

The Argonaut (S1, E57)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: All right, so here's my proposal. Are you guys ready?

Teej: Yes.

Tass: Let's hear it.

Rev: I know we are not yet at Season 2, but we're getting there. It's a couple episodes away. I think that for the first couple recording sessions of Season 2, each week, when we record the intro, each of us takes a turn and we're gonna bring in our pitch for the new hype song at the beginning of recording.

Tass: I dig that.

Teej: Did you just come up with that now?

Rev: I did. I did. Everybody seems like they're kind of ... They're kind of losing steam on "Vengabus." How many suggestions do we want? Do we want to do like -- do it for eight weeks, and everybody gets to bring in two? Do we want to just do it one? And then there -- that's it?

Jake: Let's just do ... Just bring your best. You know, each of us brings one. And then we pick it. And that's on -- that's the rotation for like, six weeks. Then at the end of six weeks, everybody brings one again.

Rev: Oh, I see. I see.

Jake: And we vote on what the best one is.

Rev: OK. So we're going to listen to them all the same day and pick one.

Teej: Should we get the people in on this?

Rev: Maybe. Maybe it's something we could do in the Discord.

Tass: Oh, yeah. I enjoy that.

Rev: God, speaking of things I enjoy in the Discord: all of the art that Nat is doing.

Tass: Oh, my God!

Rev: She has started making Discord emojis of the Hero Salad characters, and they're phenomenal. So we had mentioned last week that we were gonna record a special episode. If you follow us on any kind of social media, you've seen it by now. But this Friday, we are recording an episode with Michael Sands, which is really cool. We're really excited to have him on. So look forward to that in the coming weeks. Also on June 14th, we are going to do a Twitch stream of Tass's game, End of Days. And that will start, I believe, at nine o'clock that night?

Tass: I think so. I think that's a later one. So I think it's a 9:00 p.m.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: EST.

Rev: On that, we will have Wes The Portrait Dude, who does all of our wonderful photography. He's also been on one of the other streams. And we're gonna have Carolyn from Investigate the History.

Teej: Whoa!

Rev: She is in town working on a production of Romeo and Juliet, and I was able to talk her into coming in and playing. So she has to pick her playbook yet, but she will be here as well. So that is [Twitch.tv/thecritshow](https://www.twitch.tv/thecritshow) if you want to watch Tass's game, End of Days.

And lastly, it's that time again. We want to thank our new Patreon subscribers. We have Lisa I, we have Tobi and Josh. Josh, who actually was my college roommate. Josh -- I won't say his last name, for fear of people hunting him down.

Teej: I know it's Josh.

Rev: I know. You know. The Tinkineer -- awesome name.

Tass: Yeah, it is.

Rev: Gonna be a villain at some point. Rob W, Justin L, David S, Andrew M. Andrew, who was my first friend at GenCon. I went to GenCon the very first year by myself, and he sat and played Pathfinder Society together and then he saved me a seat when I went and saw The Glass Cannon with him.

Tass: Nice.

Rev: Christina R, Oren S, Jake R, James S, Lady C, Your Left Sock ... I don't know if that's - I don't know if that's like Your left sock, or should be read as my left sock.

Tass: Oh, yeah.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: That's a good question.

Rev: Shayna P, and Talon B. So thanks to all of you who have joined us in the month of May on our Patreon.

Teej: We love you so very, very much.

Tass: Yes, thank you.

Rev: Really, I think that's all. I think it's just time to let the recap roll.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Rev: STROHM: While you're on Grigori's little hideaway, snatch whatever you can, because I'm sure he's got loads of things in there. And I get first pick of two of the things that you find.

Jake: "All right. Yeah, I'll take it."

Rev: And inside are the seven medallions. We've got this group collected, T.J. has finished his submersible -- what are you calling it?

Teej: The Undersea Gobbler.

Tass: I think it's going to be the three of us and Anastacia going in.

Jake: But I think we should have Ori stay in the sub until we either need him for something or we have found his sister and are ready to get her out.

Rev: You start to see this sickly red glow illuminating the water in front of you. And then, in your run lights, The Argonaut comes into view.

Jake: Do I see any dangers in here?

Rev: As you hear the lights kicking on throughout the submarine, the door almost directly in front of you starts to slide open. And as it does, blood starts pouring out of this door, and it starts to take the form of a very large humanoid shape and starts to move towards you.

Jake: So I'm gonna step to this thing and try and plunge a stake into the chestal area of it.

Rev: And he lunges forward with his stake in hand and jams it into the chest. And as he does that, the creature reaches out with its right hand, and you see that it just palms his face. And Jake, you feel blood starting to fill your nose and your mouth, and pour down into your lungs.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: We find ourselves several hundred feet under the freezing water at the North Pole. The Undersea Gobbler is connected to The Argonaut. In the hallway of the connecting tube between the two, we have Anastacia, T.J., and Tass. And this large humanoid form made out of blood, gripping Jake's face. And Jake, trying to cough and convulse as this thing seems to be pouring itself down his throat. What are you two doing?

Tass: I want to try to just dart forward with the spear and try to like, sever that arm. Try to break its connection from the main body, and hope that disrupts what's going down his throat.

Rev: Roll Kick Some Ass.

Tass: That's an eleven.

Rev: All right. What is your extra effect?

Tass: Take less harm.

Rev: So Tass, you leap forward. And as you do, the tip of your spear starts to glow as you bring it down. And it cuts cleanly through this arm, and all of the liquid between the elbow where you have cut and Jake splashes to the ground. Jake, you can breathe again, but you have taken 1 point of armor-defeating damage. It staggers backwards, and you see that the blood splashes to the ground and then slowly starts to move back towards the creature.

Teej: I'm going to try and tackle this thing and take its head off.

Rev: Describe. Explain. Tackle -- how does that get a head off?

Teej: Well, I'm going to tackle it with my teeth around its neck, and take its head off by biting through its neck.

Rev: I see. So like a a normal, formal NFL tackle.

All: *laughter*

Teej: Oh, I see.

Rev: You understand? Riff with me here, T.J.

Teej: I'm so sorry.

Rev: Roll Act Under Pressure.

Teej: Will do. Sorry I failed the riff roll.

Rev: You did.

Teej: That is a twelve.

Rev: All right. You are able to do exactly what you want. You leap at this creature and you wrap your teeth around its neck and go to bite down -- and nothing happens. There is no give. But you are able to release and kind of jump backwards away from it as it swings at you and get back to a safe distance.

Teej: Oh, thank goodness.

Rev: Jake, you are on the ground. Coughing up blood -- not your own.

Jake: That's so icky.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: OK. I'm going to trade out the ... Put the stake away, and just try and use the stun knuckles. If this thing is liquid, hopefully it's conductive to some degree. And so I'm just gonna go try and knock it with the stun knuckles, and see if it conducts.

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

Jake: OK.

Teej: Nice!

Jake: Eleven, minus one Cool. Ten.

Rev: All right. So you jump forward with these stun knuckles, and you slam them into the side. And there is a very gross smell of blood boiling and heating up, but it doesn't seem to affect the creature at all.

Jake: Gross.

Teej: That makes me even more sick than you swallowing all that blood.

Tass: Yeah, seeing this. I'm gonna just try to jump back in front, between it and them, and just try to take another swing at the other arm, actually. You know how I'm kind of picturing it in my head is taking a swipe with its arm up, coming after me, to get that arm to go flying across the room -- if I can actually hit it.

Rev: So in that case, roll Act Under Pressure to try to strike out at the moment that you want.

Tass: OK. That's an eight.

Rev: So you can strike out as this thing swings at Jake. But it's going to connect, but you're gonna get the hand off. Or, you're going to get the hand cut off before the impact, but the ... Essentially, blood splatter is going to travel back towards Anastacia. Or, you're

going to be able to do it at the exact moment that you want, but the tip of your blade is going to get buried in the floor.

Tass: Ooh. I'm sorry, Jake. I have in my head that if this comes careening at you, you've got that shield to kind of smack it away. So I think that's what I'm banking on.

Rev: Jake, you take 2 points of damage, not armor-defeating. And Tass, you get the hand off, and it splatters on to Jake's shield. And Jake kind of slams it to the side and the blood goes art deco on the side wall.

All: *laughter*

Jake: "It doesn't seem like we're hurting this thing. Does somebody want to check the room it came out of and see if there's like a control?"

Tass: "Yeah. I mean, I'll keep it busy. I'm at least hacking at it, but stuff's still moving. Maybe if I just get it down to low enough little piles, it can't coalesce anymore. I don't know. I'm just gonna keep messing with it."

Teej: "I'll do it."

Rev: OK. So T.J., you're gonna go into the room that it came out of?

Teej: I'm going to check out the room that it came out of, yeah.

Rev: All right. So you go into this room, and it is a very small square. And in the back corner of it is a vial behind a crackling energy field.

Teej: I kind of want to blast it with the electro-blaster and see if it can take the brunt of my electro-blaster.

Rev: OK. Roll Act Under Pressure.

Teej: It's a three.

Rev: So you point the electro-blaster at this and you let it loose. And you see the energy travel at the electric field, and it absorbs it all. Jake and Tass, you were in the hallway, and there is a violent jolt of energy. Like, strong enough that you both feel the arm hairs stand up from the static energy. And T.J. comes flying out of the room and tumbles

across the ground, and he's smoking slightly. T.J., you take 3 points of damage as the field releases back to you the energy that it had absorbed from your attack.

Teej: "Ouch."

Jake: "What happened?"

Teej: "There's a field in there. Oh, God. I tried to blast it. It shot me back ..."

Tass: As he is careening across the floor, I think I want to try to do kind of a roll near the monster, and take one of its legs off out from under it.

Rev: All right. Roll Act Under Pressure.

Tass: Oh, no. Five.

Rev: You roll and swing your spear. And you catch the creature in its leg, and it comes clean off. And then you realize there's a bit of a shadow over you as the rest of it, whole cloth, falls on top of you and starts to fill any opening it can find.

laughter There's got to be a better way to say that.

Tass, take 1 point of armor-defeating damage.

Tass: Oof.

Jake: All right. I want to go ... Basically, grab Tass by a leg and just get him out of there. Like, grab and drag.

Rev: OK. Roll Protect Someone.

Jake: Ten.

Tass: Just shake me out by the ankle, like you're trying to get my change.

Jake: *laughter*

Rev: What is your extra effect?

Jake: Suffer little harm.

Rev: So you are able to pull Tass out from underneath this creature. And it goes fairly flat on the ground, and you can see the blood from around the room starting to come back towards it. So right at this moment, you are all standing in the hallway, the floor covered in blood.

Jake: "What was behind the energy field?"

Teej: "Some kind of vial. I don't know what it was, but it might be the key to this."

Jake: "Tass, do you want to see if the spear will disrupt that energy field? At least it's something cool and magical."

Tass: "Yeah. I'll try." So I'll run in and not try to hit this field, but just try to like, tap it.

Rev: Nothing happens.

Tass: Dang it.

Jake: While he's running in there, I want to kind of take the shield and put it down on top of whatever the core of that blood puddle was, and like sit on it. Like whatever -- whatever seemed like the brain of this thing, I'm trying to, like, pin it to the ground and stay there, so the rest of the blood can't get back to it.

Rev: I think that's the first thing that you notice starts to happen is that the blood starts to come up over the lip of the shield and crawl onto you if you are in its way.

Jake: Oh, darn. OK, then I'll just kind of ... "Never mind." Like, step off the shield and grab the edge and dive out and forward roll away from it. "Ayup!"

Tass: I want to look at this thing and open up my sight and see if this -- if it tells me anything about like what kind of energy this is, or if there's any weak spots. Anything like that.

Rev: All right. Roll Investigate a Mystery.

Tass: Eight.

Rev: You get a hold 1.

Tass: What can hurt it?

Rev: It would have to be dispelled. This is a very powerful magic spell that is protecting this vial of blood.

Tass: "Oh, I don't think any of us can do that. Anastacia, do you know how to dispel something?"

Rev: ANASTACIA: No.

Tass: "Ori? Dad? Anybody?"

Jake: *laughter* Dad!

Teej: Dad ...

Jake: Daddy, please!

Rev: Do you yell for Ori?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: He peeks his head around the corner. He can see you guys down that hallway.

Rev: ORI: Yeah. What?

Tass: "Blood monster. Vial. Magic energy protecting it. Any idea how to dispel this?"

Rev: ORI: No.

Tass: "Cool."

Rev: ORI: But I know what it is.

Tass: "Oh, what is it?"

Rev: ORI: A homunculus.

Tass: "OK. Thoughts there?"

Rev: ORI: It's like a wizard's golem, essentially. It's just made out of stuff from them, and it just serves them.

Tass: "Is there any way for us to deal with this thing without breaking that?"

Rev: ORI: No. You've got to destroy the source.

Tass: "F."

Rev: ORI: Yeah.

Tass: "OK. If we can't dispel this thing to get through, this thing's going to keep coming. So maybe you guys get your asses down the hallway and see what's in the back there, and I'll just try to keep chopping it apart."

Jake: "OK."

Teej: "OK."

Rev: ANASTACIA: All right.

Jake: So I'll move further down in the direction where we think the rooms are that we need.

Rev: All right. So let me sketch us out on your guys's map what Jake sees that has changed.

Teej: OK.

Rev: So anywhere here where I have drawn in green, that is new structure that exists that takes place of the old structure. If there is ... If there is a black door that has green totally covering it, that is a door that is not there anymore. And if it is a green door with a black square around it, it is now a door that exists that was not there prior. Or, one that did exist that's still there.

Teej: Oh, OK. I see, now.

Rev: So you can see that the shape of the inside hallways have changed just a little bit, and that some doors are gone, and some new ones are there as you go to your right.

Teej: Copy that.

Rev: So from that, where do you want to head, Jake?

Jake: I think I'm going to go for that one straight ahead on the left. Because as far as I understood it, we think the important stuff is way at the back. And that seems like it goes way to the back.

Rev: So as you head down this hallway, you pass two doors on your right and one on your left. You get to the door that is at the end of this corridor. What do you want to do once you get there?

Jake: So I'm going to gingerly open the door ahead of me.

Rev: You put your hand on the handle and you take 1 point of damage, armor-defeating.

Jake: Oh, dang. What is it? Like a shock?

Rev: It is.

Teej: It's a Home Alone thing where they put the heater on the handle.

Jake: I'm going to take my shield in both hands -- it's plastic -- and just bringing above my hand and slam it down on that door handle, to try and bust it off.

Rev: Roll No Limits.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: OK. What is your consequence?

Teej: Hernia.

Jake: *laughter* That's my life.

Rev: Yeah. It can't be a pre-existing consequence.

Jake: That's just my existence.

Rev: Monster of the Week insurance will not cover pre-existing conditions.

Teej: Oh, no.

Jake: -1 forward.

Rev: So you slam the shield down onto this door handle, and it snaps cleanly off and clatters to the ground.

Jake: I guess I'll put the shield back on and, no element of surprise now, just boot that door open.

Rev: You kick this door in, and it goes about halfway and then stops.

Jake: How does it stop? Like, it hits a wall? Or like there's someone behind it? Or like it gets stuck on something?

Rev: It stops like it slows down.

Jake: OK, that's menacing. Yeah. I mean, my gut instinct is that there is someone behind it, or something. So I'm going to give it another boot. Like, just if there's something behind it, like just try and sidekick this door now, to push it open. And if there's anyone or anything behind it, that it will knock it back or squish it against the wall, or whatever.

Rev: OK. Roll No Limits.

Jake: I will. Big money. No whammies ... Small money. Some whammies. Six.

Tass: Oooh.

Teej: No money. All whammies.

Jake: Oh, five. I took -1 forward.

Rev: As you go to boot this door open, it doesn't budge. But you do hear another door open. It is forward and to the right. And you hear the familiar sound of blood sloshing out onto the floor.

Jake: "Oh, hell."

Rev: Tass, you are back with this creature in the corridor trying to keep it here, keep it at bay. It has reformed and is starting to stand up.

Tass: OK. Yes. Same kind of thing, here. I'm trying to keep a little distance and just take chunks off of it.

Rev: OK. Starting ...?

Tass: I think I want to try the leg again. That seemed like it was a pretty good payoff, even though it kind of hit me. But it went down and showed that momentum of hitting the ground affects it in some way. So I want to try that again.

Rev: All right. Roll Act Under Pressure.

Tass: Yeah, boy. That is a twelve.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to do exactly what you want. You roll across the ground again and you cut its leg out from underneath it, and it falls down to its hands and knee. T.J. and Anastacia, you see the second homunculus start to form in the hallway next to where Jake is messing with the door on this room.

Teej: I think I want to push past it into that door that it just came out of, and see if I can find if there's a vial there.

Rev: So roll Act Under Pressure to get past the homunculus.

Teej: That's a four.

Rev: You go to get past the homunculus, and it sees you as you start to duck to go underneath it. And it gives you a hard kick that knocks you backwards down the stairs next to the wall, and you go tumbling down the stairs onto the first floor. So Jake, you are at the door.

Jake: I'm going to go into the room.

Rev: You skinny yourself around this door into the room, and the first thing you have to do is take about three big steps up. And this room is filled with packed earth, about three feet high.

Jake: Is there anything on top of the packed earth?

Rev: There is not.

Jake: I'm going to get on the comms. "There's a room with dirt, just packed three feet high. Does that mean anything to anyone? Something buried in here?"

Tass: "Not it."

Teej: "Ow."

Rev: ANASTACIA: No, no.

Rev: JINGLES: No, man. I don't know.

All: *laughter*

Jake: OK. I am going to start moving earth around, to try and figure out what the hell the purpose of this room is.

Rev: Describe to me, what are you doing? Like, you're moving earth around? Like you're just kicking dirt? What are you doing?

Jake: I ... Like, probably using my shield, I feel like? Just to kind of like, dig in an edge and like move swads of dirt and see if anything's like, shallow buried anywhere. Or, you know, I have no concept of what this could be for, except that something's under this dirt because it has to be under dirt.

Rev: All right. So Jake gets down on his hands and knees and starts to dig through the dirt. T.J., you're at the bottom of the stairs and you have tumbled into a large, wide open room. And hand me the map, and I will change what you see differently.

Teej: Cool.

Rev: And so as you can see, the room is no longer centered. It is off-center to your right as you're looking at the map. And there are four doors inside of this room.

Teej: I feel like I should go back up and help my buddies. Cause if I just start investigating around here, then I'm probably going to open up another door to another creature of some sort. That's going to fuck us up. Or, I might just find the thing that actually wins it for us.

Tass: Adversely to the worst possible thing, is the best possible thing.

Teej: That's right. I want to go to the door that is immediately to my right.

Rev: You head over to this door on the right. And what are you doing? You just grabbing the handle, whipping the door open?

Teej: You know what? I'm just gonna knock on the door, see if I get a response.

Rev: So you knock on the door, there's a brief moment and then you hear some movement.

Rev: VOICE: Have you returned, my master?

Teej: "Yeah."

Rev: VOICE: I smell the lies on you. And I sense ... Yes, I sense my children are awake. You are an intruder.

Rev: And behind you, a door slides open. And you hear sloshing. Tass, the homunculus has arisen again, and it turns and starts to walk away from you, down the hallway where the other two have gone.

Tass: "What, am I too much for you?" I want to run up and try to just full-on cut this thing in half at the waist.

Rev: All right. Roll Kick Some Ass.

Tass: Ten.

Rev: What is your extra effect?

Tass: I think I want to do terrible harm.

Rev: All right. So you leap forward and you cut this thing in half, and it collapses into a puddle on the ground. And you now have a moment in this hallway to breathe.

Tass: "Oh, come on, buddy. Don't go. 'B positive."

Rev: OK. There was your moment.

Tass: *laughter* Cause blood?

Rev: That was your moment you got.

Teej: You could have added more, but no, you wanted to do dirty puns?

Tass: Yeah ... Yeah, I think I want to look up, now that it was kind of going around, and see if I can see either of the boys.

Rev: You see a door cracked open and Jake's feet inside of the room, and you hear digging sounds. You don't see Anastacia, but you hear the sound of someone being hit very heavily against metal. And there's no sign of T.J.

Tass: From what direction was that sound of the hit?

Rev: Down the hall and around the corner.

Tass: I'm going to dart that way.

Rev: You see Anastacia in the grasps of a second homunculus, which has just slammed her into the wall.

Tass: Hoo boy. Yeah, if he's doing that same thing, I think I want to try kind of an uppercut. Like, up through the legs and split this thing lengthwise.

Rev: Roll Protect Someone.

Tass: OK. That's a ten.

Rev: What is your extra effect?

Tass: I guess I want to inflict harm.

Rev: You are able to jump forward and bring the spear up, and the blade cuts cleanly through, and the creature parts in half and falls to the ground. Anastacia lands on the ground with a thump, and starts to cough up blood.

Rev: ANASTACIA: It seems like only magic can hurt 'em.

Tass: "OK. I mean, I can try to keep disassembling these things, but we're not finding much. We're all split up. Jake? Where'd everybody go?"

Jake: "There's this room full of dirt. I'm trying to dig for something. I don't -- I don't know what it is, but I don't know why this room would exist if it didn't matter."

Tass: "OK. Fair. T.J.?"

Teej: Can I hear him?

Rev: You can. He is right up the stairs. You've just heard this sloshing sound, and you turn around and there is a third homunculus that has just come out of the north facing door.

Teej: "Downstairs!"

Tass: "You good?"

Teej: "No!" And I'm gonna start running towards the upstairs.

Rev: Yeah. There's no problem. The stairs are right beside you. And you tear up the stairs, and you see that they are standing on a very bloody floor, Anastacia on the ground coughing. But you do hear the thump of the heavy feet coming towards the stairs below you.

Teej: "I got a third one behind me."

Rev: So at this moment, the two on the ground are dispersed, and there is one at the bottom of the stairs.

Tass: I'm heading towards the stairs then, if I can hear that. And just same, I want to try to keep these things separated and splattered, just running back and forth.

Rev: OK. This one starts to come up the stairs, and roll Act Under Pressure.

Tass: Ooh. Seven. I had to math in my head.

Rev: So you can slash out and cut the leg off of this one as it comes up the stairs and cause it to tumble back down. But by the time you get back to the top of the stairs, the

other two are gonna be reformed. You can get this one's arm off and it will keep coming, or you can cut this one in half so that it splatters apart, but you notice that the way that you're gonna strike the blade, it almost looks like the blood from two of them is going to mix together.

Tass: Whoof. I don't know that in my head I would think that that matters. So I think I'm gonna splatter it.

Rev: So you slash across, and blood splatters up onto the wall. And very quickly, all of the blood in this hallway, instead of trying to recollect together, moves and pours down the stairs very fast past you.

Tass: "Whoa, whoa, whoa ... Shit."

Rev: So Jake, you are inside of this dirt room. You have dug and dug, and you have not found anything underneath. I don't know exactly what it was you are looking for, but you don't find anything.

Jake: I don't really know what I was looking for ... Like bones or a seed? Like, it seems like something -- like, 'Oh, we've got to bury this thing for magic to happen.' Like, the dirt's gotta be related. It's got to be on the submarine for a reason.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Sharp.

Jake: Oh God, OK. Seven.

Rev: I think that that is enough. This is not an overly complicated piece of information. I think that as you are starting to stand up and dust the dirt off of yourself, you remember back to the vrykolakas. And when you were researching vampires, you discovered that there are vampires that have to sleep on their home soil.

Jake: Oh, OK. I don't think that helps right this second, but I'm going to take some of that dirt.

Rev: Yeah. So you just gonna get a pocket full of dirt?

Jake: I ... Yeah. I don't think I have a better -- I mean I've got a backpack.

Rev: OK.

Jake: Could get a backpack pocket full of dirt.

Rev: All right. So Jake is scooping some dirt into his backpack. T.J., you have made it up to Anastacia. Tass is down the stairs, and you can hear him starting to come back up. But from down the hallway, you see the homunculus -- the first one you encountered -- coming around the corner towards you.

Teej: Can I push past him? Or at least get past him?

Rev: Sure. Roll Act Under Pressure.

Teej: Cool. Even with my Preternatural Speed, that's still just a five.

Rev: You go to get past this homunculus as it comes down the hallway, and it lashes out with its hand and catches you by the face. T.J., you take 2 points of damage, armor-defeating.

Teej: Ooh. I am unstable.

Rev: And you feel your nose and your ears and your mouth and your lungs starting to fill with blood.

Teej: Could I not? I mean, could I not feel those things?

Rev: No, no. In fact, asking means you feel them doubly.

Teej: Ugh.

Jake: But it's OK, because you won't feel anything pretty soon.

Rev: Tass, you come up the stairs and Anastacia is getting to her feet and wiping the blood off of her dagger. And you see that T.J. is in a very similar position that she was just in. He's being palmed by the face, and you see the blood flowing into him.

Tass: "Will you people stop getting grabbed by the face?" And I'm going to try to dart in and hack that arm off.

Rev: All right. Roll Protect Someone.

Tass: That is a ten.

Rev: OK. What is your extra effect?

Tass: I think I want the impending danger to be focused on me.

Rev: You jump forward and you cut this thing's arm off right where its elbow would be. And the blood starts to flow off of T.J.'s face, and he starts to cough and gag, and blood starts to pour out of his mouth. And the creature spins, having dealt with you once before, and it jams two of its fingers into your mouth. You take 2 points of damage, armor-defeating, as it very quickly starts to pour down your throat. Jake, you come out of the room and T.J. is on the ground on his hands and knees, coughing up blood. And you see that Tass is being grasped by this homunculus again, and its hand is just in his mouth, and you can see it starting to pour through.

Jake: OK. So I'm going to do a couple things, because I have a couple of really choice moves for this exact moment. So as part of I've Got Your Back, once per mystery, if someone near you goes unstable, you can instantly stabilize them.

Rev: Nice.

Jake: So I'm going to stabilize T.J. I don't know how that manifests instantly. But it's just ... Someone near you? Instant stabilize.

Rev: I think that as you move towards him, you grab the stun knuckles and you jam them into his chest, and it like shock paddles him awake.

Jake: All right. And then --

Teej: Shit.

Jake: Think I can use this move this time? You'll Have to Go Through Me: when a monster is threatening someone, you can step between them and challenge the monster. The monster must instantly target you instead.

Rev: Yeah. So I think that you can use this move. You can slam your shield into its arm and get it dislodged from Tass's mouth. Tass bends over and starts to cough up some blood. But this one is focused on you.

Jake: OK. So as part of that move, whenever you intentionally and willingly put yourself in deadly harm's way for another, mark experience.

Rev: OK.

Jake: So I get one point off that. And then I want to backtrack, luring this thing into the dirt room that I was in.

Rev: Oh, all right. You guys are right next to this door. Roll Act Under Pressure.

Jake: Oh, yeah. Ten.

Rev: Yeah. You backstep over T.J., step into the room, and the creature follows you. And it sloshes kind of around and through this door, and is now in this room of dirt with you. So you have the homunculus lured into the room.

Jake: OK. I want to ... This is a lot.

Rev: OK.

Jake: This is a lot to do in one. I need to maneuver past it. I want like, roll past it. Because I'm trying to trap it in here, but the door knob is gone.

Rev: Oh, yeah.

Jake: So what I want to do basically is like, as it's coming at me, is like, run my chain through the ... Kind of the straps of the shield. And then as I go out the door, run the ends of the chain through that hole. So that I can hold the chain on the outside, and it'll kind of pull the shield taut, blocking the entrance, and pull the door shut.

Rev: OK.

Jake: This seems like a big roll.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Act Under Pressure.

Jake: OK.

Tass: How good ... How good did you do? Did you do so good?

Jake: Two.

Tass: Oh, my God. We're gonna die in the cold water of the North Pole.

Jake: That's with my +1 ongoing because I've taken harm in this fight.

Tass: Oh, my God.

Jake: I'm going to spend Willem's Fortune to turn this into a full success.

Rev: Yeah. All right. So with a point of Luck, I think that you can accomplish all these things, then. You lure it into the room, and you take the shield off as you start to roll. And you tuck the chain through the shield and you get it nice and tight. And then you just poke your finger with a link of the chain through the door, step to the side, and jump out the side and pull it the rest of the way through. And you able to pull the chain through and get it taut against the door. So now you have anchored yourself to this door, but it is closed and sealed. Tass and T.J. and Anastacia, you guys are all on the ground, kind of clearing your systems of this blood, as you see Jake roll out of this room and pull a chain through a hole where the doorknob used to be, and just plant his feet.

Teej: "Tass, I'm not doing too well over here."

Tass: Oh, and he is a little, little bit a distance away, huh?

Rev: No, no, he is right by you.

Tass: Can we say he's just a little bit of distance away?

Teej: Oh, I know why.

Tass: Cause Medic Slide! *laughter*

Rev: Shit. No, I think that you just Medic Slide a ridiculously short distance.

Jake: Four or five inches.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Even better. Yeah, I want to try to patch up the obvious wounds.

Rev: OK. Roll Medic.

Tass: Ooh yeah. You get 2 points of healing, with a nine. "OK, man. This is all FUBAR. We gotta figure something out here, dude. You're the smart guy. What -- what do you got? I mean, anything."

Teej: "Well, we already know that magic can hurt them."

Tass: "Yeah, but it's not putting them down. We have to take those things out, or we just have to find who we need to find and get the hell out of here."

Teej: Just thinking back and looking at all their actions and all my actions within the last few ... I guess, almost seconds, if you think about it.

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: Could I figure out maybe what these things are attached to? If they're like to protect something? Or if they're controlled by something? Besides, I feel like that vial has something to do with it.

Rev: I mean, I think that just them saying that it's a homunculus and, you know, that it works for a wizard, that it's just here to be a guardian. It's just here to protect, in general.

Teej: Oh. "There is a guy downstairs. He said something about these are his children. We gotta get to that guy and stop him."

Tass: "Will that take out these things, if he goes down?"

Teej: "I hope so. That's all I can think of."

Tass: On the comm: "Ori, does that sound like that tracks, or is that nonsense?"

Rev: ORI: It depends what those magic fields do. They might sustain the magic beyond the caster, or they might just protect the vials.

Tass: "OK. I mean, that's as good as we've got. But unless we just try to kick open doors and find her ..." I don't know, I'll let you tell me if this sparks anything, because I don't want to just use my Weird move willy-nilly. It just makes no sense, especially when there hasn't been a change, or another reason for me to use it.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Tass: But like the landscape in here isn't what we thought, and this situation isn't what we thought. So with this new information that there's somebody else and these things here, would that be enough for me to kind of focus down with a Trust My Gut on what the better course is?

Rev: Trust Your Gut really specifically gives you where to go, correct?

Tass: Yeah. Pretty ... Pretty narrowed in on it.

Rev: So what are you trying to get towards? You trying to get towards the things you're looking for? You trying to get towards the source of these defenders? What are you trying to get towards?

Tass: I think ...

Rev: Cause that's gonna get you drastically different answer.

Tass: Right. Help me with this, guys. What's in my head is the fastest way out of here, because this is going bad. And so I guess I don't know if that -- the answer to that is stopping the homunculi, or whether it's grabbing the thing we need and bouncing. Thoughts there?

Teej: Stopping the homunculus would make it a lot easier for us to go around the ship and find the things that we need.

Jake: Yeah. If we have the theory that when this guy dies, the homunculi die. And that's been the issue we've encountered on this thing? Killing him, killing the homunculi means we can do the rest of the things we wanted to do.

Tass: Yeah. OK. So yeah, I think that's what I want to focus down on, is how do I put a stop to these with a method that we can actually employ?

Rev: All right. Roll it.

Tass: That's a ten.

Rev: So you start to play back the last couple moments in your head. Seeing these things spawned out of these rooms, T.J. being knocked backwards by the protective field around the vials of blood, your blade not doing anything to those protective fields. You know, the question you asked is, where can we go, with what we know and what we can

do, to stop these things? And your gut response is "We cannot." You do not think there's any place for you to go to stop these, because you are drastically under-prepared when it comes to magic.

Tass: "Guys, I don't think that's worth it. We have to fight through two more of these things to even get to that guy. And then we don't even know what it is or what it can do. And we have to fight through -- we're gonna get ripped apart before we have time to do anything. We've got to ... We've just got to move. We've got to move fast. We've got to find her and we gotta get out."

Jake: "Go for it. I'll hold this door. That's all I can do. If I let go, then we got three of 'em to deal with."

Tass: "OK. There's two more rooms pretty much right here. I'll stand right here and take care of these things if they come back up. You two check out these doors, huh?"

Teej: I want to check out the door that's sort of adjacent to the dirt room, then.

Rev: OK. And then I believe that Anastacia will go to the other door. So what do you wanna do when you approach this door?

Teej: See if the handle works.

Rev: It does not. There is a key code on it.

Teej: I'm gonna try the 13 19 09 on it.

Rev: It opens.

Teej: What's inside?

Rev: And I think it's worth pointing out that the code that T.J. is putting into the door and the code that T.J. put into the submarine to get in are the numbers that were on the back of The Argonaut patch that he found back in Hawaii. We didn't really say that when you used them at the door of the submarine. So just to clear that up, that's where the series of numbers came from, was the back of that patch that they found outside of the shack in The Shrieks.

Teej: Right.

Rev: Inside of this room, you see shelves on the walls. Each one of them holds a weapon. In fact, as you start to scan around the room, you see five weapons in this room.

Teej: What kind of weapons are they?

Rev: There is a warhammer, a short sword, a long sword, a dagger, and a whip that seems like it is made of links of metal.

Teej: This looks like stuff that Strohm would probably be interested in. So I'm going to grab them all, if I can? Can I stick them in my backpack?

Rev: I mean, you could get a couple of them, but I guess depends on the size that you're grabbing.

Teej: Hmm. Well then I'll put the dagger and the whip in my backpack and then I'll grab the short sword in one hand, and the long sword ... Oh, no. I'm going to get the warhammer in the other hand.

Rev: All right. So you've a -2 ongoing, I think. Because you are trying to carry something that is hard for people to heft with two hands, one-handed.

Teej: Gotcha.

Rev: And then you have a sword in the other hand, and then you have just added this weight to your bag. You have a minus Tough, is that correct?

Teej: Yeah, already. Yeah.

Rev: OK. Yeah, so you have a -2 ongoing while you drag these things around.

Teej: Sure.

Rev: And then from the hallway, you hear Anastacia:

Rev: ANASTACIA: Well, I think we've found what you're looking for, boys.

Rev: And she's standing in front of a door, and from out of the door that she has opened, steps a young girl. She has dark skin and black hair, and her eyes are very dilated. And she seems like she is under the influence of some kind of drug.

Tass: OK. I'm going to start kind of backpedaling. "T.J., grab her. Get her into the Gobbler. Let's go. Let's go."

Teej: "All right." And as I'm coming out the door of the room I'm in, I'm putting the warhammer up against the wall, just opposite of Jake. So then that way, if he needs to use it. And I'm going to point it out. "Jake, I got a hammer here for you. Just in case." And I'm going to let go of the hammer.

Jake: Oh, you shouldn't have.

Teej: Oh, I should have.

Jake: Oh, you.

Teej: Oh yes. Yes. This is for you.

Jake: Oh, my gentleman.

Teej: Yes. I expect a nice dinner after this.

Jake: *laughter*

Teej: And then I will guide Ori's sister towards the Gobbler.

Rev: All right. And Anastacia follows you. This very large homunculus starts to crest the stairway, Tass. And it is twice the size of the two that went down.

Tass: Yeah. I think I'm going to try another parting shot as I'm backing up, and try to get an arm off of it.

Rev: Roll Kick Some Ass.

Tass: Yes, that is a thirteen.

Rev: What is your extra effect?

Tass: Take little harm.

Rev: So it comes up the stairs and starts to move down the hallway, and it fills the entirety of the hallway. And it reaches out for you. And you are able to get a slash off,

and you cut a couple of its fingers off. And it brings the other fist forward as you do. And you take 3 points of damage, not armor-defeating, but you go tumbling backwards down the hall, past Jake.

Tass: "It's coming. It's coming. It's coming. We got to go!"

Teej: And I'm quickening my pace with Ori's sister to get her on.

Rev: Yeah. And you guys are able to get back into The Undersea Gobbler, no problem.

Jake: OK. I'm going to let go. And I'll grab the hammer, and try and kind of cover our exit. Like, get -- wait until Tass gets back to his feet and just be like, "All right, let's get on this thing. Let's get out of here."

Rev: All right. So roll Act Under Pressure to let go this chain and get down the hallway and grab the hammer, and stay out of the clutches of this homunculus that is filling the corridor.

Jake: What was it? Act Under Pressure?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: Seven.

Rev: So you are able to let go of this and start down the hallway. You are either going to not be able to grab the hammer, Tass is going to be left behind and the homunculus is going to get there, or when you let go of the door, the homunculus behind the door is going to join with the two in the hallway.

Jake: I mean honestly, that last one is what I was prepared for to happen. I think that I was kind of like, when I let go, this thing is going to become triple, but we're on our way out. So I think that's the one I'm going to take.

Rev: So you start to head down the hallway. You grab up the warhammer, you help Tass to his feet, and you can see this other essence flow into this homunculus. And it rushes down the hallway, filling up even more space than three of them should. And it is right on your heels as the two of you start to move back towards the submarine.

Jake: Just booking it, I think.

Rev: So T.J., you and Anastacia and Ori's sister have gotten back into The Undersea Gobbler. What are you doing?

Teej: I'm preparing the ship to leave in a quick manner.

Rev: OK. And what does that involve?

Teej: I'll have somebody on the outer door, somebody on the inner door. As soon as everybody's past the outer door, then that person will close the outer door. And then as soon as they're past the inner door -- everybody -- then we'll close it up, we'll blow off, and then we'll do a rapid rise, I guess.

Rev: Who's at which door?

Teej: The outer door shall be Anastacia. The inner door will be Ori.

Rev: So Tass and Jake, you guys are moving towards the ship, and you see that Anastacia is right by the front door. She is waiting to close it. And you can see Ori further in. Roll Act Under Pressure to get into the submarine.

Tass: Handily. Eleven.

Jake: I got seven.

Rev: So you can get from The Argonaut into The Undersea Gobbler. But then triggering the disconnect is gonna happen kind of weirdly, and either it's going to pull a bunch of things -- material things -- out of The Undersea Gobbler into the ocean, the homunculus is going to get through and be inside of The Undersea Gobbler, or it's going to get hands on Anastacia.

Jake: I think we're going to lose some loot. It's gonna wash some objects away.

Rev: So as Jake dives through, Anastacia -- she starts to close the door, and then gets caught up with some of the blood coming through, and she's trying to force it back out. And T.J. jumps the gun and starts to pull away. And as soon as the disconnect happens, there is a rush of air from the back of The Undersea Gobbler towards the front door, and a number of things: scuba suits, tanks, some tools, T.J.'s backpack, the short sword ... Basically everything that isn't currently being gripped in someone's hand all go out into the ocean. But then the doors are sealed, and you are away from The Argonaut.

Tass: "Go, go, go."

Teej: And I'm driving us up to the surface.

Rev: All right. Roll Act Under Pressure.

Tass: Four.

Teej: That's a five. But I'm gonna go ahead and use one of my Luck, because I don't want them to shoot a torpedo at us.

Rev: You are able to pull this away and pilot it back towards the location where you left Everett. The Undersea Gobbler breaks the surface of the water, and you are able to get everyone out. And Ori is holding this girl, and just talking to her in a language that you don't understand. But you can tell that she is so happy and she is crying. And he picks her up and carries her onto Mother Hen. What are you guys gonna do with The Undersea Gobbler? Are you gonna load it back up? Are you getting in this helicopter and taking the hell off?

Teej: Well, I was going to go ahead and pull out my key fob, which is attached to The Sea Gobbler.

Tass: *laughter* Of course it is.

Teej: It's not attached.

Rev: It's not attached to it. That's a huge keychain you've got.

Teej: It's just a big line. And I'm going to press a button on it, and all the hatches on The Sea -- Undersea Gobbler -- are going to close up, and it is going to just bubble, bubble, bubble all the way down. And as it does --

Tass: *laughter* What?

Teej: Instead of making like bubbling sounds, it's like, *turkey gobble*

Rev: Oh, so you have like on your key fob something that just -- essentially just shuts it off?

Teej: Yeah, it's an auto shut off.

Rev: Yeah. All right. I think that's perfectly reasonable.

Teej: It's just gonna sleep on the bottom of the ocean.

Tass: Did you build in Michael Keaton's Batmobile button for the armor to all like clink around it?

Rev: Hide the tires so no ruffians steal it.

Teej: No, but now I'm gonna make us some, just for us.

Tass: Oh, my God. I love that.

Teej: We can't move in it, or anything.

Tass: Well, time to go to bed *beep beep beep beep*

Rev: Yeah, I think that tracks. So T.J. pushes this button, The Undersea Gobbler sinks to the bottom of the ocean, and you all climb onto Mother Hen. Everett lifts off, and the nine of you head back towards IPT.

It's a fairly anxious ride back. There is a level of excitement, but there's also a level of, 'This thing is out there still. We left it behind intact. Is anything following us? Did we get away scot-free?' Because that generally hasn't been your M.O., that you've been able to get away cleanly. And it feels like you did this time. Is there anything you guys are talking about on the way back?

Tass: I would absolutely sit with Anastacia. "I'm sorry we didn't get her. I wanted it, too. But I mean, you saw. We didn't -- we didn't really have a choice. It was stay and die at that point."

Rev: ANASTACIA: I wish I could've seen more of that place, but I suppose it wouldn't be his place of safety if it wasn't heavily, heavily fortified.

Tass: "Yeah. All things considered, we're pretty lucky. And thank you so much. You put yourself on the line, and you didn't have to do that. And I wish there's more that we could say that came out of it for you."

Rev: ANASTACIA: I wish I could have done more. I wish we had known more going in.

Rev: She looks at the dagger in her hand that was entirely ineffective, and she puts it in its sheath.

Jake: I would have the warhammer and be sitting near like Rev and Everett, and trying to puzzle out what the hell this thing is. Because we've got to give it over now. So I want to know what it is to some degree before we have to hand it over to Strohm.

Rev: I think that they both take a look at it.

Rev: REV: I mean, yeah. That's not anything that I've seen before.

Jake: Yeah. I mean, I guess I would spend the rest of the flight kind of like messing with it, and seeing if anything interesting happened. Like, holding it and focusing, and seeing if it like glowed or anything like that. Just trying to elicit an effect out of it, to see if it happened.

Rev: No, nothing happens.

Jake: I think I would like, hand it to Tass at some point. I'd be like, "He's got a room full of weapons. Maybe they were weapons of the other Chosen." And hand it off to Tass, to see if it matters, if it does anything in his hands.

Tass: "No. You think?" And I mean, I would pick it up.

Rev: It doesn't do anything.

Tass: "It's real heavy, and I'm very weak."

All: *laughter*

Tass: "I got nothin, man."

Jake: "All right. I mean, if it's inert to all of us and our magic folk, and we don't know about it, then maybe she won't know about it immediately."

Rev: So you guys stopping at Chicago on the way back, or you headed back to Indianapolis straight away?

Tass: Might as well.

Rev: So as you head that way, Ori comes over.

Rev: ORI: Thank you so much. This is ... God, I can't believe we did it. But this is only half the issue. Now we gotta vanish.

Tass: "Where do we know? I mean, we know that he has enough intel that he probably knows where the main office is at this point, if he took NOEL. So I don't ... You know, I don't think that's a great plan."

Jake: "I mean Ori, do you have any ideas? Places from your past that no one knows about that you'd feel safe?"

Rev: ORI: No. I mean, as far as I can tell, if I know about it, he knows about it.

Tass: "Yeah, that's fair."

Jake: "Rev, do you want a roommate?"

Rev: REV: I mean, we could try it.

Jake: "I mean, it's off the grid and untraceable, and all that good stuff. It's the most secure place I think I know of."

Rev: ORI: Yeah. I mean, when we first talked about this, you guys had said essentially make me disappear. I don't know if one of your regular haunts is really making us disappear, and it's going to put your whole operation at risk if he can find me. You're just leading him to your door.

Tass: Yeah. I keep using this when we have a problem. What about trying to like, track through and pinpoint somewhere to take them with Trust Your Gut? Like, trying to think of like what is the safest possible place in our realm of knowledge that we could take them? And trying to kind of buckle in on that to get a clear idea.

Rev: Yeah, I think so. That if it is the places that you guys are aware of and trying to figure out where to hide somebody, what would be the most secure ... Yeah. Roll it.

Tass: OK.

Teej: Good call, bro.

Tass: And that is a twelve.

Rev: Without a doubt, you know in your head the safest place that you could put Ori and his sister Maliah, out of all the places you've been, is Elnore.

Tass: "OK. Here's a thought: we have the teleporter. What about taking them to Elnore?"

Jake: "Yeah. Do we know how to open the door there, specifically?"

Teej: "Holy crap, that's such a great idea."

Tass: "I mean, I don't know that we have the number, but I figure we can figure it out. It's you know, from what we could gather, it's like the next place over from us."

Teej: "Right."

Tass: "Like, right? That tracks on so many levels."

Jake: "Like we could just fire it up and hit channel up and it'll be Elnore?"

Tass: "That's the best thought I have. That's somewhere that literally almost nobody knows that we ever even went. With, you know, a very small list of people that do. And nobody else would really have a reason to go to. Like, that's ... That's it. That's what we've got to do."

Jake: "OK."

Rev: So I think about the time that you guys finish this conversation, you land in Chicago.

Jake: "All right. I don't know who wants to come with me. It doesn't matter to me."

Tass: "I'll keep guarding the helicopter."

Teej: "I'll go with you."

Jake: OK. Me and T.J., we'll go take the warhammer up. And before he can even ask me, I'll say "She should be expecting me."

Rev: He opens the door, and the elevator's there. And you take the elevator up, and the door opens, and she is standing there.

Jake: "Well, we made off with a handful, but lost them at the very last second. So this is the one we got out with." And I'll hand off the warhammer.

Rev: STROHM: Oh ...

Jake: "You know what it does? Does it mean anything to you?"

Rev: STROHM: It does. This is quite a rare artifact.

Rev: And she holds the hammer in both hands, and her necklace starts to glow. And she releases the hammer, and it just floats there. And she touches the necklace, and then she touches the hammer, and her eyes light up. And you can just barely see that there are images flashing across her blank eyes. And then she snaps back, and she catches the hammer as it stops floating.

Rev: STROHM: I know that you are well aware that this was happening, but Grigori Nash was killing off the Chosen. This was one of their weapons.

Jake: "Oh, I thought it might be."

Rev: STROHM: Were there more?

Jake: "Yeah, but we lost them."

Rev: STROHM: How many were there?

Teej: "There were five."

Rev: STROHM: Oh. Well that, counting the one that your friend has, as far as I know, that's all of them in existence.

Jake: "Well, he's gonna get the rest of them back. I have to assume. They just kind of fell right outside his door."

Rev: STROHM: Well, I mean, they're not really any good without a Chosen to wield them. And really, only if it's linked to them. But it's a very interesting conversation piece.

Jake: "Yeah. Seems like just kind of a sick trophy, huh?"

Rev: STROHM: Yes. Imagine if they were only six T-rexes left on the planet, and you had one of their skulls over your fireplace.

Jake: "Boy that's dark, but really good."

Rev: STROHM: Right.

Jake: "OK. Well, so there's the hammer. And I guess I owe you a favor?"

Rev: STROHM: Oh, no, I think that that makes us even. I will take that hammer for those, uh, those charms.

Jake: "Oh, OK. Well, pleasure doing business with you."

Rev: STROHM: Yes, you as well.

Jake: "They did come in handy, by the way."

Rev: STROHM: Oh, did they?

Jake: "Yeah."

Rev: STROHM: Good.

Jake: "I think we got away with some stuff that we wouldn't have been able to get away with otherwise."

Rev: STROHM: Oh, is that so?

Rev: So T.J., you are sitting there as they're having this conversation, and you're kind of going back and forth watching Strohm and Jake make this bargain. And your ears perk up. And you notice that your necklace, the lucky charm, is pulsing just slightly a green. And outside you hear:

Rev: VOICE: *shrieks*

Rev: Tass, you are sitting in the back of Mother Hen at the open hatch, watching the city go by. You look back inside and you see Anastacia and Rev having a conversation. You

see Ori flipping through his phone and showing Maliah photos. And you see that Everett and Jingles seem to be plotting a course. And it strikes you how nice this moment is, because everybody seems to be at peace. But then you notice that your necklace has this strange green pulse to it. And as you pick up the necklace and look closer at the pulse, in the distance, you hear this wailing sound. And then you hear shattering. And you look down the long road ahead of you, and you can see glass tumbling from buildings. And you can see lampposts exploding, and stoplights crashing to the ground. And you're able to focus down and across the Chicago skyline. You see the banshee screaming and heading straight for Mother Hen.

SFX:

OUTRO MUSIC

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