chris:** Alphinaud believes that to leave the Waking Sands in disrepair any longer would be to dishonor the memory of those who fell [00:14:00] there. It is time to rebuild and rise once more.

[00:14:04] **Ryan:** Just real quick. I'm realizing now that all of this, like "pray return to the Waking Sands" stuff that we made fun of last episode was actually intended to be very impactful because we haven't returned to the Waking Sands since the, since we cleaned up the massacre basically. And it just didn't land at all for me, you know, it's. I just, I kind of, we've spent so long doing all this rebuilding shit that I kind of forgot about the devastation in the first place. They didn't really have too many, like hashtag remember-the-waking-sands moments at all. So I was just like, Oh right. Oh right.

[00:14:40] **Chris:** Buddy, the whole thing is so funny that they tried to do that and make you care about it because like everyone's still fine.

[00:14:47] **Ryan:** Everyone's still fine!

[00:14:49] **Chris:** No one died. Whooooo cares?

[00:14:54] **Ryan:** Yeah! R.I.P. Noraxia and that's fucking it. That's it. And it, you know, sucks for [00:15:00] them, for sure. But like, ugh!

[00:15:03] **Chris:** Upon our return, the Waking Sands is dark and quiet, but cleaner than when we left it. Alphinaud suspects that we could have trespassers. Damn. I hate when janitors break into my house and clean it.

[00:15:14]**Ryan:**  *[laughs]*

[00:15:15] **Chris:** We enter the solar together with Cid. The door opens and Yda is already inside. She is shocked to see us, but even more shocked to see Cid who she thought died five years ago. Yda had been negotiating in Gridania still since she fucked up the whole sylph deal. Since, um, before the Empire hit the Sands. She shares her trauma at seeing the bloodstains upon her arrival and also tells us that Y'shtola is still alive and helped her clean up.

[00:15:43] Papalymo wasn't among the dead. Perhaps he was taken to the same place Minfilia was. Alphinaud thinks that Gaius van Baelsar wants Papalymo and Minfilia alive to give him information on the Echo so he can use that in his domination of the Primals and Eorzea as well. He [00:16:00] wonders again how the Empire would have found out about the Sands in the first place. Imagine fucking Gaius gets it, and then you just kill him while he's distracted by like some, uh, exposition dump in his head.

[00:16:11] **Ryan:** *[laughs]*

[00:16:11] **Chris:** Like, he's laying on the ground, having a flashback while you hack him up.

[00:16:17] **Ryan:** Wait, why has no one ever tried to murder us when we're in Echo dream?

[00:16:21] **Chris:** I know! So fucking good.

[00:16:22] **Ryan:** *[laughs]*

[00:16:23] **Chris:** It's because you conveniently get them after the threat has been defeated.

[00:16:27] **Ryan:** Oh, right, right.

[00:16:29] **Chris:** Uh, Alphinaud asks Yda for help rebuilding the Scions. It appears that basically every named Scion we have met so far is still alive.

[00:16:39] **Ryan:** Just zero, they're just retroactively yanking all of the impact out from already kind of a not impactful moment.

[00:16:48] **Chris:** Yeah. We were already unimpressed buddy.

[00:16:50] **Ryan:** Yeah. *[laughs]*

[00:16:52] While we were sleeping in the Waking Sands and waiting for Y'shtola to come back, the crystal calls to us, once more with [00:17:00] "Hear, Feel, Think!" We get a vision of the Calamity crashing down from the skies. Then the crystal finally reveals her true form to us. A gigantic blue final fantasy crystal named Hydaelyn.

[00:17:11] **Chris:** [laughing] Also a crystal.

[00:17:13] **Ryan:** Yeah. Yeah! You thought you were talking to a crystal the whole time? Turns out you were talking to a BIG crystal.

[00:17:20] **Chris:** Real Scooby-do "under the mask is another mask" energy.

[00:17:23] **Ryan:** Yeah. *[laughs]*

[00:17:26] Hydaelyn says "ware thee the bearer of the crimson band, for he is the arbiter of shadow. The crystal shall be thy salvation, thy blade and steel both." Uh, this premonition of hers is about going into the heart of darkness, but she will always be with us.

[00:17:45] Then while we're sleeping still, Y'shtola shows up. She's happy to see all of us, but is a lot more Zen about it than Yda was. She believes the hand of Louisoix still guides us. Her investigation suggests that Papalymo and Minfilia have been [00:18:00] taken to Castrum Centri, an Imperial stronghold in Mor Dhona.

[00:18:04] **Chris:** I know you think this is good, actually, but I hate her stupid stick.

[00:18:07] **Ryan:** Okay. That's fine.

[00:18:09] **Chris:** I knew you would like it because it's part of a tree.

[00:18:11] **Ryan:** *[laughs]* Fuck!

[00:18:16] **Chris:** *[laughs]* I'm sorry, but that's how I knew you would like it.

[00:18:21] **Ryan:** God damn it!

[00:18:24] **Chris:** *[laughs]* Y'shtola is worried. The Castrum was already a hard place to get into, but the Scion VIP's have led to even more security. We need more intelligence to develop a plan. Fortunately, Y'shtola knows a guy. Lord Portelaine of House Durendaire, stationed at the back of the Observatorium in Coerthas. Can't wait to go up this fuckin' tower again.

[00:18:47] **Ryan:** *[groans]*

[00:18:48] **Chris:** It says so much about how traumatized by this fuckin' tower I am that I was so thankful he was only on the second floor.

[00:18:55] **Ryan:** Same. Me too.

[00:18:57] **Chris:** *[cackles]* Portelaine welcomes us inside the guard [00:19:00] house. He asks our business with the Imperials and when he explains the kidnapping, he reports that a scout spotted four prisoners who Yda figures to be Minfilia, Urianger, Papalymo, and Tataru. He goes on to report an Imperial airship recently made an emergency landing in Coerthas and two prisoners, who Cid thinks are Biggs and Wedge because there are only so many plot important characters, were seen fleeing the ship. He immediately turns to us and asks us to rescue them before the Empire can kill them.

[00:19:29] Portelaine thinks planning the jail break is gonna take a while anyway, so we have time to go save some bros. My favorite thing is they sabotage the ship in the same way you would sabotage a Boeing 737 Max.

[00:19:41] **Ryan:** I, how do you know that?

[00:19:43] **Chris:** Well, they destroyed, they destroyed the altitude meter. So the plane can't tell how high it is and what angle it is and they have to do an emergency landing visual only.

[00:19:50] **Ryan:** Oh *[laughs]*... Right. Right. Of course. So at this point, the camera cuts to Gaius and his three armored subordinates approaching the Ultima Weapon. Final [00:20:00] preparations are nearly complete. Five years of work to forge a weapon to purge Eorzea of its false gods. Then, Gaius has authoritarian fantasies and Nero kneels down sycophanticly and vows not to rest until the Weapon is fully operational.

[00:20:15] Gaius dispatches the shield guy named Rhitatyn to the Castrum in La Noscea and asks Livia sas Junius to be in his headquarters in an hour. Uh, they don't really elaborate on what that means. Portelaine, back, uh, in Coerthas runs recon on Garlean activities and the mountains, which is how he became acquainted with Y'shtola.

[00:20:37] He tells us to go to Dzemael Darkhold in the West to interview the firsthand accounts of the airship landing. He hands us the customary Ishgardian letter of introduction and prays that we find our comrades soon.

[00:20:49] **Chris:** Dzemael Darkhold itself is an optional dungeon that we can tackle here if we want, but it's not additive to the main story. The gist is that we were asked to liberate an underground fortress that was built [00:21:00] by an old friend of house Durendaire, but got overtaken by Voidsent. The dungeon is only notable because it contains a combination of dungeon gimmicks and encounter design that makes Dzemael Darkhold the first truly cruel dungeon of A Realm Reborn. Also, it's one of my favorite dungeons. It's a good dungeon for the 44 to 50 leveling grind, but it will, uh, definitely obliterate people who are not paying attention at all.

[00:21:25] **Ryan:** Yeah. When I ran this dungeon to see if there were any lore bits worth, uh, worth throwing in the episode, um, I just had the most disastrous run. Three people who had never run it before, and me trying to heal all of them.

[00:21:39] **Chris:** Oh hell yeah. *[laughs]*

[00:21:40]**Ryan:**  Um, it took like, it took like 35 minutes. Um, I had to like break out my USB keyboard and plug it into my PS4 so that I could be like, "no, no, no, we have to, we have to stand in these little locks. We have to stand on these magical locks,"

[00:21:59] **Chris:** We should talk about this [00:22:00] dungeon later at some point. This is a very cool dungeon.

[00:22:03] **Ryan:** Yes, it's it's mechanically extremely interesting. It's just lore-wise, um, completely a nothing, which is fine. It's fine. But yeah, no, I've, I've written it up. We can definitely talk about it later, but yeah, when, when I was just trying to see if we were, if I was going to include any story events, it took me like 35 or 40 minutes and it was a great time. Just, just a mess.

[00:22:26] **Chris:** Oh, the boss fights are so fun.

[00:22:28] **Ryan:** They are.

[00:22:29] **Chris:** Except the Ahriman, which is extremely boring.

[00:22:32] **Ryan:** Um, yeah. Well, It's not extremely boring, if you, if people just refuse to get context clues about those crystals.

[00:22:40] **Chris:** It's- *[laughing]* how can you do that? You have the whole 10 minutes prior

[00:22:45] **Ryan:** I know, I, I know.

[00:22:48] **Chris:** Oh man. The room with all the skeletons where you pull them all at once and make your healer just shit a brick? So good.

[00:22:53] **Ryan:** *[laughs]*

[00:22:53] **Chris:** You know, the one with four locks in it?

[00:22:55] **Ryan:** Yes.

[00:22:55] **Chris:** Pull all those motherfuckers at once.

[00:22:57] **Ryan:** Yes. [00:23:00] *[sighs]* So, at the entrance to the Darkhold, we show the letter to the gate guard, Bricelt, and he relays that the airship landing took place near the Aurum Vale to the Southwest. Pierremons did indeed see the airship land and a troop of soldiers march out. Their commanders were barking orders at them in consternation. Uh, he also has evidence, Pierremons, that the escaped prisoners may have hidden around the area. Uh, two sets of footprints, one large, and one small. Even though it has been snowing for hours since the landing, these footprints are still trackable visually.

[00:23:34] **Chris:** It definitely, they make it seem like the original plan was to make you do the Darkhold and the Vale to find each of these guys.

[00:23:40] **Ryan:** Yeah. Oh yeah. Wh- as soon as they mentioned the Vale, I was like, "really? The Vale? I have to write up the fucking poison place?" And then I remembered no, it's an optional dungeon.

[00:23:50] **Chris:** Ah, I love the Aurum Vale. It's so fast. I bet you it's horrible when you're not the tank.

[00:23:56] **Ryan:** Mm-hmm!

[00:23:56] **Chris:** And you get-

[00:23:57] **Ryan:** Yeah.

[00:23:57] **Chris:** *[laughs]*

[00:23:57]**Ryan:**  It is.

[00:23:58] **Chris:** I've definitely failed this dungeon. [00:24:00] It's very good. Oh. Oh. And it had that boss that had the un-telegraphed AOE that obliterated everybody. What a good time.

[00:24:07] **Ryan:** *[laughs]* God, that's another one where it's just like, no, just eat the fruit. I know you've never been here before, but just eat the fucking fruit. I promise it won't kill you. And it will kill you if you don't eat it.

[00:24:18] **Chris:** I'm sad that they nerfed the coin counter now, 'cause it was so funny to have everyone just get obliterated all the time.

[00:24:24] **Ryan:** Oh, my God. I'm... no one, no one puts into the chat, "oh fuck this" anymore when they queue for the Aurum Vale, because of the, because of the coin counter.

[00:24:37] **Chris:** *[sighs]*

[00:24:38] We follow the tracks for a while, and eventually we find Wedge nearly frozen to death and hiding under a bridge. He is so happy to see us, but laments that Biggs went in a different direction to lure the pursuers away. Cid calls us on the linkpearl, which makes me mad because I remember I have this and I don't have to go anywhere to talk to anybody, even though the game makes me do it. Um, but Cid isn't [00:25:00] surprised that the big guy protected Wedge, since that's what he's always done. He tells us all to meet at Monument Tower. Wedge is so overjoyed that Cid has been found alive that he temporarily forgets to worry about Biggs.

[00:25:12] **Ryan:** Yeah. And look, I get it. Like, your boss has been missing and presumed dead for five entire years. It's-

[00:25:18] **Chris:** Imagine being sad about that.

[00:25:20] **Ryan:** Well, okay, fair, fair. But, Cid's not that kind of boss. Or, ah, ah, he probably is. What am I talking about? Um, so. His momentary elation doesn't actually last very long. As soon as Wedge has warmed himself by the fire, his thoughts turn to Biggs again. His partner lured the enemy away for his own sake, and now he suffers for it.

[00:25:43] Perhaps the people around the tower have seen something. The caretaker of the tower doesn't recognize the description of Biggs, but tells us about a nearby cave called Fury's Gaze that Biggs may have hidden in to spare any bystanders from his pursuers. Inside the frozen cave, we fight three ghost remnants [00:26:00] and have to avoid, um, a lot of really tiny will-o-the-wisp type enemies.

[00:26:04] **Chris:** That are like four levels higher than you. RIP you, if you're an AOE caster.

[00:26:08] **Ryan:** Yeah. Yeah. Do not cast a single AOE in this little cave. Uh, but, even though we fight the ghosts, we don't find any sign of Biggs.

[00:26:17] **Chris:** As it gets colder, Wedge gets increasingly desperate to find his friend. A soldier at the very top of the tower suggests we head North through Dannifen Pass to Whitebrim, but be careful on the icy stairs. Thanks buddy.

[00:26:30] Um, we get to the entrance to Dannifen Pass to find Y'shtola and Yda also on Biggs's trail. They have found him, but Imperials have him surrounded and we all make a move to ambush the Imperials.

[00:26:43] In this instanced battle we party with... mmm, oh, in this, yeah, we party- In this instanced battle, we party with Yda, Y'shtola, and Biggs in order to dispatch a group of Imperial soldiers. When the first round of enemies is down to one soldier, reinforcements spawn [00:27:00] further down the hill, including the pointy-armed mechs called Vanguards. None of these enemies are serious threats, which is what you say when you're not the tank, and Vanguards do a lot of damage.

[00:27:10] **Ryan:** Oh, are they tank busters?

[00:27:11] **Chris:** Oh, dude, they fuckin' own you so hard. They do so much damage so fast, especially because you're, I'm just going to spam my AOE button. So I have like 12 dudes hitting me all at the same time, including two guys with tank busters and the little dudes stun you.

[00:27:26] **Ryan:** Oh, big F in the chat for you there.

[00:27:28] **Chris:** Hah! Very concerning.

[00:27:30] **Ryan:** So the battle is over and we arrived just in time, as Biggs doubles over in exhaustion and cold. We help him back down the mountain to get him someplace warm and safe. Back at the Monument Tower, Biggs and Wedge share a tearful reunion and thank us profusely. The Scions reply that we're a family. Then the big one drops as Cid opens the door like, Hey guys, and reunites with his beloved assistants.

[00:27:53] He asks them what happened in the attack and Biggs explains that they were in the workshop when all of a sudden they had Imperial guns at their [00:28:00] backs. Y'shtola and Yda wonder once again how the Empire could have possibly ambushed without notice or warning. It's almost like they're about to get to that plot point.

[00:28:09] Y'shtola has concluded that it must have been Ascian teleportation magic. Wedge continues. They were taken to Castrum Centri and thrown into a cell together, away from the other prisoners. After weeks of isolation, the Imperials put them on another vessel bound for Garlemald. To avoid certain death, they sabotaged the ship to force an emergency landing and slipped out in the chaos. Everyone shares a laugh and Cid joins a list of people who have thanked us this episode. Garlond Ironworks is back in business and it is time to rescue Minfilia and the others. Next time, on Lightning Strikes Thrice Extreme.

[00:28:45] **Chris:** Enjoy your short episode because to cover the rest of this would have made this like an hour and a half long.

[00:28:50] **Ryan:** It's true.

[00:28:51] **Chris:** So, uh, peace out fuckers.

[00:28:55] **Ryan:** Yeah. Goodbye.

[00:29:05] [00:29:00] **Music Break:** *[musical break]*

[00:29:12] **Chris:** Like I said up top, thanks for being a patron. Your continued patronage helps making these shows not be a financial burden without having to put ads in them. Since you're already a patron, you can help us out by reviewing your favorite shows on the podcatcher of your choice, telling a friend about our podcasts, or sharing an episode on social media.

[00:29:32] In case you didn't know, we have lots of podcasts. We have Being Jim Davis, a daily chronological Garfield comic strip recap podcast. Lightning Strikes Thrice, a JRPG game club podcast. Magmar Sucks, a show where we stack-rank Pokemon based on how interesting their lore is. And last but not least, Boku No Stop, a podcast about anime and low effort jokes. Thanks for being a loyal listener. We'll see you next [00:30:00] time.

[00:30:06] **Music Break:** *[music fades out]*

[00:30:12] **Chris:** In retrospect, uh, it is clear to me now that you were concerned with why did I know that it was more because I used the phrase, "how you WOULD sabotage a Boeing airplane" as though I had done that before.