

The Walls of Water (S2, E20)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: So we are freshly back from Acade-Con. Nope.

Jake: Nope!

All: [laugh]

Tass: We're riffing, here. It's a AcadeCon.

Rev: That's right. Oh, Asady-Con.

Jake: Yes, Asady-Con.

Rev: You know, it doesn't matter how much I enjoyed being there, I still never get the name right. So do you guys have any good stories from the con?

Jake: I mean, all my game sessions were good. We played All Out of Bubblegum and everybody absolutely leaned into it. So a lot of just wild, dumb shit happened in all my games. But in the best possible way.

Tass: I had a lot of fun with Worlds in Peril. I should have asked -- this is something I didn't think about until we were on the drive home -- that a couple of the guys had very dynamic superheroes that they had built. And like, I kind of want to work those into Hero Salad some way, as like an NPC. But I wouldn't feel right doing it without having asked them, so I probably won't.

Rev: I had a good time with the Monster of the Week games that I ran. You know, they have the new mechanic that every time you roll Luck, no matter who you are, it has a ramification now. And a lot of those are kind of arc-spanning. Like, oh, something from your deep history might come up. But it just so happened that every time somebody spent a Luck, I was able to kind of weave in like, "Oh yes, this is the person from your past." I won't -- I guess I won't talk about the sessions so much themselves, cause we run some of those again at different conventions. But ...

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: We were able to tie things in. We had a couple of hunters who sacrificed themselves into another dimension to save the rest of the group. We had a group of people who were able to take over the monster's kind of business persona and start generating money for the good of the world.

Tass: [laughs] Oh my god.

Rev: So it was a good time. And if there's a convention around here somewhere in the Midwest close by that you think we should come to and run some games, or if you know someone who runs a convention, they're looking for people to come and do shows and things like that, send us an email at thecast@thecritshowpodcast.com to let us know what it is and when it is. And along those lines, actually, I will be at Midwinter Gaming Convention. That is January 9th through the 10th. I will be running Monster of the Week there. I'm going to run five sessions, one at 6:30 on the 9th, one at 9:30 and 3:30 on the 10th, and one at 9:30 and 2:30 on the 11th. You can sign up for those games now -- the game on the 9th is already sold out. And again, that is January 9th and 10th, Midwinter Gaming Convention, and it's up in Wisconsin. So that'll be interesting trek in the Kia Soul, up through the arctic tundra of Wisconsin.

Tass: I think by then the cheese coming down covers most of the snow, so. You should be safe.

Rev: Oh, is that instead of salt? Do they spread like melted cheese on the road?

Tass: Yeah, yeah.

Jake: It doesn't melt the ice, but it makes your tires really sticky. So it has a similar effect. But everybody does go slower.

Rev: Yeah. Coming later this month, we're going to be recording a new Let's Play for Evil Hat's latest game, Fate of Cthulhu, which I believe launches in December. Our Let's Play will come out just before that, so you'll be able to hear how to play the game in case you have preordered it already, or you want to order it before it launches. So until then, it's time to let the recap roll.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Rev: Standing next to you is a person who looks like half human, half frog. And they have a very large spear and they are pointing it at you.

Rev: FROGMAN: [indecipherable language]

Rev: And it gestures towards one of the cell doors.

Teej: I'm gonna go inside the cell.

Rev: All right. So you go inside the cell, and it follows pretty close behind you and it pulls out a key and locks it. And across from you in the cell, you see a very familiar pirate. It is the captain from the ship of the Monarchs of the Moon.

Teej: I kind of want to look around the room and see if there is anything else going on here.

Rev: So you look around the room, and what you see are six cages. And then there is a frogman sitting on a stool at the end of the hall next to a door. And at the other end of the room, the wall there is made out of water.

Jake: I gotta have a conversation with this Soul Trap. "You helped me."

Rev: It nods.

Jake: "Shouldn't you not care? I'm not your master. Shouldn't it not matter to you to listen to what I say?"

Rev: It just stares at you for a very long moment. And then it touches its chest, and then it touches you.

Jake: "I don't understand what the chest touch is. Are we linked, or something?"

Rev: It shakes its head no, and then shakes its head yes.

Jake: "Are you from here? Are you from this world?"

Rev: It shakes his head yes.

Jake: "Do you know Kolvar?"

Rev: There's a moment of stillness, and then it nods and raises its hand and taps itself on the chest.

SFX:

RECAP MUSIC FADES

Jake: "You're Kolvar?"

Tass: It nods.

Jake: "I cannot explain to you how sorry I am for all of this. I don't ... I don't want to be here like this. I don't want you to be there like that. Is there any way to get you back?"

Rev: It repeats the motion of drawing its thumb across its neck and pointing out the door that Estin went.

Jake: "I don't think that's in the cards, man. I did my best, but he's not wrong. I am not at a level where I can deal with threats, even like him."

Rev: It very slowly nods in agreement.

Jake: "Do you know who he used to be?"

Rev: He nods.

Jake: "So he wasn't always like this. And I'm hoping that maybe if we work with him and like, I don't know, get him the justice he deserves or something, he can stop being Estin the Mad and he can go back to being in his right mind. And when he is, that maybe he'll let you go."

Rev: He points towards the desk and the open book sitting on it, and starts to walk over towards it.

Jake: I'll follow him.

Rev: And Kolvar reaches down and turns the page and points at a number and then points it his head, turns the page again and does the same thing over and over again. And after about four or five times, he puts his hands up to both sides of his head and makes like a back and forth motion.

Jake: "Is he ... Is he mad because of the book?"

Rev: He flips the pages of the book and points to the different numbers.

Jake: "Has he been driven mad by seeing these other worlds?"

Rev: He nods and he indicates the teleportation room.

Jake: "So you don't think there's any way to bring him back?"

Rev: He shakes his head.

Jake: "OK. I don't think this is a bridge we can cross right now, regardless. So I think we ride this out. And if we get to a point where it's even possible, we deal with him. And I hope that it becomes possible."

Rev: He nods, and turns and walks back to the corner of the room and retakes his position.

Jake: I just want to start poring over his research. Everything. I feel like there are gaps in what we understand about like planar travel and what's going on that could be filled in by his work. He's got a fuckin book of universes with numbers. I want to remember what they are. And I want to see if there's any, you know, how he triggers those specific places. If it's different than how we do it. Like, I just want to start studying his work.

Rev: All right. So I think that this is going to be a Defy Danger with Wisdom to understand this book and retain information that you'll carry on with you in the future.

Jake: Wisdom or Intelligence?

Rev: I think this is mental fortitude to store it in your memory.

Jake: OK. Eight.

Rev: So I think that this is going to result in a hold 3. So make note of this. You get three points that you can use if you ever travel to any of the places in this book. And you can use those 3 hold as soon as you arrive to ask a question from a list I'll generate for you.

Jake: All right.

Rev: And I think about the time you are done poring over the book, the door opens and a goblin comes in.

Rev: GOBLIN: [goblin language]

Rev: And it nods towards the hallway.

Jake: I'll go with it.

Rev: Yeah. So you exit the lab and you are now in a hallway, and there is a door to your left, another hallway to your right, and a door straight ahead. And it walks towards the door that is straight ahead and goes through the door.

Jake: I don't imagine I have time to pop in those other rooms, unless ... I mean, can I just, like, crack a door and peek in?

Rev: So as you go through, the door on your left has a lock on it. And there are two doors in the hallway down your right. Neither one of them seem to be locked.

Jake: OK. I mean, I'll jiggle that one with the lock, just to confirm that it is locked.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: And then I want to duck down the hallway on the right. I mean, I'm kind of ditching this goblin, but Estin said that I could look around this place at will. So this is going to be a waste of his time a little bit, but I wanna go look in that door down the hall on the right.

Rev: So you open up that door, and inside of it are tons of supplies. There are barrels and bags. It smells very alchemical in here. There are glass vials. There are various components for spell crafting, potion making. It is just a big storage room.

Jake: OK. I'll close that door and go down to the end of the hall and peek in that room.

Rev: So you open the door on the end of the hallway, and it is wall to wall bookshelves and a chair. And this room is very clean, and there are books stacked on the floor as well. And many of them are just open and marked.

Jake: OK. I'll close that door and go back where the goblin went.

Rev: All right. So you go back down the hallway and you take a right and go into the door that the goblin went through, and inside of this room is a large dining room table. And there are a couple of goblins sitting at it, and Estin is sitting at the head of the table.

Jake: Is there a seat for me?

Rev: There is. There is one across from Estin at the table. And then there's a seat that's much larger than the other seats -- it's actually taking up two spaces here.

Jake: Yeah, I'll sit in the one across from Estin.

Rev: So you sit down. Inside of this room, there are three other doors, one on each wall. And through the door behind you where you're seated now, you hear a voice.

Rev: THE BUTCHER: All right. Well, I hope everyone is hungry. It's time for dinner.

Rev: And in from the kitchen comes the giant goblin chef.

Rev: THE BUTCHER: All right. I hope everybody's ready for some fine dining.

Jake: [laughs]

Tass: Yes!

Teej: Oh, no ...

Jake: It's my best friend!

Rev: THE BUTCHER: Hey! I know you.

Rev: And he is just ... You see that he is like Two-Face. He is half burned.

Rev: THE BUTCHER: I remember you. You're the one who set my place on fire. You said you worked for the boss!

Jake: "I do work for the boss."

Rev: THE BUTCHER: I -- uh ...

All: [laugh]

Rev: THE BUTCHER: Oh. Does he work for you?

Rev: ESTIN: Yes. Yes we're discussing that at the moment, to see what would be the best method for him to serve.

Rev: THE BUTCHER: Well all right, then.

All: [laugh]

Rev: And he sets down a large platter and opens it up.

Jake: I want to like, put a hand gingerly on his shoulder, and be like, "I'm glad you made it out. And I cannot wait to try what you've prepared."

Rev: THE BUTCHER: Oh. Well, thank you. There's not a lot of people who appreciate fine dining down here. It's nice to have someone who appreciates the little things you add onto food.

Rev: And he gives a glare towards the goblins who are just kind of pounding at the table. And he opens it up. What's your fancy, Jake?

Jake: Um ... Sushi.

Tass: [laughs] Oh my god.

Rev: And he opens it up, and there are these little rolls that have meat inside of them with rice on the outside.

Rev: THE BUTCHER: I call this ricey-fish.

All: [laugh]

Rev: THE BUTCHER: You take fish and you cut it up. You don't cook it. No time for cooking. Sometimes days are busy. And you take this here rice, and you step on it till it's flat and sticky. And you put the fish in the middle, and you just roll it up, down the hatch.

Jake: [laughs] I will happily start indulging.

Rev: Yeah. So you sit here and you eat with the group, and Estin is just watching. I think the most conversation you get is from the cook. So what kind of stuff are you talking about over dinner?

Jake: I think I am ... I'm talking about food stuff with him. Talking about like culinary stuff with him. And first of all, I want to find out his name. I want to be like, "Who should I tell people about that came up with this amazing dish?"

Rev: TROG: Oh, my name's Trog.

Jake: "Trog's ricey-fish."

Rev: TROG: Yeah. Ricey-fish. You can tell that I made it, because it's in the shape of my foot.

Jake: [laughs]

Rev: TROG: That's like a branding.

Jake: "I've got thoughts on that. I'll bet there's a better way to flatten out the rice more consistent way, like with a --"

Rev: TROG: I've got pretty flat feet. That's why I into cooking instead of being a soldier. They wouldn't take me because of my flat feet.

Jake: I think I would spend time like, yeah, talking about culinary innovation. But basically things that I like from Earth? Suggesting them to him to create in this world.

Rev: Oh, OK.

Jake: Like pizza and ramen noodles.

Rev: TROG: I take the dough, and I stomp it flat with my foot, and then I juice a tomato over it.

Jake: "With your feet. You stomp on the tomatoes with your feet."

Rev: TROG: Yeah. Like making wine, but vegetable wine.

Jake: "Yes. Like vegetable wine."

Rev: TROG: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah. I think that is what I would spend dinner talking to him about.

Rev: TROG: Yeah. It's a good thing you got out of there. The people got loose and man, they destroyed that whole place. We lost almost everybody who was there, for who you see sitting here. But we found the bodies of all the goblins that were lost, except for Krim. I wonder what happened to poor, poor Krim ...

Tass: That's when we paid off, isn't it?

Rev: That ran away, yeah.

Tass: [chuckles]

Jake: "Man, I don't know. I mean, it was probably better, right? Than being trapped in a place on fire?"

Rev: TROG: Oh, yeah.

Jake: "If you can't find ... Well, unless he just got, like, scorched up so bad that you couldn't even discern the remains."

Rev: TROG: Well I mean, we went through and picked up bones and stuff, and there weren't enough bones to make something else.

Jake: [Trog impression] It's all a matter of mathematics.

Rev: TROG: It's just a matter of fire doesn't burn hot enough to cremate a body fully, so. You learn this stuff when you're a cook.

Jake: "So you were almost a soldier, huh?"

Rev: TROG: Well I mean, as much as every goblin-born is usually some kind of a fighter. But despite my size, I had an aptitude for learning language. You know, I've got these ... These flat feet makes it hard to to march and charge and all those kinds of things. I move a little slow, and you know, by the time I got someplace, things were usually dead -- either their side or our side. And sometimes I was big enough to, you know, make the difference if I got there and all our people were dead. But it's tiring, you know.

Jake: "Why are you so big for a goblin?"

Rev: TROG: Yeah well, it's kind of a strange situation. Me Da was a goblin, me Ma was a giant.

Jake: "Wow."

Rev: TROG: Yeah. He made quite a conquest during a battle and, uh ...

Jake: "Yeah. A real go-getter."

Rev: TROG: Yeah. And, you know, I was born, and I was a little runty for them, and she threw me off. But he found me and raised me.

Teej: [laughs] I keep imagining that his goblin dad raised him just like the Shaquille O'Neal Saturday Night Live skit, where Tracy Morgan is his father. And he's late coming home from something, and he puts them on his knee and spansks Shaquille O'Neal.

Jake: What's Estin doing? Is he like ... Does he seem involved in the conversation? Does he seem like he has anything to contribute?

Rev: He's just listening right now, unless you engage him.

Jake: Yeah. I mean, I want to rope him into a conversation. I want to have him talking again, getting on his good side.

Rev: And you know, we didn't really talk about this in the moment. But I think now that you are having dinner with him, we can talk about this game mechanic. Early on, when you first encountered Estin, you had said that your goal was to try to get him talking. And he is one of the creatures from that book. And all the creatures in the Dungeon World books have things that they are likely to do, things they are driven to do. And one of his things is to explain a complicated plan. He wants to talk about the things that he has done, the things that he knows, so much so that they put that as his main drive. So you deciding that, "Oh, yeah. I'm gonna see if I get him talking" was spot on. So yeah, it won't be hard to get him talking. It just depends on what you're talking about.

Jake: I mean, I think I want to mention that I sat down and looked at his book that he referenced, and just, "That's a hell of a thing, man. You've really tapped into something." And just listen to him monologue.

Rev: Yeah. And he will, he will talk for a good long time about all the worlds that he has gone to, the ones that other people have visited on his behalf, and about how Bennari

had originally had this idea after having a dream. He had a dream that he saw another version of himself, and that he felt like the things that his dream-self was saying to him were too accurate to be a dream. And that he started to take notes based off of the things that he heard in his dream, and those dreams allowed him to create the device that let them travel to other worlds.

Jake: "Can you describe Bennari to me? Like physically? Like, you know, I don't like him, but I've never actually met him. It's just his reputation precedes him. What's he -- what's he look like? If I saw him in the street, would I know that I just want to punch him in the mouth?"

Rev: So he starts to describe Bennari to you. And the first thing he mentions is that he is undead, and that there is grey skin and dead eyes. But then as he goes on to describe the rest of him, he word for word draws you a mental image of Grigori Nash.

T.J., here you are locked in a cell some unknown distance below the waves. There is a frog-headed guard at the end of one room, a wall of water leading up to the ocean at the other. And Leif, one of the captains of the Monarchs of the Moon, in the cell across from you. What are you doing?

Teej: I feel like I want to make like a pirate captain and Leif this cell, so ...

All: [laugh]

Teej: I want to see if I can't pull these bars apart and get out.

Rev: All right. Roll Bend Bars, Lift Gates.

Teej: Oh, hell yeah. That's with Strength? That's more than enough. That's thirteen.

Rev: All right. What do you get?

Teej: I get a hold 3 on that. So I choose from the list. It doesn't take a very long time, nothing of value is damaged, and it doesn't make an inordinate amount of noise.

Rev: So are you trying to do this stealthily? Are you just doing it as a show?

Teej: Ooh, that's a good point.

Rev: Because it won't be a lot of noise. But he is still just sitting at the end of the hallway in a room filled with bars. So it's not like he can't see you.

Teej: Yeah, I kind of want to do it stealthily. So maybe at least I can take this guy by surprise, and hopefully not have anybody outside of this room hear it.

Rev: All right. So roll Defy Danger with Dexterity then, to try to use this move stealthily.

Teej: Oh hell yeah again. Eleven.

Rev: Yeah. So he is distracted, sharpening his spear at the end of the hall. He pulls out a whetstone, and you are able to bend these bars out of place and step through. What would you like to do now?

Teej: I'd like to rush him and just take him out with one -- hopefully one -- swipe of my flail.

Rev: All right. Roll Hack and Slash.

Teej: [laughs] Jeez.

Tass: I gave you all of my energy in my last stint of rolling.

Teej: I guess so. Thirteen, again.

Rev: All right, roll your damage.

Teej: And since it's a critical, I'm going to add the extra 6d to it?

Rev: Oh, to take a hit?

Teej: Yeah. I'm glad I did that, because I rolled really low on my other ones. That's a six.

Rev: You take 7 points of damage. So you run down the hallway and you hit this creature with your flail, and it staggers backwards and thrusts its spear forward. And behind you, Leif starts clapping.

Rev: LEIF: That was a good show of force, there.

Teej: "Thanks." And then I want to backhand as I return swing this guy.

Rev: OK. Roll Hack and Slash again.

Teej: There's the mixed successes. That is a seven.

Rev: All right, roll your damage.

Teej: And since I'm hitting this target another time, I get to add that extra 4d ... That's eight.

Rev: And you take 9 points of damage. So you bring the flail back around, and it jams the spear into you. And then you bring your flail down on its head, and it collapses to the ground.

Teej: Oof. I want to check it, to see if it has that key on it.

Rev: It does.

Teej: Throw it in the water and then say F you to Leif.

Jake: [laughs].

Teej: No. I will go over and unlock Leif's cell with it.

Rev: LEIF: Oh, well, good to stretch again.

Teej: "Well sure, yeah. Do you know the way out, besides the old drink?"

Rev: LEIF: No, that's the way I came in.

Teej: "Maybe we should see what's down here, and see if there's more to this place."

Rev: LEIF: Sure. I don't have much way to help you out. All my guns -- they don't work because they got wet.

Teej: "Well then just stay behind me and I'll do all the work."

Rev: LEIF: Sounds good.

Teej: I want to go to the door and check it to see if there's anybody sitting out in the hallway or the next whatever over.

Rev: You open the door and there is a hallway that goes to the left and the right.

Teej: OK, I'll take a look left.

Rev: You turn to your left, and there is a longer hallway that way that ends in a door. And you can see that it also turns left, and there's another hallway.

Teej: Oh, my goodness. Turn right to see what's down the right side of the hallway.

Rev: To the right, there is a very large metal door.

Teej: I want to check the large metal door and see if it's openable.

Rev: It is. It has a large metal wheel on it that, if you turn it, will pull three metal pegs that are going into the doorframe.

Jake: Like a bank vault?

Rev: Yeah.

Teej: Oh, awesome. Open her up.

Rev: So T.J., roll Defy Danger with Dexterity.

Tass: And the sea spills in!

Rev: Wait, it's underwater. What else is it doing here?

Tass: [laughs]

Teej: I thought it was a bank vault. You described it as a bank vault!

Tass: Jake did, actually.

Teej: Oh, Jake described -- damn you, Jake!

Jake: I just said it's like the door on a bank vault!

Teej: That would be a five.

Rev: All right. So you take 3 points of damage, armor-defeating, as water rushes through this door and throws you down the hallway, slamming you into the door at the end of the hall.

Tass. So you are standing on the ship of the Monarchs of the Moon, and you have spotted this pile of seaweed that is coming up through the hull, and you recognize it.

Tass: "All right, Cap. Here's what I have in my head. This stuff is literally at some point probably going to bring these ships down. What I'm conflicted with is do I stab it? Like, do I hurt this? Will that piss it off more? I don't have an answer for this. But one way or another, we're gonna have to get this shit off of at least the Fortune before we're gonna be able to go anywhere."

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Yeah. I wonder if that was what was making noise below deck. I sent the crew to take care of it cause there was a lot of creaking and groaning of wood. It seems like this stuff worms its way up through the hull.

Tass: "Yeah. It might be worth our time just to do a cursory glance over this, to see if there are any other survivors here. And if not, just get to work on slashing through those vines to try to get us free."

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Yeah. All right.

Tass: I'm gonna run to the other end. To the front -- that cabin.

Rev: And you see the exact same thing. In this room, there is a big pile of that seaweed, but you do not see anyone.

Tass: OK. Out of curiosity, is there anything overtly valuable?

Rev: No.

Tass: OK. [laughs]

Rev: Yeah. Not even things that are valuable -- there's just nothing on the boat.

Tass: Wow. OK. I think I'll run across the gangplank to the mystery ship, and see if I can spot anyone here.

Rev: As you cross the gangplank onto the ship, you see the same thing. It's a much larger ship. There is a cabin in the front and the back. And then around mid deck, there are steps that lead down into the underbelly of the ship.

Tass: I'm gonna go down.

Rev: All right. So you go down these steps, and the captain follows you. And what these steps go down into doesn't seem like it should be the hull of this ship. It is a square room with a hallway to the left and to the right. It almost looks like the cabin of another ship.

Tass: "What the hell?" I'm like -- I think I'm looking, like, back up the steps. Like, towards the outside, and looking at this. Like, did I just teleport? What is this?

Rev: Yeah. Roll Discern Realities.

Tass: There we go. My god. Finally. That is a thirteen.

Rev: OK. You get a hold 3.

Tass: What here is not what it appears to be?

Rev: So as you run back through your head, looking at the Monarchs of the Moon's ship and then the ship that you came down the steps, and then the room that you're in, the ship above you is very old wood. And this is old too, but it's stained differently. And you can see some markings on it that indicate that it came from a different ship. And you can actually see now, as you're looking for it, that there is a strange gap from one to the other where you can see water, but the water's being kept out by some means.

Tass: "What the hell is this?" And I'm showing the captain.

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: I don't like this.

Tass: What here is useful or valuable to me?

Rev: So I think with the realization of that gap where the water is being kept out, you can tell that there is some kind of aquamancy at play here. That some kind of magic has been

done to keep the water out of this place. And that, yeah, the piece that you walked down into is part of another ship.

Tass: "This is bizarre. It's like a ..." And I think I almost say Frankenstein ship to him, and realize he's not going to get that.

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Oh, Robert Frankenstein. The guy who designed the lazy Susan.

Tass: "Yep. Exactly like that."

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Yeah. Lazy Susan was the humanoid creature of bodies put together that was supposed to do a bunch of tasks and she just didn't.

All: [laugh]

Tass: "It's amazing how much this lines up. Perfect. Yes. Good." I think my last question is, what should I be on the lookout for?

Rev: You see wet footprints along the floor here. Not that they are currently wet, but you can see where water has dried. And they are webbed feet. And there are quite a few of them coming up and down the stairs, or going into the left or right hallway. This whole place is pretty heavily trafficked.

Tass: OK. But there's still nobody around?

Rev: Correct.

Tass: All right. Let's see what we see, here. I'm going to take the hall on the right.

Rev: OK. So you take the hall on the right, and you go down maybe five, ten feet, and you find yourself in the back of another boat. And the wall on your right is just a wall of water. And you can see like fish swimming by and seaweed outside.

Tass: "My god, they're just hacking up pieces of boats and building like an underwater maze or something."

Rev: And in the corner of this room, you also see more of that seaweed.

Tass: I think I'm gonna go back the other way then, and see what's down the other hall.

Rev: So you go down the left hall, and the captain follows you. And you step through the hallway again -- it's only five, ten feet. And you come out into a room that has a solid floor, wood planks. But every wall that you can see is water. And there are three humanoid looking figures asleep in the far corner of the room, amidst a pile of that seaweed.

Tass: I turn to give the hush motion to the captain, and kind of motion to go backwards and get back down into the entryway.

Rev: All right. Defy Danger with Dexterity to sneak back out of this room.

Tass: Seven.

Rev: So you'll be able to get out of this room without being noticed. But you're gonna have to do it by going through the wall, back into the ocean. Or you can go through the hallway, back into that central room, but they're gonna notice the captain, because he's a little louder than you are -- but you will get away unseen. Or you'll be able to get out of this room -- both of you unnoticed -- but something will become aware that there are intruders. It just won't know where.

Tass: Got it. This is a weird question. As far as looking out these walls of water, like, do I see sunlight from above? Are we too deep from that?

Rev: It seems like you're a little too deep for that.

SFX: OK. I think I want to try to go out through the wall of water. I think I'm gonna try to like motion for the captain to grab a hold of my hot water form here, and just sort of indicate for him to hang on.

Rev: All right. So you make this motion to the captain. He nods and awkwardly reaches around your water form. And you fall through the wall, and you are both lifted to the surface.

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: Oh, god. That's a ... Well, that's something.

Tass: "Yeah. Yeah, sorry about that. I didn't think we were gonna be able to sneak out of there without them seeing. Holy shit. That's ... That's good to know that these seaweed things have like something working for it? Or they're using it or manipulating it?"

Rev: I think that's even from your failed Spout Lore, you would know that the Hydra Vines are naturally occurring.

Tass: OK. OK. So they are ... Yeah. They're sort of taking advantage of it, it seems like. All right. I want to get him back over to the Fortune.

Rev: Yeah. So you head back over towards the Scoundrel's Fortune, and inside you can hear the crew making a hell of a ruckus.

Tass: OK. I want to get up in there as well and kind of see what's going on.

Rev: How are you going to get up onto the Scoundrel's Fortune?

Tass: Uh, can I use the only hold I have to sort of waterspout the captain and I up?

Rev: Yes. Yes, you can.

Tass: Superb.

Rev: Yeah. So you essentially like water jetpack your way up to the top of the deck, and you are back in your halfling form.

Tass: And yeah. I'll follow him through and just get down through the decks and see what's going on below.

Rev: Yeah. So you get down below, and there is a lot of commotion. You see that there are four spots where the seaweed has come in, and there are four of these humanoid frog figures fighting with the crew.

Tass: OK. I want to jump over to one of them -- one of those pockets of fighting -- and try to help.

Rev: All right. Roll Hack and Slash.

Tass: Ooh. Seven.

Rev: All right, roll your damage.

Tass: Five.

Rev: All right. You take 6. And Captain Kay does the same thing, and leaps at the one that you are attacking. [rolls] And plunges his sabre through it, and it goes down.

Tass: Nice. I want to see if I can try something. I want to try to transform to bear form, and ... Yeah. And then rush over to one of the others.

Rev: All right. Roll your Shapeshift.

Tass: Oh sweet. That's a thirteen.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 3.

Tass: OK. So I want to see if I can try to sell you on the fact that these things have probably never seen a big ass grizzly bear in the middle of the ocean.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: So I want to rush over, just roaring, snarling, you know, slobber from my big fangs, and just try to scare the shit out of them and see if I can get any of them to run.

Rev: So roll Defy Danger with Charisma and give yourself a +1 for each point of hold you want to spend.

Tass: Yeah. I'll use 2.

Rev: Roll it.

Tass: Oh baby, I didn't even need that hold. That brings me up to a thirteen.

Rev: Yeah. So you lunge forward in your bear form and you let out a roar, and the three of these kind of Three Stooges into one another and then plop back through a hole in the deck, into the water.

Tass: "Ok. Get to work, boys. Come on. Let's get rid of this seaweed."

Rev: Yeah. So some of the crew starts to patch the hole that was created, and others of them start to hack at the seaweed. You notice that they cut at the seaweed, they cut it off, and it regrows moments after it's been cut away.

Rev: CAPTAIN KAY BROADSTONE: What are we supposed to do with it? It won't seem to die.

Tass: "Shit. This may warrant me going back to see if I can do something about this at its core."

Rev: CABIN BOY: OK.

Teej: That was the cabin boy.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: "I love you."

Rev: CABIN BOY: You're my hero.

Teej: "I love you." Yeah.

Tass: So I think I'm gonna run back up and around, and jump back in the water.

Jake: As a bear?

Rev: We need to put like a marker up on the wall.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Print out pictures of all these creatures and put them on magnets and just

Tass: [laughs]

Jake: What are you now, up here? Cut them all in half so that when he fucks up, you can pick two halves of an animal and put them together.

All: [laugh]

Tass: Yeah. So I guess I'm gonna drop bear form and get back to mystery ship, where it leads down and starts becoming hallways. And I think I want to try to go down to something ... Something tiny and sneaky to get through this space, and see what else I can see where those sleeping guys were.

Rev: All right. Roll your Shapeshift.

Tass: That's a ten.

Rev: OK. What are you turning into?

Tass: I think we're going shrew. He has been helpful for me in being sneaky sneaky.

Rev: Yeah. I don't see you have any problem sneaking aboard the ship and down to the first level. But when you get down into that second level, as you start to go left and go into the wall and go into the room that was all water walls, you do hear the sound of moving around and chatter and commotion from the room on the right, that you know was just the back of a ship and one wall of water.

Tass: OK.

Rev: So you come into this room, and again, you see on the far side, there is a group of these same frog humanoid figures, asleep on a pile of seaweed. And as you approach them, you can actually see that the room curves around a little bit to the right. And you weren't able to see it before because the walls in this room are made of water, and so you couldn't see through one wall of water through the other to this kind of little chamber in the room. And there is a set of stairs that go down. And there's also a chest that you can now see behind the seaweed with the three creature sleeping on it.

Tass: OK. Oh, man. Yeah. I'm going to bypass all of that, and try to get down those stairs.

Rev: So T.J., you have just been slammed into this door as water comes rushing in from the large metal door that you've just opened. And after while, the water settles. And it's only about up to your knees. But you hear something moving around behind you, through the door that you've just been knocked into.

Teej: Oh, crud. "Well Captain, I think this was a bust."

Rev: You don't see him anywhere.

Teej: Oh, crap. Crud, crud, crud. And there's someone behind me. I want to go toward -- back towards the cells door.

Rev: OK. Yeah. So you head back down the hallway and turn into the room with the cells in it. And you see that Leif is there with his arms strung through one of the bars, and one

of his feet is hanging outside of the wall of water -- like he was almost blown back outside.

Teej: "Woah. Are you -- are you all right?"

Rev: LEIF: No, that was ... What was that?

Teej: "That was a big mistake. So we should probably go. I'm thinking maybe if this is the way we came in, it's probably also a good bet that this is the way to go out."

Rev: LEIF: So just throw ourselves out into the water?

Teej: "Yep. And start swimming upwards."

Rev: LEIF: Oh, god.

Rev: And he turns and jumps out.

Rev: LEIF: [jumping noise]

Teej: I'm going to see if I can't swim my way out of this.

Rev: I think this is going to be roll Defy Danger with Strength to try to swim up fast enough to not start suffering some effects of the water.

Teej: Fourteen.

Jake: [laughs]

Rev: Yeah. No problem. You leap out into the water and you start pumping those little dwarven arms and legs as hard as you can, and you break through the surface. You notice that you're maybe 100 feet away from the Scoundrel's Fortune right now.

Teej: Oh. I'm going to pump my legs a little more and head towards it.

Rev: OK. So yeah, you get over to the side of the Scoundrel's Fortune. What do you want to do?

Teej: Um ... Something pulled me under before. I want to see if there's something that's holding onto the ship, because it stopped the ship, and that's what I was initially trying to figure out. So I want to see if there's something holding the ship.

Rev: Yeah. So you swim under water, and you see that there are four vines coming from deep below that are coming up through the hull of the Scoundrel's Fortune.

Teej: Are they pretty thick?

Rev: They are.

Teej: I want to know if Honin knows anything about these seaweed.

Rev: Why don't you roll Spout Lore?

Teej: Alrighty. That is a nine.

Rev: So you recognize this as a type of seaweed called Hydra Vines. And I think the interesting thing that you know about them is that they are called Hydra Vines because they share a similar weakness to the actual hydra.

Teej: I want to swim and climb back up onto the Scoundrel's Fortune.

Rev: Yeah. So you are able to swim over to the Scoundrel's Fortune and climb up the side. And you are now below deck with the captain and the crew, and they are trying to deal with the seaweed.

Teej: Are they just like hacking at it and they're all growing back and everything?

Rev: Yep.

Teej: I'm going to pull out my torch and light it up. And as soon as one of the crew cuts off one of the seaweeds, I'm going to use it to sear the end of the seaweed.

Rev: Yes. Sure enough, you walk over and you place the burning end of the torch down on to some of the Hydra Vines, and it seals over and falls back through the hull. And water starts to come out in that spot, and they quickly go to patch it.

Teej: Nice. I'm going to go to the next seaweeds and get rid of all four of them.

Rev: Yeah. So I think that, you know, seeing you do this, everyone else on the ship sees what's going on and they, in a matter of moments, have all of these vines cleared away. So Tass, you have come down this set of stairs, and you are inside a fully intact boat. It is very small. It looks like it could be run by maybe two or three people. And there are four vines in it, and about a foot and a half of water. At the very back, you see a large metal door.

Tass: OK. Yeah. I guess I'll jump into the water and swim over to it and get through.

Rev: All right. So you jump into the water and you swim through, and you pass this metal door and you come out into a hallway. The hallway continues to go straight, and there is a door on your left and there is a door straight ahead, and a hallway on the left as well.

Tass: Are any of these open?

Rev: The door on your left is open. The door at the end of the hall is not.

Tass: I'm going to peek in the door on the left.

Rev: You see six cells, and a wall of water at the end of the room.

Tass: OK. And no one in the cells, I assume?

Rev: That's correct.

Tass: OK. Then I'm going to keep moving, and try to get to the end door.

Rev: OK. Yeah. You swim down to the end door, no problem.

Tass: Do I see anything down that hallway, now that I'm here?

Rev: From here, you don't see anything. You can see that there is a fully enclosed wooden room, but you don't see anything in it from outside in the hallway.

Tass: OK. I think I'm here at the door, so I want to try swimming down underneath, and I want to see if I could sell you on using a hold as a shrew to like, you know how they just can get frickin anywhere? And try to shimmy under the door.

Rev: Yeah. Use one of your hold.

Tass: Sweet.

Rev: And you are able to swim below, and squeeze underneath this door. And on the other side of this door is a small 10x10 room. And there is another one of these frog creatures, asleep on a bed. And in the corner of the room is a treasure chest, and in the center of the room is a very large pile of the Hydra Vines.

Tass: I want treasure so bad. [laughs]

Rev: Fair.

Tass: Everyone knows that shrews are notorious for dragging treasure chests behind them, with their tails.

Jake: And squeezing them through the opening under doors.

Teej: Right.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Like a Looney Tunes.

All: [laugh]

Tass: No. That's not where my head's at, though. I'm looking for any actual people that could have been on either of those ships. So I think I'm gonna ... Gosh, I probably have to use another hold to get back under the door.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: And I'm gonna go down the hallway.

Rev: OK.

Jake: [whispers] We could have been rich.

Rev: So you head to the hallway on your right, and there is a series of like 12 bunk beds in this room, and there are sleeping frog people on all of them.

Tass: I guess what I'm looking for are any traces of, like, stuff that they've taken. Like stuff that could have been stripped off of the ships or, you know, any of the people's clothes. Anything like that.

Rev: Roll Discern Realities.

Tass: That's a seven.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 1.

Tass: What here is useful or valuable to me?

Rev: I think the useful thing that you notice as you look around the room at the sleeping figures on the beds is that each one of them is wearing clothing or weapons that you can remember belonging to one of the crewmates of the Monarchs of the Moon. And it strikes you at first as if they must have robbed the pirate crew of their things. But then you start to notice familiar scars and tattoos, and it occurs to you that these mutated forms didn't rob the Monarchs of the Moon. They are the Monarchs of the Moon.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

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