

Behind the Green Door (S3, E8)

SFX:

INTRO MUSIC

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

First, we want to take — first I want to take a second to give a minor content warning. In today's episode, we do dabble a little bit in drugs. It's not anything ultra serious, but we realized that it was something that has not come up in the show before. So we just wanted to give you a warning that we do encounter some characters who sell and use different kinds of drugs. So we just wanted to give you a warning on that.

Also, I wanted to take a moment to say thank you to all of you who filled out our listener survey that closed just a couple of hours ago. And I've had the opportunity to put all of you who entered into the drawing at the end of it into a random number generator and pick the winners. And our winners are Masha Paramonova, Benjamin Dawes, Ben Hart, Kelly Brown, and Seth Larimer. So I will be reaching out to all five of you through email to get your addresses so we can send you your prizes. So thank you again to everybody who answered the questionnaire. All the information is going to be very useful for us as we move forward.

And speaking of moving forward, this is actually the last time I will be recording anything in our current space. We are moving into a new location tomorrow. Actually, as some of you are listening to this episode, we'll be moving right now. And while I'm very excited about the new space we're going to be recording in, it's also kind of strange to be leaving this one, because so much has happened here. This is the place where we all signed the paperwork when we turned The Critshow into an actual business. This is the place where we came up with the idea for Tales from the Omniverse, Perilous Tides ... This is the table that we all sat around as we watched the numerous auditions that were submitted. And we have sat at this table and played games with so many different creators from the gaming industry. And all of that is because of you, all of you who listen and support the show. We would not be where we are without you. So I guess as I'm packing up everything here and moving on to our new space, I just wanted to take a moment and say thank you. I have had some of the best memories of my life in this room

with these people around this table. And it's all thanks to you. So thank you for joining us here every week, and it's time to let the the recap roll.

SFX:

RECAP MUSIC

Rev: And you see you walking over to the car. And he climbs inside and sits down and starts it, and there's an explosion. After a moment he comes spilling out of the wreckage. He is on fire, and he starts rolling around on the ground trying to put himself out when a black van pulls up and four people jump out, throw a blanket over him, and it seems like they're helping put out the flames. But then one of them pulls out a large taser and hits the blanket with it. The four pick up the now still figure wrapped in the blanket and toss him into the back of the van and drive away.

Rev: NOEL: The location that you will have to break into is called The Nest, and it is located on the 123rd floor of one of the main branches of the Alkali Corporation. The information that I have been able to find also indicates that it is entirely synth guards, with the exception of one operator who has remote access to the synth guards. The one guard who has control over them is in fact a live-in guard, and does not leave The Nest.

Jake: Do some research on Peregrine, to see if I can find out a weak spot in his armor.

Rev: And what you see is a man dressed all in black, with two long blades protruding from his forearms. In the picture, there are half a dozen dead bodies scattered around the room, and he is covered in blood and gore. But he's smiling at the camera. And the info you find attached to this photo indicates that this photo was taken in the aftermath of the first attempted break-in of The Nest.

SFX:

RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: So on your initial search of Peregrine K, you found a bunch of old redacted files, but you were eventually able to discover that he was retired after having worked for Codex Artillery, and that his body count is enormous. And as an illustration of that, the most recent photo you found of him shows him surrounded by the corpses of a team of six who tried to break into The Nest. So roll your Research.

Jake: Nine.

Rev: All right. So you take a point of [intel], and I will answer one question.

Jake: I think in looking for like a gap in his armor, something that he's got a connection to, you know, that we might be able to use to get to him, I'm gonna go with who or what is related to Peregrine K?

Rev: So the thing that you find as you go through these old files about Peregrine K is a constant money transfer between them and someone with the name 00Serum.

Jake: That's a cool name. Is the money only going one way?

Rev: It is. From Peregrine to 00Serum. And it happens every week, and it has for the last 15 years.

Tass: "OK. Well, what do we want to do with that?"

Jake: "I don't know. I mean, Peregrine certainly is not the pushover tech that I was hoping they were going to be. So I mean, my first thought is like 00Serum is a family member, is a kid or something to whom they send an allowance. I don't know. And that is pretty damn dark, that we might leverage the kid against this person. But we can always find out who they are. It just seems pretty messed up to involve like a totally innocent — maybe totally innocent civilian in this."

Tass: "Well, while I agree on principle, it would be bluffing."

Jake: "Yeah." Is there ... I don't know if I need to roll another Research, or is there any just accessible information on who 00Serum is?

Rev: You would have to roll to Research.

Jake: [Laughs] Fuck. So much — I get so much [intel]. Oh, I'm gonna fail eventually ...

Tass: No, you won't!

Jake: [Laughs] That was Bardic Inspiration.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: I get to add a d4 to my roll.

Tass: Yes, you do.

Jake: Well, I wanna learn some stuff about OOSerum.

Rev: All right. Roll Research.

Jake: Nine.

Rev: All right. You get another [intel], and I will answer your question.

Jake: Where would I find them?

Rev: So as you search around for information on OOSerum, pretty quickly you find a bunch of social media with photos of them hanging out at the club called The Green Door.

Jake: What do they look like?

Rev: They have got what you recognize pretty quickly as a set of cyber eyes. They have got very short green hair, and they have a bunch of piercings on their nose and ears, and one in the cheek. And they are dressed in very brightly colored leathers.

Jake: Just kind of following my hunch from, you know, like the timeline and the photo I've got of Peregrine and the photo of this person and how old they seem to be, does it stand to reason that this could be a child of Peregrine?

Rev: It does. They seem to be in their late 20s. And the photo you found of Peregrine K seems like they're in their late 30s, and that photo's about 12 years old.

Jake: "I think there's some merit to the theory of this being his kid. I mean, at least age-wise, it could match up. If he never leaves, I don't know what other business he would really have with ... Just seems to be a partygoer."

Tass: "Yeah. OK, so what do we do then? Do we go scope them out?"

Jake: "Yeah, we could go stake them out. I mean, they've got cyber eyes — you can see in the photo. So I guess they could do what I do. Maybe Peregrine pays them to, like, look into people who potentially want to use The Nest or something? They could be more of a threat than I'm originally anticipating, here."

Tass: "Yeah, fair. OK."

Jake: "No matter what, I don't think we learn anything more, unless we go follow them around."

Tass: "Sounds good to me."

Rev: Are you both going?

Tass: I'm torn, here. Because again, just us being out at all is rough. But you're just ... You're gonna be better at staking somebody out. But I'm gonna be better at staying under the radar. And we don't want to get spotted, especially with you having, well, sort of been kidnapped by another group.

Jake: And I guess just rolling through my memories, it seems like the type of world where everybody ... Like, this is just the kind of thing that people do. And, you know, he's kind of curmudgeonly. I don't think he's much of a party person, but I bet that when the crew goes out, they go somewhere like this and he goes along. I guess — I guess I just don't know if it would be this one. You know, if this is like the hottest club in town? Maybe.

Rev: It certainly is one of the top tier clubs.

Jake: I feel like we probably go to this place. Like if this is one of the hottest clubs and we are slick, young ... We're the Fast and Furious crew. Like, we probably go to the hot clubs, which means that I probably shouldn't be the one to go to this, because if anyone

there knows that I've been taken, it would be weird. But you could maybe just be there, you know? You at least aren't missing in action to the world.

Tass: Yeah. Yeah, I think you're right.

Rev: So describe to me, how are you gonna go to this club? Are you going in as a patron? Are you just trying to scope out the outside? What are you doing?

Tass: I think I'm gonna break into this place and try to stay hidden.

Rev: All right. So I think we're gonna jump across town to outside of The Green Door. A loud beat fills the street around this club. There are neon lights glowing in the night. There are a couple of drunk people outside, yelling and cheering. And there is a line to get inside. So how are you approaching? What's your plan?

Tass: I think that I'm just going through my memory banks of if we have been here before, I would at least know the layout a little bit. And I think I would want my approach to be, you know, kind of a side door or like a second story window, or just something that isn't trying to walk in the front door. I want to find the weak point and sneak in, and stay low in the shadows.

Rev: All right, roll Assess.

Tass: Seven.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 1.

Tass: What's my best way in?

Rev: So as you get to the back of this line, you think the best way in would be down the alley next to the right side of the building, there is an old fire escape that goes up to the third floor. And you know that the third floor is where the elevator is that actually leads up to the club proper, about 20 stories higher.

Tass: Outstanding. I will head that way.

Rev: All right. So I think at this point, it's time to roll Covert Entry.

Tass: Excellent.

Rev: And you do get a +1 because of your Assess.

Tass: Oof. It was a seven, up to an eight.

Rev: OK. Describe to me how you get into the building.

Tass: I think that this is a very fast climb up this fire escape. You know, it's just a matter of timing, of just really keeping an eye out towards the street, towards the line of people especially that are all crowding to get in. And taking those moments when vehicles are going by and lights are flashing and things like that, and just pacing it so that I am moving in the darkness and holding still when anything else is going on, so that they won't catch this movement.

Rev: So you climb into the window, and it is an old broken down apartment building that you are in the base of. There are doors knocked off of the frames, and you can see neon lights running up the stairs just outside of this door. But you can actually see that there are two guards standing in front of a large elevator door that is painted green. You can also see that there are some speakers running down the hall that these stairs are in, and that is where that beat is coming from. And after maybe five or six seconds of watching, you hear a ding, and the elevator opens and three people come off. And you hear people coming up the stairs — that they are admitting some new folks.

Tass: I have a question for you.

Rev: Yeah?

Tass: With the exception of the sort of the neon lights that are kind of running up with the stairs and stuff, is it extremely well lit?

Rev: It is not.

Tass: OK. I want to use that darkness in this hallway as the two groups are passing, that's when I slip from the window and kind of meld with the groups. So that when I kind of come out with a group heading towards the elevator, it might not be clear to the guards how many people were coming out of the stairs and how many had just left the elevator and so on. Does that sort of makes sense?

Rev: Yeah, no, I think that tracks. I think that it is a smooth enough transition for you that even if for a moment it seems like an extra person is with them, the guards would assume that one of the people turned around and decided not to leave.

Tass: OK, yeah, I'll take it.

Rev: Yeah. So you get into this very large elevator with these other three people. The doors close, and there are mirrors everywhere and pulsing music. And as the elevator goes up, the music gets louder and louder, and it's more of something that you feel in your bones as the elevator just starts to jar with this pulse. And after a moment, the elevator doors open. And in front of you is three stories of catwalks and balconies, people dancing, flashing lights. You see bars on every level, big TV screens. The floor is pulsing and shifting colors. It is a party, literally and figuratively, on every level.

Tass: All right. I just want to hunt for someplace comfortable that I can see a lot of ground, and try to find the person from the image.

Rev: So you get to the third floor and make your way out onto a balcony that looks down over the main dance floor. And pretty quickly you are able to spot OOSerum. They are almost in the same spot that a lot of the photos you had seen on the social media that Jake had pulled up. And the first thing that you notice is that there's a huge mirrored wall in front of them. And so they were not taking those selfies with a camera. They were using their cyber eyes.

Tass: OK, nice.

Rev: But yeah, they are dancing and drinking. Lots of people come and go from them, and they hug and embrace and pat on the shoulder or kiss on the cheek, and people part. It seems to be a lot of traffic to and from OOSerum.

Tass: OK. I want to watch them and kind of see what their patterns are and who all they talk to, and see if there's really anything more going on than just, you know, somebody out partying.

Rev: All right. Roll Assess.

Tass: That is a twelve.

Rev: You get a hold 3.

Tass: What do I notice, despite an effort to conceal it?

Rev: So in the course of the fifteen minutes that you watch OOSerum, easily three dozen people come up and have a word with them, pat them on the shoulder. And you notice that part of that greeting, no matter who it is, always has a very specific component where their hands come together and come away in fists. And it's not until maybe the twenty, twenty first time that you see this, you notice that as the person walks away, they still have that fist made, and they pop something into their mouth.

Tass: OK. Could I figure who's in control here?

Rev: Pretty quickly, you get the sense that OOSerum is in control here. Even though their name is not attached to this club, you notice there are three or four well-concealed guards dancing near them. And every now and then you see someone approach, and a hand shoots out from one of these people dancing and pushes them away, and they don't get to approach OOSerum.

Tass: OK. This might be too specific for this situation, but I'm gonna run it past you. You know, with the idea of this person being connected to Peregrine K, is there something about that that sticks out to me where I could ask, how are they vulnerable to me?

Rev: So really, you think that the way that OOSerum is vulnerable to you is even in just this 15 minutes of observation, you can tell they are money hungry. Like at one point there is a disagreement that seems to happen, and the person that OOSerum is arguing with indicates towards their own The Bank bracelet and holds it up and points at it. And

00Serum slowly nods agreement, and then they bump bracelets together. And I think that you know that that is a way to do an instant money transfer.

Tass: Oh, OK.

Jake: Imagine just jostling through the crowd and running your bracelet into other people's bracelets and hoping at the end of the night that you got more withdrawals than deposits.

Rev: That's how a lot of the pickpockets work here in The Sprawl.

Tass: Oh my god ...

Rev: They just — because normally you have to will it to activate. You know, it scans your fingerprint. But you can just set it to auto. And they just run through the crowd, hoping someone else has set theirs on auto by accident.

Tass: That's a good band name

Rev: Auto by Accident?

Tass: Yep.

Jake: O-T-T-O.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: OK. So I think what I want to do is spot one of the people that I saw come up to do an exchange with them. And yeah, just make my way to them to try and have a little conversation.

Jake: Yeah, no problem. You saw 30, 40 over the last 15 minutes, and most of them didn't go far away and just started dancing and drinking. So you can certainly find a group of them.

Tass: Yeah, OK, I'll come up to one of the little groups, I guess.

Rev: You come up to of these groups and this younger woman looks at you and is like ...

Rev: CLUB GIRL: Oh my gosh, I love your skin.

Tass: "Oh, thanks. It helps me dance."

Rev: CLUB GIRL: Oh. That's weird. Why?

Tass: "Oh, it's just, uh ... It's the wires they put in. It lets me move with fluidity."

Rev: CLUB GIRL: Ah, yes.

Tass: Um, I kind of nod in Serum's direction. "Hey, are they selling like an array of things, or just something specific?"

Rev: CLUB GIRL: Oh no. Just the good stuff. Just the one thing.

Tass: "All right. What's the good thing tonight?" [Laughs] Come up with some drugs, Rev!

Rev: "What's the good thing tonight?" I'm more responding, it's like —

Jake: You fucking narc, get out of here!

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I think they respond with, "Are you a cop? If you're a cop, you legally have to tell me."

All: [Laugh]

Rev: Yeah, but I think they do ... Like, at that question, their gaze sours on you for a moment.

Rev: CLUB GIRL: What do you mean, what's the good thing tonight?

Tass: "I, uh ... I don't usually partake. But I'm just kind of branching out, feeling good tonight, and I don't know ... I don't know if they do something different, or if it's always the same, or what."

Rev: Roll Fast Talk.

Tass: OK. Yes. Eleven.

Rev: Yeah. So she reaches into a pocket on her skirt, and she pulls out a small strip with a couple of multicolored dots on it. And she peels one off and puts it in her mouth.

Rev: CLUB GIRL: It's the same thing he sells every night. Makes this place look like whatever you want it to. Right now I'm dancing on clouds. You're all unicorns.

Jake: Did you just describe that candy that you can only get at like Cracker Barrel?

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: She pulls out a pack of Necco Wafers. "Let's get fucked up! I've got black licorice and Necco, what do you want tonight?"

Rev: Ugh, I threw up in my mouth.

Tass: Do you want some of these tan peanut gummies?

All: [Laugh]

Tass: I got some of those in the back! OK. "Well I see you've obviously got some. Worth the price?"

Rev: CLUB GIRL: Yeah. You want one?

Tass: [Quietly] Mmhmm ...

Rev: [Laughs]

Tass: "No, I'll go get — I don't want to take yours. I'll go get a stash. How long does it last?"

Rev: CLUB GIRL: Depends on how much you're sweating. Like if you got a lot of sweat build up, it comes out pretty quick. Usually this time of night, this crowded, I'll buy like a dozen. It'll get me through three or four hours.

Tass: "Oh, OK."

Rev: I don't know why I'm dancing.

Jake: Yeah, Rev's just grooving behind the microphone to stay in character.

Tass: "How much ... Like, how much was your dozen?"

Rev: And she tells you the amount. And the amount that it costs for this drug, quickness with which she tells you that it burns through your system, seems to match up. That what Peregrine K is sending to OOSerum seems like it would cover about a week's worth of this drug, if you were taking it on the reg.

Tass: OK. That ... That is what I was looking for. I think I turn and I go.

Rev: All right.

Tass: OK. I think I'm going to just go find ... Well, I almost said 'a quiet corner.'

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: I don't think there is one. But just a secluded area where I can send a message to Jake. And I want to send him, "I found them. I know what they're doing. I think we need to follow them."

Rev: And I assume this message is a video of you pantomiming that.

Tass: Yes.

Rev: In the dance club.

Tass: Because it's too loud for me to say it, yeah.

Jake: I will respond. "Sounds like a plan. Should I meet you there? And if so, when?"

Tass: I'll send back, "Come here now and stay outside. I'll track them from here, and let you know when they move."

Jake: All right. I'll start heading that direction. And I will stay, like, not even in front of the club. Like, I will stay away. Somewhere in the shadow in an alley a block away, or something like that, waiting for word.

Tass: OK. While I'm waiting for him to make his way, I just — I wanna try to stay secluded, and kind of keep sending him texts about everything I found. You know, I'm sending, "Hey, this drug is some kind of hallucinogen that makes you see a different environment. And it's very clear that Serum is selling Peregrine that stuff, because the payments match up with how much this costs. So if that's the case, then maybe we can do something to those shipments maybe, so that it like puts Peregrine out of commission." And I'm just kind of giving him all these ... Yeah, just those little kind of details about the prices and all of that, just to lay out exactly what I think Serum is doing. But that's the big thing is, I'm not sure how those shipments are being sent or any of that. So, you know, I think we need to follow Serum to get that information and figure out how we can deal with the drug.

Rev: Yeah, I guess if we can follow them and talk to them or intimidate them or something, we could maybe get them to spike the drugs with like a major sedative? Like maybe just knock Peregrine out ... [Laughs] For a week? Jesus ...

Tass: Yeah. I mean, something like that is exactly what I'm thinking.

Rev: You're gonna try to drug the drugs.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: Drugception.

Rev: Hey man, I heard you like drugs. So ...

Jake: We put a drug in your drugs.

Rev: We put a drug into your drugs.

Tass: Yeah. I mean, it's worth a try.

Jake: I certainly don't see why not.

Rev: I think a decent amount of time passes, because you are closing this club down. But we wind the clock forward three, four hours, and they are starting to ... Not remove people, but walk people out, as it seems simple to in their states. Just the kind of the suggestion of, "Oh, yeah, we should go outside and get some fresh air." And you can see that no one is being admitted back in. And as this is starting to wind down, you see that the four dancers you noticed around 00Serum kind of get together and start to have a little bit of a chat. And 00Serum actually goes over to the giant wall mirror and taps it, and a door opens and they step inside. But you see the four guards nod in agreement. Two of the guards start to follow 00Serum, and the other two head towards the front, towards the elevator.

Tass: I'm going to send a message to Jake, saying, "Two of the four guards just split off and went out the main entrance, and the other two followed them out like a glass door. They might be going out a back way. I'll try to follow them. Try to find the back entrance so that we can pinch them."

Jake: I will say, "OK." And I will start making a course for the not main side of the building, to look around for a door that leads out.

Rev: All right. So Tass, as you head over to the mirrored door to follow them, roll Covert Entry.

Tass: OK. Nine.

Rev: So you make your way to the door, and you can see the fingerprints where it was tapped. And a simple push on it does click the mirror, and the door swings open.

Tass: OK. I'm gonna stay low, try to stay quiet, and make tracks.

Rev: You can actually hear some talking in this hallway. Behind this mirrored door is a fairly long hallway that you can see ends in a set of stairs going down.

Tass: OK. Yeah. for the moment, since I'm still on my own, I think I'm just gonna try to stay close and follow.

Rev: So Jake, you head over the block towards the back side of The Green Door. Why don't you roll Assess to try to scope out this area?

Jake: Ten.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 3.

Jake: I'm gonna start with what do I notice, despite an effort to conceal it?

Rev: There is a old broken down door that has the door hanging off of the hinges, but you can see that the darkness behind that door is actually the door.

Jake: Oh. With the knowledge that we're trying to actually, like, ambush these people on their way out, I'm gonna ask where can I gain the most advantage?

Rev: So I think that the place that you could get the most advantage would probably be inside of the door. Because you notice that this alley is wide enough to fit a car, and there are cameras up as well.

Jake: And finally, what potential complication do I need to be wary of?

Rev: Tass had told you that there were four guards with OOSerum and that two had split off. With this area being wide enough to hold a car, it's safe to assume that what they're doing is pulling the car around to pick them up. And if they don't come out within a minute or so, they're gonna get curious and come inside.

Jake: OK. I will pull out my stun gun and tuck myself away inside the door to wait.

Rev: The door is not open.

Jake: Is it open-able?

Rev: How are you trying to open it, I think is the question that begs to be asked.

Jake: It does, doesn't it?

Rev: [Chuckles]

Jake: I mean, I think I'm gonna give the door handle, if there is a door handle.

Rev: Yeah, there isn't a door handle, except on the fake door.

Jake: OK, so what would be the opening mechanism for this door?

Rev: You think it might be inside. Or else it's something magnetic or mechanical that if you would scan with it, that would open from this side.

Jake: I'm gonna text Tass to let him know that. Like, "Hey, I found the door. It's kind of hidden. Once they pull the car around, if I'm outside, I'll be spotted, but I can't figure out a way in."

Tass: OK. I'll send back, "We'll try to pinch him right when they open that door, then."

Rev: And about that time, Jake, you see lights filling the alleyway.

Jake: I send a hurried text. "How close are you?"

Rev: And I think as you're sending that text, this car starts to pull up towards the door and starts honking at you. And you can see that it's hovering about five inches off of the ground.

Jake: They're honking at me?

Rev: Yeah, cause you're standing in front of the doorway, still.

Jake: Yeah. OK. I'm gonna, like, shield my eyes from the light and just, like, grumble and stumble around a little bit. [Drunkenly grumbles] "Uh ... Stop shining that in my face."

Rev: And the car stops, and you see the wheels turn out from underneath so that it then lands on the tires. And the guard in the passenger side seat gets out and starts heading towards you.

Rev: GUARD: Come on. You gotta get out of here. This is no place for you to be bumming around.

Jake: [Slurring] "Who are you calling a bum? I'm no bum. Suck it."

Rev: And he gets closer to you and puts hands on you, and is gonna try to move you away.

Jake: [Slurring] "Leave me alone. Just let me sleep. I don't want — I just ... I just want to sleep." I want to just kind of start to like slide down into just a pile of whatever is on the ground out here. Like, this is going to be my bed.

Rev: I think roll Fast Talk. When you try to convince someone to do what you want with promises, lies, or bluster, roll Style. And so I think that this is bluster — trying to convince him you're gonna go to sleep and to leave you alone.

Jake: Yep. Eight.

Tass: OK!

Rev: All right. So on a mixed success, they will do what you want, but I will advance the appropriate countdown clock. So I think your legwork clock goes up by one. You're making some noise around places that are somehow connected to Peregrine K.

Jake: OK.

Rev: But yeah, after a moment, he takes his hands off of you and just kind of grunts and walks back towards the car.

Jake: OK. And I'm just gonna kind of lay down like real close to the door, in the hopes that when it opens, I'm at it before they are.

Rev: All right. So inside, Tass, you are about three floors above the two other guards and 00Serum, and you can hear them chatting as they walk down twenty some flights of stairs.

Tass: Yeah. I'm just following, and I want to try to make progress so that I'm getting closer as we go.

Rev: I think roll Act Under Pressure to get closer to them without being noticed.

Tass: OK. And I've got stealth gear on for that, so that helps me too.

Rev: Nice.

Tass: My +2 gets me right to a six.

Rev: So you have been sending a lot of texts throughout the course of this sneak, and your phone slips out of your hand and you hear it clatter down the metal stairs, just hitting about every other one. And the chatter below you stops. You hear the sound of guns being cocked.

Tass: No ...

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: [Chuckles] No ... Uh, I think being many floors up inside and out of contact, I'm trying a very similar thing to Jake. [Slurring] "Oh my god. I dropped my phone. Did you guys know there's a door in the glass? Who is that?"

Rev: And you hear two heavy sets of footsteps pounding up the stairs in your direction.

Tass: I think then I'm just kind of looking down, going, "Whoa, whoa! You guys have guns!"

Rev: 00SERUM GUARD: Yeah. We're gonna use them, if you don't turn around. Get out of here. What are you doing?

Tass: "I didn't mean to. Can you give me my phone back?"

Rev: Yeah, one of the guards stops and picks up your phone as the other one continues up towards you.

Tass: OK. I would like to disable a guard, please.

Rev: Yeah, so this guard comes up onto the level that you're on. Describe it to me.

Tass: Man ... Maybe I don't use my hold quite yet. I think I still want to try to keep up this clumsy persona. As he comes up I want to, like, trip into him somehow. Like just stumble, so that I clash into him.

Rev: So I think this is gonna be a Mix It Up.

Tass: I will give it a try. Can I sell you on the skill wire of martial arts as like trying to do this artfully? Like drunken master shit, to make it be like throwing him off?

Rev: Yeah, I think so.

Tass: OK. Here we go. Eleven.

Rev: Yeah. So describe this to me.

Tass: As he's coming up, gun drawn, I'm like coming down the steps with my hands up, just kind of clumsy, skipping a step kind of gait, trying to get to him to like talk to him. Just seeming kind of blustering. And when I'm within a few steps, I quote unquote "miss" a step and go into a roll so that I'm ducked down below his line of fire, take his legs out

from under him. And as I'm like grabbing to, again, quote unquote "steady him," I'm just bringing him down a little harder to clip his temple against the step.

Rev: Yeah, there is a wet thud as you hit his head on the ground, and he falls unconscious. And you hear the person who was picking up your phone ...

Rev: 00SERUM GUARD: Hey, you all right?

Tass: [Slurring] "Oh my god, he fell! Oh, my god. Come help him up!"

Rev: Roll Fast Talk.

Tass: OK. Oh, no!

Jake: No!

Tass: And this is where it goes south, with my snake eyes.

Rev: So as you yell down the stairs for him to come up and help his friend, you can see through the grated stairs that they actually reach into their coat pocket and push something. And Jake, outside at this moment, both the guards, you see something inside the car pulse twice, and they both get out and start walking towards the door.

Jake: I do nothing. I'm gonna wait until they get that door open and maybe on the way inside, so I can sneak in behind them and ambush.

Rev: OK. One of them walks over and places their hand on the blackness behind the door, and you see a scan and then it clicks open. And as they're doing that, the other one is drawing a sidearm. And they get the door opened, and they both start to step inside.

Jake: OK. As soon as the second one crosses the threshold, I want to sneak in behind him and hit him with the stun gun to try and knock him out.

Rev: Yeah. So I think this will be an Act Under Pressure to get over there and get in before the door closes and hit them.

Jake: Five.

Rev: So you get up and you sprint towards the open door, and you come barreling around the corner of the door to go inside. And the man who had drawn his firearm, who you had previously convinced that you were a very tired drunkard, is facing you with that gun aimed at you, and it roars. So Jake, you take 2 harm. So roll the harm move: when you suffer harm, even 0 harm or stunning harm, lower the harm suffered by the level of your armor, if any, and fill in a number segment on your harm clock equal to the remaining harm, and then roll harm suffered. And so you'll roll 2d6 +, I believe, 1, because you have 1 armor, correct?

Jake: So I have armored clothing, which is technically armor 0, but it gives me the ability to subtract one when rolling the harm move. So I still fill in the number of segments, but I roll as if I had taken one less.

Rev: All right, so fill in two spots on your harm clock, but roll 2d6 + 1.

Jake: That's snake eyes.

Rev: That's good, in this case. Because 10+ you choose one: you're out of action — unconscious, trapped, incoherent, or panicked; take the full harm of the attack before it was reduced by armor; lose the use of a piece of cyberwear until you can get it repaired; lose a body part ...

Jake: Whoa.

Rev: And then on a 7 to 9, I would choose: you lose your footing, you lose your grip on whatever you're holding, you lose track of someone or something you're attending to, someone gets the drop on you. So in this case, nothing additional happens except for the damage that you took. So you've been knocked backwards against this car. The guard turns their back on you to continue with the threat that they know is on the stairs. But you are in your right mind. You are clear headed. What do you want to do?

Jake: Is the door still open?

Rev: For the moment, it is.

Jake: Is it the car still running?

Rev: It is.

Jake: I'm gonna get in the driver's seat and I'm just gonna try to plow it into the doorframe. I don't know how much of it I'll break through, but at the very least, this should cause some startle.

Rev: All right. Roll Act Under Pressure to spin this car around and drive it into the building, into the doorframe.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: So you can do this. You can slam the car into this doorframe and the hallway that they are in, but the guard who was dealing with you a moment ago is going to notice, and is gonna turn and react. It's going to take you a moment to do it. Or, it's gonna cause some structural damage to the building.

Jake: I think the guard that shot me is gonna notice. He seems pretty on the ball, so.

Rev: So describe this to me.

Jake: I hop in the driver's seat and I think, like, gun it backwards at a sharp of an angle as I can to get it turned around, and probably clip some of the opposite wall, and then turn the wheel as far as I can to get it facing the door, and just floor it. And try to relax, as the impact comes.

Rev: This guard spins and, again, fires at the car as it speeds towards him. But you know in this world that OOSerum is an important person. The windshield doesn't even crack as the bullets hit. And you plow through the stone of the building, and you hear three distinct thumps as you plow into and through the hallway of the back entrance.

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.