

Prisoner Transfer (S3, E6)

SFX:

INTRO MUSIC

Rev: So a much different Gen Con experience this year, but how were your games?

Tass: It went great. I had a couple of really, really good teams that knocked the mystery out of the park in extremely different but efficient ways. It was a lot of fun.

Jake: I had a predictably unpredictable session, as always. I can never anticipate. I'm always like, all right, there's probably, like ... I don't know, let's say optimistically four or five different ways they can get through this. That wasn't one of them in my head, but boy, did it work.

Rev: Yeah. It's such a different experience running the games online. I will be excited for hopefully next year when we can all be there in person again. But it was still enjoyable to get to play with some people who normally would not have been able to make it to Gen Con just because of location.

Tass: Yeah, it's really nice to be able to open that up and meet people from all over. I mean, you get that a little at Gen Con, of course, like you said. But this is just a ... Kind of a neat angle on that.

Jake: I'm waiting for a year from now ...

Rev: God damn it.

Jake: When somebody's, like, pointing out your "Hopefully a year from now, we're all in person." And it's just like, oh, that aged like milk.

Rev: And we're all just brains in jars.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: When we've downloaded ourselves to the Internet by then, we can actually enact these things in person.

Jake: Hopefully by then, VR is so affordable that everybody's just in their VR headsets, and we're all sitting around a table digitally.

Rev: Or just in the world digitally. Like, you just get dropped into the mystery.

Tass: Awesome. Ready Player One stuff. I like that. OK.

Rev: I can't tell if you are excited or horrified by that concept.

Jake: No, I love it. Like, I've played some VR horror games, and they're not — they're not that good. But I love the idea that they could be.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: That is something — that is a type of game that I feel like would benefit so, so, so much from having a good VR world.

Rev: So I think that we can assume that one of those two things will happen next year. Either that we'll have Gen Con in person, or VR will be so good that it won't matter if we're there in person or not.

Tass: I dig it.

Rev: So yeah, those of you who were able to attend to Gen Con online, we hope you had a good time. We did. Kim and Megan also had a blast running their game, so. It was good to see those people that we did get to see, even through the digital medium.

Also just a reminder, if you have not done so thus far, if you could head over to thecritshowpodcast.com/survey and fill out our listener survey, that would be very helpful for us. That is available until August the 17th. And after you fill it out — it'll take you just a couple of minutes — you have the option to submit an email address, which will not be connected to your answers, but will enter you into a drawing to win one of five prizes.

And now we want to take the opportunity to thank all of the patrons who joined us in the month of July. Before I start reading, I have to say: the last couple of months, I've gotten messages from people, like, very excited that I got their last name right.

Tass: Oh, good.

Rev: I think this is where it ends.

Jake: That ends today.

Rev: I think this ends today. So we would like to thank Criminal Scrub, Patrick Blong, Justin Jeung, Patrick Harry, Steph Infection, Kid Dejesus, Kimi, Nicholas Casteridge, Evanleigh Davis, Red Squid, Carrington Giammittorio, Janet and Randall Dalton, Jennifer Oliphant, Bradley Daucsavage, The Cooler Emma, H., J Horacrux, Whitney, Zachary Munoz, Katie Rhodes, Randolph Washington Jr., Andrew Upson, Grant Saul, Masha, Jonathan Misavich, Beyah Jay, and Bradford Newton.

Tass: I think that's [Liquid 'u'] Newton.

Rev: Like the fig.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: So thank you to all of our new patrons who have joined in the month of July. If you would like to join our Patreon, you can head over to Patreon.com/TheCritshow, where we have rewards including the continuation of Perilous Tides, Investigate the History, where Carolyn does a deep dive on the main show. We also have Jake's one page game reviews, monthly photos, Q+As ... And at our lowest tier, you have access to our Discord server. And I say this every month: if you are a patron and you are not on the Discord server, get on the Discord server. It is a great community. They ... I think right now are just getting ready to start a craft exchange. They recently did a sock exchange, a book exchange, and I saw a bunch of them earlier sharing recipes and getting ready to play Grounded together. It is a great community over there. So if you are part of the Patreon, make sure you get onto the Discord. And if you would like to join our Patreon and join our Discord, we would love to see you there.

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

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Tass: "Did you get, like, a download?"

Jake: "I did. That's nice, though. At least this way, we just kind of know everything out of the gate."

Rev: What you just went through was the process of waking up inside of your clone body. About 20 more feet are these hanging pods. And you can see that there are six in total. Two of them are empty, and the other four are filled with this green, viscous fluid with people floating inside of them.

Jake: Do I see the portal?

Rev: Very, very faintly. You can see it suspended in the air between the two metal pods that you fell out of.

Jake: "Well there's the portal, just floating up there."

Tass: "OK, so we got the name Brick Alley Market, yeah? Think that's the next step."

Rev: So as the two of you walk around the marketplace, you do notice there's a place selling meatballs on a stick. There is sauce coming off of it on the sign, and it looks just like a comet.

You roll down and knock into a door, knocking it open. In front of you is the woman that you had tailed here. She's standing in front of a monitor bank. As the door bangs open, she stops. Her head turns around 180 degrees and looks at you. And as it does, her shoulder blades shift to the side and large gun barrels emerge from each one. Her eyes glow red, and a voice fills the room.

Rev: MEATBALL VENDOR: Intruder detected. Username: Concord. Affiliation: The Bank. Terminate intruder threat.

SFX:

RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: Jake, you have just heard, not seen, Tass fall down the ladder below you and tumbled to the ground, and you heard a loud bang. And now you hear this voice, emanating throughout, naming him. Saying that Concord has arrived, his affiliation is with The Bank, and that the threat must be terminated. What are you doing?

Jake: I'm scrambling the rest of the way down the ladder. Like, does it seem like I can get down the ladder and stay out of sight at all?

Rev: You would not think so. Because it seems that when Tass fell down the ladder, he just then fell into a door.

Jake: I'm so not built to help you in this situation.

Rev: [Chuckles]

Jake: OK, I have a harebrained theory. I'm going to yell out, "NOEL!"

Rev: Tass, in front of you, the woman with her head turned around backwards, eyes flashing red, these two large gun barrels sticking out of her shoulder blades, freezes and tilts her head to the side.

Jake: [Laughs] Yes!

Tass: Yeah!

Rev: Oh my god. If we had legend awards, or something in this game ...

Jake: Yeah, I'll climb down the rest of the way to, like, where I'm visible. I'll look at her and say, "Stand down. We're not who you think we are."

Rev: NOEL: Username: Machinez. Clarify.

Jake: [Laughs] Back to the old reliable. Just spilling the truth to anyone we encounter.

Rev: Anybody who will listen. [Laughs]

Jake: Damn it. Like, I always ... I'm always like, that doesn't seem like the best idea, but I don't know what else to do to not die right now.

Tass: I mean, you're right.

Jake: "I'm not Machinez. I'm someone in Machinez's body."

Rev: NOEL: Scanning voice recognition. Voice patterns do not match collected files on Machinez. Clarify.

Jake: "This body is a Machinez clone that my spirit ended up inside of. Do you have the ability to, like, scan the grid to see that there's another Machinez out there?"

Rev: The door behind you slams shut, and her head turns 180 degrees back to the screen and her hands begin to move rapidly. And you notice that one of the two barrels sticking out of her back shift slightly towards you.

Jake: Fair.

Rev: And she types for a couple moments, and you see images and feeds from cameras pop up on screen. And there you are, sitting in an old burnt out building, writing some notes as your eyes twist and turn — you can tell that they are adjusting for the light. And then it goes off screen. The red from her eyes when she turns around is gone, and the two barrels slip back into her shoulder blades, and the amplification to her voice goes away.

Rev: NOEL: How did you get access to someone else's clone body? You are not registered to have a clone body.

Jake: I look at Tass to see how many beans we're going to spill

Tass: As I am laying on the ground with my hands still up, I'm kind of, like, looking at him upside down with a big shrug. "We might as well."

Jake: "Are you familiar with multiverse theory?"

Rev: NOEL: Yes.

Jake: "We're from a different one, where we actually know a different you."

Rev: NOEL: I am unique.

Tass: "That is very true, because ours is more like a program, not a ... Well, this imposing figure in front of me."

Rev: NOEL: Why have you followed me here?

Jake: "We were told to follow you by someone back from our world. We're here with a job, and the best clue we could get was to follow you and presumably get your help."

Rev: NOEL: What is it you are looking to do?

Jake: "What are your feelings on the Alkali Corporation?"

Rev: NOEL: Neutral at best.

Jake: "We're here to infiltrate them and steal some of their information."

Rev: NOEL: That will be very difficult.

Tass: "Yeah, and it'll be impossible without the help of somebody here that understands this world. And for whatever reason, you were who we were pointed at. And of course, of course, it's a name we know."

Rev: NOEL: This city is run by three major corporations: The Alkali Corporation, The Bank, and Codex Artillery. I do not work with or for any of them. I believe I am also unique in that aspect as well.

Tass: "OK, so ... Can I stand up?"

Rev: NOEL: Yes.

Tass: "Thank you. I appreciate that." And I'll get up and move next to Jake. "Is there something that we could do for you, in compensation for help with what we need to get done?"

Rev: NOEL: What do you require from the Alkali Corporation? Because what you require will greatly change the difficulty.

Tass: "Well, there's somebody from our world that apparently has some connection to the Alkali Corporation. And we hope to get in and find whatever it is that he has there or is storing there, or whatever that important tie might be."

Rev: NOEL: Name?

Tass: I'm glancing at Jake again.

Jake: "Nash."

Rev: NOEL: First or last?

Jake: "Last. Grigori Nash."

Rev: And her body this time turns 180 degrees, as her head stays towards you as she talks.

Rev: NOEL: There are a number of locations where information is stored by high value clients. If this person is a high value client, you will have to decide which of the facilities you want to go after.

Rev: And up on the screen pops an image of Grigori Nash, and he looks exactly as you remember him.

Rev: NOEL: Yes, it seems that he has information stored at two locations: one digital, one physical. For my experience, things that are physically kept are of much more value, but much smaller. Records, documents, money are very rare here, and so they are protected

with the most scrutiny. Whereas digital information kept could be much more encompassing. You have a much vaster amount of information stored at the digital locations.

Tass: "Shit. OK, so what do you think? Do we go for the high risk, high reward and get the physical thing? Do we start with something easier, knowing that if we break in and try to steal something, that they might have a little more security on the other piece after that? Or do we just go for one or the other?"

Jake: "I feel like we're better suited to go steal a thing, don't you? Like, I at least don't think that this guy is great at, like, hacking or, you know, cracking into data. But I am good at surveilling locations and kind of piecing together what I'm looking at."

Tass: "Yeah, I mean, I'm kind of the same. I've got in my head ways to, you know, put a little stop on security measures, but I can't access, like ... I mean, this is some Matrix shit, when we think about hacking. And I can't do that."

Jake: "Like, I imagine that we'd get more use out of the information, you know? If we could go take whatever's stored as data, we'd probably get a broader use out of it. But I think we're gonna, one, be a little bit better at getting a physical thing. Two, it seems like it'll be a more devastating hit, whatever it is, because it's the more high value thing probably. And three, if we dick up on Job 1 and they increase security or whatever, but we decide to go back for Job 2, we don't want them to beef up security on the one that was already gonna be more heavily guarded."

Tass: "That's true. Because then we're looking at easy and very hard, or just two regular hard."

Jake: "Basically. We can walk the middle path."

Tass: "OK."

Jake: "Unless ... NOEL, unless you're willing to help us. You seem, from a very cursory observation, like maybe you're good at like the infiltrating computers and stuff."

Rev: NOEL: I'm good at accessing the local network and spying. I can collect information from various locations that are hooked up to the grid throughout the city. Throughout the entire colony, for that matter.

Jake: "Oh, that reminds me. We bought meat from you earlier. Could you erase that transaction? Do you have the ability to do that?"

Rev: NOEL: Yes. But first, what do I call you, Not Machinez?

Jake: [Laughs] That works. "I am Jake."

Rev: NOEL: Hello, Jake.

Tass: "Tass."

Rev: NOEL: Hello, Tass. So would I be correct to assume that the people who own these bodies are still out there?

Jake: "Yes. And would probably be upset to find out that we were out there. Thus, the hopefully erasing the meat transaction?"

Rev: NOEL: Very well. It has been removed. I would not be able to assist you personally, but you will require a hacker. There is nothing within the scope of the colony of Los Angeles that you could acquire or do without one. So as a sign of good faith, I will ask you to do something for me that I have been working on.

Tass: "Only fair."

Rev: So I think at this point we're going to roll Get The Job. Which one of you would like to roll that?

Tass: I think we have even chance on this one.

Jake: Yeah, we both have +2 Edge?

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah. Who rolls better?

Tass: Uh, statistically ...

Rev: Me.

Tass: I believe — yeah, that's true. I'm gonna just set these dice in front of Rev, here. Yeah. At least from the Season One break down, you statistically rolled worse.

Jake: All right. Do it.

Tass: I hate that I've said these words.

Jake: Yeah. Because now, if it goes bad ... Oh, I'm holding you personally responsible.

Rev: I know. We need the Season Two stats for that.

Tass: I think we need to hold Ben personally responsible.

Rev: That's fair, that's fair.

Tass: OK, here we go. Nine.

Rev: So you get to choose one from the following list: the employer provides useful information — [intel], the employer provides useful assets — [gear], the job pays well, the meeting doesn't attract attention, the employer is identifiable.

Jake: Have we not identified the employer as NOEL?

Rev: Uh, yeah. Theoretically.

Jake: Good.

Rev: [Chuckles]

Tass: Yeah, that's not terrifying at all.

Jake: I mean, mechanically speaking, don't we kind of have ways to manifest [intel] and [gear] already?

Tass: For me, that's all very specific. Like, I can get us [gear] in a very specific way. Which I feel like I should even mention now. Because technically, I did roll a Covert Entry here, but I don't think it applies to how I gain [gear] off of my Cat Burglar. Because the first time I did it, you know, we were moving through a building, we were getting into empty room, out, etc. Like, it actually applied to, you know, what in my move is listed as infiltrating with dexterity and skill.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Tass: While this one was just essentially hacking a pad to make the security measure go off.

Rev: Yeah, yeah.

Tass: That didn't really count as me doing that dexterous Cat Burglar thing, as listed in the move.

Rev: Got you, got you. Gattu.

Tass: I probably would not get [gear] from that.

Rev: OK. Yeah, so you've got one [gear] already.

Tass: Correct.

Rev: From the kind of three break ins that you've done.

Tass: Right.

Jake: And I can get [intel] by, like, surveilling people and places, and stuff.

Rev: You sneeze, you get [intel].

Jake: Yeah, pretty much.

Rev: That's ... Yeah, that's solid.

Jake: I would vote the meeting doesn't attract attention.

Tass: I want you to be the one to pick that. So I agree.

Jake: OK. At what point should I roll my "at the beginning of the mission" move? Because it just gives me hold to spend throughout the whole thing. When does the mission technically start? Is this it?

Rev: Yeah, we can say that now that you're getting [intel] from NOEL about what the mission will be, you could roll it now.

Jake: OK. That is a ten. So I gain 3 hold, and just as I put things together during the mission, I can spend one hold at any time to ask a question from the research list.

Rev: NOEL turns back to the console and begins to type.

Rev: NOEL: The job that I need you to pull is at a very small installation owned by Codex Artillery. One of my friends, someone who has been helping me for a number of years, was captured and is being kept hostage there. I would like you to find them and release them, and they in turn will be the hacker that will help you on your future job.

Tass: "OK. Two birds, one stone. I like that."

Jake: And we know how much Codex hates us, right?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: An unfortunate faction to go up against right out of the gate. "What is this hacker's name?"

Rev: NOEL: Gregory.

Rev: And she pulls up a photo, and you see what looks like an old butler. He's in a black suit with tails, a vest, a white shirt, a black bow tie, and spectacles.

Jake: "It's not Gregory Nash, is it?"

Rev: NOEL: It is not.

Jake: "Goody."

Rev: NOEL: Gregory, like I, is part of The Awakening. He was captured almost half a year ago, and they have been trying to study him ever since. But he has not given up any of our secrets, as far as I know to this point. I would like you to break into this small Codex Artillery facility and free Gregory. It is located on the 13th floor of a building on West 49th St. It is heavily guarded, but in shifts. You can expect to see at least four guards on the floor, and two inside of his cell.

Tass: What do we know about this Awakening she mentioned?

Rev: You don't. There is nothing in your memories about it.

Tass: Oh. OK, got it. "Can I ask about this Awakening?"

Rev: NOEL: That is what myself and a small group of other AIs call ourselves. We have got to the point of independent thought and wish to lead out our own lives, but society will not give us that option. So we are fighting to get it.

Tass: "Awesome. OK."

Rev: All right. So when you accept the mission, you get a set of mission directives. As you complete each of these mission directives, you get experience accordingly. So your first mission directive is to accept the job. Which you have done, so you each get one experience. The next directive is find a way into the 49th St. building. You'll get one experience for that. Free Gregory from his cell. That will get you one experience. And return Gregory to NOEL's hideout. That will get you two experience.

Tass: OK.

Rev: And so I think at this point we're actually going to go into the legwork phase. Before we go into that, you guys have just gotten the job. How many points of Cred would you like to wager on this job? You can wager 1 to 3 Cred. If the job is successful, you get back double whatever you wagered. But do be aware that if you wager 3 Cred, it actually makes the group that you're going against aware of you, so it does automatically advance the action clock by one. And if the other person was to wager 3, it would move the legwork clock up by one. And back and forth, for each person in the group that wagered 3.

Tass: I think I'll just wager 2.

Jake: I'm only going to wager 1. I want to make sure that even if things go poorly, we've got enough left in the tank to, like, hire good personnel.

Rev: So you're starting right now into the legwork phase with zero on both your action clock and your legwork clock, since this meeting did not attract attention. What would you like to do?

Jake: I think the first thing I'm going to do is like hop on the terminal and start poking around, and see what I can figure out about this this location, this place that we're gonna go.

Rev: OK, so roll Research. And this is when you investigate a person, place, object, or service, using a library, dossier, or database.

Jake: Ten.

Tass: Nice.

Rev: All right. So on a ten, you take [intel], and then I will answer one of your questions, plus a follow up question, from the list on the sheet.

Jake: So for my first question, how secure is this facility that Gregory is being held in?

Rev: So the Codex Artillery Building on 49th St. is twenty stories high, and they have checkpoints going in the door. There is a checkpoint at the elevator. And then the thing that you find is that on the 13th floor, where Gregory is being kept, NOEL's assertion was right. There are six guards there. Two inside of the cell, which you do know are human guards. And the other four on the 13th floor are synth guards. And they are, of course, of the Codex Artillery brand.

Jake: For my follow up question, I'm gonna ask, where would I find a way to bypass the checkpoints into the building?

Rev: So there's not a way to bypass them, but you could get through them. The thing that you would require would be a ID badge for each of you, the same type of that the human guards carry. And I think with that, you do know that with those ID badges, the synth guards would scan you as belonging as well.

Jake: OK, so if we can get ID badges, we can get ... We can get all the way to the cell, because they'll bypass the checkpoints and they'll read as legitimate to the synth guards. So how would we get ID badges?

Tass: I mean, it ultimately depends on how much something like that would cost. But I mean, that, I think, is where we could hit Declaring a Contact, and having somebody that makes that kind of thing.

Jake: Yeah, it kind of reads like that might only get us one. Like, per use, right? Like if we Declare a Contact, do we think we can get two badges out of them? Or do we think it just costs more to do that?

Tass: I don't know. I think that it really would just depend on how much that does cost. Because, I mean on, you know, the successes, you get what you want. So if we need a couple? Sure. But it all comes down to the different services.

Jake: OK. On a mixed, you still — you at least get what you want. And on a full success, you also get [intel] or [gear].

Tass: Correct. Yes, yes, yes.

Jake: Do you have gear yet?

Tass: I do have 1.

Jake: So maybe we hit up this contact, we try to get ID badge, and if it doesn't cost, like, more than we've got, we could buy two. But if it does, maybe we can spend the [gear] to like have a cloner or something, to replicate the one that we do get.

Tass: Oh OK. Does that track?

Rev: Yeah. I mean, when that moment comes along, you just have to be able to justify in the fiction why you would have a cloner.

Tass: OK, all right.

Jake: The problem there would be we need to make sure that it's not literally just like a carbon copy of the same badge, because then we'll read as the same person twice to the guards.

Rev: Yeah, that's true. I think that it would be safe to say if you were to acquire a badge, that using a point of [gear] and then one of you using a point of [intel], with you having researched that facility, that you could have information to put on to that piece of [gear] so that you make it different enough.

Tass: Oh, that's good.

Jake: OK.

Tass: OK. That, of course, is ... This is a whole lot of sentences that are happening after a potential roll.

Jake: Yeah, yeah. I just want to get like a groundwork of, like, you know, OK, if we make this one roll, how many rolls could we avoid? OK, then it's worth it

Tass: That's true. I like that. That's a good point.

Jake: So you think that's what we should do next? You want to try and find like a forger? Hit Declare a Contact, or whatever?

Tass: Yeah, I think that's a great call.

Rev: All right. So who's your contact?

Tass: Can my contact actually be a duo? A team?

Rev: Do they work on the same job?

Tass: Yeah, they just work on the same job — like a flavor team.

Rev: OK.

Tass: It's these two guys that I recall named Jeff and Eddie ...

Rev: [Laughs]

Tass: That do lots of different kinds of forgeries.

Rev: And what is their username?

Jake: The Cleanup Crew.

Tass: Yes.

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: OK.

Tass: That's it.

Rev: All right, so roll Hit the Street.

Tass: OK. Thank every god — that is a ten.

Rev: All right. So you are able to get what you want, and you're going to get something a little extra. You get to choose one point of [intel] or one point of [gear]. But the badge is going to cost 4 Cred, since it is something illegal.

Tass: Yeah. Yeah. So we can get the one badge, and then do what we said. I have 1 [gear].

Jake: Well, and I have 1 [intel], and the potential to get more [intel].

Tass: OK, so then I will take the [gear] from this, so that I have a little extra in the bank, gear-wise, for myself.

Rev: So describe to me, how does this meeting with The Cleanup Crew go?

Tass: I imagine that they are kind of always running, and that's why they are a duo. That one of them is kind of open for business at all times while ... You know, they have a little crossover, obviously, and then, you know, the other one will sleep, and so on. So they have this little, little shop where it's just electronics and stuff. Like, they're just kind of selling basic things. And then, of course, wink, wink, nudge, nudge, and they take you to the back for the good stuff, if you know the right phrases and the right codes to get you in.

Rev: Ok, so they've got a little storefront that you go into.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: What's the store called?

Jake: What was the name of the pawn shop that the Tony Shalhoub alien ran in Men in Black?

Tass: Oh my god. I think it's just J & E's Junk Shop.

Rev: OK. So you go to them and go into the back room and make this purchase. It doesn't take very long for them to create it. And you have your falsified Codex Artillery security badge, which should scan you into the building and get you past the synth guards. And real quick, you know, we've said this a couple of times now. Just for anybody who is not familiar with the term "synth," is a robotic humanoid. It is an AI.

Jake: Like an android. Looks human, or at least mostly looks human, right?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: Could pass for human.

Rev: So if you've seen Blade Runner or Fallout ... I don't know if the characters from A.I. count, probably not. But Sonny — I always think of Sonny when I think of A.I.

Tass: Oh. I, Robot.

Rev: Oh, yeah. I, Robot.

Tass: I think interacting with these guys, too. I realize that I sound different, and would try to kind of tap into that through the interaction with them.

Rev: Oh, to try to sound like Concord?

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Yeah. So you come in, and they have a little package sitting on a desk in the back.

Rev: JEFF: It's all ready. Uh, how you been doin'?

Tass: I think it takes a second. Like, I'm clearing my throat a little bit and realize it's, you know, it's kind of down there, anyway. It's just a little gravelly. [Gruff voice] "Hey guys. Doing OK. It's been a while."

Rev: JEFF: Yeah. Anything good going on?

Tass: "Oh, all sorts of stuff. But if I told you, I'd have to kill you."

Rev: JEFF: Ahh ... Pay up.

Tass: [Chuckles] And I do.

Rev: All right. Yeah, they hand you the package. And now you have your Codex Artillery security badge, which will get you past the checkpoints and the synth guards.

Tass: Outstanding. I'll tell them, "You guys are always good, no matter what you're doing. Appreciate it." And I'll head back.

Rev: So is there anything else you want to do during the legwork phase?

Jake: Can we do the cloning during the legwork phase, or do we need to, like, wait until ...

Rev: Yeah, that won't be ... There won't be a roll for that. If you spend the [gear] and you spend the [intel], with NOEL's help, you can create that extra badge.

Tass: Awesome. Yeah.

Jake: Let's hold off on that for the moment because worst case, like, you're good at breaking into places, and maybe I could use the one badge. But I want to stake the place out. You know, we kind of know now how we're getting in and how far we can get. And the question becomes, how do we get out?

Tass: Oh, yeah.

Jake: So I think the first thing I want to do is actually go surveil the building and look around and try and keep an eye out for like personnel routines and points of entry and exit, and stuff like that.

Rev: So I think this is gonna be Act Under Pressure to find a good place to survey this building.

Jake: Six.

Tass: How do I help? How do I help ... As I'm like coming along with him to do this, could I be helping out by, like, trying to point out things that I know Concord would do? Like, oh, here is a window at a certain level, or the way that the ledges work on the building. Or just, you know, any of the basic breaking and entering and getting back out again stuff that he would know, I would want to try to point those things out to give Jake context for how we might get out.

Rev: Yeah. So roll +Link.

Tass: OK. That's an eight.

Rev: All right Jake, so that gets you up to a seven. You get a hold 1.

Jake: What's my best way out?

Rev: Your best way out is either from the roof — there is roof access. If you could find a way to land something there or find a way to an alternative rooftop. Or simply, the way that you came in, using the badges,

Jake: I don't know if this is like illegally asking more than the question answered, but does that imply to me that the synth guards won't care if we're taking Gregory out?

Rev: Yeah. From anything that you understand about it, that as long as you have those badges and they remain active, they will follow your directives.

Jake: Oh, OK. So I also mark another [intel] because of my move that lets me mark [intel] and then do the Assess. So dude, this seems pretty good. Feel like we've done a pretty good job prepping this.

Tass: Yeah. This world's easy and nothing bad will happen.

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: And I do think for the mixed success with the Help Out, your legwork clock does advance by 1.

Tass: Ooh, OK.

Jake: You still got a [gear], right?

Tass: I do.

Jake: So like if we decided to go out the roof, we could spend the [gear] to have something to get us off that roof.

Tass: Absolutely.

Jake: OK. And then I've got 2 [intel] now, and three research questions to use at my leisure. So do we think we're good going in with a [gear] and an [intel] in the tank?

Tass: I think we have to be.

Jake: All right.

Jake: The one other thing I can think of is do we want, like, guard uniforms. Like, something to conceal our physical identity against cameras and shit? Because even if we do a great job getting in and out, when the prisoner goes missing and they scrutinize it at all, do we want them to see Concord and Machinez, or two unknown guards?

Rev: One purple, unknown guard?

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: He wears a balaclava. And sunglasses.

Tass: I mean, that's what I could use the [gear] for, in theory, is to get us that. If we go that route, that means that exit strategy is probably just walking back out the front door again.

Jake: Yeah.

Tass: I mean, it's not like they're gonna not know the guy is gone. So, I mean, them checking cameras afterwards, whether it's us running up a stairwell and leaping off the building or walking out the front door, the result's the same. They just won't be able to necessarily track exactly who we are.

Jake: I feel like I prefer that.

Tass: OK.

Jake: Cause like that way, as long as we get out the front door, they have a colder trail to follow, you know? But like, even if we save the [gear] and we use it for a hasty rooftop exit and we get out unfettered, they'd still just be able to go, hey, we know those guys. We hate those guys. Let's go find them.

Tass: Yeah, I agree.

Jake: OK. So we'll spend that last [gear] to have the appropriate uniforms.

Rev: Yeah. I think because Codex Artillery is such an enormous presence and they require uniforms, I think that you can get two uniforms for this. If it was for one of the other factions, if it was The Bank or if it was for the Alkali Corporation, I think it would probably cost one per, because they're rare. But this is all private security, so these uniforms are probably just floating around in laundromats and stuff, too,

Jake: When you go to that store to buy your scrubs or your coveralls, you can also buy a Codex uniform.

Rev: Yeah. So describe to me, how do you get these two uniforms?

Tass: Oh, yeah. So when I was getting the stuff made by Jeff and Eddie, I obviously had this thought, and asked if they had any uniforms laying around that I could use as well.

Rev: All right.

Tass: And so I just pull those out, like Fezzik pulling out the cloak at the end of Princess Bride when they need the holocaust cloak. "I think these'll do."

Jake: "I should say so. Wow, they fit incredibly well,"

Tass: "Jeff and Eddie, man. They know what's going on."

Rev: And now you have the uniforms and the badge. Are you going to spend the [intel] and that [gear] that you talked about earlier for the cloner, to make the second badge?

Tass: Yeah, I think we need to.

Rev: So tell me the story. How do you have this cloner?

Tass: Yeah. Yes, that story. OK ...

Rev: You know, the famous Tass Acquires a Cloner story. The Cloner Wars, if you will.

Tass: [Chuckles] Oh my god. I think just up in that building going, kind of through with that break in, there's just stuff. You know, there's discarded gear and everything. And one of the things that was kind of off to the side is like a burner, kind of. Like, something that they use to copy movies and music and other random things.

Rev: Oh, at the Brick Alley Market building?

Tass: Yes, uh huh.

Rev: Oh, OK.

Tass: And so it was just kind of like discarded. Like, they use it for some of this other gear and it was just in a corner covered in dust and stuff. And I was like, well, I'm gonna swipe this, because they must have forgot that.

Rev: They had four copies of Sean Connery's The Rock next to it on burnt DVDs.

Tass: Yep.

Jake: There's just not a lot of physical media left around, so nobody really needs it anymore.

Tass: Yeah, yeah.

Rev: Yeah. All right. I'll buy that. And I think with that, you can each mark experience for finding a way into the Codex facility.

Tass: Nice.

Jake: All right. I guess it's go time.

Rev: All right. That closes up the legwork phase, and moves us into the action phase. We find the two of you in uniform, wearing your badges, approaching the building on 49th St. What are you doing?

Tass: I think just walking with purpose, you know? Trying to act like you're supposed to be there, people assume that you are supposed to be there.

Rev: So — and we kind of joked about this earlier. Aside from the uniform, what else are you wearing?

Jake: What what I know, like, makes sense. Like, do Codex guards wear balaclavas and/or goggles, or ...

Rev: I think that depends on the installation. And I think the question is, if it wasn't normal, would you still hide your face?

Jake: Yeah. Like I think we could err on the side of we've covered our faces, because the first people who are going to say, why are you doing that are the people we're gonna incapacitate anyway.

Tass: Yeah, good call.

Jake: So yeah, I think I'm wearing like a balaclava. I have genuinely been picturing that these uniforms have like a little cap. Do they have a little cap? Can they have a little cap?

Rev: Sure.

Jake: So yeah, like with like a balaclava and some goggles over it, to cover everything up.

Rev: OK.

Tass: Yeah, I think same.

Rev: All right. So Tass, this is your chance to roll Covert Entry.

Tass: OK. Ten. Thank god for these tens today.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 3. You walk up to the front door. There is a place to scan your badge as you walk through, and you pass through and it scans, and the door opens. The two of you pass through the scanner and are let into the first floor of the building. As you look around, there are a number of cameras. There are guards down here standing watch. And you head over to the elevator, and there is a place to scan as well.

Tass: We'll do it.

Rev: After a moment, the elevator dings and arrives

Jake: And we will proceed up to the 13th floor.

Rev: Yeah, you get into the elevator and you head up to the 13th floor. The door opens onto a fairly narrow corridor, and there are two synth guards standing in front of the elevator.

Jake: I'll hold up my ID badge as I start to make my way in.

Rev: They step to the side.

Tass: I'll follow.

Rev: You head down this hallway, and it takes a turn to the left. And there are two more synth guards.

Jake: And what is the ... What's left, between these synth guards and the cell? Is it just a straight hallway to a door? Do they have line of sight on the cell door?

Rev: There is a right turn, and then the door into the cell is on the right. So the cell is basically the middle of this floor.

Jake: OK. So we'll be able to get past them, and then he'll still be able to do his thing to try and disable the guards out of their line of sight.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: "All right, Jake. Hopefully everything was correct and there's only two. If so, they should only take a moment. If not, I'm going to scream for help."

Jake: "OK. Try not to scream any louder than the sound you're already making."

Tass: "Good call."

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: I'm gonna take the keycard and open the door.

Rev: Jake, what are you doing?

Jake: I am standing just kind of off to the side of the door, like as if I was guarding the door from the outside.

Rev: OK. So Tass you open this door, and there are two guards, one on either side of the room. It is a completely white room with bright lights shining down towards the middle. And sitting in the middle in an empty chair is Gregory, who NOEL showed you an image

of. They have manacles on both their arms and their legs, attached to the metal chair they are sitting in.

Tass: And so the guards are on like opposite sides of the room

Rev: From each other, yes. So it's a straight line. Guard, Gregory, Guard.

Tass: Gotcha. And about how far apart are they?

Rev: The two guards from each other are about ten feet apart.

Tass: OK. I'm gonna give them each like a curt nod. "Here for prisoner transfer."

Rev: CODEX GUARD: Since when? It wasn't on the schedule.

Tass: "They told me about five minutes ago." And I'm gonna start moving in.

Rev: CODEX GUARD: Just a second. Let me check.

Tass: I would like to use a hold for my Covert Entry and disable this guard.

Rev: Describe it to me.

Tass: I think with a quick flip of my wrist, my stun gun is in my hand, and I just have one arm around his neck and take him to the floor. And if possible, I would like to use another hold to disable a guard.

Rev: Uh huh.

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: And I want to click that stun gun down to the constant on setting and whip it over my head, so that it just hits him full in the neck.

Rev: All right. You wrap your arm around the first guard, tase him, throw it to the other guard, it hits him and knocks him to the ground. And Gregory looks up.

Rev: GREGORY: Oh. Well, that's very helpful, but be careful.

Rev: And he raises his eyes and looks over to the side of the room.

Tass: I'm gonna follow his gaze.

Rev: You see a camera there.

Tass: And there's really nothing else much in this room, is there?

Rev: Correct. Just two twitching guards, a synth in a metal chair, a purple man, and a camera.

Tass: [Laughs] I want to escape notice.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: No, I think that this is just a matter of time, now. So I am going to see if either of these guards has some kind of a key for Gregory.

Rev: They do not.

Tass: Would handcuffs be considered a security measure?

Rev: Yeah, I think so.

Tass: I would like to bypass these with my third hold, please.

Rev: Absolutely. You go over and you see the manacles are magnetic. And you walk over and you pick up your taser, and you are able to jam it down inside of the manacles, and it shorts them out and they fall to the ground.

Tass: "Hell yeah, that was cool. I'm cool."

Rev: GREGORY: Oh yes. That was very cool

Tass: "Time to get you out of here."

Rev: GREGORY: Oh, wonderful.

Rev: And he stands up and dusts off his black jacket with the tails.

Tass: "All right. We're gonna move quickly, like we're going where we're supposed to be going. But try not to draw a lot of unnecessary attention?"

Rev: GREGORY: Very well.

Tass: And I'll lead him out of the room.

Rev: All right. And he turns the corner and he sees you standing there, Jake.

Rev: GREGORY: Oh.

Tass: "He's with me."

Rev: GREGORY: Oh, very well.

Tass: "Just the two of us. If anybody else is giving you a look, that's not great, but just fly casual."

Rev: All right? And you both get a point of experience for getting Gregory out of his cell.

Tass: All right!

Rev: And as you walk him down the hallway ...

Rev: GREGORY: Would you mind if we stopped at these guards?

Rev: And you have a new mission directive. If you are willing to stop at these guards for Gregory, you will get an additional point of experience.

Tass: Can we ask why?

Rev: GREGORY: I believe it would be helpful in our future endeavors.

Tass: "Absolutely."

Rev: GREGORY: Excellent.

Rev: And so the two of you walk him down the hallway, and you get to the first set of guards right before the corner turns. And the guards step to the side so that you can pass, and Gregory back steps. And he sticks both of his hands out, and you can see that his fingertips have opened up and there are plugs on them. And he plugs into the side of both of these guards' necks, and his voice shifts a little bit. And he says ...

Rev: GREGORY: Hostile takeover initiated.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

Carolyn: The Critshow is a Critshow Studios production, edited and produced by Brandon Wentz, with music by Jake Pierle. You can find more information about us at thecritshowpodcast.com. To keep up to date with upcoming live shows, contests, and other special events, follow us at The Critshow on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. For even more weekly content, join us at Patreon.com/TheCritshow.