

# The Soul Crystal Crisis (S2, E46)

**SFX:**

INTRO MUSIC

**Rev:** Hey, everybody. Rev here. Just a couple quick things before we get into this week's episode:

We are getting ready to celebrate our two year anniversary, and part of our celebration is our cosplay contest. The submission deadline for that, again, is May the 24th, which is a Sunday. I realize that a lot of people are still inside, not going out, so closet cause plays are totally welcome. You know, before I said, let me see your Damiens and your Landaras. But also show me your Margarets and your Sheriff Jasons and your Jeffs and Eddies. So you can enter those at [thecritshowpodcast.com/anniversary](http://thecritshowpodcast.com/anniversary), and we will announce the winner on May 27th in the intro to that week's episode.

Also, the last two weeks, I had mentioned that there would be a interview with one of the new cast members after the episode. You already had a chance to hear a little bit from Kim and Megan. But unfortunately, due to some scheduling issues, Josh will not be joining our new show any longer. So there won't be an interview at the end of this episode. But we will be announcing the show that you'll get to hear Megan and Kim on very soon. So stay tuned for that in the next few weeks.

And with that, it's time to let the recap roll.

**SFX:**

RECAP MUSIC

**Rev:** The three of you are suddenly back in your bodies, right in the moment that you stepped through the portal. Rev looks up from the console.

**Rev:** "REV": Are you guys gonna go?

**Tass:** [Chuckles] "Well, that will always be weird. We're back, bub."

**Rev:** "REV": How'd it go?

**Tass:** "Well we're back, so ..."

**Rev:** "REV": That's fair.

**Tass:** "Yeah."

**Rev:** "REV": Awesome.

**Teej:** "Well, we did as you asked."

**Rev:** "REV": Excellent. Excellent. All right. Let me get the gem and get the spell ready, and I'll go home. And you'll have your Rev back. Great.

**Rev:** And he turns and starts rummaging through the desk, and he pulls out the gem. Tass, as you see this gem, one of your visions washes over you. In this vision, you see yourself holding this gem, and you can tell that it is full and charged. And you see yourself throwing it through the portal. And on the other side, things do get a little better, a little brighter. Something is brought back. And then you're brought back to that same moment of holding the gem, and you turn and you walk away from the portal and you place it down into a summoning circle. And what is summoned with the power of this gem is a gaunt, hollow faced man, covered in scars. And in this moment, you realize that because his soul is old and powerful and rare, due to it coming from another world, it is the bait you would need to lure in Koschei the Deathless.

**SFX:** RECAP MUSIC FADES

**Rev:** Here you all are in TJ's subterranean lair. The Rev that you know is deep down Nash is preparing the ritual to transfer his soul into this gem, for you all to cast back through the portal, into his home world. Tass, you have just had this vision that lets you know that with this gem, with his soul inside of it, you could use that as a lure to bring Koschei the Deathless. What are you doing?

**Tass:** Plotting. [Laughs]

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** Like, I think I'm a little stunned at that. Because like, we need to do that. We need to do that. But we have talked so much at this point about what we should be doing and why, and how we approach things. And going back on our word with this, it's just not OK. But like, we have to. I don't -- I think I am just, in my head, doing exactly this. Like, we have to. I can't. We have to. I can't. So I think I'm ... I just have to kind of leave the room for a minute and go sit down, while he's getting all this taken care of.

**Rev:** So the two of you see Tess staring at Rev for a second, and then he turns and walks out.

**Jake:** "Do you think he's OK?"

**Teej:** "I hope so. I mean, coming back and forth between different dimensions, it might be a little hard on somebody. But we got a win, in this last one."

**Jake:** "Do you want to go talk to him, and I'll keep an eye on what's going on out here?"

**Teej:** "Sure. Yeah." And I'm going to go ahead and join Tass.

**Rev:** Tass, where did you go? Into the room with all the horrors?

**Tass:** Sounds morbid, but I think there. I think, you know, for whatever reason, I'm more drawn to that. Like, drawn to our deeds and our failures, and the representation of that.

**Rev:** Yeah. So TJ, you come into this room, and Tass is sitting on top of the giant Ecto Trap that holds all the gremlins.

**Teej:** "Hey buddy, you OK?"

**Tass:** "Nope."

**Teej:** "What's up?"

**Tass:** "I had another vision."

**Teej:** "Oh yeah? Of what?"

**Tass:** "We're not gonna talk about it quite yet."

**Teej:** "Is it something bad that happens?"

**Tass:** "We're not gonna talk about it yet."

**Teej:** "OK? I mean, if it's something that involves me or Jake or whatever, we ..."

**Tass:** "Trust me, we're not gonna talk about it yet."

**Teej:** "Of course I trust you. You're my best friend."

**Tass:** "Love you, buddy."

**Teej:** [Dog whimpers]

**Jake:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** "I will smack the hair off your face, I swear to god."

**Teej:** "Eh, I'm just playing with you."

**Tass:** "Yeah, I just gotta -- I gotta sort this out."

**Teej:** And I'll walk away.

**Rev:** So Jake, out in the main room, Rev is setting up a couple of components around the circle that is built into the floor. And I think as soon as TJ left, he asked you to start telling him the story of what all happened.

**Jake:** "Oh. I mean, we got there and they were trying to kill me. But we all, you know, figured it out amongst ourselves and did some recon. And things were really, really bad in the city. Like, super duper overrun. And boy, just nothing went right there, the whole time we were there. Nothing. Everything that could go wrong went wrong."

**Rev:** "REV": That makes sense.

**Jake:** "Yeah. But we found some survivors and came up with several game plans -- in which one of them I was going to fly a jet, but that one didn't pan out. Still bummed about that. But we realized that we thought we could save everybody. And so instead of just obliterating all the Soul Bat people, we decided to operate on the assumption that we could cure them. So we were trying not to kill people, and all this stuff. And then I got in some hot water with, like, the vampire overlords. Had to tell some of them what was going on. And then they decided they were going to launch an attack on the Soul Bats, and kill all of them with a nuke."

**Rev:** And I think at this he turns around and he's giving you that look of like, are you fucking with me? Is this the actual story?

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** "This is completely true. I know. We intercepted a nuke that was on ... Do you remember Mosquito Dan?"

**Rev:** "REV": Yeah.

**Jake:** "Yeah. So they had a Mosquito Dan, and they had rigged him with a nuke vest. But we got him, and we didn't -- well, we didn't disarm it, but we buried it. And then we went in, guns blazing, downtown. And I managed to get the hammer back. And we all kicked some ass while TJ did some magic and ultimately tapped into the ley line to cast a spell that killed all the Soul Bats on the planet. It ran through the ley lines and poof, banished them all. And so all the people that were possessed by them ended up being OK. And now there's no, like, huge power vacuum. Things are getting back to normal. There are some of us over there, like, making sure things get back to normal and things go OK. They're actually trying to strike an agreement among the vampires and the humans to live in a little bit more harmony. It's ... For how bad the individual pieces went, the outcome was very, very good."

**Rev:** "REV": It sounds like that's a better world than the one before the Soul Bat happened.

**Jake:** "Yeah, I think it is."

**Rev:** "REV": That's amazing. Thank you.

**Jake:** "You're welcome."

**Rev:** He makes a couple more marks on the ground.

**Rev:** "REV": So I owe you something. I said I would give you any information I had on Nash, for you doing this. And it seems that you fixed my world in a way that I couldn't even imagine.

**Rev:** And he reaches in his pocket, and he pulls out a small piece of paper. And on it is a name and a number -- a four digit code: 8037, and the name is the Alkali Corporation.

**Rev:** "REV": I don't know everything that your Grigori knows, but it was impossible for him to communicate with us, to link minds that way across dimensions, without letting some things through. I don't know what the world is, but that's its dimensional number to get there. And whatever the Alkali Corporation is, it's one of the things he prizes the most.

**Jake:** "Interesting. Is it the corporation itself?"

**Rev:** "REV": I don't know. Whatever it is, there's a lot of emotion mixed up in it. That's the thing I could feel when I read this thought. There's love and patience, but also fear.

**Jake:** "Weird. Those are like three things I didn't expect a Grigori Nash to be able to feel."

**Rev:** He just nods.

**Jake:** "Nothing personal."

**Rev:** "REV": Yeah.

**Jake:** "All right. Well, thank you. Once we get you home, I'm sure we'll look into this."

**Rev:** "REV": I don't, um ... I'm gonna say this and it's gonna sound like I'm trying to make a bargain with you. I'm not. It's a legitimate offer. I don't have to go back yet. I could stay. The things I've been doing for you all for the last year? I don't have any idea how much of your Rev could do.

**Jake:** "I mean, can you stay, not as Rev?"

**Rev:** "REV": If so, I would have no idea how.

**Jake:** "Knowing now that he's trapped in there, it feels unfair to me to leave him in there any longer than he has to be. To rob him of any more days."

**Rev:** "REV": Yeah.

**Jake:** "But we can bring this up with the others. They might have a thought that I don't have."

**Rev:** "REV": All right.

**Rev:** And I think about that time, TJ comes out from the back room.

**Teej:** "What, of the others?"

**Jake:** "He offered to hang around for now, if we need him to hang around. And I said, you know, it seems unfair to Rev to keep him locked up in his own body if he doesn't have to be. But I said we'd run it by you two."

**Teej:** "Oh. No, no, no, no. He's got to go. That was the bargain, right? We save his world. He goes away. Rev comes back."

**Jake:** "Yeah. But he's not sure if actual Rev can do the things he can do, that we need to help us. Like, that's a fair point. I don't know the actual limits of actual Rev's magical ability. There are some things Nash might have done that we wouldn't have been able to get done, otherwise."

**Teej:** "Well, when you start talking logically, then ... Then, you know, that changes my mind a lot. But, man, I mean, he's our friend Rev. I mean, we got to get him back."

**Tass:** "I know. I'll be curious to see what Tass has to say, though. Is he coming back?"

**Teej:** "He was thinking about something. He had another vision, I guess."

**Jake:** "Oh. Did he tell you what?"

**Teej:** "No, he was just thinking about it, and I guess trying to figure it out."

**Jake:** "Hmm. I mean, I can't really pretend to know what that's like, so ..." I'll go fetch him, then.

**Rev:** OK.

**Jake:** Yeah. I'll go back there. "Hey, Tass."

**Tass:** "Yeah. Is it time?"

**Jake:** "Yeah. He, um ... He raised a point to me. He said he doesn't have to go back right now. That if we want him to hang around, because he thinks he can do stuff that our actual Rev can't do, he could hang around and help us still. And I said that seems unfair to actual Rev, but I'd talk to you guys."

**Tass:** I'm not sure I make it through that entire sentence before I shoulder past him out of that room, straight for Nash.

**Jake:** "Oh, OK."

**Tass:** "Hey, I was real pissed off. You get it. I know you get it. To find out who you are. But I don't know what I would have done different. I get it. And it took some time for me to get it. And so I have absolutely forgiven any perceived slight on my end, if that matters. And I want to even thank you for everything that you have done for us. Because you're right. Yeah, there's probably a lot of this we may not have been able to do. So thank you. But with all due respect, I want my fucking friend back, dude."



**Rev:** "REV": All right.

**Rev:** And he steps back into the circle. And he starts to chant a couple of words, and the energy builds up in his hands and he walks over towards the center and rests his hand on the gem, sitting at the middle of the circle. And he looks up and gives a nod.

**Rev:** "REV": Good luck.

**Rev:** And there's a burst of energy, and the body collapses to the floor and the gem begins to pulse.

**Jake:** I'm gonna go grab the body as quickly as possible and like get it on a gurney and stuff. Like, I don't know what condition he'll be in, but it seems smart to put him somewhere stable.

**Rev:** He's breathing right now. So yeah, you pick him up and move him to one of the medical beds.

**Tass:** I'm gonna pick up the crystal. "We can summon Koschei with this."

**Jake:** "With the soul crystal?"

**Tass:** "Yep."

**Teej:** "Wait, what?"

**Tass:** "It's unique in so many ways. It's exactly the kind of thing that could be used to draw in a god of death. It's a soul from another world trapped in a crystal."

**Jake:** "Do we have to actually, like, use it up? Or is it -- are you just saying it's a good bait?"

**Tass:** "I'm not sure. The way these things work, it seems very much like a choice has been laid out. And I don't -- I don't know for sure. It could be used as bait and then we keep our promise, but it just doesn't hit me that that's the case."

**Jake:** "I mean, that's very cool and interesting. We can't do it."

**Tass:** "I agree. But I wasn't going to make that decision without telling you."

**Jake:** "I mean, we'll find a different way to summon Koschei if we have to. Like other than me not having powers, I'm not sure that the world is really appreciably worse for the situation with Koschei and the gods right now. But I still want to rectify it."

**Tass:** "I agree."

**Jake:** "Can we ... What's the word I'm looking for? Can we spoof it?"

**Tass:** "Huh?"

**Jake:** "Like the ... Like, whatever's so unique about this that you think we could use it as bait or spend it or something. Can we fake that? Because we've got it, and we know what it is?"

**Tass:** I imagine like a five second pause as he has presented that, and then both Jake and I just turning our heads to look at TJ.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Teej:** "Yeah, absolutely."

**Jake:** "Do we need another soul?"

**Teej:** "I don't know yet."

**Jake:** "Not it."

**Teej:** "Usually these things kind of work themselves out as I working."

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** "Yeah. I mean, we can hold on to this for a little bit. I mean every minute we've got it is a minute that that other world is still like technically doomed."

**Tass:** "Yeah."

**Jake:** "So I don't want to keep it forever, but we could, like, look into that. And if we don't think we could do that, we could try to just use it as bait. You know? But like know that we can't actually give it up. I mean, it could be that since Koschei's been back, Rev being in this undetectable place, maybe it's undetectable even to him?"

**Tass:** "Yeah."

**Jake:** "And so he hasn't known he existed at any point. Like maybe if we took this out, it would immediately send up a flare or something."

**Tass:** "OK, so how do we make that flare?"

**Jake:** "Fuck if I know. I think that's on TJ to look at. Do your science magic."

**Teej:** "I can do that."

**Rev:** So you're gonna try to create a device that can mimic what of this gem?

**Teej:** I think whatever readings that I can observe or like create, based off of what I see off this crystal.

**Rev:** Oh, so like any kind of radiation or EMP or heat, or just everything that you can measure, you want to create something that can duplicate those.

**Teej:** Right.

**Rev:** All right. Roll Weird Science.

**Teej:** That's an eight.

**Rev:** All right. So what is your requirement?

**Teej:** I think it will require a huge amount of power or fuel.

**Rev:** I think mine is that it requires a rare or weird material. Because you are putting off so many types of energy, I think you need, like, a shield. Something that can contain this energy, so that it gets big enough to be read but doesn't kind of fry or hit surrounding areas.

**Teej:** OK, so the weird material is just the shield of some sort?

**Rev:** Yeah. That you've gotta ... You've got to be able to make the shield to hold it in. Both for the purposes of letting it build up, but also not letting it get into the surrounding people, places, things.

**Teej:** Gotcha. What do they make the containment unit in Ghostbusters out of?

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** You've got one of those, don't you?

**Teej:** I do. Filled with gremlins.

**Rev:** Filled with gremlins.

**Teej:** "So I'm gonna need some kind of shielding for this. Something that will allow some of the energy to get out, but not to basically blast the surrounding area with whatever is coming off of this crystal."

**Jake:** I gingerly hold up my shield.

**Teej:** "No. No, no. Not that."

**Tass:** "Like Star Trek shield?"

**Teej:** "Yeah. More like an energy, forcefield shield thing."

**Jake:** "Is that something you can make?" Are we just getting into like a loop now? Where then you'd have to make that, but then you need something to make the shield. So then you have to make that ...

**Rev:** Tries to make the shield, and his requirement is a gem that irradiates a certain kind of energy ...

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** And then you're stuck in a loop.

**Teej:** Yeah. "I think it's going to need to be some kind of energy shield. And I don't have anything here."

**Tass:** "I mean, well ... You've done it once, but ... Like, how strong? How big? Like, because we had something like that when we had to fight the thunder lizard."

**Teej:** "Yeah. But I don't think it has enough power. I mean, it needs ... It's going to need some energy."

**Tass:** "OK. So like what? Like, we try to recreate that, but tap into the damn city's power?"

**Teej:** "We kind of want it remote. Some place maybe that isn't near a city center. Just in case any of that energy gets out."

**Tass:** "Yeah."

**Jake:** "I keep thinking, like, the ... The mine, in the other world. Like, where we buried the nuke. We need to bury the Koschei nuke in a mine somewhere."

**Tass:** "It sucks that they ransacked the North Pole. Like, they ripped NOEL clean out of there."

**Jake:** "That's all though, right? They just took NOEL out of there, didn't they? Do you think the power grid and shit is still intact?"

**Tass:** "Oh."

**Teej:** "I don't see why not. That wasn't in their plan. They just needed NOEL -- the computer."

**Jake:** "Yeah. I mean, that place had to leech a ton of power. And it has a big candy cane dome."

**Teej:** "That's right. And it's remote, too." Yeah. I want to go to my phone and call up Jingles.

**Tass:** Oh, that's solid.

**Teej:** And see if he's got some information on the the old North Pole.

**Rev:** JINGLES: Oh, hello?

**Teej:** "Jingles!"

**Rev:** JINGLES: Oh, hey man. How's it going?

**Teej:** "How's it going with you?"

**Rev:** JINGLES: Oh, Or not too bad. Just, you know, running the world.

**Teej:** "Well, yeah. Hey, we just got back from another dimension again."

**Rev:** JINGLES: Oh, how was that?

**Teej:** "It sucked over there. But we got it done, and we came out with a win on this one."

**Rev:** JINGLES: Oh. Man, it's good to have a win.

**Teej:** "Yeah, it really is. Hey, is the North Pole still, you know, active?"

**Rev:** JINGLES: In what way?

**Teej:** "Is there still power running to the ... To the shield?"

**Rev:** JINGLES: Oh, I don't know. If you've got a computer going over there, and I'll hook you up to the network there. And you can do a little search to see.

**Teej:** "OK." I go over to the computer.

**Rev:** Yeah. You go over, and it's already on. And there's a little dancing Jingles, and there's like a loading bar and it's loading up like a candy cane.

**Teej:** That's awesome.

**Rev:** JINGLES: Yeah, man. Just run that old F9, and it'll let you know what's up and running.

**Teej:** "All right." And as soon as it loads up, I will hit F9.

**Rev:** All right. So I think for this, it's gonna take a little more than just the F9. Roll Investigate a Mystery to see what's going on at the North Pole.

**Teej:** All right. That is a five.

**Tass:** [Quietly] Oh, god.

**Jake:** God!

**Rev:** Yeah. So you can't quite tell what's going on. You try to run, and it doesn't seem that the server is connected properly. And Jingles comes back on the line. He actually comes out through your speakers on the laptop.

**Rev:** JINGLES: Man, I'm sorry about that. I thought it would work. But you may just have to take a trip up there. I can't seem to get properly connected.

**Teej:** "OK. That should be no problem for us."

**Rev:** JINGLES: Yeah, all right.

**Teej:** With that fail, I do level up.

**Rev:** Oh. What are you going to take?

**Teej:** Oops!

**Jake:** Yes!

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Teej:** I miss it so much! It was so much fun!

**Rev:** That's fair.

**Jake:** Old reliable.

**Teej:** And it gave you all sorts of aneurisms.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** All right. What you can get from this is that yes, the equipment up there would probably fulfill both of our requirements. But you don't know what state it's in right now. You'd have to physically go there and test things.

**Teej:** Gotcha. "Well fellas, I've got good news and I've got bad news. Good news is we get to visit the North Pole again."

**Tass:** "Oh, boy ..."

**Jake:** "Yay ..."

**Teej:** "Bad news is I don't know what kind of condition it's in. So we might have to do a little bit of fixing while we're up there."



**Tass:** "I ..."

**Jake:** "Yay ..."

**Tass:** "I mean, there could be a lot going on up there. We know that they broke through. Like, they could just be using it, you know? I mean, his sub was up there. We were not that far away when we attacked that sub. Like, I think this is a little scarier than just checking to see if the power's on."

**Jake:** "I mean, that is a good point. But we can do like a perimeter sweep when we get there and see. I mean, if we pop in there and it's just overrun, then we'll pop out, and ..."

**Tass:** "Yeah, fair."

**Jake:** "Revisit our options, then."

**Teej:** "Yeah."

**Jake:** "I think we'll be fine to just go check, at least. And if it seems OK, we can then kind of actually scout and make sure."

**Tass:** "OK, yeah."

**Teej:** "Sounds good."

**Jake:** "All right. Are we just ... Are we just going? Do you do the whole process there, or do you need to do anything ... Do you need to front load this task here, before we go to the North Pole?"

**Rev:** You've got maybe an hour's worth of work I think you'd need to do before you would get there, to start connecting it to everything there.

**Teej:** "Yeah, I think a system check and everything ought to be made."

**Jake:** "OK. I mean, you do that. I'll keep an eye on Rev. Unless there's anything else we need to get done before we try to execute this. Hit the gym real quick ..."

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** "What can we do to prepare for the eventuality that maybe this works and we have to fucking fight Koschei?"

**Tass:** "I mean you have the nail, right?"

**Jake:** "Well yeah. But it feels like there's a lot ... A lot between here and there."

**Tass:** "Yeah. Yeah."

**Jake:** "A lot of things that could happen in an encounter with Koschei, before I manage to bury a nail in his chest."

**Tass:** "I mean, I don't know what to plan for, besides knowing what we can do, and just ... Who can try what in what order, to make sure that he's subdued for you to get that nail into him."

**Jake:** "All right. I'm gonna grab a popsicle stick and try and plunge it into your heart. And you fight me with the sword. And this will be kind of our simulation of how it might go down with Koschei."

**Tass:** [Laughs] "OK."

**Jake:** "It's like our makeshift danger room."

**Teej:** "Yeah. And I'll be to the side with a stopwatch, to see how long it takes."

**Jake:** "No, you've gotta do the science."

**Teej:** "Oh, yeah. Yeah."

**Jake:** "Yeah. You do the science, we'll practice. I'm gonna check on Rev before we do, and then before we leave."

**Tass:** "Yeah. If he hasn't woken up we need to like write him a letter or something, just in case he does."

**Jake:** "That's an excellent call. You are full of good calls today."

**Teej:** "Yeah. Nice job."

**Tass:** "Hey thanks, man."

**Rev:** Yeah. You go in and check on Rev. He is still unconscious, but he is breathing. His heart rate is normal. I think, just for my enjoyment -- there won't be any experience attached to this. But as you guys set about doing this, Jake, roll Kick Some Ass. Tass, roll Act Under Pressure.

**Tass:** OK.

**Jake:** [Laughs] Good luck.

**Teej:** Boxcars!

**Tass:** Nope.

**Teej:** [Sighs]

**Tass:** It is a ten.

**Jake:** Fourteen.

**Teej:** [Laughs]

**Jake:** Popsicle stick! Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab.

**Rev:** Yeah. So I think that the scene that plays out here is a good, like, 15 minutes of dodging and weaving, and Jake teleporting every now and then and you blocking him. And at one point, Tass swipes the wrong direction, and Jake leaps at him with the

popsicle stick. And Rev kind of steps out of the room at this point, and just sees you plunging this popsicle stick into Tass's chest.

**Tass:** "Oh, my god!"

**Jake:** "You're awake!"

**Rev:** REV: Hey. Holy shit. Where's the Tylenol?

**Teej:** "Wait, wait, wait. Before ..."

**Rev:** REV: Ah! What the fuck are you?

**Teej:** "What?"

**Jake:** "That's --"

**Tass:** "Oh!"

**Jake:** "Hey. OK. Everyone, freeze. Hold still. Rev, you've been asleep for a while. TJ was turned into a werewolf man. Let's just rip that Band-Aid right off."

**Teej:** "Oh, right. Yeah, he doesn't know."

**Rev:** And as you say this, you see his eyes roll back a little bit.

**Jake:** Oh, no.

**Rev:** And then they come back forward.

**Rev:** REV: Oh. No, yeah. I ... I don't remember it, but I have memories of it?"

**Tass:** "Oh, god ..."

**Rev:** REV: The last thing I remember is you guys coming over to my apartment. And by the way, why are we in the fucking Ninja Turtles base right now? What is going on?

**Teej:** "This is my place."

**Rev:** REV: Is that my circle? Did you rip the circle out of my floor?

**Tass:** "We thought you told us to."

**Rev:** REV: No, the last thing I remember is you guys came to my place, the defenses activated, you got trapped because I had been, like, attacked in a dream. And we sent you all into the dream realm, to go confront whatever it was that had attacked me.

**Tass:** "Yes. So ... Let's sit down."

**Rev:** REV: Uh-huh.

**Tass:** "And talk about that."

**Rev:** REV: I feel like that's been ...

**Tass:** "A year."

**Rev:** REV: Yeah. Like ...

**Tass:** "Literally, a year."

**Rev:** REV: That's the last thing I remember. Well ... Well, no. I mean, like, I'm remembering other things as I say them. Like, I remember taking the ring out of the floor and bringing it here.

**Jake:** "Do you remember sacrifice throwing a corpser?"

**Rev:** REV: Yes.

**Jake:** "That was radical."

**Rev:** REV: That was radical.

**Jake:** "OK. So when we went into the dream realm, a different world's Grigori Nash was lurking in the ether, and seized that opportunity to take you over. And we did not know it."

**Rev:** REV: Well, that's impossible. I mean, I've got mental defenses against that kind of stuff.

**Jake:** "Somebody left the door open, so to speak."

**Rev:** REV: The door to my brain?

**Tass:** "Yeah."

**Rev:** REV: Oh.

**Tass:** "That was me. And I just want you to understand that I will literally never forgive myself. And also, we didn't know what it was. We thought the whole thing was a dream. The whole thing was like your dream world. And just ... I don't know, it's all excuses, but it's my fault. It's my fault. You lost a year. You were taken hostage, and it's on me. And it's so good to see you, dude."

**Rev:** And he starts to pace around the room.

**Rev:** REV: I remember there's someone in my head. They were ... They were using my body. I felt like a puppet. And someone was trying to train me how to do stuff I didn't know how to do. So it was easy because they knew how to do it, but was hard because I didn't understand it.

**Rev:** And he snaps his head to the side and points.

**Rev:** REV: That's a portal. That's a portal. That goes to other worlds.

**Teej:** "Yeah. You and ... Well, Grigori you and I created it."

**Rev:** And his brow furrows, and his eyes grow distant as he talks.

**Rev:** REV: Grigori me ... Grigori me. That's who was from the other world. A different version of Grigori Nash.

**Teej:** "Yeah, but we got rid of him. And now you're back, I think."

**Rev:** REV: Yeah. Yeah, I just ... And you guys brought groceries.

**Teej:** "Yeah. Lots and lots of groceries."

**Rev:** And he starts to nod his head slowly.

**Rev:** REV: And I live here because there's an angry mummy.

**Tass:** "Yeah."

**Rev:** And you can tell that as he's piecing these things together, they're not in chronological order. And for a brief moment, as he is looking around and the way his hands are moving, you've seen this same mannerism in TJ's grandfather. There's something about the speech pattern, about the way the hands are moving, trying to piece together out of order time.

**Tass:** "Yeah, yeah. There was a lot. And I'm sure it's gonna come back to you in waves, just like this. And I can't imagine. I can't imagine what that's going to feel like. But we're, you know, we've got you. We're here and we're gonna get you through this, and get everything back up to speed and feeling normal."

**Rev:** REV: OK. OK, so what now?

**Tass:** "Oh, we're gonna kill the god of death."

**Rev:** REV: Koschei.

**Tass:** "Yep."

**Rev:** REV: OK.

**Tass:** "OK." And I give him a big fucking hug.

**Rev:** Yeah. And there is again -- it's that same ... Like I think Jake and TJ, seeing Rev hug you, there's that moment of confusion, and then it sparks something and the motions and the movement become regular again.

**Jake:** I want to go over to TJ's computer and pull up our case files. And like, put them in order. And just be like, "Here, just read through these. Like, I think these will help you remember things, and they'll help you stay on track. You won't just get hit by things that don't make sense, out of order. And hopefully this will keep you in order, and you can go through this while we're gone."

**Rev:** REV: OK. Yeah. Because there might be a negative effect of remembering things, or like new ideas being implanted out of the chronological order. Do me -- do me a favor. Try not to tell me anything I don't know, until I've read it. Yeah.

**Jake:** "Already screwed that up some. But from now on, yes."

**Rev:** REV: Yeah. Until I've read it. Reddit. I should go on Reddit.

**Jake:** "Don't go there."

**Rev:** REV: Oh, no?

**Jake:** "It's a cursed place."

**Rev:** REV: Oh, OK.

**Rev:** So he sits down at the computer and starts to go through the case files, and pulls up a calendar on the other side of the screen and starts to just kind of mark on it with a permanent marker. Like, checking off calendar days.

**Jake:** [Laughs] Just on the monitor.

**Rev:** [Laughs] Yeah.



**Teej:** Oh, boy.

**Tass:** He went through something. We gotta let him work through this, in his own way.

**Jake:** We owe him this monitor.

**Teej:** Yeah. And you're going to owe me a new one.

**Jake:** That's -- that's fine.

**Rev:** So the next forty five minutes passes, and TJ has the piece he needs ready to take to try and set this up at the North Pole.

**Teej:** "Well guys, do we want to do this now? Or do we want to wait till after Rev's done reading all the stories?"

**Tass:** "I mean, I think it's safe to let him chill here where it's not going to be a problem, where he'll be safe, and we go do our thing. But I mean, first, are you sure that what you have there works? Is that, you know, as long as we get the place up and running, that's good to go?"

**Teej:** "Yeah."

**Tass:** "Then I think we have to keep our promise first."

**Jake:** "Yeah. If we're confident in that machine, then we should toss that gem through."

**Teej:** I will pick up the gem. "Hey Rev, you want to see something cool?"

**Rev:** REV: Sure.

**Teej:** And I throw the gem at the portal.

**Rev:** Roll Act Under Pressure to -- no, I'm kidding.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** Just shatters on the wall.

**Tass:** Cool, huh?

**Teej:** Pretty fucking cool.

**Jake:** Who taught you to throw?!

**Teej:** That's the asshole that ...

**Rev:** Yeah. So you turn and you throw this gem through the portal and it vanishes. And for a brief moment, the portal pulses this golden color and then turns back to its normal color.

**Jake:** "... We did it?"

**Tass:** "Think we did it."

**Teej:** "Yeah, we definitely did it. I'm very confident."

**Tass:** "All right. Well let's turn this damn thing off for the moment."

**Teej:** I'll go over to the controls and I will power it down, for right now.

**Rev:** No problem.

**Jake:** "All right. If we get topside, I can teleport us to the North Pole."

**Teej:** "All right."

**Rev:** So before you all take off to the North Pole, is there anything else you want to do?

**Tass:** I think it'd be a good idea to make sure that we're, like, leaving the piece of paper that Nash gave us before he left, with the code on it.

**Teej:** Oh, yeah.

**Tass:** Just so we don't lose that. And probably the portal spell, too. Just, you know, leave them with Rev, so that all of the stuff that we have that we need for later is safe, and we can't ...

**Rev:** Oh, like the piece of paper you throw through to pause time?

**Tass:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**Rev:** OK.

**Teej:** Yeah. I will hand those to Rev, and I'll say, "Make sure Nash doesn't get these."

**Rev:** REV: Uh ...

**Jake:** "Don't worry about it. You're very safe here. We're just leaving them behind, in case ... It's nothing. You're fine. Keep reading."

**Rev:** REV: OK, all right.

**Rev:** And he makes another check on the monitor.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** So the three of you head up to the street level. Jake, I don't think there is a roll for this. The three of you appear at the North Pole. It is midday. It is cold. There's a gentle snow falling.

**Jake:** Is it immediately obvious that it's overrun by vampires, or anything like that?

**Rev:** No.

**Jake:** "OK. At a glance, this seems pretty cool."

**Teej:** "Yeah."

**Jake:** "So far, so good."

**Teej:** Wasn't there like a power station that we went to before?

**Rev:** Yep.

**Teej:** We'll start heading that way.

**Jake:** "Do we wanna ... While he's setting up, scout around and make sure that this place is in fact empty?"

**Tass:** "Yeah. I'd say check the buildings, check the bunker where NOEL had been ... Just anywhere where they might be holding up. And I'll do perimeter sweep, the candy canes ..."

**Jake:** "OK."

**Tass:** "Cool."

**Rev:** All right. So TJ, roll Luck.

**Teej:** OK. That's an eleven.

**Rev:** Yeah. So you get over to the power station, and everything is still functioning.

**Teej:** Awesome. So I don't need to fix anything on it, or anything.

**Rev:** Yeah. You don't need to fix anything here. Once you get this piece set up, you do know that you'll have to go around and reconfigure the candy canes. But you've done that once before.

**Teej:** Yeah.

**Rev:** But yeah. Everything in the power station works. And you know that the power is running out to the correct sources.

**Teej:** Awesome. I'll communicate with that with the guys, on the comms.

**Tass:** "Good deal, man. That's awesome."

**Teej:** "Yeah. Just as you're checking the candy canes, if you see anything strange, just let me know and I'll come and fix it up or something."

**Tass:** "I mean, I don't really know what I'm looking at with those unless they're just ripped apart, but I'll see what I see."

**Teej:** "Sure. Which way did you head? Clockwise or counterclockwise?"

**Tass:** "Left."

**Teej:** "OK, I'll go right."

**Jake:** [Laughs]

**Teej:** "And we'll just meet in the middle on the other side."

**Tass:** "It's cool. I'm just checking for people first. If you want to come out, that's fine. But I just want to make sure nobody's been through here recently."

**Teej:** "Sure."

**Rev:** So Tass, while you're checking the perimeter, roll Read a Bad Situation.

**Tass:** With a +1, brings me up to a solid three.

**Teej:** Oh shit ...

**Rev:** Yeah, so you start to go around the perimeter outside of where the candy canes are located, and the snow starts to pick up and the wind gets a little stronger. You don't notice any footprints or any tracks of anything having been this direction recently.

**Tass:** "Yeah, I don't see much, guys. It's looking fine out here."

**Teej:** "Great. Jake, how about on your end?"

**Rev:** Yeah Jake, you search around. There's not a whole lot of the buildings left standing, but you don't find anybody or anything odd about the buildings.

**Jake:** "Oh, shit. I found the Krampus."

**Teej:** "What?!"

**Jake:** "No, I didn't. He's still out there, in the wind somewhere, waiting."

**Teej:** "Oh god, keep your eyes open."

**Tass:** I am immediately looking behind me. Just ... OK.

**Rev:** We cut to Tass, his head poking out of the Krampus's sack, as getting carried away.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** He goes, no you didn't. Ask me how I know.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** So what's the plan?

**Teej:** Well, as soon as we had all the candy canes configured, then ...

**Tass:** I'm gonna set up some traps in the buildings, in case they go there. So like, I'm thinking like paint cans.

**Rev:** Mmm. Mmhmm.

**Tass:** On some of the stairwells.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Teej:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** I think I'm gonna heat up some of the metal doorknobs.

**Teej:** Oh, leave some of your really sharp and pointy toys just kind of laying about on the floors, near the windows.

**Tass:** Oh, good call. I mean, we're up here. There's certainly those like glass ornaments.

**Jake:** I didn't mention, but I did find a dead Joe Pesci. Does that ... Is that anything we need to ...

**Rev:** And I found a Tim Allen, but I told him to get out of here.

**Jake:** You get the fuck out of here, Tim Allen. Go on, get!

**Rev:** [Tim Allen grumbles]

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** So it takes about an hour for everything to get set up. You set this piece of machinery at the center of the Christmas village, which is at the center of the shield. And I think from this point on, it's just a matter of activating it.

**Teej:** "All right." And I'm going to turn on the shield.

**Rev:** As TJ sets this off, what's your positioning? What are you all doing?

**Jake:** I think I'm close to TJ. Like, I don't know what exactly is going to happen, but in my head, Koschei's probably going to come down right on the epicenter, here. So I want to be here, ready to engage when he does.

**Tass:** Yeah, I think I'm in like a doorway. Like something that's one of the closer buildings, but with a big open view of the area. So that in theory, if I need to suddenly lay low, I might be able to creep in while they're engaging. And I want to make sure it's a spot that I can see as much as I can of this dome, so that I can get a good gauge and call out if I see him coming.

**Rev:** All right. You turn on the shield and just like before, you see the energy crackle up into the air. But instead of that crystal transparent color, there's a bit of an orange tint to it, and the dome is pulsing this orange color. And after two, three, four pulses ... Tass, roll Read a Bad Situation.

**Tass:** OK. Nine.

**Rev:** You get a hold 1.

**Tass:** I guess I think I want to gauge here if there are dangers we haven't noticed.

**Rev:** So as the dome begins to pulse, you notice that the snow picks up, and the wind outside starts to blow faster, and there's a crack of lightning. And in the lightning, you see this large figure in the snow. And it's raising its hand, and it slams it down on the shield. And you've seen this before. It is the same large wind elemental that attacked the North Pole the last time you were here.

**SFX:** OUTRO MUSIC

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