

The Sewer Labyrinth (S2, E9)

INTRO:

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Rev: So it seems it's been decided that we're going to decorate T.J.'s car as a pirate ship for the trip down to.

Teej: It's big. It's huge. And for some reason, Jake, and Tass have gotten it in their heads that since we're dressing up as Sea of Thieves characters, that they're going to just ride the--the vehicle like it's some kind of pirate ship.

Rev: They're going to work the ship--

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: Or work the Car like it's a pirate ship.

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: I've already chainsawed a hole in the top of it and run a mast through, so...

Tass: I'm gonna just dangle out the door for most of it with a rope, with a hook and see how many other cars I can latch onto.

Rev: I will man the crow's nest, in the sense that I'll be in the car to like lower it when we come across bridges and stuff.

Tass: Nice.

Teej: Nice, nice. I'll dangle like a little cup down at the bottom, every once in a while, to check the depth--

Tass: Oh,yeah.

Teej: --of the road--

Rev: Oh--of the road!

Teej: Yeah.

Tass: That's solid.

Teej: Yeah. That's an old school like pirate thing, right?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: I can't wait till we're on the highway and I get to throw the anchor out.

Rev: McDonald's ahead! Clank, Clank, errrr!

Jake: Do we wanna stop? Somebodies gotta tell me. Do you wanna stop? Okay. Hit the anchor.

Rev: Oh, man. So, congratulations, everybody. We, uh, we passed 100 supporters on Patreon the other day.

Teej: Alright!!

Jake: Woohoo!

Rev: And almost every single one of them is on Discord. And like a fourth of them are in the 'Monster of the Week' group on Discord where they get together and play games. So, yeah, it is awesome. Thank you all for joining us on there. Again, the five dollar tier gets you all of the monthly content that comes out, 'Hero Salad', 'Investigate the History' and a couple other things coming up soon, that everybody is kind of excited about.

Teej: Ooooh! What's it going to be?

Rev: We did the other 'End of Days' just a couple nights ago with Carolyn back again, who keeps saying like, "Oh, I don't have anything I can do in this situation." and then comes up with the most violent thing to do in the situation.

Jake: She's like, "Oh, I don't know what to do. He's like--he's like tied up and I only have a tiny knife." And Tass is like, "Well, the moves work." She's like, "OK, I'm going to pour plaster down his throat." It's like, well, hold on!

Teej: Yeah, I heard that. That was like, pretty gruesome.

Jake: Pretty sideways.

Rev: In dealing with a Graboid.

Tass: Yep. Turned that thing into a taxidermed Graboid, real fast.

Rev: And I think that we may have another one between now and then, but I believe we have another one scheduled for October the 11th, which is a Friday.

Tass: Yes, indeed.

Rev: So, Carolyn, we'll be back for that, because again, we get to pick up some, 'Investigate the History'. I'm sure we'll have to stream some more stuff before October, but at least that is the next 'End of Days' that we have planned.

Tass: Yes, indeed. And, um, you know, for anybody listening currently, the one that was this past couple of days go, it stays up for a few weeks on our Twitch. So you can go back and watch that stuff, if you like, until it fades away. So that is just Twitch.TV/TheCritshow and any of the other various streams we've done in the last several weeks. It does keep those up for a while.

Rev: Does everybody got their stuff set for Dragon Con?

Tass: Yeah, I think so.

Teej: Yeah, just about.

Jake: I spent 14 full hours working yesterday. I got two props done. So that's about 20 percent of the list and I've got--let's see--it's Sunday.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Two days.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Three days.

Rev: This'll be fine.

Tass: Those props look so good though.

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: Thank you.

Teej: That sword.

Jake: I'm very proud of the sword.

Rev: Yeah, it looks really nice.

Tass: Yeah, and if anybody hasn't seen it yet either, Rav made a bad ass skull from Sea of Thieves, too, so we have several dope Sea of Thieves props. I'm super excited for that group.

Rev: Yeah. If you are at Dragon Con and you're wandering around,uh, thursday night, we'll be wandering around as characters from Sea of Thieves. I think Tass will have some quests to hand out.

Tass: Yes, indeed.

Rev: And then Saturday we're doing a Letter Kenny group.

Jake: I ordered my overalls. I bought my hat yesterday.

Rev: Excellent.

Rev: And then Sunday evening, we're doing a photo shoot with Wes, for Hero Salad, which is gonna be fun, so... We're already meeting with one of the Chosen groups to play their monthly game. So if you're gonna be around, send us a message and we'll see if we can't get together or play a game or something. So, until then, no, there's no recap this week. Oh, that's exciting.

Jake: Time to let the episode roll.

Rev: Time to let the episode---

Tass: Commence.

Rev: Commence. Time to let the--go webs go.

TITLE: THE SEWER LABYRINTH

SFX: *Heart monitor beeps.*

Rev: The three of you are awoken by the sound of three steady beeps. And as your eyes come into focus, you all see the ceiling above you and you find yourselves laying in bed. And as you start to look around, you see each other in your original bodies laying in three hospital gurneys. And the beeping is heart monitors and you've all got an I.V. in your arm. And as you start to awake, you hear an alarm sounding somewhere down the hallway.

Teej: *in his wolf form gravely voice* Oh God, oh, everybody all right?

Tass: Oh, yeah, I think I'm good. Oh, I wonder what the he--OK, well, okay. No, I think I know what happened. Obviously, if we just crumpled, this all makes sense. Is there anybody else in this room?

Rev: There's not. But as you start to look around the room, you can see that it's like plastic on the walls and that there is cement behind the clear plastic, like a kind of sterile environment has been made in a non-sterile location.

Teej: Do I recognize this place as my place?

Rev: You do you realize it as one of the side rooms of your subterranean layer.

Teej: Oh, yeah. We're just--we're just underground. We're--we're in my place. OK.

Tass: OK well, let's get moving. I'm gonna--

Teej: Jake. You, OK?

Jake: Yeah. A little stiff. What's the--what is this alarm then? Is this something you set up?

Teej: I don't know. Can I look around the room to see if I see where the alarm is coming from?

Rev: It's coming from outside the room. You hear it coming from outside the door.

Teej: Ok. I'm going to head that way outside the door and I assume walk, but very gingerly, considering my body hasn't been moving for a while, I think.

Rev: Yeah. Are you like moving your I.V. bag with you, like on the little stand?

Teej: I probably don't even notice it until it pulls on my arm.

Rev: Ugh.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: Yes. Yes. You get up and start to leave and you get tugged as the needle in your--in your forearm pulls.

Teej: Oh, God. Oh, God. I'm going to grab it and bring it with me and wheel it around with me, I guess.

Rev: Okay. So yeah, T.J. gets up and starts wheeling his I.V. bag out the door. What are you guys doing?

Tass: I'm hopping up. I'm going to take the I.V. out and check and see if I'm naked or like, what's the situation here?

Rev: Yeah. You're wearing the clothes that you were wearing when you left.

Tass: Ok.

Teej: Ahh! Darn, I was imagining myself in like a hospital gown and my ass is just showing.

Jake: Your tail.

Tass: Tail swinging out, yeah.

Jake: Yeah, I'm gonna yank the I.V. and start moving towards the door and see what that alarm is.

Rev: OK. So, yeah, the three of you come out of this semi-sterile room and you see that Rev is at the computer and there is an alarm going off on top of it. And you can see that he is reading some kind of output on the screen.

Tass: *whispering* Do we interrupt him or do we not interrupt him?

Jake: *not whispering* What's going on, man?

Rev: Doh, Cha!! He spins around. God damn!

Tass: That's why I asked.

Rev: Huh? Holy crap. You guys are back.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah. But there's an alarm. What's up?

Rev: Yeah. Yeah. So, the machine, it's--something's not right, T.J. Like we--we didn't do something right. There's something in the schematics isn't right. I don't know. But it's it's like overheating.

Teej: Uh, what!?! And I'm gonna go to the machine and I'm going to do a diagnostics on it.

Rev: Yeah. So you start to go through and you can see that something in the power output is not right and that components are starting to burn out. And you can see a couple of places where Rev has gone around and replaced components when they have burned out.

Teej: Oh, shit. Um, alright. Well, this seems like it's not a good thing, um. And I want to see if I can figure out what particular components are burning out and maybe fixing that problem.

Rev: So, why don't you just roll 'Weird Science'. We're going to kind of treat that as you're 'Sharp' for this.

Teej: Okay. That is a 12.

Rev: So, let's give you a hold 2 for 'Investigate a Mystery' with that.

Teej: What happened here? Seems like the best one so far.

Rev: So, as you start to go through the computer and look at the things you've programmed in and the setup that you have got, you can tell that the calculations just aren't quite right. Like it works, but it maybe isn't designed in a way where it could work for a long period of time. So, you can tell that some adjustments would have to be made to make it more stable or else some kind of external magic might have to be done to calm it down. But if you want to redo anything in it, you'd have to shut it down.

Teej: Ok. And, uh, what is being concealed here?

Rev: I think the thing that occurs to you as you are making this realization of, you know, it's gonna take some kind of outside influence to stabilize the machine or shutting it off and spending a little bit of time working on it. If you shut it off when it comes back on line, when you reactivate the portal, there is no guarantee that it's going to take you where you left the portal.

Tass: Oof!

Teej: Well, fellows, I've got some good news and I got some bad news. Good news is, I think I can fix this. Bad news is, it's not going to take us right exactly where we want it to take us.

Jake: What do you mean, like wrong dimension?

Teej: Yeah. It'd be the right dimension, just the wrong place in the dimension.

Tass: So we could end up in some other dead bodies in another part of the world.

Teej: Yeah, yeah.

Tass: Yeah, that's fair. OK. So is there anything to do to it now? Is there a Band-Aid for this?

Teej: Well, I guess like Rev has been doing, it looks like he's been replacing pieces. Is that right, Rev?

Rev: Yeah. As things are burning out, I'm just trying to swap them out. If you could figure out something to, I don't know, drain off some of the energy or something. It seems to be creating too much energy.

Teej: Gotcha.

Tass: Jake, does anything in your book do anything like that?

Jake: Well, sort of. So mechanically speaking, one of the effects is, counteract or purge preexisting magic from a given area, stop something from using magic or disrupt another's use magic attempt. Could that be something that could be like adapted?

Rev: Yeah, I think so.

Jake: OK, yeah, sort of. It's really just kind of like a straight up counter spell. But, I might be able to work it so that it's just kind of like a, uh, a siphon instead.

Tass: That sounds amazing. I don't know what any of that means, but I believe you.

Teej: And since this machine is a confluence of magic and technology, it should work.

Jake: Ok. I mean, how should this resolve? Because this is one of those things where it just--it just goes.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: But, do I need to put in some extra effort here? Do you think there are are, you know, things? Dammit, what's the term I'm looking for?

Teej: I think he's a--I think he's asking if it's 'Big Magic' or just regular magic.

Rev: I think that for the purpose of this, it is simply what it does. I think that Rev can point out to you where it needs to be cast at, to have the effect needed.

Jake: Okay.

Rev: Yeah. So, I think that you are able to, with the help of Rev, set up a couple of spots around the room and cast this spell. And there's a small little orb that appears. And you can see that some of the excess energy from the different areas of the room seem to funnel into this and then just vanish.

Teej: I'm gonna check diagnostics now that that's going on.

Rev: Yeah, everything seems stable.

Teej: Nice. Yeah, it looks like power is at full capacity and it's draining off just fine.

Jake: Alright. Well, that's a new one. Hey, I think maybe like doing magic in the other place has made me a little better at magic here.

Tass: Maybe. That's amazing. Holy shit. How long have you been doing this?

Rev: Well, it just started to really act up about an hour ago.

Tass: Oh, OK.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: How long have we been gone?

Tass: Oh, that's a good point. That's a good question.

Rev: Like six or seven hours.

Tass: Oh, damn. OK.

Rev: How long were you guys gone for you?

Jake: Like--

Tass: What was it six...

Jake: Six or seven days like--seems like maybe an hour a day. The opposite direction of Elnor on this one.

Tass: Shit.

Rev: Well, I mean, that's good, right? It gives you time to get some stuff done.

Tass: Sorta. We got some answers, but we didn't exactly accomplish a lot.

Teej: We did meet Baba Yaga again, though.

Rev: Bwa...excuse me?

Tass: Yeah. Check this out. Apparently, through the worlds, in one way or another, for good or ill, Baba is going to be somewhere.

Rev: But like--like just the one that you met already.

Tass: We kind of gleaned that she can sort of communicate and get information from all the others, but it's not like the same woman hopping around from place to place, the way we're going through a portal like...

Teej: Yeah, this one seemed a lot nicer.

Jake: She was kind of like the mayor of a town. Her house was a lot brighter and, you know, tidier than it is here.

Teej: Still had the metal teeth, though. So that's kind of off putting.

Jake: Still had the metal teeth--

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: Off putting for sure.

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: Here's what I'm thinking. What is occurring to me right now is every hour that we're here, a day is passing there.

Tass: Yep.

Jake: And Nash is doing his dark deeds. So that's the problem with us being back here is he's getting time over on us, on top of all of the time he's already gotten over on us because we don't know how long he's been gone anyway.

Tass: Right, right. So, while we were gone, did anything come through?

Rev: Uh, no, not that I know of.

Tass: OK. OK. That was kind of my big check because we essentially had to leave the portal to do some stuff and it was just open. So that was kind of what I was worried about is, Oh, God, what might have happened while we weren't standing by it, watching it?

Rev: Oh, God. I mean, not as far as I saw, nothing came through. But I'll be honest, I was spending a lot of time setting up that space. I had no idea what the hell happened to you guys, so. It was a matter of setting up that room and just getting you stabilized.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Were we effectively brain dead?

Rev: I mean, from my point of view, you were effectively sleeping.

Jake: That's less terrifying.

Tass: Yeah, yeah, yeah. We woke up literally inside of dead bodies.

Rev: Dead bodies?

Jake: Very recently dead.

Tass: Very recently dead, yeah.

Jake: For all intents and purposes, like also they'd been asleep almost.

Rev: Oh, wow.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Wait. So, instead of like teleporting there, you almost kind of like astral projected there.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Wow.

Tass: Right? Um, and that's--I like to think that nothing came through even if you weren't looking. I feel like you would know, because we were, dude, we were in like a fantasy world. There were literally goblins that we had to fight our way through to even get out of where we were in the first place. And I feel like if anything was going to come through, it was gonna be--that--that's what was there, Goblins and Trolls and shit. So, you know, if some creatures didn't plow their way out of that, then cool.

Rev: Wait. But, no. Why would a creature come through in body if you guys didn't go through. It's the same portal.

Jake: Uh Oh, what--what would the nearest dead bodies be? Do we have a morgue? Is there a morgue here?

Teej: No. But I do have a lab full of some dead creatures.

Jake: I would like to go check the lab immediately.

Teej: Yeah, I'm gonna head that way as well.

Rev: Alright. So, you guys get into the lab and you find the slab where the mosquito man used to be.

Jake: Oh, my God!

Rev: And you notice that he ain't there anymore.

Jake: This is the worst possible outcome. Mosquito Dan lives again!

Tass: This. This is why I wish I'd have crept in and checked on the goblins, because we would have seen that they are just carting around an unconscious one and we would have went, oh, God, oh, God, oh, and I just kind of storming around the room, pulling my hair, now.

Jake: Now, now, wait, hold on. I'm trying to imagine a Goblin brain in Mosquito Dan's body. What is it doing? Like, it's probably flying in a circle seven stories up from us right now just like sniffing its ass. It's a goblin. They were stupid. Except for the cook. He was very smart and cunning and wise and should be respected. I'm so scared to go back and see him.

Tass: Okay. I'm instantly in tracker mode. I want to try to figure out if I can see where this thing went, if it left like a trail of blood or anything from where we had injured it and so on.

Rev: Alright. Roll 'Investigate a Mystery'.

Tass: Oh, no. Well, that's a f--uh, that's a 3.

Rev: Alright. So you start to look around trying to get a sense of where this may have gone, but you can't find anything. But as you start to go around towards the back of the room where the Pandora Gremlin's box is, the thing that you do find is, in the very corner of the room what looks like a shadow. You kinda get up to it and start to examine it and it looks like a very small portal.

Teej: Like an energy portal, like what we created?

Rev: Yes.

Tass: Guys?

Jake: Yeah?

Tass: What does this mean?

Jake: How very small are we talking?

Rev: It's about three feet in diameter.

Tass: Well, what the hell is this now? Could Mosquito Dan make portals and we didn't know about it?

Jake: Uhhh, or whatever came through and occupied Mosquito Dan could make portals.

Tass: And their magic works here. OK. Uh Oh.

Jake: And they opened a portal and maybe they're bringing their people through or something like maybe they didn't go home. Maybe they recruited.

Teej: I've got an idea. And I'm going to go up to Rev and I'm going to start patting him on the back and the neck just to make sure that he doesn't have a mosquito on the back of his neck.

Rev: Oh, yeah. So, you go back into the main room and Rev is kind of looking at some of the different machinery again. And you pat him on the back. You don't notice anything.

Teej: Just making sure.

Rev: Making sure of what?

Teej: Oh, uh, that you didn't have a mosquito sucking on your brain to, you know, control you. We found a portal back there. We didn't know if like, maybe you created one.

Rev: What? You found a portal?

Teej: Yeah. Come on. Check it out. And I'll take him back there.

Rev: Yeah. He follows you back and he just kind of puts his hands on his hips and looks at it and tilts his head. Well, that shouldn't be there.

Tass: Yeah. We think something got through.

Rev: Something got through. What do you mean?

Tass: Mosquito Dan's body is gone.

Rev: Oh, God.

Tass: Jake, you want to poke your head through this or...

Jake: I have a feeling that it's going to astral projector a head to through that, then. But like, what happens if only part of my body goes through the portal?

Tass: This is a different portal. We don't know how this portal works.

Jake: Oh, inspiring. Yes. Filled with confidence, now.

Teej: Is this portal on the ground?

Rev: It is.

Teej: I'm gonna jump in the portal.

Rev: Ok. So T.J. leaps through the portal. T.J., you come out in the sewer system. You're pretty familiar with this area down here and you come out, you think probably four or five hundred yards away in one of the access tubes. And on this side, the portal is much larger and it takes up the entirety of the hallway like it is blocking this walkway.

Jake: Oh, God. He just did it. He just did it. I'm going to go through.

Rev: OK. Yeah. You appear next to T.J. and he is standing there looking around. And you are inside one of the sewer access tunnels.

Teej: You know what I'm happy about, Jake?

Jake: What?

Teej: That this didn't lead to some kind of like death machine, like just a big shredding device.

Jake: Yeah. Me too, buddy.

Tass: On the comms. Are you guys OK?

Teej: And yeah, we're actually about 400 yards from you. Uh, just jump on through.

Tass: You guys are wild. Why didn't you try the comes first, Jake? Why did you just jump through? What the hell? And I'm going to reach through and see if I can't grab him and pull him in.

Rev: As soon as you start to reach towards it, you can feel it pulling you in. So there is no like halfway with these.

Teej: Oh, OK. So, like you actually have to go through.

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: OK. So, I'm going to jump through and then I'm going to take him and push him in.

Jake: Just grab him a and power slam him back through the portal.

Rev: So the--so you hop back into the room and Rev and Tass are standing there kind of looking at the portal and you give Tass the old Ally-oop into the portal and follow him and now all three of you are standing in this access tunnel.

Tass: Oh, my God.

Jake: So what, are we trying to pick up a trail here?

Tass: I mean, something came through, one way or the other. So, either something made this to like wormhole into your place or vice versa. I feel like it's the vice versa. I feel like they made their way out. Just I mean, that's just instinct. I have nothing to go on on that. But, can I see anything with my sight? Like any sort of magic energies or spirit?

Rev: No. You just see the portal.

Tass: OK.

Jake: OK. Who wants to try and track? Or is it just like muck are we in like liquid?

Rev: No, here you are not. It is fairly dry cement. It's an access tunnel that you would use to get to some of the larger sewer lines and electrical tunnels.

Tass: I don't see any magic signatures. T.J., do you see anything on any of your spectrums or anything?

Teej: I'm going to put on my thermal goggles and then I'm going to see if anything shows up, any kind of temperature differentiations, some kind of thing that might have been cold or hot that has passed through here recently.

Rev: Ok, so you switch on your thermal goggles, make sure you mark your point. We haven't done that in a long time.

Teej: Yeah, I know.

Rev: And you look around down here and you don't see any heat signatures. You know, you've got really an absence of heat from the portal. And then further down the hallway, you can see that there's just a little bit of an absence, again.

Teej: Guys, I'm seeing something here, like an absence of heat. It's like causing like a little bit of a trail here. I think if we follow this, we might have something.

Jake: Alright, let's go.

Teej: Alright. And I'm going to lead the way.

Rev: Alright. So the three of you head down the hallway and you go about 200 yards and, you know, this is lit every 10 or 20 feet by a small light. And after you travel that distance, you come to another large portal that is blocking the hall.

Jake: Good God.

Tass: Whelp. And I'll jump in.

Rev: Tass, you leap through the portal and you splash down into about five feet of sewage.

Tass: Ughh, Uhhh, UGHHH!

Jake: *snarky like* I'm going to get on the comms. Hey, so how'd that one go?

Tass: *in a disgusted manner* Ughhh! It's sewage. It's so much sewage. It's like almost-- it's up to my neck.

Jake: I wasn't--the image in my head wasn't five feet until you just said that it was almost up to your neck and then I was like, oh, God.

Tass: It's in my pockets.

Teej: I keep all my treasured possessions in those pockets.

Rev: It's in my pockets!

Tass: I'm gonna have to get a new license.

Rev: I have to get a new body, I need a head transplant.

Teej: God.

Jake: Do you see anything?

Tass: I see feces everywhere.

Jake: OK. Buckle down, though. Try to examine.

Tass: I'm going to look around. Not under water.

Rev: Yeah. I mean, it is very dark in here. You've got a little bit of light from the portal which is taking up the entirety of this tunnel to your back and maybe two or three hundred yards in the distance, you can see just a little bit of light.

Tass: I guess I'm going to get out my headlamp covered in feces and put it over my stupid forehead and click the button.

Rev: It's like that moment in the sitcom where like, you take it out to put on your head and you turn it upside down because it's on a hardhat and it just dumps on your head. Yes. You turn it on and it is just as bad as you're imagining. That is what you see. It is the final scene of Shawshank.

Tass: Guys it's the final scene of Shawshank. Guys, guys, guys.

Teej: I don't know if I want to go in there now.

Jake: I absolutely don't want to go in there.

Tass: Um, I can try to keep going and you can teleport to me. I'll do that for you. I don't wish this on anybody.

Jake: Hey, what if we backtrack to the lab real quick and whip up some suits that'll protect us from all this garbage so we can all go in together? Like, I don't want you to move in alone, but I genuinely think that being neck deep in poo might affect our combat prowess. If something bad were to happen, so...

Tass: That's up to you guys. I think hurrying is probably better as there is a thing opening portals through the tunnels of Indianapolis.

Jake: Ok. All right. Yeah, you go ahead. I'll teleport to you. T.J., I don't know if you want to walk through or if you want to trust riding with me.

Teej: Yeah, I'll go with you.

Jake: OK. Well, Godspeed. Let me know if something terrible starts to happen while you're down there and I'll just teleport to you immediately.

Tass: Ok. And I'm going to have the spear out and wade through this.

Rev: OK. So he's--

Jake: I'm just going to hum daybreak on the other side of this portal.

Rev: Ok. So you trek down about two or three hundred yards and you come to a small ladder that you can climb up to and get back onto an access tunnel. I'm going to do that.

Rev: Yeah. So, you get up and what you find is a very long tunnel that there are dozens and dozens of like electrical cables and other cables running across the top of it.

Tass: Ok, I'm up. I'm up on a thing now. So you should be safe.

Jake: Cool. Let's see how my first roll back in the world goes. I'd like to 'Angel Wings' me and T.J. to Tass.

Rev: Ok.

Jake: 10!

Rev: Alright. You appear right next to Tass and he is wet from the neck down.

Jake: HUGHHH!!

Teej: Oh, God.

Tass: Ok. This is the third time in like four days. So I--you should be over this by now. I smell bad. That's how this goes now. That's who I am now. Let's just focus, please.

Jake: OK. Let's move forward.

Rev: So you can go left or right.

Tass: I'm going to put my thermal goggles back on and see if there is a differentiation in heat in here as well.

Rev: From here, you don't see anything in either direction. The tunnel goes down to the left and the right as far as you can see.

Tass: Ok, guys, I don't have any bearing on this. So it's either left or right and I'm not sure which. Let me scout.

Jake: I'll just pick one and start moving down that direction. And if it ends up being a dead end, I'll just teleport back and we'll go the other way.

Teej: OK.

Jake: So, I'm going to go left. I'm gonna start moving down the left tunnel, kind of, you know, try to keep an eye out and stay quiet-ish.

Rev: Alright. So, you get down about 50 feet and there is a room that opens up onto your right and then right in front of you, you can keep going straight or you can kind of peel off just a little bit to the right.

Jake: I want to check that room first.

Rev: Inside the room, you just find a bunch of like lockers and hardhats and vests and boots. You can tell that is a place that is used for storage for the workers.

Jake: OK, I will take that fork first then.

Rev: OK. So you start to peel off and it is three, four hundred yards that you go down. And the whole while you're going down here, there are ventilation shafts the whole way. And it then slightly curves around again to the left and you come to a four way.

Jake: You can go straight or left or right, man, just on the comms, like this is a labyrinth, guys. Hold on. I'm going to backtrack a little bit here and take the other path and see what happens.

Rev: OK.

Jake: So, I'm going to teleport back to the fork and go straight.

Rev: Ok. So, you go straight. And after about 100 yards, you come to a ladder that goes down on your left and you can just hear from that ladder that it is another tunnel like Tass was in that it's some kind of sewage overflow chamber. But then straight ahead, you go down another 100, 150 yards and there is a giant portal blocking the hallway.

Jake: Alright. I'll get on the comms. OK, there's a big portal if you just go down that hallway and go straight. Nothing came at me. I'll wait here in case something like tries to come back through this.

Tass: OK. We're hauling ass.

Teej: Copy that. And we'll head to the left and go the direction he said.

Rev: Alright. So you head down that straight hallway to the left, and after about four or five hundred yards, you come to Jake standing in front of a big portal. I suppose it's my turn to go through one first, huh?

Tass: I mean, I'll keep going. I don't mind.

Jake: I'm just gonna jump through it.

Rev: So, you jump through and this is actually an area that you're familiar with. You come out in the hallway that is almost directly outside of T.J.'s layer. It's pretty close to where you would normally climb up to get into your car that you park in the alley.

Jake: I'm going to radio. Guys, I'm like--I'm right under the car.

Tass: What the hell? Okay. I am starting to question my theory that something came out of the place making these portals.

Teej: I'm wondering if this isn't just a side effect of the power overflow and that those few times that it did overflow, that it created multiple portals just around the area of my layer.

Jake: Interesting. Well, you guys are clear to come through if you want to come through here or I can head back that direction. I don't think we want to backtrack all the way through the portals it was pretty gross.

Teej: No, let's let's just head through this one and we'll pop through this portal.

Rev: Yeah. So, the two of you hop through and you're standing next to Jake, pretty close to the entrance to the subterranean layer.

Jake: Alright. So this was almost kind of a loop. Right? Like one of them was inside of the lab, but this is kind of the entrance to the lab. Like we're just...

Rev: Yeah, you're about 50 yards away. It's kind of the long hallway where you took the chain off of the door.

Jake: Yeah, OK. Weird. I don't know. I mean, that seems like it makes sense, that maybe this is the overflow manifesting because this is just kind of a useless path. I mean, I guess there might have been more portals that branched off elsewhere, but I don't know why this would have just made essentially a big loop that starts and ends with the lab.

Teej: Yeah, it's almost like random. The only thing I can think of is one; a goblin came through, took over Mosquito Dan. He got away. And this is just what's happened with the portal or two; something more powerful than a goblin came through and is able to create portals from possibly the energy that is outputting off of the machine.

Jake: I mean, we did encounter a couple of magic users in that tunnel anyway.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: I guess it's possible that there was a real smart goblin who was like a good mage that came through and can just wield this sort of power. I don't know. Do you think there's any point in following this ladder up and seeing if there's another portal like near the car? Or should we move back towards the lab and see if there's another portal between here and there?

Tass: Yeah, I think maybe one of us should at least check the car to see if it's still there even.

Jake: Good point. I'll go up and I'll see if the car still there.

Rev: Yeah. You're able to crawl up this air grate. And you come out in the alleyway where you have your car parked and it is still there.

Jake: No portals immediately visible or anything?

Rev: You don't see any car still here.

Jake: I don't see anything in this zone, so...I don't know, I mean, we either start exploring above ground or pick a different avenue to pursue here. There were a bunch of more tunnels that branched off that I didn't follow. They were just--it was a lot. You know, I was afraid to get lost or get too--too sidetracked.

Tass: Yeah.

Teej: Yeah. This is like really perplexing me. And I want to--since I am the one who created my my layer and everything. I'm--I really want to look around, see if there's anything out of place, especially in like the entrance way that we're in here, around the car, around the entrance way and see if there's something that I'm just missing that wasn't there before.

Rev: Inside of the lab or just out here where you are kind of in this hallway?

Teej: Out here around the hallway area.

Rev: Alright. Roll 'Investigate a Mystery'.

Teej: That's a 9.

Rev: Alright. You get a hold 1.

Teej: What is being concealed here?

Rev: So, the thing that you think has escaped your view from this point, is that as you stand and examine this portal that everybody came through this most recent time and thinking back to the other portals that you've seen, it clearly has the same energy signature as the portal that led you to Fanarin. This is being generated by your machine.

Teej: Hmm. The only thing I can think of is looking at this same power signature and everything, it seems like it's my machine, my and Rev's machine that is doing this. This can't be good because I mean, it's going to cause chaos if we're not careful. So we need to do something, maybe shut down the machine and then hopefully reset it and then we'll hopefully be able to get back to the world we were in before.

Jake: Yeah, but I thought the problem was if we shut down the machine, we don't know where we're gonna end up back there. At least these are just kind of a arbitrary loop through the sewers.

Teej: Can I figure out, like, whether or not these portals could cause us trouble in the sense of that they would continue to manifest throughout, let's say the downtown Indianapolis area and cause all sorts of chaos.

Rev: Roll 'Investigate a Mystery' again.

Teej: That is a 13.

Rev: Alright. So you get a hold 2 and you get a couple different question options. So your other question options come from 'Tome of Mysteries'. Because, right now, you are investigating a weird phenomena. So your other question options are: How is this phenomenon doing this? What could fix it, cure it or slow it down? How far does the effect reach? What will be affected next?

Jake: Interesting.

Teej: How far does the effect reach?

Rev: So as you ask this question, I think that you start to dig out your portal device that did not make the trip with you and you start putting information into it, trying to get information on these portals and it starts to beep and gives out some measurements. And you can tell that right now the portals seem to affect about half of a mile around your lab. But as you're watching, all the sudden, the distance grows by about half. So it seems like it's getting larger.

Teej: And I'm gonna *whistles impressed*, oh, boy, guys, this is actually kind of getting out of control. I think I might be able to figure this out, though. My next question is: What could fix it, cure it, or at least slow it down?

Teej: You think with the way that magic works in this world, you know about putting up protection on your base, you know about how Rev sets up runes and totems. You think that with the right kind of magical device or even weird science device placed around the area affected, that it could not only control this, but reverse it and get things back to normal?

Teej: It looks like we're probably--and I'm saying this as I'm typing out on my on my device. We're gonna probably have to create something to contain this within my base. I think I'm gonna need to get Rev to help me out, though.

Tass: Okay. Yeah. What--Like, what do you mean do? Are we containing it as far as its origin? Or do we have to get out, like to the outer edges of where it's happening entirely?

Teej: Yeah, it looks like we're gonna have to go all the way out to the edges of the area of effect on--and I'm gonna show 'em on my device--right here. Yeah. We're gonna have to place something at each corner of this radius.

Tass: And it keeps growing?

Teej: Yeah, it just grew by half. So according to my calculations, it's probably going to grow by half again and just keep going and going.

Jake: So we need to like extrapolate the rate at which this is spreading so we know how far it's gotten by the time the things are done? And then just like get there quickly or something? Oh, my God.

Teej: Yeah. It's all a big math problem.

Tass: Ok, well, let's go. Let's go.

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: I can teleport us back in there.

Teej: Yeah. I mean, it's the only way to get inside right now.

Tass: There's another way, but...

Jake: Unless we backtrack through all the portals and the dookie tunnels.

Teej: No. No, guys. No. I can't get this in my fur.

Jake: Oh my God.

Teej: Could you imagine?

Jake: No, I don't want to imagine.

Tass: It doesn't change anything for me. So that's up to you.

Jake: Okay. Yeah. I'll give this a shot. So I'm gonna grab onto 'em and see if I can get us back inside.

Rev: Alright. Roll it.

Jake: 7.

Rev: So, do you want to end up in the wrong place together or the right place separated?

Jake: I guess the wrong place together.

Rev: The three of you appear at the far side of that "Y" access tunnel that you did not complete your journey down. And as you appear, you see something jump at your arrival and skitter down the hallway on four legs.

Jake: Oh, going after it as quickly as possible.

Teej: Yeah. Same.

Tass: Same.

Rev: Alright. You all start to run in that direction. Who's leading this charge?

Tass: I have my headlamp on, so I assume I'll try to get ahead so that we can see more clearly.

Rev: Alright. Roll 'Investigate a Mystery'.

Tass: Ok. 8.

Rev: Alright. You get old 1.

Tass: Where did it go?

Rev: So, you start sprinting down and you're able just to keep it barely in the edge of your light. Like, you can't quite get a good look at it, but you can see where it is at. And you come to a four way intersection in the hall and it darts to the right and you follow it around the corner and it's not there anymore. But there is a large portal about 20 feet in front of you.

Tass: It portaled! And I'm going to barrel around and jump in too.

Teej: And I'm going to follow him.

Jake: And evidently so am I.

Rev: Alright. So you all appear in this long access tunnel and not very far ahead of you is this creature running on all four legs and it is running just as fast as it can straight ahead.

Teej: I want to go ahead and I just want to sprint past Tass and see if I can't tackle this thing.

Rev: Alright. So, I assume that is with your enhanced speed?

Teej: Correct. Yeah.

Rev: Alright. So, roll 'Act Under Pressure' to sprint past them and tackle this creature.

Teej: Yeah. That's a 14.

Rev: Yeah. So, you get down and you plant your hands and your feet and you launch off and start sprinting down this hallway and you are able to catch up to the creature and tackle it to the ground. And you have it in your arms and it is thrashing about.

Teej: I want to see if I can put it into is light so I can see what it is.

Rev: Yeah. So, You get a hold of it and you wrap your arms around it and you spin around and you kind of thrust your arms out to Tass as he is running and squirming in T.J.'s hands, you see the headless corpse of Mosquito Dan, the neck and the chest are missing. And there is a small creature buried inside of the body. And it seems like it's operating his limbs from the inside.

TBC: TO BE CONTINUED

Carolyn: The Critshow, part of the NerdSmith Network, is a Critshow Studio's production, Edited and Produced by Brandon Wentz with music by Jake Pierle. You can find more information about us at TheCritshowPodcast.com. To keep up to date with upcoming live shows, contests and other special events, follow us @TheCritshow on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. For even more weekly content join us at Patreon.com/TheCritshow.