

Secret Agent Man (S1, E5)

INTRO

Rev: Hey everybody, this is The Critshowshow and I'm Rev and this is Episode 5, which is a very special episode because we were actually able to put together a fairly coherent episode while at least one of us was super doped up on pain medication after a fun little stint in the E.R.. See if you can figure out who. We're constantly trying to expand our understanding of Monster of the Week and the Apocalypse system, but we can always use help. If you're listening and you know of something we are really screwing up, some game mechanic, or playbook move, or rule, you can contact us at thecritshowpodcast@gmail.com and let us know what it is. We may not get it right next time, but we'll sure try. We plan on playing a number of different games on The Critshow as time goes by, but right now we're playing a game that doesn't really have critical successes. Sure we've had a number of crit failures, but it's not quite the same. I know we here at The Critshow have favorite stories about critical successes or critical failures. We already know ours. So we'd like to hear yours. If you've got a favorite story about a natural 20 or a natural 1, send it our way and we'll start sharing those stories during future episodes. Anyway that's all for me

Tass: Last time on the Critshow.

THE RECAP

Teej: All the power coming from the grid goes down into one wire and into the suit of armor. Supercharge the armor.

Rev: You turn into the theater and you see that the curtain, the stage, everything is engulfed in flames.

Jake: And I mean we just run through alleys and jump fences.

Rev: Part of the brick over his shoulder just puffs into dust. Someone has just fired a sniper rifle at you guys.

Teej: Can you get us out of here?

Jake: I can get us somewhere.

Rev: T.J. appears on the steps outside of the theater surrounded by cops and the fire department.

SECRET AGENT MAN

Rev: So Jake, you are at home. You're not sure where the other two went. Who do you want to go to first?

Tass: You know who you go to.

Rev: He said knowingly.

Jake: I think my answer is always, It's got to be T.J..

Rev: T.J. you appear and Jake's not there and you feel intense heat behind you and lots of lights in front of you and there is cops and firefighters and they kind of jump at your appearance. And then Jake is beside you. Jake, you see fire and cops and on your appearance they start to draw weapons.

Rev: COPS: Freeze! Freeze! Hey, where'd you come from? What are you doing? Put your hands up.

Jake: I want to put one hand up and one hand on T.J.'s shoulder and then I want to try and teleport us to Tass.

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

Jake: Oh!

Rev: To get your hand out fast enough, before these cops respond.

Tass: *in pain* Oh, that's good.

Jake: 8.

Rev: With an 8, you can either, teleport too soon before you touch T.J.. You can teleport away but leave something behind of yours. Or you can teleport away and leave something behind of T.J.'s.

Tass: It's gonna be a leg.

Jake: Yeah. When you say leave something behind, you mean a possession.

Rev: Yeah. Not like a physical body part.

Jake: Not a body part.

Rev: Correct. You're not getting splintched.

Jake: I mean, I don't know what he's got on him. He's got nunchuckus and a multi tool, those are the things I know of.

Teej: And a cell phone.

Jake: And the key fob. One of those things is enough to find us. I assume I'm going to leave behind my hammer if I leave something behind.

Rev: And it is bullet time, like you see the cops raising their guuunnss.

Tass: *makes a "Six-Million Dollar Man sound*

Jake: T.J., I think I'm going to leave behind one of your things.

Teej: Ok.

Rev: You reach out, as you raise your hammer, you're able to touch T.J.'s shoulder and you both vanish. And the last thing we see of the burning theater and the cops rushing up, is a double-fold wallet hitting the ground and falling open...to show a driver's license that says, Terry James Tincher, with an address. You guys appear at Steak and Shake.

Jake: Out of character.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Oh no!

Rev: Yep. In character, you have no idea.

Jake: Oh God.

Teej: *oblivious* Oh, Steak and Shake. Delicious.

Jake: Do we just see him in there, eating his Frisco Melt?

Rev: You do. You do.

Jake: Walk up to him and I'm like, Well that didn't go according to plan, but at least we're out.

Tass: This is fine. This is fine.

Jake: The cops definitely just saw me and T.J., though.

Tass: Where?

Jake: I set him to the theater.

Tass: Ooh!

Jake: And I had to go pick him up.

Tass: OK. We'll deal with it. Somehow we'll deal.

Jake: I think we should call an Uber from here.

Tass: Yeah. That's not a bad call.

Rev: Are you guys going to eat? He's eating. Are you guys going to eat?

Jake: I might order a take-home-a-sack, while we wait for the Uber to show up. Order a Jalapeno Crunch Burger and pull up the Uber up on my phone.

Rev: No, you don't have a phone.

Jake: Oh my God, I lost my phone. That's right!

Tass: And his is dead.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: His is dead and yours is gone too, isn't it?

Tass: Yep.

Jake: You can't literally call an Uber, can you? It's all...

Tass: Nope.

Rev: No, uh uh.

Jake: We need a ride. We need to call somebody to give us a ride or something.

Tass: Yeah, I go to the, just the counter and say, hey can you guys call us a cab?

Rev: STEAK AND SHAKE CASHIER: Oh sure. That'll be here in seven to ten minutes.

Rev: And are you having the cab take you to your house?

Jake: You said downtown.

Rev: Oh yeah, you said downtown, Indy.

Tass: We need to go to IPT.

Jake: IPT, yeah.

Tass: Maybe they can help us out a little bit.

Rev: All right. Yeah. So you get in the cab and they take you to IPT. Are there people at IPT 24/7?

Tass: Yeah, absolutely. You know things go bump in the night, so to speak. So, um, there is certainly a team that is essentially there to take calls, or be doing research on, you know, reports and things like that, that might be coming in that would give us a tip.

Rev: You're able to get there, you put in your code, you get inside the building and Margaret is there.

Rev: MARGARET: You boys look like hell.

Tass: Yeah, it went bad. It all went real bad.

Rev: MARGARET: Well, you brought with you a rather motley looking crew. Who are your friends?

Tass: When you asked me if I had any other help that I could potentially find, these are them.

Jake: Hi I'm Jake. Hold out my hand to shake.

Rev: MARGARET: I'm Margaret.

Teej: I'm Teej.

Rev: MARGARET: Hello, Teej. How are you?

Teej: I'm worse for wear.

Rev: MARGARET: Yeah, rode hard, put to bed wet, kind of thing?

Teej: Uh, Yeah...

Rev: MARGARET: You didn't leave the theater in too bad a condition, did you?

Tass: Oh it's on fire.

Rev: MARGARET: *laughs at Tass's joke* No, but seriously, like how is it?

Tass: Last I checked, it was literally on fire.

Teej: It was on fire. I accidentally set it ablaze with a bunch of wiring, faulty wiring.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh.

Teej: Yeah, my bad. Hey, but no more Soulbat, right!? *finger guns*

Rev: MARGARET: Yeah. Yeah. Huh. All right. So what do you boys need?

Jake: Medical attention.

Teej: We're all really bad right now.

Jake: And a place to crash until things cool down. That not is not a joke about the building burning down, but it is now. *Rimshot*.

Rev: And what is this theater equipped with?

Tass: Weird tech gadgets and cover identities.

Rev: MARGARET: All right. Um, I think we've got something that should be able to fix you boys up. You be careful. Basically, what it does is, we took this from a werewolf that we had killed. Some of the boys down in the lab were able to harness some of the cells in their bodies that regenerate from wounds and mix that with some time travel magic and we inject that into your body and it speeds up time in your body so that you get a werewolf's regeneration for a moment, but like it had been a couple days. Be careful, it's addictive. Don't use it too often and I'd say that there are other known side effects, but really we've only used it a handful of times.

Tass: Yep, fine by me.

Jake: Cool.

Teej: I'll take one shot.

Rev: MARGARET: Well, I'm only giving each of you one shot.

Teej: Oh well, then great. Then I don't want anything else after that.

Rev: And she leads you down into one of the labs. There's a couple of guys down there working and you can see that there are a couple of creatures down there that they're doing tests on. And they're trying to use technology to replicate some of the abilities of these creatures by harnessing cells, or energy from them and then mixing it with technology. And she brings you over to a large case attached to the wall and there is different serums in it. And she takes out a number of needles and goes down the line, gives each of you a shot. And it's pretty weird and pretty fast. You feel this sudden urge to eat raw meat, like you just start salivating and you smell fear and then you feel fine and your damage is healed.

Tass: Well that was unique.

Teej: Oh my God. That was like instant gratification.

Rev: MARGARET: Like I said, it's fairly addictive.

Jake: All right. Well, we're good. I think we need to buckle down and sort of consolidate what we know and tomorrow we should give Rev a call, meet up with him at his place and figure out where to go from here.

Tass: Yeah, I think that's a good call.

Jake: Do you have, uh, some cots that we could crash in somewhere?

Rev: MARGARET: Oh yeah. There's the Equity cots, back of the theater, you can sleep in.

Jake: That'll do.

Rev: So, you guys make your way downstairs, deeper into the theater, in their Greenroom actually. For two of you, it's like, "Oh, I hadn't seen this greenroom before. It kind of does look like the one that we just burned down."

Jake: I deserve that.

Rev: You don't deserve that. It was really T.J. who burned it down.

Tass: I helped.

Rev: That's fair. You see a couple of cots laid out. What do you do?

Jake: Get ready to go to bed. Take the armor off. Set the--like set it down next to the cot.

Teej: You need some help with that, man?

Jake: Set the hammer down. I don't think I do. It's a relatively light armor. Just empty my pockets and crash hard, I imagine.

Tass: Yeah, guns on the floor, fall onto the cot.

Teej: I fall onto the cot myself, as well. As I'm laying there, I realize that, um, that I still have all the stuff in my pockets and I reach into my back pocket.

Rev: You realize that your wallet's not there.

Teej: I'm feeling for my front pocket, again.

Rev: It's not there. Even if you check your prison pocket it's not there either.

Teej: Did I forget that home? I must've forgot it at home.

Rev: Do you leave your wallet at home sometimes.

Teej: Sometimes.

Rev: Just cause the other day, you gave me a big speech about, "Whenever I'm out. I have three things on me. I always have my wallet--.

Teej: I do, you're right!

Rev: --my phone and my keys."

Teej: You're right.

Tass: Called out.

Teej: Oh crap, oh crap. Guys???? *the more question marks = higher the pitch*

Jake: Yeah, buddy. Have you seen my wallet??

Jake: No. Why, would I?

Teej: I don't know. I thought maybe I might have left it in Tass's car.

Jake: Oh my God, did you leave your wallet in the car?

Tass: Face down on the cot, *muffled in a pillow* I swear to God, I'll kill you with my own hands.

Rev: And, as he makes that statement, you, I don't know if you were clear headed enough to think about it before, but your car is outside of this burned down theater with the license plate on it.

Jake: Well, if it's in the car, then that's two of us made. I wonder wonder what piece of identification I left behind somewhere, but I think we cross that bridge in the morning.

Rev: You do see there is a chord in the outlet in the greenroom for a phone.

Teej: I plug my phone in.

Rev: So your phone sits for a couple of moments and powers on and right as it powers on, it starts to ring.

Teej: Do I recognize the number?

Rev: You do, it's your mother.

Teej: Oh. Hey, Madre. What's up?

Rev: KHADIJA: T.J., why are the cops here looking for you?

Teej: Uhhh...Mom...Mommy... Madre, I love you. Hang up. *boop*.

Rev: So, you hang up on your mother.

Teej: Yeah. I've got to spare her all of this, as much as possible, and lying to my mom would just make this worse.

Tass: What was that about.

Teej: It was my mom. The cops are at my house.

Jake: Oh my God. No.

Tass: Uhhhh.

Jake: How?

Teej: I assume it's because they found my wallet.

Jake: Oh, OK. All right. Well that's ummm.

Tass: Give me your phone.

Teej: Why?

Jake: He's gonna put it on do not disturb.

Teej: I give him my phone.

Tass: I break it in half. Come with me.

Teej: You know what? I've always wanted to get rid of phone. I've been looking at my phone for far too long. It's time to live life a little bit. Here we go.

Rev: I need to stop looking at my life through an Instagram filter.

Teej: That's right.

Tass: Leading him back to Margaret.

Rev: Yeah. She's up in the main office.

Tass: Do you have a minute?

Rev: MARGARET: You need something else?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: MARGARET: How you feelin from that--it's like seven days worth of,uh, werewolf regeneration in like three seconds. It work pretty well?

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah. It worked really, really well.

Teej: Yeah. I feel really good.

Tass: I have had this erection I can't get rid of.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh yeah. That's the red rocket effect.

Tass: Oh, yeah, I thought...

Jake: No, I hate this.

Rev: If you look, don't look though.

Jake: I don't look.

Rev: You don't want to know.

Jake: Eyes to the sky. I'm not looking below anybody's waist for a while.

Tass: So, we have a situation. And, uh...

Rev: MARGARET: Besides the burnt down theater?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: MARGARET: Oof.

Tass: He's been made and I can only imagine what it looks like, that we just purposefully went in and set a building on fire.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh, what do you mean, he's been made? I don't mean the terminology, but what happened. I understand the lingo.

Tass: I thought you might. We think he lost his wallet. They're looking for him, the police.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh.

Jake: They've already gone to his house.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh.

Tass: I was hoping maybe we could do something for him, as far as as a cover.

Rev: MARGARET: What do you mean, "Do something for him as a cover?" I mean, your cover identity is just, kind of, you work at a different place and you aren't like--I can justify your car being there because you were looking at the theater for us.

Tass: Sure sure. But, yeah, I don't know. I don't think we can justify him having been there with me. With the fact that--.

Rev: MARGARET: Were you seen?

Jake: We were.

Rev: MARGARET: Both of you?

Jake: T.J. and I, yeah.

Teej: Yeah...

Rev: MARGARET: They have anything yours?

Jake: Not to my knowledge.

Tass: But, they did see him teleport away.

Rev: MARGARET: Who?

Tass: Both of them.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh.

Tass: Look, I know he's just "Joe off the street" to you and to this company, but I would literally be dead if I had tried to go in there on my own. These two are legit. They're good at what they do. I barely did anything to kill that Soulbat.

Rev: MARGARET: What's your name again?

Teej: Teej, well it's--

Rev: That your Christian name?

Teej: Uh, no it's Terry.

Rev: MARGARET: And where's the jizz come from? *in reference to Teej* No the "Eej" I guess--.

Teej: I could show you, but I don't think--.

Rev: Oh, God. Red Rocket.

Jake: No!

Teej: No, it's Terry James Tincher.

Rev: MARGARET: What--And what do you do, Terry James Tincher?

Teej: I work at a bookstore, a warehouse.

Rev: MARGARET: No. What do you do, that makes me give a shit of saving you?

Tass: He--.

Rev: Ah Ah! Did I ask you? How long you been working here?

Tass: Two years.

Rev: MARGARET: How long you been working "here"?

Tass: A week.

Rev: MARGARET: Yeah. And if it was my new job, I wouldn't be cutting off my superior, mid conversation. You're not answering my question.

Teej: I build things. I built, out of his car, a power suit of armor that utilized all the lights in his vehicle to stop the Soulbat.

Rev: MARGARET: Really?

Tass: In like five minutes.

Rev: MARGARET: Hmm. Follow me.

Rev: And she takes you downstairs. You guys go past the laboratory, where the men in the lab coats are working, to a room that is just filled with what you would assume is junk. It is scraps, it is electronics, it is pieces of old cars, tractors. There is the top of a tank. There are helicopter blades. It is a massive room just filled with things.

Rev: MARGARET: Make me something.

Teej: I'm going to 'Weird Science' together...

Tass: A PlayStation. I really want a new PlayStation.

Teej: No. Maybe later, but right now, I'm going to create a robot that when it's turned on it goes to the most beautiful person in the room and hands them flowers.

Rev: Roll it.

Teej: I got an 11.

Jake: All right!

Rev: All right, so what is your condition?

Teej: 'It requires huge amounts of power or fuel'.

Rev: You don't have any problem finding that in here. So you construct--what does the robot look like?

Teej: It looks like--do you guys remember, in Futurama, there was the little greeting card that, that started an uprising with Bender.

Rev: Yes. *giddy*

Teej: Right. It looks like that, like a little stick person, but within the tubings and everything, whenever it pulls out the flowers, it's a full on bouquet of flowers.

Rev: Oh, so it almost uses a magician's trick wand, hidden bouquet thing.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: So, its arms are like made out of trick wands.

Teej: Yes.

Rev: And then it takes huge amounts of power or fuel. Are you powering it through some alternative source? Like, is this little thing fusion powered, or is it carrying around behind it a stack of 20 car batteries? Is it connected to a generator so it's dragging wires behind it? What is the big source of power?

Teej: It's got to be plugged in. It's always dragging around a little chord.

Rev: All right. And so you make this and you turn it on and it walks over to Jake, pulls out some flowers and hands them to him. And she looks at you and she's like--.

Rev: MARGARET: I'm supposed to be impressed that you made a robot that gives your boyfriend flowers?

Jake: I take a deep smell of the flowers. I am so soothed. I'm so pleased.

Teej: Not only did it just give him flowers, it picked out the exact most beautiful person in this room.

Jake: Don't say this part out loud. Don't say this to her.

Teej: That takes a lot of processing power. And also it takes a lot of aesthetic A.I.

Rev: MARGARET: How does that help me kill monsters?

Teej: It helps you kill monsters because I can also program it to pick out any kind of attributes--that you need monsters--that monsters have--that can help to kill those monsters.

Rev: MARGARET: Did you just have a stroke?

Teej: I did, I think

Rev: MARGARET: This is cute. I don't know if we're having a laugh. Show me something that tells me the time, the effort and the money it would go in to saving you, will be worth it, to my agency and my men. You just told me you built a suit of armor that defeated a Soulbat. Then you made me a pipe-cleaner that gives up flowers.

Jake: Hey, make something for me to train against, make something that can fight me. I will make a sparring partner for Jake, with swords for hands.

Rev: What else is it made out of.

Jake: I love it.

Rev: Like any other interesting pieces, or is it just, the only thing that matters are the helicopter blades, I assume are the sword hands.

Teej: Right. I mean it has, like pressure points on it. So, like whenever he hits those things, like those certain pressure points, that certain parts of its body fall off to make it harder, or easier for him as he likes.

Rev: All right. Roll it.

Teej: That would be a 4.

Rev: So what happens--what does it say on a 6 or less.

Teej: Something goes horribly wrong.

Rev: You make this robot with propellers for hands, to fight with Jake and you turn it on. The blades start whirling and it turns to the flower robot and just chops it up--

Jake: Awww.

Rev: --and starts eating the pieces with this really strange metallic mouth, that you've made to be knocked sideways, to show that it had been injured the jaw. And you realize that you have accidentally made a technological cannibal. That this thing hungers for the electronic parts of other robots. *A Futurama reference* And it starts to like dig through the trash heaps looking for other things.

Tass: Bra, you made a robot zombie.

Teej: I did. Oh God. It's eating other robots and or electronics, ugh.

Rev: And you see like a montage of a, like an 80s movie where we're seeing flashes of famous robots through our childhoods. And you see that like, "oh they're old and they're rusted and they happen to be in this junkyard." They're being eaten by this other robot.

Jake: Oh God.

Rev: Yeah. It's pretty gruesome.

Jake: Do I need to hurt this thing or not?

Rev: I mean right now it's just focused on eating its kin.

Teej: I mean it does have pressure points on it.

Rev: CANIBAL-BOT 4000: OM NOM NOM!

Teej: You can bust it up, it's not a problem. I mean, I made it to where it would basically fall apart as soon as you hit it in certain areas.

Rev: CANIBAL-BOT 4000: OM NOM NOM!

Jake: Well, you also made it to not eat other robots, so I'm not sure I trust your design right now. You did so good with the Flower-Bot, though.

Teej: I know, it just, it was very inspiring.

Rev: MARGARET: How about I give you a little instruction.

Teej: Sure.

Rev: MARGARET: I can see you're minded towards conventional weapons. Really, the best builders think outside the box. You fought against this Soulbat, and you knew that it was weak to light. Instead of making a light-gun, you made a suit of armor covered in lights, so that you could get up close to it and grapple with it and it would be damaged. That's thinking outside the box. So, we've got a creature that--lets say we have a creature that feeds off of the color of the world.

Teej: Off the color of the world?

Rev: MARGARET: Yep. It can take the spectrums of light and turn them into emotional powers. I want you to make me a device that makes the world around you black and white. If you're going to work for us, you've got to expand your mind a little bit. It's not all guns and armor. It's about devices that solve the problem with that creature. So I want you to build me something that makes the room and everyone and everything in it look like it's in The Wizard of Oz.

Jake: But, like the first part of the Wizard of Oz.

Teej: Is there a black and white TV I can find?

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: I assume there's a bunch of prisms and things like that that I can look up?

Rev: Mmhmm.

Teej: All right, so it's a gun, but it's got like a little mini TV on it and it shoots black and white light. And the mix of these two, suck the color out of whatever it hits. It's almost like it sprays it with black and whiteness.

Rev: All right, roll it.

Teej: I got an 11. The requirement on it is, 'It needs a rare and or weird material'.

Rev: And what might that material be?

Teej: I believe that is up to you.

Rev: It needs a cursed Diamond.

Tass: Oooo!

Rev: And you know that.

Teej: So, this isn't going to work completely, Margaret. I need something from you guys, if you have it.

Rev: MARGARET: What's that?

Teej: A cursed diamond.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh.

Rev: She reaches in her pocket and she pulls out a ring and she throws it to you.

Rev: MARGARET: That's from my second marriage. Pretty sure that counts. Give it a try.

Teej: Do you mind if I take this apart?

Rev: MARGARET: Oh, please do.

Teej: I get some tweezers, I undo the little clasp on the diamond and I pull it out and I place it into the machine.

Rev: All right.

Teej: So I just start on one side of the room and just--*makes The sound of a Black and White gun, which oddly enough sounds like a vacuum cleaner*--shooting the room and turning it all black and white.

Rev: And you do it to everything and everyone in the room?

Teej: Well not to everyone, I'm not going to blast my friends with it. That's not very nice.

Rev: She said everything in the room.

Teej: OK, well then I, sorry about this Tass--*Vacuum Sound*--and he is black and white.

Rev: OK.

Teej: And then I hit Jake with it. Sorry Jake.

Jake: No, suck it. I 'Angel Wings' behind him.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh, now it's become target practice. You better get him.

Teej: Just reach back behind me and blast him.

Jake: Just over the shoulder blast me. Excellent. I thought, I gotcha.

Teej: Yeah, something I saw in a movie once.

Tass: I start walking around like Charlie Chaplin.

Rev: You find some grease paint on the ground, that you can put on a mustache.

Tass: Good, Good.

Teej: And then I'm like, sorry about this Margaret. *Vacuum sound*.

Rev: MARGARET: Look at that.

Rev: Takes out her phone and takes a picture of herself and of you guys.

Rev: MARGARET: No filter needed.

Tass: Damn it.

Teej: Wait a minute. I thought you said this was for some kind of creature.

Rev: MARGARET: Well, a hypothetical creature. There's stuff we're fighting all the time that we don't know what it does. I just made up a scenario.

Teej: Oh, Great.

Jake: It's for a creature called to the Instagram.

Rev: MARGARET: I wasn't gonna, like let a monster loose in here or something.

Tass: I told you though he's legit.

Rev: MARGARET: So how does it wear off.

Teej: Yep.

Rev: MARGARET: Yep, what?

Teej: You didn't ask me about that.

Rev: MARGARET: I just asked you about it.

Teej: Well, just now, but you didn't ask me about that before, when I made it.

Rev: MARGARET: That's fine. But, how?

Teej: I don't know.

Rev: MARGARET: Oh.

Teej: I don't know how it wears off. I guess I could try and make a machine to--

Rev: MARGARET: Do we have to paint ourselves every morning, now?

Tass: *referencing Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* The Painted man. He haunts my dreams.

Teej: Nah, I just to have a different color TV.

Jake: Oh, my God, you just put in the cathode from a color TV instead of a black and white TV.

Teej: Yep

Rev: You test that theory?

Teej: Sure.

Rev: It works.

Teej: Good.

Jake: I love it.

Rev: MARGARET: Yeah, alright, alright. It took some prodding, but that's interesting. But, um, I've got a room full of guys upstairs who can do this. That's why we've got this room, to keep them on their toes. What's special about you?

Tass: I'm kind of glancing over my shoulder at Jake, again.

Jake: The gods want him alive and protected. I don't know why. They didn't tell me that part.

Rev: MARGARET: What gods?

Jake: Norse gods.

Rev: MARGARET: Which one?

Jake: Presumably Odin, based on--and I just kind of, like hold up the hammer and channel some energy through it. Might be kind of a one-trick, because he kind of made the same person twice here.

Rev: MARGARET: Has he talked to you?

Jake: He doesn't, like talk to me, in that I hear a voice. More that I am implanted with visions and feelings. I have been given one task in my life and it is to protect him.

Rev: Roll 'Manipulate Someone'.

Jake: OK that is, that's a 12.

Rev: MARGARET: So you say that he's important enough that some Celtic, Greek, who was it again? What God?

Jake: Norse.

Rev: MARGARET: Norse god, gave you power specifically to protect him. So, you're kind of a package deal. I think we can do something to help your friend out. We've been looking for someone to test this new technology on.

Jake: What kind of new technology?

Teej: Yeah...

Rev: MARGARET: Well everything we do here mixes science and magic and some of the creatures that we combats, natural abilities. We've found a way to take a vampire's glamour ability where it can look like something else. If you tell someone who you are, or share with them some deep connected moment, something that only that person would know, they'll see you for who and what you actually are. The only problem is, can't be taken off. It uses a little bit of your blood to work. It's not going to cause any permanent harm, but you can't undo it, except by the condition I just told you and that's a one on one basis. Someone that works for us, that doesn't seem to exist anytime they're caught. No record of them on file. No history of them. You're ours in the field until we tell you otherwise. There's pay, there's good benefits, but you're gonna work off quite a debt and not a debt of money. That's what I can offer you.

Teej: Are you telling me that I'm gonna be someone completely different than who I am right now?

Rev: MARGARET: Well, you're going to look different and you're going to sound different to anybody that you don't share the secret with. It will get the cops off your back and you're going to have to come up with some story as to why you're not around anymore because you won't be around anymore.

Teej: If it gets the cops off my mom and dad, that's all that's really important.

Rev: MARGARET: All right.

Teej: All right. I'll do it.

Tass: This sounds like a step towards destiny, bub. Whatever these gods are, that want something for you, this seems like the next step. You know what I mean?

Rev: MARGARET: I'll give you till 9:00 in the morning, if you want to say goodbye to anybody. Be in the lab, where we gave you the shots, 9:00 a.m. sharp. I'll see you boys later.

Rev: She turns and walks out.

Teej: Yeah, I'll go say goodbye to my mom and dad.

Jake: I'll, I'll get you there buddy.

Teej: Thanks.

Rev: We see the outside of T.J.'s childhood home where his family has lived their entire lives. Jake and T.J. appear outside of it. T.J. turns to Jake and thanks him and walks inside. Jake sits down, looks out at the stars, thinking about what's happening now to the man he's supposed to protect. We see through the window of the House a somewhat tearful goodbye. He's not really able to explain exactly what's going on, or why he has to go and why he has to go away so far. But he promises them that he'll write and that someday they'll see him again. But for now he has to go. And you can see that it is hard for them to understand or accept. But eventually they do. T.J. walks out of the front door of his house and turns back to look at it one last time and feels a hand on his shoulder. We see that it's Jake who asks, "Are you ready?" T.J. responds, "I've actually got one more stop I'd like to make." We see a small house in a suburb. The pair appear outside of

it. T.J. starts to walk towards the door and realizes, "Oh my god it's 5:00 in the morning. How would I do this?" And he turns around and walks back towards Jake and halfway there stops, rummages through his pockets and pulls out a notepad. He takes a pen from his other pocket and jots something down walks over to the mailbox. Tears the note from the note pad, folds it up and puts it in the mailbox and lifts the flag. He looks up at the house and smiles. They meet mid driveway. Jake again asks, "Are you ready?" T.J. steals one last glance at the house and with a smile says, "I am."

Rev: It is 9:00. Are you guys going to join T.J. here for this whatever is going to happen to him to change him?

Jake: Yeah, I don't think we want to leave him alone for this. I think we want to be there.

Tass: Yeah. I definitely go.

Teej: Guys, I don't want you here, OK? Go away.

Jake: Go on, git!

Rev: I'm a big boy.

Rev: Margaret comes in and one of the tech guys, from the previous night, joins her. The technician goes over and opens up a small steel case and inside of it is a ring with two gems on it. One of them is blood red. The other one is clear. And he walks it over to you and holds it out. Margaret says,

Rev: MARGARET: You ready?

Teej: Yep.

Rev: MARGARET: All right.

Rev: And she plucks the ring out of his hand and hands it to you.

Teej: Put it on my left, middle finger. My favorite of all my fingers. And I just slip it down.

Rev: As you slide the ring down on your finger, you feel this strange--like something is touching your finger very lightly. And you can see, as you look down, that there are all these tendrils, almost like cilia, coming off of the ring. And you can see them start to weave into your finger like they are sewing themselves to your flesh. It hurts for a

moment, but not bad. The ring on your finger as I said has one red gem and one clear gem. And as you feel the ring tighten the other gem starts to fill with what you assume is your blood and become red and you see the other gem empty and as it empties you feel this little burst of power inside of you. Jake and Tass, you see this shimmer appear over T.J. and standing before you is not T.J. anymore. You see this red-haired man with just the right amount of five o'clock shadow, blue eyes and pale skin. The image fades away. You know this is T.J. and for some reason being present at this moment disperses the magic. But, you do get a brief glimpse of what the rest of the world sees, when they look at him now. Margaret looks at you then turns and walks across the room, to where a printer has just finished printing a number of documents. She picks them up and shuffles through them, nods with approval and walks over to you and hands them to you. It's a birth certificate, Social Security forms and tax forms, a contract for employment. All filled out except for the places where a photo should go. Your eyes scan across the documents and you see the name printed there is Roger Jamison. She looks at you and smiles and says,.

Rev: MARGARET: Welcome to the IPT

Rev: So, T.J. has had his induction ceremony and you guys are in the commissary eating lunch. Is there anything you want to do today?

Tass: Yeah, I think we need to find you. Kind of deconstruct what in the hell happened.

Jake: Do we get new phones from IPT?

Rev: Yeah. As you guys left they had a little packet for you, of phones and some loaner car keys, since your car is garbage.

Jake: Oh, what's the rental. What do we got?

Rev: You're not gonna like it.

Teej: It's my car, isn't it?

Rev: No, it is a 2003 P.T. Cruiser.

Tass: No!

Jake: I'm alright with that.

Teej: I would rather vomit in my mouth and swallow it again than drive a PT Cruiser.

Tass: I'm going to wreck this car on purpose.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: It's okay. Wait till you see what you get next.

Jake: You guys are so unappreciative.

Tass: Then you can drive.

Jake: Okay, happily.

Teej: Yeah. Enjoy that piece of garbage.

Tass: Shotgun.

Jake: Okay. Yeah. So I'll text Rev. Hey man, sorry for the delay, but we finally got new phones. Where are we supposed to meet you today?

Rev: He gives you an address and it's basically across the street from that Steak and Shake.

Jake: We'll head to the garage and I'm driving, and I drive to the address that he sent me.

Tass: Oh it's one of those P.T. Cruisers with the, like color changing purple to green, that sucks.

Jake: Does it have a, like a vanity plate?

Rev: It does. It says--.

Jake: It's my favorite thing now, is just making him make something up, right now.

Rev: It says, IPT CRUZ.

Jake: God damn it. I regret that. I regret that setup.

Teej: Oh, that's actually not bad. But at the same time, I hate it.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: I can't believe you've done this. Okay. We drive to the place.

Tass: No, we don't. I'm irate. I'm leaving.

Jake: I'm done.

Rev: So, you guys arrive at the building and you go inside and you see that he had told you it is apartment B-12 and that's actually in the basement. The first floor is "A"'s and then the basement is "B"'s.

Jake: Does it look like a one-story building, from outside?

Rev: It doesn't.

Jake: How many is it?

Rev: It looks like maybe three.

Jake: Well if "B" is down, then what's up?

Rev: You can't find anything. There's no stairs going up.

Jake: But, there's like a ceiling?

Rev: Yeah, mmhmm.

Jake: Weird. Okay. Well, I'm gonna go downstairs and find the door to B-12.

Rev: Yeah, it's at the end of the hallway. There are 12 doors in this hallway. Six on each side.

Jake: And I knock on it.

Rev: Your phone vibrates.

Jake: I'm gonna look at it.

Rev: It's a text from me and it says, "Is that you guys?"

Jake: "Yup" send.

Rev: You here a couple of clicks and a chain and then the door opens and I peek out. Hey who, who the hell's this.

Teej: ROGER: Hey, man.

Rev: Why are you bringing Ron Howard's younger brother here?

Jake: This is--hey he called you his younger brother, so that's something. This is Roger.

Teej: ROGER: Rev...

Rev: Mmhmm?

Teej: ROGER: Remember that time I went to your house and in actuality it was your apartment in college?

Rev: What--who--have you known me since college?

Teej: ROGER: Uh, yeah. Yeah. You've known me since college. Especially--.

Rev: Oh, Willie!

Teej: ROGER: Uh, No no, no no.

Rev: That's the only redhead I know.

Teej: ROGER: Remember that time that Teej came over to your house, or apartment and he was playing Spider-Man 2 on, on your Xbox and he accidentally turned off the power to his--ex, to your Xbox, when he was saving--

Rev: Oh, he thought he, like was, was saving something he should have. So he yanked the chord out so that it wouldn't save.

Teej: ROGER: Yeah...

Rev: And it wiped the system.

Teej: and it wiped the system.

Rev: Yeah, I rememb--T.J.?

Teej: It's me.

Rev: What the--Oh God, are you a vampire?

Teej: No. No no, oh no. Oh! Uh!. Gross, right? Am I right?

Tass: Show him the ring, show him the ring.

Teej: Oh yeah, uh. Check this out. I got this cool ring.

Jake: We're engaged.

Teej: It's on my second, er my first favorite finger of all time--

Rev: Is that blood inside of that diamond? Is that a blood diamond?

Teej: Yeah, it's a blood diamond.

Tass: Not the same kind.

Teej: No it's, I mean, it's my blood.

Rev: Wait what kind of do you mean? I mean like blood diamond, like a clear empty diamond that takes your blood to power magic.

Teej: Oh, yeah, then yes.

Tass: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Rev: Okay.

Teej: Yeah. So I had to disguise myself because apparently some assassin knows my face and all that sort of good stuff.

Tass: Well mostly, also the cops.

Teej: And also the cops and--.

Rev: I was gonna say, if it was an assassin, why didn't they--like do they not care about you two?

Tass: Yeah, no. It's mostly he just needs deep cover now because they have his wallet.

Teej: At the police station, where they do criminal investigation.

Rev: Oh.

Teej: So you gonna let us in? Are we just going to chill out here in the hallway.

Rev: Oh yeah. Yeah. Sorry I wasn't gonna let Mitch from Modern Family in to my house, but now that I see it's you...

Jake: Why wouldn't you let Mitch for Modern Family into your house?

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: He's a dick, like he does not deserve Cam.

Rev: Yeah. Guys come on in. I'm sorry, I just, I was startled by the unfamiliar face.

Tass: Understandably.

Teej: And we enter his domicile.

Rev: Yeah, he closes the door and you see that he's got a series of locks on the back of the door. Not all of them look like locks. Like, one of them looks like a leaf with a twig on it, that he puts across the door. And one of them looks like half of an arcane symbol and there's a piece of chalk hanging there and he redraws the other half on the frame of the door.

Tass: Fancy.

Rev: Well, this line of work, you've got to be careful of all kinds of different stuff.

Teej: Sure, sure. Is there any, like furniture to sit down on, or to plop down on?

Rev: There's actually just a hallway and then a stairwell, going up.

Teej: Oh. This is not an apartment at all. There's an entry way.

Rev: Yeah. Yeah. The the basement ones are lofts. Yeah. Come on up. As you come up the stairs, you can see that there are little rooms sectioned off. There's an area that's got a bunch of chairs and books and bookshelves. There is an area that is a kitchen. There's an area that's a bedroom. You can also see what almost looks like an operating table, or an examination table with some various supplies around it.

Teej: Is it at least clean, this operating table? There's not like blood and shmootz and everything?

Rev: No, no, yeah it's very clean.

Teej: Okay.

Tass: You really got--you really got a spread here, bub. Like, this is pretty cool.

Rev: Yeah, it's, it's nice. They kind of set you up with a location and any of the stuff that you might need, based off the job. And so I've just been collecting stuff that I've had to use throughout the time I've been doing this.

Teej: When did you become a doctor?

Rev: Never.

Teej: Oh I'm just, just curious about the operating table.

Rev: Oh that's just for, you know, if someone gets injured, or if I get injured. You know, you want to have a clean sterile place to try to take care of that stuff.

Teej: Oh okay.

Tass: Do you have this whole building?

Rev: No, no. Just, just this one apartment.

Teej: So, Rev, we were thinking...

Rev: Mmhmm.

Teej: You know, that you should probably go ahead and just, you know, fill us in, man. Because I think we're a little taken aback.

Rev: What do you want to know?

Tass: Just anything that you think you might know, that would help us out with this. Like, this is clearly something we want to start, kind of investigating. There was an invisible person trying to murder us, that what, they sucked this ley line dry? Like, what in the world? Any input about this world--this is not stuff that we really know, you know?

Rev: Yeah. Anytime that I've seen a ley line used like that, it's a group of people doing some kind of ceremony. You know, sometimes they can naturally go dry. I mean, I guess, huh, we assume naturally. I guess something could be using them. Actually, that's kind of unsettling. I never thought about that before, because energy isn't really created or destroyed, it only...hmm. But, yeah anyway, yeah, you know, sometimes the ley lines are dry. So, I guess that things have to be using them, but the ones that we let people know about, I mean, we know the kind of rituals, or the things they're trying to power with them, if it's some spell, or some piece of arcane technology or whatever. Like I said, I've never seen a person be able to do it, but you said there was only one set of footprints down there, right?

Tass: Yeah, there's one set of footprints down there and then there was a ritual site on the roof, too.

Rev: What do you mean a ritual site?

Tass: Like the same candle layout was on the roof. And if I were to put money on it, I'd say directly straight up above it.

Rev: Really?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: And he goes over to one of the bookshelves and pulls a book off and starts flipping through it. You know, I've never seen this specific layout before of candles around a ley line. Because, a lot of times with candles and a ley line, it's specifically to help channel

the energy, but I don't understand how this would help. Especially if it's just a single person. But you said, that you think the same pattern was on the roof?

Tass: Yeah, it was definitely the same pattern. And I'm not 100 percent sure, but I'm pretty sure, it was directly above where it would have been in the basement.

Rev: How much of this stuff did you guys get to explore while you were there? Like I don't know what you guys found before you found me.

Tass: Not much. I mean, really we were in the door and dealing with those imps and from there on out until we got you and headed to where that lay line was, there was not a lot of investigation.

Teej: I didn't investigate a darn thing.

Tass: It was survival.

Rev: You guys have some time?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Would you mind going back? Not to the theater, but around the theater. I've got this hunch that--look here...and he opens the book. And you can see inside the book it shows a pattern of candles. Not the pattern that was there, just a pattern. And you can see that it's repeated multiple times and it shows it in depth that it goes through levels.

Teej: Oh, sort of like a 3D, three-dimensional sort of, stack.

Rev: Then at the very top level of it the same pattern is repeated, but much further away. You use the candles to focus an energy and then keep something kind of contained in a bubble. Do you think you guys could go see if around the theater there are candles out there? It's kind of a long shot, but something about it just feels feels right. Mechanically, he's using one of his moves and got to know that this is part of a ritual. I don't want people to think I'm just metagaming for you.

Tass: Yeah, well, I don't see why not. I mean, I can't imagine by now there'd still be just cops and stuff wandering around a charred building. I'd say if we're gonna do it, the time is now.

Teej: Sure and I mean, they're not going to recognize me anyway because of my disguise.

Tass: Right.

Teej: I mean...

Rev: Right.

Tass: No reason to recognize me.

Jake: I'm a little questionable, but we'll find out won't we?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: You have, like a hat and some sunglasses?

Jake: Oh the Marvel Cinematic Universe disguise.

Rev: Yeah. Yeah.

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: Awesome. Yeah. If you guys wouldn't mind, go out and look around the area around the theater and see if you can find-- Do you remember where they were laid out in the roof? Like, if you could, kind of, do geography you might know exactly where to look.

Tass: Oh yeah. I mean, I know, yeah, I know where it was on the roof and if there's something about that, that would kind of give me an idea of where I should look on the ground, yeah.

Rev: Well I mean, if you, if you can remember where the the candle layout--

Tass: Ahh, and there'd just be a bigger layout in that same way arou--.

Rev: Uh, huh.

Tass: Yeah, absolutely, yeah, we can handle that.

Rev: All right.

Tass: All right. So, this is where I, um, toss Jake the keys that I had pick pocketed from his pocket, to him, real casual style over my shoulder and say, All right, let's go.

Rev: Everyone at the table seems dubious about that.

Tass: Yeah, you should. You should.

Jake: I demand a roll.

Rev: That's fair.

Tass: What would this be, I guess, uh...

Rev: It depends. Are you trying to do it so that you look cool? Are you trying to do it for some actual reason?

Tass: Just to look cool.

Rev: Then 'Cool'.

Tass: Okay.

Rev: Roll 'Cool'.

Tass: That is an 8.

Rev: Kay, so mixed success. Uh, yeah. You slip your hand into Jake's pocket and you get the keys and as you start to pull them out, his gum comes with them and you put it in your mouth and it's not a flavor you like.

Tass: So I'm chewing on it, but I'm trying to look snazzy and tossing the keys and say, let's ride!

Rev: It's not even, like a flavor you don't like. It tastes like the gel that the dentist puts in your mouth and it's the flavor you hate the most.

Tass: But, I'm selling it baby.

Rev: Yeah. I mean they can kind of tell.

Jake: Okay.

Teej: Let's go.

Jake: Yeah. Are we gonna pick a area and park and look around on foot, or are we gonna just drive around and looked out the windows and hope we see candles?

Tass: We should probably get on foot and...

Jake: Okay. Well then, how far are we going?

Rev: And he would tell you before you left, that it needs to be on the same plane. So it would, at least, be as high up, if not higher, than the ones on the roof of the theater.

Teej: Okay. So we're looking for rooftops.

Rev: Okay. Where you going?

Tass: So if we--well first, just like going past the theater, is it gon--like, what was the fire damage?

Rev: Oh I see. It's gutted. It's not gone because a large part of it was Stone. And so the frame is still there.

Tass: Okay. But, like no walkable roof?

Rev: No, the roof is there, the roof was Stone.

Teej: Okay.

Rev: Oddly enough, we established that.

Tass: We did. Do I think I could climb a ladder on the side and go up.

Rev: You do.

Tass: Okay. Yeah. I would want to climb up there first and see if there's just a wider pattern on the roof. Like, it was just this rooftop.

Rev: You get up and go around to where you knew the original pattern was, and it's just a little puddle of hard wax.

Tass: Mmm.

Rev: The fire has melted everything. So you want to walk around and explore the roof?

Tass: Yeah, absolutely. See if I can find any more puddles.

Rev: Yeah, you don't see any.

Tass: Okay. All right. So it's probably not just a bigger pattern.

Teej: I'm going to look out across the horizon see if there are any buildings that looks somewhat similar to the height that we're at.

Rev: Yeah. Roll 'Investigate a Mystery'.

Teej: Will do.

Rev: You're trying to figure out where these candles might be located that are the same height as they were at this theater.

Teej: That would be a 6.

Jake: I'm so glad I have this ability now, that just lets me teleport to anybody I know well. I never have to lose him again. Every time I turn around and he's gone, I just got to go, ugh and then, woop, and I'm right next to him again.

Teej: Which, I do when he disappears and ends up on the roof.

Rev: Okay, so you teleport onto the roof next to him.

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: Yeah, he's standing right near the edge and you start to fall.

Jake: Woo, oo, oo!

Rev: We'll have to roll, like a D-4 or something, to decide which side of him you appear on.

Tass: Oh my God.

Teej: Oh, shoot.

Rev: Unless, you want to decide now. Like, do you always appear on his right side? Do you always appear in front of him? Do always appear on his left side? Do you appear behind him?

Tass: On his shoulders?

Teej: Creepily behind me?

Rev: Like uncomfortably close. Like, trying to get the gum out of his pocket close.

Jake: On his right.

Rev: Okay. So, you're looking out over the city, trying to figure out where these candles could possibly be. And you look down and you see Tass's, essentially, frame of a car, that you guys have left behind and you realize that you have his keys in your pocket still. So you fish em' out and you're kind of looking at 'em and fiddling with the key fob. And all of a sudden, Jake appears on your right side and it startles you and you push a button and for a brief moment the horn goes off on the car. It only lasts for like 17 seconds, but it goes for some reason.

Teej: Um, what?

Jake: What, indeed. I want to climb back down and head over to the car. Is it really still going off? Is it literally 17 seconds?

Rev: Yeah, mmhmm.

Jake: Oh Jesus. Yeah. I want to go over to the car and try and figure out how it could possibly be doing this without a battery. Like is the hood still up and shit?

Rev: Yeah, I mean, the hood is gone.

Jake: Is gone?

Rev: It's part of the armor or it was.

Jake: Yeah, I mean, I don't know what I'm looking for, but like looking in the spot where a battery would normally be, seeing if like somehow there's battery goo left?? I don't understand electronics at all evidently.

Rev: Um, T.J., did you go with him? Did you stay on the roof?

Teej: No, I went with him.

Rev: Okay.

Tass: I also went down.

Rev: OK. Anybody know anything about cars? Who's looking in the car? Jake just admitted that he doesn't know what to look for. He thinks there might be battery goo.

Jake: Like, if left to my own devices, I'm gonna stick something metal in here and electrocute myself, probably.

Rev: He's going to take a spoonful of battery goo.

Jake: Taste it. Yes, it's done. Mmm, its ready.

Rev: Its good. Oh no. This defeats my armor.

Teej: I do know that, usually, they have fuses and then there's also the, uh, oh what is it called?

Tass: Engine.

Teej: No, it's a electronic thing that splits off the battery into--.

Jake: A spark plug.

Teej: Yeah, it's a spark-plug, sure. why not?.

Tass: The rotor-girder.

Teej: No.

Jake: Transmission.

Teej: No, the alternator. There we go. The alternator.

Jake: That's a good one. I didn't think of that.

Teej: I look at the alternator to see if something's up with it.

Rev: Ok. What are you looking for? You just looking at it? Are you getting inside, trying to turn it around. Take it apart?

Teej: Yeah, I'm, I'm getting inside to see the alternator, to see if it's like connected to any other power source, besides the battery.

Rev: Ok.

Jake: I'll help him out, however I can. Like, when I see him diving in under the hood, trying to like--.

Rev: Point out the battery goo so he doesn't get in to it.

Jake: Yeah. Don't, don't eat that battery goo, it's not good. No, like--

Rev: That's my favorite Pokemon is Battery-Goo.

Jake: If I need to like hold anything out of the way, or like hold a flashlight for him so he can see better, or you know...

Rev: All right.

Jake: Anything like that, I'm just trying to be an extra set of hands.

Rev: Yeah, um, roll 'Help Out'.

Jake: 7.

Rev: So T.J. you get a +1 as you try to 'Investigate the Mystery' of how is the car got a little bit of power in it.

Teej: Okay. Oh. That's a great roll. I didn't need the +1, but I do appreciate you holding that flashlight. I've got a 14.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 2. And as you hold the flashlight for him to kind of look around and peek throughout, you take a step backwards and you slip on some of the oil that has drained out of the car. Tass, you see Jake starting to stumble backwards into traffic.

Jake: Oh no! Battery goo! You got me again!

TO BE CONTINUED