

Vox Machina: Adventurers, Heroes, Legends, Pyrotechnicians

Von Indy

“Come on, it’s gonna be fun” was the sentence it all started with. She had said it with that cheery voice she got when there was too much day ahead and too much alcohol behind. That alone should have been warning enough, but in case they still hadn’t got just how many kinds of stupid this undertaking was, Grog had deemed it a “great idea”, too. In other words: At least eight individual warning lights should have flashed up in every single one of their heads.

So what did Vox Machina do with this idea? Exactly. They went through with it.

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No one knew exactly why they had given in to a daydrunk Keyleth, but they ended up standing here in Whitestone, watching colorful lights explode above their heads. And it wasn’t even half bad.

“You know,” Vax said, not looking at Keyleth because he didn’t wanna miss a bright blue dot bursting into a star in the night sky. Not because he wouldn’t trade one glance at this woman against an eternity of stargazing in a heartbeat, but he had a pretty good idea why she had orchestrated all this in the first place. “I take it back that this has to end in disaster. Seeing my s...” He swallowed. “What happened may have made me a little cynical. You were right; this is exactly what we needed now.”

Keyleth, with her hands raised to the sky, glowing gently and drawing intricate patterns into the floating embers, gleamed at him sheepishly. “Thanks. You deserve a downtime, too, from time to time, you know?”

He finally tore his eyes away from the fading lights that slowly danced to the ground, to look at her with a faint smile. And really, Keyleth thought, this was what made it worth taking an evening off from sphinxes and vestibules and dragons. Vax hadn’t looked any of them in the eye since Percy had opened the coffin, and that one night after, she feared she’d never see that smile on his face again. Having bullied Percy into building explosives in different colors, having dealt with Scanlan’s comments and Vex’ahlia’s ‘but it’s literally money blown into the sky!’ – it was for this. This moment was enough.

Unfortunately, that moment was indeed enough. Enough time of her not paying attention to her Control-Flame-Spell to lose track of one tiny ember that twirled down peacefully into Gilmore’s new herb garden.

Keyleth’s and Vax’s faces fell at the half-annoyed, half-terrified “Aaaaah!” behind

them, where a very unhappy Percy started to tear at his grey hair. " 'Don't set anything important on fire', I believe were my exact words when I gave you the rockets!"

"Oh my god, I'm so sorry!!" Keyleth shrieked and put her hands out toward the smoldering potion ingredients. The gust of wind they emitted did, as luck would have it, nothing to put the ember out, of course, but rather turned the patch into a (literally) full blown fire.

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!" Percy shouted in horror.

"I – I wasn't thinking!"

"Yeah," Scanlan agreed. "You do that a lot with your spells, don't you?" He seemed a lot more excited about this turn of events than he had been about the fireworks. Little bastard.

"This is a lot more like I was expecting this evening to go," Vax stated matter-of-factly.

"You two are not helping," Percy scolded them and tried to take control of the situation – because as it happened so often, he was the only grown-up around.

"Keyleth! Water!"

"I can only control water that is already here!" She seemed conflicted whether to be pissed at Scanlan and Vax or to start going into a well-deserved complete panic.

"Oh, is this part of the show?" a deep, confused voice mixed in. "Because, I gotta say, as much as I like burning stuff, this is kinda not as impressive as the rest. It's too bright and colors are just boring fire-ish."

"You should listen to him," Scanlan added. "He's an expert on colors and shiny things."

Grog puffed a bit and tried (and failed) to hide his prideful grin. "Yeah, you could call me Grog the shiny color inspector. You should make this fire more green!"

"Grog," Vex'ahlia patted his arm. "That's not a fire show, that is Gilmore's new-found existence going up in smoke."

"It's Gilmore's flowers, Grog," Scanlan clarified because there was the slight chance that Grog would take Vex literally and try to dig up a magic-merchant he believed buried under that herb bed.

"Oh," the Goliath made. "Look, I think he likes his magic flowers, Keyleth. And it's really not that pretty. I don't think he'd like it if we burned them for a fire-ish colored fire."

"Yeah, no shit, Grog," Vax snorted and rubbed a hand over his face. "Gilmore is gonna kill us."

"I'd say that's a plausible reaction to being dumped first and then have all you've left of your means of existence incinerated by your ex's new girlfriend," Scanlan mused, still not making any attempt to help while Keyleth was running around headles, looking for water to control; Percy was trying to rouse the neighbors to get help and Vax had begun pulling his old coat off his sister.

"What the hell are you doing?!" she shouted, not sounding too agreeable to that undertaking and dug her nails into her lapels to hang on to her clothing.

"We have to put the fire out and my coat is made of corpse-stink and very burnable feathers!"

"Why don't you take one from your portable wardrobe you seem to carry around," the bard suggested, getting more amused by this by the second. "Not that I'm averse to the idea of stripping down your sister. But your involvement just makes it weird."

"I don't hear a better idea from you, little man!" To that, Vax was admittedly expecting to get an answer, just not for it to be helpful...

"Well, you could always use Trinket."

...and he was right.

"How about we use YOU?" Vex asked.

Scanlan managed to combine the motions of shrugging and shaking his head. "Nah, I'm so tiny, that wouldn't do much good."

"It would do my sense of satisfaction plenty good," she threatened, but before she could follow up on her suggestion, Keyleth's voice came from behind them:

"Why isn't there ANY water in this godforsaken town?"

"Maybe we drank it all," Grog mused like the detective that he was. "We drank four kegs of ale today."

Vex wasn't convinced with his deductive powers. "I think they have some water aside from ale, Grog."

"But we could kill the fire with ale," he countered. "Too bad it's all gone now."

Something lit up in Scanlan's face. "I wonder – IS it? Is it gone, or...?"

Both the twin's heads snapped to the gnome. "You've got to be kidding...", they said uni sono, only that Vex sounded furiously disgusted and Vax was already smirking and slamming his hand on Grog's back. "This is your time to shine, big guy! KEYLETH, COME HERE! We've got water!"

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"And that," Keyleth concluded, "is why you found Grog, Scanlan and Vax pissing on your burnt garden after I woke you up by shouting about never forgiving myself for misusing the divine powers gifted to me by nature and generations of the Ashari while Vex stands there half-undressed and stares very furious at them, and Percy is muttering something about this not being what we saved this city for."

Gilmore, with his bed hair and disgruntled robe, looked like he wasn't quite sure if he was indeed awake or maybe still dreaming. "The fact that you people are Tal'Dorei's last line of defense consistently terrifies me."