

End of the Road (S2, E31)

SFX:

INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Just a couple of quick reminders before we get into the episode today. If you have any questions about Dungeon World -- about the team's time there, about the mechanics, about the stories that were hit, or missed moments that you want to know about, make sure to get those to us by January 31st. We're going to do a little bit of a Q&A as we wrap up our time in Dungeon World. And so we will take those questions and we'll answer whatever ones of them we can. Also, late last week, we passed 200,000 downloads.

Tass: Woo!

Rev: So thank you everybody who listens and suggests the show to other people. We could not do any of this without all of you and your support. So thank you so much. As a way to show our thanks. We are doing a giveaway for this kind of celebration of passing two hundred thousand downloads, as well as getting ready to release the first story in Tales from the Omniverse. If you head over to thecritshowpodcast.com/200k, you can sign up for a chance to win one of five goody bags of some swag we are putting together, which includes a t-shirt featuring some fan art from Lady C of our Discord. These shirts will not be ones that we sell. We're just making them for this run to give away. We'll also have some other little goodies that I will drop in those bags before we mail those out.

Tass: [Gasps] A lock of Jake's hair?

Rev: Yes.

Tass: Oh, nice.

Teej: A live, on-air version of one of us doing a sexy dance?

Rev: How do I put that in a bag? Explain.

Jake: Print out the YouTube link on paper, and slip the paper into the bag. It's a private video. You have to have this link to access.

Rev: And then eat the paper, once you're done.

Jake: Definitely eat the paper.

Teej: I just meant, like, on the podcast. Like one of us dances ...

Jake: In an audio medium?

Teej: Yeah.

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: Just ... [Dances]

Teej: Oh, you get it. Yeah!

Rev: But everyone would get that -- not just the five people who win.

Teej: Oh.

Rev: This is all stuff for the five winners.

Teej: I'll just do it in my own good time, then.

Rev: [Laughs] T.J. right now is doing a very seductive dance while I read through the rest of these announcements.

Tass: I'm gonna record it on a TalkBoy and send that to you.

All: [Laugh] So just head over to thecritshowpodcast.com/200k and fill out the form by February 1st to be entered in that drawing. And Nyx, our webmaster, has also put a couple other ways that you can get some additional entries into that drawing. Also, thank you. We have just passed our fourth Patreon goal. We have -- I swear, I promise -- we have these coming.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: Our schedule is so full right now from setting up these recordings. You know what? I'm going to talk about a couple of them. I'm going to say some of the games we're playing.

Tass: Oh my god.

Jake: No, no, no. It's illegal. You can't.

Rev: Yes. So in no particular order, we're playing a game that is kind of Monster Hunter meets The Great British Bake Off. We're going to play some Earthdawn. We're gonna play some Pugmire. We're going to play some Dread. We've got all kinds of games going on, and we will have the first one of the Tales from the Omniverse releasing by February 1st. I've said it out loud now, so I have to make it happen.

Jake: Yeah you did.

Teej: So let it be written. So let it be done.

Rev: It is all done but the editing, so ...

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: You know what? It'll get there. And so as T.J.'s very sexy dance winds down, we just want to take a chance again to say thank you everybody, for listening, for supporting. I realized as we were going through those that all of these announcements were just little celebrations that are thanks to all of you out there. So thank you so much.

Teej: Big finish!

Rev: Listen to that dance.

Jake: My God, look at the hips.

Rev: It's time to let the recap roll.

Teej: And jump, splits, and land it. Got it.

Jake: [Laughs]

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Rev: Coming towards Knottermore, you see a huge dark wood Man of War surrounded by smaller boats, all flying the flag of the Monarchs of the Moon.

Bennari: I would say they'll make a landing in 10 minutes or so. So you can stay here and deal with me, or go save the world.

Rev: As the two of you sprint towards him, he leaps into the air and lands on the ground behind you, and the two of you collide into one another.

Bennari: You asked me before how I knew you weren't going to get to Grigori in time.

Rev: And he reaches into the collar of his shirt and pulls out a necklace that you both recognize. It is the Necklace of the North Winds.

Bennari: It's because I've seen this already.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Some things that exist in your world exist here. Not all things, not many things, but some things. There are things that reoccur and reappear. And Nash seems to know what things are in what worlds. So he knows where to go to find what he needs.

Rev: You look out to sea, and the naval force of the Monarchs of the Moon is bearing down on you. And actually being here now, there is the sound of drums coming from the ships, and the din of panicking people behind you. But all that sound seems to fade away as you see this hulking figure walk up to the front of the Man of War. And it tilts its head back to the sky and lets out a long, deep howl that cuts through the air.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: Tass, you are flying through the town, towards the docks. People in the street are starting to panic, and you can hear the distant beat of drums and then the loud howl of a wolf. As you approach the dock, Jake and T.J. appear at the end of it. What are you doing?

Tass: I mean, I'm certainly dropping the hawk form, just so that it's very clear it's the three of us. And just looking out from that point of view that he gave us, just sort of, like, trying to wave off.

Rev: Roll Discern Realities.

Tass: That's eight.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 1.

Tass: What here is useful or valuable to me?

Rev: So as you're standing at the edge of the dock and waving, looking out, you actually notice just a slight, almost twinkle in the sky. And thinking back, you can tell it must be where Bennari's window is. That must be the point that he is seeing back through. And as the three of you stand there, 30, 45 seconds pass, and the ships are getting uncomfortably close at this point. But then you see someone run up to the hulking figure at the front of the Man of War, and then another of those howls peels through the air. And in unison, all of the ships bank to port and start heading back out to see who.

Tass: [Sighs] "Well, I still don't feel great. But I mean, we did save these people."

Jake: "What now? Nash won. At least on this one, Nash won."

Tass: "He didn't all the way, though. I've still got the thing he wants. So right now we need to figure out how to get James back."

Jake: "What is the -- what thing?"

Tass: "Let's talk away from this little window, shall we?"

Jake: [Laughs] "That's a great point. Yeah."

Rev: So you all turn from the dock and head back into town, towards Yaga's house. And as you approach, she's standing outside on the sidewalk.

Rev: BABA YAGA: Is everything all right?

Jake: "I mean, pirates aren't currently attacking Knottermore, so. That's fine. I have no idea what other sinister things were accomplished instead."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh.

Tass: "Yeah. We were kind of put between a rock and a hard place. It was save these people, or stop whatever the Bennari from our world was doing here."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh, I see. Well, saving everyone here from whatever was set upon us is ... Well, it speaks to your character.

Tass: "Yeah. I mean, I'm not going to lie to you. It was tough. We almost went the other way. You know, we don't know what we're facing. We don't know if we're trying to save the collective worlds or just one town, you know what I mean?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: And at least your portal is safe, as well.

Tass: "Yeah."

Rev: BABA YAGA: I think I ... Well, that's not true. I was going to say I think I could have protected the city, but it's really just more of a ... Really, it's only helpful for flooding. I have never tried to use it against attacks or things like that.

Tass: "What? What's flooding? What?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Well sometimes the ocean gets too high, and the dock is built on a buoy system of wood to keep it up. But we had an enormous storm, and so I took a cue from my sisters and I made some adjustments to Knottermore.

Teej: "What sort of adjustments?"

Rev: And she goes over to her desk and she opens up the roll top, and she pulls out a sketchbook and she lays it down. When you all first came to Knottermore the first time, I described that it was this almost square city built on what seemed like kind of a wooden flat. And you see on this sketch that she has, underneath the city, these two clock work legs that can raise the city about thirty feet into the air.

Teej: Tell me they are a clockwork chicken legs.

Rev: They are.

Teej: [Laughs] Oh shit.

Jake: Nice.

Tass: "Yeah, that's pretty good."

Rev: BABA YAGA: It's not very stable. I moved the city once -- not far, and not without much damage to the infrastructure. So it would not have saved us. It would have bought us a little bit of time. But I think even them taking shots with those cannons at one of the legs, it would have been the ruin of us.

Jake: "So what's the -- what's the thing? What's the thing? The important thing?"

Tass: So yeah, I'll pull the piece of paper back out that he gave me. "Yeah. So, you know, obviously he was a little more lucid this time. So he pretty much explained it working the same way. Now that he was thinking clearer, I think it was a little bit more urgent for him, for the thought of us throwing it through the portal so that it isn't here."

Jake: "OK, so do we want to do that right now?"

Tass: "I mean, I don't think so."

Jake: "Why?"

Tass: "Well ..."

Jake: "Why? He just -- didn't he just tell us to?"

Tass: "Yeah, but if we're not going straight back through, I don't like the idea of just tossing it through unattended -- to a Rev that we're not really sure what's going on with him yet, by the way. We have to address that when we go through. So if I just throw this through to a person that we're not exactly sure about and then we're going to hang out here longer. Especially if Nash is cleaning up and going home ... Yeah, I don't like that. I don't like the idea of this thing that's so powerful, being unattended by us."

Teej: "That makes lots of sense."

Jake: "That does make sense."

Teej: "Yeah."

Jake: "I wish we could just know everything that's happening."

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I was -- I was going a direction with that sentence that was equally as ludicrous as what I ended up saying.

Rev: You're like, Rev, give me your notebook behind that screen.

Jake: Give me that!

Rev: Give me the notebook, nerd!

Jake: Nerd!

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "OK. So we hold on to this and just keep it locked down at Haven until it's time to go?"

Tass: "Yeah, I think so."

Jake: "Neither of these is like a strong option to me."

Tass: "Right."

Jake: "You know, while he's here, it's in danger if it's here. And while he's there, it's in danger if it's there. But this is a whole, uh ... How long we been here?"

Tass: "Our side or theirs?"

Jake: "Our side."

Tass: "A few hours."

Jake: "Cool. So this has been a whole few hours of just nightmarish decision making. So what's one more, I guess, where I don't feel good about any option? Just add this to the pile."

Tass: "Yep."

Jake: "OK. Then is there anything else we need to do? Is there anything we can get to like help Grandpa? Yaga, do you have any thoughts? So we found the guy we were here to claim. But if he goes home, time will catch up with him and he will just turn to dust, basically. He's been here a really long time. So we need to figure out is a way to get him somehow, bodily or mentally or anything, back to the other side without him just dying on impact. Do you have any thoughts?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh I'm sorry, I don't. Time is not something I understand the workings of. In fact, I seem to defy most of the ideas behind it.

Tass: "That's fair. I think if there is an answer to this, it's in that book."

Jake: "Yeah. Let's get the hell out of here. Before we go actually, should I take the other black gem and have her, like, fix it up and like, reinserted in my head? So that maybe I have like a better teleport going on?"

Tass: "Oh, that's a good point. Yeah."

Jake: "Yaga, is there any way that you could ... Whatever you did to the black gem that's currently in my head," and I'll take the bracer from Tass. "This was the other one. I used to have this one, too, but I gave it to someone. But could you put it back and fix it up the same way? Would that -- would that buy me anything?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh, yes. I could put it back in. It would kill your recharge time, because the other one would always be full. So as long as you are not leaping here and there a couple of seconds apart, you shouldn't have to wait any longer.

Jake: "You guys think that's worth it?"

Tass: "Yeah."

Teej: "If it saves us some time? Absolutely."

Jake: OK. I would love for her to do that. I'll hand her the gem and take a knee again.

Rev: BABA YAGA: Which one of these would you like me to take out?

Jake: "Do we think blue? Like blue is handy, and especially in a fight."

Teej: "Mmhmm."

Jake: "But white is just ... I mean, that's a heal. Like if shit really went bad, I'd rather be able to heal us up than take some extra actions."

Teej: "Yeah. I think getting rid of the Dexterity gem is probably the best idea."

Jake: OK. So yeah, I'll swap out the blue for the black.

Rev: And what's the color progression now?

Jake: Black, white, black.

Rev: Yeah. So it takes two or three minutes, and you take back those 2 points of permanent damage, and she gets it in place.

Jake: All right. Well once that's done, I'll take us back to Haven.

Rev: And the three of you appear back in Haven. And it's been maybe fifteen minutes, and the scene is mostly the same. Landara is sitting on the table and Grandpa Tinchler has scribbled out three pages of notes, and they both turn and look at you as you appear.

Jake: "Pirates are stopped. Knottermore is safe. Nash has gotten away with it -- whatever it is."

Teej: Now we just got to figure out how to get you back, Grandpa."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: This book has lots of phenomenal knowledge in it. But the thing that I have discovered ... He knew. Estin -- he knew he was going mad, and he didn't stop. He didn't stop because he was driven. You can see it all throughout the pages of this book. He was driven by the obsession of proving he was better, smarter than Bennari. And he didn't stop even, though he saw it coming. But I ... I noticed something here. In this first section, after he goes to another place for the very first time, it starts. There's a fracture in his writings. You can see right here.

Rev: And he points down at the book, and you can see the handwriting changes a little bit, and the word usage changes. Like if one of us was trying to pretend to be the other person and write a letter, it would just be off, because we don't have the exact same vocabularies. And you can see that, when he points it out.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: This didn't happen to me. All of the issue that I'm having, it's not from being here. It is from the magics that I have messed with to try to get out of here. The thing that he did wrong is he didn't stay. I left home and I came here, and physically and mentally, I was fine. Yes, it's a little unclear now as I mess with the magics, but that's because I've been trying to see back into my world and I've been dealing with magics that forward time and rewind time and pause it, and it has put me out of sorts. I wasn't used to the thought of existing for so long. But Estin, he would go and

he would come back. I've told you what would happen to me if I went back. There's a cost, and he just kept doing it over and over and over again. I think it's like getting a fish used to a new aquarium. I can't go home, at least not from here, because it's not similar enough. But I can go somewhere else. And my body and my mind, I think, will adapt to it. Until maybe I can find a place that is similar enough to home to make that the next place I go.

Tass: "OK. That's a lot. That's a plan, that -- god. I mean, now that you've said it, it sort of makes sense. Which is bad news for us. If we have to keep jumping through portals to hunt down NASCH."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: That's the thing. Don't fix it.

Rev: And he points at you, T.J.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Don't fix your machine. Because just your mind, it's the essence of you and it's protected by the shell of the thing from that world. If you turn it into you going through, you will suffer the same fate as Estin. But I think if you keep doing it the way you're doing it, you'll be safe.

Teej: "So what you're saying is that even though me and Rev kind of messed up the machine, we actually saved ourselves by just sending our souls/minds through?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: You might have perfected it when you thought it was done incorrectly.

Teej: "That's awesome. But Grandpa, I mean, we got to get you back somehow, too."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. I think my path is forward. I don't think I can go back. And I just have to hope that ... I have to hope it's like a big circle -- that somehow I can find a way to come back around.

Jake: "I mean, we know of a world that is basically adjacent to our homeworld. So I wonder if there's a way to, like, you know, knowing that and extrapolating from that, be able to plot a course, you know? Like if we can find one that is adjacent to this one, would that be enough? That we know the degrees of separation, and then we can figure out how many you've got a hit to travel safely."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: To this other world, what was it called?

Jake: "Elnore."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: What was time like there for you?

Tass: "It was pretty much opposite of how it works here. Although, point of interest: I don't know if this helps, but it was only some of the time that it moved faster. Like at night, it was pretty much opposite of the way it works here. But during the day, it froze. Like, time didn't pass at all."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: For your home?

Tass: "Right."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Interesting. Is there anything unusual about this world?

Tass: "It was very magical. Magic was enhanced quite a bit."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Oh, interesting. That would make sense. I obviously have only looked through here a little bit, but I haven't found technology that successfully effects time. Only magic.

Tass: "OK. So the main problem here, if we need to sort of pressurize you to the correct time and go through enough places. The problem is, you just don't know if you're going to be able to make a portal to the next one in any given new spot. Is that safe to say?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes, it all depends on the world and what its capabilities are. Estin has kept very detailed notes about the worlds that he's gone to, so I can tell what might be a similar time. I could probably find one that's fractionally different from here, closer to home, but I don't know how big of a step I can take. This is all human testing.

Tass: "Right. And are there enough in this book that you know of for sure that even if you can figure out a portal, that you know what the next step is?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: That would take some time, to sit down with it and try to make a list.

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "Yeah. This thing is literally infinite. So somewhere in there, probably."

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "But boy, will it take a long time to go through."

Teej: "Maybe there's something in the book that'll, I don't know, just skip all over the whole acclimatizing to time, and just allow him to go back home? I mean, it's just a matter of sitting down and looking at the book." So I kind of want to grab the book and see if there is something.

Rev: Oh, so you're wanting to Spout Lore to see if maybe Estin discovered something. Like, that he knew the effects of time and at some point didn't care, if there's something in here to remove the need to reacclimate him to the proper time.

Teej: Right.

Rev: OK. Roll Spout Lore.

Tass: I'm going to fumble for another -- for other books, any lore books to give him. Because I have a few left.

Rev: All right. So then that'll give me a +2 with my modifier and the book that Tass has given me.

Rev: OK.

Teej: All right.

Jake: Twelve, twelve, twelve, twelve, twelve ...

Teej: Not a twelve. Eight.

Rev: That is not enough for the answer you seek.

Teej: Whoa, you just got all DnD on me for a second.

Rev: So the interesting fact that you find going through Bennari's book is that yes, there might be a way to do this. But because he did not care about the effect, there's a lot of blank spots in that equation. Like, he stopped trying to solve it.

Teej: [Sighs] That sucks. "It doesn't look like there's going to be a shortcut to this, guys. It looks like we're going to have to go the long way around. Like, Grandpa's going to have to travel to other worlds. And I think we're going to have to facilitate him along the way, every once in a while."

Jake: "OK. I mean, you're functionally immortal, right?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: At least here. I have no idea what the ramifications will be of getting into and adapting to a new world, but that's the theory.

Jake: "Yeah. I mean, I guess if we can get you started on this path, then, you know, whenever we have the means, we can try to help you along. Like, we'll know where you are going. And we've got a thing that can send versions of us to other worlds. So if you ended up in a very tight spot or very stuck or whatever, if it's at a time in our journey that we can get away -- you know, that it's even possible or feasible -- maybe we could go to the world he's in and provide some help. But that's a big if. Otherwise, you'll be kind of on your own here, I think, once you start this."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Do I wait at each world until you show up, so you know where I'm going next?

Jake: "That's a good point."

Teej: "What about the crystal?"

Jake: "The SOS crystal?"

Teej: "Yeah."

Jake: "It only worked from Earth to here. So it stands to reason that no matter where it goes, that might still be the case. Or at least until it got much more similar to Earth."

Teej: "What if I got back to Earth and was able to create something that could resonate to a different world?"

Jake: "I mean, that would kind of solve the problem. Then you'd have a thing that if you were somewhere and you were stuck, you could go -- hey, need this help in this place. And then we could try to find time to come help out."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Oh.

Jake: "It's not ..." [Chuckles] "Again, it's not great. It's not ideal. But it is more than nothing."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Is that something you could make?

Teej: "I think I could."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: I would happily accept it. Because I spent years and years tapping on this stupid thing and it clearly never got to anyone.

Teej: "Well then, we better fix that."

Jake: "You think it is a modification of these things? Or do you think it is a brand new thing?"

Tass: "Either way, we can't get him something new. So it's got to be based on connecting to his."

Jake: "Unless it can fit in the capsule. We got this crystal through. So clearly something this size can effectively do this job. So if we made a new one or fixed his and send it back through to here while he's still here, then he'd have it."

Teej: "I could probably make something new for him. For all of us, really."

Jake: "OK. I mean, yeah. Otherwise we'd have to take his crystal back through with us. And that might be a little ... An annoying process, considering we barely got the one through in the capsule."

Teej: "Right."

Jake: "So we go out and we take our crystal and we can get messages back here, while you make a new thing? And then just that new one goes in the capsule and comes back through?"

Tass: "Except you can't leave until he's gone."

Jake: "Yes, of course. By 'we' I mean you guys, and I stay here and kick it with Grandpa until everything's fixed."

Teej: "By the time we come back, Knottermore better be a party town."

Jake: [Laughs] "Oh, you know me. Bringing the party everywhere I go."

Teej: "All right. Well then, why don't me and Tass go back, see what's going on with Rev, and I'll make a new device or crystal or something that we can use to communicate through dimensions."

Jake: "That's fine. Oh, hmm. Here's a fear: is Death going to close the door on you guys once you aren't here anymore? And if he does, could the capsule still get back, because it's not like an unnatural being?"

Tass: "I don't know why not. I mean, it came through physically, so I don't know why ..."

Jake: "Well Grandpa came through physically."

Tass: "Yeah, I just -- I'm just saying it's not like it's a soul that's coming through, if we just launch it."

Jake: "Yeah. Like he didn't have a problem with the gems. He specifically was like, there are five beings here that I don't want here -- get rid of them."

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "And he didn't call, like, and also the items with them."

Tass: "Right."

Jake: "So I have a feeling that once you guys go through, you might not be coming back."

Tass: "Right."

Jake: "But the capsule still could. And then I can deliver it to Grandpa, see him on his way, and then I can come home."

Teej: "That is a interesting theory. Because if we can't get back, then that sucks. But throwing the capsule through should be no problem."

Jake: "Yeah. And I mean, there's no way to know this except to do it. Just like with all of this."

Teej: "Human testing."

Tass: "All right. Let's get this lined up. Let's make sure that he's ready to go, that he can go through the portal that he wants. We'll make sure that that is ready and good. T.J. and I go through. He'll take care of it, even if it takes him a couple of hours. That might be a few days for you. And then you come right back as fast as you can."

Jake: "I am OK with this."

Teej: "All right, let's do it then."

Jake: "OK." So I guess I will teleport the three of us back to Knottermore, so that they can go through the portal.

Rev: All right. So you take them back. There's no need to roll for this. You're not under any pressure. You appear in front of Baba Yaga's door.

Jake: Knock, knock, knock, knock, knock.

Rev: BABA YAGA: Come in.

Jake: "Hi Yaga."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh, welcome back. Are you headed home?

Jake: "Well, these two are for the moment. Is it cool with you if I, like, pop back in here every day for a while? Because they're going to have to send a package back through. And I don't want to, like, crash on your couch, you know. I've got -- we've got our own place. I don't need to intrude on you like that. But to come back and check and see if the package has come through yet?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh, sure. You're going to be like a set time. Three o'clock is the mail check, or ...?

Jake: "Does it really matter? Like it's going to be between hours for you guys? That doesn't really matter. I can come back at any time, any day, and it'll be a difference of like ten minutes to you."

Rev: She's just wondering, for the sake of her schedule, when to expect you.

Teej: She is a busy politician.

Jake: "Oh. You know, hey, whatever works best for you, Yaga. Like noon -- do you want to do lunches?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: I do.

Jake: "OK. I'll come back and we'll do like lunches until my package arrives and it's time for me to go."

Rev: BABA YAGA: All right.

Tass: "What are you going to eat?"

Jake: "Whatever Trog makes."

Tass: "Oh, good call."

Jake: "This will be a good opportunity for Trog to flex his cooking muscles." OK. God, I hope that this all holds water.

Teej: "All right. We'll see you in a bit. Tass, you ready?"

Tass: "Yeah, I think so. I think we should send through the paper first, right?"

Teej: "I think that would be actually really good. Because if we tried to do it after we came back, we'd only be saving ourselves like maybe two days or so."

Tass: "Right now, about nine hours has passed, something like that, on our side. So if I cast this through, we should be waking up right where we fell."

Teej: "Right. So we should scare Rev immediately."

Tass: "Oh!"

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: "Yeah. All right. Jake, we're going to see you soon. Just lay low. If something troublesome seems like it's going to pop off, just get out. Be safe."

Jake: "Mmhmm. Mmhmm."

Tass: [sighs] Oh, god.

Jake: "It's all going to go fine."

Tass: "Love you, buddy."

Jake: "Love you guys, too."

Tass: "Thanks for everything, Yaga."

Rev: BABA YAGA: You're more than welcome. Good luck in your travels.

Tass: "Everything you say sounds so ominous. Do you know that about yourself?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh ...

Tass: "There it is! Yep." [Laughs].

Rev: BABA YAGA: Perhaps I do.

Tass: [Sighs]

Teej: "All right, let's go."

Tass: All right. I'm going to cast the paper through.

Rev: You throw this piece of paper through. And it's strange, because it's a piece of paper -- like, it shouldn't throw. But you throw it in the direction of the portal, and it seems like it is sucked into it. And as it goes, the writing on it glows and the whole portal washes with a gold energy. And then it's gone.

Tass: All right. Off we go.

Teej: "Three, two, one." Jump through.

Tass: And I'll follow.

Rev: So you both jump through and there's, again, that sense of vertigo. And then you are standing right in front of the portal, and you hear a thump on the ground as Jake, beside you, collapses to the ground.

Jake: [Laughs]

Teej: "Oh, my gosh!"

Rev: And you hear Rev, he's like ...

Rev: REV: [Sighs] Damn it. I wasn't sure who to grab first.

Rev: And he's got his arms around you, Tass.

Tass: "I'm here. We're still here."

Rev: REV: Why didn't you go through? Here, let me give you a push ...

Tass: "No, no, no!"

All: [Laugh]

Tass: "Stop. Stop it. No, it's OK. Long story." And I am kind of trying to get out of his grasp and look around for the piece of paper.

Rev: It is fluttering to the ground, just directly in front of you.

Tass: Yeah, I'm going to grab it out of the air.

Rev: Yeah, no problem.

Jake: It catches a breeze and goes back through the portal.

SFX: No! No!

Rev: Catches a breeze and goes up through a sewer grate and out in the world.

Teej: I've got all those fans going on in my secret hideout

Tass: Oh, god ... "No, we're OK. We went through. It worked. Jake is still through, but we'll have him back soon. T.J., you good? You cool?"

Teej: [Werewolf T.J. voice] "Yeah I'm great, as far as I know."

Tass: "Oh, I missed that voice. Oh, that wolfy, wolfy voice."

Teej: "Yeah."

Tass: "You know what's super nice? Is being this height. I missed this, too."

Teej: "Oh god, right?"

Tass: "Oh my gosh."

Teej: "I can finally reach the top shelf."

Tass: "OK. Get to work, man. The sooner the better for him."

Teej: "Right." And I'm going to go straight to my workshop and see if I can't build these interdimensional communication devices.

Rev: All right. T.J., roll Weird Science.

Teej: OK. Rolling Weird Science. That is a twelve.

Rev: All right. What's your one requirement?

Jake: And you have advanced Weird Science now.

Teej: Yes. Which means that on a twelve or more, you gain a +1 ongoing when operating the device.

Jake: Nice.

Teej: So I'm thinking about this. Of the things that we have here, there's two that stick out to me. It either needs a rare and/or weird material, or it will take a long time to get it working. I kind of want to take a long time to get it working, only because I don't want to

have to go after some rare or weird material. And I want it to work, so none of the other ones.

Rev: So describe to me what you're making.

Teej: To get this thing to fit into the egg ... Like, I have in mind like one of those little fidget cube toys? Except instead of having, like, all sorts of little buttons and switches and pulleys and ...

All: [Laugh]

Rev: Pulleys?!

Jake: Bop it!

Teej: Bop it, yeah.

Jake: Flick it!

Teej: It's basically, yeah.

Rev: A tiny, tiny Bop It.

Teej: Except instead, one side is just like flat and blank -- kind of like an iWatch. All the other sides are letters and numbers, just like a keyboard. Except it's all over that little thing. And so it just sends texts between the dimensions.

Rev: OK. What powers it?

Teej: I think that what it does is it siphons energy off of interdimensional travel. As it's pushed through whatever portal or gate or whatever, like it is able to suck some of that energy in and it powers it. For a very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very long time.

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: Yeah, that all jives.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Yeah. Makes sense to me.

Teej: Right, scientists out there?

Rev: And it's going to take you ... I think it's going to take you about two days to make. Because it's very small. There's a lot of compact pieces. You also have to find a way to test the oh, is it drawing energy off as it passes through an energy field? So I imagine that you have set up like a super strong magnet and you're moving it in front of it, to see that it's charging. And you've got to get them to communicate even through barriers. At one point you go outside of the lair here and try to send a message, because you know that it's magically protected. So you test it against the barriers that you're aware of, but you do get it working.

Tass: I think at some point in this process, as he is clearly taking longer than what I had guessed it would take, I think I would just try to go back through the portal.

Rev: All right. So you step up to the portal and you go to step through. Are you telling anybody that you're leaving?

Tass: I don't think so. I don't think so, because my intent is literally just to walk in and say, "Hey Yaga, whenever Jake comes back, let him know this is going to be a while." You know, I think in my head I'm just jumping in, jumping right back, so that so little time would pass on this side that it wouldn't matter.

Rev: All right. So you step into the portal and you get that feeling again of vertigo, but it's cut short. Like, you hear the sound that you have heard a couple of times now as you go to teleport, and then it's silence. And you see something dark step in front of you, and you hit it, and you stumble backwards into your body and onto the ground.

Tass: "Oh, man. Shit." I think I go over and I start scribbling a note. And I think I get the capsule out, but I'm afraid of losing this capsule. I'm afraid that if I launch this through that God only knows what's going on on that side and we don't get it back, and then we can't send him the item when it's done. [Sighs] So I think I wrinkle up the paper, because I don't want to chance it.

Rev: So Jake, is there anything you want to do here? You're not quite sure how long this is going to take. You said you're going to check in with her every day. Do you have anything you want to accomplish while you're here?

Jake: I mean, the first thing I want to do is find somewhere to inter Kolvar's body. I want to take him home. Or, I don't know, somewhere that's not Haven.

Rev: Yeah. I think that with very little research, you can find where he was from. And Landara offers to go with you, if you'd like some company.

Jake: Yeah, I think that would be nice.

Rev: It's about a three day travel to where Kolvar is from. So I imagine you traveling during the day, teleporting back to Haven at night, having dinner with Trog and Grandpa, and then starting back where you stopped the previous day and traveling again. So it takes more than three days, because you're not traveling at night.

But on the third day, you're walking along and you're talking with Landara, and she stops. And she looks around and she just holds up a finger, and she creeps over into the brush. And then 15, 20 seconds pass, and then from a tree next to the brush that she had climbed into, a body falls out and hits the ground, and she hops down next to it.

Jake: "What? What?!"

Rev: LANDARA: Sorry. I realized somebody was following us. We'd been chatty, and I hadn't caught the sound until just now.

Jake: I want to see who it is.

Rev: It is a human. They've got a dark, scruffy beard and long black hair, and they are dressed in leathers, and they've got a very nasty looking blade on their back.

Jake: "Who is it?"

Rev: LANDARA: Well, I don't recognize him, but I do recognize that.

Rev: And she indicates to his leg, where you see a scroll tube.

Jake: OK. Yeah, I would like to open that up and see what's in there.

Rev: Yeah. You open it up, and inside you find a writ.

Jake: [Sighs]

Rev: Three of them, actually. And it is one for the Soul Trap Chef ...

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: One for Honin of the Iron Striders, and Walfus of the Towering Mountains.

Jake: "Well, that makes sense."

Rev: LANDARA: Yeah. I guess we'll have to be careful. I wonder if this is The Eternal Colony themselves. I mean, they're really the only ones who saw you guys that day, right?

Jake: "Yeah. I mean ..."

Rev: LANDARA: Oh. Or Bennari.

Jake: "Or Bennari." Can I take his cool sword?

Rev: Yeah, absolutely.

Jake: Neat.

Rev: So you and Landara travel the rest of that day, and you find the small village that Kolvar was from. You're on the outskirts of it as the sun begins to set, and there's two or three dozen houses, a couple of very small shops, there's smoke rising from a lot of the chimneys. You can tell that people are inside having dinner, kind of wrapping up their day.

Jake: What else is around here?

Rev: There's not a lot. There's a small river a few hundred yards away, and there's also a hill with a tree on it just before you get into the town.

Jake: I think the tree at the top of the hill seems like a nice spot.

Rev: Yeah. So the two of you head up that way, and the view is actually surprisingly beautiful. You look to the north and you can see mountains -- very tall, with snow at their peak. To the east is the small town with the river. But just down to the south, you can see that the river connects to a much larger river. And there are trade boats and fishing vessels headed up and down the length of it. And then to the west, down the path that brought you in, you can see where it connects to a crossroads of two main thoroughfares. And I think in this moment, that you get a brief flash of a memory you had

at one point when you were going through Kolvar's Rolodex. And it's of him standing here in this spot under this tree, and he's looking out at all the different paths of travel and feeling them all tug at him. And his realization in that moment that his home would never be this small town or even one of the larger cities, but that he would live his life on the open road.

Jake: I'll look to Landara and nod. "I think this is the spot. I think this is where we should bury him."

Rev: LANDARA: All right.

Rev: And Landara sets out to help you dig.

Jake: Are there any, like, sizable stones around? Like pillow sized stones?

Rev: Yeah, there's some like at the bottom of this hill.

Jake: I want to go get one of them and carry it or roll it or whatever up the hill, so that I can make a headstone and engrave some words on it with an epitaph: "Here lies Kolvar. He died saving worlds beyond his own." But I think I would do it in American English. Like, what will be an imperceptible tongue to anyone in this world. But it's there. He is -- it is dedicated, you know? And then I probably do my best, not as good of a job, to sing some kind of song for him.

Rev: And after this is all done, we see you and Landara walking down this hill that's got a big tree at the top and this stone with writing that will be unintelligible to most.

Rev: LANDARA: Well, I was going to take off, but I feel like I should wait around until you're gone. So I know, like, if the job is done.

Jake: "Yeah. Also, you want to be able to get the body."

Rev: LANDARA: [Laughs] Yeah, I'll be honest, I had forgotten about that.

Jake: "I'm true to my word."

Rev: LANDARA: Yeah.

Jake: "Can't let you forget."

Rev: LANDARA: I'm not sure, uh ... Well, I'm not sure I want it. Like I like the idea of having it before, when you were just some stranger asking for a favor. I don't know how I feel about puppeting around the body of a friend.

Jake: I'll give her a big hug, and then kind of hold her at arm's length and look at her and say, "I agree, it would be weird. But we had an agreement, so I won't fault you if you change your mind back. But I would absolutely love it if you stayed with me until the end."

Rev: LANDARA: What are you going to do with the Haven?

Jake: "I don't know. You know, I'm kind of the battery. Or like, the conduit that lets it work. So I don't know if it'll be accessible again once I'm gone."

Rev: LANDARA: Yeah. I know Trog doesn't really have a way to get in or out, either. I wonder if we could find a way to set your body up inside of the room, and maybe make another one of those bracers for Trog, at least. So he's got a place to go. And then we know your body would be safe. Ain't nobody going to find it and take it.

Jake: "Yeah, I like that thought."

Rev: And I think that with you going and checking in with Yaga and having lunch, that we kind of roll through these next what end up being almost two months. And it's you and Landara and sometimes Trog traveling, trying to find the right people to help do exactly what it is you've talked about. And you are able to, after about thirty days, find someone with the knowhow to recreate those bracers and inlay the black gems in them, and make it so that when you leave the Soul Trap, it can be left in the room of teleportation and it will still power these two gems.

I think that while you are out traveling the world, the other thing that you find is news. A lot of things happened while you were all here. Things that I don't know that you ever thought you'd see the fallout from. The first piece of news you find is of Leif. You're in a small port town and you hear them talking about him, that he was recently here. And I imagine you eavesdrop to find out what's going on.

Jake: I sure do.

Rev: And the story that they tell is that he sailed into port on what looked like a giant tri-corner hat.

Jake: Yeah, all right.

Rev: I think that in that conversation, Landara tells you of hearing about a magic item, that it's a hat. And that if you throw it into the water, it grows bigger and has a sail -- that the feather turns into a sail, and it can be a one-man boat. And in that description of it, it is exactly what you remember him wearing.

Jake: Good for him.

Rev: And the second piece of news that you hear is news from the Dead Isle. That there was an attack made against Bennari and his court, and that in the attack, these three intruders were killed. And it has images, and it gives names of the people who were killed trying to attack Bennari. And you recognize one of them. It's Nyx. And you spend so long looking at that image, you actually realize you recognize the second one. It gives his name as Danthor -- dark skin, shining armor. And he was the paladin that you met, the same night you met Nyx. And it also gives the name of a dwarf named Aurin. And in the article, it talks about how it's strange that he in particular would make a move against Bennari and the Dead Isles, because he had just won the leadership of the Iron Striders.

Jake: Oh, boy. Man, whatever we fucked up here was very specific. I do not think we understood ...

Tass: Yeah, clearly we did not.

Jake: I wonder if the Paladin was somehow linked to Walfus. Because like Nyx was linked to Kolvar, and the Iron Striders were linked Honin. I wonder if we just never discovered how the paladin was linked to Walfus, and like we specifically had something to do with this.

Tass: Maybe. I mean, he did see me. I don't know.

Jake: And we -- and we may never.

Tass: [Laughs] Yeah.

Rev: And more time passes. A lot of it, actually. Seven or eight weeks. And who knows, maybe we'll come back at some point and see some of the adventures that Jake and Landara and Trog have had during this time. But for now, we find ourself at Yaga's house on the 57th day. And as you arrive, Jake, she holds up the capsule.

Rev: BABA YAGA: This came for you this morning.

Jake: "Oh, wow. All right. Finally. Not that I haven't enjoyed our time together, but ..."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Yes.

Jake: "I can tell you're getting tired of having me here for lunch. I have ..."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Well, it's unsettling to have lunch with someone that never eats anything, and just crams stuff into a hole.

Jake: "Yeah. Yeah."

Teej: You should see his boots, all filled with food.

Jake: I just pat my big iron, like, tummy. And I'm like, a lot of meat in here.

Rev: BABA YAGA: I can hear it, like, hitting the bottom when you cram it in. It's very strange. It's like if you dropped loose deli meat into a metal trash can. Just that flop sound, constantly.

Tass: Loose deli meat!

Rev: [Laughs]

Tass: Is the worst fucking thing.

Jake: And the best band name.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "Well, I guess I'm going to take this back first thing, and then I'll be out of here."

Rev: BABA YAGA: All right. I'll see you in a little bit.

Jake: I will teleport back to Haven.

Rev: All right. You arrive. And Grandpa Tincher has been ready to go for about ten days. He has got Estin's book packed away, he has got a bunch of supplies from here packed away. He has even taken some of the empty crystals, in the off chance that they'll help

him. And he has been relatively OK the entire time they have been gone, because he's had a task to do. You have not seen a lot of the slipping in and out that occurred when you first met him. And I think at some point, even over dinner, he talks about that and says that something about this being in a void space might be shielding him a little bit from it. But he is sitting at the dinner table and he's just reading a book.

Jake: "I got it. I got the thing."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Oh, so it's time to go.

Jake: "I think it is."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: All right. Well, let's go.

Jake: "All right." I will head over to the ... I assume this works off the teleportation room, still.

Rev: It does.

Jake: Yeah. Head over there and I'll hand him the thing. And I'll kind of look at it first and be like, "All right. It seems like ... So this is like a screen and those are I mean, it seems like a keyboard. Are you familiar?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Like a typewriter.

Jake: "Yeah, it's basically a typewriter. And then when they send a message, it seems it'll show up on this side. I'm going to test it." I just type "Hey," and send.

Rev: And a few minutes later, you get back a message that says,

Tass: "New device, who dis?"

Jake: "Yeah. So you type what you want to say and it'll go. And then when they type what they want to say, you'll see it on this side."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Oh, yeah. Sorry, I was -- that was a joke. I don't know if you remember, I invented a supercomputer and I didn't ... Like, I know computers. Not typewriters. I was trying to be funny. It's been a long time since I've had Earth humor.

Jake: "Yeah. Yeah."

All: [Laugh]

Rev: Just an awkward silence as you both stand there.

Jake: And then I shove him through the portal. [Laughs]

Rev: He shakes your hand.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Good luck.

Jake: "You too. Let us know if you need anything."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Maybe I'll see you on the other side.

Jake: "I hope so."

Rev: And he walks towards the center of the room, and it starts to glow, and he vanishes.

And we find ourselves in Yaga's house. Jake, Trog, and Landara are standing in the living room.

Rev: TROG: So once you go through, this body's going to go limp. And then we're supposed to take the two black things out of your head and put them in these?

Rev: And Trog holds up his wrist and he's wearing one, and Landara has the other.

Jake: "Correct. Well, it shouldn't go limp because it's like all metal and stuff. So probably quite the opposite."

Rev: TROG: Oh, right. Oh, it'll just be standing there, like, remember when we found it?

Jake: "Yes, exactly like that."

Rev: TROG: Oh, good times.

Jake: "Yeah. Man, it was good times."

Rev: TROG: Yeah.

Jake: "I'm going to miss you."

Rev: TROG: We'll miss you, too.

Jake: I want to go, "Trog, I've got one more gift for you before I go."

Rev: TROG: Yeah?

Jake: "And it's a -- it's an idea."

Rev: TROG: Oh.

Jake: "And I want you to bring it to fruition."

Rev: TROG: Uh-huh.

Jake: "It's called the double down sandwich."

Rev: TROG: Yeah, all right. Go on.

Jake: "The bread."

Rev: TROG: Uh-huh.

Jake: "Ready?"

Rev: TROG: Yeah.

Jake: "Is chicken. The bread is chicken! Whole sandwich is meats all the way down."

Rev: TROG: Oh. So like the chicken's not bread in return.

Jake: "The chicken is breaded."

Rev: TROG: Uh-huh.

Jake: "And in between the chicken? Whatever you want."

Rev: TROG: It's like an all-meat lasagna that you hold in your hand.

Jake: "Yes, it is. And I -- well, one caveat. It will shorten your life noticeably, but I think it's worth it."

Rev: TROG: Yeah, all right. I'll be rich.

Jake: "Yes. You bring that to the world. You make your fortune, Trog."

Rev: TROG: Am I going to see you again?

Jake: "I don't think so."

Rev: TROG: Yeah.

Jake: "I think once I go through, I'm locked out."

Rev: TROG: That's what I was afraid of.

Jake: "But if you ever find a way to go through yourself, catch me on the other side."

Rev: You can see he's -- he's very sad. Um, and Landara goes over to him and puts a hand on his shoulder and kind of rubs his shoulder.

Rev: LANDARA: Good luck saving the universe...es? Worlds?

Jake: "Yeah. Like multiverse, or something?"

Rev: LANDARA: Yeah.

Jake: "Omniverse, even."

Rev: LANDARA: Oh.

Jake: "Has a nice ring to it."

Rev: LANDARA: Yeah. Interesting.

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: This episode of The Critshow brought to you by The Critshow.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "Thank you. We'll, uh ... Oh boy. We'll need it. Good luck here. What are you going to do next?"

Rev: LANDARA: You know, I hadn't really thought about it. I was so focused on what it was I needed to do for Death, and how to not see him again. I hadn't really given a lot of thought to what I should be doing instead of spending my time trying to make sure I don't see him again.

Jake: "Well ... You know, I don't want to, like, push you into doing something you don't want to do. But, you know some things about some people in this world that no one else in the world knows. You have the opportunity to go white hat here. You could institute some real change. There's one particular guy in the Dead Isles who's doing some war crimes. You might be in a position to stop him from doing any more evil here, the way that we couldn't."

Rev: LANDARA: Huh. Yeah, and he's already seen my face, so ... Might not be a bad idea to see if the next assassination attempt doesn't succeed.

Jake: "Yeah. Holy shit. You're going to be, like, full on Batman. Sorry, let me explain an intellectual property to you from our world." [Laughs] "Batman is a vigilante who has his own hidden cave."

Rev: LANDARA: Oh.

Jake: "It's very ... Oh, this could be cool. But hey, follow your dreams."

Rev: LANDARA: I think I will.

Rev: And they escort you over to the stairs and down into the cellar.

Rev: BABA YAGA: With the knowledge of your not returning, what should we do with the bodies of Honin and Walfus? I was keeping them preserved here in case they showed up, but ...

Jake: "I mean, I laid Kolvar to rest where he was from. Could anyone do the same thing for them after I'm gone?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh yes. I imagine that we could send out a few letters. Should we contact the Iron Striders?

Jake: "Hmm. He is wanted. Yeah."

Rev: BABA YAGA: But he is also dead now. I don't know if they take him back in death and bury him with his family, or ...

Jake: "Can we ship their bodies back home?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh yes. There are enough ships headed out. Getting one to the Misty Mountains and to Gulgeroth would be easy enough.

Jake: "OK. That's probably the best bet."

Rev: BABA YAGA: All right.

Jake: "Bye, Yaga. Thanks for the many lunches."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh, you're welcome.

Jake: "I'll see other you."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Yes.

Jake: "Probably other yous, huh?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh, most certainly. I'm sorry for what some of them will try to do to you.

Jake: "Yeesh."

All: [Laugh]

Rev: BABA YAGA: I wanted it to be heartfelt, to show I didn't feel the same ... I can see how that would be horrifying.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "I hadn't heard it until -- until that one ..."

Rev: BABA YAGA: You know, I heard what I said and I looked at it through someone else's lens of perspective ...

Jake: Yeah. I think though the last thought I have is like, oh man, I've got an empty capsule. I want to bring something back. What do I have that'll fit in the capsule? Can I bring the Nightsider's Key? Will it fit in the capsule?

Rev: I think it will.

Jake: I have no concept of whether it'll work. But one, I'm pretty sure it's the only thing I've got that'll fit in the capsule. Or I can put, like, as many gold coins as will fit in the capsule and hock them for fourteen hundred dollars an ounce when I get back.

Teej: You should see if, the Immoveable Rod, you can cut it down to like just a small little ...

Jake: The Immovable Button?

Teej: A little -- the Immovable Nub.

Jake: [Laughs] I'm going to put the key in the capsule. And if it works, that's pretty cool. And if it doesn't, I've got a very unique souvenir.

Rev: Yeah, you put it in the capsule and it fits.

Jake: "I hope I see you guys again someday, somehow, under happy circumstances." And I will step through.

Rev: Jake, you step through the portal, and you get that sense of vertigo. And the noise of dimensional travel fills your head, and then it's silent. And you're in a very familiar space. There is a big metal and wood gate, and a figure floating in front of it.

Rev: DEATH: Welcome back.

Jake: "Is this the exit interview? Did I do good?"

Rev: DEATH: You did good. You spoke to me, on first arrival, of the gods in your world dying. This seems unnatural to me.

Jake: "It was unnatural. They were slain by another ... Basically, an older god. Honestly, he's kind of the death of our world. He's like you. But a lot more malicious, I think.

Rev: DEATH: Would you say that his presence has created imbalance?

Jake: "Well, yeah. I mean, he kind of took out his only opposition. There's only one side of the scale now, and it's him."

Rev: DEATH: You restored balance for me and my world. For that, I have a gift for you that perhaps will help you restore balance in your own.

Rev: And the figure moves its hand back to the gate. And you see a grimy hand come out from underneath the cloak and touch the gate. And then you hear the sound of a fingernail scratching down the wood, and it catches. And the figure pulls out what seems like a five inch nail, and it places it in your hand.

Rev: DEATH: This will end your imbalance when placed through the heart of that which should not be.

Rev: And you get that sense of vertigo. And then you are back in the laboratory, laying on a gurney. And in one hand is the capsule, and then the other hand is a thick black metal nail that feels cold to the touch.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

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