

# Card Sharks Wolves (S4, E10)

**SFX:** INTRO MUSIC

**Rev:** So the other day when we were streaming the Q&A, Tass and I remembered, much to our surprise, Halloween is coming.

**Tass:** Yeah, it's October. When did this happen?

**Rev:** Yeah. And so that means it's time for our annual costume contest.

**Tass:** Woo!

**Kim:** I'm so excited.

**Rev:** Yeah. With like Gen Con and everything actually happening this year, it ... We kind of almost, like, let it get away from us. But normally we give like six or seven weeks? Probably too much time.

**Kim:** It's true.

**Rev:** Probably too much. Like, oh yeah, I'll do it later.

**Jake:** There's fun in the crunch.

**Rev:** Yeah. And then there's — and then it's Thanksgiving. And you're like, I forgot.

**Tass:** Yeah, yeah.

**Megan:** I definitely haven't figured out what my Halloween costume is going to be yet, so ...

**Rev:** Well, here is ... What's — what's the ... Like not your reminder, but like, your ... The thing that's supposed to, like, push you. Like, oh, I gotta do this now.

**Kim:** Your incentive?

**Rev:** Yeah. Yeah, maybe. I don't know. I don't know if Megan can win. That might be a little ...

**Tass:** That's fair, yeah.

**Kim:** I think legally, we can't.

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Megan:** Oh, I just meant Halloween in general. Because you need to have a Halloween costume for Halloween.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Tass:** But still,

**Rev:** So like, here's your reminder. Hey, let's all figure out Halloween, because we've got the details for the costume contest. Just like last year, we're gonna pick three winners. The deadline for this will be November 6th. Because Halloween falls on a Sunday, we want to give everyone the opportunity to, you know, if you're doing something on actual Halloween, to get that into us. But get that into us by November the 6th, we'll announce it on the 10th. You can either email us the photo of your costume, or you can tag us on Twitter with #CritOrTreat.

**Kim:** Or you can tag us @TheCritshow.

**Rev:** That's probably an even better option.

**Tass:** Nice.

**Rev:** We're gonna draw three winners at random. You'll get one entry for your costume, two entries if your costume happens to be related to the show — again, not a requirement. We had some awesome pet entries every year. I almost said last year, but every year.

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Rev:** For the winners, instead of naming the prizes, like, "Oh hey, you're gonna get some swag and you're gonna get some merch," we're gonna do three Halloween treat bags. And we're gonna kind of curate it to the winner. Because the winner might have some stuff already, or they may have nothing. And maybe Jake is like, "Hey, you know about this winner? I think they get a bag of ... Of, uh ... Oops, All Berries."

**Jake:** [Laughs] What?!

**Megan:** I've changed my mind. I can win this!

**Rev:** I was trying to think of bubble gum, and then all a sudden my mind went blank. So one box could be just all of our favorite cereals.

**Tass:** [Gasps] Just loose?

**Jake:** That ain't bad, yeah. Just loose and mixed.

**Megan:** [Laughs] I can definitely ...

**Rev:** Loose, mixed, with a giant spoon, and a coupon for a gallon of milk.

**Megan:** Oh, I'm definitely winning this.

**Rev:** But yeah, who knows what will be inside? Well work together, based off of the winner, and we'll make a little one of those 'if it fits, it ships' boxes for each winner, and just cram it full of stuff.

**Tass:** I'm so excited.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Tass:** I'm going to put something of TJ in there. Like ...

**Rev:** You know what? I —

**Tass:** Literally of TJ, though. Like a finger.

**Rev:** I have some TJ props.

**Tass:** Oh my god.

**Rev:** Collecting dust.

**Tass:** Oh boy. Yeah, that's true.

**Rev:** I'm just saying.

**Jake:** We need to keep those for the inevitable museum, though.

**Rev:** That's fair. It belongs in a museum!

**Kim:** Yeah. So just a reminder: send us your pictures by Saturday, November 6th. And you can send them to us by emailing us at [thecast@thecritshowpodcast.com](mailto:thecast@thecritshowpodcast.com), or posting a picture on Twitter and tagging @TheCritshow.

**Rev:** Also, I want to take a moment to thank all the patrons who joined us in the month of September: JGame\_Z ...

**Tass:** Hey, buddy.

**Rev:** Hallie Koontz, Tim, Isaac McWhinnie ... This is the month of, this is going to go sideways as I try to read them for the first time.

**Tass:** Yes, these are my favorite

**Rev:** Satchel Perry, Jason Hanks, Joseph Newkirk, Yordleboi, Robin Bowles, Julian Rayn Walraven, Sidney Tetramore ...

**Tass:** Ooh, good one. Sheriff Jetsaurian — or "jet sauryan."

**Tass:** Ooh.

**Rev:** Karen, Edwin Barron, Martin, Mikal Dev, Hannah Gallaher, Robin ... [Chuckles]

**Kim:** Hmm?

**Rev:** Robin Fiorenza, and Josh Leavitt. That was not a command.

**Tass:** Leave it!

**Kim:** Josh!

**Tass:** Put it down.

**Rev:** Put it down. Whatever you've got right now, Josh, put it down. So thank you for joining us this month on our Patreon, and thank you to all of you who join us every month on Patreon. You can find all the information you need over at [Patreon.com/TheCritshow](https://Patreon.com/TheCritshow). It starts at just one dollar, which gets you invited into the most aggressively welcoming Discord community on the internet. If you have signed up for the Patreon and you are not in the Discord, make sure to check your email. Because Patreon emails go to junk mail, and your link is gonna be there.

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Megan:** I really enjoy how many people still don't fully understand what aggressively welcoming means until they get into the Discord. Because every time new people join, there's always the comment of, "Wow, y'all are really aggressively welcoming."

**Rev:** "You weren't joking."

**Megan:** "You weren't — this wasn't a bit."

**Rev:** And now the thing I promised last week that we didn't get around to — because it was just Harvey and I. He didn't have any really good stories. How was your Gen Con?

**Jake:** Harvey didn't have any good Gen Con stories?

**Rev:** He didn't. He didn't. He went — oh, he went on a boat while we were at Gen Con.

**Jake:** That's a good Gen Con story!

**Rev:** I have a video of him going on a boat, and playing caddy for my dad when my dad was golfing.

**Jake:** Caddy for your daddy?

**All:** [Laugh].

**Rev:** That sounds like I'm purchasing a vehicle.

**Tass:** I did very good. I spent just over only half of the money that I set aside for dice.

**Megan:** Wow.

**Rev:** That's impressive.

**Tass:** I know, right? And it was still a lot of dice.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** I did a good job of scouting dice for Tass to purchase.

**Tass:** He did! I sent him two or three messages of, "Where did you say that was? Oh, cool, cool, cool."

**Megan:** I found some cool dice as well. I was really happy with like — I didn't ... I didn't find like that Gen Con purchase that I was looking for. I was going around to all of the different booths looking for like, what is the thing that's going to jump out at me and be like, this is the unnecessary, like, extreme purchase that you need to make. And I didn't quite hit it. But I found a lot of really cool dice, and I found some really cool pirate coins for everyone. And so that was really, really neat. And then just running games was

amazing. I got to do one of the mysteries that I wrote a couple of years ago, and everyone seemed to really enjoy it. I got a lot of eye rolls.

**Rev:** And a piece of art was posted on the Discord!

**Megan:** Oh my gosh! I had one player who was so, so good. He played a Spell-Slinger named Gandalf the Senile. And ... Which is this old wizard who just kind of danced around and summoned gummy worms and was just a delight. And ended up joining the Discord, and drew his character? And it was exactly like I pictured him.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Megan:** It was great.

**Kim:** I had some great tables at Gen Con. It was really fun how many people had never played Monster of the Week before.

**Tass:** Same.

**Kim:** I love teaching this game. It's so fun, and just ... It was really fun watching them enjoy themselves and get, like, very into their characters. I made a note of all of the characters that I ... That I ran games for, for Gen Con. And man, some of them are so wonderful. I wish I could contact them and like, keep the stories going. Because I'm dying to know what happens to these people after my adventure. I had a table and they were a couple in real life and they were playing and Initiate and a Mundane. And they were married — these two people — and The Initiate's mentor was his father-in-law. But the wife, The Mundane, didn't know about this secret order that both her father and her husband were in. And so there was so much drama of the mentor trying to get The Initiate to do this like very shady thing and him trying to hide it from his wife. It was like ...

**Tass:** Oh my god.

**Kim:** It was like watching — it was like watching a Lifetime movie. It was incredible. And The Mundane had Telekinesis as her Weird move. And so we were at the very end and we were fighting these monsters, and my Mundane was like, I want to use Telekinesis to like, grab one of the monsters and slam it into the other one. And I was like, yes,

absolutely. And she rolled a six. And my Initiate was like, can I help her? And I'm like, yeah, I feel like you've seen your wife's telekinesis, and you can kind of help her focus. And so he ... He was like, all right, I grab Debbie and I pointed the monster, and I say, "Just imagine Pat from the PTA. We hate her." And it was — god, it was so good. [Laughs]

**Tass:** I did have another Meddling Kid that played the dog. But this one was special, in my opinion, because he insisted on driving his own van.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** Like Toonces, the driving cat.

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Rev:** I think I've unfortunately just dated myself, horribly.

**Megan:** I have no idea what you're referring to, so.

**Tass:** Oh, no.

**Rev:** Yeah, you shouldn't.

**Megan:** You shouldn't! [Laughs]

**Rev:** Yeah. We ran, I believe, 140 chairs over the weekend. And I think about 110 of those folks had never played Monster of the Week before, which is awesome.

**Megan:** Wow.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Tass:** So cool.

**Jake:** I also had a conversation with the people who run Kraken Dice. Because they named some sets after Twilight characters, and I recommended that they name a set after Shark Boy instead, as far as Taylor Lautner characters go. And that seemed promising. But if you want to see more traction on that, @KrakenDice on Twitter — just go ahead and tag them. Tag us. Ask them when Shark Boy and Lava Girl sets are coming.

**Rev:** Nice.

**Tass:** Well, y'all, I know this is already kind of a long intro, but I have one other thing that we need to talk about real quick. I'm actually going to need you here at the table to give your attention to the Discord — Rev in particular. This is for everyone to enjoy, but particularly a story that's two and a half years in the making ...

**Jake:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** And something that I'm very, very glad to be able to give to Rev.

**Rev:** Oh!

**Kim:** [Gasps]

**Tass:** So what we're looking at is something that we tried to put together two and a half years ago for Rev's birthday. And because of some just life matters, it fell through. But I had all the contributions to make this happen. And finally, thanks to our good friend of the show, Lord Nitekon, we're able to give Rev this piece of art that features himself at the center, and many of the characters that he voices surrounding him.

**Rev:** Oh my gosh.

**Tass:** So a big, big thank you to Lord Nitekon for this beautiful piece of art that he did practically instantly when we gave him the information. And so this art features, clockwise from noon, First Vine from our Hero Salad show, Boba Yaga, Damien O'Doyle, Ori, Jingles, Margaret, Everett, and Ferguson, all surrounding Rev in his wizard hat.

**Rev:** Oh my gosh. Thank you, everybody. I will have to send that to Kim so you can share it on social media.

**Tass:** Yeah, it's beautiful. Oh ...

**Kim:** Yeah, absolutely. I will — I will definitely share this. This is incredible.

**Megan:** And Rev is in the center, and he has his wizard hat!

**Rev:** I do.

**Tass:** So happy birthday, from two and a half years later.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** Wait. Does that mean I'm officially only just turned that age?

**Tass:** Yep.

**Rev:** Fucking win.

**Jake:** But the next couple years are gonna hit you in like the next few seconds, and you're gonna feel it.

**Rev:** Oh man, it's [Old man voice] time to let the recap roll!

**Megan:** His face just melted!

**Rev:** It's like he opened the Ark of the Covenant.

**SFX:** RECAP MUSIC

**Jake:** "I think this might be kind of a splinter cell mission. I think me and James might be going into the Rookery. If you guys want to knock out the nightmare, we could really kind of accelerate our timeline, here."

**Rev:** And he reaches out and grabs it in his hand and pulls it to himself. And then he freezes and waits, and his eyes dart around the room, looking for anything to happen.

And nothing happens. He slides open the panel on his arm and starts to check the readouts and punches in a couple of things. And a few moments pass, and he sets it back down.

**Rev:** JAMES FRANCIS TINCHER: All right. Let's go.

**Jake:** "Hey, kid!"

**Rev:** She stands up and walks over to you, and you see the little tongue darting out of the proboscis. And you can see that her forehead furrows a little bit, and she signs to you, "Do you know Borbauk?"

**Jake:** "I don't really know him. I encountered him earlier today."

**Rev:** She signs to you, "Can I go home?"

**Jake:** "Man, I wish I could tell you yes, but I don't think so. You know, my duty here is to take care of you, but it is to take care of you for the Order of the Ley Line."

**Rev:** She looks at you for a long moment, and then she signs to you. "My smell is on you. If the wrong people get that scent, someone will come for your life."

**Jake:** "Someone specific?"

**Megan:** She nods, and she raises her open hand, with her fingers pointing up and her thumb touching her chin. And you recognize that as the gesture for Mother.

**SFX:** RECAP MUSIC FADES

**Jake:** "Is Mother ... Would she kill me? I mean, you said she'd come for my life. It sounds like she would want to kill me?"

**Rev:** She signs to you, "You're keeping one of her children. Well, maybe not you, but you're keeping one of her children hostage."

**Jake:** "Who is Mother? I know she's, like, in charge, but can you tell me anything about her? What form does she take?"

**Rev:** She signs to you that Mother wears a white mask and white gloves and a deep purple robe. And that whenever someone is found, someone that doesn't fit in someplace else, that doesn't belong, she's the one that seems to track them down and bring them to The Lost Ones. And she is then their mother.

**Jake:** "What can she do, as far as abilities? Like powers? Or, you know, like you've got wings and you can fly, and I can do lightning and fire and stuff. Like, what can Mother do?"

**Rev:** She shrugs.

**Jake:** "Oh. Well, I appreciate the heads up. And, you know, again, I don't like this anymore than you do. I don't want to be making you be here. So let me talk to Lore Merchant and just see if there's any ... Any avenue that gives us more of a direction. You know, maybe I can start working towards getting you back home. Or at least have some certainty, rather than just we exist here in limbo. Sound good?"

**Rev:** She nods.

**Jake:** I guess I'll head back downstairs to Lore Merchant to chat about this.

**Rev:** As you come out of Dani's room, he looks up from his work and nods at you, and seems like he's going to settle back into it.

**Jake:** "Hey, can I talk to you about something real quick?"

**Rev:** THE LORE MERCHANT: Ah, yes.

**Jake:** "Dani is, as I'm sure you can guess or maybe know, she doesn't love being here. She'd rather be home. And she's bringing it up."

**Rev:** THE LORE MERCHANT: Hmm.

**Jake:** "What's our plan? What's our endgame, having her? When does she get to go home? What do we need to accomplish before that can happen?"

**Rev:** THE LORE MERCHANT: I'm not quite sure. I think that would be a question for the council. She has become kind of a bargaining chip. But we just haven't found the bargain we're looking for yet, I suppose.

**Jake:** "I mean, I think if we played it just right, just sending her back home could score us a lot of favor with The Lost Ones. You know, having taken her in in the midst of this conflict and protected her and then returned her back where she belonged. If we don't have any other thoughts on what to do with her, it seems kind of mean to just keep her. And we could still, you know, send her home and benefit."

**Rev:** THE LORE MERCHANT: That's true. But you have to take into account the cost of New Canterbury learning that we had her and then just gave her back.

**Jake:** "Yeah. I just feel bad for the kid. I think I might try to have a conversation with the council and see if we can't figure out a more forward direction on this. How do I — how do I do that? How do I — is there just an appointment book? Do I schedule online?"

**Rev:** THE LORE MERCHANT: No. This would be a matter of getting their attention. Doing something that was ... I don't want to say "worthy of their time" — that seems rude. But they're very busy. They help coordinate the training and the placement of all magic users on the planet. And so there's a good bit of stress put on their time.

**Jake:** "All right. Well, I guess I'll think on that and try and figure out a way to pull that off. All right, I'm heading out."

**Rev:** THE LORE MERCHANT: All right.

**Jake:** And I'll go hop in the car with Grandpa and take off.

**Rev:** Tass and Megan and Kim, what is your plan for breaking out this horse?

**Tass:** Oh, no plan necessary. I already got the whole thing. So here's what y'all see. There's one of those ramp-looking truck things that you know you're supposed to get

stuff on it — but it's like set back, so it's a ramp. So there's the motorcycle with the two side cars, and it ramps up over the wall. In the air, all three of us flip backwards out and land — superhero pose. The motorcycle crashes through the gate. Fire, explosion, horses go everywhere. And we walk out with the smoke behind us.

**Jake:** Boom.

**Rev:** Oh, no. Horses go everywhere.

**Tass:** Everywhere.

**Kim:** Everywhere? There are only two horses in the zoo.

**Tass:** I know. That's how excited they were to get out. Just — horses.

**Rev:** They just spawned more horses.

**Megan:** Well, I am in. A hundred percent.

**Rev:** Yeah. I think roll ...

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** Oh no.

**Rev:** It's gonna be a series of things, here.

**Jake:** Roll bullshit.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** But for real.

**Rev:** Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

**Tass:** It's just gonna be a matter of us getting inside the gate and then getting to the actual exhibits. Because it wanted me to open that gate to the exhibit — that's what it wanted me to open, for the deal. So I have to assume that once it goes through that, it can kind of handle itself. So I think it's, you know, waiting till close, waiting a little bit longer than that, and then getting there to check out what the security is, to just be able to slip in.

**Rev:** And when you're waiting for this, like, are you sitting in the parking lot in your motorcycle? Are you ... [Laughs]

**Kim:** Really conspicuous.

**Rev:** Your flaming motorcycle.

**Kim:** You guys can just go on home, I'm just hanging out.

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** No, I think I think we're cruising around and stuff. Like we're waiting till it is closed and then some time before we make our way in.

**Rev:** OK.

**Tass:** Probably being a few blocks away. Dissipate the bike and then, yeah, then sneak our way in and check it out.

**Rev:** OK. So I think to start this off, why don't you give me a Study a Place of Power — and this is gonna be with Power.

**Tass:** OK. Thirteen.

**Kim:** Nice.

**Rev:** All right. So I think the thing that you notice here that is not what it seems is that you have been here before and you went in through the main entrance. But on the far left side, you see someone come out and get into the last car in the parking lot, and they

came out from a wall — that you did not see a door there. Like there's nothing there, but someone very clearly just walked out of that area.

**Tass:** OK. I guess what I want to know about ... Because it's Ozymandias that's in charge of like all this, right?

**Rev:** Correct.

**Tass:** So like, is this a standard thing that they use for concealing their places of power? Is this like, you know, a usual defense. Some sort of false wall, or whatever this might be when I get up and inspect it: is that how they roll in general?

**Rev:** Yes. After that person leaves the parking lot, the three of you go up and inspect this wall. And it's not an illusion, but when you go to touch it, that cement sinks in as if it's sand. And you can just barely see the faintest of footprints where that person just came out. And they did not flinch, and this was just someone who works at the zoo. So you imagine this must be pretty standard fare at a lot of Ozymandias's locations — that they have doorways or hallways or whatever that are composed of this really loose sand that gives way when people walk through it.

**Tass:** OK. So when I touch it, it does give a little. Like, so it really is just a matter of knowing where it is, and I think I could make my way through this?

**Rev:** Yeah. It doesn't seem like it has ... Like, it's not sensing that, oh, you're the right person. It's just a matter of knowing where it is.

**Tass:** Nice. "This is so cool."

**Megan:** "What does it feel like?" And I want to go up and put my hand against it.

**Rev:** You know that really colorful sand that they have at museums where you can kind of mold it? It has the texture of sand, but it's also somehow really fluffy?

**Megan:** Yeah, it's like kinetic sand.

**Rev:** Yes. It feels like that.

**Megan:** That's so cool. I want to live in this.

**Kim:** That's amazing.

**Tass:** Well ...

**Kim:** Clan Ozymandias has all the good fidget toys.

**Rev:** Well, when you're around forever ...

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** You get super fidgety.

**Megan:** I would be the worst employee here, because I would just be hanging out at this wall. Like secret hidden passageway, and I'm just very obviously halfway through it, jumping in and out. "Which exhibit is on the other side of this wall?"

**Tass:** Let's see if my memory serves. You said this is on the left side of the parking lot?

**Rev:** Mmhmm.

**Tass:** Would that be closest to the horses?

**Rev:** It would.

**Tass:** That's awesome.

**Kim:** "Do we think this is a, like, hold your breath as you're walking through this fake wall, kind of situation?"

**Tass:** "I don't know, but I'm not chancing it."

**Megan:** "Yeah, I would."

**Tass:** And I hold my nose and walk through.

**Megan:** I follow him.

**Kim:** Me too.

**Rev:** All right. You all walk through this. You're in it for a little longer than you expect.

**Kim:** Oh, no.

**Rev:** Not like a super long time, but probably like 10 feet when you're maybe hoping 3.

**Tass:** Awesome. Awesome.

**Kim:** That's much longer than I'd like.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Tass:** Yeah. As we come out, what are we looking at, here?

**Rev:** You're very clearly on the backside of an attraction. Like outside of all of the areas that you were at at the zoo, there were signs and big art displays and stuff, but you're seeing the backside of that stuff — the posts and everything that's holding it up, walkways for workers, benches ... If anyone has ever worked behind the scenes at any place that has a public facing side, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Kim:** Mmhmm.

**Tass:** Do I see any cameras or anything?

**Rev:** You do. They are not facing you just yet. You can see that they are slowly turning, but this is an area obviously that has observation on it.

**Tass:** All right, then I'm gonna point those out and start moving. I just — I want to try to get through all of this and out towards that side of the exhibit that has that door that I need to open.

**Rev:** So I think that's gonna be Keep Your Cool. All three of you could roll this and have different success levels, or are you kind of leading them through this?

**Tass:** I think I'm leading them through it.

**Rev:** OK. All right. So Tass, Keep Your Cool. But before you do, what's the situation you want to avoid?

**Tass:** I want to be able to get to that gate without being spotted by these cameras with my team.

**Kim:** What's your Spirit at, baby?

**Tass:** Don't worry about it.

**Rev:** [Chuckles]

**Kim:** I'm worrying a little bit.

**Tass:** It's not gonna be necessary.

**Megan:** Spirits are high, but don't worry about the number.

**Tass:** Seven.

**Rev:** So you are able to get through to the location you want without being spotted by the cameras. But you're gonna make some noise, and it's gonna make your escape a little more difficult because some folks might come this direction. You're going to leave some obvious tracks behind, having come through the sand for like the first time. Or ... This is kind of a tricky one, because it would be unbeknownst to all of you. But some of the sand is still going to be on you when you finally depart.

**Tass:** I get pocket sand?

**Rev:** [Laughs] Yes, you get pocket sand.

**Tass:** Pocket sand, for sure.

**Rev:** All right. So you are able to make it through to that side gate where the exhibit for the nightmare and the pegasus are. And as you arrive, that gate is maybe five feet high. There's enough room for like the horses to stick their head out if they wanted to. And you can see inside. It's completely dark in there right now, but it is like an open air section, so fresh air can get in. But it's not large enough that the pegasus could fly out of that spot to put their heads through.

**Tass:** OK.

**Kim:** "So all we're supposed to do is just open this gate?"

**Tass:** "Yeah." And I want to look it over to see is that something I can easily do from this side? Is it locked? Like, what's the situation with that?

**Rev:** There is a lock on it, but it's like a typical barn door setup, where there's the piece that goes into the ground and then the whole thing would swing open. But there is a lock on it.

**Tass:** "Anybody have ideas on this? Or should I just try to rip this thing open?"

**Megan:** "I mean, it doesn't look super guarded or anything right now. I wonder if you can just get it open and we can get out."

**Tass:** "Yeah, maybe. I can sort of pick locks, but I also can just clean rip the door off."

**Kim:** "What do you mean, sort of pick locks?"

**Tass:** "I mean, I'm OK at it. I'm not great at it, but I can do it."

**Megan:** "I can whip up like a smoke bomb to cover us if anybody starts running this way."

**Tass:** "Yeah. I'd say hang on to that. That's fantastic. Yeah, I think that's the play, then. Let me see if I can rip this thing open and then we just be ready to scatter." I think I'm trying to rip the lock off so that it can be easily opened.

**Rev:** I think this is gonna be Keep Your Cool again. This is gonna be trying to utilize your strength, but not overutilize it. So what exactly do you want to avoid in doing this?

**Tass:** I think I want to avoid making enough noise that doing this will immediately attract attention.

**Rev:** OK.

**Tass:** Oh boy, here we go. Ten.

**Kim:** Yes!

**Megan:** Nice.

**Rev:** What does this look like, when you break this lock?

**Tass:** I think my hand heats up a little bit as I'm grabbing onto this mechanism and just twisting. And because of the heat, it's kind of like just twisting silly putty. The whole thing just kind of sloughs off and out as I pull that piece out.

**Rev:** Inside, in the darkness, you see really briefly just the nose breath of fire. Just that [Exhale] from the horse.

**Tass:** I give a little nod in that direction and just kind of barely nudge that door, just to make sure that it can open.

**Rev:** You hear the sound of the nightmare cantering over, and it sees all of you and it nods and it puts its teeth on the door and pushes it to see if it can open it. And seeing that it can, it pulls it back to look like it's closed. All right, Tass, you get to mark that you have a favor from Sweet Vendetta, the nightmare.

**Tass:** I love that sentence more than anything in the whole world.

**Rev:** It looks you in the eyes again and gives a nod and turns and heads back inside.

**Tass:** "All right, I don't know what plan it has besides that, so I think we're good. Let's go, let's go, let's go."

**Kim:** "Yeah, let's get the fuck out of here."

**Megan:** "That was so cool. Oh, yeah. Let's go, let's go."

**Rev:** Yeah, I don't think there's a roll for this. You're all able to sneak back out through the false wall, into the parking lot, and into the night.

**Tass:** I'm gonna have to work on this, because I have it mentally but I don't know if I can do it physically. If I can strut and sneak at the same time? That is what I'm doing. I'm so happy about this.

**Jake:** Stand up right now and demonstrate for me?

**Tass:** [Laughs] Nope.

**Rev:** The thing that instantly came to my mind, like what that would look like, is the walk that the "Keep on Truckin'" guy does? Like the really far leaned back, and the legs out, just ...

**Tass:** Yep. Yep.

**Rev:** That seems like a strut-sneak to me.

**Jake:** A very ... Yeah. A very Looney Tunes-esque movement.

**Megan:** I'm imagining like the Scooby Doo sneak down the hallway, but just like fucking hips.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** Oh my god ...

**Rev:** So where are you all going after this breakout?

**Megan:** "That seemed too easy. That was like really easy, right?"

**Tass:** "It was. Let's not question it. Let's take our wins and head back to the 606 and wait for Jake and Grandpa."

**Megan:** "Sounds good."

**Kim:** "OK."

**Tass:** "I hope he doesn't mind me just calling him Grandpa all the time. I'm just thinking about that to myself. I'm sorry. I don't know. I hope he doesn't mind. OK, let's go."

**Rev:** All right. So you all head back to the 606. And I think about the time that you get there is when Jake and Grandpa Tincher have arrived back as well. So we find you all inside of the subterranean lair.

**Kim:** "How'd it go?"

**Jake:** "Flawlessly."

**Kim:** "Really?"

**Jake:** "Yeah."

**Tass:** "All right!"

**Jake:** "A separate hang up, though, is that Dani does ... She smelled Borbauk on me. And she, like, you know, wants to go home. I told her that I would start trying to open up a dialogue with the faction to figure out what we could do about that. Which would require me somehow getting the attention of the Council of the Three, which I guess requires something kind of monumental. But that's not like an immediate pressing concern. But if

the wrong people smell both her and Borbauk on me, then Mother will come — maybe claim my life. So that's as pressing of a concern as we are social, out and about in the world, to be smelled."

**Kim:** "Well, the good news is that like no one ever sees Mother. Like she pretty much stays wherever The Lost Ones are based, which no one seems to know. And the only people who meet with her are like the highest of high ups in the factions."

**Jake:** "Is there a bad news to follow?"

**Kim:** "Well, like ... I guess no one that I know has ever dealt with Mother and, like, lived to talk about it? I guess?"

**Jake:** "So people do see Mother. They just don't get the chance to report back, is what you're saying."

**Kim:** "Yeah, I guess so."

**Jake:** "That's not excellent. And if it takes that much to draw her out, then Dani might be way more important than I think even the Order of the Ley Line realizes."

**Tass:** "OK. A thought for later, because I know we have kind of more pressing things, but is that the play then? If they don't even realize the importance, is just doing all of this without setting up a meeting with the Council gonna end up being more beneficial? You know, if you just — if that is the big statement is 'I gave her back. Mother owes us a big debt now,' and like, you know, is on our side because we kept her little kid here safe and got her back safe. Like, is that maybe the statement? Or do you think that would be more trouble?"

**Jake:** "Maybe. I don't know a lot about Dani. And we haven't really talked about it. I've just been treating her like any other kid. I guess she might know exactly why, like, she's in this high of demand, or ... You know, she might know her own importance. She might not. But I guess I could talk to her about that. And you know, if we get some answers, then yeah, it might be, 'Hey, I figured out this thing that you guys didn't realize, and it seemed the most pressing to get her home so that we didn't all get stomped.'"

**Tass:** "All right. Well, yeah. That's worth looking into."

**Jake:** "All right. How'd your guys thing go, though?"

**Tass:** "Great."

**Kim:** "Surprisingly easy."

**Jake:** "Well, you know what they say. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth."

**All:** [Groan, then laugh]

**Megan:** Oh my gosh.

**Tass:** Ugh.

**Megan:** Damn, that's good. Why didn't I think of that?

**Jake:** "What a weirdly successful night. Let's ... Should we? Should we ride this? Should we ride this high? What's next?"

**Tass:** "I mean, if we're feeling lucky, that's when you head to a casino, right?"

**Jake:** "We could go to the casino tonight and at least start watching. And like figure out if we can figure out any patterns or where specific things are. And then by the time we head out, we'll have a good idea of what we need to follow up with on the outside."

**Megan:** "Yeah, that's a great opportunity to go in and scope a place out. We could just gamble, and see what we can see."

**Tass:** "Yeah. I mean, if we get very lucky, maybe we move tonight. But yeah, at least let's go take a look."

**Kim:** "OK."

**Jake:** All right, I'll drive us to Wrigley.

**Rev:** All right. So you all head over to the Wrigley casino. Describe your approach, here. Are you going into like the self park? Are you dropping your car off with the valets? Are you decked out? Like what kind of vibe are you trying to put off as you go to this casino? We're gonna say that it is Friday night.

**Jake:** My gut instinct is that we are being very low key tonight, because right now we're just trying to observe. What does everybody else think about that?

**Kim:** I mean, to a certain degree, I'm always constantly a little dressed up, but I'll try to tone it down, I guess, for the purposes of casing this casino.

**Jake:** Could you slum it with us in the casino?

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** Yeah, I think it is very much putting off that vibe of "we're new in town and checking out all of the cool spots" and yeah, just going with it.

**Megan:** Yeah. I think since Fiona has contacts in different, you know, factions and we've kind of established that she has this other werewolf that she meets up with and stuff, it's not unreasonable to think that like she comes here to kind of meet contacts sometimes. So I think I'm just walking in like, "Yep, here to gamble on a Friday night."

**Rev:** All right. So you park Jake's car and you head into the casino. It is loud in here already. It's like ten o'clock at night on a Friday night and there are people celebrating wins everywhere. You do notice heavily armed werewolf guards right at the door, first thing. Inside is kind of your typical casino. It is a lot of bright lights, no windows, no clocks. As soon as you come in, there are a bunch of the four player ... Like the big round slot machines that have a number of seats around the same tower?

**Jake:** Uh-huh.

**Rev:** Like the big video ones. And off to the right are a bunch of tables for poker and craps. And then on the left are more slot machines. And then directly in front of you is an enormous bar that stretches across about half of the building.

**Kim:** I've got a question for you, Rev.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Kim:** So first part of this question: how well-known am I as a member of the House of Strohm?

**Rev:** I mean any of you, with the exception of Megan, someone with the proper knowledge could put a name to a face.

**Kim:** Fantastic. Second part of this question: how welcome are oracles inside of a casino?

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** That's a solid question. I think it's not an issue because it's very obvious when you're using your abilities.

**Kim:** That's true.

**Rev:** Just like all of the other paranormal in this world.

**Megan:** She's just walking with her arms full of chips and her nose just bleeding.

**Kim:** Big, glowing eyes behind a pair of dark sunglasses.

**Kim:** I've got my hair in a super tight bun.

**Jake:** All right, at a glance ...

**Tass:** Where's Lana?

**All:** [Laugh]

**Kim:** Yeah, I like to find Lana, please.

**Jake:** No. At a glance, where are casino staff in and out of? I want to post up somewhere by like an employee door that it seems like is being used probably by security, honestly. So that that's what I can watch for the night. I can sit at a slot machine and learn patterns and see if I can spot anything beyond the door, or how they get in and out. All that good stuff.

**Rev:** It takes you quite a while to find a good spot to post up.

**Jake:** Oh.

**Rev:** Because the doors here are pretty well hidden. You actually have to go to the far back right corner before you find a location that is guarded by the armed werewolves, but then also has traffic in and out. You notice that the traffic here is not like the bus staff or the wait staff. They are all coming from a set of double doors on the left side next to the bar. But there is a door on that far back left wall that is being guarded. And you see a pit boss come out and go back there, a new one comes out. You see a couple of the folks working at the high roller stations go in and out of there.

**Jake:** OK, yeah. My goal for the night then is to keep an eye on that and, you know, kind of leave this spot and go to other tables enough to not just seem like I'm sitting here and staring at this door all night.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Jake:** But see what I can glean from here.

**Rev:** All right. And what is everybody else doing while Jake is posting up to watch this guarded entrance?

**Megan:** I think I'm gonna post up at the bar and just kind of look for some patrons that are drinking pretty heavily and see if I can try and overhear some gossip or something.

**Rev:** OK.

**Kim:** I would like to keep an eye out for Grayson Winters and see if I can track his movements, if he's here. Like, how often is he walking around on the floor? How often does he seem to be going into his office, or going into another door? Stuff like that.

**Rev:** OK.

**Tass:** I think I would very specifically be trying to track anything on the security end. Like location of cameras and movement of the guards, things like that that's going on inside.

**Rev:** All right. I think everybody, give me a Keep Your Cool roll, and I assume what you all collectively do not want is to be found scoping out this place.

**Tass:** Yeah, that's fair.

**Rev:** OK.

**Megan:** Ten.

**Kim:** Seven.

**Tass:** Also seven.

**Jake:** Nine.

**Rev:** All right. So for those of you with mixed successes, I think your options are that you can find out some information about what it is you have posted yourself up to scout out, but you're not going to be here quite as long as you want. That you're gonna kind of get the funny feeling that you've been noticed, so you're gonna need to make a little quicker of an exit than perhaps the rest of the group will make. Someone of not necessarily importance, but at least of somewhat power here is going to notice you. That like, "Oh hey, this person was here." Because you all are kind of names to some extent in the city, even if you have just arrived. Or you can stay longer and not be noticed, but you're not gonna get quite as detailed of information.

**Tass:** I like being spotted by someone who would recognize me.

**Rev:** OK.

**Tass:** I think that this tracks for Raguel and his story, that this is the kind of thing that he would be doing casually anyway.

**Rev:** On how good of terms is the House of Strohm with Night as a collective? Like I know that there is some bad blood with New Canterbury. Does that extend to The Monarchs?

**Rev:** No. Her struggle with the other group of power seems to be strictly with New Canterbury.

**Kim:** OK. Because I didn't want to be noticed by someone important here if it was going to, like ... If I had a concern that it was going to be bad for Strohm.

**Rev:** I mean, I think that ultimately depends on what you do in the future.

**Kim:** Yeah, that's true. Yeah, I don't want to risk it. I think I'm just gonna have to make a hasty exit.

**Jake:** I will just get less refined information.

**Rev:** All right. So Megan, at the bar. You kind of settle in and start listening to people as they are chatting about their evenings here, trying to overhear just any rumors or gossip between either the patrons or the waitstaff. And I think the details that you pick up is that a number of the wait staff have had to pick up additional shifts, and they're kind of crabby about it. And the reason that this has happened is because there has been a bit of a shift in the need for additional security. So people have been grabbed and basically moved up. That this is very much a you start as a busser, move to a server, move to a bartender and then you get to do floor stuff. And then from that, you might get to go to security. That everything advances kind of like on a pack level — that you start to move up as you get more skilled and more familiar with the location. And so this need for additional security has been noted by all of the servers who are having to pick up additional shifts as they figure out who is going to move up into their missing positions. And there's a lot of talk of on the ground training for this new security. So that at some point in the evening, you see someone pointed out who is guarding a door, and the wait staff is kind

of talking about how like, "Oh yeah, this is their first night. I can't believe they got picked over me," kind of thing. And so you get the impression that the casino itself seems to be being guarded by the less experienced guards and the more experienced guards have been moved somewhere else in the building.

Jake, in the back corner of this casino, watching this armed door. Throughout the course of the night, you do see people going in and out. And I think the piece of information that you gather from this is that everybody who comes in and out of that door has something on them that scans to unlock the door. Like they are not being checked by the security and let in. They just have something on them that's letting them through the door. Security's not even bothering to deal with them. And I think on that other side, you do see someone go towards that door trying to go in and it doesn't automatically open, and they get stopped and grabbed and pushed away — like a drunk patron at some point.

**Jake:** Nice.

**Rev:** And then to Kim, who is floating around inside of the casino, trying to keep an eye out for Grayson Winters. There is a section of high rolling tables next to the bar, and above that are a set of darkly tinted windows. But you've seen him before. You can make his shape out. And you can see that he is standing there, just looking out over the area before he returns back to his desk. There are a couple of times where there are large pots being handed out, that a big win has happened. And when those happen, he comes down to the table and personally congratulates the winner. But I think you have a hard time getting a sense of how much that win is, because kind of as you're starting to track it down, you get a sense that someone's gonna spot you if you're here too much longer, because you have encountered Grayson before. That there's a close call with him coming around the side of a slot machine and you're there, and you barely miss him, and it feels like it's time to go.

And then Tass, who is trying to get a sense of the security. You notice that a lot of the security that's going on is manpower. There are not a lot of cameras here. There are cameras specifically aimed at the tables, everywhere that people are playing. But you notice at like the bar, the walkways, going to the bathrooms, don't seem to be covered by cameras. That it's mostly people patrolling. But at some point you are spotted. As you are making your way through, a hand slams against your chest and you get stopped. A woman about five foot three, dark hair, sharp blue eyes and canine features.

**Rev:** WEREWOLF WOMAN: Why do I know you?

**Tass:** I'll look her up and down. "You been around New Orleans much?"

**Rev:** WEREWOLF WOMAN: No.

**Tass:** "I just came up from there. That's where I used to operate. Checking out the town."

**Rev:** WEREWOLF WOMAN: Huh. That's not quite it.

**Tass:** I'll offer a hand to shake. "Name's Raguel."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Name's Mallory Mercer. Most folks call me Mal. I'm the head of security here.

**Tass:** "Oh, nice. Nice to meet you. Looks like you're running a tight ship."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Try to.

**Tass:** "Nice. I understand that. I'm a little bit in the security game, myself."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Oh yeah?

**Tass:** "Yeah. Well, you know the family, we kind of call it, um ... Aggressive security."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Now that, I can appreciate.

**Rev:** And she smiles, and you can see her canines.

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: We actually have a group of us that get together every other week. A little bit of a fight club.

**Tass:** "Are you serious?"

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Yeah. Are you interested?

**Tass:** "Hell yeah."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: All right.

**Rev:** And she pulls a card out of her breast pocket and scribbles a number on the back of it and hands it to you.

**Tass:** "Nice to meet you, Mal."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Yeah, you as well ... Yeah. Why do you look familiar?

**Tass:** "I wish I knew. I apologize. You don't look familiar to me. We'll figure it out, maybe."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Yeah, I'll figure it out.

**Rev:** And she steps a little closer to you and takes a big whiff.

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Hmm. Familiar scent on you. I can't place it, though. I'll figure it out.

**Tass:** "Tell me if you do. I'll be around more. This place is pretty awesome."

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: Agreed.

**Rev:** And she heads back into the crowd.

**Tass:** "Oh, shit."

**Rev:** All right. So Kim does exit first, and then shortly thereafter Jake, and then Tass and Megan. And I think we find you at the car, outside of the Wrigley casino.

**Jake:** "Did anybody pick up anything useful in terms of information? I was kind of watching this door where some of the pit bosses and stuff were in and out of, and all I could figure out is that they just kind of automatically scan in. They've got something. I

couldn't get an eye on what, though. I don't know if it's a key card or a lapel pin or something."

**Tass:** "That's big. There's not a lot of camera work going on. It's — they're really trying to stop people from cheating. You know, they've got stuff on the tables. But keeping an eye on hallways and stuff in the general areas, that's all manpower. I also met the head of security, and she is a little fireball. And I guess I can probably hang out with her at a fight club."

**Megan:** "A fight club?"

**Tass:** "Yeah."

**Megan:** "That's awesome. That's so cool."

**Tass:** "Yeah, right? I don't know that that will benefit us with this, if we're gonna put this off for a while. But it might. So yeah, that's the big one there, is we gotta keep an eye on the people, right? Like they're gonna be the ones patrolling that we have to avoid, and so on."

**Megan:** "Yeah, that's really interesting that like most of the security here is people. Because what I was able to overhear is that a lot of the wait staff are kind of frustrated because they've had to, like, pick up more shifts. This place totally just like promotes within. So you start out as like the server or whatever, and then you move your way up to one thing, and then you're a bartender, and then you're security. But they've moved all the, like, experienced security somewhere else. So everybody here's kind of newbies."

**Kim:** "I have a pretty good idea what the experienced security guards are guarding."

**Megan:** "Well yeah, I don't know if that's gonna be Lana. I don't know if that's going to be the Tranquil Silence stuff that they're hiring out to guard. I don't know exactly where they pull from that pool."

**Kim:** "Well, the thing that y'all want is inside of Grayson Winter's office, and it's right above the casino floor. But he doesn't ever seem to really leave when the casino is in

operation. The only time that I've noticed that he leaves his office and goes down onto the floor is when one of the patrons has won a pretty big jackpot."

**Tass:** "Oh, OK. So ... Wow, that's a lot. So we've got technically less experienced guards that are the ones on patrol in the main casino. We don't know which thing the better ones are guarding. We know if we can get whatever these security fobs are, that we can get in and out of certain checkpoints. My instinct was to use whatever we were going to do to get Lana out to direct attention so that one of us could get up and get the rifle. But I guess if security is indisposed elsewhere, I don't know that Grayson would leave, or maybe he would to go deal with that. But if he doesn't ... I guess what I'm saying there is maybe we need to get that first. Maybe we need to wait for an opportunity to get up in and grab that and get out while he's shaking hands with the high rollers, instead of using the other thing as distraction."

**Jake:** "I mean, we also just ... We still don't know much about where Lana is. It seems like we can guess that the better security are probably watching her, but we don't know where that is or what like their rotations are like, or anything. So yeah, I feel like we could plan a decent angle against the gun here, but we can't really plan anything regarding Lana yet. Do we, you know, wait for the distraction or manufacture the distraction to get Grayson out of the office and go up there and do the thing with the gun, and then purposely blow that? So that then everything is drawn back in that direction, and maybe we can infiltrate towards Lana at that point? Like we get it done, and then we make it seem like we screwed it up?"

**Tass:** "I mean, I like the thought, but what kind of artful screw up allows us to just continue on? You know, if we get caught doing this thing and we mess that up, then what happens to us that lets us stay in the casino?"

**Jake:** "I mean, I don't think we would have, you know, just a casual time left. I think that would become sort of a 'All right. The clock's ticking. Which one of us was in the office to draw that attention? Everybody else is pushing in to try and figure out where Lana is and get her out.' I don't think anything allows us to stay peacefully in the casino for as long as we want at that point. I think once any part of this is done, we don't get to stay peacefully in the casino, or even peacefully return to the casino if we wanted to try and split it into two parts."

**Kim:** "Could we swap the rifle you all need with another rifle?"

**Tass:** "I don't hate that. That's ... That could be solid if we know exactly what it looks like."

**Megan:** "What if we caused a distraction not where the rifle is, where we need to get, but on the floor. To draw attention away from both the office and wherever they're holding Lana?"

**Jake:** "I think we have to consider the levels of their priorities. Like if we cause a stir on the floor, are the office and Lana more important? Are they gonna forsake security on the floor to lock down those areas? If we cause a stir in the office, is the office more important than Lana? Will they redirect security there? Or again, would they lock down on Lana harder?"

**Megan:** "I wonder if the type of distraction matters. Like if it was an explosion or something? Yeah, they might think something's up and put protection on the things that are higher priority. But if it was something like just an all-out fight, that is maybe not super uncommon, that they would bring security into break up?"

**Tass:** "I mean, I could certainly cause a scene with that."

**Megan:** "Yeah. I mean, I don't know how much trouble that would get you in with like Lady Jense or anything too, right? Like, are you able to just go and start fights with other factions? Or ..."

**Tass:** "I mean, it's probably not gonna look great?"

**Megan:** "I wonder if it can be something that's not so much a, 'Hey, look at me, fight me.' But it's ... If we could get people to fight each other. Maybe kind of not be as obvious about where it originated, but it just kind of gets out of hand? Like, that's why we thought this would be better to do it on the weekend, right? It gets pretty rowdy? So it might be better to do something like that, so it's not traced back to any one of us, and maybe just help escalate it. So they're already inexperienced security is spread even more thin."

**Kim:** "Yeah, like don't try to start a fight. Like, wait for one to happen and then just escalate it."

**Jake:** "Saturday night is gonna be the night to try this. So do we want to get this done in a day or do we plan to wait at least a week? I'd love to take a shot at this tomorrow. That would be fantastic. But we can't knock it out the day after. It's either tomorrow, or eight days from now."

**Megan:** "Does anyone have any favors they can cash in, to maybe get us some more information? I mean, I'm kind of not in a great place with that, but I don't really know where your personas stand."

**Jake:** "I don't have anything relevant. I don't have anybody who owes me that is involved with The Monarchs."

**Kim:** "Yeah, me neither."

**Rev:** So I think as you are all sitting in the car having this conversation about the different ways to deal with the building and the things inside of it, who's kind of leading this stakeout, would we say?

**Kim:** I'll do it.

**Rev:** All right. So why don't you Study a Place of Power?

**Kim:** Sure. Six.

**Tass:** Can I lend a hand by like pointing out some of the security stuff that I'd noticed as she's studying this place?

**Rev:** Yeah, go for it.

**Kim:** Oh, and because I have the Dual Loyalty move, you can roll that with either Power or Mortalis.

**Tass:** I'm gonna roll with Mortalis.

**Rev:** All right.

**Tass:** Nine.

**Rev:** All right. Kim, you can mark Night. And Tass, you can mark Mortalis.

**Tass:** And that levels me up.

**Rev:** Oh, what are you gonna take?

**Tass:** I think I'm going to take another Tainted move. I'm going to take Tough as Nails. So I get +1 armor. Blessed or holy sources ignore my armor, but weapons designed to stun or impair have no effect.

**Rev:** OK. And you also expose yourself to danger, entanglement, or cost. But Kim, the thing that you find out as you study the place of power is that from outside, this building is at least a few hundred feet longer than evidence of anything you saw inside the casino, including any time where Jake saw that door open and lead back into a hallway where the people who work here were going. So there is a area almost the size of the casino behind the casino that you have not seen any of. And on the back side of the building, there are no doors or windows. Except about halfway up, on the very back side, you can see that there is a trash chute on about the third floor that has not been bricked over.

Tass, as Kim is examining this building and you're kind of pointing out things to her as the two of you stand outside of the car having this chat, you hear Mallory's voice ring out.

**Rev:** MALLORY MERCER: I remember now. I saw you the other day on the street. You're working with that bastard ex-boyfriend of mine, aren't you?

**SFX:** OUTRO MUSIC

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