

Crit or Treat 2020 (S3, E18)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hey, everybody. Just a quick reminder before we get into this week's episode, that we have the costume contest, the deadline for that is November the 1st. If you submit your costume to us through email at thecast@thecritshowpodcast.com, we will enter your name into a drawing for a leather dice box and a set of custom dice. And if your photo has our logo or somehow related to our show, will enter your name twice into that drawing. And then I'd also like you all to do me a favor and stay tuned after this episode for a couple of special announcements. And with that, it's on to the episode.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: Here you all stand outside of what should be Lindsay the lab technician's house. She's standing on the sidewalk next to you, rubbing her arms in disbelief, trying to stay warm.

Rev: LINDSAY: And I just ... I got home, and this is ... This is all that was here.

Rev: And where her house should be is just a dense thicket of trees.

Tass: "Holy shit."

Rev: LINDSAY: I'm afraid to go inside. I ... I don't know what it'll be. I mean, last Halloween was fine, was safe. And so we thought we could ... We could celebrate again this year. And I ... I was on the Eye of Ra for the last week. I was helping them install some systems. And Neil, he told me that he was gonna set up. So I don't even know. He said it was gonna be a surprise. I don't even know what's in there.

Tass: "It's OK. We'll go in, we'll figure out what's going on, we'll make sure everybody's safe and we will get them out. OK?"

Rev: LINDSAY: OK.

Jake: "Do we think it's the genie situation again? Do you think we're gonna transform when we go in?"

Megan: "What?"

Jake: "Sorry. Megan, last time this happened, a genie made everything what it appeared to be, decorations-wise. So we were all transformed into the characters that we were dressed as for Halloween."

Megan: "Transformed how?"

Jake: "Like, became an actual version of what we were dressed as. So I was dressed as Pinheaded from Hellraiser, and I became Pinhead from Hellraiser."

Megan: "OK, wait. So did you still think you were yourself? Like, as Jake? Or did you think you were actually Pinhead?"

Jake: "Uh, sometimes I was overtaken. But no, for the most part, I knew who I was."

Megan: "Man, that sounds really intense."

Tass: "It was."

Megan: "So if that's gonna happen again, you think we should plan ahead and dress up in a costume that would be helpful if we transformed into it?"

Jake: "Maybe. Maybe we could weaponize that. Maybe we could use that to our advantage."

Tass: "At the very least, we look really cool and walk in and can do whatever we do anyway."

Jake: [Laughs] "That's true."

Tass: Can I try to open my Sight as I look at this place, to see if ... I don't know, if that would help me in any way to analyze what this is, to see if it looks or feels familiar, the way it did before.

Rev: So I don't think there's a roll here, because you didn't have your special sight the last time you encountered this. But you do open up your Sight, and it is clearly very magical and it's fluctuating a bit, and it is contained to this crop of trees. But it almost seems like it's starting to bleed out further, like it goes out, in the time that you're watching, it may be another foot. And you see a smaller tree crop up, like it seems like the area is getting bigger.

Tass: "Did you guys see that? Did you see that? It's spreading."

Jake: "It's noticeably spreading?"

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "That's fast."

Tass: "We either need to plan quick, or go now."

Jake: "Um ... Text me what you want to be. I'll be right back." I'm gonna teleport to a Spirit Halloween store.

Rev: [Laughs]

Megan: Yeah, I text him.

Tass: Same.

Rev: So Jake has vanished to a Spirit Halloween. You have both texted him. You've all gone your separate ways to get dressed. What does Lindsay see, as you all come from around your various changing locations?

Tass: The Green Ranger.

Rev: Good, good.

Megan: I'm dressed as Bubbles from Powerpuff Girls.

Tass: Yes.

Jake: Awesome. I am Batman.

Rev: Oh, which one?

Jake: Animated series Batman.

Rev: LINDSAY: OK. So should I just wait here, or do you want me to come in too? Or ...

Tass: "I think wait here. And if you see this growing more and more, do whatever you can to get people out of houses and stuff. Get them away from it."

Rev: LINDSAY: Yeah. Yeah, I'll call Margaret. I called you first because, I mean, you guys — you experienced this before. I'll call Margaret and get a containment team, if it seems to be growing.

Tass: "Perfect." And I give the other two a shrug, and turn and start walking towards the tree line.

Jake: Same.

Megan: "Is this what happened last time? You said it was like a haunted house?"

Tass: "Yeah. It wasn't like this. I mean, there wasn't a forest like this. But, you know, it was obvious that something was going on, so ... You're ready for your first real mission?"

Megan: "Yep. Yep, sure am. Yep."

Rev: All right. So the three of you step into this small cluster of trees. And it is dark, but you feel something wash over you as you pass through. And I think you all instinctively turn around to look back towards Lindsay, and it's just forest as far as you can see.

Jake: OK. But do I feel like Batman?

Rev: You don't feel any different, dressed in these costumes,

All: [Laugh]

Megan: So I'm freezing, obviously.

Jake: "Uh ... This is embarrassing."

Tass: "Just come on, just press on. Let's go."

Jake: [Laughs] "I didn't bring my sword."

Rev: Yeah, I imagine right now Tass is armed with the Green Ranger's dagger.

Tass: Yep.

Rev: And Megan, did you bring your salt shaker?

Megan: Yeah. I don't think I am letting that out of my sight.

Rev: Yeah, that's fair. So you're all taking stock of what you do and you don't have, and you start walking through the woods. And Tass and Jake, you notice that your comms are dead. Out of the corner of your eye, you spot someone following you, about thirty feet back. And you all turn to look to see who is there, and it's hard to make out because it's so dark.

SFX: PERCUSSION PLAYS UNDER NARRATION

Rev: But you see that there's a man standing there — very muscular, no shoes, no shirt — and he gets down on all fours and starts sprinting at you. And for a brief moment, he passes through the moonlight in the trees, and you can see the figure sprinting at you ... Is Shia LaBeouf.

Megan: [Gasps] Oh my god!

Jake: [Laughs]

SFX: CRIT OR TREAT MUSIC

Rev: So welcome, everybody, to Crit or Treat 2020. Before we go a single step further, the first thing I have to do is give a thank you. Two, actually. The first is to thank Rob Cantor. I reached out to him after I had written this mystery, not expecting to hear back from him. And he wrote back, and gave us permission to use his story. So you will hear the actual song connected to this. In case you're wondering, what the hell was that intro? Why are they fighting Shia LaBeouf? Do me a favor: don't Google it. Join us for the ride. By the end of the episode, it'll be perfectly clear.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: So thank you again to Rob Cantor for granting us permission to use his music in this episode. And second, I want to thank one of our patrons, Joseph M. I had written this mystery, and then Joseph posted a very similar mystery on our Patreon GM Discord channel. And I read through it, and it had some mechanics in it that I really liked. And I messaged them, to ask if it would be OK if I incorporated that into my mystery. I will say now, after hearing from Rob Cantor, I did rewrite actually the entire structure of the mystery. But even so, I did want to thank Joseph for allowing me to use some of his mechanics — even though I'm not using his mechanics, or the ones I had originally written, anymore. So thank you for that.

And real quick before we get into this, just in case you happen to be listening to our show for the first time because of this song, a little back story. Two years ago on Halloween, someone who works for the IPT called our team for help in decorating for a haunted house competition. They decorated the house. They made a big map of it. They set up different rooms. They made basically a plot that went through about some kind of cult that was sacrificing people. And the daughter, Jayna, had gotten a lamp for her costume, and it turned out the lamp was an actual genie's lamp. And she made the wish that she wished everything was real, and so everyone became the things they were dressed as. And the haunted house became this actual scenario that they had to get through. At the end of the story, once they had gotten to the end and freed everybody,

Jayna told them very proudly that she had learned a lesson from one of her favorite movies, and that for her last wish, she had wished the genie free. So the genie has been in the wind for the last two years. And I think that should bring you up to speed for where we find them now.

SFX: CRIT OR TREAT MUSIC

Rev: So the three of you are standing in this dark woods. And as this figure gets down and starts to sprint at you, you hear this music emanating all around you.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE WALKING IN THE WOODS
THERE'S NO ONE AROUND, AND YOUR PHONE IS DEAD
OUT OF THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE, YOU SPOT HIM
SHIA LABEOUF

Tass: "Son of a bitch! Run! Run, run, run!" And I turn on a heel, and start running the opposite direction.

Megan: "Shit!" Yeah, I'm tearing off as fast as I can. This is terrifying. [Laughs]

Jake: I guess I follow.

Rev: And as you run, you hear, again, this music around you.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

HE'S FOLLOWING YOU, ABOUT 30 FEET BACK
HE GETS DOWN ON ALL FOURS AND BREAKS INTO A SPRINT
HE'S GAINING ON YOU
SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: Everybody, roll Act Under Pressure.

Megan: [Through muffled laughter] This shit! Oh my god ...

Tass: Twelve.

Jake: Nine.

Megan: Seven.

Rev: You all turn and scatter as Shia runs towards you. Megan and Jake, you've got a couple of options, here. You can stay with Tass, who seems to be running through a clear path in the forest, but you're gonna take a little damage. Or, you're gonna get separated in the trees.

Jake: Is this a joint decision, or an individual decision?

Rev: I think this could be an individual decision.

Jake: I'll take a hit.

Megan: I think I would have tried to go more to the side, and get out of his direct path. So yeah, I think I'm getting separated.

Jake: So Jake, you take one point of damage as Shia slashes you with a knife. And as he gets this close to you, you can see there's blood on his face. There's blood everywhere.

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: So Tass, as you're running, what are you doing?

Tass: Um, god. Like, I'm just a scramble of thoughts right now. Because, you know, it's like — it's clicking, I think, sort of in my head what's going on. But I don't understand it yet. I guess what I'm doing is I'm running. You know, I'm glancing over my shoulder to see who's still with me. And I'm trying to analyze if I'm supposed to follow what happens in this song, or if I'm supposed to, like, avoid the things that happen in the song.

Rev: So Tass, as you're running, why don't you roll Investigate a Mystery?

Tass: OK. Eight.

Rev: All right, Tass. You get a hold 1, and the phenomenon questions are on the table.

Tass: OK. In that case, I guess the closest thing to what I have in my mind is, what could fix it, cure it, or slow it down?

Rev: So based off of what you have experienced here in the moment, as you got to the point where you turned and started to run, you heard the song all around you. And so you think that as you complete parts of the song, it will play out. So you need to finish the song.

Tass: "Son of a bitch!" I say out loud, loudly.

Rev: Megan, you are sprinting through the woods alone. What are you doing?

Megan: I would like to try and reach out telepathically and see if I could hear Tass or Jake.

Rev: Yeah. You can hear both of their thoughts right now. And they're getting to the point where they're starting to cut out. You think they're getting a pretty good distance from you.

Megan: Can I use that as kind of a guide, to try and get closer to them?

Rev: Yeah. Why don't you roll Read a Bad Situation? I think you get a +1 for using your Telepathy as kind of a range finder on your distance from them.

Megan: With the +1, that is a three.

Jake: Oh my god!

Tass: Oh ...

Rev: You come to a clearing in the woods, and there's a car parked there. And then all three of you feel this strange ripple of magic, and then you're all together again. You're walking in the woods...

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE WALKING IN THE WOODS
THERE'S NO ONE AROUND, AND YOUR PHONE IS DEAD
OUT OF THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE, YOU SPOT HIM
SHIA LABEOUF

Megan: [Laughs] Oh my god...

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: He's following you, about thirty feet back. He gets down on all fours and breaks into a sprint. What are you all doing?

Tass: "OK, run." And I turn and I run again.

Jake: "No. I've fought worse than Shia LaBeouf."

Megan: [Laughs]

Jake: I'm gonna turn around, and I'm gonna punch him in the face.

Rev: All right. Roll Kick Some Ass. [Laughs]

Jake: [Laughs] Seven.

Rev: All right. So you turn around, and you punch Shia LaBeouf in the face, and he stabs you with his knife. You take one point of damage. How much is your unarmed Smite damage?

Jake: 2-harm. Intimate, hand, messy.

Rev: And he staggers backwards.

Jake: After the reset, do I still have the original harm?

Rev: You do.

Jake: Oh, no.

Rev: What's everyone else doing?

Tass: "Jake! God — oh, Jesus. No! We gotta follow the steps. We gotta do the song. Come on!"

Megan: "Do the song?"

Tass: "Yes! Just ..." [Through gritted teeth] "We'll talk about it in a minute. Come on!"

Megan: Shit. Yeah, I'm following Tass.

Jake: [Laughs] Roll Manipulate Someone.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Cause I'm pretty confident I can kick Shia LaBeouf's ass.

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: No, I'll start — I'll follow.

Rev: So as you're running, what are you all doing?

Tass: "Guys, this is so stupid, but I think we gotta look for our fucking car."

Megan: "Oh, I found it. I found the car."

Tass: "What?"

Megan: "Yeah. Like in a clearing."

Tass: "Oh, OK. Then what happened?"

Megan: "I took a step towards it, and then I was back with you guys."

Jake: "So that ain't supposed to happen."

Tass: "Yeah. So we need to look for the car, but not find the car?"

Jake: "But not find the car. How do you know that we need to do the things in the song?"

Tass: "It was just — we didn't hear it. We didn't hear it play through the steps we'd been through until we'd done those steps."

Megan: "I don't know the thing by heart, but from what I remember, it doesn't go really good for us."

Rev: And you do notice that as you're all having this argument, he is gaining on you.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "I mean, ultimately, the protagonist survives. And that's — I guess all we can ask for." I look for the car.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YOUR CAR
BUT YOU'RE ALL TURNED AROUND
HE'S ALMOST UPON YOU NOW
AND YOU CAN SEE THERE'S BLOOD ON HIS FACE
MY GOD, THERE'S BLOOD EVERYWHERE!

Jake: "What do we do now?"

Tass: "Just keep running!"

Megan: "Go! Faster! Run!"

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

RUNNING FOR YOUR LIFE (FROM SHIA LABEOUF)
HE'S BRANDISHING A KNIFE (IT'S SHIA LABEOUF)
LURKING IN THE SHADOWS
HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTAR SHIA LABEOUF

Tass: "He's gaining on us! He's gaining on us!"

Megan: "We gotta go, go, go. Go! Go, go, go!" [Screams]

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

LIVING IN THE WOODS (SHIA LABEOUF)
KILLING FOR SPORT (SHIA LABEOUF)

Jake: "Oh, my god. I think we are truly lost."

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

EATING ALL THE BODIES
ACTUAL CANNIBAL SHIA LABEOUF

Jake: "Actual cannibal?"

Tass: "Yeah ..."

Megan: "I always forget that that's part of it, until I hear that 'eating all the bodies' part. Oh, it just makes it so much worse."

Tass: "OK. Um, trying to find the cabin?"

Jake: I don't know what else to do, but keep moving through the woods and hoping that I spot a cabin. I'm gonna keep an eye out for lights or smoke, or anything that would indicate a cabin.

Rev: All right. So as you start to move through the woods, you hear this music playing again, and you notice that as you look around that Shia above isn't there. You seem to have lost him ...

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU SEEM TO HAVE LOST HIM
BUT YOU'RE HOPELESSLY LOST YOURSELF
STRANDED WITH A MURDERER
YOU CREEP SILENTLY THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH
AHA! IN THE DISTANCE
A SMALL COTTAGE WITH A LIGHT ON
HOPE! YOU MOVE STEALTHILY TOWARDS IT

Tass: "Oh, shit. Jake, stop!"

Jake: I was already like creeping very gently, because it told me that I moved stealthily towards it. So I freeze.

Rev: Roll Act Under Pressure.

Jake: [Laughs] Four.

Tass: [Laughs] Oh, no!

Megan: Oh no.

Rev: Jake, you take two points of damage.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

BUT YOUR LEG! AH! IT'S CAUGHT IN A BEAR TRAP!

Rev: It's caught in a bear trap.

Jake: [Screams]

Megan: "Oh, shit! The bear trap!"

Tass: "Oh, no!"

Jake: [Cries out]

Tass: "I thought it was later! Oh, no ..."

Megan: I look at Tass. "Does he have to do — does he have to do it?"

Tass: [Through gritted teeth] "He has to gnaw his leg off."

Megan: "No, no."

Jake: "... What?"

Megan: "That's part of the song."

Tass: "It's part of the song. You have to gnaw your leg off."

Jake: "I can't gnaw my fucking leg off! I don't even bend that way!"

Rev: The music just pulsates, like it's waiting.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

[PERCUSSION VAMPS THROUGHOUT]

Megan: "I'm gonna throw up."

Jake: I don't want to talk about this. I do that.

Megan: Can I try and ... [Laughs] Like, help?

All: [Laugh]

Jake: How?!

Megan: By making it ...

All: [Laugh]

Megan: You know how.

Jake: Mmm, get a bite in there.

Megan: [Laughs]

Jake: Juicy, juicy. Watch out for the ligament.

Megan: [Laughs] Fuck. Like can I just hold the trap steady, or like secure his leg so it doesn't ...

Rev: Oh, I see. Like, help out. Not like help out, but help out.

Megan: Yeah. Make it just even a little bit easier than it could possibly be.

Jake: Don't help out, but facilitate.

Tass: There we go.

Rev: OK, OK. So as Jake leans down to do this, you put your teeth onto your leg, and there's a weird magic pop.

SFX: POP

Rev: And then your leg is gone from the knee down, and there's just like ...

Tass: Dare I say, an oozing stump?

Rev: Yes.

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: Does it hurt more, or less?

Rev: You actually feel a little bit of relief, because the pressure of the bear trap isn't there anymore.

Jake: "Do you think it resets if you, like, try to stop the blood?"

Tass: "I don't know."

Jake: "I guess don't bother."

Rev: The song starts to play again.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

GNAWING OFF YOUR LEG

Rev: Tass, you're familiar enough with the song to know that it stops abruptly. And it tries to start again.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

GNAWING OFF YOUR LEG

Rev: And then it stops abruptly as it gets to the end of that line. And then there's that weird ripple of magic, and you're all walking through the woods ...

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE WALKING IN THE WOODS

THERE'S NO ONE AROUND, AND YOUR PHONE IS DEAD

OUT OF THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE, YOU SPOT HIM

SHIA LABEOUF

Tass: Is Jake still missing a leg?

Rev: He's not.

Jake: Is any of the harm gone, or am I still sitting pretty at four harm?

Rev: You're still hurting.

Jake: "What did we do wrong?"

Tass: "Shit, do you think it's just because we were not being quiet? That's part of it."

Megan: "Being quiet?"

Tass: "Yeah, that's part of the thing. The like, caught in a bear trap. You know, sneaking through the woods ..."

Megan: "The quiet, quiet!"

Tass: "Yeah."

Megan: "Oh, fuck."

Jake: "I'm gonna need somebody else to step in that bear trap, because I don't think I'm gonna make it through another time."

Tass: "I got the next one."

Megan: "OK."

Tass: "It's OK. I lost a leg once already, and it was a whole thing, so ..."

Megan: "What?"

Tass: "Another time."

Megan: "OK, let's go!"

Tass: I turn and run.

Jake: I follow.

Rev: All right. What are you all doing as you run?

Jake: Looking for the car.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YOUR CAR
BUT YOU'RE ALL TURNED AROUND
HE'S ALMOST UPON YOU NOW
AND YOU CAN SEE THERE'S BLOOD ON HIS FACE
MY GOD, THERE'S BLOOD EVERYWHERE!

Tass: "Oh god, there's blood everywhere!"

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

RUNNING FOR YOUR LIFE (FROM SHIA LABEOUF)
HE'S BRANDISHING A KNIFE (IT'S SHIA LABEOUF)
LURKING IN THE SHADOWS

Jake: "He's somewhere out there in the shadows."

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTAR SHIA LABEOUF
LIVING IN THE WOODS (SHIA LABEOUF)

Megan: "Run! Run, run, run! Fuck!"

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

KILLING FOR SPORT (SHIA LABEOUF)
EATING ALL THE BODIES
ACTUAL CANNIBAL SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: You hear the music stop, and you realize that you have lost him. He is nowhere around.

Tass: "OK. OK, we did it. We're up to next. We gotta go until we spot the cabin, I step in the bear trap, we are quiet, I gnaw off my leg, and we go up to the cabin."

Jake: "OK."

Megan: "Right."

Tass: And I'll start wandering again.

Rev: In the distance, you see a cottage with a light on.

Tass: And I take a step forward.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

BUT YOUR LEG! AH! IT'S CAUGHT IN A BEAR TRAP!

Tass: "God!"

Rev: And Tass, you take two points of damage.

Tass: Is that armor-defeating?

Rev: It's not.

Tass: Then I don't take any.

Rev: Oh, because your armor is not ...

Tass: Yeah, it's just the magic Chosen armor.

Rev: Yeah. So you take no damage, then.

Tass: [Through gritted teeth] I'm gnawing off my leg.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

GNAWING OFF YOUR LEG (QUIET, QUIET)

Rev: So Tass, you take the bite out of your leg, and there's this weird magic pop.

SFX: POP

Rev: And there is an oozing stump where your leg used to be.

Tass: OK. So I start limping towards the cottage. And I'm gesturing for them to follow, but like, you know, finger over my mouth.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

LIMPING TO THE COTTAGE (QUIET, QUIET)

NOW YOU'RE ON THE DOORSTEP

SITTING INSIDE

Rev: Sitting inside is Shia LaBeouf.

Tass: So I'm looking back to both of them, and gesturing to be quiet.

Megan: Yeah.

Tass: I think I gesture with my hands out to strangle him, and then I make a motion — like that psycho kind of knife gesture — and I'm like pointing at the knife.

Megan: Oh, yep.

Tass: And then I point to my kidney, and point at the knife.

Jake: I think I'm like pointing at myself, questioningly. Like, I do this?

Tass: Oh, I'm shaking my head.

Megan: [Laughs]

Tass: I have to rethink. So I go back, and I think it's like ... I start from strangle, and then I kind of grab his wrists and kind of, you know, do a little wrestling sort of thing. And then,

like, I have pulled the knife away from him. Now I'm pointing in the doorway at Shia, and then making the stab at the at the kidney motion.

Megan: "I can't remember. Does Shia get stabbed in the kidney, or we get stabbed in the kidney?"

Tass: I'm nodding at the first one, and I'm pointing at Shia. I'm pointing at Shia LaBeouf, in the cabin, sharpening an axe.

Megan: "OK. But we come up behind him and strangle him, right?"

Tass: Thumbs up.

Megan: "And then we stab him in the kidney."

Tass: Nod.

Megan: "OK. I can strangle him, if someone else wants to stab him."

Tass: [Laughs]

Megan: "Or is that one person has to do it? I don't know how this works. This is very different from what you guys said would happen."

Rev: You all see for a moment as Shia, through the window, is sharpening his axe. He tenses up and looks over his shoulder, and then goes back to sharpening his axe.

Jake: I point at Megan and do the strangle gesture, and point at Tass and do the stab gesture, and then shrug?

Tass: I'll give a thumbs up.

Jake: OK. I wait for Megan to creep in.

Megan: I don't think I can do this with my hands. I take off my Powerpuff Girl tights and I wrapped them around my hands, and go in and sneak up behind him.

Rev: All right. So you sneak inside and you wrap these tights around his neck, and you start to strangle him.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

BUT HE DOESN'T HEAR YOU ENTER (SHIA LABEOUF)
YOU'RE SNEAKING UP BEHIND HIM
STRANGLING SUPERSTAR SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: He drops the axe and pulls out the same knife that he had before. What are you doing?

Megan: I'm just saying, "I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

Tass: I'm bursting in the door, and I'm gonna try to, like, grapple him and get it out of his grip.

Rev: All right. Roll Act Under Pressure to wrestle for your life with Shia LaBeouf.

Tass: [Laughs] Eleven.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE WITH SHIA LABEOUF
WRESTLING A KNIFE FROM SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: What are you doing now?

Tass: Stab him. Stab him in the kidney. So fast.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

STAB HIM IN HIS KIDNEY
SAFE AT LAST FROM SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: So here you are in the cabin, safe at last from Shia LaBeouf.

Jake: "What's next?"

Megan: "I don't remember, but I think he's not gone."

Jake: "I remember something about jiu-jitsu. I assume I have to do that part."

Tass: "I don't remember the order. There's like some ... He faints, and you are supposed to counter. But that's after you get the axe? He's gonna have a — oh, he's gonna have the axe, because he's not dead. We have to go, and we're relieved. And then he's there. And there's an axe, and jiu-jitsu, and somebody cuts his head off, I think."

Megan: "Oh man, I super don't remember how this ends."

Tass: "I don't remember the order. I don't remember exactly."

Jake: "OK, I feel like you guys go first. Because I feel like he like gets the drop on me or something, right? As we're leaving. Does he get the drop ... Do you think he get the drop on the person who's gonna be in front, or the person who's gonna be in back?"

Megan: "It was only one person."

Jake: "I know."

Megan: "Uh ..."

Jake: "We have to extrapolate from incomplete data."

Megan: "Well ..." [Laughs] "OK. Well, if you have to do the jiu-jitsu part, we should probably keep you safe until the — isn't it later? Isn't it like at the end? Or is it — or is it next?"

Tass: "I mean I think if we survive the next part, I think we survive. Hey, you know what? Only one way to find out."

Megan: "Yep."

Tass: I think I'm gonna turn and limp out the door.

Rev: What are you both doing?

Megan: Yeah. Following behind. I'll just be like, "Man, I'm sure ... Sure glad we're safe now."

Jake: I'll go last.

Rev: All right. So as you exit the cabin and start to walk through the woods again, you hear the music play.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU LIMP INTO THE DARK WOODS
BLOOD Oozing FROM YOUR STUMP LEG
YOU'VE BEATEN SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: Tass, as you take another step in this forest, Shia LaBeouf leaps out of seemingly nowhere.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

WAIT! HE ISN'T DEAD (SHIA SURPRISE)

Rev: With a gun in his hand, and murder in his eyes.

Megan: [Laughs]

Tass: Oh, I forgot about that gun!

Rev: What are you doing?

Tass: I'm gonna try to grapple with him.

Rev: There's a weird pulse of magic, and you're all walking in the woods ...

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE WALKING IN THE WOODS
THERE'S NO ONE AROUND, AND YOUR PHONE IS DEAD

Megan: "Damn it!"

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

OUT OF THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE, YOU SPOT HIM
SHIA LABEOUF

Megan: "Run!"

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

HE'S FOLLOWING YOU
[SONG SPEEDS UP, BECOMES UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Jake: We run through the woods, we look for the car ...

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YOUR CAR
BUT YOU'RE ALL TURNED AROUND
HE'S ALMOST UPON YOU NOW
AND YOU CAN SEE THERE'S BLOOD ON HIS FACE

Megan: "There's the blood. OK."

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

MY GOD, THERE'S BLOOD EVERYWHERE!
[SONG SPEEDS UP, BECOMES UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Jake: Creep through the underbrush, look for the cabin. Tass, you go first.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU CREEP SILENTLY THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH
[SONG SPEEDS UP, BECOMES UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Tass: [Sighs] I'll step in the bear trap.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

BUT YOUR LEG! AH! IT'S CAUGHT IN A BEAR TRAP!
GNAWING OFF YOUR LEG (QUIET, QUIET)

Tass: I'll gnaw off my leg. [Whispers] "All right. We have to limp to the cottage."

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

LIMPING TO THE COTTAGE (QUIET, QUIET)
NOW YOU'RE ON THE DOORSTEP

Jake: Get to the doorstep, peek in the window.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

SITTING INSIDE
SHIA LABEOUF
SHARPENING AN AXE (SHIA LABEOUF)
BUT HE DOESN'T HEAR YOU ENTER (SHIA LABEOUF)

Megan: I used the tights again, and I sneak in and I strangle him.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE SNEAKING UP BEHIND HIM
STRANGLING SUPERSTAR SHIA LABEOUF

Tass: I'll leap in and start grappling with him for the knife.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE WITH SHIA LABEOUF
WRESTLING A KNIFE FROM SHIA LABEOUF

Tass: I'll get the knife and stab him in the kidney again.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

STAB HIM IN HIS KIDNEY
SAFE AT LAST FROM SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: And he goes down.

Jake: "So what do we do wrong last time?"

Tass: "The gun. I forgot the gun entirely. I think I just started fighting him too quickly."

Jake: "What happens in between, then? He comes out, he's got the gun in his hand, murder in his eyes. Something."

Megan: "Body slam?"

Jake: "Is that when the body slam is?"

Megan: "Question mark?"

Jake: [Singing "Shia LaBeouf"] "'You can do jiu-jitsu. Body slam superstar Shia LaBeouf.' Is that right after the gun?"

Tass: "Maybe. I think so. Because then that talks about — something about the epic fight."

Jake: [Singing "Shia LaBeouf"] "'Legendary fight with Shia LaBeouf. Normal Tuesday night for Shia LaBeouf.'"

Megan: "Yeah! Tuesday night. That's what it was."

Tass: "Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And I don't know if there's much between that, but then it is the — that's when it's like the specifics of the fight. So he does something one way or the other, and I don't remember what. Like it's him parrying or fainting or something left or right — I don't remember which."

Jake: "There's something, parry to the left, counter to the right, catch him in the neck. I think. Cause 'left' and 'neck' are a rhyme."

Tass: "Right. So he does the first one, you do the second one."

Jake: "What's the very first line, though? Because if he parries to the left, that means that I did something for him to parry to the left."

Tass: "OK, right. The axe! OK. OK. OK. The axe. At some point, you've gotten the axe."

Jake: "But we don't bring the axe, because the song didn't say anything about us leaving with the axe. Right? Does it appear? Does he have it somehow?"

Tass: "Oh, shit. I don't remember."

Jake: "It didn't reset when we left without the axe before."

Megan: "Right."

Jake: "So, OK, let's go out here. He'll jump us, I'll jiu-jitsu him, and we'll see if it resets or not, and we'll see if an axe appears. Because I don't remember the order after that. I don't remember what happens after body slam."

Tass: "Oh, god. All right. Yeah, I'm down. That works."

Megan: "OK."

Jake: "And body slam — I'm not 100 percent that body slam is the thing that follows the gun, so we'll find out."

Tass: "It may not be. Yeah, we'll see."

Jake: OK. I'll go out the door and start walking into the woods again.

Rev: So as you walk out into the woods, Jake, out of nowhere Shia LaBeouf above appears.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

WAIT! HE ISN'T DEAD (SHIA SURPRISE)

Rev: And he leaps at you with a gun in his hand. What do you do?

Jake: I grab onto him and jiu-jitsu him.

Rev: There's a strange ripple of magic.

Megan: Oh no!

Rev: And you're walking in the woods ...

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE WALKING IN THE WOODS
THERE'S NO ONE AROUND, AND YOUR PHONE IS DEAD
[SONG SPEEDS UP, BECOMES UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Jake: I start running immediately.

Tass: [Laughs]

Megan: Yep.

Jake: "OK. Body slam is not the next step."

Megan: "Look for the car!"

Jake: "Where's the car?" We've lost him. We continue into the woods. Tass goes first.

Tass: I step in a bear trap.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

[HIGH PITCHED, FAST]
BUT YOUR LEG! AH! IT'S CAUGHT IN A BEAR TRAP!
[SONG CONTINUES AT AN UNINTELLIGIBLE SPEED]

Tass: I gnaw off my leg. I sneak to the cottage.

Megan: Get the tights ready. Sneak and strangle him.

Tass: Wrestle for the knife. I get it from him, and I stab him in the kidney.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

SAFE AT LAST FROM SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: And he is laying on the ground. What are you all doing?

Megan: "All right, so fighting him first is not the way to go."

Tass: "OK. Yeah. Right. Right, right, right. So I think we have to wait a little longer. And this is awful, but we have to let the gun get to our head first, whoever's doing the body slam."

Jake: "Is that it then? Gun to your head, but you can do jiu-jitsu."

Tass: "Yeah, I think so. I mean, I don't — I don't remember anything else."

Jake: "Fuck it. Let's go try it."

Tass: [Sighs] "All right."

Jake: I go out first again.

Rev: As you walk out into the woods, out of nowhere, Shia LaBeouf appears.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

WAIT! HE ISN'T DEAD (SHIA SURPRISE)

Rev: And leaps at you with a gun. What are you doing?

Jake: I wait until he puts it to my head.

Rev: He gets onto your back, and has the gun to your head.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

THERE'S A GUN TO YOUR HEAD
AND DEATH IN HIS EYES

Rev: What are you doing?

Jake: I can do jiu-jitsu. I body slam superstar Shia LaBeouf.

Rev: Roll Kick Some Ass.

Jake: Ten.

Tass: Yes!

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

BUT YOU CAN DO JIU-JITSU
BODY SLAM SUPERSTAR SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: You body slam superstar Shia LaBeouf to the ground, and he gets up and faces off against you. What do you do?

Jake: "What do I do?"

Megan: "Legendary fight! Give him a legendary fight, Jake!"

Jake: I throw like a thunder kick at him, or something — something flashy.

Megan: [Laughs]

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

LEGENDARY FIGHT WITH SHIA LABEOUF
NORMAL TUESDAY NIGHT FOR SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: And then there's a weird magic pop.

SFX: POP

Rev: And there's an axe in your hand.

Tass: "Go for the attack! Let him feint, or whatever."

Jake: I swing the axe at him.

Rev: As you do, there again is this strange pop.

SFX: POP

Jake: And your leg is gone, and blood starts pouring from it.

Jake: [Screams]

Rev: Tass, your leg is back.

Tass: "What the hell?"

Rev: And Shia is looking at you, and he's just kind of bouncing back and forth like he's waiting for something. What are you doing?

Jake: Can I, like ... I know that something's supposed to happen next, and like I know I'm supposed to swing or something, but I don't remember. Can I, like, read him or his body language? Like what he's expecting to come next? What the phenomenon is kind of couching for?

Rev: Yeah, so roll Investigate a Mystery, and the phenomenon questions are on the table.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: You get a hold 1.

Jake: I guess what could fix it, cure it, or slow it down?

Rev: You can tell that what he's waiting for is to dodge a series of swipes from the axe. He is on the balls of his feet, waiting to duck and dodge and weave for a moment.

Jake: OK. I just start swinging the axe at him.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU TRY TO SWING AN AXE AT SHIA LABEOUF
BUT BLOOD IS DRAINING FAST FROM YOUR STUMP LEG

Rev: And after about four swipes, he uses the gun and parries to the left and knocks the axe.

Jake: Yeah! I counter to the right, and catch him in the neck.

Rev: Roll Kick Some Ass.

Jake: [Laughs] Thirteen.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

HE'S DODGING EVERY SWIPE
HE PARRIES TO THE LEFT
YOU COUNTER TO THE RIGHT
YOU CATCH HIM IN THE NECK

Rev: The axe catches him in the neck, and he falls to the ground.

Megan: Yes!

Rev: What are you doing?

Tass: "Chop off his head!" Oh sweet, beautiful, talented Shia LaBeouf, I'm sorry. Jake, chop off his head."

Jake: "I loved you in Fury!" I chop off his head.

Megan: [Laughs]

Rev: As you start to bring the axe down to chop off his head, everything slows down, and you hear the last of the music play.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE CHOPPING OFF HIS HEAD NOW
YOU HAVE JUST DECAPITATED SHIA LABEOUF
HIS HEAD TOPPLES TO THE FLOOR, EXPRESSIONLESS
YOU FALL TO YOUR KNEES AND CATCH YOUR BREATH
YOU'RE FINALLY SAFE FROM SHIA LABEOUF

Rev: And as the axe hits his neck, it turns foam. And the head grows enormous, made from folded paper. And you hear a voice inside, coughing.

Tass: I run over and try to get this weird fake head off of him.

Rev: You pull this giant fake head off and it is Neil, Lindsay's husband.

Rev: NEIL: Oh, what are you guys doing here?

Megan: "Who's this?"

Tass: "This is Neil!"

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: And I think I punch him.

Megan: [Laughs]

Rev: NEIL: Ow! I thought it was a pretty good head. Have you seen the video?

Jake: "Did you use the genie again?!"

Rev: NEIL: What?

Jake: "The genie. Remember — remember last time? Your house?"

Rev: NEIL: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. No, no, no, no. We ... Last Halloween was safe, so we thought we'd ... So we thought we'd celebrate Halloween again. I mean, I set all this up. Isn't this cool? Shia surprise!

Tass: I punch him again.

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: NEIL: Ow. What?

Jake: "It all turned real again, and we just got done getting our legs — literally having to chew them off. Why did it turn real again, Neil?"

Rev: NEIL: I don't know. Where ... Where's Jayna?

Rev: And he turns. You see that the cabin in the distance is now their house, and he starts running towards it.

Tass: I'll follow him.

Megan: Yep.

Jake: Same.

Rev: He kicks the door in as he gets there. And in the living room, sitting on the couch, is Jayna. And draped over her lap is this shadowy form. You can see that she's crying.

Jake: "Jayna?"

Rev: JAYNA: Yeah?

Jake: "What's going on?"

Rev: JAYNA: I don't know what's wrong. He's ... He would sneak over, and say hi. And I told him I wouldn't tell my parents. But he came this time, and he said he wasn't feeling good. And then things started to happen. I ... I think he's sick.

Rev: And you can see that the shadowy figure laying on her is slowly dissolving and fluctuating.

Jake: Does that tell me anything? Like does this seem like an identifiable condition?

Rev: Roll Investigate a Mystery.

Jake: Six.

Megan: Can I help out with that roll at all? Like, have I — have I read anything about this, in all of the research I've been doing?

Rev: Yeah. Why don't you roll Help Out?

Megan: Nine.

Rev: All right. So Jake, that gives you a +1.

Jake: All right. So, seven. I guess, what happened here?

Rev: As you're looking at the genie, you see that there are all these spots on it that are becoming loose and floating away, almost like it's flaking. But you can see it most heavily concentrated where its bands used to be. And you think the thing that happened here is that there's never really been an opportunity to study something like this, but you're not sure genies can survive without their lamp. That it's simply starting to not be anymore. And these are its last throes of the magic coming out of its system.

Jake: "What happened to its lamp?"

Rev: JAYNA: It's in my room.

Jake: I'll pop up to her room and grab the lamp and pop back down here.

Rev: She holds her hand out, and puts it on the genie's head. And you can see that it glows a little bit, and her eyes glow a little bit.

Rev: JAYNA: He said that he will go in the lamp, but he wants to stay with me.

Megan: "Didn't you guys say this has happened a couple of times already?"

Tass: "Well, this makes two."

Jake: "Well, three. But it wasn't under Jayna's control the first time."

Megan: "Just the rest of the times."

Tass: "Yeah."

Rev: And with your hand outstretched, it actually starts to siphon back inside of the lamp.

Jake: Then I'll wait.

Rev: You see this inky form fully slither inside of the lamp, and it pulses twice. And Jayna holds her hand out for it.

Jake: I hand her the lamp, because — like as soon as she reaches for it, I hand it to her. Because I don't want it to seem to this kid like I don't trust her or think that she's irresponsible or anything. But after I hand it to her, I want to say, like, "Jayna, this is a very big responsibility. You need to be very careful with him. I'm glad that you're here to take care of him, and I'm glad that he's gonna be comfortable with you. But you know what he can do. Like, he's very strong. So just be cautious, OK?"

Rev: And she nods. And as she does, the lamp gives a very dull pulse. And you can see it reflected in her eyes.

Rev: JAYNA: He said that he lost a lot. I don't think he can do much anymore. But he said — he said thank you. And he thinks he might have one thing in him. Maybe not big.

Probably something small. So if you need something from him, to ask me, and I'll let him know.

Tass: "Well that's very, very kind of him. Neil, sorry to do this, but no more Halloween. You all can hand out candy at the door. But no decorations."

Jake: "No costumes."

Tass: "No haunted houses. If your kids want to dress up, they're going as, you know, a consumer. Or ..."

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: "Or a child, in whatever age group they're in. Do you understand?"

Rev: NEIL: Yeah.

Tass: "Thanks, bub."

Rev: NEIL: Yeah.

Tass: "Jayna, you're pretty awesome, you know that?"

Rev: JAYNA: Yeah.

Tass: "Cool."

Rev: And she smiles and she turns and looks at you, Megan.

Rev: JAYNA: I like your hair. Who are you?

Megan: "Hi, I'm Megan."

Rev: JAYNA: Hi Megan. Nice to meet you.

Megan: "Nice to meet you, Jayna."

Rev: JAYNA: Did you like my dad's haunted house?

Megan: "It was very spooky."

Rev: And carrying the lamp, she goes over to a laptop on the counter and hits the spacebar, and a song starts to play.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

YOU'RE WALKING IN THE WOODS
THERE'S NO ONE AROUND, AND YOUR PHONE IS DEAD

Tass: I am out the door.

Jake: Yep. Plugging my ears. "La, la, la, la."

Megan: Oh, boy.

"Shia LaBeouf" by Rob Cantor:

OUT OF THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE, YOU SPOT HIM
SHIA LABEOUF

SFX: CRIT OR TREAT STINGER

Rev: All right, so now it's time for end of session experience.

Tass: Oh, my god ...

Rev: Did we conclude the current mystery?

Tass: Yeah.

Megan: Yeah.

Tass: I think we did.

Rev: All right. And did we save someone from certain death or worse?

Jake: Anybody that wandered into this would have died, almost certainly.

Megan: It was expanding, as well. So it's not ... Like eventually, yeah.

Jake: Yeah, I guess that's fair. It was definitely expanding. So it would have caught some people, and they would have died.

Tass: And we helped save a genie.

Jake: And — yeah, and we saved a genie. Nice, good call.

Rev: Did we learn something new and important about the world?

Tass: Yeah. I think very specifically, about that genie. Like that's a whole new thing I would never have guessed is true.

Rev: And did we learn something new and important about one of the hunters?

Jake: I learned that I at least had the mettle to take the first bite out of my own leg.

Rev: Horrific.

Jake: It is fucking horrific — you did this!

All: [Laugh]

Jake: You put us here!

Rev: Yeah. You know what? You did learn something about yourself. You didn't know that's how that was going to work. You didn't know it was going to magically pop away when you bit it.

Jake: Nope.

Rev: All right. So instead of two points of experience for three questions, everyone gets two points of experience for four questions.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: Does anybody level up from that?

Tass: No.

Megan: No.

Jake: I'm over halfway there again, already.

Megan: Same.

Rev: And before we get back into the main story, we just want to give one more big thank you to Rob Cantor for allowing us to use his song and his music. It was super exciting to do this. The mystery was much different now than what it was before. Because basically it changed from a monster mystery into a phenomenon mystery. So again, thank you, Rob Cantor. If you're a fan of the song, you can find all of his different music on Bandcamp. So thank you again to him, for allowing us to use this.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: So here you all are again, back in the subterranean lair. What's the plan?

Tass: "All right, Megan. I suppose this is about time we had a talk."

Megan: "Yep, I agree."

Tass: "So, um ... This is our portal. We've used it to go through to other realities. And it is in one of those other realities where we knew that there were two things hidden that are important to Nash, the guy we're hunting. One of them led us to you. We don't know what the other thing is, but we knew that at some point we're gonna have to go back through and try to find it. Because if it's important to Nash, it's important that we know what it is, destroy it, whatever. I'm still not sure any of us really know exactly how you're

tied to all this, but ... I mean, I'm not gonna tell you you have to come with us, but it may not hurt. You obviously can kick some serious ass and do some amazing shit. So, uh ... I don't know. I guess what I'm saying is I'd feel a hell of a lot more comfortable if you were with us. But when we go through, it ... Well, it kind of changes us. Our bodies stay here. Our minds go through and pop into the bodies of something or someone that can handle it. So that's ... That's kind of my whole recruitment speech. I hope you liked it. Thanks."

Megan: "It was very nice. Look, I ... I left home because I couldn't control these things that I started to be able to do. And I looked for information for a long time, and I learned how to control them. But I still don't understand them, or why I can do any of it. So ... I've watched you guys and, you know, you're real good at what you do. It seems like you've been through a lot. So yeah, if you'll have me, I'd love to be able to learn whatever I can. I'm not ready to go home."

Tass: I think I'm just nodding.

Jake: "Before we go through the portal again, do we want to do something here? Like there's stuff to take care of here. Megan, do you want an opportunity to just be on this world for a minute, before we step off it again?"

Megan: "I mean, yeah, I've spent apparently the last six months reliving the same day. So yeah, if we have time, I would not be upset to find out what's going on now."

Tass: "Yeah, that's fair. I mean, there's a lot of stuff that we need to follow up on. There's a weapon at the bottom of the ocean we might look for. I mean, hell, we really need to check in with Margaret, just in general."

Jake: "That seems smart. Call her, see if she's got anything that, like, is so important we can't waffle on it. Because otherwise, we have at least got options."

Tass: "Yeah, OK." And I think I call Margaret.

Rev: JINGLES: Hello?

Tass: "Jingles?"

Rev: JINGLES: Oh hey, man. What's going on?

Tass: "Oh, not too much. I thought I was gonna get Margaret. What's up?"

Rev: JINGLES: Oh, yeah. She kinda patched me into all the phone services and stuff, so I can just kind of direct calls where they need to go. And man, this place has been ringing off the hook.

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: "That's cool, man. So hey, we're essentially just calling to give our report to Margaret, and check in and see if anybody needs help with anything."

Rev: JINGLES: Oh man, yeah. There's all kinds of stuff going on. Like with you guys gone, everybody's kind of working double duty.

Tass: "Oh that, in a weird way, kind of makes me feel good."

Rev: JINGLES: Yeah that's real fucked up, man. We're busting our ass over here.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: "Well — well, shit. If there's a lot going on, what do you need? Is there anything pressing?"

Rev: JINGLES: Yeah, man. I mean, there's a lot going on. It ... Wait a second. Here, just let me ... Well that's weird.

Tass: "Whatcha got?"

Rev: JINGLES: There was some ... Some kids gone missing in Helen, Georgia. And we sent one of the operatives out to check it out, and they haven't checked back in.

Tass: "Helen, Georgia?"

Rev: JINGLES: Yeah.

Tass: "OK. We'll get on it, then. Who was it that you sent?"

Rev: JINGLES: Well that's the weird thing. I mean out of anybody, it's the person who should have been able to take care of themselves. She's usually very good about checking in. But we sent Anastacia down there two days ago, and haven't heard back.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hey, everybody. Rev here. Thank you for hanging out after the episode. I had said that we had a couple of brief announcements.

I'm not sure who all knows this. You talk about things on social media and on Discord and things like that, and it's easy to lose track of who knows what. But a few months back, my wife was diagnosed with stomach cancer, and she had a pretty rare form of it. So rare, in fact, that they wanted to do her procedures at the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. For the last month, she has been staying there and I have been traveling back and forth every week to be with her, and then come home and ... Well, just get things done around the house. Put out the show, pay the bills, all that kind of fun stuff. But it has finally caught up with me. We have run out of episodes, and I am pretty beat, flying back and forth to DC every week and sleeping at a hospital three or four days, and then coming home and trying to get everything else done. It has taken its toll. When I started this podcast, I in an interview one time said that the reason that I did it was because I was having a very hard time, and I listened to a show very similar to this and that it helped me through some dark times. And so I hate the idea of not being here one week when someone out there might need us. Because ever since I did that interview, I've had people email and say that our show helps them sometimes get through some stuff, or helps them get a laugh when they don't feel like they're going to get one that week.

So our feed will not be going dark. For the month of November, we're gonna take a break from Coin, from the main story, just so that I can take a breath and catch up and start to record episodes again, so that we are not living episode to episode. So during the month of November, Jake has ran a one shot for us. We have played a game of Bubblegumshoe, which is also by Evil Hat, which will be four parts. And so that's what's going to come out in November. And it's actually kind of a double feature. Every episode

in November, the first half will be Bubblegumshoe, and the second half will be two of the fights from the Monster Mash. As I had mentioned before, I'd kind of come up with a game for us to play, to figure out who would win the monster mash. And so that will be the second half of each episode. So that it will be the next four weeks, and then we will be back with Coin on December the 2nd.

Just with everything going on, I just want to take a moment again to ... To thank all of you who join us here every week. Who support us through listening, who support us through social media, who support us through the Patreon. Just the people who show up in general. It is times like this where you become very aware of the people who show up. And there are a lot of you every week who show up. And it means a lot to me. It means a lot to all of us here. I feel like there's some other thing to say, some better way to put it, but that's really all I've got. Thank you for being here, knowing that a lot of you are out there sending messages as you have gotten the episodes. It has made it much easier getting through some of these rough patches over the last month. So thank you, as always, for joining us. And we will see you next week.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC CONTINUES

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.