JULIUS: You're listening to Brains On where were serious about being curious.

DUMINKA: Brains On is supported in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

MARC SANCHEZ: OK, Amerika. Rose, DeChambeau. Whoever wins this gets to try out the cheese ray first.

MOLLY BLOOM: Sweet beams of Gouda, here I come.

MARC SANCHEZ: Ready?

MOLLY BLOOM: Oh, yeah.

BOTH: Rock, paper, scissors.

SAPINA: Tree.

MOLLY BLOOM: Marc, did you say tree?

MARC SANCHEZ: No, that wasn't you? Whatever. Let's try this again.

MOLLY BLOOM: One more time.

BOTH: Rock, paper, scissors.

SAPINA: Tree.

MARC SANCHEZ: I definitely heard tree.

SAPINA: Trees beat rocks because trees could eat sunshine and rocks can't.

MOLLY BLOOM: I think the voice is coming from the window.

SAPINA: They beat paper because paper is just old trees, and old never beats young.

MARC SANCHEZ: Behind the blinds. On the windowsill. It's a sapling in a pot.

SAPINA: And trees beat scissors because when we are big and mighty, nothing can get through us. Trees win.

MOLLY BLOOM: I don't think that's how the game works exactly. Also, a talking sapling?

SAPINA: Oh, please. You guys have talking bugs on your show all the time. Are you really surprised?

MARC SANCHEZ: Good point sapling. Good point. Plus Sanden has been experimenting with giving voices to inanimate objects. He's been paranoid that the staplers are plotting against him and he wanted to get Intel from the water cooler.

MOLLY BLOOM: What's going on, tiny tree?

SAPINA: The name is Sapina. I'm just photosynthesizing and pondering the big questions. If I was all alone in a forest and I fell down, would I make a sound? JK LOL, of course, I'd make a sound. I'd sound like this. Aw! I fell over. Ouch! That hurts. Someone call a tree doctor.

MARC SANCHEZ: Hey, oh. Ha-ha. You're pretty funny. Molly is literally about to do an episode about trees right this very minute. We should totally have you on.

SAPINA: Me? What could I possibly talk about? Psyche! I can talk about anything. I have so much to say. You want to hear my thoughts on ponies versus puppies or the best kind of knot? I'm a big fan of the figure eight but a timber is--

MOLLY BLOOM: Come here tiny tree. Let's get you to the studio.

MARC SANCHEZ: OK, you guys go ahead. Let me just put this trees right away. Oh.

MOLLY BLOOM: Whoa, you just turned the copier into cheddar.

MARC SANCHEZ: Oops, I guess my finger slipped. But Menaka, if you hurry back, you can help me eat this.

[THEME MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Welcome to Brains On for American Public Media. I'm Molly Bloom, and today I'm here with Julius from London. Hi, Julius.

JULIUS: Hello. We're also joined by Sapina, she's a tree sapling. That's what you call a small young tree.

SAPINA: Hi, I'm Sapina. And I'm a blackjack oak.

MOLLY BLOOM: Today, we're talking trees. Julius, you wrote into us a long time ago asking about trees. I was wondering, do you still think about trees?

JULIUS: Yeah, I do. I guess. I always wondered how they communicate, stuff like that.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's very interesting. Do you have a favorite kind of tree?

JULIUS: Oh, I would have to say maple because of maple syrup.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's very delicious. When you think of a tree, what is the first part of the tree that you think of?

JULIUS: The first part of the tree I think of as the branches because calculating the best way to get up it.

MOLLY BLOOM: Definitely. Finding your climbing route.

JULIUS: I think one of my favorite outdoor activities is probably tree climbing.

MOLLY BLOOM: Do you have any tree climbing tips?

JULIUS: Upper body strength is really important.

MOLLY BLOOM: Do some training first.

JULIUS: Pulling yourself. Yeah, you have to train.

MOLLY BLOOM: What about you, Sapina? Do you think about trees a lot too?

SAPINA: Oh, yeah. I think about trees all the time. We're just so amazing.

MOLLY BLOOM: That makes sense and you are in good company. Our listeners like pondering trees, too.

MALCOLM: Hi, my name is Malcolm. My question is, what happens inside of a tree while it is growing?

OLIVER: Hello, my name is Oliver and my question is, how do trees grow?

SARAH: Hi, my name is Sarah. And my question is, how do trees grow?

CLAIRE: My name is Claire. How do little tiny seeds become big trees?

JULIAN: Hello, my name is Julian. I'm eight years old. My question is, how do trees grow? And while they're growing, how do the branches form? Thank you. Keep up the good work.

MOLLY BLOOM: Thanks, Julian. Sapina, since you're here, maybe you can help us answer some of these questions.

SAPINA: Totally happy to help. I'll take you through all the levels I've gone through to get here.

JULIUS: Levels?

SAPINA: Yeah, you can think of growing into a tree like playing a video game. You complete level one and it's on to the next. Lucky for you, I've been recording my game on Twig TV. Check it out.

ROBOT: Level 1, seeds can't run.

SAPINA: In this level, I'm a seed. I can't move. My foes?

ROBOT: The forces of chaos.

SAPINA: I have to avoid getting eaten or destroyed. Oh, no. A bird. Whoa. It flew away. This level is almost all luck. But thankfully, I find a good spot to grow. I make it to?

ROBOT: Level 2, start to thrive.

SAPINA: As a seed, I have all the food and instructions I need to start life as a tree. This level is all about letting water into my seed and chomping on the starch stores in my seed so I can grow and get to?

ROBOT: Level 3, sprouting root.

SAPINA: Now, I'm still chomping on starch for my seed because I can't make my own food yet. But I'm running out of starch, I have to break out of this shell. So I grow my first root.

ROOT: I am root.

SAPINA: And I grow a little shoot. My first little stem from the top of my seat, too. I follow gravity to point my root down and follow sunlight to grow my shoot up. Once my shoot grows through the dirt into the air--

ROBOT: Level 4, first leaf.

SAPINA: This is a big one. I grow above ground and get my first leaves. So this level is when I start doing my own photosynthesis. That means I take in water, carbon dioxide, and sunlight, and make oxygen and sugar. I can make my own food from light. And thank goodness, seed searches for plant noobs.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow. Thanks, Sapina. But we like seed starch.

JULIUS: Yeah. When people eat rice, they're eating seed starch. Flour is ground up seed starch, too.

SAPINA: It seems a little weird to eat seed starch if you don't you grow roots or leaves. But anyways, those are the levels I've beat so far.

ROBOT: Progress saved. Bark boss awaits.

SAPINA: I have some leaves now and a few different branches. And I think in the next stage, I do more growing but I can't seem to beat the bark boss that unlocks my bark growing powers.

JULIUS: Seems tricky.

MOLLY BLOOM: I think I know who can help. We have this tree museum on the 11th floor actually. I bet we could figure out your next steps there.

SAPINA: For real sees? A tree museum? I mean, obviously, because trees are totally museum worthy, but I could meet some of their trees there?

MOLLY BLOOM: Yeah, all kinds of trees.

SAPINA: Oh, whoa, whoa. Yes, please. Let's go right now. Lead the way and also carry me because I have no legs.

MOLLY BLOOM: OK, Sapina we'll go in a second. But first, a little sonic sleuthing. It's the--

JULIUS: Mystery sound.

MOLLY BLOOM: Are you ready, Julius?

JULIUS: Yeah.

MOLLY BLOOM: All right, here it is.

[CRUNCHING]

Any guesses?

JULIUS: If I had to guess, maybe somebody eating something.

MOLLY BLOOM: Very, very good guess. Well, we'll be back with the answer and another chance for you to guess a little bit later in the show.

[THEME MUSIC PLAYING]

[FOOTSTEPS]

It should be right down this hall.

SAPINA: I see it. I see it. The Tree Hall of Fame. You guys, there it is.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow, this is actually much bigger than I was remembering.

JULIUS: Oh, we all saw it. Where is all that sky coming from?

HYPERION: Well, hello down there.

MOLLY BLOOM: Hi?

HYPERION: I am Hyperion. The tallest known tree in the world.

SAPINA: No way. I have your training card. You're like a living high score. You are my hero.

HYPERION: Oh, that's so nice to hear.

SAPINA: Yeah, you are a Sequoia Sempervirens or a Coast Redwood. You live in the Redwood National Park in California and you're a whopping 380 feet tall.

HYPERION: You know your stuff little one.

SAPINA: I am devoted to my STEM education.

JULIUS: STEM? You mean science, technology, engineering, and math.

SAPINA: What? No, dude. I mean, STEM, like studying trees every minute. Because trees are the best. Oh. Over there, is that--

GENERAL SHERMAN: General Sherman is my name. The largest living trees my claim to fame. Pleased to meet you fine friends.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wait, wasn't that other tree the largest?

GENERAL SHERMAN: Silly human.

SAPINA: Yes, silly human. Hyperion is the tallest known tree. General Sherman is the largest. That's measured by volume. It includes height and width.

GENERAL SHERMAN: That's right. I'm a giant Sequoia living in Sequoia National Park California. I'm certainly no slender sapling. If you're looking for lean lumber, you're barking up the wrong tree.

[LAUGHTER]

SAPINA: Free jokes. It has tree jokes. Mighty General Sherman the tree, how can I grow big and tall like you and Hyperion?

GENERAL SHERMAN: Be patient little sapling. It takes time.

HYPERION: Yes, but with luck, it will happen.

GENERAL SHERMAN: As you age, your bark will get harder and darker, but it won't be the bark that will make you thick and robust like us. No. It's the stuff right under your bark called the cambium.

JULIUS: The cambium?

GENERAL SHERMAN: Yes, indeed. It's a woody plant tissue. And over the years, it will grow outward making a tree wider and mightier.

HYPERION: At the same time, your roots will grow deep into the ground snaking their way through the soil to bring you water and nutrients.

GENERAL SHERMAN: And branches. You'll grow many more branches filled with sun-kneading leaves. Those will feed you. I enjoy that quite a bit. Eventually, you'll start growing seeds of your own.

HYPERION: Some may even end up in the soil where they'll grow into other trees.

SAPINA: Oh, wow. Oh, wow. I can't wait.

HYPERION: Well, treeing is not about speed.

GENERAL SHERMAN: Indeed. I've been growing for over 600 years. And I've been at it for over 2000.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow, that's amazing.

JULIUS: Yes. You guys are ancient.

METHUSELAH: Did someone say egg ship? I'd like to see an egg ship.

MOLLY BLOOM: What?

GENERAL SHERMAN: Ancient. He said ancient.

HYPERION: Don't mind Methuselah there. Methuselah is the world's oldest known tree.

GENERAL SHERMAN: A legend. It's a bristlecone pine that's been growing in the Eastern mountains of California for over 4,800 years.

METHUSELAH: Are the eggs riding the ship? Or is it a ship made of eggs? Either way, count me in.

HYPERION: Its hearing isn't great.

SAPINA: Wow, you guys have so much wisdom. So much bark. I'd love to learn more from you.

GENERAL SHERMAN: Then why don't you join us? We could talk tree stuff and our favorite types of nuts from time to time.

SAPINA: What? I love nuts, too.

MOLLY BLOOM: It seems like you're really happy here. Why don't you stay, Sapina? Lay down some roots. This is a perfect home for you.

SAPINA: Really? OK, I will. Thanks so much, Molly and Julius.

JULIUS: We should get back to the studio anyway. See you tress later.

MOLLY BLOOM: Bye.

SAPINA: Bye, Molly. Bye, Julius.

GENERAL SHERMAN: Farewell. Sad to see you leave.

[LAUGHTER]

HYPERION: Oh. Come bark soon. We're rooting for you.

METHUSELAH: Maybe one of the eggs is a pirate.

[THEME MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Right now, we're working on an episode all about spacesuits.

JULIUS: Those super cool suits that let astronauts do stuff in the cold, dark vacuum of space.

MOLLY BLOOM: And we want to hear from you. If you could invent a suit to help you do something here on Earth, what would it do? Julius, what would you like a super suit to do that would be helpful to you?

JULIUS: I would probably have a super suit that most kids would want. It would enhance your brainpower so homework would be easier.

MOLLY BLOOM: I think I would like one that is human bubble wrap because then I could like try doing new things, like, I don't know, skateboarding or maybe climbing trees without worrying about hurting myself. It might be useful. Well, send your super suit ideas to us at brainson.org/contact. We'll play some of them on that upcoming episode.

JULIUS: And that's where you can also send us questions, drawings, mystery sounds, and high fives.

MOLLY BLOOM: That's how we received this excellent question.

ARTURO: Hi, my name is Arturo from Tucson, Arizona. And my question is, why does the moon change colors sometimes?

MOLLY BLOOM: We'll be back with an answer to that question during our Moment of Um at the end of the show.

JULIUS: And we'll read the latest group of names to be added to the Brains Honor Roll.

MOLLY BLOOM: And if you stay tuned to the very, very end, you'll hear a preview of a new episode of Smash Boom Best. Our debate show that pits two cool things against each other and asks you to decide which one is best.

JULIUS: This time, it's snakes versus spiders, so keep listening.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

You're listening to Brains On from American Public Media. I'm Julius.

MOLLY BLOOM: And I'm Molly. Julius, I think we should get back to that mystery sound right away. Are you ready?

JULIUS: Yeah.

MOLLY BLOOM: OK, before we get back into it, before you said it was someone eating, and here's your clue. They're eating something that you might get from a tree. OK, here it is again.

[CRUNCHING]

Any new guesses?

JULIUS: I would guess an apple.

MOLLY BLOOM: You are 100% correct. That is the sound of someone eating an apple. Very good ears. Are you an apple eater yourself?

JULIUS: Yes, it is one of my favorite fruits.

MOLLY BLOOM: What is your favorite way to eat an apple?

JULIUS: I always eat it from top to bottom eating everything really.

MOLLY BLOOM: Explain more about that. You start from where the stem is?

JULIUS: I put out the stem, I then eat it all the way from the top, I even eat the core and then nothing left at the end.

MOLLY BLOOM: Do you eat the seeds too?

JULIUS: Yeah.

MOLLY BLOOM: Wow. You really like apples. And our listeners have some fruit questions as well.

OLIVER: My name's Oliver from Adelaide, Australia. My question is, how does fruit grow on trees?

JUDE: Hi, my name is Jude from Charlottesville, Virginia. My question is, why does fruit grow on trees?

MOLLY BLOOM: So I went to the University of Minnesota Orchard where I met Jim Luby. He's a professor of horticultural science and also one of the scientists who brought us the Honeycrisp Apple, an Apple which like the name describes was bred to be very crispy and sweet.

JIM LUBY: This is the oldest Honeycrisp tree in the world. It dates back to about the mid 1970s.

MOLLY BLOOM: Jim knows his apple trees, and he showed me how these trees make fruit.

JIM LUBY: If we want to go over to this tree here, what we can see here is a little shoot and this shoot grew last year. And then at the end of it, it formed what we call a terminal bud.

MOLLY BLOOM: So picture a tiny little nub on the branch of an apple tree. It's called terminal because it's at the end of the shoot that comes off the branch.

JIM LUBY: Probably late last summer, that it went from growing leaves on this little chute to stopping growth at that terminal bud. Those flowers start developing inside that little bud through the late summer and fall, the whole tree of course goes dormant loses its leaves and goes dormant. And then the following spring, those flowers will continue to develop in the bud, the bud eventually breaks, we see those nice white pink flowers. Hopefully, a bee or other pollinator comes by and deposits some pollen from a different tree.

MOLLY BLOOM: Pollen is that yellow powdery stuff you'll see in the center of flowers. All of the flowers on the apple tree have nectar and pollen to attract bees to them. But that pollen also has another purpose. It can accidentally take pollen from one tree's flower to a flower on a totally different tree. That will fertilize a cell in that flower and it will start growing a seed. And around that seed, fruit cells will start growing.

JIM LUBY: The fruit will start enlarging. Also, during the summer, it's packing lots of starch into this fruit. And eventually, as a fruit ripens, that starch will be converted to sugar. And that's what you and I would recognize as the sweetness of an apple.

MOLLY BLOOM: But it's worth it because animals who want to eat these apples will then help spread their seeds around by gobbling up apples and pooping out the seeds somewhere else. Then, from that humble beginning, a new tree will grow. The apple trees native to North America are tiny crab apples because they were eaten by smaller animals. And all those big apples that we think of as well. Apples those can trace their roots back to Kazakhstan where they were eaten by bears.

JIM LUBY: I've been actually over to Kazakhstan. And what you'll see is some, you'll see brown bear dung and it's full of apple seeds.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: I don't know about you, but I find trees very calming to be around. My daughter hugs every tree she sees when she's walking down the street. I don't know. Julius, do you feel a connection to trees? I know you climb them, but have you ever hugged one or how does being around a tree make you feel?

JULIUS: I know that they give me oxygen, they basically keep us alive. For that, I'm grateful so I suppose I'm happy they're around.

MOLLY BLOOM: I find it like, I don't know. I just kind of feel like I slowed down a little bit when I'm near a tree. Trees do have a certain magic. They can't talk like we can.

JULIUS: Except Sapina and those other trees.

MOLLY BLOOM: Right. Well, most trees can't talk and they can't get around, but they're definitely alive. We wanted to know more about what they're up to so we called David George Haskell.

JULIUS: He's a biologist at Sewanee The University of the South. And he wrote a book called The Songs of Trees. Welcome, David.

DAVID GEORGE HASKELL: Thank you. It's a delight to be with you.

JULIUS: Is it true that trees use underground signals to communicate with each other?

DAVID GEORGE HASKELL: Absolutely. This is one of the revolutions in biology over the last few decades is that we used to think trees were solitary individuals each doing their own thing, deaf to the world.

And now we know that they're engaged in this intimate conversation both below ground and above ground with other trees, but also with other organisms with the insects, and then the bacteria and fungi in the soil as well. They're very chatty organisms. They are indeed communicating. But of course, not using a language as a human language, but using their own tree method of communication, which is mostly through the medium of chemicals.

JULIUS: Cool. Can a tree tell when another tree needs help, like when it's being attacked?

DAVID GEORGE HASKELL: Indeed, it can. Now, whether the other tree is able to provide any help or not really depends on the situation. But if insects, for example, attack one tree in a forest, the other trees around it will learn of that attack and will defend themselves before any insects hit them. They know this through a couple, at least a couple of different means.

One is through airborne chemicals, little aromatic molecules that drift out of the injured trees leaves and waft away into the air. And the leaves around that injured tree then receive those chemicals, they smell them through their leaves, because the leaves, of course, are open to the air that's how they function. They draw an air through little breathing pores. And with that air comes these little alarm chemicals.

The other method is below ground. It seems that chemicals are moving from one tree to another via pathway that involves the tree's roots that are connected to fungi below ground that are then connected to more tree roots. So that there's a whole hidden network of chemical conversation happening under the ground as well as in the air.

JULIUS: Why do trees communicate? Because if they've got all these self-defense mechanisms, what is the need of actually saying if some insects are attacking you, why aren't they solitary figures?

DAVID GEORGE HASKELL: In this way, they're analogous to human communication. Why do we talk to one another? Partly it's to learn things that are going to be helpful to us. Through experiments, monitoring the communication of trees and what they gain, people have found that trees, and not just trees, other plants as well that are communicating one to another, can protect themselves from drought. They can deter herbivores more effectively. They can get more carbon and nitrogen into their bodies. They can receive advance warning of what's happening in the forest.

JULIUS: Do you think that someday people can learn to understand tree communication? Is there a simple thing we can do to understand it?

DAVID GEORGE HASKELL: I think people have been doing this for thousands of years. Trees center and many of our important stories about meaning think about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or the tree under which the Buddha was enlightened. We understand in our culture that trees are symbols of meaning and understanding and wisdom. We've been listening to them through culture and literature and poetry for many centuries.

Now, science is catching up and teaching us new things about how trees can connect one to another. I would recommend, and this has been my own practice as a biologist and as a writer, the best way to hear the stories of the trees and to connect into this communication is to pick a particular individual tree and return it to it again and again with all of your senses open.

What am I hearing here? What am I feeling through my sensitive fingertips on the tree's trunk? What can I smell here? How is the water moving through this environment? Returning to that tree again and again, befriending the tree. And the tree, of course, uses very different language than we humans, but it still has its own language, its own ancient interesting stories that we can connect to by opening all of our senses to its marvels.

JULIUS: Thanks for talking with us today, David.

DAVID GEORGE HASKELL: Thank you. It's been a great pleasure.

[THEME MUSIC PLAYING]

MOLLY BLOOM: Trees start as seeds fill the starch. That starch feeds the tree until it can make a root and a sprout.

JULIUS: The root pushes down into the soil to find nutrients and water.

MOLLY BLOOM: And the sprout climbs up above ground where it will eventually form leaves.

JULIUS: The leaves use photosynthesis to create energy from sunlight and air which helps the tree grow even more.

MOLLY BLOOM: Over time, the tree's bark will darken and harden and the tree will keep growing wider.

JULIUS: Trees grow blossoms and then fruit as a way to get animals to plant the seeds in new places.

MOLLY BLOOM: And trees can communicate with each other by sending chemical messages through the air and underground. That's it for this episode of Brains On.

JULIUS: Brains On is produced by Marc Sanchez, Sanden Totten, and Molly Bloom.

MOLLY BLOOM: Our majestic fellow is Menaka Wilhelm. And we had production help from Brigitte Asamoah and Christina Lopez. Engineering help from Veronica Rodriguez, Morad Campbell, and Evan Perkins. And special thanks to Sabina Cap, Diane Peter, Marlee Foyer Ricker Otto, Josh Holt, Vicki Meckler, and Sam Choo.

JULIUS: Brains On is a nonprofit public radio podcast. Your support helps us keep making the show.

MOLLY BLOOM: You can support Brains On and see our cool thank you gifts at brainson.org/donate.

JULIUS: Now, before we go, it's time for our Moment of Um.

OLIVER: My question is, why does the moon change colors sometimes?

SARAH KOMPERUD: The moon actually doesn't change color. It looks like it changes color because the Earth's atmosphere. My name is Sarah Komperud and I teach astronomy here at the Bell Museum. The moon can appear to change color based on a few different things with the Earth's atmosphere. During a total lunar eclipse, for instance, you often hear it being referred to as the Blood Moon, and it turns that reddish orangish color.

That happens because as the light passes through the Earth's atmosphere, the red light gets bent and shines on the moon. In that case, if there's more pollution, either natural or man made pollution in the Earth's atmosphere, the deeper red it will turn.

If we're looking at the moon on the horizon and it has this nice golden orange color, and then later in the evening we see it nice and high overhead and it's more white, those colors change based on how much of the Earth's atmosphere the light reflected off the moon has to pass through. It has passed through more atmosphere on the horizon, and again that red light is bending a little bit more to give that orangish yellow color. Where straight overhead, it's more of a straight pass through.

MOLLY BLOOM: Here's a group of people that deserves a colorful thank you. These are the kids who send us mystery sounds, letters, and drawings. And they're the newest addition to the Brains Honor Roll.

[LISTING HONOR ROLL]

[THEME MUSIC PLAYING]

We'll be back soon with more answers to your questions.

JULIUS: Thanks for listening.

MOLLY BLOOM: And now, here's a sneak peek at the latest episode of Smash Boom Best. Our micro round challenge today is "Be My Roommate". We've asked Jenny and Anna to imagine what a spider and a snake might be looking for in a roommate and to write up a listing about it. I went first last time, so our resident, spider expert Jenny is up first. Jenny, what is the spider side of your identity looking for in a roommate?

JENNY: Quiet and tidy house spider seeking similarly considerate roommate to share web building chores and food trapping responsibilities. Start at a 6-inch web by the corner of the living room door that is, in my humble opinion, a geometric and architectural Marvel. And yes, I said Marvel, huge fan of Spider Girl. Looking for a roomy who can also spin some six silk. Landlord is very understanding.

And we'll leave us alone because we'll be capturing house flies, mosquitoes, gnats and wasps for food and humans hate bugs. More for us. I hang out on the web basically all day, but you will never notice me. Super good at tippy toeing on all eight legs. Also, I have really slow metabolism and don't need to hunt for food every day. I could be the chilliest roomie and not move until we catch us some dinner vibrations.

My hubby already came by for a honeymoon visit and luckily, he wasn't too small and weak, or else I would have eaten him. LOL. But thankfully, he already left. I am pregnant and laid 1,000 eggs in my silk socks but those kiddos will leave home immediately after they're born. So don't worry, I love my privacy. I hope you do, too. DM me and let's we've our very own world wide web.

MOLLY BLOOM: That is one compelling listing. Harriet, any thoughts about Jenny's roommate listing?

HARRIET: Way better than I thought living with a spider could ever be.

MOLLY BLOOM: It's pretty good sell.

HARRIET: That's right.

MOLLY BLOOM: All right. Anna, what is your snake alter ego looking for in a roomy?

ANNA: Rattlesnake looking for a friend to share my space. My house has everything because I have so many different interests. I like hiding under rocks, slithering through the underbrush, climbing trees and swimming. A little bit about me. I'm 7 feet long, have no arms or legs, and I am something of a musician. After all, I have a built in instrument on my tail. It might sound like a maraca, but it's actually interlocking scales that make noise when I shake them.

I usually use my rattle to warn off predators. But hey, it makes a great addition to a drum circle too. This house has been in my family for over 100 years. Generations of my relatives have hibernated here. I'll only go into hibernation if the temperature gets too cold, though. So I like to keep the thermostat pretty high. Hopefully, you don't mind. I tend to keep to myself but I can have a bit of a temper.

That said, I will usually warn you before lashing out. Just stay out of my stuff, OK? Eight legs, six legs, four legs, two legs, no legs. All are welcome. Though whoever you are, make sure you're a lot bigger than I am. When I get hungry, I can open my mouth close to 180 degrees to eat even moderately-sized roommates. This has been a problem in the past. I hope to meet you soon.

MOLLY BLOOM: Excellent work, team snakes.

HARRIET: Excellent.

MOLLY BLOOM: Harriet, any thoughts? Did Anna make it sound like living with a snake would be pretty cool?

HARRIET: Oh, definitely.

JENNY: If you want to be eaten.

[LAUGHTER]

Make your call, Harriet.

ANNA: But hey, they'll eat the mice and rats too so there's that.

MOLLY BLOOM: So both roommates provide excellent pest control. Harriet, now is the moment to make your decision about who is going to get a point for this micro round. It's a tough one.

HARRIET: It is and it's been done.

MOLLY BLOOM: She has done, she has marked the point.

JENNY: I am tingling with anticipation. I'm so nervous.

ANNA: Me, too.

MOLLY BLOOM: Find out who wins this epic debate by subscribing to Smash Boom Bust on your podcast app and go to smashboom.org where you can vote for your favorite.

[THEME MUSIC PLAYING]