

The Gleaming Moon (S2, E13)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hey everybody. Before we get into this week's episode, I wanted to take a moment to let you all know what some of our sharp-eared listeners may have caught in last week's credits. That The Critshow is no longer part of the Nerdsmith Network. Now, this change is completely amicable and does not reflect any negative views towards Nerdsmith or what they do. In fact, we actually have a handful of projects in the works with Nerdsmith and some of their partnered shows, and look forward to sharing those with you as they get closer. So while The Critshow is no longer officially on the network, you'll still see some of us as contributors there in the not too distant future. And with that, it's time to let the recap roll.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Jake: Yeah. I mean, I want to pull out the gem and, like, basically flash S.O.S through it. So ... Did Tannis die while James was still around?

Rev: Yeah, he was there when he died.

Jake: OK. So I want to use Tannis's color. He should know damn well that this isn't one of the actual founders. Try to get in contact with him and start blinking S.O.S on Tannis's color.

Rev: He responds, "Constantly on the move. Being hunted."

Tass: I'll send, "We're heading to Dunehurst. We'll be in touch."

Rev: He responds, "Hurry."

Jake: OK. Let's book passage on a galleon.

Rev: And you do see this one galleon sitting there. And the name painted on the side is The Scoundrel's Fortune.

We see your face lit by the signal fire on the front of the boat as you open up the piece of paper. And inside it reads, "Rev isn't who he seems."

Jake: "Rev's done a lot for us for a long time. And he's been on our side, he's been in our corner -- up to the moment we just left again."

Tass: I think I'm just going up to kind of watch. Watch everything. Like, looking out ocean-side.

Rev: You do see, in the distance, a small pod of dolphins swimming around and jumping up. And you start to meditate. And this meditative state is broken as, behind the pod of dolphins, you see three, four, five, six bright flashes. And you barely have time to register that there is this light effect coming off of the water before the cannonballs hit the deck.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: So you are all in your various locations on the ship. Jake, below deck in the galley. T.J., working the rigging. And Tass standing, looking out at the ocean. It is dark, and then the sky in the distance is lit up. And Tass, you take 5 points of damage as your world becomes nothing but sound and movement as these cannonballs hit the deck. Jake and T.J., you clearly hear this. You hear explosions on the ship. What's everybody doing?

Teej: Well, being up in the rigging and everything, I feel like I have a pretty good, clear view of what's happening. What's happening?

Rev: All right. Roll Discern Realities.

Teej: That is an eight.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 1.

Teej: What should I be on the lookout for?

Rev: So as you're standing on the rigging, you look out towards the direction of the sound. And you can see, very faintly on the ocean, the silhouette of a very dark ship. And as you look in that direction, you notice that on the sail is what you mistook for the moon. They have painted some kind of a luminescent sphere on their sail to mask their approach. And that the moon is directly behind them.

Tass: That's so good.

Teej: Seeing that, would I be able to discern, like, who that ship belongs to? Or what that ship is?

Rev: Yeah. Roll Spout Lore.

Teej: That would be a nine.

Rev: So I think the interesting thing you know about this ship is that it belongs to one of the self-proclaimed pirate lords. There are a number in this world who claim to be in charge of the ocean and the other pirate groups. But none of them ever agree on who it is. But this one belongs to The Monarchs of the Moon.

Tass: [chuckles]

Rev: How do you know that?

Teej: I think that Honin has done some touring of like, some of the dwarven kingdoms and everything. And one of the kingdoms is in this mountain that's basically right next to the ocean. It's called Mount Gul...ger? Gulger. G-U-L-G-E-R. And this mountain has been attacked by pirates. Like, who are coming to seek dwarven treasure and everything. And one of the pirates that came along was Monarchs of the Moon.

Rev: OK.

Teej: At one point.

Rev: What are one of the other factions that were involved with that?

Teej: Like Dwarven or pirate?

Rev: One of the other pirate factions.

Teej: Oh. The Red Skeletons.

Rev: Are they undead?

Teej: No. Surprisingly not. They're named that because of the red paint that they paint their bodies in. They mostly wear black, except for like this red paint that lines their clothing and their faces, to make them look like they're skeletons. So at night --

Rev: Kind of like intimidation factor.

Teej: Yeah, basically. And at night it kind of glows a little. And so they sort of show up as ... They look like skeletons.

Rev: Oh, so the paint glows a little bit.

Teej: Yeah.

Rev: So pirates in this world kind of use luminescent paint in various ways to help them with what they do -- whatever kind of their theme is.

Teej: Yeah, exactly.

Rev: OK. So what are you doing? You've got this knowledge now. You have spotted the ship. It is very difficult to see, but you have spotted it as the sails shifted on that ship, and you were able to see the actual moon behind it.

Teej: I'm going to yell down to the captain, "Monarchs of the Moon on the starboard side!"

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Good eye! Men, get the cannons ready on the starboard side.

Rev: Jake?

Jake: There are people down there with me rowing, right?

Rev: Yes. Uh-huh.

Jake: I feel like the first thing I'm going to do is go, "Is that normal?"

Rev: You get a resounding no.

Jake: "OK. Well, we should probably all go fight?" And I'm going to run up the stairs to the deck.

Rev: OK. So yeah. You lead a large group of the rowers up. About half of them stay, continuing their job, trying to kind of stay on rhythm to keep the ship going. Tass, you are having a hard time hearing, but it comes back to you in that harsh buzz sound. But you find yourself with your back against one of the cabin walls. And the railing that you were standing at is gone. And there are big holes in the floor and the side of the ship near you.

Tass: I think the first thought that occurs to me as my head clears is, their lookout sucks. And I'm getting to my feet to try to get over to the rail, and stay low and see what the hell just did that.

Rev: Yeah. So as you get out there ... I don't think that I'll have you roll Discern Realities again. But you are able to see that behind the dolphins is a very dark ship with a black sail, with a luminescent moon painted on it.

Tass: "Son of a bitch." I'm looking around. Have people mobilized by now? Does it seem like now that my hearing -- or I don't know. Is my hearing even back at yet?

Rev: It is. It is.

Tass: OK. I guess I'm looking for the captain.

Rev: Yeah. He is over on the starboard side, and he is getting cannons moved into position. But I think the thing that you notice is that as they get the cannons rolled into position, that ship out there is coming towards them very fast.

Tass: "Captain, what can I do?"

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: I don't know. What can you do?

Tass: "Do you have anything like Molotov cocktails? Anything like that?"

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: What is that?

Tass: "Like a bottle of rum or something with a lit piece of rag in it, that I could drop on that boat?"

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: No, but we've got grenades and we've got some powder kegs.

Tass: "Well, that'll goddamn do."

Rev: Yeah. He points over to a chest against the wall. And you go over and you open it up, and inside there are slots that have these grenades laid down in them, and there is straw around them. And then on the left side of it are these two large powder kegs, taking up the rest of the chest.

Tass: [laughs] How do the grenades work?

Rev: That's a good question. How do these grenades work?

Tass: Oh!

Rev: I think this is something we haven't established. So it's time to let you guys generate some more lore of this world.

Tass: Sure. You know, I like the idea of this being kind of alchemical. I mean, similar in its own way to grenades in our world, but this is literally more like a magical concoction. Some sort of liquid that's held in a compartment, and then when you pull a pin, just a whole piece slides away that lets that leak into some sort of powdered concoction. And then you just have -- it's just a matter of time. It's a matter of seven, eight seconds before those chemicals react all together, and boom.

Rev: So this is like the deadly version of Mentos and Diet Coke.

Tass: Yes, exactly.

Rev: All right. So yeah, you pick this up. It's about the size of an apple.

Tass: OK. So I'm going to grab one of these and then Shapeshift.

Rev: All right.

Tass: That's a ten.

Rev: Yes. So you get your hold.

Tass: All right. Yeah. I'm just going to have this grenade in hand ,and start wingin' towards this ship.

Rev: OK. T.J., you have climbed down off of the rigging. And about the time you get to the bottom of the rigging, the ship is hit by another series of explosions. And you actually see the captain up at the wheel, and he gets blown sideways and seems to fall unconscious.

Teej: "Holy shit!"

Rev: Right about that time, Jake comes up the stairs. And he is right next to you, next to this mast.

Teej: "Jake, are you OK?"

Jake: "Yeah, I'm fine. What is going on up here?"

Teej: "Apparently, we're being attacked by pirates."

Jake: "Great! What a fun first venture onto the ocean in this world."

Teej: "I know, right?"

Jake: "Where are they? Who are they? What are they?"

Teej: "They're called The Monarchs of the Moon." And I'm looking at him, like ...

Jake: "Like --?"

Teej: "Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Uh-huh."

Jake: "Is that ... Are they pirates here? Is that just --"

Teej: "Yeah."

Jake: I want to go check on the captain.

Rev: He is unconscious and you notice that the wheel is just starting to turn.

Jake: Do I have reason to believe he's going to die if I don't do something about it right now?

Rev: You don't see any blood on him, but you just see that he has been knocked unconscious from force.

Jake: OK. Yeah, I'm going to grab hold of the wheel and try and ... Shit, that other ship's coming right at us?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: So we have an angle to shoot on them, and they don't have an angle to shoot on us.

Rev: They have a few guns mounted on the front, but not nearly as many as they do along the sides of the ship.

Jake: OK. I want to try and keep the wheel steady and keep the ship steady so that the guys on our guns have a shot on them.

Rev: All right. Jake, roll Naval Maneuver.

Jake: I beg your pardon?

Rev: And so you're going to roll this, plus maneuverability of the ship.

Jake: [laughs]

Tass: OK ...

Rev: And the maneuverability of a Galleon ...

Jake: Bad, I assume.

Teej: Is 1.

Tass: I doubt it.

Teej: -1.

Rev: Is -1.

Jake: Tremendous.

Teej: I was right.

Jake: That's a two.

Rev: [laughs]

Jake: Do I could experience for these ones?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: All right.

Rev: So you take the wheel and you start to shout out, because you want the cannoneers to fire on this ship. And they are unfamiliar with your voice, and they do nothing as they look for a form or a face that they recognize. And from your vantage point, you can see that that ship has gotten close enough where the cannons cannot shoot down at them. Tass, you fly off with this grenade, and roll Defy Danger to get over this ship and drop the grenade.

Tass: That is an eight.

Rev: All right. So you are going to be able to fly over this ship and drop the grenade. But it is not going to go exactly where you want. You know that it will explode on the ship, but it's not going to be anything vital. It'll do damage to the ship and to some of the crew members, but they're going to take notice of you. Or you can get it exactly where you want it to go, but you're going to get caught in the sail.

Tass: But I can get it to go exactly where I want it?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: I'm going to take that. And I want to hit the mechanism that drops their anchor.

Rev: All right. Roll your damage, which is a d10.

Tass: Ooh.

Rev: And I think that the tricky thing about this is that when you hit the capstan, I think it'll be a matter of doing enough damage to destroy it, but not doing enough damage to blow the chain off of it.

Tass: Yes, I see what you mean.

Rev: So I think this is gonna be a little bit of fate, here.

Tass: OK. Six.

Rev: The ship suddenly lurches to the side as the anchor drops, and the boat starts to pivot. And you see the back end of it slam into the side of The Scoundrel's Fortune.

Tass: Oof.

Rev: But it does not get hit with the very ugly looking masthead that you see now.

Tass: Oh, nice. OK. What does it look like?

Rev: It looks like an iron wolf.

Tass: Oh. OK. Cool.

Teej: [chuckles]

Rev: T.J., you have felt this impact, and you're not quite sure what's going on. Jake is up top yelling some orders. You don't see Tass. What would you like to do?

Teej: Feeling the impact, am I able to, like, jump over to their ship?

Rev: Absolutely. You could jump over the side, onto their ship.

Teej: I want to be very careful in doing this, but I want to do it.

Rev: All right. So are you going alone? Are you trying to rally some men to go with you? What are you doing?

Teej: As I'm trying to jump over, I'm like, "Follow me, boys! Let's not let these sea dogs take us!"

Rev: All right. So first, roll Charisma.

Teej: Oh. Oh, I forgot that I have Charisma. [laughs] Or lack thereof ...

Tass: Do you?

Teej: Nope. Nope. Sure don't. In fact, that is a six.

Rev: Yeah. So nobody joins you. And you leap off the side of the boat and you land.

Teej: Story of my life.

Rev: And there are pirates everywhere. And they look to you, when you land on the deck of their ship with a thump. And you can see that they are all dressed in black, and they have like luminescent stars on them.

Teej: "That's really cool, boys. But you're about to see some stars." And I'm gonna --.

Jake: Oh, jeez.

Teej: Just jump into the middle of this crowd, and start brawling the hell out of them.

Rev: How many are you going to try to hit? It's pretty close quarters right now.

Teej: The three closest would probably be my best bet.

Rev: All right. Roll Hack and Slash.

Teej: That is a twelve.

Rev: All right. Roll your damage.

Teej: Six.

Rev: Yeah. So you spin your flail around amongst this pirate crew, and you knock three of the pirates to the ground. Jake, you have just seen T.J. leap off the side of the boat, alone.

Jake: Are we stationary now because we've been rammed?

Rev: You're not moving very fast at all, but you are still moving some.

Jake: Think I'll let go of the wheel for the moment and run over to that side of the ship to look over the deck and see what the hell is going on down there -- where he jumped.

Rev: Yeah. So you look down over the side of the deck, and what you expect to see is this ship rammed into the side of The Scoundrel's Fortune. And it is actually next to it. You see that it has really just knocked into the ship. And its anchor seems to be down, and so the back end of this ship is dragging along The Scoundrel's Fortune as it slowly

creeps forward. And you see T.J. down there on this dark wood boat, fighting a sea of thieves.

All: [laugh]

Rev: Fighting against a sea of pirates.

Jake: Size-wise, how does this stack up to our ship?

Rev: It is very small. It is a sloop.

Jake: Do I see a captain on the deck at the wheel?

Rev: Roll Discern Realities.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: You get a hold 1.

Jake: Who's really in control here?

Rev: Back towards where the wheel is, you see that there is a man who's got a number of pistols crossing his chest. He is not manning the wheel, but he is shouting orders to some of the people who are trying to get the anchor raised.

Jake: OK. I want to yell out to that guy from where I am. And just, you know, "Hey! Hey, Captain Werewolf! Captain Monarch! Moon Man! Up here!"

Rev: Yeah, I don't think he hears you over the sound of everything that is happening.

Jake: OK. Can I try to shoot him with an arrow?

Rev: Yeah. Roll. Volley.

Jake: Actually, I don't want to shoot him. I want to spike an arrow right in front of wherever he's standing. Like, I want to use that as something -- you know, that if an arrow lands right in front of him, that he'll look for the source and he'll see me.

Rev: All right. Roll Defy Danger with Dexterity.

Jake: Five.

Tass: Dang.

Jake: God.

Rev: So you draw an arrow and you let it loose. And you notice that at the movement of your arm, the captain's eyes twitch up. And he draws a pistol and shoots the arrow out of the air, and keeps eye contact with you.

Tass: Oh!

Jake: While he is looking at me, I want to hold up the bow and sling it over my shoulder. Empty hands. And then gesture that I'm going to come over there. I don't know if this would just be a straight Charisma check? To like, put forth the image that I'm unthreatening, that I'm coming over there to talk?

Rev: Yeah. OK. So real Charisma, then. To convey to him that you mean no harm.

Jake: OK. That's a ten.

Rev: Yeah. He gets this strange grin on his face, and he puts the pistol back into his belt and waves you over. So Tass, you are tangled in the rigging of this mast, and you see T.J. on the boat fighting pirates. And you see Jake hop down onto the boat and just start strolling through the chaos towards a man at the back of the ship.

Tass: OK. OK. I think I'm gonna just go ahead and drop my hold and drop my form, because I want to try a new form. I want to roll my Thing-Talker into my Shapeshift, and just turn into the largest mountain boulder that you will let me turn into.

Jake: [laughs]

Teej: That is awesome.

Rev: So we've not dealt with you dropping form to take a new form. So right now you're an owl, caught in the rigging. Obviously, you're gonna be more tangled when you come out of this form, because you're gonna be larger. So roll Defy Danger with Dexterity to get untangled before you try to transform into something else.

Tass: Excellent.

Rev: Or else you'll just be a bolder tied up --

Tass: Just dangling.

Rev: Yeah. Tied up in rope.

Tass: [chuckles] That is an eleven.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to get yourself untangled.

Tass: All right. And I'm just going to stand kind of in the ropes and do a little bit of a kind of a diver pose, and jump and try to transform.

Rev: OK, roll it.

Tass: That's an eight. I get hold 2.

Rev: OK. What do you get from this ability?

Tass: It's just the same as Shapeshift but also can be applied to talking to creatures or using a Studied Essence on things from new places. I just get to take the form of objects. Things, plants, stone, wood, whatever.

Rev: So you're not at a place yet where you're getting bonuses from the things you turn into still?

Tass: Yeah. Not like ... I think the only bonuses I get would be when I'm an appropriate thing, I get a higher dice to do damage.

Rev: OK. But like, you don't have any armor or anything as you to leap off?

Tass: No.

Rev: OK. So what exactly are you trying to do, as you leap off of this and turn into this stone creature?

Tass: I think I'm just trying to ACME anvil these guys. You know, I want to get as close as I can leap to, you know, towards T.J., so that he's not just alone. And just crush some guys on the way down.

Rev: So we haven't really used your hold this way before. But now that you are turning into like, a rock elemental, I think this is the kind of thing your hold would be used for. Like, do you want to have its armor? Do you want to have its strength? What are you -- what are you using these hold for?

Tass: Yeah, I don't know ... I don't know if that's allowed, to even use both? But, you know, the main thing would be to be able to fall through and just not die from a big jump. And I mean, if I could use hold as well just to make it a stronger hit, I would absolutely do that.

Rev: Yeah, I think you could use both hold in this moment to give yourself the armor and the strength of an earth elemental. And then once you hit, you'll turn back to normal.

Tass: I dig it.

Rev: All right. So looking through the sourcebook here, you give yourself 4-armor, and your damage will be a d10, plus your Strength.

Tass: OK. So that would be six.

Rev: All right. So you leap out -- and roll your Dexterity, just to see how many you catch in your fall.

Teej: Twelve. Twelve. Twelve!

Tass: Seven.

Rev: Yeah. So I think that with a mixed success, you are able to catch three of the pirates underneath you. And you deal 6 damage to them. And as well to yourself, but you'll subtract your natural armor.

Tass: Nice.

Rev: But now you are standing on top of three pirate corpses as you transform back into your halfling form.

Teej: "Oh, god."

Rev: T.J., you see Jake stroll past amidst the battle. And all of a sudden, a large rock lands next to you and then transforms into Tass.

Teej: "All right. Let's do this, guys!" And I'm going to grab three more and just waylay them as best I can.

Rev: All right. Roll Hack and Slash.

Teej: Oh, yeah. Thirteen.

Rev: OK. Roll your damage.

Teej: Ten.

Rev: Yeah. Three more of these pirates go down. And you can see that they are actually starting to become aware of your presence here, and they are giving you a wide berth, trying to get out of the range of this constantly lengthening and shortening flail. Jake, you stroll through this and you get over to the captain.

Jake: I want to hold out a hand to shake. And just be like, "Hell of an attack, Captain."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: I thank ya.

Jake: "Look, this has been a real ride. But if you look around, you will see that there is a living cannonball tearing through your people. There is a monstrosity of a dwarf tearing through your people. We know what you are and how to kill you. And we've got more than enough manpower to do it. So, with no further bloodshed, what say you just claw that anchor off the bottom and sail the fuck away?"

Rev: Is this a move?

Jake: Um. I don't know. So I have the move called Charming and Open, where when you speak frankly with someone, you can ask their player a question from a list, and then you get to ask -- they get to ask me a question?

Rev: Oh, OK.

Jake: Or I don't know if this would qualify as Parley, because the leverage is just kind of a huge excess of manpower. And like that we're, you know, we're we're busting their shit up so far.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: I don't know if that's enough to leverage him into listening to what I'm saying.

Teej: Intimidation. Yeah.

Rev: So what is your question you want to ask of him? You have spoken open and frankly with him.

Jake: So one of the questions is, how can I get you to ____? How can I get you to leave?

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Well, I suppose short of killing us? We've got to have something to go away with. Or when we get back, the man in charge will have our heads.

Jake: What did he say that we're shipping? What did the captain say that we've got on board?

Rev: He was kind of vague. He just said that it was spices and foods and cloth, and he just takes it from point A to point B.

Jake: OK. And then you get to ask me one of these questions off the list. The options are whom do you serve? What do you wish I would do? How can I get you to ____? What are you really feeling right now? And what do you most desire? This is something that he gets to glean from me.

Rev: I think he wants to know what you most desire right now.

Jake: I mean, I think what I most desire is just for this to be done with. Like, I don't care to throw them in a cell, or anything. I just want them to leave us alone. We've got a journey to undertake, here.

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Tell you what, we'll take off right now. You see that hole in the side of the ship?

Rev: And he points towards where the back end of his ship has been dragging along The Scoundrel's Fortune, and has made a fairly large tear.

Jake: "Yeah."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: You get you and your friends to hop in there and find three or four things, throw 'em over the side into our boat, and we'll take off.

Jake: "I mean, I'll warn you. We're not carrying anything good. No valuables on here."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Yeah, I know. But ... Well, this was the target we were given. So unless we come back with something, they'll have us.

Jake: "The target you were given? You were like, pointed at us?"

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: I was told to hit this ship as it passed in the night.

Jake: "Weird. Yeah. Let me go talk to my guys. Can you call for your crew to stand down? I'll do the same."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Yeah. You think that the people above are going to not fire down as well?

Jake: "I'll do my best to make 'em stop. I don't command them. But I mean, if they shoot back, then it's self-defense, I guess."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Oh, I like the sound of that. All right. Go talk to your men. I'll start working on that anchor.

Jake: "OK."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Crack shot with that explosive.

Jake: "Yeah. Yeah. He was good. Crack shot with the pistol."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: I thank ya. It's what I do.

Jake: "Blasted an arrow out of the air. That's a hell of a thing." So I'm going to move back towards Tass and T.J. and hopefully he's like, telling his people to stand down for the moment?

Rev: Yeah. He puts two fingers into his mouth and a sharp whistle rings out. And you see all of the pirates in these dark garb with these stars painted on their face, they step back and they stop and look back to him.

Jake: OK. "Hey, guys. We've negotiated a possible ceasefire here, so stop murdering for a second while we discuss the terms."

Rev: And the crew, who was looking at him, he nods and starts to shout a couple orders.

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Get working on that anchor. Get it up. Make sure everything's patched up properly. We're gonna take off here in a moment.

Rev: And they start moving around the boat.

Jake: OK. I'm going to tell Tass and T.J., like, "Hey, hop through there. Pick something that's not that valuable. I'm going to go tell the rest of the crew to get ready to start moving. I've negotiated a treaty, here."

Tass: As I start backing towards the hole, nodding, I'm whispering to T.J., "We scared the shit out of them. We did this." And I'll jump through the hole.

Teej: And before he jumps through the hole, I'll give Tass our secret handshake that we always do. [handshake sound]

Tass: [handshake sound]

Rev: Yeah. So the three of you are able to jump back across, into the torn open hole. And you know, part of this is storage. Part of it is rooms. But there are crates and satchels everywhere.

Tass: Is anything marked?

Rev: They aren't marked, but they are numbered. Like it doesn't say gold bars, fish, saltpeter.

Teej: [sings 1776] Saltpeter ... [laughs]

Jake: Is there any crew from our ship around here still?

Rev: Yeah. Oh yeah.

Jake: I just want to go, "Hey, what's unimportant in here? What's the least valuable thing? What do we not care about losing?"

Rev: SAILOR: I don't know. You'd have to check with Cordelia. She's the one who keeps the log of everything.

Jake: "Where's she at?"

Rev: SAILOR: Oh, I don't know.

Jake: "Cordelia!"

Tass: I want to, like, turn into like a coyote, or something little that I can just start sniffing at the boxes. And see if I can determine what's in there through smell.

Rev: Yeah. So roll it.

Tass: Eight. So I get 2 hold. You know -- I mean, the first one I would want to use is to essentially use my smell for that, for detection.

Rev: All right. So roll Discern Realities.

Jake: [chants] Do good. Do good.

Tass: Eight.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 1.

Tass: What here is useful or valuable to me? As far as like, that idea of the valuable thing to throw out for our benefit? [chuckles]

Rev: So as you start to sniff around the boxes and the barrels in the gunny sacks down here, I think that you are able to smell out five or six of them that are just very clearly food. The other things have metallic smells, they have alchemical smells. But you can tell which ones of these are food, at least.

Tass: "Yeah. Here's a couple of these burlap, and maybe one of the metal ones. They might be some weapons or something in there for them. Or are we just doing all food?"

Jake: "I say we throw them a few bags of food. And just pick it back up when we get to Alpo, or even when we get to Dunehurst or something. Like, we've got gold."

Tass: "All right. Help?"

Jake: OK.

Teej: Yeah, I'll grab a couple of crates of food.

Rev: So the three of you lug these crates of food over, and you chuck them down onto this other ship's deck. And it is starting to get further away, but it is still dragging along. And he is getting his men to raise his anchor.

Jake: I want to go talk to him again. "Tass, will you come with me? So you can, like, fly me back or something if we get too far apart?"

Tass: "Yeah. Yeah."

Jake: OK. Yeah. Before we're too far apart, I want to hop over back to their deck and approach the captain again.

Rev: OK. And T.J., what are you gonna do as they hop off the ship?

Teej: "Guys, we're over here!"

Jake: "I want to learn something from him. We'll be right back."

Rev: "We're pirates now." [laughs].

Jake: I've changed teams. This seems like a tight operation. I like it.

Teej: [chuckles] I'm gonna go upstairs to the top deck, and I'm going to check on Captain Broadstone.

Rev: OK. All right. So Jake, you and Tass hop off to the ship.

Jake: "Well, good doing business with you. I do have one more question for you, though. And I'm willing to grease your palm a little bit, if you'll give me a real answer."

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Oh, really? Well, let's hear the question first.

Jake: "Who sent you at us?"

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Ah. Well, let's see the color of your coin.

Jake: Yeah. I'll pull out just a big handful. Like 75 gold.

Rev: Yeah, I think that's about right. And he takes a look at it, and nods.

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: He's the leader of The Monarchs of the Moon. His name is Pardum. And he sets all of the missions that the smaller ships go out on from his Man of War.

Jake: "Was this one any more targeted than any other? Was there someone special on board or anything? Did he seem to have a grudge against the ship? Or was it just a regular raid?"

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: We just got a message with a location and a ship description.

Jake: "Tass? Any other thoughts?"

Tass: "No. I like the sound of that. I mean clearly, it doesn't seem like you were told, 'Wreck this thing at all costs,' or this would be going a different way, wouldn't it?"

Rev: MONARCHS CAPTAIN: Correct.

Tass: "Happy sales to you, sir. Can I know your name?"

Rev: LEIF: Oh, yeah. Name's Leif.

Tass: "Pleasure to meet you."

Rev: LEIF: You as well.

Jake: "Maybe we'll see you again on the water sometime -- but under friendlier circumstances, huh?"

Rev: LEIF: Oh, I doubt it. Unless, of course, you're interested in joining?

Jake: "We've made allies out of less savory people. Maybe we'll call you." OK. I'll drop that 75 gold in his hand, and let's fly back to the ship.

Tass: Yeah. I'll condor up, I guess.

Rev: OK. Roll it.

Tass: Ten.

Rev: All right. So you turn into a condor and you grab Jake, and you fly off of this pirate ship as they get their anchor up and they start to sail away. You get to the deck of The Scoundrels Fortune. T.J. has just woken up the captain. And he's kind of groggy, but he's looking around, trying to get lay of the land.

Jake: "How you doing, Captain?"

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Well, I haven't had that good of a sleep in years. Did they take off?

Jake: "Yeah. Yeah. We talked them down, and they left. Made off with just a couple bags of food, but we're more than happy to reimburse those when we get back to port."

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Oh, well. Good job, gents. Being able to talk off a pirate crew -- especially The Monarchs of the Moon. They're pretty ferocious, from all tales.

Tass: "I think we scared 'em."

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Well, good on you. I suppose we'll have to keep you boys maybe topside. And I think we're gonna move your room to a place where you got easier access.

Rev: And he kind of snaps fingers, and Cordelia comes over.

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Move these boys up to a room here on the top floor. We want to make sure that they've got access to all the places here, as quick as they can. That's pretty valuable work, boys.

Tass: "Thank you."

Teej: "It was our pleasure."

Jake: And I want to check with Cordelia to find out what exactly we gave away, so that we know what we're going to resupply when we get to Alpo.

Rev: Yeah. So she takes you down and she gathers up all your stuff, and moves you up into a state room. There are essentially two or three very nice rooms up here, and this one is empty. And there are two beds in here, as well as a sitting room. It's a pretty good size. And she comes up and tells you that you had given away a bag of grain, and a barrel of prunes, and a barrel of pickles.

Jake: [laughs] Oh, no. I didn't check if there was a pixie inside, first.

Teej: Oh, boy.

Rev: In the first campaign that -- actually the first campaign that we played with Jake and Tass and T.J. altogether. They were running around and they had to travel around Barsaive. And they had chartered a ship, and it happened to be run by a Tskrang named Saul -- or Sal, I guess technically.

Tass: Sal.

Rev: Yeah, Sal. And they were pickle vendors. They took pickles up and down the river. And there was one particular adventure where they were trying to infiltrate a bandit camp. And T.J.'s character, who was a Windling, carved himself some pickle armor and hid in a barrel of pickles.

Teej: [laughs] It was because I had efficiency in armor ...

Rev: Yes.

Teej: Armor smithing, or something. And I was like, "Can I make armor out of pickles?" And sure enough, I could.

Rev: And so ... I think it was Jake's character decided to give a show of skill, and grabbed some pickles at random out of the barrel and threw them into the air to shoot.

Teej: And I just so happened to be hiding in the barrel of pickles.

Rev: In that particular barrel. And so it was T.J. spiraling through the air as Jake knocked an arrow in his direction.

Jake: I threw him, and somebody else was going to shoot him with an arrow. And I realized as he was flying through the air that I had thrown T.J.

Rev: Oh, yeah. It was Tass who was going to shoot him.

Jake: So I had to botch Tass's shot. And so it just -- I threw a handful of pickles, and it just plopped into the water. And all the guys went, "... OK?"

All: [laugh]

Rev: Right. Because like, no shot was taken. He was like, "Oh, watch. We'll just do this, and it'll be cool."

Tass: [laughs] "Check this out."

Rev: It was him just throwing a handful of pickles into the river.

Tass: A handful of pickles that were going [distant yelling] sploosh.

Rev: So as the sun rises on The Scoundrel's Fortune, we see it pulling into the dock at Alpo. Alpo is one of the largest cities on this continent. And as the ship pulls into the dock, we pan up and we see a sprawling dockyard, a bustling marketplace, and a city skyline that gets higher and higher, as we see that the structures are built into these rolling hills. And the highest point is a very ornate castle in the distance. What do you guys want to do now that you're here?

Jake: I want to go check out this famous museum that I've heard so much about. [chuckles] We promised to resupply. So should we just get that knocked out?

Tass: Yeah, we probably should.

Rev: So the three of you are heading towards the marketplace so you can buy the various things to replace what you gave away to The Monarchs of the Moon. And we see Tass looking through a barrel of pickles. And we see Jake going through plums. And T.J. is sifting his hand through a bag of grain. And we see a shadow fall over T.J. And he gets clubbed in the back of the head with a huge fist, and falls to the ground.

Teej: "Ow!" I want to turn over and see who assailed me.

Rev: You roll over onto your back, laying on the ground here in the marketplace, and you see this very beefy dwarven woman standing over you. And she's got her hands on her hips and she chuckles.

Rev: DWARVEN WOMAN: I have to admit, it took quite a while to track you down. Well, get up and dust yourself off. We've got to be getting home, little brother.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

Carolyn: The Critshow is a Critshow Studios production, edited and produced by Brendan 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 at The Critshow on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. For even more weekly content, join us at Patreon.com/TheCritshow.