

Unexpected Magic (S3, E42)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: So last week, we played the first episode of Masks on our Twitch channel.

Tass: Oh yeah.

Rev: Did you have a good time?

Tass: Oh, yeah. It was fun.

Megan: It was great.

Rev: Yeah. He does a great job of running that system. That was a lot of really good, like, prepared dialogue — that I do really badly with. But it flowed so well.

Tass: Yeah.

Megan: You could really, like, tell how much you were loving it. [Laughs]

Rev: Yeah. Oh, boy ...

Megan: Like, loving specifically setting up like scenes in — as comic book panels.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: Like you were totally into it. It was great.

Rev: I forgot to mention this the beginning of the stream, and we'll mention it at the beginning of this week's episode. But we do have character art on our Twitch channel. Again, Masks and all of this is going over at [Twitch.tv/TheCritshow](https://www.twitch.tv/TheCritshow). But we have some awesome character art of the superheroes that we're playing, and that art is by Lord Nitekon. You can find Lord Nitekon on Twitter @LordNitekon. L-O-R-D-N-I-T-E-K-O-N. So you can see all of their work. And they are also, I believe, open for commission. So if you

like the art that you see there, that's where you can find the artist who made that for us, and also will be making any future character art we have on the Omniverse as we go forward for the rest of this year.

And lastly, I just want to remind everybody that we have the cosplay contest coming up for our three year anniversary. The deadline for that is May 21st. We have started to get some submissions. Very excited about them. We have got a couple of great prizes set up, including a pile of swag from the mystery pile that keeps hidden in my closet from the Patreon giveaways and all of that

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: [Snorts] That sounds so menacing.

Rev: It's like my dragon's hoard.

Jake: [Menacing] Hidden away in my closet.

Rev: [Laughs] And we also have a gift certificate for our merch store, which has a bunch of new shirts on it. My favorite new one being the Keep Calm and Roll +Cool, which we have sold a bunch of this week. I'm very excited.

Megan: Awesome.

Rev: And then lastly, the third winner will get the opportunity for me to run a game for them and three of their friends. So you can enter that by submitting through the website, sending us an email with the photos, or @ing us on Twitter. And again, that deadline is May 21st. And with that, it's time to let the recap roll.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Rev: And you knock into him, pushing him out of the way. As you push him out of the way, you see that the spear has finished lighting up. And it fires, but there is no one there to catch it. And it hits the crystal, and you hear the soft distant scream. And Megan and Tass, for a brief moment, you can see the silhouette of someone inside the crystal as it lights up. The crystal pulses with this influx of power, and then explodes. Your world is

filled with blinding light and extreme pressure as you're all thrown backwards from the force of this magical backlash. After a moment your heads clear, and you can see a form made out of radiant light standing where the crystal was moments before. It turns and it looks at you, Tass, but then it raises a glowing hand and examines it. And then it slowly turns and looks at the spear floating at the center of the circle. It takes a slow step forward, and then gently reaches out and touches it. At this touch, the light making up the body starts to shift and flux, forming clothing and hair. And as all of these details take shape, color starts spreading through the figure.

Tass: "Wait, who are you?"

Rev: Their hand closes around the spear, and a final ripple of energy flows over them and into the spear, which pulses once and then goes silent. The woman holding it turns and smiles down at you.

Rev: LANA KING: My name is Lana King, and I'm so happy to meet you.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: Here you all are inside of this castle, deep down inside of a mine shaft. A magical explosion has knocked you all backwards and away from the ritual that Estin was trying to perform. The three of you and Estin lay sprawled on the ground. And standing in the middle of the circle is Lana King, holding Tass's spear. In this moment of this magical energy being drained from this room, you all feel again that sensation of power being ripped out of your body. And mechanically speaking, you're all now back inside of your Monster of the Week playbooks. What are you all doing?

Megan: What condition is Estin in right now? Was he just like knocked over, but otherwise undisturbed?

Rev: Yeah, he's kind of in the same condition as all of you. Just momentarily jarred, laying on the ground near you.

Jake: I think I want to try and take the opportunity in the stunned silence here to go fuckin' swing at his neck with a sword. Like Estin is still a major threat, here. I want to try and take him out while he's distracted.

Rev: All right. Roll Kick Some Ass.

Jake: Is there any transfer of, like, the harm we took in our Dungeon World playbooks, to now?

Rev: Where were you all at damage-wise in Dungeon World, before this magic was drawn out of you?

Tass: I was at full.

Megan: Same.

Jake: I was at 10 of 21 hit points.

Rev: OK, yeah. So Jake, I think you're probably at like three damage right now, but the other two of you are full.

Jake: OK. Seven.

Rev: All right. And how much damage does that do?

Jake: 3-harm, hand, fire, holy.

Rev: All right. So you lunge at Estin and you chop at his neck, and he kind of turns to the side a little bit and you feel it cut into his vertebrae in the back of his neck. It does not cut all the way through. But you can see the skin there starting to melt and bubble from the fire and the holy damage. But he reaches out with his hand and grasps onto your arm, and you feel some of the life force drain out of you as you take two points of damage.

Jake: So armor-defeating, I presume?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: All right. Well, this went south fast. [Laughs]

Rev: Are you unstable now?

Jake: Oh, yeah.

Tass: I think if Jake does this lunge, I think that snapped me out of what is essentially shocked staring at Lana.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: That is the last person I was expecting to see suddenly standing here. So I'm gonna turn and shoot.

Rev: All right. Roll Kick Some Ass.

Tass: That's a ten.

Rev: All right. What's your extra effect?

Tass: I'm gonna go terrible harm. And this is with my SMG. So with the terrible harm, that would bring it up to four.

Rev: All right. You start spraying bullets over in that direction, and you see the Estin wrenches Jake's blade out of his neck and rolls onto his back and casts a hand out at you, and a ball of fire flies in your direction. I keep wanting to roll dice, but I don't do that anymore.

Tass: [Chuckles]

Rev: It's like an addiction, now. And this fireball streaks at you and you take three points of damage, not armor-defeating.

Tass: Ooh, OK.

Rev: Megan?

Megan: I want to stop him from hurting my friends. I wanna use Telekinesis and try and hold on to him.

Rev: All right. Roll Telekinesis.

Megan: Seven.

Rev: All right. And what do you get on a mixed success?

Megan: On a 7 to 9, you move it, but it hurts. Choose one option, and mark 2-harm.

Rev: OK, what's your option?

Megan: Something is held fast.

Rev: All right, so you thrust your hand out in this purple energy wraps around Estin, but you feel the strain on your body as you try to hold him in place. But he does seem to be stuck for the moment.

Megan: "I've got him held still. Do it. Do it now."

Rev: Jake, roll Cool.

Jake: Thirteen.

Rev: Yeah. You see that his eyes get that glow in them again. But you've seen it before, you felt it before, and you're able to shrug it off.

Jake: And he's frozen?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Boy, I walk up behind him and I hold onto the grip of the sword with one hand and grab onto the end of the blade with the other, and I just put a knee in his back and try and pull that blade through his neck.

Rev: Jake puts his knee into the back of Estin, puts the blade to the front, and pulls it backwards. And his head is severed off. It falls to the ground, and a moment later, the body turns to ash.

Megan: I think I just kind of crumple to the floor.

Tass: I am ... I'm gonna look around and see if Lana is still here and like, what — what the hell? Like what is her state?

Rev: Yeah, she's just standing there still, holding a spear, watching the three of you work.

Tass: And so she just looks like physical? Like she's alive and standing there?

Rev: Yeah. She's holding your spear. Or her spear.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: Depending on how you want to look at it.

Tass: Yeah. "Hey."

Rev: LANA KING: Hi.

Tass: "How the hell is this possible?"

Rev: LANA KING: I don't know.

Tass: I'm gonna give her a big smile and offer a hand to shake.

Rev: You go to shake her hand, and she hugs you.

Tass: "Oh, shit. Oh, I'm so sorry." And I kind of shrug out of it and actually slide over to Megan, who's just crumpled.

Megan: "What's ... Who is this? What's happening?"

Tass: "Hey, hey, hey, hey. We're good. He's gone. And this is Lana King. She's, you know, Anastacia's wife."

Megan: "But I ... I thought that she ..."

Rev: LANA KING: I was. I'm not quite sure what happened.

Rev: And she starts to reach down now. She examined her hand before, but now she's touching her arm and her shoulder and feeling that it's solid.

Megan: "I don't mean to be rude. It's nice to meet you, but are we sure that you're you? I mean, it seems like Estin was doing something here. Is this ..." And I kind of just look at Tass. "Could this be a trick?"

Tass: "I mean, it sort of tracks that if he's gonna do all of this stuff, he had to have at least one of the spirits. So if he was doing that whole laser focus version of this, maybe he only needed the one and it just happened to be her."

Megan: "Well I mean, glad you seem to be OK. Sorry, just a second." And I think I want to go over to where Jake is with Estin's ashes. "You good?"

Jake: I feel like at this point I'm probably — like I've probably just also been kind of staring at Lana. Because this all — it seems ... I don't know, I also kind of feel like maybe this is a trick of some kind, and I'm watching and waiting to see if anything kind of gives itself away. "I mean, I'm not fantastic, but I'm alive."

Megan: "Thanks. Thanks for that. I'm gonna — I'm gonna clean this up. You should probably go have Tass look at you."

Tass: "Yeah, man. You're in rough shape."

Jake: Yeah. I'll head over to him, and kind of sit down on the ground.

Rev: Again, as you start to treat Jake, roll Medic. And while you're doing that, Lana starts to walk around, and she's examining this magic circle and all of the things inscribed in the floor, just looking at the spell that has just gone off.

Tass: OK. That is an eight. So you can either stabilize or heal two.

Jake: I guess I'll stabilize. Again. I think, as Lana is kind of circling and looking at stuff, like mechanically, if this were D&D, I have readied an action.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: To, like, trap 'em up. Like that's just — I'm just waiting for the other shoe to drop.

Rev: Yeah. So I think that normally I would have you roll Read a Bad Situation here, but ... And there's no really ... There's no way to say this that isn't just us metagaming.

Jake: Mmhmm.

Rev: But there's no ... There's no fail consequence, and there's nothing bad to read here. You try to get your hackles up around the room, and nothing is kind of setting off your spider-sense, we'll say.

Jake: OK.

Megan: Can I look around for like jars or anything that he has down here? Something that's container-like that I could put these ashes in, to put in my backpack?

Rev: Yeah, there's nothing in here. But you do know that back in the room that had the secret door, there was a lot of stuff like that.

Megan: Oh, excellent. Yeah. Then I'll find something to bag him up and put him in my backpack.

Tass: "Lana do you remember anything? Like about this, about being with Estin?"

Rev: LANA KING: Time inside of those gems is different. You've been in one before.

Tass: "Yeah. Yeah, I remember."

Rev: LANA KING: I remember talking to you, and I remember actually talking to all three of you when the storm was coming. And I don't really remember much else until I saw this bright point of light and it like pierced through me. And I remember screaming and then feeling dizzy and fuzzy, and out of focus almost. And then I remember seeing you, and then I remember feeling the pull of the spear and touching it, and everything from that moment is clear.

Tass: "Yeah, OK. So whatever he was trying to do to himself, all of that magic, it went into you. And instead of infusing him with you, just brought you back, maybe?"

Rev: LANA KING: I guess. My visions, they started to be clouded. This storm, I couldn't see through it. I couldn't see past it. I never saw a future where I was able to escape.

Tass: "I'll tell you what, none of what has just happened seems like it was really anybody's plan. Our guess is that Estin has just completely gone off of any of Nash's plans, left him behind, used a modified version of Nash's shit, and tried to make himself this Chosen. Some sort of monstrous energy filled Chosen. So, yeah, when he attacked, why we're here at all is because he got the spear. And I think this is all pretty much proof. Proof that Nash isn't here. He was doing this directly to himself. It looks like there was a split. He was useless to Nash, and he was trying to get revenge or something."

Rev: LANA KING: The spear was part of the ritual?

Tass: "Yep."

Rev: LANA KING: Maybe all of that energy channeled through that weapon connected to me, and then coming into contact with my spirit. That's — that just feels like luck.

Tass: "Yeah, right? Your old spear, your soul. Here we go."

Megan: "Quick question. If Estin is dead, does that mean the ghouls are dead? Or do we still got a whole bunch of ghouls we gotta get past to get out of here?"

Tass: "That's a great question. We can at least go back to look. But I have to assume that Jake can just get us out of here now. With all of this broken down, we're just back to our world. We're not in these globes anymore."

Jake: "I mean, not all at once. But yeah, I could try. We still have to put these other spheres back where they belong, though. I don't know how to do that."

Megan: "I mean, there's gotta be more information here that we can get. Maybe just some insight into how exactly Estin set all this up. I mean, I know it's kind of based off of other things that you guys have already encountered, but might be good to have some of that knowledge."

Tass: "Yeah, fair. For all I know, whatever he was doing was tethering that stuff, it may have already happened. I guess we can go check outside of the castle in the tunnel and see if the entrance is even still there."

Jake: "Well, let me see if my shit's working, and I can try and go check it out myself." And I'll try to just teleport back to outside the castle, to where I would be able to see the last gate.

Rev: Yeah. You teleport outside of the castle to where you remember that dome of darkness beginning, and it's just a stone tunnel ahead of you.

Jake: Then I'll teleport back to Tass. "It looks like they resolved themselves. I guess maybe he was holding them here, and now he's not. Because that's just an empty tunnel now."

Tass: "Awesome. Awesome. OK, so if you want to maybe start getting people out here. We have — we have the ashes?"

Megan: "Yep."

Tass: "OK. We have Lana now. Maybe start taking them back. I'll take the doorknob and check in to let everybody know in the tavern that they're free to go home when they want. And then I'll pop back through and wait for you?"

Jake: "Sure."

Tass: "Is there anything else we want to look at around here? I don't know if there's anything here we need."

Megan: "I definitely want to look around and see if there's anything interesting that we might be able to go over."

Jake: "Yeah. This place merits further investigation."

Tass: "All right. I'll take the doorknob and go check in with the others then, while you're looking around here."

Rev: All right. So Tass, you head out of this room, out of Estin's study, and down those set of stairs, back through the place where Trent's body is lying, and into that little storage room that had the normal door on it. And I will say that as you are walking through here, you notice that the door — the funny smelling door — is open, and there are scratch marks and tracks all over this floor. But there's no sign of any of the ghouls.

Tass: OK. I think that warrants, since it's, you know, just a minute. [Laughs] I think that warrants dodging back to let them know that it seems like they have scattered. And then I'll head back and pop in that knob.

Rev: Yeah, so you put the doorknob in and you open it up, and it opens into the Inn that Wanders.

Tass: I'll roll in.

Rev: TROG: Oh hey, how's it going?

Tass: "It's going, man. We think we got done what we needed to. It seems like all of those worlds that were bubbled up are released." So I'll look around and see if any of those people are still chilling.

Rev: Yeah. Yeah, they're all still here.

Tass: "Hey, it seems like you're all good. Whenever you're ready to go home, it'll take you ... Well, pretty much where we went in. When you open your door, that's where it'll spit you back out."

Rev: All of the pirates, they nod and raise a drink to you.

Tass: "Cheers. Hey Trog, thank you again for everything. I mean, I literally don't think we would have survived this without your help."

Rev: TROG: Yeah, no problem. I hope I get to see you more often. And Jake told me ... I, uh ... Sorry about what happened with TJ.

Tass: "Yeah, man. I appreciate that. But yeah, we'll make sure we come see you more. This is great. You're doing an awesome thing here, so hopefully we'll see you again soon."

Rev: TROG: Yeah, all right.

Tass: "Take care, bud." And I'll head back.

Rev: Megan and Jake. So where exactly are you looking around? What do you want to do here? Lana's just kind of hanging out with you.

Jake: I think I'm looking for the type of shit that was in his lab in Fanarin. I'm looking for books, I'm looking for schematics. Like, trying to figure out exactly everything he's been trying to do and how he's been trying to do it. Whatever notes he's been taking.

Rev: All right. Roll Investigate a Mystery.

Jake: Eleven.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 2.

Jake: What is being concealed here?

Rev: So yeah, the thing that you find that gives you a clear picture of what he was up to, really, is that painting in the room before the room the ritual was happening in. You can see all of these colors lacing together. And it's basically what Tass kind of said to Lana. That all of the energy from these different worlds were being pooled, and that that energy was sent through the spear of the Chosen. That energy would have hit him, and the soul of the Chosen would have then been drawn into him. That's why he was standing against the large gem that held Lana's soul. And I think the other thing that you find is that these chunks of these worlds were picked specifically because they had something large and powerful inside of them. So you had the Grotto of the Shark God, you had the Ice Dragon, and you also had the Demogorgon. So it seems that he picked those spots from those worlds to get those creatures, because they fulfilled so many of the checkmarks that he needed to be able to have the power and the energy to pull this off.

Jake: All right. I think, kind of following the idea of just looking for all of his various researches, like even things that weren't this ritual, what can it do?

Rev: Yeah. So as you look more through the study, you do find his journal. And his journal kind of outlines very loosely the last couple of days. And the impression that you get from it is that the chain of events are kind of what you said. That Nash saw him as disposable, that he had failed him and given up information that he shouldn't have, that Nash was able to get a final Chosen soul. And so to put a wrench in his plans and get revenge, he stole one of the Chosen souls and ran with it, and started to put together this ritual himself. So this ritual does not do anything except transfer a soul into a host. You think that like if you had a soul and an empty body, or like the Soul Trap, that that might allow you to transfer it that way. The Soul Trap kind of already does that. But it does have the ability to transfer a soul into a body — or if it's like a husk or a golem or something.

Jake: You said this is his journal?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: I will just hand this off to Megan. I imagine whatever might still plague her mind, the answers might be further back in this thing.

Megan: "Thanks. I'll look through this later." I'll put it in my backpack. Can I look around, even if I have to kind of backtrack to maybe some other rooms. I'm kind of interested in looking more for are there any, like, items or artifacts? Like I know he was obviously doing other things here. Like even if it's going back to like where Trent was, and maybe he was working on something else, if this was like his castle.

Rev: So I think that going around the castle and, you know, Tass saying to you, "Oh yeah, the ghouls have kind of scattered." You go around and you do find that there is no sign of them. It seems that without his tethered control, they just kind of went back to whatever it is that ghouls do when they're not being directed. The thing that you find down where Trent was — and both of these bodies are now dormant inside. They are other ghouls, again with these extra appendages and very sharp claws, and just kind of testing. You don't get the impression, though, that he was here very long. Like all of this seems set up pretty fast. Like it's kind of complicated in the sense of bringing those magic realms here, dropping this castle here. But it was all done relatively quickly. And you imagine that's probably from having stolen from Nash and then ran.

Megan: So like, is this his castle? Or did he, like ... You know what I mean? Like, is this is his — is this is house? [Laughs]

Rev: It's still here. You know that it's not from this place. It seems that he brought it over somehow. But it is still here. It is just sitting in the bottom of this empty mineshaft.

Megan: Yeah. I think then I'll go back to talk to Jake. "Hey, so like all those other worlds got disconnected, and this place seems like it was brought here as well. But it's still here, in this mine shaft. Like where did it come from?"

Jake: "I don't know. Maybe it's just from somewhere else on Earth? Or maybe, you know, we were able to go through portals bodily. Maybe somehow it just came through. And even though the magic surrounding it is gone, it remains."

Megan: "It looked like he set this up pretty quickly. So I'm guessing like this isn't — this isn't his home base. Where did he get it? He just find an abandoned castle? Did he take it from someone else?"

Jake: "I mean, maybe we can Google castles that have gone missing when we get back to the surface. But right now, I don't — I don't know how to answer that. I don't know how to figure it out down here."

Megan: "Yeah. I'm really interested to see what that Google result is gonna come up with."

Jake: "I mean, good news, maybe we have an underground castle now. If nobody else is looking for it."

Megan: "That is true. The ghouls all seem to have, like, left-left. Like Tass said, you know, they're not — they weren't holed up where they were before. But yeah, seems like he was telling them what to do. And now that he's not doing that anymore, they're just off doing ghoulish business."

Jake: "They're all doing ghoulish business. They've all got little just collars with ties."

Megan: "They got little briefcases."

Jake: [Ghoul noises]

Megan: [Laughs]

Jake: I guess I'll wait till Tass gets back, so we can figure out where exactly we are going from here.

Rev: Yeah. A couple moments later, Tass comes back out of the Trog door.

Jake: I can't believe you've done this.

Rev: Trogdor! [Laughs]

Tass: "Hey, everything's square."

Jake: "Perfect. We have kind of ironed some stuff out here. Nothing really new. But yeah, the ghouls are gone. The other creatures that were in the tanks are shut down. It seems

like he's been working on this ritual and kind of nothing else, but our thought about him turning on Nash is correct."

Tass: "Do we think there's any chance at all this is Nash's castle? Like did he take his whole damn castle, if he betrayed him and took his shit?"

Jake: "Uh ..."

Rev: I mean, I will say this. There's nothing else in here except for his lab equipment. Like the whole place is empty.

Jake: So probably not Nash's house.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah, OK. "Maybe he just really envied Nash's style with the castle. And he was like, "Fuck it. I want one."

Tass: "Yeah, right?"

Megan: "I get that. I kind of want one now."

Jake: "Again, I think this one is ours now. So you can have it."

Megan: "Yes!"

Tass: Is there ... Where he was doing all of this stuff. Is there like a magic circle inlaid?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: "Just a thought. I mean, this isn't the ideal location, but we have a magic circle. If we want to set up the portal here, if we want to give Nash something to work with. Our — you know, Grandpa."

Megan: "Oh! Yeah, yeah. That's a good idea."

Tass: "I mean, we — again, we gotta hash this out. Because wherever we set it up, that's where we're coming out, right?"

Jake: "Yeah."

Tass: "Yeah. I mean, it's just a thought. Something that we can look at, if we don't have a better alternative. Or if setting something up a little closer to Chicago is just gonna take a lot more time on our end. You know what I mean?"

Megan: "Yeah. I mean, it sounds pretty solid to me. We have got the circle here. It's in a secluded place that we don't think many people might stumble across."

Jake: "I mean, I could even take the time to do my own magic here to, I don't know, cloak it or shield it or make sure it can't collapse in the next 100 years or whatever. Like if this is where we're gonna be and we know he's gonna need a minute, I could also take that minute."

Tass: "Sounds good, man."

Jake: "All right. So we know we need to check in with him, then. And maybe bring him here."

Rev: LANA KING: You're working with Nash?

Jake: "A version of Nash. Yes."

Tass: "Yeah, there's ... Well, a future version of him where everything went sort of to plan, but then it didn't. And he came back, and now he's working against current one that we have been dealing with. So it's not an ideal situation, but the logic is sound that we can use something that he can do to get ahead to the future, to get the information we need. Because frankly, we're not strong enough to find that stuff here. We don't think that we're gonna survive it. But if we can get ahead, see it all laid bare and then come back? We can stop it here."

Rev: LANA KING: So there's two of them here?

Tass: "Yep."

Rev: LANA KING: That sounds dangerous.

Tass: "Yep. You know, there are some time things that are making it so that they're not together. Like they can't be close together. Our Nash, I guess, is slowly losing pieces of himself. Like he's losing a lot of the memory and what led up to him doing all of these things. He's been able to give us bread crumbs to change the course of what he had done."

Rev: LANA KING: That's why ... I bet that's why I couldn't see any further. If the future was being changed or was altered or was uncertain ... I told you there was a storm that kept blocking my view of the future.

Tass: "OK, interesting."

Megan: "Hi, I'm Megan."

Rev: LANA KING: Hi.

Megan: "Nice to meet you."

Rev: LANA KING: Nice to meet you.

Megan: "Yeah. So Future Nash that's here helping us is my grandfather. But he's not really. But he is. But he's also Nash. Yeah."

Rev: LANA KING: That must be difficult.

Megan: "Yeah. Yeah, little bit."

Rev: LANA KING: Earlier, you told Megan that I was Anastacia's wife. You've met Anastacia?

Tass: "Yeah. We're actually close. You want to go meet her?"

Rev: LANA KING: I do.

Jake: "I can take Lana there first so we can give them a minute. Come back and get you guys?"

Tass: "Sure."

Megan: "Yeah."

Jake: I will hold out a hand to Lana.

Rev: LANA KING: What are we doing exactly?

Jake: "I'm going to teleport us to where your wife is."

Rev: LANA KING: All right.

Rev: And she turns and hand you the spear, Tass. And you notice that when she lets go of the spear, it's brief, but there's a moment where she seems less tangible. But then she's solid again.

Tass: Yeah, I think I give a little double take at that. And even as she's handing it to me, there's ... I don't know, there's something about it that doesn't feel right. But for the moment, I'll just give her a smile and take it.

Rev: And she holds her hand out to you, Jake.

Jake: I will take us to the lair.

Rev: The two of you appear just outside of the subterranean lair, and you lead her inside. And inside, Rev and Jingles are working at a computer and Anastacia is standing at a whiteboard that has been placed up on the wall. At the sound of the door, Anastacia turns and she sees the two of you standing there. She freezes, and her eyes become hard. And her hand slowly starts to drift towards the gun on her hip. But Lana smiles, and the smile stills Anastacia's hand and softens her expression.

Rev: ANASTACIA: Is that you?

Rev: LANA KING: Yeah, it's me.

Rev: Lana steps forward and takes Anastacia's hand, turning it over and kisses the palm, then raises it, resting it lightly against her face, closing her eyes.

Rev: ANASTACIA: You left. I woke up and you were gone.

Rev: Lana opens her eyes again, and now they're brimming with tears.

Rev: LANA KING: I'm so sorry.

Rev: Anastacia's hand caresses Lana's cheek.

Rev: ANASTACIA: I was supposed to protect you.

Rev: LANA KING: I know. I couldn't let him kill us both. If you came with, if you even knew where I went, that would have been the end.

Rev: ANASTACIA: Are you really back?

Rev: Lana nods, and tears start to spill down her cheeks, which Anastacia brushes away with her thumb.

Rev: ANASTACIA: Don't leave me behind. Not again.

Rev: LANA KING: I won't. I promise.

Rev: Anastacia nods and slides her other hand into the small of Lana's back, pulling her in tightly. And they kiss.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: And now it's time for end of session experience.

Tass: Oh, my.

Rev: All right, so we are gonna do experience, obviously, through Monster of the Week, here.

Jake: Does all the shit we did in Dungeon World count for anything in Monster of the Week?

Rev: Yeah, it'll answer your questions.

Jake: All right.

Rev: So, did you conclude the current mystery?

Tass: Sure did.

Megan: Yup.

Rev: What was it?

Tass: It was Estin, where go?

Megan: Why?

Jake: How?

Rev: [Laughs] How? Who?

Megan: Where?

Tass: And a little bit of when.

Rev: Did you save someone from certain death or worse?

Tass: A few people, yeah.

Rev: Yeah. You saved some people from being sacrificed by the shark gods. Or to the shark gods, I suppose.

Tass: We saved Trog some boredom.

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

Tass: Yeah, I think we confirmed the Estin and Nash split, which is kind of a big deal. We learned that there's this whole laser-focused version of pulling power that Estin created. We learned that it's possible to bring a Chosen soul back, in very specific, explosive situations.

Rev: Yeah, almost kind of by accident.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: And we'll talk about this. Um, well, I'll get to this final question. You know, obviously, we're gonna talk about just some random things that happened throughout the mystery. That was pure luck. When I knew that Estin had stolen one of the Chosen souls, I rolled a d8 and subtracted one, and it was Lana's soul. And then when Jake gave over your spear, it was like a couple of days later when I was editing, it occurred to me. I was like, "Oh god, this has to do something, if this goes differently."

Tass: Nice.

Rev: So yeah, that's — that was wild. That was awesome. And then lastly, did we learn something new and important about one of the hunters?

Megan: Yeah, apparently we're all Chosen? Or possible Chosen?

Rev: Yeah. And I think that was probably assumed for Tass and Megan, because you both become the Chosen, or you were the Chosen.

Megan: Yeah.

Rev: But we do find out that Jake is also, and that you could travel bodily through these portals and the energy of that world would make you fit the world. That the mental backlash of being in another world, another time, would not affect you the way that say it did Grandpa Tincher. So with that, everybody gets two points of experience. Does anybody level up?

Tass: I do.

Rev: All right. What are you gonna take?

Tass: I'm gonna take my last Chosen move that I can take. So I'm gonna take Devastating. So when I inflict harm, I may inflict +1. I don't always, but I can I guess.

Rev: Like you choose? Or we flip a coin? Or ...

Tass: It just says you may inflict +1 harm.

Rev: OK, so I assume that's just you get to decide if you want to do it.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: OK.

Tass: I'm feeling particularly stabby.

Rev: So is there anything else that came up in the course of this story that you all want to talk about, or you have questions about?

Megan: I feel like the end was a big thing. [Laughs]

Tass: Yeah, it was cool.

Jake: What becomes of the 150 coin in our possession when we revert back to regular world?

Rev: Hmm. You have 150 bright, shiny pennies.

Jake: OK. And all the other shit. Like did the Arcane Map seem to continue working? What the fuck are the health potions now?

Megan: Oh my god. My mermaid ring?

Jake: Yeah. What do the rings do?

Rev: Do you want to find this out as we're talking about character stuff, or do you find this out in the world?

Jake: Um, I mean, I think all I want to know now is looking at the stuff in my pockets, what is the status of it now?

Rev: Yeah. Like the health potion seems like it's flat Code Red, but ...

Jake: Oh, OK. Good. [Laughs]

Rev: Everything else that you found — the rings, the map — they all still have their luster.

Jake: OK.

Megan: Yes! [Laughs]

Rev: And I said before when we first jumped into Dungeon World, that I wanted to take a moment to thank Mark Tygart. And the reason that I want to thank him is because all of the worlds that we saw, and all of the creatures that we saw, and some of the magic items that we saw, came from their book of quick start worlds for Dungeon World. And you can find all of their work on DriveThruRPG under Lampblack & Brimstone. So I want to take a moment to thank them for sending me this pack to use when we jumped back into Dungeon World, and for a number of the monsters and magical items that you saw in this last story arc. So thank you again. And if you enjoyed those worlds, the pack I believe has like 18 or 20 other worlds that I had to choose from. And again, you can find those on DriveThruRPG, just search Lampblack & Brimstone.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: So here you all are in the subterranean lair. About a half hour has passed, and you are here with Jingles and Rev and Lana and Anastacia. What are you doing, now that you're all reunited?

Jake: Probably recapping what just happened for everybody. "So as is immediately evident," I kind of gesture to Lana. "Some things happened. We did find Estin. We did manage to stop him. We determined that he was actually working against Nash, trying to ... We thought he's trying to create his own Chosen, but it seems more like he was trying to become his own Chosen at this point, maybe? Restored a few segments of other planes that he had bound here back to where they belonged, and managed to divert what he was trying to do, which accidentally resurrected Lana, and managed to finish him off before we got out of there."

Tass: I think while Jake is filling everybody in on the situation, I am actually, for the first time, gonna open up my Sight and look at Lana, and just see if that — I don't know, if I get any particular magical read on what has happened to her.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Investigate a Mystery while using your second sight.

Tass: OK.

Rev: It's not what it's called, but sounded nice in the moment.

Tass: Yeah, it was good. I liked it. Eight.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 1.

Tass: What's being concealed here?

Rev: So now that you're looking at Lana magically, that seems to be entirely what she is made up of. Like her magical glow is so bright. And even as you are standing in this room with her, like her and Anastacia have been together in proximity about a half hour now. You swear that she looks a little older. Like that she subconsciously aged herself to fit with Anastacia again.

Tass: Wow. OK. Yeah. I think I just kind of file that away. That's amazing. She's just made of this magic, huh?

Rev: Yeah. It seems like all of the magic that was in that spell concentrated through her spear, then into her soul gem/ it really was just ... Almost like Steve Rogers, like almost impossible to recreate this accident.

Tass: OK. "Lana, looking at you, with ... Well, I mean, you probably remember being able to kind of open up and see magic. That's what you are. I mean, you're made out of all of that concentrated magic. For what it's worth, I have no idea what that means, but that might be worth looking into for us in general."

Rev: LANA KING: Interesting. I wonder ... Wonder what that could mean.

Megan: "So what are you gonna do now that you're back? I mean, like, I don't — I guess I don't know how — how long has it been?"

Rev: LANA KING: Well, I died in 1994, so ...

Rev: And as she says that aloud, it does kind of dawn on her how much time was lost. But it doesn't seem like it affects her in a negative way. Like the time she has now was not time she expected to get.

Rev: LANA KING: I'm not sure. I lost so much time in that gem, but ... That was supposed to be the end. I saw it. And so this time now? I was never supposed to get this. So I think I will enjoy it, and see what the world has to offer. And I don't know, spend a little time with this old grump.

Rev: She nudges Anastacia.

Tass: [Chuckles] "You old grump."

Rev: Anastacia looks at you and you say that.

Rev: ANASTACIA: There's a lot that I'll take from her that I will kill you for.

Tass: "Yeah. Yeah, I'm gonna stop."

Rev: [Chuckles]

Tass: "Well, I think we have a few things we have to consider as well. And we have something that we need to go check on. So we should be back, I don't know, as soon as we can to check in, but we're gonna try to go hunt down a lead."

Megan: I think I go over to Anastacia and I pull out Estin's ashes and I give them to her. "This is, uh ... This is what's left of Estin. Don't let him come back, OK?"

Rev: ANASTACIA: All right.

Megan: And I hand them to her.

Rev: She holds them in her hand for a moment, and is almost just feeling the weight of them.

Rev: ANASTACIA: Feel any better?

Megan: "I feel better knowing that he can't hurt anyone anymore. So I guess? Not as much as I expected? But yeah, a little bit."

Rev: ANASTACIA: Good. It was a lesson that I learned very, very hard. But the moment that you kill something and it makes you feel better? That's when you gotta start being really careful.

Megan: "Yeah, I don't feel ... I don't feel like I've been, I guess, avenged? Or the time that he took from me is avenged? But I feel good knowing that it's not gonna happen to anyone else. He's not gonna hurt anyone else. So yeah, that's ... That's worth it."

Rev: And Lana, obviously being with Anastacia, not really being willing to separate from her at this moment. She smiles at all of this.

Rev: LANA KING: You've got a good heart.

Megan: "I mean, thanks."

Rev: And Anastacia walks away and stows the ashes in a messenger bag that's sitting on top of the desk. All right, so where you headed to now?

Tass: I think it's time to make our way to Grandpa Nash and ask about the ring in the castle, if that will be viable.

Rev: So you all head outside of the subterranean lair and vanish in a burst of flame. We find ourselves back inside of the kitchen in Megan's mom's house. Nash is sitting there with a glass of milk and a couple of Oreos, looking at all three of you sitting around the table.

Tass: "So we think we found a circle for you to use. It's kind of in this, well, a castle that was transported underground into a mine shaft. And it's about two and a half, three hours away from Chicago."

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Well, in the sense of a place to put a portal into the future — or the past, depending on how you're looking at it — a couple of miles below ground out in the middle of Illinois is not a bad choice.

Tass: "Awesome. Yeah. I mean, we think it's pretty well hidden, and Jake might even be able to do some things to make it more well hidden. In theory, even Nash won't know where it is. Because, you know again, Estin really took off to do his own thing."

Megan: "If this circle will work for you, how much time are we gaining?"

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Oh, about a week and a half, probably. I could be ready ...

Rev: He looks over the calendar on the wall.

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Maybe two weeks from now.

Megan: "Two weeks. OK."

Tass: "So then we need to figure out how to make it look like we perish, so that I can give up this energy. If we want to make everything go the right way, I think I'm gonna have to give it up."

Jake: "I feel like any way that we fake our death, Nash is gonna be able to see through one way or another. We've determined that he can kind of rewind time and watch what happened to somebody if he knew where it was, especially if it's something that happened in front of him. It'd have to be extremely convincing, and impossible to review."

Tass: "Well, as far as the convincing part, I think that's a big reason that my giving up the energy is going to go in our favor. Because there is not a chance he'll be ready for me to do that on purpose willingly. You know what I mean?"

Jake: "Yeah."

Tass: "So whatever we do, I think he's gonna believe we're dead. Man, shit. But you're right. Like, I don't know that that's gonna stop him from taking a close look and being sure about everybody else."

Megan: "And he might even like try to interrogate people if he doesn't have, like, a clearer idea of what happened to us. Like if there's anybody else that we let in on it. So whatever we do decide is gonna have to be kind of kept under wraps?"

Jake: "I feel like maybe instead of faking our death specifically, we can fake like we went dimension hopping again. But just this time we didn't make it back."

Tass: "OK. OK, so ... Yeah, I like that. So we get ready to go through, I give it up as we're stepping through. He's gonna know that's out in the ether, and he's gonna know I didn't give it up on purpose. Or at least think that. And then we just — quote unquote — never come back."

Megan: "So we just tell everybody else that we're going to a different world. So we are going through a portal, it's just not the portal that we're telling everyone we're going through."

Tass: "Yeah, I like that. I mean, hell. Yeah, I don't think we tell them any specifics except we're hopping. We have another thing. We don't want to say what, so that he can't get a hold of one of you and try to extract that."

Jake: "Yeah. And like the people who know about the portal process know that we've talked about time being weird. So for all they know, we stepped through a portal into a world where one second there is one hundred years here."

Tass: "Yeah. Good call."

Jake: "And if they don't see us again in their lifetime, that wouldn't necessarily mean that we weren't coming back."

Tass: "OK. So then ... Oh, that's great. Yeah. Oh god, but yeah, when we don't come back ... If we don't come back, what's gonna stop them from going real hard to try to throw a wrench in his plans. Because we need this to pop off all correctly, right?"

Megan: "So we need some way to let people know to not interrupt Nash's plan, or to interrupt their attempts to fuck with Nash. But not in such a clear way that if they do get interrogated, it'll be obvious what we were doing."

Tass: "Yeah. So how do we tell them, 'Yo, if we don't come back, don't fight.' Without it being suspicious, then?"

Jake: "I don't think we can."

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "Like I think that is such a dead giveaway that something is up. Not what specifically is up, but enough to make somebody be like, 'Oh. Well, something's going on. There's a bigger picture here.' And if Nash figures that out, to remain on his guard."

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: Yes. And if the three of you vanish and don't come back, you inspire a lot of people. I'm sure that they will redouble their efforts to pick up where you left off.

Megan: "So is there something that we can set up to interrupt our friends' plans to interfere with Nash, without giving that information to them directly ahead of time? So that their, I guess, reactions are more genuine? Or if they are captured, it's not information that they have?"

Tass: "You say, 'is there some thing.' There might be someone."

Megan: "Who?"

Tass: "Damien owes us a favor. We could weaponize him, have him stand in their way and subvert any attempts to mess with Nash's plans."

Jake: "We need to ... I hate to use the phrase, 'lock him in.' But if we lock him into a deal, nobody else could lock him into a counter deal. So that would be kind of insurance for both of us. Like for him as well. That he couldn't be like, 'Demon law — I've gotta take this other deal, which means I've gotta give you up.' As long as we cut a deal with him, he's on the hook with us. We've got the coin. So yeah, he does — he does owe us the one. So we just tell him to keep an eye out and, you know, generally interfere along the way? Damien could have cut a deal with anybody for any reason. So I suppose there's limitless justification for why he would be interfering with the plans of the resistance."

Tass: "That's the best I've got. Unless anybody else has a suggestion. Someone else, something else."

Jake: "I don't. Like I know that it's kind of callous, but in reality, this is only gonna matter for however long we're stuck in the future. We're gonna come back, and none of this will have happened."

Tass: "All right."

Megan: "Do we want to get to the magic circle and, like, make sure that it's a viable option?" And I look at my grandfather.

Rev: GEOFFREY NASH: I could gather my things up in a few moments. If you could take me there, I'll start setting up now. I will need a minute. I need to leave your mother a letter. Yes, I'll be right back.

Rev: And he walks out of the room. And he comes back a couple of moments later with a letter, and he is putting in an envelope and licking it. And he's got a little duffel bag and a suitcase.

Jake: All right. I'll make the couple trips to get us all there.

Rev: So yeah, I think we jump ahead maybe a half hour as the four of you walk through this castle. You take Nash upstairs to the third floor where the ritual room is, and he gives you the OK that yeah, this is absolutely a place that I can work from. There's still books in that library that he can do a little research from over the next couple days. And that it will be two weeks.

Jake: "I mean, is there anything else we need to do before we talk through this with Damien then, or is this what we're doing?"

Megan: "I mean, we should talk to him and make sure it's something he can do, right?"

Jake: "Yeah." OK. I'll step out into like the main cavern of the mineshaft here, and then I will summon him.

Rev: All right. So Jake flips the coin into the air. Megan, this is new for you. What you see is Jake standing there, and he flips the coin into open air. And as soon as the coin leaves his thumb, you hear the sound of screeching tires. And then there is a burst of flame, and a car comes skidding to a halt. The driver inside of it has their hand out, and they catch the coin. You notice that the driver has gray skin and small horns, black hair, and a set of sunglasses and a leather jacket.

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Yeah. Was waiting to hear from you. How's it going?

Megan: "That was the raddest shit I've ever seen in my life."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Oh, shit. Who's your friend?

Tass: "Damien, this is Megan. Megan, this is Damien O'Doyle, our good buddy."

Megan: "Right. Hi."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Hi. I like your hair.

Megan: "Hey, thanks. I like your car."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Thanks. Wanna go out sometime?

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I'm just like looking back and forth like, whoa, this popped off faster than hell!

All: [Laugh]

Megan: "Can I drive?"

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Yeah.

Jake: I just — I elbow Tass and just gesture for us to disappear back into the castle.

Tass: "We can go, they've got this."

Rev: And there's a burst of flame, and they're both gone.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Anyway. What, now?

Jake: "Things are really in motion. Things are happening in a major way. We need your help. We are gonna jump ... Well, I feel like maybe we need to make a deal first, just so that we're kind of like insured."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: OK.

Jake: "Both of us. So that, you know ... I'm gonna tell you some secrets, and I don't want anybody else to have to cut a deal with you to, like, pump those secrets out of you or anything like that."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Yeah, yeah.

Jake: "So ..." I kind of look at the other two, like just to confirm. Like, "We all — we set on what the deal is that we're gonna make here, that we're cashing our coin in for?"

Tass: Thumbs up.

Megan: "Yeah, I think so."

Jake: "OK. Nash has a grand plan to create a monster. A monster Chosen. And we need you, in our absence, to prevent our allies from interfering with that plan in any meaningful way."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: All right. So the deal is, in your absence, from the time that I last see you to the time that I next see you, I will interfere with the IPT and your various allies, trying to stop Nash from doing what exactly? Just them interfering with him?

Jake: "Just preventing them from interfering with his plans."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: All right. So I will make sure to interfere if it seems like they are taking large steps that would affect his plan.

Jake: "Yeah."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: And his plan involves ...?

Jake: "Do you need to know it before we cut the deal? Because I'll explain you the details once we're, like, on the same page here."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Oh, yeah. We're kinda in it now.

Jake: "OK."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: So like ...

Jake: "So I can — we can safely talk freely now, because nobody could make a — could cut another deal that would ..."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Yeah. This is all off the record now.

Jake: "Cool. We're going forward in time. Nash is working on a ritual to create a monster, to create a more magical world, to kind of end ... Not end the world, but so fundamentally shift the world as we know it that many people would perish and suffer. So we don't know exactly how he's doing that. But if we can go to the future where it's been done and it's not a secret anymore, we can bring that information back, and then we can stop it from ever having happened."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Oh. Gotcha, gotcha. All right.

Rev: And he flips the coin in the air again, and you see it burst into flames and vanish.

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: The deal is made.

Tass: "Thank you. I mean, I know it's all a deal, but thank you.

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Yeah.

Tass: I kind of glance at the other two, like there's this thought that I want to ask him to step aside. But I think I just abandon that thought and step up to the window. [Chuckles]

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: Can I take your order?

Tass: "Yeah. I was actually hoping to talk to you about a side deal of sorts."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: You know this one wouldn't be free.

Tass: "I do."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: I'm listening.

Tass: "So if this goes the way that we hope, when we leave, I'm gonna lose what I have. I'm gonna need something, some kind of power, some ability to help when we go through. Because I've gone without it before, and I was the next best thing to useless. So I was trying to think of my options, here. I already sort of got one offer, but that's kind of a deal with the devil situation."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: You're looking for power?

Tass: "Yeah. I guess, stated simply, that's the gist."

Rev: DAMIEN O'DOYLE: You know what? I think I've got just the deal for you. Why don't you all step into my office?

Rev: And he nods towards the passenger door as he lowers his sunglasses.

Tass: Yeah, we'll get in.

Rev: Damien adjusts the rearview mirror and drops the car into gear, leaving nothing behind but a set of flaming tire tracks.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

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