

IPT Dossiers: Bridges and Break-ins (S1, E47)

INTRO

Rev: Hey everybody. Rev here. It is just Harvey and I in the studio today because, well because it's a couple days before C2E2 and everybody is off getting things done. I'm actually mostly covered in Plasti Dip and spray paint right now, but the intro must go on. So, I've got just a couple of things here for you. The first thing is, if you go over to theghtable.com you'll find an interview there that I did with the guys over there. We talk about 'Monster of the Week', we talk about some other game systems and we talk about how we run games. So, if that's something that you'd be interested in you can head on over to theghtable.com and you can find the video interview that I did with them. Also, just a reminder we are on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, all @thecritshow. You can find us there and follow us. Rachel is doing amazing things. Every day she's putting out poles and audio clips and teasers and throwbacks and all kinds of stuff. So you can find us there. Also our Patreon is Patreon/thecritshow. We're at the point now where we are doing 'Hero Salad' four times a month and we are also doing "Investigate the History' once a month and that is at the five dollar tier. So if you feel so inclined join us there. We have a good time. We've got a Discord set up for all of the Patreon subscribers, where we get on there and chat while we play games, or while I edit and the other guys play games. And then lastly, we actually ordered a few extra hats. We have a couple of the beanies and a couple of the cleanup caps, both in the Navy. So if you wanted to get one of those and didn't have the opportunity to order before we placed the order, send us an email. We have a couple extras for just such an occasion. So, I think that's all for me. Let's just get into the episode and I'm going to get back to work. Those of you who will be in Chicago. Well I'll see you in a couple days.

IPT DOSSIER: BRIDGES AND BREAK-INS

Rev: So here you all stand once again in T.J. subterranean lair. Tass has just been fed a vision of multiple car crashes, cars slamming into the river below a bridge and every time he is sitting in the passenger seat and the very final time he has this vision he looks over at the driver right before they hit and sees himself driving the car.

Tass: Oh God I think I'm gonna be sick. Ho.

Teej: You okay, bub?

Tass: Oh, that was a, that was a bad one. Oh good lord. Bwugh!

Teej: What does it look like to us whenever he has these visions? Like, do his eyes go white? Or does he just like faint?

Rev: Uh, no, his- He just stands and kind of goes catatonic for a moment.

Teej: Oh.

Tass: OK. Um, we gotta, we gotta be careful on that bridge, boys. Oh, ughhh! I kept seeing like I was in this car and all these different cars and we were just going over the bridge and smashing into the river and just over and over again and then I saw myself driving and I could just feel it. Oh my God.

Jake: OK. I mean, I feel like maybe we just shouldn't actually drive onto the bridge.

Tass: Yeah, that's a good call.

Jake: Maybe we investigate the bridge itself on foot. I mean, feel like the first thing we should probably do then, is figure out a way to shut the bridge down. Is the bridge already, like closed off because of this?

Rev: No it is not.

Jake: Yeah. Maybe we should figure out a way to close it off, so that nobody's driving across it until we figure out what's going on.

Tass: We just going out there throwing cones around. Are we like, what are we doing?

Jake: I think we could, probably if we got some like roadwork stuff. If we got some signs like a detour sign and some cones, I don't think most people would just ignore it and drive on through.

Teej: And we also have our badges that change shape on us, so we could make any sort of badge if anybody gives us crap about it.

Tass: Yeah, that works, I don't know what, road worker badges or?

Teej: Department of Transportation or something like that, yeah.

Tass: OK.

Jake: I don't know if that's Google-able. I don't know if there's a picture of a D.O.T. badge somewhere on Google.

Rev: Yeah, and you know from the dossier that it is not a main road. It is buried pretty deep in the woods. It is traversed, but it is not a busy road. It is just one lane.

Tass: Oh cool. Yeah, I think that would all be pretty easy. We've just got to find this stuff. Let's, let's get moving. Who do we, do we know anybody?

Jake: For what.

Tass: Like that has, I don't know, like where are we gonna just go get cones?

Jake: I don't know. I mean, I, I know where you can get, like sports cones. I don't know where you get traffic cones.

Teej: I've got my fabrication shop here in the lab. We could make whatever we need.

Jake: Oh.

Tass: Why didn't you lead with that!?

Jake: God, I forget about the things that are here. Yeah, I mean, if you can fabricate some cones and like a couple barriers, one for each under the bridge.

Teej: Sure.

Rev: All right, roll it.

Teej: And this is on my plus 'weird.' Oh, boy. That's a 7.

Jake: What does that mean? We get half as many cones as we need?

Teej: It just means that I can make it, but only barely.

Rev: Ok. So you are able to make, uh, road cones, but they are very tiny. They look like they probably came from someone's car. Like, if you had an emergency flat tire Kit. They're about six inches high.

Teej: Well, there you go guys.

Tass: Good.

Jake: Yeah. Can I buy, can I spend gear points, or anything on just a couple of road flares?

Rev: Sure.

Jake: Like, a pack of road flares.

Rev: Yeah, I think one will come with a pack of three.

Jake: I'll do that. We'll throw a flare down on either end of the bridge and some of the cones. and.

Teej: Cool, one of those long lasting things that they use at, you know, festivals and things.

Jake: Or, like that cops use in the road, like a road flare.

Rev: Are you referencing Burning Man or what? T.J.'s a huge Burning Man fan. One of the paths we haven't delved down yet.

Tass: What about a vehicle? Are we just taking your car?

Jake: I mean it's a, it's a Charger. It's got a law enforcement look to it.

Tass: OK, let's go.

Rev: So what time of day do you guys want to arrive?

Jake: Probably night. The fewest people are gonna be there and our shut down will be the most visible, like flares burning in the night will be pretty hard to miss.

Teej: Yeah, like even early morning 2:00, or 3:00 a.m. would be even more super.

Jake: Yeah, I'm just trying to think of when, when the fewest people might be out there.

Tass: We said it was morning?

Rev: Correct. You guys got to sleep at some point too, I think. You guys haven't slept in, what, since Russia.

Tass: Oh.

Jake: *A la, No Sleep Till Brooklyn by Beasty Boys* NO, SLEEP, SINCE RUSSIA!

Teej: Yeah, we, we took a nap in Baba Yaga's house.

Rev: I think the last time you slept was at Baba Yaga House. So that was at least two or three nights ago.

Jake: Well then let's go to sleep and then go when we wake up, which will be evening time.

Tass: That works.

Teej: Granted on that, but I have had multiple werewolf serums, which I'm sure are very waking.

Rev: Yes that is accurate. What damage is everybody at?

Jake: I'm at 2.

Teej: Same.

Tass: None.

Rev: All right. So you guys both heal 1 point of damage as you take your nap. T.J. roll, cool.

Teej: That's a 9.

Rev: All right. So, you do not need to take one, but you will have a minus 1 ongoing until you heal that last point of damage.

Jake: All right. Let's roll out.

Rev: We jump ahead a little bit. It is about three hours later and you are right now, about half a mile away from where the bridge is. You're at a fork in the road. The left fork goes to another road and the right fork goes to where you know the bridge is. It is about one o'clock in the morning.

Jake: I pop one of those flares off and some of the cones and put them across the side of the fork. That goes to the bridge.

Teej: I guess we'll drive down to the other end of the bridge then, yeah?

Jake: I think we should drive down to the end we come up on and just kind of park perpendicular to it on our side.

Teej: Okay, and then cross the bridge by foot and then put down cones and flare there?

Tass: Yeah. Yeah. I'm not driving across that bridge after feeling that over and over and over again.

Teej: Fair enough.

Rev: How close are you guys getting? Like, where are you stopping at?

Jake: I think that in my head, just on the bridge is the danger zone and I get pretty much up to where it begins.

Rev: Jake, roll 'cool'.

Jake: Kay, uh, 8.

Rev: So you can stop the car right before you get on the bridge, but you're gonna have the sensation that something is weighing you down, that there is a weight on your chest, and so you'll have a minus 1 ongoing until you can figure out what this feeling is, or you can let go of that sensation and continue on across the bridge.

Jake: I mean, I think I'll take that weird sensation, probably.

Rev: So, you guys are parked right at the edge of the bridge and Jake has this strange look on his face as if he's got just kind of a shortness of breath.

Tass: You okay, buddy?

Jake: Something just feels weird. Something feels just wrong about being here.

Tass: Well, I guess that tracks. That means we're in the right spot. I'm gonna hop out and just take a look over the bridge and open up my sight.

Rev: Roll 'Investigate a Mystery'.

Tass: Ok. Ugh,6.

Rev: You look over the bridge and you start to get very dizzy as you open up your sight, because there's just so much conflicting information. You see what seems to be people from all different eras and as you take them in, it becomes so overwhelming because you feel their pain and you start to tumble off of the bridge. The two of you see this happening.

Jake: I would like to try to grab him before he falls.

Rev: All right, roll 'Act Under Pressure'.

Jake: Oh my God. Snake eyes and a minus 1 ongoing.

Tass: Oh, I can't wait to do some swimming today.

Jake: I grab you and I hug you tight, and then we fall together.

Rev: T.J., are you doing anything as you see this happening?

Teej: I was going to get all the road cones and flares, so my hands are filled with stuff. So, the thing I can only think of is, I'd drop those as I see this happening and rush to, like grab somebody by the belt.

Rev: Yeah, roll 'Act Under Pressure' to try to grab a hold of Jake, but you're gonna have an additional minus 1, because of his failure.

Teej: That's a 7.

Rev: So you can either reach out and grab a hold of Jake from behind and dig your heels in, but if you do, it's gonna wrench something in your back and you're gonna have a minus 1 toughness, or you're going to be able to wrench him backwards and you know

that the force of it is going to jerk Tass out of his hands, because he has just got a tenuous grip on him, or you can get him over and pull both of them back onto the bridge, but it's going to cause part of the bridge to collapse. You can feel the cement and the old steel creaking underneath you.

Teej: I'm gonna go ahead and take the wrenching in my back and just go with a minus 3 tough now.

Rev: Oh, well, only minus 2 because the minus 1 stacked from Jake's failure so you don't have that ongoing.

Teej: Oh, well, I've already got a minus 2 tough, so.

Rev: Oh I see. So you have a minus 4 tough now is what you're saying.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: Okay good. So yeah, you are able to pull them both back to safety as they spanned over the abyss for a brief moment. You plant your science guy feet and square your science guy shoulders and somehow suplex Jake backwards over your shoulder, throwing Tass to the middle of the bridge.

Teej: Ouch.

Jake: That was heroic. Good job. Thank you.

Teej: You're welcome. And I'm gingerly getting up, trying not to breathe because I feel like if I do it's just going to pull something else out of place.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: I'm helping him up.

Jake: Considering he doesn't have actual harm from that, would 'Lay on Hands' help?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: OK. I'm going to 'Lay on Hands'. Uh, 8.

Rev: Yes, so you have that minus 1 removed. Your back feels more limber.

Jake: Do I have the minus one now?

Rev: Yes.

Teej: Thanks. Oh what about my harm?

Rev: I think he has to choose damage or an effect.

Jake: Harm or illness.

Teej: OK.

Jake: So, "hurt back" I guess is your illness.

Teej: Oh, so much better. I'm like doing back bands now and just, like being all limber.

Jake: And I am dead lifting just slightly less than the fifteen-thousand pounds I was before.

Rev: What is your tough? 3 normally?

Jake: Yeah, so plus 2 now.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Sorry about that. Holy shit! There are like, I don't know if they're ghosts or what, but I saw this, just crowd of people from different eras and things and it just it overwhelmed me. God, I think it's, I don't know, I think it's ghosts, I guess.

Jake: So this isn't a recent phenomenon. Is this something that's been going on for like decades?

Tass: Oh, here at the bridge?

Jake: Yeah.

Tass: Would we know that?

Rev: Well yeah, I mean, it doesn't say in the dossier. It just says that it has happened recently with more consistent regularity.

Jake: Well I mean, I wonder if this is something that's kind of cyclical and you know this, this has happened to people for decades and and just now it's picking up for some reason.

Teej: Well I mean even in Greencastle we have quote, unquote "haunted bridges" and you know, it was all a big high school thing where kids would just drive up in the middle of the night honk their horns turn off their lights and then the "ghost of some drowned spirit" would come and like scare the dickens out of them apparently.

Jake: Yeah. Seems like maybe the origin of those urban legends. It seems like it might, might be the real one.

Tass: Is there anywhere that I can see that it would be easy to go around the side of the bridge, down towards the water, where I saw the forms?

Rev: It's a pretty safe incline on both sides. You could get down no problem.

Tass: I think I want to go down to where I saw sort of a collection of them like were they in the water mostly?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Do I feel like any of them were close enough that I could be standing on the bank and just swing the spear out to see, or feel if I can connect with anything.

Rev: I don't think so. They were all kind of at the middle of the bridge.

Tass: OK. So, I'm at least gonna kind of motion for them to follow and point out where I saw them.

Jake: I mean, I'm going to throw down the other flare and cones on the other end before I follow him down there.

Tass: Good call.

Rev: How far down are you gonna go? Like, you just gonna put it right at the other side of the bridge, or are you going to go far down the road, or?

Jake: Where did that feeling come over me? How far from the edge of the bridge did I get this sensation?

Rev: Probably about 50 yards.

Jake: That. I'm going to go just kind of outside, where I felt like I got this temptation to drive on to the bridge, I'm going to go just pass that on the other side and throw down the markers.

Rev: What are you doing T.J.?

Teej: Well, I was going to throw down those markers with him, but I see Tass going down there and I'm going to go with him instead.

Tass: You have something that can maybe see ghosts, right, or at least see certain signatures?

Teej: Yeah. I've got my EMF goggle lenses, so yeah.

Tass: That's what you used for the gremlins, isn't it?

Teej: Yes, indeed. So I'm just going to toss those on.

Rev: OK, roll 'Investigative Mystery', if you're trying to look around with those.

Teej: Absolutely. 8.

Rev: You get a hold 1.

Teej: What is being concealed here?

Rev: So as you look around, you do see these various forms above the water, around the middle. And as you scan across them, you start to look up under the bridge and you see a lone specter underneath the center pillar of the bridge. He is in his early 30's, dark skin, black hair and he has a shovel and he is just watching everybody below.

Teej: Does he look like he has any injuries on him to say maybe how he died or what he died from?

Rev: He does. As you start to examine him closer, you can see that his overalls and his boots have the crust of cement all over them.

Tass: Oh God.

Teej: Yeah, I'm going to convey that to Tass, "I think..." and I'm pointing out like you know where the specters are above the water and then this particular specter at the pillar of the bridge and everything. "And I'm thinking, Tass, that maybe this guy was buried alive in the cement.

Tass: That's horrifying. Good Lord. So. OK. So he seems like he's orchestrating all of this, or like watching over it.

Teej: I think so. Either that or he's, he's the one who, yeah. Like, he might be orchestrating the deaths and everything and maybe he's so pissed off at people coming across his bridge, or being betrayed, or whatever it was that got him in that position in the first place that he's taking it out on innocent people.

Tass: Ok. Wow. This is something we haven't really had to mess with. I'm not sure how to make a ghost go away for good.

Rev: And Jake you are back now.

Jake: What's going on?

Tass: I guess there's like a specter of some kind under the bridge that seems to be orchestrating this. I mean, I've got literally some magic bullets I can try to put through this but I don't know that that's gonna make it go away. I feel like, I feel like we're going to have to destroy the bridge and find his remains if that's what happened.

Jake: Ok. Is there a way to like, you said there's a column kind of supporting the bridge from the river.

Rev: He's just at the middle column. There's a series of six columns in total. Is there a way to kind of fabricate something that'll temporarily prop it up while we knock out a column, or do you think we just got to destroy a column and wreck this bridge, whole cloth.

Tass: I don't know the first thing about construction. I don't know about holding the bridge up while we do something like that. I'm more of a mind of let let the state deal with

it. I'd rather save some lives and let somebody else deal with rebuilding a crappy old bridge, or I can literally just try to put some bullets through it and see what happens.

Jake: I can't imagine that one would work.

Tass: I know at least not last.

Jake: I can't imagine you could just shoot ghosts to death and they're gone forever.

Tass: No. Yeah.

Jake: OK. I mean that's fine. Time's a factor, I guess. I'm gonna go just try and, I'm gonna go try and knock down a supporting column for a bridge.

Rev: All right. So are you going to go down into the water and basically square up with it?

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: You climb into the water and it's not very deep, it's only two or three feet now that you're here.

Rev: Roll 'No Limits'.

Jake: Twelve.

Rev: How are you doing this, why don't you describe this for me.

Jake: I feel like I'm probably just John Henry-ing this pillar with the hammer. Just swing after swing, taking this thing out from the base.

Rev: Yeah, I don't think it takes more than two. You slam the hammer into it twice and it shatters. Roll luck six and the center does not hold as you collapse this pillar. The center of the bridge gives way and collapses into the river. But since you're on the outside of it it's not any danger to you.

Jake: Ok, I want to start searching through the rubble for human remains.

Rev: Roll 'Investigative a Mystery'.

Jake: God, that's grizzly.

Tass: I'm not sure what this would be, but I want to, I guess, try to open my site, just to talk to him. I, I want to, um, just be kind of looking at that area where T.J. indicated and just start saying, "That, that we're here to help and that we want to be able to put him to rest and if there's anything that we can do, please let us know."

Rev: Roll 'Manipulate Someone'.

Tass: Okay. God! That's a 5. He's pissed.

Rev: Jake what did you get on your...?

Tass: Just for the sake of Reddit nerds, I don't have anything that I can manipulate monsters.

Rev: Yeah, I know. He's not a monster.

Tass: OK. So I just want to, cool, cool.

Rev: How reductive of you, to say that.

Jake: I rolled a 12 so minus 1, that's still an 11.

Rev: All right. So you've got a hold 2.

Jake: What is being concealed here?

Rev: So you start to root around in the broken pieces of this destroyed column and pretty quickly you do find some human bones. And you know looking at them that this person very clearly was built into this bridge. It seems like they might have fallen into the structure designed to pour the pillar and that they were just left there, because there was no way to get them out, it was so far down in, that there was no getting them out. And so they just kept pouring.

Rev: What can hurt it? Basically, I want to know what can, how to eliminate the remains in a way that can perish a ghost.

Rev: Yeah. And the way to get rid of the spirit here is by simply destroying the remains, or giving them a proper burial. But, as you find these, roll 'Act Under Pressure'.

Jake: Damn, boxcars again, 14.

Rev: You grab a hold of the remains as you start to hear more of the bridge collapse in and the two of you, Tass and T.J., see that the spirit gets agitated when Tass tries to talk to it and it puts out both hands and it starts to collapse in more of the bridge towards where Jake is standing. But, he is able to grab a hold the remains and teleport to the side of the riverbank next to both of you.

Teej: Nice.

Tass: Oh, God, sorry. I guess I won't try to talk to him anymore. You, you found it? That's him?

Jake: Yeah. Is there any kind of identification like is there any scraps of cloth or anything left that might have a name tag?

Rev: No.

Jake: Damn, well, I mean, I guess we're not going to know who he was. We can't really, like share his story or put his descendants at ease, but at least we can put him at ease.

Tass: Yeah. OK, let's, let's do it. What, what do you think? What's the best way here?

Jake: I think he deserves a proper burial.

Tass: OK.

Rev: All right. So we cut to the three of you deeper in the woods, standing around what is now freshly packed earth. And there is a headstone with a message carved into it. What does it say?

Jake: Here lies Dobby, a free elf. I think just, "Gone, but not forgotten".

Rev: All right. And are you doing anything in particular over the grave, or...?

Jake: I mean I'd probably say a prayer of some kind. Well, I know the five gods, that there are.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: But, you know, to ask them to help this guy on his way, that he's he's been lost for a long time and he's on his way. Please, help him get there.

Rev: And, as the three of you stand in this small clearing around this makeshift grave, there is a faint glow that comes from underneath the earth and the remains. And you see this man appear for a brief moment and he smiles and then he dissipates.

Teej: Nice. Jake, you feeling better?

Rev: You are.

Jake: Yeah, that was it. I'm cured. That guy must be where he belongs.

Tass: And I would also call 9-1-1 and tell them we went over a bridge and it started collapsing and we threw out some cones and some flares. But someone should go check on that immediately.

Rev: And we fade down on the three of you driving through the country. Tass in the backseat making this phone call. And you are now back in T.J.'s subterranean lair. What would you like to do next?

Jake: Missing hunters, robberies on the highway, grave robbers.

Tass: I picked the last one.

Jake: I think, grave robbers. Right now, just after that mission, putting somebody to rest who had a wrongful death, that I'm kind of on that track. That somebody else might be robbing other people of their eternal rest and I want to go fix that.

Teej: Yeah I'm feeling that same vibe too.

Rev: All right. And having offered up that prayer to your God, Jake, over this man's grave, you get your beginning of mystery move back.

Jake: Oh good.

Tass: Aww.

Rev: So roll you're beginning of mystery moves.

Jake: 11.

Rev: All right, Jake, what is your question?

Jake: What happened here?

Rev: You get a vision that whatever is happening at these graves, they're not random, that someone is looking for some lost items. And so, when the defender grants you this vision you see very clearly the stones of the graves that have been robbed so far. And they are names like, O'Houlihan and O'Brien. They're all Irish last names that you see. And, Tass, what did you get?

Tass: I got a 12.

Rev: Tass you are hit with a vision of the three of you walking through a graveyard and there is a large mausoleum and as you go to open the door, all three of you slam your hands to the sides of your head and you can tell that you're all feeling immense pain as this white-haired, faded-out creature comes flying out of the tomb and into the night sky.

Tass: Oh my God! What the hell was that? I think I'm shaking, trying to shake the pain, like out of my head, just out of that feeling. And I'm gonna start describing to them what I saw and even to Rev. Any thoughts on this? This sort of flying, shrieking thing, like God like a, a...

Teej: Banshee?

Tass: Yeah. Like a banshee or something.

Teej: If that's the case then, from what I know in my own personal experience with banshees...

Jake: Which is, deep and rich?

Teej: Darby O'Gill. Yeah. "Darby O'Gill and the Little People" of course, that a banshee's wail or cry will basically signify someone's death. So, I want to start fabricating some kind of sound dampening headphones for us.

Rev: If you want to block out what you're assuming is the wail of a banshee, I think you'd have to use 'Weird Science' for that.

Teej: Well, then I would like to invent some sound dampening headphones with some really cool accoutrements on them to work against spectral, or supernatural beings.

Rev: All right, roll 'Weird Science'.

Jake: Some really cool accoutrements. I'm talkin blue LEDs, red LEDs, chrome? Yes.

Tass: I don't know if this is another roll, but maybe think about something too that will let us communicate with each other. Because, if we can't hear each other...

Teej: Well I figured we, we still have our throat mics, right?

Tass: Oh Yeah, that's true.

Teej: Yeah. So those are just, like always in our ears. So all we gotta do is just kind of put those headphones over that.

Tass: Ahh, That's fair.

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: I love it.

Teej: I'm so smart.

Tass: You're so smart. That's why you the science guy.

Teej: That's right. Let's see. I still have the minus 1 ongoing?

Rev: Correct.

Tass: So then that is only a 12 instead of 13.

Rev: All right, what is your requirement?

Jake: That hits your advanced move too, don't it?

Teej: It does.

Rev: Oh.

Tass: Well and lately too, we haven't really needed to address the situation around it because Rev's been really good about, "Okay, you've made this thing. Now, roll to use it." Which is the way it should've been.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Well done, sir.

Rev: Thanks.

Teej: It needs a rare and, or weird material.

Rev: I think that if it's going to require a rare or weird material, it's going to require something that can absorb sound.

Teej: I don't know what that is.

Jake: Luckily, you got a move to just have what you need.

Teej: I know.

Teej: So, I'm gonna go ahead and roll 'Preparedness' to see if I have...

Tass: This is the most circular character I've ever seen.

Teej: This is ridiculous. I'm gonna go ahead and roll 'Preparedness' and see if I have that material handy.

Rev: All right, roll it.

Jake: I would call it optimized.

Tass: And this is against my sharp, so with my minus 1, that's a plus 2, so a 9.

Rev: Yes, so you do know that you have some of this in your possession. Unfortunately, it is at your parents house in their basement.

Tass: All right is this operation break into T.J.'s house?

Teej: Yeah, yeah it is. Yeah it is.

Jake: Yeah. They don't know who you are anymore. I mean, they knew one, or both of us though, right?

Tass: Oh yeah.

Jake: So this doesn't seem like a "break into T.J.'s house" moment. It seems like a "let's go have dinner with T.J.'s parents and, and ask if we could grab some of his stuff."

Tass: Yeah. Yeah. Okay. All right. Absolutely.

Jake: Because what, I, what do they think happened to you?

Rev: They think he just left. If it is a dinner thing, it's gonna turn into them haranguing you about, "Where's our son? Is he dead? What's been going on?" Just to throw it out there. Like their son has vanished, said that he had to leave and could not come back and couldn't tell them why. If you guys are like, "Hey you wanna have dinner?".

Jake: We could just spin it as like we miss him too. Let's catch up.

Tass: Here's our buddy, Roger.

Jake: I can get us there. I haven't been inside.

Tass: I have. I know the basement.

Teej: That sounds so creepy.

Tass: I've been in your basement. I know...

Rev: That sounds dirty too.

Tass: Oof. If you want to just go to the door and play the the "Divine" card, you know hope, hoping that they've seen you on the news and say, "Hey there's something in this house that we know that T.J. used to have. It would really help us right now. Please, please help us." And be talking to them and hopefully that works. And if not, I'll be trying to break in the back way anyway.

Teej: Yeah, I guess, since you know your way around the basement.

Teej: Yeah, that's fine, so you're gonna stay then I assume?

Teej: Sure.

Tass: OK.

Teej: Yeah. I've got these headphones to build so it would stand to reason you should go and get that.

Tass: OK. Tell me what it is, exactly, that I'm looking for.

Teej: There is a storage room where they keep all of my stuff from when I was a kid and also when I was in college, so all my toys and action figures and things like that.

Tass: Sure. And there's a door like into the basement, right? Like the back way underneath.

Teej: Oh yeah, yeah, there absolutely is. Yeah.

Tass: Cool.

Teej: And you'll find in a, like it almost looks like one of those old steamer trunks like what, you know Seamen would have on a boat and you'll find wrapped in a piece of soft cloth a rock that is a piece of the blarney stone, that my parents got.

Tass: That's probably illegal, but cool. All right. I will find it. Let's do this.

Rev: What time are you guys gonna get there?

Jake: Dinnertime?

Tass: Yeah. I like it.

Rev: All right. So we jump to about six o'clock and Jake and Tass appear at the end of the driveway of T.J.'s parent's house.

Tass: Okay, I'm gonna go around wide around the back.

Jake: I'm gonna go right to the front door.

Rev: Tass, roll 'Cool'.

Tass: Excellent. That is an 8.

Rev: So, you can sneak around to the back of the house, but it's gonna have to be a very wide arc because you notice that they have some automatic lights and so it's going to take longer than you imagine to get there. Or you can set off the lights and a dog next door is gonna start barking.

Teej: That tracks.

Rev: Or you're going to step on a rake. Home Alone style and smack your face and have a minus 1 ongoing to 'Sharp', but get there with the timing you desire.

Tass: Oh, you know I'm stepping on that rake. There was never a question.

Teej: This is like turning into like an inadvertent Home Alone. My parents have left out these weird things just lying about on accident and...

Tass: The door handle at the back is scalding hot.

Rev: We cut to the dinner prep and for some reason your dad like trips and drops a box of jacks on the ground.

Tass: It's accidental Home Alone.

Rev: Yes exactly. It's all just things that they accidentally have done.

Tass: *as Teej's dad* I've been carrying these paint cans around by the rope for a while. I'm going to set them up here above the door for a minute.

Rev: *as Teej's dad* I'm gonna tie 'em off here, so no one steals 'em. There's been a lot of paint theft going on. Hope no one nudges 'em. All right, so Jake, you go to the front door and you ring the doorbell. And after a moment T.J.'s dad answers.

Jake: Hi. I don't know if you remember me. I'm Jake.

Rev: JIM: Yeah. You're the superhero.

Jake: Yeah. I have a a weird question.

Rev: JIM: Yeah, I'll join you. Can you like Grant powers?

Jake: I can't. Also I, I can't imagine putting T.J.'s father in harm's way, I'm sorry. But, if you want to be like, like a Oracle, like an over the phone comms helper guy, we might work something out.

Rev: JIM: Oh yeah. We just get the fiber wire here, so the Internet's faster.

Jake: Damn. Hey. So actually something that I'm working on right now, I need a thing that I know T.J. had in his belongings, that was in the basement and I was wondering if I could go grab it. It's like a little piece of stone for the, for the mission that we're working on right now.

Rev: Roll 'Luck'.

Rev: 7.

Rev: T.J.'s mom steps into the room and sees you. She kind of walks up behind him and whispers in his ear and he shifts uncomfortably and you can feel his demeanor kind of change to whatever it is that she's saying and you realize she must have been listening in and is dissuading him, so roll 'Manipulate Somebody'.

Jake: 2.

Tass: It was a what? What was it?

Jake: A 2.

Tass: Oh.

Rev: And you see his face kind of set.

Rev: JIM: You used to live with our son, where'd he go? What happened to him? I got so carried away in your "je ne sais quoi" that I forgot that you may have answers about my son and he's, he's been missing for over a year now and...

Jake: Look, I know that he came to see you guys and honestly whatever he told you is all that you could know. I don't know the conversation you guys had, but I, I can't tell you any more than he told you.

Rev: JIM: Because, you don't know, or because you won't tell us?

Jake: Probably a mix of both.

Rev: So, Tass, what are you doing?

Tass: I guess I'm checking out the door and trying to figure out the best way to pick this lock.

Rev: All right, roll 'Sharp'.

Tass: OK, well that's a 5. The impenetrable fortress of T.J.'s parents house. We did better at the penthouse of a mummy.

Jake: But, the grit and gumption of this, this old couple, we just can't bypass.

Rev: Yeah. You're no match for the wits of Quilt-wing Duck.

Teej: A story for another time.

Rev: Yeah. Yeah. That's a story that has to be told. So, Tass you start to try and pick the lock and you put what you think is a lock-pick set into the lock and it just seems to jam and snap off.

Tass: Shit. I think I'm testing the door right now to see how...because, I know they're like glass doors, but it's all framed and everything obviously. So I'm trying to test to see how easy it would be to just force it open now.

Jake: I don't know that that's something that you could estimate. I think it would just be a matter of trying it.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: I think the amount of energy it would require to test it, to see what it would be like, would just do it.

Tass: All right. Yeah, I think I'm gonna try to shoulder it open.

Rev: All right, roll 'Tough'.

Tass: These are all my best stats.

Rev: Oh, are they?

Tass: All my best.

Rev: Good.

Tass: Yes, for sure. Oh okay. That is at least a 9.

Rev: All right. You are able to snap this door sideways with a hard jerk and it comes off of the track and falls. And Jake you hear this upstairs. You hear kind of a loud metal crunch and the two of them start to turn around and look back inside.

Jake: Were you expecting company? Is there anyone else here?

Rev: JIM: No.

Jake: Is it okay if I investigate.

Tass: JIM: Yeah. Yeah.

Jake: Stay here. I'm going to go see what that was.

Rev: JIM: All right.

Tass: I love you so much, that was so smooth.

Jake: I'm going to go toward that sound.

Rev: You go downstairs and you see Tass basically trying to hold up a giant glass door on the outside, it has come off of the rails and the door is just wide, not even wide open, just they have a hole into their house now.

Jake: I'm just going to I'm going-.

Rev: I assume that this moment is real, just the two of you staring at each other through a pane of glass in silence.

Rev: I'm going to, I'm going to look at him. I don't want to say anything, but just a, "Go right now. Get out."

Tass: And yeah I think I'm going, *makes sounds of comically running away with a large glass door in his possession*.

Rev: Okay, so you're going to drop the door and run?

Tass: Yep.

Rev: All right, roll 'Act Under Pressure'.

Tass: Oh good. That is an 8.

Rev: Yeah, so you are able to drop this door and get out of sight before they come down the stairs to check on him, but to do so you're gonna drop the door and it's gonna shatter and cut you up a little bit. Or, they're going to hear the direction that you have run, or the next door neighbor's dog is gonna get loose.

Tass: Oh my God. I don't like any of this.

Rev: It's kind of the goal.

Tass: I think, they're gonna hear the direction that I'm running and just for flavor can I essentially, as I'm starting to sprint away, fumble for my wallet and try to throw out what's the equivalent of one gear point worth of cash on that broken door.

Rev: Yes. Yes, you can.

Tass: Okay. And I'm just like, full-tilt as deep into the woods as I can possibly run hoping they don't want to chase me through the woods.

Rev: All right. So yeah, they come down the stairs after you, hearing the glass door hit the ground and like.

Rev: JIM: It sounds like whoever it is, is running back into the woods.

Jake: I, I don't know. They left cash on the ground. I thought maybe somebody had followed me here, but this is weird.

Rev: JIM: You want me to get my gun?

Jake: I don't think that's necessary, if they're leaving, I can do a kind of a sweep and make sure that they're gone.

Rev: JIM: Yeah. Go get him or they're gonna come back probably kill us.

Jake: Where's the gun?

Rev: JIM: In my closet.

Rev: This is the strangest episode we've recorded in a long time.

Jake: This is weird. Ok. Go hole up in that room. Don't get it yet. But yeah, in case something happens be prepared. Safety is paramount.

Rev: JIM: Yeah. Yeah I won't get it, yet.

Rev: And he winks.

Jake: I do not wink back. No. No return wink. We're not on the same page about this.

Rev: JIM: Yeah, not the same "page".

Rev: and he winks again.

Jake: I'm going to run out in the direction Tass went. I'm going to get to like the woods and not actually look for anything. I'm going to do like a back and forth in the trees and then go back to them and say...They're gone. I don't know what that was. It might have been somebody that tried to follow me here because they might be looking what I'm looking for. Please, if I can just grab that, that thing I'll get out of your hair. Whatever might've followed me here. We'll go. You seem perfectly capable of protecting yourself if it's not the kind of threat that I deal with. I'm sure that you can handle something smaller, maybe call the police, get them out here to do a sweep of the perimeter. But if I can just get this material and get out of here and I promise if I can get you any more information about your son, I will. I just can't right now.

Rev: All right, roll 'Manipulate Someone' again.

Jake: God, 5!

Rev: They start to panic.

Rev: JIM: What do you mean we can take care of ourselves. Whatever followed you is probably the threat level of something that you deal with. We can't save ourselves from that. They're going to come back. If we give it to you they're going to be mad at us for giving it to you or...

Jake: No. If you give me the thing then they'll come after me. If they want the item that I want and I've got it then they'll come for me. They'll follow me. They'll follow the trail of the item thereafter.

Rev: JIM: But, no they'll just, they'll punish us for giving it to you instead of giving it to them.

Jake: OK. Call the police. Get some extra people here to help to look around. We can make sure that nothing is still here. You can have somebody here to protect you if you don't feel comfortable.

Rev: Yeah, so he goes upstairs and, and they call the cops. This has gone sideways real fast. Tass, what are you doing out in the woods?

Tass: I am just hunkered down in some trees, fairly far off, but I just, I'm just sort of waiting and I think I have a plan in mind, but it just depends on what happens.

Rev: So, what are you doing in the meantime, Jake, while you're waiting for the cops to arrive?

Jake: I am going to kind of relay out what just happened and what is going to happen, but with my comms open. So that Tass can hear what's about to happen and help formulating his plan and in the meantime, I'm just kind of gathering them into like the living room, or somewhere safe and I'm guarding them essentially.

Rev: And what is the what is the plan.

Jake: For me?

Rev: Yeah that Tass hears.

Jake: Oh no, not, not a plan really. I'm just gonna be like, OK so somebody broke in. They ran off into the woods. I couldn't find them, but the police are on their way here. So hopefully we can get some extra security around you guys. You can get some peace of mind here. Maybe, the police and I together can do an extra sweep to make sure that everything's clear and then I can get out of your hair and if it's something that followed me in fact, they'll follow me out, as well.

Rev: KHADIJA: Ok, I know what we can do.

Rev: And T.J.'s mom speaks up she waves the money she's like.

Rev: KHADIJA: I wonder if his fingerprints are on this.

Jake: Oh I don't know.

Rev: KHADIJA: That's how fingerprints work right? Like you touch something and it's there.

Jake: I don't think it works on porous materials like dollar bills.

Rev: KHADIJA: Oh, I don't think that's true. CSI told me that's not true.

Teej: That's exactly how my mom would track that. Absolutely.

Jake: I mean, I guess we'll find out when when the police get here, maybe one of their crime scene guys will be able to figure it out.

Rev: KHADIJA: Yeah. Or the door.

Jake: Could be on the door. Yeah.

Rev: KHADIJA: We're gonna get him.

Tass: I am making my way back by then.

Rev: Headed back where?

Tass: To the front door.

Rev: OK.

Tass: And I'm gonna knock.

Rev: JIM: Oh is that the cops already.

Jake: I don't know. Do you want to answer, or do you want me to answer it?

Rev: JIM: I'll answer it.

Rev: And T.J.'s dad goes and answers the door.

Tass: Hey how are you?

Jake: JIM: Good. How are you? Are you the cops now?

Tass: No I'm working with Jake, but he's been a while. So I came to check and see what was going on. Is everybody OK?

Rev: JIM: No someone tried to break into our house and it's like some super-powered threat that's chasing Jake and we got something that's gonna save the world and he wants to take it. But if we give it to him, the bad guys probably gonna come kill us out of spite.

Tass: Oh no. They, they can't possibly even know that that exists. That's, I think everybody, I think, I think he just doesn't know what it was that was here. Because nobody would be after that. That doesn't make any sense.

Rev: JIM: It's supposed to save the universe.

Tass: Yeah, I mean it is, but it's absolutely not important to bad guys.

Rev: And about that time the cops show up and they start running up to the door.

Rev: COP: Sir what's going on here?

Rev: And he starts to tell them the story that this super hero came to get something that they needed to save the universe. But, in the conversation of them trying to figure out what happened to their son someone tried to break in to the basement where the thing

that's going to save the universe is kept. And about three other cars show up and they start to make rounds around the house.

Jake: Boy, not a lot going on around here tonight huh? Four units.

Jake: No not at all. So what're you guys doing while this is happening?

Jake: Following the officers around as they look for things and...

Rev: Roll 'Luck'.

Jake: Nope.

Rev: Yeah. The cops don't buy your story. They ask you to have a seat on the couch with the family.

Tass: I think I'm trying to talk to the cops, like when they're off to the side, when his parents aren't close. Yeah, they lost their son last year. He ran off, or something, or disappeared he was an old friend of mine and I'm essentially just trying to feed in that I think they're a little more paranoid than they need to be and that it was likely kids, or something messing around that did this. And so to just go easy on them, I'm just trying to relax them.

Rev: Roll 'Manipulate Someone'.

Tass: Okay that is a 9.

Rev: So you talk to them for a while and it does seem to have an effect on them. And they ask you to stay and have dinner with the family to try to calm them down some more and they're gonna take off as long as they know that you're gonna be here for a little while. They didn't find anything. They've taken some of the dollar bills to see if they get fingerprints. They've taken some stuff off of the glass and so yeah that's their condition. They will leave and let it be as long as they know that you're gonna stay in and comfort them for a while still.

Tass: Absolutely will. So we jump ahead. About an hour and a half later and you're all sitting at the dinner table. It's fried chicken and.

Teej: Store bought fried chicken.

Rev: yeah, store bought fried chicken and they're just having a chat with you and they are pressing you guys about information on T.J..

Tass: I'll tell them, you know, look, I can just, I can be honest enough to tell you that we're we're doing some work. He's helping this man right here who's literally helping to save the world. But what I can tell you is that he is safe. He's alive. He's in good hands with good company. What I can't tell you, I literally have no idea where he is right now because I don't. I have no idea where that hidden room is.

Rev: Roll 'Manipulate Someone' I suppose.

Tass: Ok. Will you stop making us roll things, Rev? That's a 6. No, no, I'm done with this. I think I'm just gonna use luck.

Rev: Yeah. So you talk to them and they buy it. They understand that T.J. is off somewhere doing something important and that Jake is somehow involved and that the thing that is needed is in the basement. And after the coffee cake is had, they offer it to you. They allow you go down the basement and take what you need.

Tass: Awesome. Also, point of order, anytime I use luck, in theory, relatively soon here...

Rev: Yes.

Tass: My tags have been invoked.

Rev: Yes and what are those tags again?

Tass: The heroic tags are visions and mystical inheritance. My Doom tags are nemesis and doubt.

Rev: So as dinner wraps up, Tass has told this story to T.J.'s family and they seem to be accepting of everything. So we find ourselves back in T.J.'s subterranean lair and you guys have given T.J. the chunk of stone which he breaks into three pieces and begins to integrate into the headphones that he's created. Tass, ever since dinner, you've felt this pressure building behind your eyes. It feels a little like a headache, but it's, it's off somehow. And as you guys are kind of standing around talking, you hear...

Rev: SAUL: *high pitched groaning*

Rev: ...and it's Saul and he flies out of Jake's sleeve and he slams into your chest and he engulfs you in his glow and you both vanish. And as they vanish, T.J., you see Tass grasp the side of his head, as his eyes fill with light. Jake you are standing in front of the Defender, but it's different. Looking at him it feels a little painful and you notice that Saul is floating next to you and you realize you're not seeing Saul as the Defender you're seeing the actual Defender.

Rev: DEFENDER: Jake, I'm, I'm sorry I blamed you, all of you. I thought our inability to peer into the future was a result of what you had done. That your future was in flux because of the possibility of losing you and your group. But, our vision isn't clouded by your impending deaths, but by ours.

Rev: Tass you find yourself looking at a battle and though you've never seen these fighters you recognize them from the descriptions you've heard. The Torture, The Anarchist, The Challenger, The Executioner, and The Defender. And they are striking in tandem at a shrouded figure. The silver trident glints in the sun as The Challenger strikes the foe in the shoulder and the flaming sword slices through its midsection as The Executioner soars past with its wings of fire.

Rev: DEFENDER: Jake your job isn't done yet.

Rev: And he points to Saul who starts to glow brighter.

Rev: DEFENDER: But you can see it through, Jake.

Rev: And Saul starts to spiral and churn and then he flows into The Defenders hand. Tass you feel the heat of a fireball as it flies forth from The Anarchist's demon bag and engulfs the shadowy figure while the razor whip of The Torturer coils around the figures neck. The Defender slams into the ground next to the being and brings the hammer down, but the form darts a hand up and catches the hammer before it strikes home and in its other hand a long blade forms.

Rev: DEFENDER: I wish I had more to give you Jacob. Use it well.

Rev: And he touches your chest and the glow transfers from his hand to your chest.

Rev: DEFENDER: Goodbye Jake. Do me proud.

Rev: Tass, you get a feeling of dizziness as the shadows melt away from the figure revealing Koschei the Deathless. He smiles at the stunned Defender and thrusts the

blade through his gut. T.J. You have run to where Tass stands motionless and you're able to catch him as he topples backwards. And then Jake is back standing right where he was a few seconds ago. He's holding his hammer in his hand. And when he appears it slips from his grasp hits the stone floor of your lair and shatters.