

Fangs in the Gloom (S4, E5)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hey, everybody. Rev here. Before we get into this week's episode, I want to take a moment to thank all of the patrons who joined us in the month of August. Mars Pinkelman, YuccaPoison, PDX Dice, Alex, okwtf, Dane Yu, Brian Umberger, Glaive Guisarme Games, Patrick T. Banach, and Jay Arr. but spelled out J-A-Y A-R-R. Not like Jr. So thank you for joining us this month, and thank you to everyone who joins us every month on Patreon. Again, you can find all of our information on Patreon over at Patreon.com/TheCritshow.

And for those of you interested in getting in on the swag or the T-shirt tiers, this month, all the month of September, is the month that you can hop in to get in on that cycle. We are just getting ready to send out the swag and the shirt from this past cycle, and I'm very excited for everybody to see it. So again, tiers start at just one dollar. And if you're interested, this is the month to get in on the swag and T-shirt cycle. With that, it's time to let the recap roll.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Kim: "I have the thing and I'm heading back to the 606, if you want to join."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: She just gave it to you?

Kim: "Yeah, I just asked for it. And she was very curious as to why I needed it. And I didn't say anything about it yet, but she reserves the right to ask me about it later."

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Well, I hope they're all this easy.

Kim: "Yeah, I don't think so."

Rev: So a couple of moments pass, with James holding this to his chest and watching the readout on his wrist from the device that TJ had built. And then he looks up and he smiles.

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: I've got it.

Kim: "Really?"

Rev: JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: Yes. One down.

Tass: "That's awesome."

Megan: "All right, Kit, so we're gonna go check out these safe houses, right? How long do you think that should take?"

Rev: KIT: Five or six hours depending on how we travel to them, I guess, because they're all over. If we're hoofing it, it'll be a long time. But if we get a car or something, maybe three hours to hit all six of them.

Rev: So as you make your way to the alley and down the side of this building, as Kit heads the other direction down the other alley, you do see movement inside of the window. And at first glance, it looks like two people asleep, maybe a little intoxicated. They kind of passed out where they fell. And I think the thing that you catch that is not what it appears to be is that the person who is slumped up against the other one is not asleep, cuddled against them. They are a vampire, feeding on them.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: Megan, you have just made your way down the alley next to one of the safe houses for Mortalis. And as you walked by one of the windows, you saw inside two people who seemed like they were asleep. But upon further investigation, you realized that they are not two folks asleep. One is unconscious, the other one is feeding off of them.

Megan: I think I want to backtrack around the other side of the house so I can get Kit's attention.

Rev: Are you trying to, like, be sneaky about this? Are you just sprinting around to catch him?

Megan: I'm gonna try to be quiet, to not alert the people that are inside.

Rev: OK. So I think this is going to be a Keep Your Cool. So what exactly do you want the outcome of this to be?

Megan: I want to avoid letting this vampire that's feeding inside ... I want to move quick enough so that I can get to Kit without the vampire inside being alerted to other people being in the vicinity.

Rev: All right. So roll Keep Your Cool. And that is with Spirit.

Megan: It's actually with Blood for me, because one of my Hunter moves is Slayer — when you Keep Your Cool or Let It Out on a hunt, roll with Blood instead of Spirit. Thirteen.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to sneak very quickly around the building and catch up with Kit before they have made it to the back of their side of the building.

Rev: KIT: Whoa.

Megan: "Hey."

Rev: KIT: What?

Megan: "There's a vampire inside, feeding on someone."

Rev: KIT: Oh.

Megan: "I don't know if there's more than one, but there is at least one."

Rev: KIT: OK, what's the plan?

Megan: "We gotta get in there."

Rev: KIT: OK.

Megan: "All right. Come with me." And I'll rush around to the front of the house with my repeating crossbow drawn and open the door.

Rev: All right. So when you open the door, are you trying to kind of scope the situation out? Or are you just firing where you saw the vampire before?

Megan: No, I'm not firing yet. I'm aiming at kind of where I saw, but I'm definitely wanting to take in the situation.

Rev: OK. Yeah. You are able to knock the door open with your repeating crossbow drawn, and you see the same thing you saw outside. This vampire is laying almost in the lap of its victim, feeding off of its neck.

Megan: I aim my crossbow and just yell at them, "Hey, get away. Get away! Back up!"

Rev: I think this is gonna be Persuade an NPC. When you persuade an NPC with seduction, promises, or threats. I think a ...

Megan: Seduction, yeah.

Rev: Yeah. [laughs] The seduction of the crossbow.

Megan: That's what I'm going for.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: Glad that read.

Jake: That's a great name for something. The Seduction of the Crossbow.

Rev: [laughs]

Megan: I'm working on it. Don't worry.

Rev: Roll with Heart.

Megan: Six.

Rev: So you yell out at this vampire to get away. And at the sound of your voice, it turns and looks at you, and then it leans in again and bites down on the throat of its victim and wrenches backwards. And you hear the gurgling voice leave this victim's body.

Megan: Fuck! I shoot him.

Rev: All right. Turn to Violence. When you turn to violence, roll with Blood.

Megan: Twelve.

Tass: Yeah!

Rev: All right. So on a hit, your opponent gets to choose one: they inflict harm on you, they put you in a bad spot, they create an opening to flee. But on a 10+, you also get to choose one: you inflict terrible harm, you take something from them, you create an opportunity for an ally.

Megan: I think I will create an opportunity for an ally. I'll give Kit some space to act, here.

Rev: All right. And I'm gonna pick they put you in a bad spot. And so as you fire this repeating crossbow, they start to move around, and you have to kind of position yourself differently to get the clean shot at them. How much damage does your repeating crossbow do?

Megan: So the crossbow does 2-harm. But the tags that I have for it are semi-auto, so I don't have to worry about reloading it, and high powered, which does an extra harm. And then one of my Hunter moves is called Deadly. When you inflict harm, inflict harm +1. You cannot choose to reduce this harm. So with this shot, I'll be doing 4-harm.

Rev: All right. So you land this shot, and this vampire turns to dust and crumbles to the ground. Having gotten yourself into a bad spot, you hear footsteps moving above you. And then something falls on top of you. But as this form falls on top of you, Kit, who has now had this opportunity, tackles them off of you. And you can see that Kit has another vampire on the ground, and he is struggling to keep it pinned down.

Megan: Yes, Kit! I take out my two hand axes that I have and attack this vampire he's trying to pin.

Rev: All right, Turn to Violence.

Megan: Ten.

Rev: All right. What do you choose?

Megan: I would love to inflict terrible harm, here.

Rev: How much harm do your axes do?

Megan: The hand axes do 1-harm. But my tags for that are bladed, plus +1 harm, and hashtag #blessed, so it's holy. And then with my Deadly move, I do another harm. So that'll be 3-harm with these axes.

Rev: All right. So you hit this vampire with these blessed axes. And instead of turning to ash, for a moment this one shimmers, and then white energy explodes from them. And in this explosion, you do take a point of harm, because I think this is a new experience for you, having a dead body just explode in your face.

Megan: That's fair.

Rev: Kit rolls over onto his back and stares up at the ceiling.

Rev: KIT: [exhales] OK.

Megan: "Are you all right?"

Rev: KIT: Yeah, I think so. Are you?

Megan: "I got all my limbs. I don't feel great. That was a lot."

Rev: KIT: Yeah.

Megan: "That thing just exploded. But it's fine. I'm used to this."

Jake: [laughs]

Kim: I've done this so many times before ...

Megan: Yep, there's a reason I'm in charge. So this isn't new to me at all. "What the fuck? How did this place get compromised so fast?"

Rev: KIT: I don't know. They must have followed someone here, or ... I'm struggling to come up with another explanation.

Megan: "OK. How many people are supposed to be here right now?"

Rev: KIT: I mean, right now, just the two who were in charge of watching it.

Megan: I look at the body on the couch.

Rev: Yeah, it is one of the people who should be the guards here.

Megan: "All right. Let's look for the other person. See if it's not too late for them."

Rev: KIT: All right. Where do you want to start?

Megan: Where did — the vampire that came from the ceiling, where did they come from? Is there like a stairwell?

Rev: Yeah. You look up and you can see that they jumped from the second floor, because part of this area has a vaulted ceiling. So there's just a railing going across where the second floor is.

Megan: "Let's head up that way, where this one came from. If they got to the other person, then that might be where they are."

Rev: KIT: OK.

Rev: And Kit runs over and starts going up a spiral staircase. And after a moment, he shouts down ...

Rev: KIT: Yeah, we've got someone up here and they're still breathing. We should get him back.

Megan: "Yeah. Can you get him downstairs OK, on your own?"

Rev: KIT: Yeah.

Megan: Is there anything left over from these vampires that I can look to see if they were carrying anything? Or the other person that got killed, do they have anything on their person that might identify them or identify us?

Rev: The vampires, no. But there is like a weapon, an ID, and stuff on the guard for here who was killed. So you could take that stuff to make sure that this wasn't marked as your territory.

Megan: I definitely will.

Rev: Yeah. After a moment, Kit comes down the stairs carrying an unconscious man with short hair and dark skin, and he carries him towards the front door.

Megan: "Oh, all right. Where do you think we should take him?"

Rev: KIT: Back to the church?

Megan: "All right. We're gonna need to get a ride. I think we can maybe pass them off as being drunk or something, but definitely not for long enough to walk. And they need attention, so."

Rev: KIT: Yeah.

Megan: "I'll get us a ride."

Rev: KIT: OK.

Megan: And I'll have it set up to meet us like a block down.

Rev: And so as Kit and Megan get this injured member of their Circle into the car, we find Jake walking just down the block from the Rookery Building. It's getting close to dawn, and he's got an errand to run. Jake, as you approach the location, that The Lore Merchant told you that this bookstore would be located, there's a line of about a dozen people waiting in front of an empty lot.

Jake: I'll walk up and get in line.

Rev: OK.

Jake: I'll ask the person in front of me, "How long do they typically stay open?"

Rev: PERSON IN LINE: It depends on the time of year. Uh, right now, I'd say about twelve and a half minutes before they vanish.

Jake: "OK."

Rev: PERSON IN LINE: Yes. Good, good ... Good thing you got here right when they open. They have to cycle people in and out pretty quickly. There's some times of year where it's like eight minutes. Other times, it's a nice solid seventeen.

Jake: "Important to know what you're looking for then, huh?"

Rev: PERSON IN LINE: Oh, yes. This is not a place you want to browse, or you may find yourself stuck there until the next dawn.

Jake: "You know, stuck in a bookstore for a day doesn't sound too bad though, right?"

Rev: PERSON IN LINE: That's true. Although I'm not really sure where it goes next.

Jake: "Mmm ... Yeah, OK. I don't wanna find out."

Rev: PERSON IN LINE: Like when you open that door, is it the void of ...

Jake: "Space?"

Rev: PERSON IN LINE: Oh, I was thinking, like, madness

Jake: "Yours sounds worse."

Rev: PERSON IN LINE: Yeah.

Rev: And as the sun starts to rise, the rays of light hit this empty lot and a building appears, and a little old woman opens the front door and ushers everyone in. You can see that everyone, as they come inside, go straight to very specific areas, like they know exactly what they're looking for.

Jake: OK, I'll head into the history section.

Rev: So as you enter into this bookstore, I'm gonna ask you to Study a Place of Power, and you're going to roll with Wild.

Jake: Seven. [exhales]

Rev: Yeah. As you make your way through this bookstore, everything is written in magical runes. But you are able to read them and find the history section, and you are able to find a copy of The Dawn of the Earth.

Jake: Perfect. I'll take it to the cash register?

Rev: [chuckles] Yeah, you head up to the cash register and the little old woman looks at the book, and she looks back at you and she smiles.

Rev: BOOKSTORE OWNER: And what do you have to offer for trade?

Jake: "Uh, I have cash?"

Rev: BOOKSTORE OWNER: The paper?

Jake: "The paper currency, yes."

Rev: BOOKSTORE OWNER: Ah, yes.

Jake: "Which is — of course — insufficient, and not what I will be offering for trade."

Rev: BOOKSTORE OWNER: Oh, good. Good.

Jake: I start patting all of my pockets. [laughs] Uh, I start patting like my pockets and stuff, and I produce one of the healing potions that we got in not-Fanarin Dungeon World Land.

Rev: Yeah. And I think that as you pull this out ... You know, we've talked about how you feel the magic in the air. This feels very potent here.

Jake: Oh, man. Maybe I don't want to give it to her.

All: [laugh]

Jake: Oh, man. Now it's extra valuable! I think, then ... Genuinely, I think I pull it out and I'm like gonna give it to her. And I feel how potent it is, and I kind of like look at it, and I look at her, and I just go, "Can I owe you one?"

Megan: BOOKSTORE OWNER: Owe me one, what?

Jake: "A favor." A debt, mechanically speaking.

Rev: BOOKSTORE OWNER: Oh, those are my favorite things to trade. Yes, I'll just have you sign this here. It's a very common price that people pay in my store.

Rev: And she pulls out a ledger from behind the desk, and she opens it up. And you can see that as she flips through the pages, there are very nice signatures and handprints of blood on each page.

Jake: Oh ...

Rev: And she turns it to a blank one.

Jake: Yeah, I do it.

Rev: All right. So mark down that you owe one debt to the owner of Print, Reprint. And she hand you the book with the smile.

Jake: "Thank you. What's your name?"

Rev: PRU: My name is Pru.

Jake: "Thank you very much, Pru. You have a lovely shop. I look forward to seeing you again."

Rev: PRU: Ah, you as well, Brizack.

Jake: All right. I'll head back to the Rookery.

Rev: All right. And so as Jake heads back to the Rookery, Jake, you can mark that you have one debt from The Lord Merchant. And we are going to fade out on the city.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: So now we're gonna take a chance to do our first passage of time. Because in Urban Shadows, a lot of things happen and mechanics work on the passage of time. And so when the passage of time happens, we get the faction turn. So the first step of the faction turn is that —

Kim: Actually, before each faction turn, I get another roll of Foretellings.

Rev: All right, so roll it.

Kim: Nine.

Rev: And remind us what this does?

Kim: Sure. On a hit, pick one of the options below. The MC will tell you whose future you see. So I'm going to pick one of the three options, and you're gonna tell me who I'm having this vision about.

Rev: OK.

Kim: A tragedy lurks in the shadows. The MC will tell you how they can avoid it.

Rev: So the vision that you have is a vision about Jake.

Kim: Again!

Rev: The tragedy that is going to befall him is that Zui is going to find out the secret of his ward. And the way that he can avoid that is by making amends with Zui, as Brizack.

Kim: OK.

Rev: So the first thing that will happen is all of the PCs will make a city move. And these highlight how it is you spend your downtime during this faction turn. So each of you have the opportunity here to make a city move. And those are Weaken Someone's Standing, Consult Your Contact in another Circle, Put Out the Word you need something, or Tend to Your Business instead of meddling in city affairs. Tend to ya' business.

Megan: [chuckles]

Rev: And you can make as many moves as your highest status. With the exception of Kim, who can make two moves as long as one of them is with Mortalis, because of her Dual Loyalty. So what would everybody like to do in this downtime?

Megan: I would like to Consult a Contact.

Rev: All right. So a contact in what Circle?

Megan: I want to go with the Night.

Rev: All right. And Megan, who is your contact that you're reaching out to?

Megan: I think it is a member of The Monarchs named Foster, who just really does not like New Canterbury at all. I think we have met up at a bar playing pool a couple of times. He thinks that I am also a werewolf, and we just talk shit about the vampires.

Rev: [laughs]

Megan: Sometimes he feeds me some information he's overheard.

Rev: Excellent. So what is your standing with Night?

Megan: My status with Night is 0 right now.

Rev: OK, so you're just going to give me a straight 2d6 roll.

Megan: Eight.

Rev: All right. So on a hit, you can ask me one question. What conflict is everyone talking about? What happened to ____? What has ____ been up to recently? Who is responsible for ____? And who has a debt on ____? And I'm gonna go around and have all of you do your moves, and I'm gonna gather the questions that you make. And then as the faction turn goes on, we'll get to a step later where you'll start to hear rumors that give you the information or the location of things that you were looking for.

Tass: Nice.

Megan: I'm trying to get information on how are these vampires able to track these humans in Mortalis and get to these safe houses that have just been established, and attack people when they're seemingly blending in.

Rev: OK. Who else?

Tass: I would also like to Consult My Contacts. I have the idea that we know what the thing is that we're looking for that Tranquil Silence has, but we don't know where it is.

Rev: OK.

Tass: So what I'm hoping to lean into here is what happened to that ornate silver cross.

Rev: All right. So you're gonna roll your status with Night.

Tass: OK, will do. Snake eyes.

Rev: All right. So on a miss, you can still ask one question, but your contact has some questions about your Circle. You have to answer them honestly, mark corruption, or lose them as your contact.

Tass: I think I would answer them honestly.

Rev: OK, so who is this contact in ...

Tass: In Tranquil Silence?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: I think it's the Scoleri Brothers. That's for you, booboo.

Rev: Yeah, that's nice. All right. And so the question you're asking them is what happened to the silver cross?

Tass: Correct.

Rev: OK. All right. What else?

Kim: I would like to Consult My Contacts in Night.

Rev: All right. So who is your contact in Night?

Kim: All right. Well, since I am playing myself and I went to college here in Chicago, I don't think it's unreasonable to assume that at one point in my college years, I probably dated a vampire for a little bit.

Tass: [chuckles]

Megan: Yeah, that tracks.

Rev: All right. And what is this vampire's name?

Kim: His name is Henry.

Rev: All right, so roll it. Let's see what you get.

Kim: OK. A ten.

Rev: All right. So you get a hold 2. What are your questions?

Kim: I want so badly to ask, what has Mercury been up to recently? But I don't know if that's something that Henry would necessarily know.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: So I think I'm going to go with, what conflict is everyone talking about? And, what has Dr. Vance Benson been up to recently?

Rev: OK.

Kim: I'm also going to make a second city move. I'm going to Put Out the Word with Mortalis, and I would like more information about the Cloud Gate.

Rev: OK.

Kim: Nine.

Rev: All right. And on a seven to nine, you get word back that a member of another Circle has what you need, and a friend or ally has already scheduled a meeting to close the deal. And that leaves us with Jake.

Jake: I'm also going to Put Out the Word.

Rev: OK.

Jake: I am putting out the word I would like information on Clan Ozymandias's item. You know, nothing is known about it. I am interested in knowing where it is.

Rev: OK.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: So, same thing. You get word back that a member of another Circle has what you need. A friend or ally has already scheduled a meeting to close that deal.

All right. So I have taken just a little bit of a pause here as the Circles made their moves. And the way this works is that the Circles have a certain order that they act in. They go Mortalis, Night, Power, and Wild. And the Circles get a number of moves equal to their size in the city. So the faction sizes go from 1 to 4, 4 being the largest. And we have two large powers — Night and Power. And then two smaller powers — Wild and Mortalis. And then when it comes to moves, I will pick a specific faction from each Circle to highlight, and size 1 and 2 get a single faction move. Sizes 3 to 4 make two faction moves. So we do have a 1, a 2, a 3, and a 4 in this city. 1 being Mortalis, 2 being Wild, 3 being Power, 4 being Night.

So now that they have made their moves in their order, you all start to hear rumors through the city. A couple of days have passed. You're starting to get into the groove of these cover identities. If you've got damage, that has healed by now. And we're gonna say that five days have passed at this point.

So the rumors that you start to hear on the street and back from your contacts are varied, because you put out a large net. Tass, you find out that the silver cross that belongs to Tranquil Silence is buried in the basement of the Congress Hotel.

Tass: OK.

Rev: And in exchange for that information, Tass, the thing that the Scoleri brothers ask you is what's the deal with the little imps that they sometimes see with the members of your Circle?

Tass: Yeah, OK. I pass along the information that they are sort of like little narcs for Lady Jensie to keep an eye on all of her operatives.

Rev: OK. They thank you for that information. Megan, you reach out to find out who is making these attacks against the humans, against Mortalis. And the rumor you hear is that there is a small splinter group that is breaking off from New Canterbury, because they don't like having all of these rules laid down for them. And they have made it their personal mission to try to hunt down any humans, because that's the smallest faction. And then they'll work their way up.

Megan: OK. That doesn't sound good.

Rev: Kim, you had consulted your contact in another Circle. This was your ex, Henry, who is in New Canterbury. And you had asked information about what conflict is everyone in New Canterbury talking about, and what had Dr. Vance Benson been up to lately? So the conflict that everyone is talking about is a pretty continuous land grab. Oddly enough, between New Canterbury and The Monarchs. There seems to be some infighting over who gets what territories, what buildings, and the map seems to be shifting pretty often. Which is kind of unusual inside of a Circle, that they are fighting amongst themselves. And then as for what has Dr. Vance Benson been up to lately? He has been seen talking to a lot of the people of contact for all of the other factions, because he really took the brunt of the blame for losing Dani in the confrontation over who would keep her as a ward. And so since she went missing, a lot of that is resting on his shoulders.

Kim: OK.

Rev: And then you also put out the word that you were trying to find out information from Mortalis about Cloud Gate. And what you heard back is that while they are uncertain about who is running Cloud Gate, they believe that the envoy for The Lost Ones may have that information. And a meeting has been set up for you, so that you can head to that point of contact and try to negotiate with them.

Kim: Sounds good.

Rev: And Jake, you reached out to get a sense of where Ozymandias's artifact is located. And it turns out there is someone who knows that information. A meeting has been set up for you with one of the lieutenants from Wild, a Mr. Damien O'Doyle, where you can try to negotiate with him for that information.

The other rumors you hear over the course of these five days are connected with certain factions. First, you hear that not only have The Monarchs secured some new holdings in the form of a world class Formula One race car driver and their car, but they were also seen bringing someone into their casino. And this person was wrapped in a sheet so they couldn't be identified, but their restraints were magical, technological, and just plain old physical. There is a rumor about The House of Strohm bringing in members from outside of town to bolster their numbers, as well as one regarding some kind of strange, magical malfunction that happened at The Vault. You also hear that the Court of the Silver Wing has seized the buildings around Lincoln Park, pushing Clan Ozymandias out of them. And you don't actually hear any rumors about Mortalis. But I will let you know here, since this is the first time we are going through these mechanics, that one of the moves that all of the Circles have access to does give them the ability to hide their action from the public's knowledge.

And so then the final part of the faction turn is that you all have the option to do the Rumors move where you can cash in debts, offer debts, or mark corruption to ask follow up questions to the rumors that you have heard. And this will then set the stage for the next active period before the next faction turn. Does anyone have any Rumors moves they'd like to make?

Jake: I would like to mark a corruption to expose a vulnerability and an enemy's defenses.

Rev: All right. So which of the rumors that you heard would you like to get this further information about?

Jake: The Monarchs. They were seen bringing in a heavily restrained hostage. I want to know about the vulnerabilities around their defenses of that hostage.

Rev: OK. So you're gonna mark a point of corruption to expose a vulnerability in an enemy's defenses. So I think the vulnerability in the defenses at the casino is that at night, it is far more crowded and far more rowdy. But it also means the security is spread much more thinly. You don't see a lot of patrols at night, especially on weekends, because all those people are needed inside. Whereas on a Monday night, a Tuesday night, all the security is spread pretty evenly along the roof access and around back and the front gates. Seems everyone's kept pretty busy during the rowdy times of the weekend.

Jake: OK.

Rev: Anybody else?

Tass: Yeah, I actually would also like to take a corruption and try to learn about some of the weaknesses in the defenses of Tranquil Silence. Specifically, that hotel where I know that the cross is buried.

Rev: So mark your corruption, and the thing that you learn is that this building has been surrounded by very large copses of trees. And the rumor is the building has also become ghostly in some way, and that direct sunlight on the walls of the building make them weak and brittle.

Tass: Oh, very cool. I also want to ask ... If I can, I want to offer up a debt to ask a follow up about one of the rumors or secrets.

Rev: OK. Who are you gonna offer a debt to?

Tass: I think I'm still working with them. I think it's still the Scoleri brothers.

Rev: All right.

Tass: So I think they have a debt. And what I want to ask is about, like, who's in charge of the hotel and who's, like, protecting the cross?

Rev: The thing that they tell you is that it's actually hired muscle that protects that area. And it is a group hired from The Monarchs.

Tass: OK.

Rev: Yeah, it seems The Monarchs hire out for security work. And since Tranquil Silence has a very specific time of the 24 hour cycle where they have some issues, they bring in outside muscle to help protect.

Tass: Guard dogs.

Rev: Yep.

Tass: I like it.

Kim: I would like to offer up a debt to ask a follow up question about the ritual that The House of Strohm did that was unsuccessful.

Rev: OK. Who are you offering this debt to?

Kim: I'm gonna offer it to Al, the doorman at The Vault.

Rev: All right. Yeah, he will absolutely take a debt from you.

Kim: OK.

Rev: What Al tells you is that Strohm tried to do a magic ritual to make it so that the building was unscalable, and that it did not work. And you can actually see, as you're talking to Al outside of the building, that the concrete and the brick and everything is a little more porous. It seems a little weaker.

Kim: Oh, boy.

Rev: And he also tells you that Strohm is pretty rundown from this attempt. That even though it didn't go the way that it should have, she still put out the energy to do it. And so she was kind of knocked on her ass by the magical expenditure.

Kim: Oh, OK. Can I offer up a debt to someone else to ask a follow up question about a different rumor?

Rev: Sure. Who?

Kim: I would like to offer up a debt to Henry, my contact in New Canterbury. I would like more information about the hostage that was seen being dragged into The Monarchs' casino.

Rev: OK, so what do you want to know? And I think you need to tell me, how is Henry important in New Canterbury?

Kim: I think Henry is Dr. Benson's assistant.

Rev: Like his scheduler, and ...

Kim: Yeah, exactly. Like maintains Dr. Benson's schedule. And, you know, assistants, they're good people to talk to, to get the gossip. I would like to know, if I could, the identity of the person that was kidnapped by The Monarchs.

Rev: So you find out that the person who was kidnapped was from Tranquil Silence. And you learned that their name is Lana King.

Tass: Oh, no!

Jake: I would also like to offer up a debt to ask a follow up question. I am going to offer a debt to a member of The Monarchs. Us having established that The Monarchs are kind of for hire as security and stuff? I think that the ... Basically, like the dispatcher. The lead dispatcher. Uh, and ...

Rev: Oh, for like the security teams?

Jake: Yeah. For, you know, whoever decides like, "OK, this faction needs help. So you, you, and you are going here," you know? And they kind of get the mission reports and whatever.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: And her name is Scruff. And I think Scruff knows what Clan Ozymandias is hiding, because she was involved with the security detail that helped hide it.

Megan: Is that her nickname? Or is that just an unfortunate coincidence that she was turned into a werewolf?

Jake: No, that's her nickname.

Rev: OK. All right. So mark down that you owe a debt to Scruff. And they're able to tell you that the rumor that they have heard is that the item for Clan Ozymandias is a metal pyramid that, when activated, shows like stars and planets. Like, shows a very specific area of the sky. That it kind of projects it above, like a hologram.

Kim: Dope.

Megan: OK. For my first move, I would like to offer up a debt to ask a follow up question.

Rev: OK. Who are you offering a debt to?

Megan: Foster, my werewolf friend. I want to get a little more information on this splinter group from New Canterbury that is tracking down and murdering humans. I kind of want some information on what have they done to be able to like pick us out, specifically?

Rev: All right. So mark down that you owe a debt to Foster from The Monarchs. And what they are able to tell you is that it seems that at a museum exhibit, they were able to pull some blood from what everyone had assumed was a completely dry corpse in a sarcophagus. There was a finite amount of this. Ingesting this blood heightened their senses a ridiculous degree, and that they can actually smell the difference between a paranormal creature and a human now. But I think you also know that's not a, "Take it once, and you can do this." It is, "Take it and you can do it for a while until the effect wears off."

Megan: OK. So for my second one then, I will mark corruption to expose a vulnerability in an enemy's defenses.

Rev: OK. Whose?

Megan: I want some information on New Canterbury. Kind of hearing this information about this power struggle between this land grab between Monarchs and New Canterbury. I'm kind of interested in the power structure within New Canterbury, how that's set up. Like, what's some vulnerability that I can exploit, there?

Rev: The thing that you're able to learn about New Canterbury is that because they are spread kind of thin — having lost Dani, having this issue with this splinter cell inside, most of the faction not knowing who the actual leader is here in Chicago ... That the result of that is the people in power in that group don't seem to be reporting all the issues, because they don't want Nash to come here and handle it personally. And so there seems to be some stopping the flow of information from going up higher.

Megan: I love that Nash's organization is now just a, "Don't tell mom, don't tell mom," situation. That's very good.

Rev: I mean, would you want to tell him?

Megan: I mean ...

Rev: I mean, you would. He's pretty sweet to you.

Megan: I would. He's my grandpa. [laughs]

Rev: So that brings us to the end of our faction term. But before we go out of this, there are a couple of things that are gonna happen. So all of you, for the Circle moves that you have used, you're going to mark that Circle. So if you went to Mortalis and offered up a debt, if you went to The Monarchs and called in a debt, you would mark that Circle. Once you mark all of the Circles, that is when you will advance. And there are also the moves like Hit the Streets, Study a Place of Power, Put a Name to a Face, and the Rumors move, which we have just done. So take a moment and mark all of the Circles that you have interacted with. And also, while we're here, I want to take a moment to give Jake something. Because Jake has, as part of his playbook, your sanctum. One of the things is that it's difficult to get to. So we kind of established early on that Jake's sanctum is the

castle back in the mine. So I want to give you just a small addition to one of your powers that you can use. So when you summon energy, you get that hold, your teleportation only lets you teleport a short distance, like where you can see. But for the purpose of accessing your sanctum, if you spend 2 hold, you can teleport to your sanctum. If you spend the third hold, you can take one person with you. The only real difference here is that even in a un-stressful situation, you will still have to summon this magic to take you there, because it is such a powerful spell to travel you that far.

Jake: OK, nice.

Megan: So, yeah. It's supposed to be difficult for you to access, but I don't want you to have to get in a car for three hours every time you want to go there.

Tass: [chuckles]

Rev: So from marking your Circles, has anybody advanced?

Kim: Yeah, I'm one short.

Jake: One short.

Tass: Not even close.

Megan: I think everything I've done has been in Night. So, [laughs] no. I do also have two marked down, but not the other ones that I need yet.

Rev: OK. All right. So the last thing here is the end of session move. At the end of every session, decide if you've grown closer to a Circle you've engaged with this session. Increase your score in that Circle, and decrease your score in a different Circle. Tell the MC how your relationship to these communities have changed because of the events of the story, and mark one of the two Circles involved in those changes. So we will also do this move as the end of our session when we go through and do the faction turn. This is an optional thing. You do not have to do this. This is if you feel like you have grown closer and away from a Circle. So is anybody shifting their Circle numbers around?

Jake: I'm gonna increase with Power. Power is my faction, I am getting more involved in it, I am watching over Dani, I am doing favors for Lore Merchant. Like, I think I'm getting closer in there. And so I will decrease Wild. You know, Zui from Silver Wing is mad at me. And The Lost Ones would be mad at me if they knew I had Dani, probably. So yeah, I think I'm probably not in their good graces.

Tass: Do we feel like this would be decisions we would make based purely on the like in-play interactions, or would the faction turn interactions also affect this?

Rev: I mean, it says "because of the events of the story." So I think it's open to interpretation. Like some of you did some things in the faction turn that while not scenes, were still interacting with NPCs and trading information and debts. So I think it's dealer's choice, there.

Tass: OK. I was leaning towards I didn't think I was gonna do it, but I think I might with that. Because technically speaking, I did give up some information about Wild. So I think maybe I go down with them. And I think just by virtue, I think those line up that maybe I've gotten a little closer to Night because of that.

Rev: OK.

Kim: I think it makes sense to increase my score with Mortalis, especially based upon all of the things that I've done during this first session. Meeting these three and working with James to set up their identities, and making sure all of that went off as successfully as possible. You know, Rev, you and I have talked about how my working relationship with James was primarily based upon working with him to try to prevent Strohm's assassination. And this was like our next task. And so I feel like this is my first sort of job, kind of proving myself as a double agent.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Kim: And I hate to say it, but I think it makes sense that I lower my score in Power. Even if it was on good terms and with Strohm's blessing, I did take an item out of The Vault and give it to someone not in her faction.

Rev: And that information is now in the world.

Megan: OK. And I am going to lower my standing with Night. I feel like murdering some vampires, even if they were part of a splinter group, still probably counts as not being great. Also, I did get some information on New Canterbury's power structure. So I think just kind of gathering ammunition against them probably wouldn't put me in great standing with them. Not that I was to begin with. But yeah, I think that makes sense. And then I'm going to boost my standing with Mortalis. I think stepping into this role of running The Red Line and scoping out the safe houses, getting more familiar with how to run this faction and make things smooth, and specifically using my city moves and the Rumor moves primarily to get information on how to keep humans safe, would bump me up with Mortalis.

Rev: OK. So now that the faction turn is over, I think that we will always find, at the end of a faction turn, the four of you having reconvened inside of James Francis Tincher's subterranean lair.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Tass: "How's everybody holding up so far? Everybody ... Everybody chill?"

Megan: "I mean, I got attacked by vampires earlier. That wasn't great. Definitely had to kill them, and lost somebody."

Tass: "Oh, shit. I'm sorry."

Megan: "Yeah, it's wild out there. There's something going on with them being able to tell who is human. They got like blood out of a mummy corpse at a museum or something, that like gave them extra superpowers. And now they're just like, yep, we know that you're human."

Tass: "Damn. OK, well, that's not great, but good to know. So, you know, obviously we can keep an eye on that."

Megan: "From what I was able to gather, there's not much of this blood that lets them do this. So I don't know if it's a wait it out until they use it all up, or try and find where they're keeping it and get rid of it, or ... I don't know."

Tass: "Huh. All right. Well, I figured out where Tranquil Silence is holding their artifact. We've got a few avenues to deal with, there. Seems like The Monarchs are actually hired to guard the place. And if we can find a way to get through the trees that surround the place, if we can get like direct sunlight to hit the building, that also makes it kind of brittle, kind of something that we can maybe use to use brute force to get in. But I mean, either way, we've got — we've got some avenues. If we want to try to work with The Monarchs or something, we might be able to get in there."

Jake: "I learned from one of The Monarchs — Scruff, she kind of like dispatches their hireable security forces. She let me know that the item that Clan Ozymandias has is some kind of little pyramid? Like a metal pyramid that like makes a hologram of a star chart. And I don't know where it is yet, but actually I have a meeting set up with Damien to figure it out."

Tass: "Oh, OK."

Megan: "Oh, nice."

Jake: "Yeah, I don't think ... I don't think Damien knows that it's me-me necessarily. But, you know, that'll be fun. I'll play that up."

Tass: "Oh, boy. Yup. He's gonna learn."

Megan: "That's interesting, that this thing has a star chart. Like is the item the thing that we would need? Or do we need to know like, what ... Like, you know, does that mat — is it just a cool, like, nightlight? Or is that important, to know what star thing that is? I wonder."

Tass: "It might be. If this is something ... Logistically, if we have to go to a place, it might not hurt to have that information. But long as we get James close to it, that's all that really matters."

Jake: "I'll see if I can ... I mean, we can see if we can snap a photo of it projecting while James is siphoning its energy, or whatever. And as far as the protection on the item in the Wrigley Casino, security is spread pretty thin at night, and especially on weekends."

So if we're gonna go for it, you know, that would be the time to go for it, is maybe a weekend evening or weekend late night, when security's got way too much going on as it is."

Tass: "Oh, OK. Yeah, that makes sense."

Megan: "Did I hear something about them like getting a hostage? Somebody in the casino?"

Kim: "Yeah, I was talking to someone that I know in New Canterbury, and he told me that the hostage that The Monarchs took was Lana King."

Tass: "Oh, shit."

Kim: "Yeah."

Megan: "Do we think it's the same Lana?"

Jake: [laughs] "I have to assume."

Megan: "I don't know. Is she immortal now? I know she did like a thing that made her look older, but I didn't know if that meant that she can't die."

Kim: "I mean, as far as I am understanding, she was just this source of kind of like pure magical energy. And if anything, the world's gotten more magical since then. I don't see any reason why she wouldn't still be around."

Megan: "So we gotta save her, right?"

Tass: "Well, I don't know. Like that seems like a thing where we ... We save her, for what? Like to help us do the rest of this and fill her in on why we left?"

Megan: "I mean, she's in chains."

Tass: "Well, sure. But if this all goes off well, then she won't be in chains for very long."

Megan: "It's weird. I don't ..." [sighs] "Yeah, I guess I gotta — I just gotta keep in mind that we did the things that we gotta do, then the stuff that's happening now, I guess, isn't as important. But it still feels important."

Tass: "Yeah. I mean, it is. It is important. But we gotta figure out how, and what order to do this, and which thing isn't going to make waves enough to fuck us up when we try to do the next one."

Kim: "Yeah, I gotta say, the more you all keep talking about how, you know, we don't need to follow up on this, because if we're successful, none of this is going to matter? Isn't making me feel great."

Tass: "I know, I know."

Kim: "Anyway. Jake, I had another vision about you."

Jake: "Stop it!"

Kim: "I wish I could! They happen just randomly, and I guess ... I don't know. Like, you should ... You should be flattered. You left such a positive impression that I keep just having premonitions about bad things happening to you. I'm sorry."

Jake: "Great. Yeah. What doom do I have a waiting me now?"

Kim: "It's still related to Zui. So I guess it's the same doom? It's just a variation. He's going to find out about Dani. And the only way that I've seen for you to prevent that is if Brizack genuinely apologizes for cheating in that duel."

Jake: "Oh, I'll do that."

Kim: "OK."

Jake: "I mean, that was a dick move on Brizack's part. I have no problem apologizing for ... Yeah, that's fine. OK."

Kim: "OK. So, yeah."

Jake: "Yeah. That one's not so bad."

Kim: "No."

Jake: "Keep having the visions!"

Kim: [sighs] "If you don't do that, then the outcome is really — is really quite bad. But yeah, it's easily preventable."

Jake: "All right."

Kim: "Also, Strohm is justifiably wary of Night — and New Canterbury, specifically. It seems as though she was trying to do some sort of ritual to make The Vault less scalable, and it went south in a really bad way. If anything, the building is even more easily accessed than it previously was, and she's pretty weakened right now."

Jake: "Well, I mean, the good news is we already got what we needed out of there, as far as information goes. I guess I might advise you to not crash there if you know it to be more vulnerable."

Kim: "I mean, where else would I stay? And I don't want to leave Strohm by herself."

Jake: "That's fair. If you want to stay there as her muscle, then that's one thing. But, you know, if you're worried for your own safety ... I mean, you would not be the first person to have crashed in a Tincer subterranean lair, so."

Kim: "It's very nice of you to say that I'm the muscle, all 4'11" of me. I'm more intimidating than I look."

Jake: "Yeah, I know. You keep telling me about certain dooms coming for me."

Kim: [laughs]

Jake: "It's not inspiring."

Kim: "And then really everything else that I've done over the last five days was just digging for information about New Canterbury. Seems as though Benson is in a lot of hot water about losing Dani, and is having to have several meetings with members of the other factions."

Megan: "Oh, yeah, I totally found out that like most of New Canterbury is — OK, so it's like really ... It's really funny, because there's all this stuff going on, right? And like problems where they like lost Dani, and — things are just going wrong. But they don't want to, like, tell each other about it."

Tass: "What?"

Megan: "Yeah. Like they don't — they don't want it going up the ladder, because they're afraid that like Nash is gonna come back."

Tass: "Oh ..."

Megan: "And like handle shit himself. So it's like a 'Don't tell mom, don't tell mom. Everything's fine. You're not hurt.'"

Jake: [laughs]

Megan: "'I didn't even hit you the hard. You're OK.'"

Tass: "Oh, shit."

Megan: "Yeah. So like nobody actually knows everything that's going on, because they don't really have this figurehead head that's like keeping them in line. So they're just kind of like, it's cool. It's cool. So I mean, I don't know if we can use that to our advantage, but ..."

Tass: "Yeah, that is big ammo."

Kim: "The other thing I was looking into was I'm so curious as to what's going on with the Cloud Gate, how all of these people keep appearing at midnight. And my contacts in

Mortalis didn't have very much for me, but it looks like the envoy of The Lost Ones might have some information about it. I'm gonna meet with them soon."

Megan: "Yeah, that's awesome. I would love to know more about that. I actually met somebody that just came, like, fresh from Cloud Gate, and she just didn't really know much about why she was there in the first place. She was just kind of, like, there."

Kim: "Well, do you want to come with me?"

Jake: "I mean, I imagine we should probably all come with you, right? We should probably all do this together, just for safety in numbers."

Kim: "Absolutely. That does raise an interesting point as to how I tag along to your meeting with Damien. I want to go, but you should know the last time that Damien and I were in the same room together, he did say that the next time he saw me, he would kill me."

Megan: "What did you do?"

Kim: "Well, I ... I tried to lure him into a magic circle that would have banished him from this plane."

Jake: "That's harsh."

Kim: "But hey, if you all are as good of friends with Damien as you claim to be ..."

Jake: "I feel like we could at least make it smooth enough to not have any attempts on lives during the meeting. Maybe we keep you out of sight until we — maybe we don't spring you on him, though. We, like, keep you behind a curtain. And we're like, hey, you remember Kim? Well ..."

Rev: Damien O'Doyle, this is your life! Do you recognize that voice?

All: [laugh]

Jake: "We'll cross that bridge when we come to it. Let's hit your meeting, figure out what we figure out, and then go deal with Damien."

Tass: "I like that."

Kim: "Sounds good to me."

Rev: All right. So you are all gonna head over to the Union Stock Yards Gate for Kim's meeting with The Lost Ones, is that correct?

Kim: Yes.

Rev: So as you have all heard, the envoy for The Lost Ones changes as the seasons change. And as you pull up and park your car and head towards the gate, there is a very large figure standing next to the Stock Yards Gate. They have four legs, two arms, and are just covered in hair. They're shirtless, big muscles, and they're eating a cupcake.

Kim: Would this be an opportunity to try to Put a Name to a Face to figure out this person's reputation?

Rev: It absolutely would. When you put a name to a face or vice versa, roll with their Circle. On a hit, you know their reputation. The MC will tell you what most people know about them on. A 10+, you've dealt with them before — learn something interesting and useful about them. Or, they owe you a debt. The choice is yours. All right, so Kim, you're gonna roll this with Wild.

Kim: OK. Ten.

Rev: All right, so do you want to know something extremely useful about them, or do they owe you a debt?

Kim: I think they owe me a debt.

Rev: Yeah. So you put a name to the face, and you recognize this person. You have worked with them before. It was about last year this time. But their name is Borbauk, and

they are a centaur. Very fond of this time of year, because of all the baked goods that can be smelled on the air. And as you approach, he waves.

Rev: BORBAUK: Oh, hello, Kim. How are you?

Kim: "Borbauk! Hey! I didn't know that you were up this season. Congrats."

Rev: BORBAUK: Oh, yes. It was my turn to come back. It's a very nice to be here. Who are your friends?

Kim: So I think I'm pretty good introducing Raguel and Brizack. But Megan, does Fiona have another alias that she goes by?

Megan: Yeah. So I think Fiona has these different kind of identities that she takes on when she's developing contacts in the different Circles. For example, when she talks to Foster, she doesn't do so as Fiona. She does so as Alexandra. And as far as he is aware, she is a werewolf. So I will interrupt and kind of just take a step forward as Kim tries to introduce me. And I will reach a hand out to Borbauk's non-cupcake bearing hand. "Alexandra, nice to meet you."

Rev: BORBAUK: Well, nice to meet you. What can I do for you?

Kim: "I was looking into information about the Cloud Gate, and how people keep appearing there. It's a big mystery. And a little birdie told me that you might know something about it?"

Rev: BORBAUK: Oh, interesting. You've heard that Borbauk knows secrets, huh? Well, it might be true, but ... What in it for Borbauk?

Kim: "I mean, had I known that I was meeting with you, I would have brought you some of those apple donuts that you really like."

Rev: BORBAUK: Oh ...

Rev: One of his hooves stamps.

Kim: [giggles] "What can we do for you, Borbauk?"

Rev: BORBAUK: Well, if it is exchange of services for information, I would gladly make that trade for you. There is something that I actually am very interested in getting my hands on. In the zoo right now, they have a nightmare on display. It's beautiful. And I would like to get some of the hairs from its tail because ... Borbauk's working on a little something to see if Borbauk and a nightmare — what do you get when you mix them all up?

Kim: "Sounds like the setup to a joke."

Rev: BORBAUK: Oh, I think it would be anything but funny. I think in the my enemies will tremble.

Kim: I look around at the rest of the group. "I think we could do that for you. What do you all think?"

Jake: "I love the zoo."

Megan: "Oh, same."

Kim: "Yeah, you all ... You all are from out of town, so you haven't gotten a chance to see the zoo. It's pretty great."

Tass: "Let's go."

Rev: BORBAUK: Excellent. Excellent.

Rev: And he goes around and he pats each of you on the back. As he does, he stops at you, Jake.

Rev: BORBAUK: There's something funny about you.

Jake: "Thank you. I like to think that I'm a funny guy."

Rev: BORBAUK: No, not funny "ha ha." Funny "no no."

Rev: He grabs a hold of you with both hands and starts sniffing you.

Rev: BORBAUK: [sniffs] Hmm ...

Rev: And his eyes get big.

Rev: BORBAUK: You have this scent of The Lost Ones on you, eh? Tell Borbauk, which my of clan have you've been spending time with?

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

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