

Turbulence at 10,000 Feet (S3, E24)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hey, everybody. Rev here. I hope that you have had a safe and happy holiday. Just a couple of things before we get into the new information on the Patreon for this year.

First, thank you everyone who showed up for our push for partner on Twitch. We had great audiences on Saturday and on Monday. Of course, I am recording this before they have played Who's Your Daddy? on Thursday, but I imagine that the excitement around that will also draw a good crowd as well. So thank you everyone who has joined us so far. If you have not joined us yet, you can go over to Twitch.tv/TheCritshow and follow us there. And you will get notifications whenever we go live throughout this month. As a reminder, we are streaming on Saturdays at 6:00 p.m. Eastern, Mondays at 8:00 p.m. Eastern, and Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. Eastern, all through the month of January as we make our push for partner on Twitch.

So what are we playing next week? Well Saturday, we are going to do another one page RPG. I will be leading Kim, Tass, and Megan through a game of Haunts of Horrid Hill, where they will be playing a group of spirits dedicated to scaring the living out of their home so they can get back to having a little peace and quiet. And then on Monday, we'll be getting together to play some Jackbox games, so you can join in, be in our audience, and help sway the vote. As I feel like with every time we have played Jackbox games, our votes become irrelevant and you, the watchers, end up deciding the winner of those games. And then next Thursday, Megan and Kim are going to play some Cuphead, which should be a delightfully frustrating time for them. So again tomorrow, on January 7th, Megan and Kim will be playing Who's Your Daddy?, and we'll be having a competition for the best Dad Joke. On Saturday, the 9th, at 6:00 p.m. Eastern, we'll be playing Haunts of at Hill. On Monday, the 11th, at 8:00 p.m., we'll be playing Jackbox games. And then on Thursday, the 14th, Megan and Kim will be playing Cuphead. So again, that is Twitch.tv/TheCritshow if you'd like to join us as we make our push for partner.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank all of the folks who joined us on Patreon in the month of December. Reana, Rex, Steve Radabaugh, Lyce, S Lee, Phoebe Seiders, Jeramie Glasenhardt, Beer Lare, Aston Fletcher, Amanda Mullins, Lady Nightlight, Harry

Ward, Matt Pappacena, Jake Prewitt, and Linda Foster. So thank you to all of those folks who joined us on Patreon in the month of December. We have already had a handful of folks sign up in January, but I will read those names come the first episode of February.

If you are interested in joining our Patreon, this is the month to get on the new swag and t-shirt cycle. So if you sign up, or if you feel like upgrading your Patreon, this is the month you can do it to get in on the cycle for the next thing that comes out. This last cycle, we ended up making pint glasses with the logo on them. And for the shirt, we had a very cool welcome to the North Pole postcard that had a bunch of Season One and Two spoilers inside of the image, kind of like a Where's Waldo?

Speaking of the Patreon tiers, we have made a couple of adjustments to some of them. We like to go in and do a little straightening up, getting things in order, making some adjustments based off of the feedback that we have gotten the previous year.

So a quick rundown of the tiers. The Initiate, our \$1 tier, has not changed at all. You get access to our Discord server. On the Discord server, we have a lot of stuff going on. It is a great community. We have book clubs and movie nights. There are channels where people share recipes, schedule games together ... We did a Christmas exchange, as well as a craft exchange a while ago. It is a great group of people to be a part of. We will also give you a thanks on the intro to the episode, and you'll also find your name on our friends page on the website.

The Professional, the \$5 tier, gets you everything in The Initiate tier, as well as a private RSS feed that you can enter into the podcatcher of your choice and listen to all of our Patreon exclusive shows, including Hero Salad, which is Tass's Worlds in Peril game, where we play a group of superheroes who have been transformed into fruits and vegetables. Investigate the History, run by my good friend Carolyn, that is a deep dive into the lore and legends and myths that make up the various story arcs of The Critshow. Perilous Tides, which is our Rapscallion game that we are currently playing right now. And Tales from the Omniverse, which is our series of one shots. The concept being that you're looking at all of NOEL's screens that monitor the multiverses, and each episode we zoom into one and you get a story from another dimension in the omniverse.

And we are very excited that we are doing a second season of Tales from the Omniverse. As of right now, it will be six stories long, and we have set those releases to

coincide with Patreon goals, as we did with the first season. These may not be the exact order they happened in, but we actually do have all of the stories in place right now. So I will be game mastering a game using Neverland, The Impossible Island, in which all the players will be the lost ones from Neverland, trying to figure out what has happened to Peter Pan in the midst of chaos that has engulfed the island. We will have Cuppycup from Ain't Slayed Nobody running us through a Call of Cthulhu adventure, Stalkers in the Moonlight Mall. Jake will be running Cowboy World. Josh Harrison, who ran us through Earthdawn last season, will be back again, running us through 1879, a steampunk powered adventure game. Jeff Stormer from Party of One Pod will be running us through Anyone Can Wear the Mask, a superhero story. And Lara Turner, who you may remember from Fate of Cthulhu, will be running their new game, Abyssal, in which you play a half human, half monster hybrid trying to survive in a city in turmoil as it goes through a transformation of its own. We may add one or two more, depending on some irons in the fire, if we hear back from them. But for right now, those are the six stories that we'll be running in Season Two of Tales from the Omniverse.

The Expert, which is the \$10 tier, we have had to make an adjustment to. We have not been able to do any cons this last year. And as a result of that, we also have not been doing any photo shoots with Wes, so we have not been able to create more wallpapers using Wes's wonderful photos. So we have changed this tier to be a little more geared towards game masters, dungeon masters, keepers, whatever you'd like to call them, the folks running the games. So in addition to the GM Discord room, where you can go in any time and ask GM advice from other game masters that are part of the Discord, you'll continue to get the monthly one page RPG recommendation from Jake, and you'll also get access to our newest show, which will be for the \$10 tier, hosted by Kim, Hold 2. Hold 2 is gonna be a show where Kim will collect questions every month from folks in the \$10 and above tier, get together one or two of us, and talk about those questions in a little bit more detail than you may get inside of the discussion room on the Discord server. Because the thing with the Discord server is you get all kinds of advice from everyone involved. Maybe the person who you wanted to ask the question to specifically didn't see it. Or maybe by the time they got to it, it had already been answered by a number of other folks in the Discord. So this is your chance to ask questions that you might like to have a little more of a deep dive into the answer to. This will come out once a month, and each episode Kim will get together herself and a few others to answer the questions — kind of based off of the questions that are there, and who she thinks might be the best group to talk about them.

The Big Game Hunter, which is our \$20 Patreon tier, get you exclusive swag every four months sent to you, as well as everything in all the previous tiers. If you are an international listener and you were interested in getting into this tier — we have a few of you who have done it already — send us an email at thecast@thecritshowpodcast.com, and we can figure out what the shipping would be for your country, so we can make an adjustment to the price of that tier.

The Constructed, which is our \$25 Patreon tier, get you an exclusive shirt three times a year. And if you are an international listener and you want to get in on The Constructed, you do not have to worry about international shipping, because the shirt company that we are using has locations all over the world. And so that does not affect us when it comes to shipping.

The Divine tier, which is our \$40 tier, gets you everything in all of the tiers below it. This is the tier that if you would like to get the swag and the shirt, it gives you a little bit of a discount and you will get all of that three times a year.

Our Founders tier, which is \$70 a month, includes everything below as well as getting a game session ran for you once a month by the cast member who is in the title of your specific tier. So we have Founders Jake, Founders Tass, and Founders Kim. As of this moment, all of those slots are sold out, with the exception of one slot that has just opened up in Kim's Monster of the Week game. So we do have one spot left in that Founders tier.

And then lastly, our new tier that we have added, we are bringing back The Chosen tier. I had a conversation a while back with one very dedicated listener, and they were talking to us about tiers and about setting up a tier that was kind of our shoot for the moon, just something that we think would be awesome. So we have created it. The Chosen tier — there's only one of these available right now. I won't say the price of it out loud. You can go to [Patreon.com/TheCritshow](https://www.patreon.com/TheCritshow) if you'd like to see what the price is. I don't want to make anybody gun-shy, but if you're interested in checking it out, you can go there. What you get with The Chosen tier is you get everything in all the previous tiers below, with the exception of what's in The Founders tier. And you might be thinking, well, why would I want a higher tier that doesn't let me play a game with you once a month? Well, that's because The Chosen tier, once a year, we will clear our recording weekend and we will

bring you to us for a weekend of gaming. We will cover the cost of your travel as well as your housing. That could be a plane ticket and a spare room in one of the cast's houses. It could be a train ticket and a hotel. It could be us swinging by your place on our way to a rental cabin. It will very much be determined based off of who you are and where you are. But once a year, we will clear our weekend and we will bring you to us for a weekend of gaming. So if that is something that might be interesting to you, you can head over to Patreon.com to find out more information about all these tiers, including the return of our one slot Chosen tier.

That was lot. Thank you for sticking through it with me. And actually, thank you for sticking through all of this with me. We are getting close to our three year anniversary, and everything we do here would not be possible without all of you, so thank you so much for joining us here every week. Thank you, on a personal note, for all of the letters and the emails and the messages that I got after describing why we were taking a little break in the month of November. It really, really warmed my heart. So thank you so much to everyone who took the time to write me and to message me.

I don't know what else there is to say. I hope that you have had a safe and happy holiday. Welcome to 2021. We are very excited to see where all of this goes throughout the course of the next year. Hopefully we'll be able to get back on the road and get to some conventions, see more of you in person. But until then, it's time to get to the episode.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: So here you all are in Mother Hen. The engines have just cut out, the helicopter is starting to plummet towards the ground. What are you all doing?

Jake: Checking on Everett?

Rev: You hear him cursing from the front of the cockpit.

Jake: "What's happening?"

Rev: EVERETT: I don't know. Whole thing just went dead.

Jake: "How long before we hit the ground?"

Rev: EVERETT: I'll give it 25, 30 seconds.

Megan: Can I Tune In and try and pick up on if anything is causing this?

Rev: Yeah. You reach out with your senses, and you don't sense anything.

Megan: I'm gonna use Telekinesis.

Rev: Roll it.

Megan: Eight.

Rev: All right, you get a hold 1.

Megan: Something is held fast.

Rev: Yes. So Megan stands up, and you all see the salt come out of the salt shaker. And this pink and purple energy erupts out of her, and your descent is suddenly brought to a jarring stop. And Megan, you take two points of damage.

Megan: One of those, I think, gets taken away a bit by the hummingbird skull necklace that I had from Siobhan.

Rev: All right. So you take one point of damage. And again, you hear Everett in the front curse.

Tass: I'm rushing up to him. "What's going on? Like some kind of EMP, or did everything just shut off?"

Rev: EVERETT: Everything just shut off.

Jake: I want to, like, look out the windows of the helicopter and see if there's anything around us. Like has something flown up on us? Are storm clouds rolling in? Like anything to indicate that something is outside and we are being targeted.

Rev: Yeah, you don't see anything. It is a clear blue sky, and there is forest below you.

Jake: "Everett, can the helicopter be accessed from anywhere else that isn't inside the helicopter?"

Rev: EVERETT: No, not as far as I know.

Rev: And this whole time he is resetting switches and making adjustments of dials, trying to get this whole thing to restart.

Tass: "OK, man. Well, this is the time, I guess, to say it. From what we can tell from what we just went through, IPT has some kind of mole. Somebody's working against us from the inside. Is there any way somebody is connected to how this rig works?"

Rev: EVERETT: I mean, it's been inside the IPT shop, that's for sure.

Tass: "OK then, we gotta look. We gotta see if there's something somebody put on here to be able to do this. If they know that we foiled whatever it was that they were working on and jumped in the chopper ... What a great way to just kill us all, huh?"

Jake: Yeah. I think my inclination would be wherever they put the explosive on my car? Like a near equivalent on a helicopter, to look in that spot.

Rev: Yeah, so right outside of both back windows on the left and right side are the Chinook's engines. And so you imagine it would be in one of those locations.

Jake: I'll open the chopper door and start climbing out there, to try and examine one of the engines.

Rev: I think roll Act Under Pressure to climb the Chinook in mid-air.

Jake: Cool. Ten.

Rev: All right. You are able to climb your way up to the engines. You open up the right engine, and sure enough, about the spot where you would expect to find the piece that

was inside of your car that was going to detonate, you find a little box with a very familiar Wi-Fi card on it. And this box is connected to the main power source for the engine.

Jake: Can I remove it?

Rev: Yes, you can.

Jake: OK, I will do that. I will remove it, and see if the helicopter starts spinning again.

Rev: So you unplug this coupling piece and you reconnect the wire without this little box with the Wi-Fi card on it, and inside, all of the lights kick back on, and you hear the engines start to fire back up and groan.

Megan: As soon as the lights come back on, I think I drop my hold with Telekinesis and just kind of crumple to the floor a little bit. "Guys, I'm not ... I'm not doing so good."

Rev: Yeah. So Megan lets go of her hold, and there is a brief moment where the helicopter falls another 10, 15 feet and then catches and starts to lift itself up again. After a moment, Jake, you are able to climb back down and get inside the helicopter and get the door closed.

Tass: I'm gonna rush over to Meghan. "Shit, that looks rough. How are you feeling?"

Megan: "Not great. Every time I try to do that, it messes with me. I mean, that wasn't as bad as it usually was, but I just kind of get like ... Really ... My hands are really cold." I think I reach out and I, like, touch your arm, and you just feel like my fingers are like freezing.

Tass: "Whoa. OK."

Megan: "I think ... I think this necklace helped a little bit, but I don't think I can do much more right now."

Tass: "Yeah, yeah. Just take it easy. Jake got it back going. You saved our asses." And I don't know, I want to see if I can somehow try to warm her up, or do anything here that to try to Medic her back to health a little bit.

Rev: All right. Tass, roll Medic. And I think the way that this is gonna work, because this is all mental damage that Megan has taken, is that it's like an injection, it's supplements ... Things to make her blood pressure stable and like get her iron levels right, and that kind of stuff.

Tass: OK yeah, I like that.

Jake: What's the ... What's the cold supplement that doesn't actually do anything? The orange — like the vitamin C?

Rev: Oh, Airborne?

Jake: Airborne. You just give her a whole bunch of Airborne.

Tass: I like it.

Rev: That's what he does on a fail.

All: [laugh]

Tass: Thirteen.

Rev: All right. So Megan, you are healed 2, and stabilized.

Megan: Thank you.

Rev: So you are all back inside of the helicopter, and it is running smoothly again and headed back towards Indianapolis.

Jake: I think I just hold up the chip to everybody. "This was planted in the engine."

Megan: "Another one?"

Tass: "They know. They know that we're on to them."

Jake: "And it seems that they prepared for any eventuality. They have to have rigged this helicopter before he came and got us. When was the last time this was in the shop, Everett? Since you dropped us off?"

Rev: EVERETT: Oh, no. Last time it was in the shop for an extended period of time was after we rescued you boys. It took an awful lot of damage.

Jake: "Like they've had this on the burner for a while. They've got a lot of threads that it seems they've set up and are ready to cut at any time."

Tass: "Jake, we're gonna have to go over your car that you put the order in for."

Jake: "Damn it! If they mess up that ... That's a rare car. There aren't a lot of those! Oh god, I'm gonna be so mad ..."

Rev: In the distance, you hear a tiny explosion.

All: [laugh]

Jake: "I'm just saying that, like, for someone whose god magic now comes from like wrath and anger, probably just blowing up my car for shits and giggles is the wrong move for that person to make."

Megan: You hear a tiny explosion. And then you hear a tinier explosion, with my moped.

All: [laugh]

Jake: I'm trying to imagine — just like [small explosion noise, smaller explosion noise]

Tass: [laughs]

Jake: Um ... "So what do we ... What do we have to do now? Like, we're still — we still need to go talk to Margaret, right?"

Tass: "Yeah. I mean, I think overall, the plan doesn't change. Just ... We have to see if she's legit. And then it's my opinion that I mean, sure, maybe we look at Anastacia's

office and see who put the thing down. But I'd rather take a look at who put the Wi-Fi card in the chopper."

Jake: "Yeah."

Megan: "Yeah, that would be a little more concrete. Because whoever put the file on Anastacia's desk could have just been told to do it, so ..."

Jake: "Fair. I mean, I feel like that kind of could have been the same thing ... That could be true for the Wi-Fi cards, too. Like a tech could have just been given the Wi-Fi cards and told they were something. 'We're installing these in agent vehicles now, it's a safety measure.' Like ..."

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "But yeah, we can definitely start in the garage, because that is definitely the more, like ... Explicitly, they put an explosive in a car."

Tass: "Right."

Jake: "Dangerous thing."

Rev: ANASTACIA: You know, if you want a really fast way to check if Margaret's OK, why don't the two of you ...

Rev: She looks at Jake and Megan.

Rev: ANASTACIA: Why don't you teleport back right now and tell her about what happened with the helicopter, and say it crashed and we died. See if she's relieved.

Tass: "That's a good call. I mean, I'll keep an eye out here and make sure that we keep truckin', and send me a text if it's bad."

Jake: "At this point, it almost seems like they're just trying to kill Anastacia. Like, so far, everything that has happened has targeted Anastacia, and we just happened to also be part of it. Like they had no way of knowing we were gonna come back after Anastacia

got the file and get involved in this. They have no reason to believe we were gonna ride the helicopter back."

Tass: "I mean, the only reason they might ... And this is, again, it just depends on how connected they are. All they have to do is check in with Jingles. Either way, we have a quick decision to make, here. If we want them to think this went down, I need to smash this card right now, just in case."

Megan: "Jake, I don't know much about how your teleport thing works, but I assume since we're moving pretty fast in the air, can you get back here if you leave?"

Tass: "Yeah, you can just appear next to me."

Megan: "Oh."

Jake: "Yes, that is true."

Megan: "Cool."

Jake: "I mean, I kind of feel like we should smash the chip regardless, because we've got another one if we need one. So best case, it makes it seem like the chopper went down and supports a story. Worst case, like it's just tracking us, and we're just continuing to hold on to a thing that's constantly endangering us."

Tass: "All right." And I'll toss it down and smash it with the butt of the spear.

Rev: Tass brings the butt of this spear down onto this magical piece of technology, and there is a small explosion. Everybody takes one point of damage, armor-defeating, as the floor is ripped out from about three feet of Mother Hen. You Everett, from the front, curse again as Mother Hen starts to handle poorly, as wind is coming in this hole.

Jake: "OK, I should have thought about that."

Tass: "Yeah. It was magic, isn't it?"

Jake: "Yeah." I don't know if this is answerable. Did that seem like just something that would happen by nature of destroying like a magical electronic thing? Or did that seem like a dead man switch kind of thing? Like that was purposely 'if destroyed, then trigger explosion' by whoever designed it?

Rev: The first one.

Jake: OK.

Tass: Also, I am unstable.

Jake: "Everett, how you doing?"

Rev: EVERETT: It's real hard to keep this thing steady.

Jake: "Are we gonna stay airborne, or have I doomed us?"

Rev: EVERETT: She's handling pretty rough. I can keep pushing, but setting down may not be the worst idea.

Jake: "Do we wanna put Mother Hen down and use this as our cover? That the chopper "went down," quote unquote, and Megan and I teleport on to headquarters?"

Tass: "Sure. Yeah. Yeah, that way we can work on this and get this patched up. And if it breaks bad there, just come back and get me, I guess."

Megan: "At least you'll be on the ground."

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "Hey, Megan?"

Megan: "Yeah?"

Jake: "We're gonna have to jump out of this helicopter first."

Megan: "Sorry, what?"

Jake: "I can't teleport into or out of warded areas, and the whole helicopter is a warded area."

Megan: "I mean, like, what are the chances that this doesn't work? Because if it's zero, I mean I've always kind of wanted to skydive, but like I don't have a parachute. Is there a parachute? Can I have one, just in case?"

Jake: "Oh, Everett's surely got parachutes."

Rev: EVERETT: Ayuh.

Jake: "But if we teleport to headquarters and you're wearing a parachute, the jig's kind of up on the whole 'the helicopter crashed unexpectedly' thing ..."

Megan: "Um, but isn't the IPT warded too?"

Jake: "Yes, I have to teleport outside of the door and then walk in. But it is surveilled."

Megan: "Well ... I mean, fine."

Jake: "All right." I will hold out a hand for Megan to take.

Megan: "All right. Let's do it."

Jake: "Hold on extremely tight."

Megan: "OK."

Jake: And I'll just take us through that hole in the floor.

Rev: All right. So the two of you step into the hole in the floor and begin to freefall.

Megan: "Oh, shit. It's so loud! I didn't think it would be so loud!"

Jake: Part of me wants to give us a few seconds so that you can get the experience of skydiving, but part of me doesn't want to add any risk that we die on top of the great risk that we die. So once we're outside of the wards, I'm gonna just try and teleport us to IPT.

Rev: All right. Roll Angel Wings.

Jake: Twelve.

Tass: [exhales] Oh, my god ...

Megan: [quietly] Nice.

Rev: So the two of you step through the hole. And Tass, you see them start to streak towards the ground and then vanish in a burst of flame. The two of you appear at IPT, on the street.

Megan: "Holy shit, that was amazing!"

Jake: "Oh, good. Was it good?"

Megan: [breathless] "Yeah."

Jake: "OK, cool."

Megan: "I'm a little — I think maybe a little high from all the air that I was breathing. But yeah, I think — I'm not dead, so that's really good. Good job."

Jake: "Cool. Now bring it down."

Megan: "OK." [swallows] "Yep. OK."

Jake: And I'm gonna try and like sober up here, before marching in and heading directly for Margaret's office.

Rev: So the two of you march into IPT and get into the elevator and head up to Margaret's office. You come into the office and she is sitting there at the desk, and Jingles is perched on the corner of the desk. And she looks up.

Rev: MARGARET: Is everything all right?

Jake: "Somebody shot down Mother Hen on our way back. And we're the only two that made it out."

Rev: MARGARET: What?

Jake: And I wanna wait and see what kind of read Megan seems to get off of her.

Megan: Yeah, I'm reaching out with my mind.

Rev: All right. Roll Investigate a Mystery.

Megan: So that's a four.

Jake: [laughs]

Megan: But I feel like this is really important. I feel like we really, really need to know if Margaret's on our side. So I think I'm gonna spend Luck.

Rev: All right Megan, you get a hold 2.

Megan: What is being concealed here?

Rev: Yeah. So as you are peeking into Margaret's head, trying to get a sense of how she feels about what's going on, you feel this deep heartbreak, specifically connected with Everett. And you also get a sense of hopelessness, at the loss of Tass and Anastacia.

Megan: Yeah I think, going off of that feeling of heartbreak, I guess, what happened here?

Rev: So the thing that you find as you look around inside of her memories is that Everett and Margaret used to have a relationship. And at one point, Margaret chose the job over Everett. She could not take time away, she could not make this every waking moment of her life. And Everett couldn't live that way, and so he left. With Anastacia, the sense that you get is that she thinks she might have finally found someone to actually take her place, so she could have a life again, or if anything were to ever happen to her. And with Tass, you get this sense of absence. And it almost seems like she was connecting Tass to the idea of a son that she never got to have in life.

Tass: Aww ...

Megan: Oh my gosh.

Jake: While Megan is reading Margaret, I want to be keeping an eye on Jingles as we break this news, and see if there's any tell in him. We had talked briefly, I think, about him maybe being compromised somehow.

Rev: Jake, as you start to look over at Jingles with this idea that he could possibly be compromised and you want to see his reaction, roll Read a Bad Situation.

Jake: Nine.

Rev: You get a hold 1.

Jake: Are there any dangers we haven't noticed?

Rev: You notice that ... It's been a while since you have spent a whole lot of time around Jingles. And you know that he has been integrated into all of the systems for IPT, that he is essentially doing NOEL's job right now, until you're able to retrieve her. And you do notice that there are additional antennae coming off of his back. One of them looks very familiar. And you see that what he is showing on his face is grief, but that his one mechanical eye is looking at Megan, and you see the red glow in it starting to get larger and brighter.

Jake: I'm gonna step and turn, putting myself between Jingles and Megan, and kind of like covering her.

Rev: Roll Protect Someone.

Jake: Eleven.

Rev: What is your extra effect?

Jake: I inflict harm on the enemy. I think like, as I turn and kind of cover her as this laser beam goes off, I'm just throwing a back kick, like into Jingles, off the desk.

Rev: So Jake, you spin in front of Megan, blocking her with your body, and this laser fires from Jingles' eye. You take three points of damage, not armor-defeating. As it fires, you hear him go ...

Rev: JINGLES: What the fuck?

Rev: And then you kick him backwards off the table. And you hear him go, again ...

Rev: JINGLES: What the fuck?

Megan: [laughs] Oh, my god.

Jake: [muffled laughter]

Rev: Margaret is standing. She has got a gun in her hand that she has drawn from a spring clip under her desk, and she is not quite sure where to train it.

Megan: "What's going on?!"

Jake: "Somebody's put bad tech in Jingles. Jingles, you're compromised. You got a bad antenna, and I need to get it out."

Rev: JINGLES: Oh, god!

Jake: I want to try and run over there and just, like, locate that bogey antenna I saw and see if I can rip that piece out.

Rev: Yeah, roll Act Under Pressure. You come around this desk and Jingles is like covering the eye, and you see that the metal is starting to glow red on his hand.

Jake: Oh ... Nine.

Rev: All right. So you can get to Jingles and remove this antenna that you saw in his back that looks familiar. But the laser that's going off is gonna melt through his hand and do some damage. In the scuffle, you're going to break at least one other antenna, disconnecting him from something else. Or, the rest of the office is going to hear this scuffle going on. And everyone kind of out in the lobby, and in their offices is going to be aware that something is going on in here.

Jake: I think I'll tank the rest of that laser damage.

Rev: Yeah. So this laser makes it the rest of the way through his hand, as you are trying to fix, and you feel it slash across your knee. You have a -1 ongoing until you can get this properly treated, when it comes to movement with that leg. And you do take one point of damage, not so much from the laser, but just from the strain of everything you are doing since you are unstable.

Jake: OK.

Rev: But you have gotten this antenna off of his back, and you can see that the laser has stopped firing.

Jake: Do I get the whole piece? Does it look like the chips we've been dealing with?

Rev: It is much smaller, but when you pulled it out of the back, you can see that the same design pattern is there. But it is much, much smaller.

Megan: "Did you get it?"

Jake: "Yeah, I got it. This is it." Is there anything metallic in here that I can wrap this thing in? I know it's gonna blow up if I try to destroy it, but can I Faraday cage this one, sort of?

Rev: Roll Luck.

Jake: Ten.

Rev: Yeah. You see that in Margaret's trash can is the foil from her lunch.

Jake: OK. I'll just stick that chip in there and wrap it up real quick.

Rev: MARGARET: What the hell is going on?

Jake: I think I just look at Megan in front of them and say, "How is she?"

Megan: "It's fine. It's fine. Everybody's OK. Tass is OK. Everett's OK."

Rev: MARGARET: What?

Megan: And then I look at Jake and I say, "She's good."

Jake: "There's a mole in IPT. And they've been targeting ... I don't know, it seems like at least Anastacia. They put Anastacia out on that bogus mission. There were no missing kids. They trapped her, they started drawing her abilities. They detonated one of these chips that they planted in Mother Hen. Mother Hen hasn't been in the shop for months. There's some shit going on that's been in the works for a long time. And part of it clearly has to do with Jingles, because he's had some bad tech within him."

Rev: There's a long silence in the room as she looks at you, then at Megan. And then she slides her gun under the desk, and you hear the clack of it locking back into its hidden holster.

Rev: MARGARET: Shut the door.

Jake: Oh god, I wish I would have thought of this when we walked in, but I shut the door.

Rev: MARGARET: Where is Mother Hen right now?

Megan: "Safely landed somewhere in between here and Helen, Georgia? I wasn't tracking our path."

Rev: MARGARET: So say that all again, but in a way that doesn't make me quite so angry.

Jake: "I'll do my best. We have reason to believe that there is a mole within IPT. Obviously, we didn't know who to trust. Could have been literally anyone. Some of these things that have been taking place couldn't have been done by a peon. A peon couldn't get Anastacia out on a mission and arrange something that would trap her and start draining her powers. Somebody lower in the organization wouldn't have had access to Mother Hen to start implanting these wireless chips and shutting down their technology. No offense, we had to be sure it wasn't you. I'd hope, as the leader of a shadow organization, you understand our caution."

Rev: MARGARET: If someone is in our system, Mother Hen is much older, tech-wise, compared to Jingles. That's a very wide net that's being cast. How do you propose we move forward?

Jake: "I mean, we know that somebody put this file on Anastacia's desk. We know that somebody messed with the helicopter. We've got two places that I can go and I can use my magic and spectate when those things happened. Hopefully get a visual ID on whoever was directly involved with those two pieces, follow up on them, see if they got their orders from someone else. The problem is they definitely know we're after them, now. We were trying to keep this a little bit incognito as we came in so that hopefully they wouldn't start to run. But I'm sure that they know now that they tried to sic Jingles on us and it didn't work. If we don't start acting quickly, this person's gonna be in the wind."

Rev: JINGLES: Yeah, man. I put that file on Anastacia's desk.

Jake: "OK, good. Then not you. But do you know who, like, put that imperative in you to give her that file? Do you know where that file came from?"

Rev: JINGLES: I don't know. Like, I don't even remember doing it until you just pulled that thing out. Like, I didn't charge this thing up, it just did it. And like I've got thirty seconds missing from a couple of days ago, but now I can see it, and I put the file on her desk.

Jake: "But you don't remember where it came from?"

Rev: JINGLES: No, it was in my hand.

Jake: "What's the last thing you remember before that?"

Rev: JINGLES: I remember going from Margaret's office, into the elevator. Then I was standing on the second floor, holding the file.

Megan: "So in the elevator must have been when you got the file."

Rev: And he actually goes over to Margaret's computer, and turns the monitor around. And he pulls another wire out from under his neck and plugs it into the screen. And you see from his point of view, and there's a time skip of like 45 seconds. It seems like inside of the elevator was dead air.

Megan: "That's where you could look."

Jake: "I can't do anything, though, while the wards are up in here. Margaret, Jingles, do you know any way to kind of selectively lower the protections in here, so that I can start doing some magic and sussing this out without fully compromising IPT?"

Rev: MARGARET: It'd really be a matter of doing what they did on the Eye of Horus. We'd have to go around and basically make each room its own protection.

Jake: "How long do we think that would take?"

Rev: MARGARET: I mean, it's been something that's been on the docket for quite a while, but it's a time consuming process to ward a room. We could take the wards down for a brief time, if you knew exactly what and where you were going to do, and I would just have everyone more on guard than we normally are. Which is already pretty high.

Jake: "It sounds like I don't need more than 60 seconds. I know exactly where this was. I know exactly when it was. I should be able to just throw this spell up, watch what happened, put it down, and we can bring up the protections again."

Megan: "What do we think would be most vulnerable here?"

Rev: MARGARET: It's either on the level that we keep all of the things that we capture and don't kill, or it's the agents.

Jake: "I'm gonna get on the phone with Tass, here."

Tass: "Hey, man. What's the sitch?"

Jake: "Margaret's clean. Jingles himself is clean, but he had one of those chips implanted in him, didn't seem to know about it. We're pretty sure we know when and where he was given the file to put on Anastacia's desk. He can't remember it. So we think we've got a good hold on ... We could look here at this time, and see at least who that point of contact before was. But we've got to drop the wards in IPT completely to do it, or else we're gonna spend a lot of time rerouting all the protections."

Tass: "Oh, god. OK."

Jake: "So what do you think? Do I come back and get the rest of you? I think our secret's out. We had a bit of a tussle with Jingles, he did shoot a laser beam at us. So I think the mole knows what's going on. Me and Megan are kind of thinking we need people here to keep a close eye on whatever's gonna be the most vulnerable when we drop these protections."

Tass: "Yeah. I mean, I'd rather be there, but I don't know how much help I'm gonna be. I'm in rough shape, bud."

Jake: "Man, I'm in rough shape, too. But I don't know what to do. Like, we don't have time."

Tass: "Yeah. Come get us." And I will talk to Everett and Anastacia. "All right. Rundown is we think we're compromised, here. Like, they know that the jig is up for them. They tried to use Jingles to attack, but apparently they at least got Jingles fixed up. They're gonna take down some wards and try to figure out who's doing this. Jake's only gonna be able to take two of us. Everett, do you want to stay with Mother Hen and make sure that the

bottom here gets patched up? I mean, if you keep up your wards and stuff, you should at least still stay relatively hidden, right?"

Rev: EVERETT: Yeah.

Tass: "All right. Anastacia, is that cool? You wanna come back with us and just be ready for whatever happens?"

Rev: ANASTACIA: I suppose so.

Tass: "All right. Everett, we'll be back to get you as soon as we can."

Rev: EVERETT: Yeah. Just keep me abreast of what's going on. I'll try to get this thing back in air as soon as I can.

Tass: "All right. Jake, come get us." And I'll lead Anastasia out.

Rev: All right. So Jake, you go back outside and you vanish in a burst of flame. And I don't think there is a roll to get the two of them back. But I do think you suffer another point of harm, from being unstable.

Jake: I am at 6 harm.

Megan: Oh, no.

Jake: Rarely have I been in such dire straits.

Tass: "Oh bud, you look worse than I do. Do you want me to try to patch you up a little before you do this, or is it go time?"

Jake: "I mean, I'm not doing well. I think if I work too hard, I'm gonna beef it. If you can just stop me from getting worse ..."

Tass: I'm gonna pull Jake inside. Like, try to get him on to one of the couches or something in the entryway and start to patch him up. "Hold still."

Rev: All right. Roll Medic.

Tass: Nine. So you can heal 2. Yeah, I guess I'm gonna get him up and jump in the elevator. Go up to Margaret's office.

Rev: All right. So the both of you get into the elevator and head up to Margaret's office. And inside are Margaret and Megan and Jingles, waiting.

Tass: OK. I'll close the door behind us.

Jake: "Do I need to give a signal or something, Margaret, when it's time to, like, drop the protections?"

Rev: MARGARET: Yes, we'll get it all organized. And I'll send Jingles with you, and he can transmit throughout the building.

Rev: So where are you going to, Jake?

Jake: He had video all the way up to getting in the elevator?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: And then from the moment he was in the elevator, it cut out. And then it picked back up when he was at Anastasia's desk, right?

Rev: Picked back up when he was outside of the elevator. So basically what he is missing is the travel time from the top floor to the second floor.

Jake: Then I think I'm just — I'm getting in the elevator and preparing the spell. And then, like, putting the elevator on that course. So like, as we're actually descending, I'm watching that other time in where we are right now.

Rev: OK. What are the both of you doing?

Tass: I think I'm going to get to wherever kind of the biggest pool of agents would be, if something decides it's coming for us.

Megan: "Guys, I have an idea. Do we think that whoever this mole is, they're human?"

Tass: "No idea. We know that there was one mole at one point that was a vampire."

Megan: "Give me a second. I'm gonna ... I'm gonna try to see if I can sense anything."

Tass: "Oh, shit. Yeah. If you think you can, that's awesome."

Megan: "I can try it." Yeah. And I'm gonna reach out and see if I can feel any sort of presence.

Rev: Yeah. So you reach out with your mind and try to sense if there's any creature here, any monster, and what its intents are. You do hear a couple of different voices, but you know that they're coming specifically from the direction of the location where IPT stores the things that they have captured and not killed. This sounds like an odd way to say it, but you don't sense any free-range monsters.

All: [laugh].

Jake: Any cage-free.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: "Yeah, I don't ... I don't sense anything. So I mean, either they're not here within a couple of miles, or they're not a monster."

Tass: "Yeah. OK. So they're either really working with the Wi-Fi card so that they are controlling this from afar, or it's like a ... Well, like the Krampus. It's like another robot, or something. My money is on control from afar. So if they have any other way with, Jingles' antenna being taken off, of watching this, they're already gonna know what's about to happen. So I'm going to get down with the other agents, just because I feel like it's gonna be people that they'll come after, if they find a way to get in when the wards are dropped."

Megan: "Yeah. If I had ... If I had any idea of where they might be ... If I had any idea of where a good place might be for them to be posted up to have control over this thing remotely, I could try and keep putting up my senses and see if I could tell if there's anything there. But I just have no idea which direction."

Tass: "Yeah. We probably won't know until we drop these and let Jake see what he sees, unfortunately."

Megan: "Yeah. I guess just be careful and be on alert. I'll try to do what I can from here."

Tass: "OK." And I'm gonna head down.

Rev: All right. So Megan is in Margaret's office, with Margaret. Jake and Jingles are in the elevator. Tass has gone down to the second floor where most of the agents have their office, along with Anastacia. So inside of the elevator, what exactly are you setting up?

Jake: I think I grabbed like a fuckin' box of paper clips out of Margaret's desk. Because I need a metal ... Basically, summoning circle. A magic circle here. So I've been just kind of setting up, positioning these in a ring. And, you know, how I know this is supposed to look, just by hooking paper clips together in there.

Rev: Yeah. And as you're setting this up, the elevator keeps going up and down and opening. And Jingles is basically being a doorman.

Rev: JINGLES: Sorry. Can't get in this one. Take the next one.

Jake: [laughs]

Rev: But yeah, you do get it set up, and Jingles stands back and looks to you.

Jake: OK. I'm gonna try to invoke the magic to see another time.

Rev: And you hear Jingles say, "Execute," and you hear it echoed all throughout the building. And with that statement, you see that a number of the runes, on the elevator even, like stop glowing. And people around the building put slash marks through

different symbols, they wipe away others that have been painted on, and the defenses are down. Jake, roll Use Magic.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: All right. What is your effect, and what is your glitch?

Jake: My effect is observe another place or time. And I think my glitch on this one is 1-harm, ignore armor. I think I'm just burning the candle at both ends, trying to get all this shit done, and it is taking it out of me.

Rev: All right. So Jake, you set this magic off. You take two points of damage, one for the magical backlash and one for pushing yourself while you were unstable. But as you fall to the ground, before you pass out in the elevator, you see, very clearly, an image appear inside of the circle. Jingles steps into the elevator on the fourth floor. It goes down. And as it goes down, smoke starts rolling in through the air vent. And a person appears — it's Natalie. And she hands Jingles a file, and then turns into vapor again and exits the vent.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

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