

Face to Face (S1, E38)

Rev: All right. So since T.J. had mentioned it before I made a note. So the first thing we're doing right now. Everybody say whatever it is you want to say real quick about Into the Spider-Verse, because we've talked about this forever and not actually gotten to say anything.

Jake: I, I feel Peter B. Parker so hard.

Rev: Yeah. I think that it is my favorite superhero movie. I love Infinity War and Captain America: Civil War, but those movies need the buildup. The fact that they were able to do this movie without the buildup is super impressive.

Teej: Right. Because, we're talking about a character that most people, I would assume have never even heard of, and so I think the idea is that we don't need a build up we just need to learn about this guy.

Tass: It hit all of my favorite things in that my favorite superhero movies are absolutely team dynamic movies. I love a good team and that we're getting a full team of spider people is just the best thing ever.

Jake: Probably my favorite Nick Cage role.

Teej: Yeah. Honestly. Yeah. No, I hate saying this but yeah.

So I'm kind of in the buildup to the holidays and really seeing the Patreon. There was a lot going on here and none of us caught this in the moment but I sure made the anagram for NOEL and it does not spell NOEL. Yeah but none of us caught it until after the episode was way out. But yeah my anagram for NOEL, I was so excited when I came up with that I set forever and looking at it and I was just so out of it that I spelled it NEOL and so in canon T.J. is. Grandfather is dyslexic. This is how I'm solving this problem. So Rachael asked me to remind everybody we are doing a kind of a starter pack for Monster of the Week, a giveaway on Twitter. If you go to our Twitter you'll find a link where you can go and like the post and follow us and retweet it and each of those gives you an entry and we're giving away is a fresh off the press copy of Monster of the Week and four sets of D-6's so you can start your very own Monster of the Week game at home. So that is going actually until February doing that for about a month. So that is at the Critshow on Twitter. A little bit of housekeeping, so we started a Reddit page I'd mentioned it is the Critshow on Reddit but I had been pretty active on the Monster of the Week Sub Reddit

and we discovered that two or three weeks ago it was locked for some reason. So one of our listeners has actually started a new sub Reddit for the actual game Monster of the Week. So for those of you who listen who found it through the Sub Reddit and have noticed you can't post on there the new Monster of the Week Sub Reddit is MOTWRPG. He tried to talk to the the admins at Reddit and get put into an admin position but the guy who created the page hasn't been online in like four years and he's not getting any response from actual Reddit. And so the page is just dead. So we're trying to rebuild the community over at M.O.T.W. RPG if you are someone who is on the Monster of the Week Reddit before can go and join MOTWRPG as well as the Critshow as we're having the conversation the other day as we were trying to come up with one of the posts, you the listeners you right now, what should we call you? We don't have a nice nickname for you. Something that's just simple. Yeah, so if you have an idea of what we should call you guys seasonal IPT if you're I don't know what you are but if anyone's got an idea about what our listeners what we could call you guys.

Teej: Sort of like the West Wing has the Wing-nuts and...

Rev: Yes.

Jake: I like Critters.

Teej: Yeah, critters sounds great.

Rev: I think that's taken.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: I think that is literally taken by a Critical Role.

Jake: Well who even knows what that is?!

Rev: Yeah. So if someone has an idea send us a message we would love to hear it. So that we're not just awkwardly always going "our listeners at home" it would be much easier to be like.

Teej: Or the audience.

Rev: Our Critters, but not that because that's taken.

Tass: Critheads?

Rev: I think that's taken too. Well maybe not. You know, like gosh, was it like episode four or five, like eight months ago at the intro of the show we played a game try to guess who is hopped up on painkillers and back then I, I edited the show a lot more tightly so you probably couldn't tell but you're gonna get to play that game again today. Someone here is just...

Jake: Just nasty on painkillers.

Rev: Yeah. Yeah. So see if you can guess who.

Tass: Guess who that idiot is.

Rev: It's me.

Jake: That, the different voice it's me. The secret fifth member!

Rev: I guess lastly. Thank you again for everybody who has joined us on Patreon. Last week we had the first episode of Hero Salad come out and this week we have the first episode of Investigate the History. We are almost at our final goals. We've actually come up with a couple of new goals which we'll be adding there, so you can take a look at those to see what kind of things we're going to try to get into the works as this continues to grow again. Thank you everybody for listening. I did an interview a couple of weeks ago. This guy was doing his master's thesis on podcasts and on advertising for podcasts and he put out the results a couple days ago and the big thing that he found was that 67 percent of people who listen to podcasts, all of the things they listen to come from word of mouth and from that word of mouth, like 78 percent of that comes from literal people you are in the room with. Not like online but just "Hey you are standing next to me and we like similar things. Listen to this." And I know so much of our growth has because of our listeners are so kind to spread the word to their friends and to their friends. So keep up the good work. We really appreciate it means a lot to us. We would not be anywhere near where we are if it wasn't for all of you spreading the word. So thank you again so much for that. Yeah I think it's time. Actually there isn't a recap. Oh this is one of my favorite episodes. I love when there's not a recap. Oh no! There is a recap. I just edited it never mind. I'm sad again.

Jake: Now. Now let's play who's hopped up on painkillers because your answer might have changed.

THE RECAP

Rev: STROHM: When you take possession of this coin you will owe me six truths and I will owe you Six Truths.

Jake: Where's the spear of the Chosen?

Rev: STROHM: The Shorsky National Park in Russia. It is guarded by a very very ancient woman. You have a friend who helped you get past the magic wards in my home. Where does he live?

Jake: I tell her. A few months ago there was a magic ritual in Indianapolis. Who was the recipient of that spell effect?

Rev: STROHM: I do not know but it was not a major player. Who is informing to you about Grigori Nash?

Jake: Oh God!

Teej: We should stop!

Tass: I don't think it matters.

Jake: I tell her, the answer is drug from me. Its Ori.

Rev: Tass sees the two of you kind of balanced in this very strange pose and he tries to put the shotgun in to help out, and just the intervention of the gun kind of throws you both off and he pierces his heart and turns to dust and standing on the pile of ashes is a very slight man wearing a vest and a pocket watch and he's got white hair that is slicked back and some spectacles. Very nice shoes and he looks at you, Jake and he looks at T.J. and then his eyes land on Tass.

Rev: GRIGORI: Tass Allgood. You're a very hard soul to track down.

FACE TO FACE

Rev: So here the three of you stand amidst the snow and the wind. It is not totally dark yet but the sun is starting to set. In front of you stands this slight man with a very wicked grin on his face and he is walking towards you, Tass.

Tass: Just stay right there, bud.

Rev: SLIGHT MAN: Oh I don't think so. I've wanted to get a look at you for quite a while. I did not realize that you are back. You are very hard to find.

Jake: I would like to position myself between him and Tass, like kind of arms out keeping him behind me.

Rev: Roll cool.

Jake: Five.

Rev: You go to step in front of him and you can't move and, T.J., watching you see just a very slight flick of the finger from this guy and it stops Jake from moving.

Teej: I want to raise my blaster like I'm about to shoot him.

Rev: Roll cool.

Teej: I also got a five.

Rev: You go to raise your blaster and you can't move. And he gets right in front of you Tass and he starts looking you in the eye and down your arm and at your neck and your hair. And he just seems to be examining you very closely.

Rev: SLIGHT MAN: What's wrong with you?

Tass: Nothing at the moment. Feeling good.

Rev: SLIGHT MAN: You don't look good. You're alive, but you are not right. What's wrong with you?

Tass: You're him.

Rev: SLIGHT MAN: Oh I'm sorry. Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Grigori Nash and I'm the man who, well I'm the man who had you killed. But it's to serve a greater purpose.

Tass: Well it looks like your purpose didn't did much take did it.

Rev: GRIGORI: Oh well I suppose there's no use to keeping any of you alive then.

Teej: Can we move at all?

Rev: You can not, you are Frozen. You can try to roll cool again if you want to try to break out of it.

Teej: God yes! How about a nine?

Rev: You can break out of it but it's going to cause you a great deal of mental pain. You'll take one point of damage or you can stay in it and try to focus harder and you'll get a plus one to the next time you try to break out.

Teej: I will go ahead and concentrate.

Rev: Jake are you trying anything?

Jake: So this is like a mental block that's stopping us from moving. Can't just like super powers through the stoppage can I?

Rev: Correct it would be- it is mind over matter in this case.

Jake: Can we talk even?

Rev: Not right now you can't.

Jake: Well, I'm going to try to teleport in front of Tass instead.

Rev: Okay roll cool to break the hold.

Jake: 9.

Rev: Same as T.J., you can focus a little longer to get a plus one next time or you can do it and take one point of armor defeating damage.

Jake: I'm also going to focus down I am under the assumption that he's not just gonna walk up and murder task he seems too curious so, feel like I've got a second and I can build myself.

Rev: Yeah. So Tass, the last thing you said to him was that it didn't work and now he has asked you if there's any reason to keep the three of you alive.

Tass: Well it's still out there. I can still get it. And if you kill me you're going to have to start from scratch.

Rev: GRIGORI: Interesting. Interesting. So you're not quite whole.

Rev: And you both can try to roll again to get out of this.

Jake: Lets do it.

Teej: Teamwork! That's a 10 for me.

Jake: Nine again.

Rev: Is that with your plus one.

Jake: Yeah, it is.

Rev: So, yeah you can, you can double down and get a plus two next time. T.J. you are able to move.

Teej: I want to pretend like I'm, I'm still under his sway.

Rev: OK.

Teej: Knowing full well that I can move but I'm gonna wait for my, my shot.

Rev: OK take a plus one on whatever you choose to do eventually.

Teej: Yes.

Rev: GRIGORI: Why were the three of you here.

Tass: Because, we are where we need to be.

Rev: He looks over your shoulder in the direction of Santa's village and he grins.

Rev: GRIGORI: So there's something important in there.

Tass: I'm sure I don't know that. I just do what I'm told to do and do it pretty damn good so far cause 'jor boys ar ded'.

Rev: GRIGORI: Oh so it was an official mission was it? So, perhaps more forces here are necessary. If I hadn't found the three of you defending this place I would have assumed it was not anything worth fighting over.

Tass: Come on everybody loves Santa Claus.

Rev: GRIGORI: Oh yes, and Santa, he's just got a bag full of goodies so I wonder what the IPT is hiding here.

Tass: You'll never know because it's up and running again.

Rev: GRIGORI: Yes, well three's not many. It was a poke with a toothpick. Next time I'll send the blade.

Tass: There any other reason you came here?

Rev: GRIGORI: Couple of my enforcers died and I felt someone messing with the magics when they were trying to communicate with me so I thought I'd come through and see what it was. And here I find the three of you.

Rev: Jake, you can try again if you'd like.

Jake: Twelve.

Rev: You are able to move.

Jake: I can't think of any reason I wouldn't go try to hit him. like, I just can't, I just can't think of one.

Tass: Oh no.

Jake: Yeah. Sorry guys.

Rev: Roll kick some ass.

Jake: Seven...

Rev: Described to me how you're gonna hit him.

Jake: The way I'm picturing this is that me and T.J. are kind of to the side, right? So I mean basically as soon as I kind of break through it and can move I'm taking a swing so that it kind of comes in between them and knocks him in the solar plexus back and away from Tass, like trying to create space between them.

Rev: So you swing this hammer and it does it connects. There is no movement. It is like you have just hit a tree and you take one point of armor defeating damage, mental, as you see a glowing energy come from around his head as if he's trying to stop you from moving again. But you were able to get past that effect.

Tass: Wait, wait, stop, stop! Just everybody chill out for a second!

Jake: I gladly stop.

Tass: I think, I think you're lying to me. I don't think you would have wasted any resources on sending somebody here at all if you didn't know there was something there in the first place. So what's really going on man?

Rev: GRIGORI: Oh I knew there was something here I just didn't know it was IPT it reads as magical here. Even behind that barrier.

Tass: All right. Well yeah it's IPT. We wouldn't be here otherwise. You're a genius! Well done! But, Look they're down and we're gonna keep comin' if you keep sending stuff at it all over the world it doesn't matter. You killed me once and I'm back! You know what? I'm gonna keep coming back! You might kill me right here in the snow, but you know what? I'm gonna drag you to hell with me if you try! So, you can either back up and let me maybe get this thing or you can just kill me now and either go to hell with me or you're gonna spend the rest of your damn life looking for another one of these and we're gonna keep stopping you at every turn!

Rev: Everybody, roll cool.

Teej: I got a 9.

Tass: 7.

Jake: 4.

Rev: Jake you are frozen and as Tass is giving this speech to the side of Grigori he's just watching you and at the end of Tass's speech he turns back to Tass and smiles and nods and then starts walking towards you and you both see this glow start to come off of Jake. He opens his mouth. Jake you lose one point of luck. And at the end of that breath-in, you see that Grigori stands a little taller and he turns back to your task and says...

Rev: GRIGORI: Just remember that your friends are alive so that I can hurt them instead of you. So I'd mind your tongue, boy. There's a lot of people I could hurt instead of you and make you keep going. Now do your job.

Rev: ...And he vanishes and Jake looks a little drained and you actually see a couple of threads of gray in his beard that weren't there before.

Tass: I think I'm gonna run over and kind of put an arm around him. Dude I'm sorry what did he do. Are you okay?

Jake: I feel as old as you guys.

Teej: Hey, hold on, wait a second. Woh! Ouch!

Rev: That's solid.

Tass: I'm sorry. I'm sorry guys. I did. I'm shaking like a leaf. We should be dead. We should be dead. I just kind of wandering off to the side doing my little panic mumbling.

Jake: I'm like yeah, yeah. Yeah we sure should be dead. I hit him did you see me you hit him.

Tass: I saw and it looked like literally you were trying to push over a stone pillar.

Jake: Yeah.

Tass: Oh no.

Teej: When he hit him. Did anything like, chip off of him any bit of clothing or like anything at all?

Rev: You knowm T.J. you were unfrozen and you were kind of playing along when this moment happened so roll 'investigate a mystery' to kind of think back to what you saw in that moment.

Teej: Eleven.

Rev: All right you get a hold two.

Teej: What is being concealed here?

Rev: You did not see that there was any damage taken by him. And as you're thinking back on it and seeing the kind of spark, the color that came from around his head right after Jake hit him, you feel like you remember seeing that same color spark happens so fast between his body and Jake's hammer as if there was some kind of a T.K. shield that hit.

Teej: T.K. shield?

Rev: Telekinetic.

Teej: Oh thank you. Interesting. I think he was using mental telepathy of some sort or telekinesis to keep you from hitting him.

Tass: He was using a lot of that. I mean a lot. Yeah. Mental shift. He just stopped you guys in your tracks.

Teej: Yeah. I'm wondering if we can get him to concentrate on either one thing so hard or many things, I guess equally, we might be able to penetrate that.

Jake: like he won't have the mental faculty left to protect himself.

Teej: Correct.

Rev: BILBO BAGGINS: Like Jam spread across too much bread.

Tass: Thank you for that.

Rev: You do have another hold still if you want to use it.

Teej: What sort of creature is it?

Rev: You don't have any hesitation in your mind that that was in fact Grigori Nash. He had all the telltale signs. You do not think that this was some kind of an illusion or a dupe or a ghost or anything. It was the man that you have heard about in the flesh.

Teej: Yeah. Guys I think that was really him. There's no doubt about it. In my mind.

Jake: I guess we should finish what we're doing here and let someone know they need to bolster their defenses now.

Teej: Boof. Yeah. All right. Yeah let's get back.

Rev: How are you guys going back?

Teej: I'm definitely taking the sleigh back. I mean-.

Rev: Who's driving?

Teej: I guess I'll do it, 'on Dasher on Dancer on Prancer and Vixen on comet on Cupid on Donner and Blitzen!

Rev: And it roars to life. And you guys head back to Santa's village.

Tass: I hate this sleigh.

Teej: NOEL are you there?

Rev: NOEL: Yes T.J..

Teej: Oh great. Is there any way that you can, I don't know, somehow manufacturer more defenses for this place.

Rev: NOEL: Negative. All I am able to create are the automatons who run the place. The defenses were put in place before I was created.

Teej: What about the shield is there any way to energize that even more to protect this place better?

Rev: NOEL: Not that I could do.

Tass: Is there something you could do?

Teej: Maybe. Can you show me where your shield generator is and then I'll go do some finagling?

Rev: NOEL: Yes, you have been to those locations I believe to repair the shield.

Teej: Well then I will go out and make them better.

Rev: So what exactly are you going to try to do to the shield to bolster it?

Teej: I'm going to create a device that takes the spin of the earth, the actual Coriolis effect and turns that into energy. Basically turning the earth into a power generator for Santa's shield.

Rev: Jake looks skeptical at best.

Tass: I think he's making up words personally but...

Jake: What's the Coriolis effect?

Teej: The Coriolis effect actually is a term used by snipers for the spin of the earth affecting the trajectory of bullets, like they take that into effect. It's pretty awesome.

Jake: Okay. No. No.

Teej: You still look like, "Bullshit!".

Jake: I had, I got was like, the Coriolis effect had something to do with snipers and I was like but I under- Its just the spin of the earth.

Teej: Right. A spin of the earth. Yeah. So, yeah it's, it's a machine that sensitive to the spin of the earth and as it spins, the Earth, it takes the energy from that spinning and creates energy for the shield.

Rev: Roll 'Weird Science'.

Teej: Will do. 7!

Rev: All right. So what are your options there, with a 7?

Teej: It needs a rare and or weird material.

Rev: And I'm going to say I think it is not going to be very reliable because you are trying to harness the spin from almost the top where there is no spin.

Teej: Fair enough.

Rev: You need a rare or weird material and it is going to be a, you need a metal that can transfer inertia.

Teej: An inertia transferring metal.

Rev: Correct.

Teej: All right. Well it just so happens I have a power that lets me just have things. So I'm gonna go ahead and do 'preparedness'.

Rev: All right, roll it.

Teej: Oh no!

Teej: I got a 5 on that.

Teej: Yeah. The only person you could think that would possibly have any metal like this might be Strohm.

Teej: And as I'm having this realization as I'm in the middle of building this, this machine, it's almost complete, and I have this realization and I look at the guys.

Teej: What's up buddy?

Teej: I need a metal that will transfer inertia of the earth to this machine and the only person who I think will have that sort of thing is Strohm.

Teej: Good. Jake, how many questions do you have left.

Jake: Three.

Tass: Do you want to maybe barter. See if she'll trade one of your questions that you can just use as a gimme and she just won't have to answer one. In exchange for that metal.

Jake: To my understanding I don't think that's really how it works I think, just we're both bound for six questions no matter what.

Tass: No, I know, but I mean that's what you could barter, is I'll ask you a dumb- you know "hey is your name Strom?" and she'll have to answer 'yes' and then she gives you the metal since you don't have to force her to divulge something important.

Jake: I can try. I'm going to go to Strohm land.

Rev: Where are you going to?

Jake: I think I have to go to the door man again.

Rev: Yeah. You appear at the door.

Jake: Hello. I'm here to see Miss Strohm.

Rev: DOOR MAN: Is she expecting you?

Jake: Should be.

Rev: And he pushes the button and the elevator arrives.

Jake: All right I'll go up.

Rev: And she's there waiting for you in the foyer.

Jake: Hello.

Rev: STROHM: I didn't expect to see you again so "SPOON!". She's stirring her tea.

Teej: For some reason her eyes are redder than usual.

Jake: Yeah, me either. We need a specific kind of metal that can transfer inertia and T.J. thought you might be the one to have it. So I didn't know if we could barter for that. My thought was that I could just kind of blow one of the questions you owe me on something silly and mundane so you don't have to give me a piece of good information and in return I could, I could get the medal.

Rev: STROHM: I do have a piece of that metal. There are actually only three that I know of in existence and two of them have been made into suits of armor.

Jake: Are they your suits of armor.

Rev: STROHM: I wish that is a very very rare piece. The two suits have gone missing. They have not been seen in over two hundred years, so the cost will be far more than a question.

Jake: Such as...?

Rev: STROHM: Do you have anything to offer. I hate to have to do all the thinking.

Jake: I could pat my self and like I, I don't carry a lot. I have a pretty spartan lifestyle here so...

Rev: I think that you will have to have something very good to trade for this.

Jake: Okay. Well let me go talk it over with the team and see if we can think anything.

Rev: STROHM: Very well.

Jake: All right. I'll leave her place and go back to them.

Tass: I see no medal so I assume that didn't go great.

Jake: Hey, NOEL. Do you have any records of suits of armor made of a metal that can transfer inertia, lost about two hundred years ago?

Rev: NOEL: Affirmative.

Jake: Do you have any idea where they were lost. Could I read the articles or anything you've got so we can try and track one or both of them down.

Rev: NOEL: Searching...file not found.

Jake: Interesting. Why would the file not be found.

Rev: NOEL: I do not know. It almost seems as if I do not have access to all of my programming.

Jake: Weird.

Teej: I wonder. NOEL, I found these glyphs. It almost looks like the same code that activated you. Does this mean anything? And I'm gonna show her the journal.

Rev: NOEL: It looks very similar to the code found within my system but I do not know what that code would do.

Teej: Would you go ahead and integrate it into your system then?

Rev: NOEL: Yes if you program it in.

Teej: All right I'm gonna go ahead and do that then.

Rev: And as you finish entering the code the lights around the room start to blink red and then they flash blue very quickly.

Rev: NOEL: Systems restored to full.

Jake: Thank god!

Tass: Okay.

Teej: Nice!

Rev: NOEL: This is very interesting. This happened to me a number of times but I never remember it each time. This is a fail safe code that your grandfather programmed into me. He would enter it when he would leave and enter it again when he returned and so entering it the first time locks off many areas of my database as well as access to a number of rooms within this building.

Teej: That's super smart.

Tass: Yeah. What are the other rooms?

Rev: And as you say that the stone wall on the north side of the room opens up.

Rev: NOEL: Access to teleportation chamber re-acquired.

Teej: Teleportation?

Tass: Okay, I want to head that way. I want to see what's in there.

Rev: So you guys go down this hallway and there is another set of metal doors and as you approach them it unlocks and you hear again that hermetically sealed hiss and inside you find a wall of monitors, four rows of five, and in the middle of the floor is a metal circle, very similar to the one in Rev's place, but instead of candles again you find this strange amalgamation of processor units and hieroglyphs and runes and herbs and candles. This mishmash of technology and magic.

Tass: Ok. This is pretty dope.

Teej: Yeah. What are the monitors showing.

Rev: They are blank.

Tass: Like are these like, OK so they're monitors are they like, stations or is it like a display.

Rev: That's a wall of monitors.

Tass: OK.

Teej: Are they just showing static or are they just blank, blank?

Rev: Right now they're blank, blank. They're showing nothing.

Jake: NOEL, can you like, power on these monitors or anything?

Rev: NOEL: Affirmative.

Rev: And she activates them, but now they are showing static.

Tass: What are these for?

Rev: NOEL: These are the monitors to show the other dimensions in which travel had been acquired.

Teej: How come they're showing static? Shouldn't they be showing the other dimensions?

Rev: NOEL: Yes, they should. It seems that my systems have been damaged in the teleportation room. Access to the cameras as well as my ability to turn on the portal seemed to have been disabled.

Jake: T.J. can you fix that?

Teej: Possibly. I don't see why not. I mean, I have engineering.

Rev: Ok, roll 'engineering'.

Teej: Yeah.

Tass: Nice.

Teej: That would be a 10.

Rev: So you start to fiddle with the monitors and you know they should be working at this point and they still show nothing. You assume that maybe the cameras or whatever was transmitting the images on the other side is what is broken and not so much her receiving.

Teej: Oh my gosh. NOEL can you tell us like, which worlds these are or anything, because it seems like these monitors aren't working?

Rev: NOEL: They are only designated by number.

Tass: Oh they didn't give them nicknames likem Bullet Bill world or like...

Jake: Everybody's wearing hats world.

Rev: NOEL: Negative.

Rev: And as you're looking at the monitors you notice that there are some labels underneath each one and as she had said that they were labeled by number. You see a couple of numbers that have been essentially taped underneath the monitors. You see 6 1 6, 2 8 2 and you see 3 4 2.

Teej: Wait a minute. 3 4 2.

Tass: Isn't that the one that you said your Grandpa went to.

Teej: Yeah. And then just never came back I guess. Yeah.

Jake: So did your engineering get the actual portal working or just the monitors?

Teej: That's a good question. NOEL?

Rev: NOEL: Negative.

Jake: I mean so this is, we have the potential to maybe find your grandpa. Yeah it's a hell of a thing.

Teej: Yeah.

Tass: Oh. Now that you're fully online do you have any information about that metal. The suits of armor that disappeared?

Rev: NOEL: Searching. They disappeared approximately two hundred and fifty three years ago. They were last seen in London England. No known traces.

Jake: Do you have the last known owner?

Rev: She brings a spot up on the map and you can see that it is the Royal Castle.

Tass: Oh goody.

Teej: Buckingham?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: All right. So either we come up with something really good to give to Strohm for her piece of the metal because she wasn't accepting questions or answers.

Tass: OK.

Jake: Or we try and get some from Buckingham Palace and Co.

Tass: I mean I'm down for that but again I am really struggling with the thought of doing much else without getting the spear first. NOEL? Do you know anything at all about the Shorsky National Park in Russia and maybe anything it might have to do with housing the Spear of the Chosen?

Rev: NOEL: Information on Spear of the Chosen not found. Do you have any factual information about it?

Jake: It last belonged to Lana King.

Tass: We have those news- No we have pictures of the newspaper clippings.

Jake: I do. I can pull that up on my phone and show it to NOEL.

Rev: And she scans them.

Rev: NOEL: This will take me some time to search. You said that it was located where in your belief?

Tass: Shorsky National Park.

Rev: NOEL: It will take me approximately six days, seven hours to search the park.

Jake: Ok.

Teej: Can we lock you down and still have you be searching.

Rev: NOEL: Negative.

Jake: Damn. The only other thing I can think of is that we know it's in Russia protected by a powerful woman. I am guessing, just guessing that that powerful woman is Anastasia the previous 'divine' who I've tried to contact.

Tass: She may have gotten in contact. We've not really been checking up on the, on the messages. You know there's a chance.

Jake: Yeah, I guess I've kind of had it in my head that just like, off camera between things I would have scrolled through that and you would have told me of anything important.

Rev: I don't think you guys have had a spare moment since Halloween. Like, you guys have not stopped.

Jake: Yeah. OK good. You're correct. Yeah I can pore through that stuff see if she's made contact. That would be neat.

Tass: Ok then let's break. Let's head back to IPT and kind of work through some of the checklist of things we need to get done while Noel is doing the search.

Rev: NOEL: T.J. in unlocking my systems I have found a number of programs that were not completed I believe they are intended upgrades that were never finished.

Teej: Go on?

So T.J., mechanically speaking there are a couple of screens that NOEL can take you to and show you. And with the knowledge that you have of how her systems work now and a little bit of programming that you've done to her you could attempt to continue the programming. There are three different things that you can unlock. You can attempt to enhance the speed at which she does processes.

Teej: OK.

Rev: You can attempt to enhance the number of processes she can do at one time. You can also enable the ability to transfer her from this system into another system. But that would also require you to build a proper unit for her to go into and you can see that these things are all detailed on these screens that she takes you to.

Teej: Ok, I want to go ahead and give ourselves as much of an advantage as possible so I'm gonna go ahead and try and attempt to programming these.

Rev: All right. So for each one you will roll 'weird science' before you roll know that a good success will yield a good result a negative success will yield, not just a negative result, but you could screw up part of her programming.

Teej: That sucks. Ok, well then I'll go for process speed.

Rev: All right, roll 'weird science'.

Tass: Oh that's good.

Teej: Yeah it is. That's a nine and a three That's a twelve?. I did math right? Yes. Yes. Nine and three is twelve.

Tass: T.J., The science guy, ladies and gentlemen.

Rev: And so this takes place over the course of about 15 minutes. You're able to change the programming inside. It will require you to get some additional components. You'll need sticks of ram, runes and symbols, but she is able to show you the runes that are required once you get the programming complete. So that's something that you'd be able to chisel out. You have the ability to make the parts needed or if it is the technology to purchase the parts needed because it's oddly not that different than if you were building a computer at home.

Teej: Cool. That's great. So, is this like a list I need to take with me on my way back, you think?

Rev: Correct.

Teej: OK. So what items would I need?

Rev: Irrelevant.

Teej: Oh, just the plethora things you listed.

Rev: There will be a list of things that you have to get to implement this change.

Teej: Gotcha. All right.

Rev: Is that the only one you're going to try.

Teej: It seems like this is pretty good for right now. I mean I only want her to concentrate, at the moment, on finding this one thing, so if she's running multiple systems and everything, I don't care at the moment I guess. And then putting her into like some other unit or mobile unit of some sort, I don't need that at the moment, I don't think. I think I'll hedge my bets on that. So guys I need to go to the store.

Tass: Yeah I think we need to just head back Stateside and start taking care of some business while she's running this.

Jake: OK.

Teej: All right.

END OF MYSTERY

Rev: So it's time for the four questions. Did you conclude the current mystery.

Jake: Yes, we figured out what was happening to Santa and we stopped it and we fixed their systems.

Rev: Did you save someone from certain death or worse?

Jake: Does NOEL count as a someone?

Teej: Or Santa for that matter?

Tass: She was the entity they were trying to, seemingly trying to destroy???

Jake: But she was in shut down until we brought her back.

Rev: Yeah, um, oof!

Tass: I would not be mad if you said No.

Rev: We're going to give that a hard maybe, right now. She's more of a asset. If we're going to use the Worlds in Peril terms than an NPC.

Tass: Right.

Rev: Did we learn something new and important about the world?

Tass: So many things...

Rev: Go on.

Tass: We learned about that Inter-dimensional Paranormal Task-force is a thing and we had no idea before that. So that's pretty huge.

Rev: Yeah, alright. And did we learn something new and important about one of the hunters?

Jake: We learned that T.J. his grandpa was a big bad ass at IPT.

Tass: Can we can we argue that we saved T.J. from bleeding-out under...No that's not someone else that's just us.

Rev: Correct.

Tass: Man you were shish-kebabled. Remember that? LOL!

Jake: We saved Jingles...

Tass: After killing him first.

Jake: We brought him back from death by restoring the systems that could rebuild him.

Teej: What we like to call system death.

Rev: So, the nice thing is, even though you guys are fighting for this fourth point it results in the same thing when it comes to experience. Everybody gets two point of experience and you get 6 gear points.

Jake: I think I had my whole shitload left from last time too I don't think I've spent one in a while.

Rev: Does anybody level up.

Teej: I level up.

Rev: All right. So what're you going to take?

Teej: I'm going to go ahead and advance two more of my basic moves. I'm going to go with 'read a bad situation' which allows me, whenever I get a 12 or more, to ask any question to the keeper that I'd like.

Rev: You guys still haven't hit that on 'investigative a mystery'. I'm waiting for it to come up.

Teej: Yeah. I'm waiting for us to get a good roll on, you know,'read a bad situation' sometime too.

Tass: Or anything really.

Rev: Anything that's not 'kick some ass.'.

Teej: Right. And then I'm going to go ahead and take the 'weird science' advance, as well, which gives me a plus one ongoing whenever I'm operating whatever it is I create.

Rev: Yes. Which I think it brings us to an important point. This is a thing that we were not playing before. I had had T.J. create his devices with weird science and then I just had always assumed that they were doing the thing he wanted. But there will be times now in the future when T.J. will have to roll to actually use his device, that the weird science is just to create it. So if you are playing along at home you might be something that you should add if you aren't doing it because I sure missed that. So, you will not get a plus one, example that Jake had given previously when we talked about this was when you built the sleigh, if T.J. had driven the sleigh, he could have gotten a plus one on that 'act under pressure.'

Jake: And I leveled up too.

Rev: All right, what're you going to take?

Jake: I am going to take 'add plus one to any rating' and get my 'weird' up to a plus three.

Rev: Oh all right. So plus three weird.

Jake: Plus three 'weird', plus three 'tough.'

Rev: This went from a group of all negative or no 'weird', to two plus three 'weirds.' Is that right.

Jake: Yeah.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: How the times have changed, how the tables have turned.

Teej: We've grown so much.

Rev: Sunrise, Sunset. So, is there anything within the adventure you guys want to talk about? The thing that really surprised me was that T.J. accessed a lot of NOEL's stuff way faster than I imagined. You know, if you guys had arrived and Jake had not inadvertently melted down Santa's brain by instantly guessing that he was a robot...You know because if NOEL had been up and running these robots are sophisticated enough that they could have withstood that kind of catch 22. But with her systems down.... That was the first thing out of the gate, I thought there's a chance they may never even find NOEL, because if the systems above ground work right, they're going to go away thinking like "oh we saved Santa awesome." But, you guys found, kind of, the secret that I had hidden here that I thought maybe you would never find or would not find for quite a while yet. So that's a very lucky coincidence that- I can't remember what triggered it but you just went. "Are you a robot?" And I went "Oh no! Because, I sure am!".

Jake: It was- He repeated something exactly the same. I had asked him a question and he said it and I kind of I kind of joked on like how "gamey" it sounded because he was just very much like an NPC in a game giving me a quest. And then like, asked him another question and he kind of double down on the exact same thing and I went, "this dude's an NPC in a video game give me a quest" and I said "Are you a robot."

Rev: And so you know, that led to the finding of NOEL, which led to T.J. being able to kind of hack into the systems and repair that.

Tass: I still never asked NOEL or anybody, why do they have a Krampus here!?

Rev: That is accurate. You guys never took any time to figure out about, what is the deal with Krampus?

Teej: Solid question.

Rev: Maybe that's something you guys can can find out later or I could just tell you, but that's not as fun.

Teej: Yeah. Let us find out.

Rev: He might have escaped who knows.

Tass: Oh no!

Jake: I'm picturing that like the systems came back up and like they're kind of advanced intelligent again but like Krampus like took the opportunity to flee the North Pole and

start a new life and he's somewhere in like Europe like a market buying his bread and like he's finally free. And we go back to NOEL and we're like "What about Krampus?" "Hey NOEL can you like remote shut down?" "Yeah." His last thought is just like "Finally, I found peace." *Bzz*.

Tass: Aww!

Rev: Anything else?

Tass: Man, it's real daunting that we were chin to chin with Nash.

Rev: Right. You guys finally met Grigori Nash in a complete fluke. Jake kind of messed with the magic that they were using to communicate with him and it brought him here.

Teej: Good job, Jake!

Jake: Yeah. That was God. Like it's, it's kind of hard to materialize how outgunned you are when all you hear is a name and kind of like the legends and stuff. It's like, "Oh, Grigori Nash is like Voldemort. He's untouchable he could vaporize you." and it's like "yeah I can hear all that but I don't necessarily buy it."

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Until he freezes two of us in place and when I break free I hit him and literally nothing happens and now it's very very real. Oh yes he's like Voldemort you can vaporize me with a thought.

Rev: Yeah. And you know in character you guys had no idea what had happened but you straight up as players saw him just drink a point of Jake's luck when he was angry. He was upset by the way he was spoken to and he took it out on the last person who had kind of done something towards him. And that's unlike something you guys have ever seen before you know, luck is a precious resource that you guys have sometimes spent a level to get back. And the fact that he just, "om nom nom nom nom."

Jake: Yeah he just ate a level from me outright.

Rev: Yeah. I think it's a very daunting message that he left you with too like it's almost kind of like what Green Goblin says to Spider-man, the idea that "oh I'll let you live, but think of all the people I could hurt and how much more painful that will be for you."

Tass: And as scary as that is, all I can think about is how honored I am to be compared to Spider-Man in this analogy. Thank you for that, Rev...

Jake: So you guys have got six days to kind of kill some time. We have paused here for a moment to talk about what it is you're going to kind of do during this chunk of time. Let's go through each one of you. How you deal with the time we're going to you're going to go with T.J. first because he effects the time. So T.J.'s first day is going to be shopping for the components and getting a little bit of help from IPT.

Teej: Correct.

Rev: On the components to complete NOEL's upgrade, which actually, as you install that, changes everything. NOEL's countdown time to her searching of the forest and Russia goes from six days to four days. So you all actually only have four days to kind of accomplish some tasks. You said that next you were going to spend some time researching inter-dimensional travel.

Teej: Yes.

Rev: So what you find going through the notes from your grandfather, going through the different files that you find in NOEL, as well as the books there is that it is going to take 'big magic' to reactivate this, essentially time travel circle. It is going to take a while to get it up and running again, but it would be what the game considers 'big magic.' So to do 'big magic' here are the things that you're going to have to find for this 'big magic.' So, you have to find an item that's from another plane.

Teej: A dimensional link of some sort.

Rev: Yeah, just something that exists from another world. You're going to need to research the spell to actually activate this ability. You also have to find the spell that will let you operate it. So one spell is going to basically recreate the structure that lets you travel from dimension to dimension but you also have to have another spell to start it each time. Someone will have to cast a spell to basically open the rift.

Teej: So like a jump start.

Rev: Exactly. And then the last thing is that will take seven days of preparation.

Teej: OK.

Rev: So there's be seven days of preparation. There will be the spell to basically run it in addition to the spell to create the event and then you'll also have to have an item connected to another dimension just kind of to attune it to the ability to go to different places.

Teej: That's a pretty 'big magic.'!

Rev: It is. Perhaps the largest we've done. And then you said the last thing was that you wanted to create- what did you call it again?

Teej: It is a an inter-dimensional multi-tool.

Rev: Explain to me what this inter-dimensional multi-tool does.

Teej: Well, what it is, is it's basically like a sensor that once you travel to like another dimension or something, it will determine like the time-scape in relation to let's say our world. So our world is 24 hours. What is that compared to then.

Rev: Right.

Teej: Like, kind of like with Elnor, where one second was like a day or something like that or vice versa.

Tass: Not quite that big. But, Yeah yeah we get yah.

Teej: Yeah. So, like I want to know like what kind of like their lunar cycles if need be.

Jake: And you also talked about the idea of it being able to detect magic or something like Wi-Fi signals.

Teej: Yes.

Rev: Does this place have technology does it have magic? So for that roll 'weird science' and this is gonna be kind of theoretical because you're testing it in a vacuum. You don't really have anything to compare it against and you won't know till you go someplace, if it works and how reliably.

Teej: Gotcha, that would be an 8.

Rev: All right. So what is your condition?

Teej: It's gonna need massive amounts of power.

Jake: That's the one I was going to pick as well so I will go with 'it won't be reliable' seems just rude, but you know what that's what it is, actually.

Tass: It says "yeah there's air" as we're like *heavy breathing noise*

Jake: I think that it will not be reliable in that- and we'll go through and we'll make a list of 'here are the things that it gives you' and we'll let's say that there are six of them. The six things that it's going to measure are: radio frequencies, magic in the world, time passage versus the time passage of where you are now, it'll track the rift that you went through, so that you can get back, if you put water in it or if you put soil in it or if you hold it up in the air it will let you know the elements that exist, and then it will also check for a hospitable environment, it will check the breathable air and the gravity. So those are your six elements. One of them will always be wrong. One of the six readouts will not be correct.

Teej: But we won't know which one?

Rev: Correct.

Jake: "Is there air? You don't know!".

Rev: That is T.J.'s four days. Let's go to Jake. So Jake's first day, you said you were gonna help Rev move, you're going to relocate him to T.J.'s secret hideout.

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: And so that does take the full day because I think that he's taking everything he can. So it is you guys tearing up the ring. It is you guys taking down his defenses he thinks that this place is essentially 'burned' and so it is tedious day of moving enchantments and you know pulling up the ring and packing books and just all of his stuff over to T.J.'s place. On the second day, you're gonna go through the list- actually before we move on to the second day, T.J., are you going to tell Rev how to get in and out or is he just stuck there after Jake teleports him and his stuff in.

Teej: I would assume that he wouldn't want to know how.. .

Rev: How to get out?

Teej: How to get in. Because I mean we don't want that kind of information getting out to people.

Rev: So you're putting him in an unknown location with no way in or out ever.

Teej: Right. But I mean he'll be safe. I mean unless he starts a fire or something and then like burns the place I mean....

Rev: Yeah, what could go wrong with magic?

Rev: Right.

Jake: I mean I would I would let him know he can 'call out' essentially like everything is untraceable out of here and if he needs me to get him out to let me know I might not be there immediately but I'll be there as soon as possible.

Rev: So what kind of supplies are you leaving him with?

Jake: Whatever he says he needs, you know I get him something to sip on.

Rev: No I mean like, days of food and water for example.

Jake: Just like how many days of food and water?.

Rev: Because this could be relevant. You guys could vanish to another dimension for a year.

Jake: OK. Yeah that's a good point. I need to have a talk with T.J. then about telling him the way out.

Rev: You guys come back from Elnor and he's just a skeleton. So on Jake's second day, Jake is going to go through his list, the emails, the voicemails, whatever he's gotten from his kind of superhero hotline that he posted after his fight with the thunder lizard. You do not find anything from the previous divine in the messages. On the third day, Jake goes out and complete some of the requests that were put into his hotline just helping out where he can. Jake you get three gear points from that. It's the only thing that I can think to give you as a reward. On the fourth day, Jake you are, where? Are you in with Rev? Are you in Indianapolis? Are you in the North Pole? I think it's, you know, T.J. spent the bulk of his time in the North Pole for example.

Jake: I probably would have still been in Indianapolis like I imagine I would have still just been trying to grind out some missions like some tasks for people. I don't know what's about to happen to me but probably interrupting me kind of scrolling through and going "Alright, What's the next one."

Rev: OK.

Jake: And on my way somewhere and Indy.

Tass: Tass, let's go through yours. So Jake is in Indy on day four. You're going to debrief Margaret you're going to go and tell her about things that you guys found there. Again I'm sorry for anybody listening that we kind of condense this but this was a very long conversation of figuring out what all we were going to go through. You were going to spend your second day trying to hunt down the other circles in Indianapolis. You guys know were the first one is. You know the measurements of these, you just want to go kind of spot these other places, see if you can find anything going on there. So roll 'investigate a mystery.'

Tass: Okay. Alright! Eleven!

Rev: All right so you get a hold two.

Tass: 'What's being concealed here?' is my obvious one.

Rev: So you do find evidence at one of the locations that something had gone on here but it seems like someone came in actually and cleaned this one up, opposed to what you had seen at the Halifax. The Halifax just seemed to kind of been left but here it seems that everything was cleaned up. You don't find any actual candles, but you do find spots of residue. It's inside an old apartment building and what you find that is very strange is a closet at the kind of epicenter of where you think this was happening and inside of this closet are dozens of uniforms, but different kinds, police officer, construction worker, flight attendant, pilot, racecar driver, delivery driver, and just all kinds of uniforms.

Tass: Okay.

Rev: So what's your second question?

Tass: 'What happened here?'

Rev: So as you go around and you investigate this first location you can see that this ritual happened here and you're able to find the circle that you believe the creature is supposed to go into. Based off of the layout of the circles that Rachel told you about and Rev had demonstrated and what happened here is that someone came back, they got undressed and they laid down in their bed and underneath the bed was that circle. So whoever it was that laid into that bed was the thing something was being transferred from. And you can see that like the most recent outfit crumpled on the floor is that of an auto mechanic. But it doesn't you don't find like another one. There are just like I said dozens of different types of uniforms. And as you look through the uniforms you find different names on the tags but inside you find a very very thin almost layer, it looks like dust or something leftover from spray paint. There's a kind of residue inside of every one of these uniforms.

Teej: Ok. I think I'd actually take a couple and just fold them up and and bring those back.

Jake: All right so you get to the second location roll 'investigate a mystery.'.

Tass: Oh! That's six...

Rev: Yeah. You don't find anything here. It seems that it has been spotlessly cleaned. You don't even find a residue from the candles. But you know that this is where this should have happened. It is actually a park but there is nothing. You think that the weather probably has helped clean that since it happened so long ago.

Tass: OK.

Rev: So what do you want to do. I know that you had talked about on your third day training, but now you have these uniforms what do you want to do with these.

Tass: I would definitely want to run that past somebody. I know T.J. is working on the other stuff so I probably can't mess that up but I would definitely report into IPT about it and say, you know, I wonder if there's a way to analyze any of the residue.

Rev: Yeah. Actually you take these in and I don't think that this is a rare enough occurrence that it is not something they know. They tell you that the residue comes from a shape-shifter.

Tass: Oh, OK. Very cool, yeah. And I guess that that would be that day, I'd get that information and I'd let the boys know "hey that other 'whatever', the other thing that they were trying to get was a Shapeshifter."

Rev: Yeah. So you know two of the three creatures the Soul-Bat and the Shape-shifter.

Tass: Oh God. OK.

Rev: And so then your third day is your training. You said you want to find a spear and just kind of train with it, try to learn to fight better with it.

Tass: Yeah, I think all of my training so far has been guns and now I'm gonna have to do this shift and I don't even know if I'm capable of it. So, that would just be that montage of day of trying to do sweet spins and stuff with a quarter-staff Yeah.

Rev: And then on your final day you are going to go into the research area where NOEL is and try to find anything about the chosen. And, you are able to find a couple stories about her just various people that she had saved where she had done it. It's not really anything in depth that gives you any kind of new insight on her, but you do feel when you leave that day that you know her a little better. It's weird to say but something about these stories and seeing her words, you hear them in her voice because you've heard her talk in your head and so you feel like you know her a little bit better and you can see why her chosen weapon was the spear, because she was always trying to fend off things dangerous so they couldn't get too close to the person she was standing in front of. Jake on your final day back in Indianapolis you are getting ready to go on to another one of your checklist items and Saul pops out of your sleeve.

Rev: SAUL: I just got a message, we need to go.

Jake: OK.

Rev: And there is a flash of light and the two of you are gone and you appear again in that very familiar white room and Saul shifts into the defender.

Rev: DEFENDER: Jacob, it's good to see you.

Jake: You too.

Rev: DEFENDER: Something that has happened in the last few days has cleared our vision. The path is still not set but we can see paths again, which is no small thing. I

believe that T.J. must be on the precipice of fulfilling his role and you must see that he is successful, but there will be change, Jake. Every path I see demands it your time as the defender may be coming to a close, the others believe *labored breathing*.

Rev: And he falls to one knee and he starts to fluctuate and change and before you hovers a figure in dark armor brandishing a flaming sword with a long cloak trailing out behind them.

Rev: DARK ARMORED FIGURE: The time of the defender draws to a close, Jacob. There is nothing left to defend. Enemies are in the walls all around you, but they will pay. They will pay for the things they have done and the things they soon will do. You, Jacob, will no longer be the shield. You will become the sword. You will strike with the righteous fury! You will become our Executioner!

TO BE CONTINUED