

Episode 50 Celebration Questions (S1, E50 – Q/A)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hey everybody, and welcome to Episode 50. If you're unfamiliar with the show, don't start here. What a -- what a horrible idea. If you've stumbled across us and started playing this episode, this is a series. They are not self-contained stories. So go back to the beginning.

Teej: That's right.

Rev: But we'll see you here in a while. And now for those of you who joined us before and had to start from the beginning, welcome to you, too. So we're doing things a little ... [laughs]

Jake: [laughs] What?

Rev: I mean, because they would get there eventually. Like -- I'm like, "Hey, don't listen here." And then they would go back and listen through --

Tass: OK. I follow. I follow.

Jake: Yeah. I heard U2. Like the band.

Tass: [laughs] Oh. And welcome to U2.

Jake: And I was like, is this a reference I don't understand?

Rev: No, they're avid listeners. Welcome, U2.

Jake: Welcome, Bono. And ... The other ones.

Rev: So we're doing something a little different for this introduction. We have had listeners for the last week and a half submitting questions, and we have a good chunk of questions. Enough that I've actually saved some of them, because some of them are specific to story arcs. And a couple of weeks from now, we're going to actually have another kind of dissection episode where we talk about the story arcs. So I'm going to save those questions for then. So if you don't hear your question asked today, I promise you it will be asked in just a while.

All right. So. "What has been each of your favorite monsters so far?"

Jake: This is difficult for me to answer, because a lot of the monsters aren't monsters to us anymore.

Rev: Right.

Jake: Like, many of my favorite monsters are just NPCs at this point. Because like, I think my favorite monster's Ori. And it's just -- it's it's hard to call him a monster. But I'm going to stick with that. I think Ori is my favorite, because he was just ... It was out of nowhere. And weirdly, largely without consequence, in a lot of ways.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Like ... It's like, "Oh my god, this guy's a vampire!" And like five minutes later, "Yeah. He aight."

Rev: Yeah. And I know I've talked about this a couple of times. I don't necessarily know that I've talked about it on here. But Ori was originally the big bad at that location. He was the one in charge. But because of the way you guys interacted with him ... You were friendly with him, you joked with him ... Kind of in the moment, I was like, this doesn't feel right. No, he's not the bad guy here. And, you know, as you guys were kind of going through, dealing with the other things, the back part of my brain was kind of rewriting him. So yeah. I loved the way that you guys interacted with him, because it changed him in a very drastic way.

Tass: For me personally, it had -- it has to be the vrykolakas. I think it just ties into what ended up being obviously a very big change for my character. And um, just dealing with all that, and essentially dealing with what was our first big loss.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Tass: Was ... Was just really cool. So yeah, I just dug everything about that, dug who it ended up being. Yeah. I liked it.

Rev: Yeah. Kim is very sad about your statement, that that was your first big loss.

Jake: I was about to say, what you consider a big loss is pretty rough.

Tass: I mean loss as in ... Not loss of person, but loss of --

Rev: Oh, I see. Like failed the kind of --

Tass: We just outright failed.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Like yeah, we didn't do great, obviously. We lost people in the space station and so on, but --

Rev: Yeah. But you still succeeded.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Whereas the vrykolakas did exactly what he was supposed to do.

Tass: Right.

Teej: I would have to say that my favorite monster is Damien O'Doyle, because O'Doyle rules. And it has to do with the fact that he hit me first. It was love at first ... I was love at first hit and run.

Rev: [laughs]

Teej: No, like seriously. Like, I just find ... Whenever you said speed demon, I just lost it. Because I love puns.

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: For one. But yeah, he's the embodiment of speed, or whatever that is. But in a very cool way, too. So.

Rev: I think for me, it's ... It's hard, because I want to say Baba Yaga. But again, she's not really a monster. So I'm going to go with Estin -- only because of the sheer number of people who message me, going --

Jake: Who hate the voice.

Rev: "What is wrong with you? How do you do this? And never do it again."

Tass: That's a very close second for me, honestly.

Rev: All right. So next. "On Investigate a Mystery, sometimes there will be a hold 2 or 3, and the answer to the first question usually results in enough speculation that the others never get asked. For example, when they first saw Koschei in the woods, they responded to the first answer, but never used the other holds. Are they allowed to go ahead and ask all of the questions before reacting? It was driving me crazy that 'What sort of creature is this?' Had never been asked."

Well, just in the sense of the simple part of that question, yes, they can use all questions before time starts again. I would imagine that some players in other games, the thing that they probably end up asking the most is, what is it? And, how can I hurt it?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: But you guys are much more concerned with figuring out what's going on, and figuring out how to kind of protect the people around you or divert the creature, than you are on killing it the first encounter.

Teej: Well I think that's because you set up such a world where it's kind of a gray area now. We don't know what monsters are friends and which just are enemies, so.

Rev: Yeah. That's fair.

Tass: On top of that, I think where we go wrong with that, where we kind of skip the rest is -- we've been doing improv together for 17 years, for God's sake. And I think just that little bit of improv 101 has locked down to, "OK, I've got a thing and I'm reacting to it."

Rev: Mmhmm.

Tass: And we're just going with what we heard, and trying to keep that action going. And we're ignoring the other kind of rules of improv of, it's OK to listen and take it in and then respond, so.

Jake: I think that we would use a lot more of the hold we get if we did not act out the results of each one. You know, like if we went. "OK. I've got 3 hold. I'm going to ask these three questions before I do anything with it." We'd use them.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Jake: But we have a tendency to get the answer to the first one and go, "You know guys, I think that it's this ..." And give the rest of the people an opportunity to chime in.

Rev: Uh-huh.

Jake: And then we just get drug away with it.

Tass: [laughs] Yeah.

Jake: You know, it's like, "Oh, guys --" like, "T.J., like -- you know, I think that actually those might be werewolves." And we're like, "OK. Well, if it's werewolves, then we need to do this thing." And we just -- we just go. But if T.J. had gone, "OK, what kind of creature is it?" "It's a werewolf." "OK. What can it do?"

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: And then went, "Guys I think they're werewolves, which means they can do this." You know, we would have used our information, and still gone a similar direction.

Rev: Which, I mean, is not a necessarily negative thing. It shows the drive of you all acting. Like, it is action. It is not sitting and thinking too much, which could be a downfall sometimes. But it is -- it shows your drive to act as soon as you think you can, which is good. All right. Next. "Your episodes are so short and efficient. How much real life play time does each session take, and how much -- aside from table talk, etc. -- gets cut out?"

You know, really, when we're done recording, the file is usually an hour and five minutes to an hour and ten minutes. And for the most part, what you guys get is somewhere between 45, 50 minutes. There have been a couple times where it's 35, 37 minutes. So not a whole lot gets cut out. And usually a big chunk of it is just silence. Once I go through the process of editing the sound, I truncate it. And I usually lose about ten minutes just truncating -- it if not more, sometimes. So. Really a bulk of what is here stays in, with the exception of if someone has to do a redo, or maybe somebody says something that's not factually accurate to the story. But actual verbiage that is cut out isn't a whole lot. And it's definitely not as much as it used to be, you know, 50 or even 20 episodes ago.

Teej: It's because you've gotten good at hitting that pause button.

All: [laugh]

Rev: That's true. I can feel when things are starting to go bad. So like, I'm just gonna pause this, and let you guys puzzle it out.

"Tass said he does not drink. Has he never drank?"

Tass: That is accurate. I have never had a sip of alcohol in my life. Weird thing about that, though, I did have a lot of friends in high school that constantly tried to get me to, and it just never worked. But something that I did get from them is, I always like to smell their drinks to see if it was something that I would like.

Tass: Mostly off their breath.

Tass: [laughs] Yeah. Exactly. No, but I still to this day, like, I'll always ask it the same way. "Hey, I know this is weird, but can I smell your drink?" And just, yeah. I have come to realize that I am a rum guy.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Jake: Did you smell Joe's terrible pineapple juice thing?

Tass: Yeah, I did.

Jake: OK. Yeah. How did it smell?

Tass: Terrible.

Jake: OK. Because it was a bad taste as well.

Tass: [laughs] Good. Good.

Rev: "What does your prep look like for a session?"

So for me, I actually don't prep per session. I prep a story arc. And that is making a map if one is required, making a list of NPCs -- kind of picking what their job is, some personality traits -- making the monsters, and you know, deciding their damage and their hit points and what their weaknesses, and all that. And really other than that, I don't do much prep at all. Because as Tass said, you know, we've been improvising for 17 years. And any story that I write out, it's not gonna matter after 15 minutes. At least in the sense of specifics. Like, if we were playing Pathfinder, you know, we're playing a Pathfinder

Adventure Path. So that is laid out. And really, there's not a whole lot of getting away from that story. And if you do, you're still going to come back to the part that you skipped. You know, that's not how this game works. I've kind of said from the beginning that to force people down a storyline is disingenuous to the way this game works. So I actually don't do a whole lot of story prep. I know what the creature is, what its objective is, who's in danger, where they're at. And then at the beginning of every story arc, I also track how much time has passed, and any important player not involved in that story, I make a note of, okay, what have they been doing? And where are they now?

Tass: For Hero Salad, it's very different than when I run, you know, the few little things that I do run for friends. Because Hero Salad has been so near and dear to my heart for so very long that I just know the world already. I know what's going on with this story overall. I know where everybody is in this city, in this world. So it's more just a matter of prepping what I think you guys are gonna do, to make sure I have the stats for the stuff you might have to fight or deal with. And beyond that, it's just kind of gauging where you guys are going to go. So, you know, a lot of it is kind of just that weekly prep of making sure I have whatever corner of the city ready that I think you guys are going to deal with. But other than that, it's just -- it's kind of already laid out. The groundwork's there.

Rev: "How do you have so many fitting options for each random hijinks the guys make happen? Do you have a bunch -- do you have a bunch of roll tables or something? Would this be answered if I had the book to read? Do you come up with three options for Act Under Pressure on the fly? Do you have some in mind, or do you edit out dead time while you come up with the options?"

I mean, I can let these guys kind of refute this if it's not true. I mean, for the most part, again, it is just the way my mind works. The way that I come up for the options for Act Under Pressure is that I just take a second and I imagine myself in that situation as they're telling me the roll. And I feel like we've all been in that situation in life where I'm, you know, going for a run or whatever. And I trip, and in that moment of tripping, time kind of slows down a bit. And my mind goes, "All right. Well, I could try to catch myself on my hand, but I might break my wrist. I could try to roll with this, and take the damage on my shoulder. Or I could, you know, try to go to my knees." And so it's just always trying to figure out, like, if things are gonna go badly, how are they going to go badly?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Because I feel like we all have a little bit of choice in that. Which I -- you know, we found out recently -- not everybody does three choices. In fact, most people don't. But I just like the idea that even in failing, you still have a little bit of control.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: So I feel like ... Every now and then, there's a hesitation for the third one. But for the most part, I feel like I kind of rattle them off, just because that's where my brain goes.

Tass: Yeah. Absolutely. He hits us with them pretty rapid fire. And again, you can refute me, here. But I feel like any of the times that I've seen you actually have to stop and think, it isn't about the options. It's about --

Jake: How bad does he want to hurt us?

All: [laugh]

Tass: Well, not even that. But just like, "Oh god, the thing that they did is changing this track." And you're almost -- I almost feel like I'm watching you decide, "Well, what's going to happen after we wrap up this?"

Rev: Yeah -- what direction am I going to push this?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: "How do you come up with ideas for the adventures?"

That's actually a really hard question. It's different every time. Sometimes I come up with a monster, and other times I just come up with the environment. Or other times I'm like, what would be something fun for them to do? And then, how can I make it dangerous? I don't have a formula. You know, Hawaii was kind of just for shits and giggles. I was like, OK. They've been through this rough time dealing with, you know, the Halifax. What would be fun to do? You know what? They're gonna go to Hawaii. We're gonna do a vacation episode on the second story arc.

And then for the Eye of Horus, it was, OK -- what's the opposite of this? I want to go the exact opposite of big open sky and beaches and plenty of area to explore. You know what? I'm gonna go for that kind of confinement horror. It's really kind of different every time.

You know, the Halloween story and the following story with the vrykolakas was simply spawned from the death of that character. That was too good of an opportunity pass off, knowing what the vrykolakas was. So.

Tass: Yeah. I think you do a really good job of not only laying that out to be, you know, different feels and, you know, keeping us on our toes -- as well as the listeners. But then also at featuring us. So that, you know, we're kind of highlighted in different ways based on what's going on at the time.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: So that has its own level of keeping things different and off-kilter.

Teej: And I think also it's us. Like, you know us, for a very long time. And you know what it is that we can understand, and what we like as geeks and nerds and things like that. So like, for example, while I'm doing my little offshoot little thing -- Agrabah 2018 -- the group I'm with, I know that they love Disney.

Rev: Right.

Teej: Yeah. And they know that world, and everything.

Rev: Thank god.

Teej: Thank goodness, yeah.

All: [laugh]

Rev: It's just a torture campaign.

Teej: [laughs] Yeah. Cause I think you know us so well that you could get away with a lot more of, you know, throwing different things at us that we can understand and everything.

Jake: Like our deepest, darkest fears.

Teej: That's right.

Tass: [laughs]

Rev: In my defense, a lot of that was accidental pull.

Um. Yeah. You know, a good example is that -- and sometimes people say something and it plant a seed that I don't want to use right away -- but I remember after Elnore, Jake was real bummed that he didn't get to use his car in any big way. And I thought, OK, at some point there's gonna be an episode that is, you know, Smokey and the Bandit. Now unfortunately, that car didn't get a lot of play in that episode, but I did specifically design that so that, you know, Jake could get to use his car. But, you know, best laid plans, and all that.

Jake: I mean, I got to shoot a handgun out the window of a car. Like, that's all I wanted.

Rev: You did get to shoot a werewolf off your sunroof, too.

Jake: Yeah. I did a lot of cool shit in this one. I'm more than happy.

Rev: "When you finish your current campaign, what do you plan on doing next?"

No idea.

Jake: Retiring.

Rev: Turn this into a cooking show.

Jake: Good one. [laughs]

Rev: Um. Yeah. I mean, I'm really not sure. I have a concept of how long this will go. And I think at that point, it'll just be a matter of seeing what the audience is interested in. It will probably be a game that, unless people just demand it, they'll probably be characters. We could have some change up, or addition to the cast. I have no idea. You know, it's a couple years away. And, you know, life can change so much. So I couldn't even guess what we'll do next.

So this is actually very sweet. "Just know that your work has helped me through some rough patches lately. The laughs, leaving me on the edge of my seat, it is all helped me out of some dark places. So thank you for that. Along those lines, did you all ever think you would be able to do that for others?"

Tass: I can obviously only speak for myself, here. But that is the hope. And hearing that really gets me in the feels. And I ... I appreciate it. That is very, very sweet. I am going to forget who it was that wrote this, but it's some author that was talking about how they don't call themselves an entertainer -- they call themselves an escape artist.

Rev: Oh, I like that.

Tass: Yeah. And ... Like that, what a cool way to use that term. Is, you know, the whole goal is to make people forget about the shit, and, you know, relate to something else. And feel like they can be a part of something bigger and more important -- or even just sillier and more relaxed, or whatever it is. And obviously, everything's going to touch different people in different ways. But man, as entertainers, that's -- that's the goal. That's where we want to get people. And so, yeah. It's -- it means a lot to hear that. So thank you.

Rev: Yeah. I mean, like Tass said, that was the goal. The whole reason I started doing the research for this and asked everybody to participate was because the first podcast that I ever listened to, a great actual play podcast called The Glass Cannon, did that for me. And I thought, man, if I could take the two things that I love, which are entertainment and games, and be able to do that for somebody else, even just one person. I don't think that enough can be said on a daily basis about being able to make even just one person's day brighter. So yeah. While I did not expect it, it was my biggest hope.

Teej: I'll admit that whenever I first started with this, I was a little on the fence about it. I've never done this, one. And then two, I have such big doubt about myself. I have no doubt about these three gentlemen, because I know they rock so hard, and everything. But like for myself? I ... I doubt and doubt and doubt, and it always encompassed me. And then one day it was actually like come to Jesus sort of moment, that Rev like sat me down and he talked with me about this and everything. And it was like, you know, one of these talks where it's like, "Hey look, we're putting a lot of effort into this. You need to, too." And I was like, "Yeah. I know. I know. I know." You know, I was kind of giving him that lip service. And then, man, the next thing he said? He's like, "T.J., I love you, man." And I've never heard that from Rev before. And it, like, shocked me. Not just in the feels, but like, in my motivations and things. So I think that everybody deserves a chance. And they've given me more than enough chances. So I definitely love to have the chance and opportunity to help others as well with that.

Jake: I don't take positive feedback well, and I don't feel important enough to have enacted that kind of feeling in other people. So you're going to have to lobotomize me to convince me that I have had a good effect on anybody. But I really appreciate hearing that. I just can't comprehend that anybody wants to listen to me do anything or enjoys it. But I'm sure glad you guys invited me. Thank you.

Rev: "For Rev. What has been the most surprising narrative choice you've had to make while GMing, based off the way the gang has played things out?"

I'm going to say probably the destruction of the North Pole, and NOEL being captured. You know, we actually talked earlier about this. Kind of the first piece of information is what we end up acting on. And, you know, they had figured out, OK -- what do we going to do to make the shield stronger? Which would have been enough to protect her. And I think you guys went to Strohm, and you weren't sure what she wanted. And so you left to kind of figure out like, oh, what can we trade her for the ... I can't even remember what it was you needed.

Jake: Some kind of metal.

Rev: Yeah. After you guys left, something -- I don't even know if it was big -- but something happened. And you all kind of went, you know what? Let's go to Russia. And then you left. And I thought, "Oh, no. This is out there in the world." You know ... The audience, the world, the ether, whatever, knows that the North Pole needs better defenses. And they just left without finishing it. So there's got to be heavy ramifications for that. And so I think that's probably the thing that surprised me the most in the moment.

"And then on the other side, for T.J., Tass, and Jake. Have there been any moments where you've surprised yourself with the decision your character made, as opposed to the decision you would have made?"

Teej: Yeah. I was very surprised by everything I've ever made a decision for.

Tass: [laughs] Us, too.

Teej: Cause a lot of that stuff is, again, the improv training and word association. And the first thing that comes to my mind, and that's the decision I'm making. And that's how I honestly live life, too. It's kind of true.

Tass: I've seen it.

Teej: It's kind of ridiculous.

Jake: You guys know that bit? I think it's Brian Regan. Where he talks about like, saying something, and like the words leave. And then he's like, "No!" And trying to cram them back in his mouth?

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Half of that is like T.J.

All: [laugh]

Jake: Where like, you know, he says the things. And like, he sees them leave. And he's surprised. And then he just goes, "Yes."

Rev: "Yeah. All right. This is what I have birthed."

Jake: "Yes. I've done it." I mean, honestly? Much of the violence that my character does. Like, I know how to describe violence because I am a fighter. Like, I am a martial artist. That's what I do. That's what I taught. I know how to hurt people. But I don't actually like hurting people. I like the academics and the sport of it. But so from the moment that in-game me, like, hurt anybody or anything or killed it? That was not me anymore. Like, I can't, I can't -- I don't fish, because I don't like to hurt the fish. So it is just like -- yeah. All of the ways that I have hurt people in this game is like, oh my god, I can't believe ... Like, I could have never done this.

Teej: Yeah. How would you like a hook in your mouth, huh?

Jake: That is kind of a last step for Jake. I feel like I've only seen him get frustrated enough where he even talked about violence, let alone acted any out on anybody.

Tass: I don't know. The closest that I can come up to -- and I think this is an answer to a different question, honestly -- is just some of the decisions that I've made that real world Tass would probably just freeze in that situation, as opposed to make a hard decision.

Rev: Right.

Tass: You know, real world Tass would have been dead so, so long ago in these situations.

Rev: Yeah.

"Is there anything you guys feel especially proud of about the game so far?"

Tass: Do we want to divide this up? Like, is this a decision in the game or moments in the game? Or just overall with the process?

Rev: I would say either or both, if you got one.

Tass: I think my in-game sort of -- not necessarily in-game, but kind of -- is just dealing with the Dr White situation. I ... Just of ... Calling it.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Because we kind of talked early on, and usually don't even give stuff up. But it was just important to me to know that, I think. And I think you realize that, that I wrote down on that little piece of paper, "It's Dr. White, isn't it?" And you gave me the solemn nod. And I was like, oh my god, I can't believe we have to deal with this. And I'm just kind of proud of getting through that entire arc without telegraphing that at all, or without leaning into that, story-wise.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Because I'm not particularly great at that. You know, in general. With, you know, kind of hiding that stuff, or not accidentally leaning towards something I already know. But I held strong.

Jake: In-game, convincing The Defender to keep me.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Because like after we did that, after we finished that recording, Rev was like, "That wasn't an option."

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Like, "There was no consequence where that was the ending. But your speech was good enough that it swayed me. And thus, swayed The Defender."

Rev: Yeah. I actually just talked about that moment on an interview that I did. That that is ... You know, for me again, the whole idea of not being locked into a story. That if a moment changes me as the storyteller or as the character, I'm not going to ignore that, because it's disingenuous. But yeah. Jake's options were to change gods but keep his current level, reset and have to pick a different god, or -- and if anybody remembers back

that far -- Jake had been hit in the neck with two werewolf serums, and he had also taken the poison out of T.J.'s system from when T.J. drank from that vial that he found inside of the mini bar in Hawaii.

Teej: Oh, yeah.

Rev: And so, you know, I kept telling him that you've got these two things kind of tearing at each other inside of you. And it was the werewolf and the vampire trying to take control of him. Which was he going to become? And so his fail, if he had failed his trial, was that The Defender was essentially going to say, "All I can do for you is take one of these away. Which one do you want to become the least?" So yeah, but Jake's speech, you know, kind of changed The Defender's mind and caused him to go back and fight for him. So yeah, that was a great role playing moment for you.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: And going back to Jake not taking compliments. He actually just laid down on the ground and put a blanket over his head.

All: [laugh]

Jake: Out of game, not in the story. Just the fact that we're here doing this, right now. Like, I am just unbelievably proud to have created this product at all, and to have lasted this long, and to have contributed, and to have made something that people like. Like I can't narrow down a piece of this. Just ... This thing as a whole is like maybe my proudest achievement in life.

Rev: Yeah, I am actually going to agree. You know, I have been working in theatre for 20 some years, and I've been working in voiceover for about 7. And I have been a teacher off and on. But this is definitely the thing that I have made that I am the proudest of. You know, I have worked on some of the best plays. And while they are important to me and powerful, I love the fact that this is not ephemeral. That what this is, is what this is. And 20 years from now, if somebody listens to it, it's the same. You know, there's that element of theatre that it's just ... No one will ever see my performance of Cyrano that didn't see it. No matter how proud of it I was. No matter what kind of reviews it got. It's just a story now. But this still exists. And it will continue to exist as long as, you know, an EMP doesn't take out the whole world.

Um. In the sense of just overall? I'm proud of what we've been able to create. And even the skills that we have been able to learn and to polish. Three months before we started

this, I had never edited a piece of audio. And, you know, a lot of us had never had any training on the microphone. And probably what a lot of people don't know is that we record a single track. Which is super rare, especially when you've got four people kind of all talking at the same time. But, you know, we took a little time and we learned mike etiquette. And it makes life so much easier, not having to edit four separate tracks. So just, you know, everything, I'm proud of with that.

Jake: If I've got to pick a one? It has come to my attention that a handful of people have the theme song as their ringtone.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: That's pretty neat. Thank you.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Yeah. In-game, I think the thing that I am proudest of is the story arc and the reveals. As a person who has written before, as a storyteller -- whatever you want to call it -- it is super important for me that any reveal, any twist, isn't the obvious one. But it's also not one that there aren't at least two or three indicators at some point throughout the story, where if you listen back, you go, "Oh, shit." There was, you know, an indication of this happening. You know, for me that most heavy handed one was Dr. White. I was terrified everybody knew. I'm very happy that a lot of people don't. Just, it's very important to me to keep the story straight, and to be able to do pulls that, while not the obvious thing, aren't, "Well, that's bullshit. He just pulled that out of nowhere."

Tass: Mmhmm.

Rev: So anyway, that's my long what I'm proud of with the actual game.

Teej: I'm proud of the fact that whenever I jumped into the water.

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: Whenever I created the mech armor, because that was just like a spur of the moment ... Like I said, like a lot of those little moments throughout the game where I just come up with something on the spot, and I'm like, "Oh my god, that's actually a really cool idea and everything." And then whenever I pull it out there and you guys are laughing your asses off about it or something, that makes me feel like one hundred percent. Yeah.

Tass: You get us top, buddy.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah. There's ... T.J. is the person at this table who will do something that I feel like a gust of wind just hit me. Like, I will reel from the things that T.J. does, more than anybody else at this table.

Teej: In a good way, I hope.

Rev: But in a good way.

Tass: Ninety five percent good way. Yeah.

Rev: "Do you record weekly, or do you record for a longer amount of time less frequently, and split the recording up into multiple episodes?"

Usually we record at least once a week, sometimes twice. Especially now that we are doing hero salad for the Patreon. We schedule about four hours. We record maybe for both shows combined two and a half. And then we sit and bullshit and eat meals and talk about, you know, whatever it is we're gonna do. You know, go see a movie or something. So, no, we do not, for the most part, record multiple episodes in one day. I kind of get a sense of how I want the episode to end as it's starting to wind down. And these guys are really good about ... You know, obviously when we're telling the story, something kind of changes in my voice or my expression or whatever, and we start to get into a moment where it's going to be narration. They're really good about not trying to interject. I'm like, "OK, so we're in the dark and we start to see this light flashing." "Oh, I want to roll to see what the light is." "Just ... Just give me a second." So yeah. They're really good about sensing when something is kind of a narration. As opposed to, you know, kind of an interject-able moment.

"As kids, we see monsters more easily. What were the nastiest fears you had that you didn't face?"

Tass: Spiders.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: It's just such a cliché answer, but I will never forget being like -- I couldn't even tell you -- maybe four. And sitting on my porch out way out in the country, in this tiny, tiny little town that we lived. And I was sitting on the porch, and a spider had crawled up onto my leg. I don't know what it was, but it just absolutely froze me in horror, that this thing was crawling up my leg and up my side and up onto my chest. And I don't remember anything after. Like, I don't remember how it went away or how that resolved. But I just remember being locked in horror at this huge -- it was like some kind of wolf spider, or something. And it just never went away. It just embedded as a deep, deep phobia. That to this day I talk about and go, "I know. It's stupid. A spider's not going to hurt me. That's fine." But then if one came down from the ceiling, there'd be a Tass-shaped hole.

Rev: Yes.

Tass: Right behind me.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Matter of fact ...

Rev: I've been sitting in a ditch with you, after you drove us off a road.

Tass: [laughs] Yeah. I was gonna say. Somebody here --

Rev: Because there was a spider on the --

Tass: In the car with me, when it came down from the ... [shudders]

Rev: Rear view mirror, yeah.

Teej: It wasn't even like a spider. It was like a speck of a spider. It was so tiny.

Tass: The smallest ones are the scariest, because they can get into every little crack.

Rev: God.

Jake: The first fear I can remember having: when I was really tiny, I walked in when my sister and her boyfriend were watching it. There's a part where blood's coming out of the sink?

Rev: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Jake: Yeah. I remember watching -- walking in and seeing that, and that scared the hell out of me. The blood coming out of the sink would freak me out a lot. Though the worst intense fear of something I ever had? This is embarrassing, because I was entirely too old for this. The Ring. The girl from The Ring. And when did The Ring come out?

Teej: Like 2002, or something.

Jake: I mean, like, I was like 10 or 11 or something when The Ring came out. And that --

Rev: Oh my god, we're so old.

Teej: God. We are.

Jake: The girl from The Ring scared the shit out of me. That movie scared me so bad that I slept in a sleeping bag on my parents' floor for a long time, because I was afraid to be in my bedroom by myself. Because The Ring girl was gonna come get me. Like, I owe a genuine debt of gratitude to the Scary Movie 3 that had the parody of The Ring girl, for helping me get over my fear of her. By making her a ridiculous thing.

Teej: In 1997 there was a movie that came out called Jurassic Park.

Tass: [chuckles] Oh, no ...

Teej: And for the longest time after I saw that movie -- or maybe was 95, I don't remember -- I had a fear of velociraptors in and under my bed.

Rev: Oh.

Teej: For the longest time. And I would do one of these things where I would -- whenever I went to bed, I would click the light off and I would jump in an arc onto my bed. Because --

Jake: Like a Mario brother.

Teej: Like a Mario brother. I feared that some velociraptor would stick its head out along with its long, you know, gangly claws, and just like, grab my legs and pull me under. And I would -- I'd be dead. I'd be nothing but dead.

Rev: You know, the fear that I actually still carry today. And I did some sleep study, and I'm actually excited that I understand why, now. But I have always had a what I call a healthy fear of the dark. And I discovered that -- and I can't remember the term for it -- but there is something about my brain that when I go to sleep, I actually expand the distance of awareness that I have. Like, I start listening harder. And the guy was like, "Yeah, this has ... You know, we can tell, because of the way that all of your things read, the heart monitoring stuff." And he's like, "It is a left over unnecessary part of like, Neanderthal brain." Because that is when you are vulnerable. If you've got a cave, if you've got a house, whatever. You don't want to just hear the area you're sleeping. You listen far enough to hear the opening of the cave. And he's like, there's a decent number of people that have this. But it's part of the reason that I have such poor sleep. Because, you know, if we're sitting in here right now and something by the front door creaks, I would never hear it. But if I'm asleep in bed, I hear it and I wake up. But in the sense of when I was a kid, I was unreasonably afraid of Chucky. Never saw it.

Jake: [laughs]

Tass: Wow!

Rev: I only saw the previews.

Teej: I could -- I could feel that.

Rev: But I was so afraid of that stupid doll. To the point where, like, I kind of would do what T.J. would said. I would turn off the light, and I would jump to the bed so that his butcher knife didn't come out and get my feet, or get my ankles. And it lasted long enough that I was -- I was either a junior or a senior in high school. And I started doing theatre. And my dad restores classic cars. He bought an old classic car, restored it, sold it for a little more. And he's kind of worked his way up over the last 30 some years. And I don't know if you guys have ever been to any car shows, but a lot of people buy those little kids who are in, like, overalls. And have like --

Jake: A Cabbage Patch doll?

Rev: Kind of. But they stand up and they have their hands on their face, like they're -- like they're maybe counting hide and go seek. And they lean them against their car.

Jake: Oh, god.

Rev: They're like just a little ... They're everywhere. I'll show you an image.

Jake: No, I know what you're talking about. I hate them.

Rev: So one night I came home from rehearsal ...

Tass: [laughs]

Rev: And I turned the corner and there's a kid in overalls with his face against the wall.

Tass: [laughs]

Rev: And then he was two rooms away. Because I punted him.

All: [laugh]

Rev: Now, what's worse is that I ran into that room, and he's on his back -- and he has no face. He's got no face! They put no face on him, because you're never supposed to see that side.

Tass: Oh my god ...

Teej: Whoa.

Rev: He had no face.

Teej: He had no face.

Rev: And so, you know, the next morning, my mom was like, "What happened to this? Why is this in here?" I was like, "Why did you leave this here?!" Like, "Oh, we just got it. And, you know, we're gonna put it with the car when we go to the next show. I was like, "Don't ever put that anywhere but in the trunk of that car again." So that was my kind of irrational fear when I was a kid.

"What is your advice to a first time player/longtime listener that will be playing Keeper in a different country?" And I guess my question is, does your advice change, knowing they're going to be in a different country?

Jake: Name generator.

All: [laugh]

Tass: Really, just don't go in with expectations?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: But you know what I mean. Like, you might have a story in mind. Your players don't care.

Rev: Accurate. I think the two biggest things for me are know your NPCs, know your location really well, and know your monster. Other than that, it's all kind of up in the air. As long as you know what the monster is and what it wants, any other planning is probably gonna get wiped away with the first couple really high successes or bad fails. And then the other thing is ... And I can't -- I don't know why this has become my new, like crusade -- a mixed success is still a success. It bums me out when I hear people get a mixed success, and all of the options are not succeeding in the thing that they have tried.

You know, T.J., for example. When we were at the Halifax, he tried to run across a beam in the grid, and he fell with a fail. And then he got a mixed success on trying to grab a hold of the rope. And, you know, his kind of alternative that wasn't exactly what he wanted was falling into some covered chairs and taking a little bit of damage. And then his other options were either being able to get a hold of the rope and getting really bad rope burn, or being able to -- essentially, what he did -- get tangled up in the rope. And none of those options were him landing flat, amidst the monsters. You know, all of those things are still a success in what he was trying to do, which was stopping himself from falling so badly and really injuring himself in the center of where these monsters were at.

Teej: Which kind of goes back to your original talk on that. Like, it's that moment of, "Oh, I'm falling. World slows down. What are my options?"

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: So, yeah. I think just always remember that a mixed success is still a success.

Jake: I think one that I would give is don't be afraid to make decisions on behalf of the characters you've created. Like I feel like in a lot of games, people will be like, "I don't know what this person would do here, so I'm gonna roll a d20 -- high or low." You know, or, "I'm going to flip a coin. Which one do you call? And we're going to see what happens." You've invented them. You personify them more than anybody. What you think

they would do is what they would do. So you know, if you're like, "Oh, I'm not sure which person he would hit." Well, pick one. You know, don't second guess what they're going to do. You made them. You know what they'll do -- they're you. So just do it.

Rev: Yeah. And that kind of reminds me, actually. I think the other thing is that the fails that people get don't have to be apparent in the moment. "Things go to hell" does not necessarily mean that things have to go to hell, right there. You could let them get the hit off, but somewhere else, the people who are coming to help them get a flat tire. The people who were coming to aid the monster somehow since it's in trouble, and so they call for backup. You know, some of my favorite fail results are ramifications that they have to face later. And I think for me, some of the most interesting ones are the ones that, you know, you'll go an episode, and all of a sudden, some kind of bad thing will happen. And you'll be like, "Well, where ... God, where did that come from?" But there is not a single bad moment that I have given them that you can't go back and track. Like, "Oh, they had a fail here. Things go to hell. But he didn't do anything." No, it's because I was saving it.

Tass: Right.

Rev: So there's -- there's even a couple coming up, still. Where, you know ... Where I've got some stuff saved back, that I kind of have ideas for what I might want to use it for, so. I think that's the other thing, is that as much as you're transparent as the game master, those little things -- "Things go to hell," "You give up a vital piece of information" -- don't have to be revealed in the moment that the roll happens.

Tass: It's taken me far too long to get there, especially with Hero Salad. When we just recently been able to utilize that. And it just changes the way you think about all of the things. So yeah, that's huge.

Rev: "Top three tips for starting an actual play podcast?"

I think for me, some of the tips would be about expectation. There are going to be -- and this kind of gets, I don't know, personal. Or kind of hits the heart of some stuff for people. There will be people that you never expected that will come out of the woodwork and support you. And there will be people that you love with all your heart who won't give a shit. Will not even attempt to listen, to support you. And it's hard when it first happens. So I think that that is definitely something to be aware of.

Jake: Hire me to make your theme song.

Rev: Yes.

Jake: [laughs] Don't don't hire me to make your theme song.

Rev: Um. Audio quality. I mean, this is an audio medium. So you want it to be strong, and you want your audio to sound good from episode 1. Because if it's not, even if you give a disclaimer at the beginning of that, it's probably gonna be hard to get them back for episode 2.

And I think the other thing, too, is to know why you're doing it. With as crowded as this market is, it's not enough anymore to just be like, "Oh hey, we have good chemistry and we're funny." You got to know how you're telling the story differently. How are you utilizing your game differently? You know, we really kind of lucked into ours, just on a joke of, "Oh, what if we played ourselves?" But it's kind of the piece that, for now, in the sense of Monster of the Week games, of what is the notable thing that you can say, like, "Oh, yeah. This is what's different." You know, there are some games that they take place in a very specific location. And so, "Oh, that place reminds us of, you know, USA, your hometown. So that's what makes us unique." "Oh, we're doing a thing set in, you know, the 1800s, and the whole story takes place on a cross-country train trip." OK, so that's unique. That's a different way to tell the story. I know that there is a Monster of the Week podcast coming up soon that is based in the realm of a series of books that the Keeper has written. And so there is that additional extra material available. If people really like the game, they can go read the books and get more information about the world.

Jake: I feel like it is a very fine line between over and under engineering. Like ...

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: You can't just lay down your audio track ... Even if you clean the audio and make it sound nice, you can't just leave it as it is. That's under engineered. Nobody wants to hear the dead air, or anything like that. There are things to leave in that aren't, you know, part of the story or the game or even the words, but that are kind of essential for the sound to feel right.

Rev: Yeah. I would probably say that maybe our first ten episodes or so, I aired on the side of too clean. Which is ... I got some feedback, actually, from listeners. They're like, "Hey, can you leave some breath in it? Because I want to be able to laugh at what has happened without missing the next thing." So I've tried to loosen the reins, at least in the last 30 episodes or so.

Tass: And one thing that I think we talked about together ages ago, that kind of drives us collectively crazy in stories -- and then especially in playing any kind of RPG -- is if you're going to have NPCs helping your players, make sure that the NPC is just that. Help. Make sure that they are not the one that's kind of the linchpin to everything, or the thing that's the Mary Sue -- that's so powerful that your players don't need to be there.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: You know, you really want to make your players the star of this. They are the protagonists of this book, of this movie, of this story in general. So, yeah. If you have NPCs jumping in to save the day at the last moment at every turn and things like that, then, you know, it loses a lot for the audience, and kind of deflates your players as well.

Rev: "Rev, how do you keep your Keepers notes organized? Do you have a flowchart? Use OneNote? Other recommendations for tools for the Keeper to use?"

I use a spiral notepad. You can go back through my notepad and see the maps, you can see the list of character names and monster stuff. I'm very big into technology, but this is the one vein that I don't use it. I even use Hero Lab for my Pathfinder character. I love it. But something about trying to get everything on anything more than just a notepad for this is weird to me. So my notes are all organized by adventure. There's really not a whole lot of organization to it. If anybody's ever seen my writing, it's like chicken scratches. And so they're really not all that organized.

"Favorite 'What if?' moments? Moments where the story could have seriously changed with different actions, or different die rolls?"

Tass: What if I hadn't just answered that damn door?

Rev: [laughs]

Tass: If I ... What if I had looked through the peephole, for god's sake?

Rev: Yeah. That was such a -- I love that moment. Because we had finished the Halloween episode. We'd all had a good time. And everybody was just kind of relaxed. And it was like, "Yeah, there's a knock at your door." "Yeah man, I'm gonna go answer." Awesome.

Jake: You planned that.

Teej: That's right.

Rev: I did.

Jake: You lulled us all into a sense of security.

Teej: And that's the reason why I also injected -- what's his name -- Koschei.

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: With the thing. Because it's like, you present us with these things. And it's like, "Oh, I should probably go ahead and do this," you know? Oh, he can't move his mouth? I'll inject werewolf serum into him. And that way we can talk with him. Because the world we've set up here is, you know, there's a gray area and monsters can be friendly. And he'll probably be friendly and thankful that I pumped him full of this healing serum.

Rev: "I'm sure this will be fine. It won't be the captured God of Death."

Teej: That's right.

Jake: I mean, nothing you just said was wrong. He was friendly and helpful at that point.

Rev: Oh, yes.

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: What if we had betrayed Damien, before he spit out that he was not ...

Teej: Oh, man.

Rev: Holy shit.

Teej: Good pull on that one, yeah.

Jake: That one -- that was just such like a, "Oh, no. Oh this got so close to happening."

Teej: Yeah. We're so dicks.

Rev: Ooh. That's a good one.

Tass: Yeah. There's just so many what seemed like little things in comparison to this end of the world scenario we seem to be travelling towards. But just what if we hadn't made the decision to kill Rachel? What if I hadn't just done a peekaboo at that golem in that room with Dr. White?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: I mean, there's just so many.

Rev: I'm actually going to go with one that I have not thought about in a very long time. But I think an interesting "What if" would be, what if you guys hadn't freed Rev in those 24 hours? Like, what if he was stuck with the soulbat?

Tass: Ooh.

Rev: Just cause seeing now, how he is kind of woven in and out of the story.

Tass: Yeah. Good Lord.

Rev: Oh, god. I forgot this. I'm asking this question, because I said I would ask every question. [sighs]

Teej: Oh, god.

Rev: I can't tell if this is someone messing with me. "Why is Rev so hot?"

All: [laugh]

Rev: I'm gonna assume it is the fever that I've had for two weeks.

Tass: Yes.

Rev: Like 103.

Teej: Yeah. That's probably why. Yeah. Also, don't you go running? You exercise, you go to the gym.

Rev: I do.

Teej: So you ... Your body temperature goes up as --

Rev: Right. Metabolism.

Teej: Yeah. As you're working out.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: There is a great chance-- at least a 50/50 chance -- that that was asked by one of the Joes that we know.

Tass: I -- God. I was literally ... Just now they saw me, in real time, scrambling for my pen to write down the name Joe Miksan.

Jake: Or Joe Riley. One of them. Not to -- not to undercut. Sorry. You're a beautiful man.

Tass: Yeah. Of course. Of course.

Rev: But I'm trying to think who would ... Who would be brave enough to write that. And really, it's Joe Miksan.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: All right. And the last one for episode 50. "You were cursed." The end.

Jake: Accurate.

All: [laugh]

Rev: "You were cursed. Altered. Transformed into a wretched thing. But at least you get to pick your new monstrous form. What will you be, and why?"

Jake: I would be something akin to a Gillman. Something aquatic. I adore the water. I love the ocean.

Teej: Going for that Sound of Water, sort of.

Jake: That Sound of Water ... Yes. The Sound of Water -- that hit film.

All: [laugh]

Teej: Trying to hit that market.

Rev: It's just someone slapping the top of a pool for an hour and a half.

Jake: I ... I just, I love water. I love swimming. I love the ocean, and all that. So if I got to pick what kind of monstrous being I was going to be, it would be something that lived in the water.

Tass: Ghost. For sure. I ... I think I want, more than anything in this world that I can think of to be real and to be true, I want to see a ghost. And if I can't have that, I want to give that to somebody else. I love scaring people. It's one of my favorite things that exists, as well. So, yeah. I would want to be a ghost, so I can jump out and scare people. And them not just be like, "Oh, Tass ..." They'll be like, "A ghost!" You know? But like genuinely.

Teej: I honestly would probably go for the whole vampire spiel. Because I ... I want to live forever.

Jake: [sings "Fame"] "I want to live forever ..."

Teej: That's right. I want fame. And I want to live forever. But not because, you know, oh, because I'm afraid of death, or anything. I want to see where the world goes.

Rev: Hmm.

Teej: Like, I want to go to the year 3000 and see, does the world finally just culminate in one big, you know, explosion? Or do we finally get our shit together, and ...

Rev: Yeah. Because surely at some point, there's got to be an upswing, right?

Teej: Yeah, we would hope. We would hope. And now that there are vampires around? Absolutely.

Rev: Gosh. I'm going to say like a changeling, like a shapeshifter. Only because my experience in life thus far, I have had 20 some odd jobs, done just a bunch of random stuff. Met a lot of people, had to put on different hats. And I feel like that's the thing that is one of my strengths, is that Jack of all trades, master of none. And I'm usually pretty good about blending in to whatever situation I'm supposed to be in. And so something about being able to kind of change my form and fit into this new location, but then maybe also sometimes have ... Like, a ulterior motive as to why I'm there. You know, I just think of changelings kinda being like ... [trickster laugh] You know, they're infiltrating a group to

get, you know, some victims away, or a result that they want. And I say that, because I remember ... I can't remember what we were talking about, but we were standing outside the gym one day. And we'd kind of talked about something, and Jake goes, "You know what? I think you'd be a really good politician. But I think that you could House of Cards real fast."

All: [laugh]

Rev: "Like, as soon as someone gave you enough money or power?"

Teej: Boy.

Rev: "I can see you just going real dark side, and manipulating a bunch of people." And I just ... I was like, "Yeah."

Jake: He was nodding, well before I finished the sentence.

Rev: I was! I thought it was a compliment. I didn't realize he was saying it as a warning.

All: [laugh]

Rev: So I've got one last question, actually. Has anybody here ever experienced something supernatural?

Tass: Oh my, yes. And of course, I say that with the mind that wants it to be true.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: And I, from a logical standpoint, acknowledge that. So cheers. But, yeah. Absolutely. The most terrified I've ever been in my life was going into my high school. We had a very big theater, and it was very old. And always ... Almost every theater's reputed to be haunted in some way. And of course ours was, too. So on two different occasions, unexplained things happen. One of which, I'll tell you is -- was horrifying. In that we went in on a Saturday to paint a set. The reason we had to paint the set was because we'd already painted at once. And of course, said the thing that you're not supposed to say backstage.

Rev: Uh-huh.

Tass: And then left and giggled. And we came in the next day, and the paint had bled through from the old set. And like, what we had painted was like almost gone. It was like it faded. Like, that was weird. It must have been really crappy paint, or whatever it was. And probably was. So we had to come in on a Saturday to repaint everything. It was just me and two other people. And off to the side, you know, backstage in this theater, are these ... Just this big set of like metal double doors. And somebody started pounding on them. And I'm like, "Oh. OK. We told whoever that wants to come and help us paint, come in." So the three of us walk over to let them in. And I mean literally, I have my hands on the door, feeling it, pound, pound, pound. Like, "Jesus! We're here! Hold on!" And I'm opening the door -- long-ass hallway in this theater. Nobody's there. And it was that kind of fear that just stops you cold, because it just ... It doesn't make sense. Like the physics, the reality doesn't make sense. And it was that kind of thing where we just stood there. And we looked up and down the hall, and we looked at each other. We're like, " ... What?" And before we knew it, the girl with us was almost crying. I was almost crying. We shut the doors, we come back out again, we look around, we go down to the end of the hallway, and those doors are locked. There's no way anybody could have gotten in from the outside. And by that point, we're just panicking. [panicked murmurs] "There's nobody there! I don't know what to do!" And just left everything. Paint out, open cans, brushes. We got the hell out of there. I have never been that scared in my life, and can't imagine being again.

Rev: Hmm.

Teej: I've had a moment of actual Zen -- of the idea that I became one with something, and I saw from that something's point of view.

Rev: Hmm.

Teej: And what it was, was I was bowling. And I was terrible at bowling. But at this one roll of the ball, I was concentrating so hard and so heavily. And as I brought the ball back and released it to deliver the ball, my mind went to the ball. I was the ball. And I could see the pins getting closer to me. And at the moment of the strike that I hit with it, my consciousness or whatever came back into me -- T.J. -- and it freaked me out. I freaked out.

Jake: The one thing I can think of that I simply cannot explain is pretty mundane. But I was driving in Bloomington when I was in college. I think Larissa might have been in the car with me. We were driving down this road and there was a person -- you know, it was not very well lit. It was on a bridge. There was a person crossing the road. There's a sidewalk on both sides, you know, of this bridge. And they're crossing the road in front of

us and they kind of stepped through a streetlight and out of the street light, and were absolutely gone as we drove by. Because I'd slowed down to let them cross, and they kind of stepped back into the shadow and simply were not anymore. And I like blinked a couple times and I thought about it. And I turn, and she goes, "Did that person just disappear?" And I went, "Yes!" And I have ... That's the one -- like, I have no idea what happened. I don't know what part of that wasn't what I thought it was. But that's the weirdest thing that's ever happened.

Rev: So I was driving from Terre Haute during college to go visit my parents. And I was on a access road to get onto the highway. And this story -- even telling this story, I feel insane that I am saying this and being like, "Yeah, this happened to me." Because it is ridiculous. But I got to the point in the road where you have to take that left lane to get onto the highway. Like you have to ... You're in the right side, and you got to cross over in the little turn area and start going up the ramp. And I looked over and my side seat, I was trying to find like a C.D. or something. And I looked back up, and probably about 12 feet in front of me was a man standing in the road. And I slammed on my brakes and slid through him. And then my windshield was covered in dust. And I remember very distinctly that the man was ... You know, he almost kind of looked like the dummy from Jeepers Creepers. Like he was in a very old coat, a hat, and he had white hair and a very aged face. And I stopped. I got out of the car, and I started walking around looking for somebody, and there was nobody there. And that's when I kind of noticed all of this dust on my windshield. And so I ran, you know, the windshield wiper. And I got in the car and I started driving. And I got home about four hours later and I went to sleep. And I woke up and I heard the garage door open and close. And so the thing to know about this is that my parents' house on the inside essentially makes a big circle with a square in the middle of it. Because that's the square that holds the stairs that lead to the basement. And so around that circle, there is a big portrait window at the front, the front door, and then next to that are three bedroom doors. Then the next area over is a bathroom door and a kitchen. And then the side one is the door out to the garage. And I got up, and was like, oh, I knew my mom had gone to work. My dad comes home for lunch sometime. I thought, "Oh, he must be home." And so I walk past the bedroom doors and I go over to the open window and I pull it open, and I don't see his van there. I was like, "Oh, that's strange." And then I hear the garage door slam shut behind me. And I was like, "Oh, I must have just missed him." So I go over and I open the garage door and I look out, and there is nothing there. As soon as I make that realization, I hear the master bedroom door slam shut. And I was like, "What? Am I just missing him all the time?" And so I walked past the bathroom, walked up towards the master bedroom, which is now shut. And as I passed the spare room, the door slammed shut. And I just kind of stand there for a second and I'm like, "What?" And I hear my dog whining. I had a shih tzu at the time, and he's in the kitchen. And as I start to walk that way, I hear the garage door open again and

then shut. And I come in to the kitchen and the dog is sitting there. And he is just ... You know how sometimes dogs just stare at a place? Like they just stare at a location? He was just staring up. And I was like, "Hey Buster. What's the matter? Are you all right?" And I lean down to pet him. And out of the corner of my eye, I see something in the reflection of the mirror. And I realize that's where he's looking. And I look up, and that guy's face is in the reflection of the mirror. And I picked up my dog and I went into my bedroom and I locked the door. It couldn't have been more than five minutes later, I hear both the bedroom doors open, I hear the garage door shut, and then I don't hear anything else. And I've never experienced something like that in that house again. So it just ... I was like, "Well, some thing was here, and it just wanted to check the place out. And now it has left." What the hell. So that's my -- there's my one.

Tass: Oof.

Rev: Was that a ghost story?

Teej: Yeah, it sure was. I was a little intrigued. That was really scary.

Rev: Once upon a time, was gonna put you guys through that story. I just didn't know what it culminated in, so.

Tass: I can tell you exactly what that was.

Rev: Go on.

Tass: You hit an off-duty moth man. That's what the dust was.

Rev: Oh ...

Tass: All the wing dust.

Rev: And so he, like, flew over me all the way home.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: He was just riding on the luggage rack, holding on for dear life.

Rev: That's I was gonna say about your guy that disappeared in the light! That he just kinda parkoured up to your roof and was just like, "Whee! I pay for no bus fare."

All right. Well, I think with that, unless anybody has got anything else they want to share? I'm not even going to let the recap roll. I think at this point, I'm going to let the credits roll. And this is going to be at least a two-part episode 50. Because you know what, guys? We haven't got to a damn second of the actual game yet. So we will see you once you hit play on 50b.

SFX:

OUTRO MUSIC