

March of the Pallbearers – (S4, E36)

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: So I'd like to ask you all if you'd like to play a game.

Megan: Always.

Kim: He rolls in on a little tricycle.

Rev: It kind of is a game like that.

Megan: Oh, no!

Tass: Oh my god, everyone. He's wheeling a barrel full of needles.

Rev: [Laughs] That we picked out of our carpet.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: So we got a package the other day from one of our listeners in Germany.

Megan: Oh.

Rev: An 11lb box of various German candies.

All: [Gasp]

Rev: I did not bring the box because there is enough in it of every kind that we can send a portion to Kim.

Kim: Ah!

Rev: So here's the game I would like to see if you all interested in playing. We all enjoy how poorly I pronounce things. I've written down all the names of these candies.

Tass: Oh, no.

Rev: And I'm gonna read them to you. And you're going to pick, just from the name, which one you'll try in the intro when we try them.

Tass: Oh, good. Yeah, OK. I'm in.

Kim: How many are there?

Rev: A lot.

Kim: OK.

Rev: There's like at least ten.

Jake: Let's go.

Rev: OK.

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: I saw Jake's hesitation. And some of these — I apologize to anybody who speaks German. Some of them are simply probably the brand that I think is the name of the candy, but some of them might be both.

Tass: Yeah, it's good. I'm ready.

Rev: All right, so I'm gonna — so keep in mind the one that you're like, "That's the one I'm gonna try." And I'm going to ask the listeners: if you know what these are, keep it out of the Discord. Let this be a surprise for all of us. The first: Dickmann's Schoko Strolche. The next: Niederegger.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: Mine! Dibs!

Rev: Is that yours?

Tass: Yes. That's hilarious. Sounds like one of the robots in Red Vs Blue short circuiting. Niederegger.

Rev: Feinsteinst Soufflé.

Tass: That one was fancy.

Rev: Coquier Winter Apfel.

Jake: Hmm.

Rev: Verpoorten.

Tass: Ooh.

Rev: Knoppers.

Tass: OK, now you're just making stuff up.

Rev: Vingummi Spunk.

Tass: [Laughs]

Kim: Germany has some very sexy sounding candies.

Rev: Yeah. Läkerol, Rumpflaume.

Tass: Ooh.

Rev: Türkisch Pfeffer, and Saltlakrids. That's the last one.

Tass: I'm set. It's all you guys, now.

Jake: What was the one that had, like, rump something?

Rev: Rumpflaume?

Jake: I'll do that.

Tass: Sign Jacob for rump-something.

Megan: I fully expected to Jake to be like, "I'll do the winter apple."

Jake: [Laughs] I feel like I understand that one.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: It's a safe — that sounds like a safe pick. It's no good for the comedy.

Rev: Fair.

Tass: Wasn't one of them salt something, and Megan hasn't said anything?

Megan: It sounded like salt licorice.

Tass: Oh.

Kim: Oh, we had a bad experience with that.

Rev: That's fair.

Tass: Fair.

Megan: What was the spunk one? [Laughs]

Tass: [Laughs] That's all you need.

Rev: Uh, Vingummi Spunk.

Megan: Yeah, I'll take that one. [Laughs]

Kim: What was the first one that you said?

Rev: Dickmann's Schoko Strolche

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Absolutely That one.

Rev: Yeah, perfect.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: And then I will — once we divide all this up and send it out, I'll just put the rest in a hat and draw one for myself.

Jake: He's like, "I'll handle the rest of them."

Rev: Yeah. So — oh, god ...

Megan: I do want to try the winter apple, because that one does the safest.

Rev: Yes. There is a ton of it. Some of the things that were in the box I didn't list because it's like stuff that we know or have gotten before, like Stroop Waffle and stuff like that.

Megan: Oh, love a Stroop Waffle.

Rev: I just took the ones that I was like, I don't know what these are.

Megan: This is great. I love it — so it's like, we can all try all of them, but we have to try the ones that we signed up.

Jake: Yes. Each of us has to champion one of them.

Rev: Yeah. Because I don't know that they want to hear us try all 15 of these.

Megan: I'll do a separate ...

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: A separate video.

Rev: A separate ASMR one, yeah.

Megan: Yeah.

Rev: And with that, it's time to get into the episode.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: After a very long helicopter ride, we find all of you in Baba Yaga's territory, in the center of Shorsky National Park.

Tass: I am holding a bouquet of blue roses, and a little gift basket filled with various kinds of tea.

Kim: Nice.

Megan: "I'll wait — I'll wait out here."

Tass: "No, you will not."

Kim: "No. Megan, we're gonna go in together. It's gonna be fine."

Megan: "Mhmm." I run. No, I'm just kidding.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: The house chases you.

Megan: Oh, god!

Jake: Its predator instinct takes over.

Megan: I'm slapping myself. Wake up, wake up!

Rev: The door at the front of the cottage slowly creaks open.

Jake: I take a big, deep breath and walk forward and into the cottage.

Tass: I follow.

Megan: Yep. I, like, force myself, like to take each step.

Kim: Yeah. I walk with Megan.

Rev: As you all get onto the steps and the porch, you feel the building lurch as it stands up and starts to slowly walk. Inside, there is a dim light glowing from a fireplace.

Rev: BABA YAGA: I was expecting all of you. Please do come in and join me for some afternoon tea. [Chuckles]

Megan: I'm like, checking every corner, like this is a haunted house and I'm just waiting for somebody to jump out and scare me. [Laughs]

Rev: Yeah. You look around, and you see this very old figure sitting next to the fireplace in a rocking chair. And the chair is rocking slightly with the shifting weight of the house as it walks through the forest.

Tass: "Oh, I didn't ... I didn't think about this. This vase is a little thin. Is there a good — is there like a stable place you want me to ... I'll just hold on to it."

Rev: BABA YAGA: I've got some nice stone vases.

Kim: "Hi, Baba Yaga. It's nice to meet you. I've heard a lot about you. I'm Kim."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Ah ... Hello, Kim. I smell ...

Rev: And you notice that her face starts to get longer. And it moves towards you, slowly sniffing.

Kim: Mmhmm.

Rev: BABA YAGA: I smell ... Yes, you're able to peer around the corners of time. I can smell it on you.

Kim: "Yeah, that's true. You've got a very good nose. I'm an oracle. I'm also Strohm's heir."

Rev: BABA YAGA: So you are to be the next Oracle of the North Wind, is that true?

Kim: "I have had a vision that suggests that very thing, yes."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Oh, a vision of the Oracle of the North Wind. What else did you see in this?

Kim: "Well I saw Megan, here."

Megan: "That's me."

Rev: BABA YAGA: You ... I smell on you power and death. Oh, something I have not smelled in a very long time. A god, long dead. Yes. It's familiar. Comforting, in a way.

Megan: "Uh, good? I'm glad that it's a positive smell. Yeah, I seem to have the abilities of The Empath."

Rev: BABA YAGA: One of the gods that died in our great task.

Kim: "Yes. And the first vision that I saw, Baba Yaga, was a vision of the past. I saw the ritual where you and the Oracle of the North Wind and a woman with a spear — in addition to all of the gods. I saw the ritual where all of you sealed away Koschei the Deathless."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Hmm ...

Kim: "But, I then saw another vision. This one, of the future. I saw Megan standing in a circle with seven other figures, and Megan was the only person in that circle who I could make out. But then off to the side, I saw myself wearing the Necklace of the North Wind, and Jake next to me — in the same place where you were, Baba Yaga, during the original vision. And in the center of the circle, surrounded by the gods, was this dark shape. I couldn't quite make out the subject, but it seems like sometime soon we're going to have to do that ritual again."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Jacob, have you been learning magic?

Jake: "I have."

Rev: BABA YAGA: I noticed the sign of your god lacking. Have you left? Parted ways?

Jake: "Yes."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Good.

Jake: "Oh."

Rev: BABA YAGA: What was done in the past, I will not be able to do again. Nor do I believe the others will be willing to join, but that is not my tale to tell. There's something I need you to do for me, to get the information that I sense you're seeking.

Jake: "What is that?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: The woman that you saw in your vision with a spear? Cara Ó Dubhghail. You must find her and ask her. She was The Chosen. She spoke for the people. It was her who convinced us to do what we did.

Kim: "Is she still alive?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: She is not. But I will give you something. It will grant her the time to tell you her story.

Kim: "OK, yeah."

Tass: I'm just nodding.

Rev: And I saw you writing, Megan. It's C-A-R-A, O-D-U-B-H-G-H-A-I-L. Dubhghail.

Megan: OK. I was only almost completely wrong.

Rev: [Laughs] It's not at all spelled like it sounds.

Kim: Gaelic'll get you like that.

Rev: Yeah, it will.

Megan: "If we get this story from her and she's not alive, what's gonna happen to her?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: What do you mean?

Megan: "You're giving us something to give her time to talk to us? Does that mean she just gets to ... Does that mean she just gets to talk to us, or are we pulling her from a rest? Can she go back to it?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: Yes.

Megan: "OK."

Rev: BABA YAGA: She is buried in a place that is ancient, guarded. A place of honor, when it comes to burial. Deep below the earth. Deeper than the two of you went when I sent you on your first errand for me, in the down below.

Rev: And you feel the house stop and settle back down onto the ground.

Jake: "Are we here?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: You're at the gateway.

Tass: "Anything in there you want us to pick up for you?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: No. There are some things I give willingly. This story, or at least the ability to hear it from another, is something I give freely.

Kim: "Thank you."

Megan: "Is there anything we should know? It sounds like this place might be hard to get to."

Megan: She stands up from her rocking chair and moves over to the cellar door, and wraps a gnarled hand around it and pulls it open.

Rev: BABA YAGA: The journey is easy. For some, unpleasant.

Rev: And as you peek down into the cellar, you see four stone coffins.

Kim: "Do we have to die?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: No. But you must travel as the dead do.

Tass: I'm low key super into this.

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Yeah, no. Me too. [Laughs]

Megan: "I don't know, guys. I get kind of claustrophobic sometimes. This ... This looks ... This looks like ... This looks like it's, yeah, unpleasant. That's probably gonna be me."

Jake: "Yeah. Uh, I mean, hopefully that part doesn't last too long?"

Rev: BABA YAGA: It's hard to say. But once the journey begins, do not open your lid until you feel the coffin settle again. If you open it on the journey, The Harvestman will come for you.

Tass: "Oh, I don't like any of that. OK ..."

Rev: BABA YAGA: But once you arrive safely, he will not be able to get to you there.

Rev: Baba Yaga goes over to a drawer and opens it and pulls out a small crystal vial and holds it out to the group.

Rev: BABA YAGA: Fill this with the water from the stream around the location you're visiting. Pour it into the mouth when you find the body, and she will speak.

Megan: I take it from her.

Rev: OK.

Tass: "Well, this is what we came for, guys."

Jake: Yeah. I head down the stairs and start opening the lid on a coffin to get in. I don't expect much more. I'm just like, whatever. Fucking ... I'm here for the ride. She's told me what to do. I'm just gonna go do it.

Megan: "Yeah. I don't think I'm gonna be tempted to look at The Harvestman. So I think — I think that'll be the easy part of this, is not opening the coffin."

Rev: BABA YAGA: Good.

Tass: I motion down the stairs to Kim. "Um, you first?"

Kim: "Sure." I hop down the stairs. This is like my, like, spooky goth dreams.

Tass: "Thank you, Baba. I don't know anything about tea, so I just got a mish mash. Like, I don't know if any of it — like, I hope it's good. I got the expensive stuff. I assume expensive is better. I don't know. Thank you for this. I'm gonna — yeah ..."

Rev: She just very slowly grins at you as you ramble.

Tass: And I will follow suit.

Kim: "OK. Slow breaths, everybody, when we're in there."

Rev: So you all climb into the stone coffins and pull the lids closed over top of you. You lay in the silence. And at first it seems very long, the amount of time you've been in here. But it's hard to tell, because of the darkness and the silence and the cold. And then you all feel your coffins shift, and you hear the sound of slow footsteps — three pairs on each side of your coffin — as you feel the coffin being walked. And you can tell that it's going down and at an angle. Anybody who's got a beginning of mystery move, now is the time to roll it.

Kim: Oh, no. That's a six.

Rev: Inside of your stone coffin, Kim, the light flares from your vision. In this vision, you see this large black dog, and it is digging an enormous hole in a cemetery. Around the cemetery, there is a river flowing of this deep blue water. The dog continues to dig until it can't be seen anymore. And then it leaps out of the hole, its muzzle and its paws covered in saliva and mud, and it moves very slowly over to a large tree where there are four bodies. And it drags them one by one into the hole and starts to fill the hole in. And then you are out of the vision.

Megan, I think that knowing you're kind of uneasy about this tight space, and one of your dark tags being impulse control, I'm gonna ask you to Act Under Pressure to keep it together and not bust out of this coffin partway through the trip.

Megan: All right.

Rev: You know, your dark tag says that when your power needs you to do something, and I imagine this energy inside of you — like The Big Whammy, your Telekinesis — because it's tight and closed up in this thing, that it wants to be ... To be free, to be used.

Megan: Twelve.

Rev: You are able to channel your energy into the saltshaker. And I think for a moment our view like zooms in inside the salt shaker, and we can see that inside, individual grains

of salt are like flying around and bouncing off of the inside. Like you've contained this impulse into your focus.

Megan: Awesome.

Tass: You said that these are stone coffins, right?

Rev: Yes.

Tass: So it's like nice and cold in here?

Rev: Mmhmm.

Tass: I don't think I'm ever getting out.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: They tip you to the side and start shaking it, trying to dump you.

Tass: No, no!

Megan: He's holding it closed from the inside! [Laughs]

Jake: He's just pressing his hands and legs against the sides of it and holding himself in it. Like, they flipped it all the way upside down. Like, is this one empty?

Rev: [Laughs] And they shake it and see that nothing falls out. All right.

Jake: OK, bury it.

Rev: After what feels like a very long time, the footsteps come to a stop and your coffin is lowered, and there's a heavy thunk on the ground. And then you hear footsteps walking away.

Jake: Once I can no longer hear the footsteps, I'm gonna give it a ten count, and then I'm gonna crack open the lid to my coffin and peek out.

Rev: You peek out of your coffin, and there's a very faint blue and green glow. You're inside of a cave on a hill. There is an old stone building at the top of the hill, and a number of grave markers. You can see that there is a trench dug around this graveyard, and there is a large black dog fighting with three people dressed in rags.

Jake: I'm gonna go knock on everybody else's coffin lids real quick, to give them the all clear.

Tass: Yeah, I'm cracking it open.

Kim: I don't move mine, I think.

Megan: Yeah. After I hear the knock, I'll open it just a little bit. And I'll say, "Is it okay? Are we good to come out?"

Tass: "Yeah, but it's wild out here."

Megan: I'll push it open and step out.

Jake: And I'll loop back to Kim's that is still closed, and I will push the lid open.

Kim: You see me just as curled up in a ball in this coffin as I possibly can, and my eyes are wet with tears.

Jake: "Whoa, hey —"

Kim: "I had a vision. We're all gonna die. All four of us are gonna die."

Jake: "OK, but sometimes your visions are the things that don't end up happening, right?"

Kim: "Yeah. It's just — it felt really real. I saw a big black dog, and it was digging a mass grave for all four of us."

Jake: [Laughs] I am ... My eyes are wide, and I'm looking just from her toward the dog.

Rev: Like the camera pans up, and we see the dog fighting the three people, over Jake's shoulder.

Megan: In the background. [Laughs] The.

Jake: I'm just pouring sweat and going, "Mmhmm, mmhmm, mmhmm. Interesting."

Megan: Why don't you get out of the coffin, and only face this way?

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I go, "OK. There ... You're not gonna love this part. There is a dog. But, there have been many times that we were supposed to die and we haven't yet. So I am intending to keep that particular trend going. And really that's all we can do. Do you — I can close the box."

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "If you wanna stay in the box."

Kim: "No. No, I don't — I don't wanna stay in the box. It's just this is — this is the first time that I've ever seen my own death? And that was a lot for me."

Jake: "Well, ain't going to happen. You're a very talented seer, and I believe in your abilities. But this one's wrong."

Megan: "Hey, I didn't get carried out of window by a gargoyle."

Kim: "That's true. And Tass didn't get stabbed by Ranger Dave."

Tass: "Yeah."

Megan: "Yeah. Your senses of all kind of ended up not true lately. What's with that?"

Kim: [Laughs]

Tass: While they're talking to her, I'm like watching this engagement across the way. I'm trying to understand this fight that I'm seeing. Like, are these things trying to escape, and it's guarding? Is this something harrying these people in some way?

Rev: Roll Read a Bad Situation.

Tass: OK. Six.

Rev: Yeah. Getting a glimpse of this, it seems like the people are there to protect this place, and the dog has encroached and is trying to kill them, to take this place over itself.

Tass: OK. "How are you guys doing over there? We seriously got some action. This thing is like attacking these people."

Megan: "Oh, my god." Can I try and read its thoughts?

Rev: Sure. Roll Tune In.

Megan: Well, with my +3 Weird, that's a six.

Jake: Oh, god.

Kim: Oh my god!

Megan: Yup.

Rev: You reach out with your mind towards this large black dog that is attacking these three people. And very quickly, the dog turns in your direction and it snarls. As it does, one of the three people jump onto it and you can see that they're kind of tearing at its side, and it starts biting them. But it has become aware of you as well, and assumes that you are part of this group.

Megan: I stumble backwards. "Oh, I can't — I can't get a read on it. It's not happy with us, though."

Tass: "OK, so what the hell? There's no water here, right? So what do we have to figure out? Do we have to get water flowing? And then — and then what? We're gonna have to run distraction or something on this, if we actually wanna get in here."

Jake: "I mean, maybe something to do with like the conflict between those two is preventing the water from flowing. Like River Styx or something? You know, like if a soul isn't, I don't know, the river can't flow if like, souls are refusing to go? I don't — I don't know. I can hold the dog in place, if that's ... Like I can do a magic, and I can just hold the dog still. Do we want the things to destroy the dog? I don't want the things to destroy a dog."

Kim: "The dog was the one that was burying us!"

Tass: "I really feel like this thing is attacking these people."

All: [Laugh]

Jake: [Laughs] Tass just ... Face in palm, regret.

Rev: [Laughs]

Jake: It can't chase us or anything right now, but I don't want it to keep fighting those people. So I'm going to try to cast a spell to hold it in place.

Rev: All right. Roll Use Magic.

Kim: While Jake's using magic, I have pulled out my tarot cards, and I'd like to try to See Through Time.

Rev: All right, roll it.

Kim: That is an eight.

Rev: All right, you get a hold 1.

Jake: [Snorts]

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: OK — seven. Seven.

Kim: OK.

Jake: Good god!

Rev: So what's your effect, and what's your glitch?

Jake: My effect is to trap a specific person, minion, or monster.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Jake: The dog.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: And my glitch is the effect is of short duration.

Rev: What does your hold look like now? Because it used to be chains of fire that engulfed the thing you were trying to hold in place. But you're no longer empowered by that god. Is it just the same, just out of force of habit? [Laughs]

Jake: It's the same. It's still chains, but they kind of look like ... Like hard light constructs.

Rev: Oh, OK.

Jake: Because there's just — there's not fire behind it, but I don't know another way to do it.

Rev: OK, that's fair. So these chains spring up from the earth and wrap around this large black dog. And instantly, the three people that it was attacking let go. And they sprint to three different locations, three tombstones, and they all start to dig. And you can hear the sound of chewing.

Jake: Oh!

Megan: Oh, my god!

Jake: I want to run over to the nearest one of those people and, like, run up to it. Like, "Hey, what are you — we gotta — the dog's held down, but it's not gonna last. Like, we gotta get you out of here."

Rev: Lightning fast, this thing pivots and slashes at you with a jagged hand. You recognize a ghoul when you see one.

Jake: "These are not innocent fucking people, Tass!"

Rev: You take two points of damage, not armor-defeating, but it turns and continues to dig down, chewing on bones and things that it's finding inside this grave.

Jake: I'm going to start readying a combat spell here, and I'm gonna yell out, "These are ghouls, and they're eating bones!"

Rev: Yeah. So the three of you see Jake rush over as the three figures break away from the dog and start digging into these graves. And the sound of chewing fills the air. And Jake is knocked backwards, and you see a little bit of blood trickle from his midsection. What is everyone else doing?

Tass: I am just cussing up a storm as wings sprout from my back, chain is out in my hand, and I'm flying towards one of the ghouls.

Rev: All right, roll Kick Some Ass.

Tass: Eight.

Rev: All right, what's your harm?

Tass: Two.

Rev: And Tass, as you are flying at this ghoul and slashing at it with the chain, I think you pretty quickly notice that it doesn't look like a manufactured ghoul, if that makes sense. Like it just looks like a normal ghoul, as opposed to the ones that you have all normally encountered.

Tass: I see. This one's — this one's free range.

Rev: Yes. Yeah.

Tass: OK.

Kim: This is the elusive "regular ghouls" that Megan talked about in one of her very first episodes.

Rev: Yes. You also take two, not armor-defeating, as this ghoul tries to defend its buffet.

Jake: Oh!

Kim: [Gags]

Jake: That's the person's last name.

Rev: Yeah. Jimmy Buffet was buried here.

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I'm also running towards one of the ghouls and pulling out my light pistol.

Rev: All right, roll Kick Some Ass.

Megan: Eight.

Rev: And how much harm does the light pistol do?

Megan: It's 2-harm, light.

Rev: All right Megan, you fire the light pistol at this ghoul's back, and you can see that it sizzles as the skin on its back starts to cook under this light, and it lets out a shriek. Kim?

Kim: Yeah. I'm scooping up my tarot cards and shoving them back in my pocket and then hopping out of my casket. And I want to try to attack one of these ghouls with my censer.

Rev: OK, which one? Tass and Megan and Jake are all kind of on separate ones.

Kim: Which one is closest to me?

Rev: The one that Jake ran up to that slashed at him.

Kim: I'll do that one.

Rev: All right. Roll Kick Some Ass.

Kim: Seven.

Rev: All right. What is your damage?

Kim: 2-harm.

Rev: You run up to this ghoul with your censer and strike out at it. It feels the hit of this and slashes out at you the same way that it struck out at Jake, trying to keep its focus on what it's eating. You take two points of damage, not armor-defeating. Jake?

Jake: I'm going to conjure a wall of lightning between this thing and the grave that it is trying to rob.

Rev: OK. Roll Use Magic. Or is this Kick Some Ass? Is this ...

Jake: This is a Combat Magic. I have the wall effect, now.

Rev: Yeah. All right. Roll Kick Some Ass.

Jake: Eleven.

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

Jake: I'm going to inflict terrible harm. So that is 3-harm, magic, barrier ... Just a whole lot of tags. Messy, obvious, loud, close, whatever.

Rev: Is that terrible harm — is that one extra harm, or is that terrible harm up to my discretion? Or is terrible harm 1-harm?

Jake: Terrible harm is +1 harm.

Rev: OK.

Jake: So it is — that is with ... The 3-harm is including the terrible harm.

Rev: I see. You cast this lightning wall on top of the grave as the ghoul turns to try and start digging back down in to eat. And you notice pretty quickly that it kills itself, not stopping. Like, trying to get through this barrier. That it just burns and chars away until it's stumps, and then it keeps going. Elbows, keeps going. And then it is dead.

Jake: Whoa!

Kim: Oh, no.

Rev: Tass?

Tass: I'm still swinging. I'm trying to get in close, get this chain wrapped around like this thing's neck. I'm just ripping into this thing.

Rev: All right, roll Kick Some Ass.

Tass: OK. Way better. Ten.

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

Tass: I also want to inflict terrible harm.

Rev: All right. You take two points of damage — once again, not armor-defeating — as it continues to swipe at you over its shoulder. It is in very bad shape. You take off a huge chunk of its left side. But it continues to claw down with its right side, cramming bones into its mouth. Megan, behind you, you hear the sound of heavy running.

Megan: I'm looking.

Rev: The dog has gotten loose from the spell, and it is barreling towards you.

Megan: I'm gonna use Telekinesis to try and stop it.

Rev: All right. Roll Telekinesis.

Megan: Eleven.

Rev: All right, so choose two, and mark 1-harm.

Megan: My two options, I'm gonna go with something is held fast, and you suffer one less harm.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to hold the dog at bay at the moment, but it is taking your focus. And it lets out a frustrated howl. Kim?

Kim: Yeah, if Megan is focused on this dog but there is still a ghoul near her, I want to run over to her ghoul and try to attack it. I don't want it to hurt Megan.

Rev: All right, roll Kick Some Ass.

Kim: Two.

Rev: Jake, as you have finished laying out this spell, you see Kim raise her censer and start to charge at the ghoul that is at Megan's back, as Megan is holding this giant dog at bay. The ghoul seems to sense her approach and swipes out at her leg. And you see Kim collapse to the ground, and the ghoul wrap its arms around her and position its mouth over her neck.

Jake: OK. I wanna run over there and try and, like, get between them and chuck this thing off of her. I want to separate the two.

Rev: All right, roll Protect Someone.

Jake: All right. That is a ten.

Rev: All right, what's your extra effect?

Jake: I will inflict harm on the enemy.

Rev: Describe this to me. What does this look like?

Jake: I think it's just like the good old days. I think ... I think no magic required. I just like, like, run up behind this thing and kind of, like, grab it by, like, top of jaw. And just try and, like, peel it back and away and like, melon drop it on the ground.

Rev: Yeah. And as you do that, it's jaw is very strong. It eats bones.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: And like as you peel it backwards, it clamps its mouth shut and you take two points of damage, not armor-defeating.

Jake: Well, I have Shield Spell. So when I Protect Someone, I gain 2-armor against any harm that is transferred to me.

Rev: Oh, nice.

Kim: Nice.

Rev: So, some magic required.

Jake: Like an inherent magic. Like an implicit magic.

Megan: It chomps its mouth down and it's like, "Oh, gross. Your fingers taste gross."

Rev: Is this like, Master Chief, where now you're beeping and then eventually the shield will pop back up?

Jake: Yes, precisely.

Rev: Awesome. Tass?

Tass: I am taking this thing out. I am so done with this one, so I'm still fighting.

Rev: All right. Roll Kick Some Ass.

Tass: Eleven.

Rev: What's your extra effect?

Tass: I think suffer less harm.

Rev: Your chain wraps around the ghoul, and it's like, "Yes."

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Hot.

Tass: Same, bro.

Kim: It says, "Yes, daddy."

Rev: Your chain strikes out at the ghoul, and it collapses to the ground and starts to just spread out into a pool of goo.

Jake: [Shudders]

Rev: Megan, you have got this black dog held at bay. Is that where your focus is staying, keeping it locked in place?

Megan: Yeah. I know that this thing kind of saw us as part of these ghouls, and I don't want to hurt a dog, and I don't want it to hurt us. So I think I am holding it back, because it's obviously got something on its mind. But I think I am just saying to it, like, "I'm sorry. We're not with them, we're here to help."

Rev: And are you saying this out loud? Are you saying it with your mind? Are you like ... How are you conveying this to the dog? Just yelling at it, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry."

Megan: [Laughs] Like I accidentally stepped on its paw.

Rev: Yes, exactly.

Megan: I'm so sorry, I love you.

Tass: That is the most Megan response.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: Yeah. I think initially that would be just my impulse, is to hold this thing back and just very much with my ... With my soul, Rev. [Laughs]

Rev: [Laughs]

Megan: I'm just. I want this dog to know that we are not here to hurt it.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: She wants this dog to love her.

Megan: More than anything.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: How cute is this dog?

Megan: Probably pretty cute.

Jake: Actually ...

Kim: You hesitated.

Rev: I mean, all dogs are cute on some level. But this is more like a ... Like Sirius Black. Like big, dark, wolf dog.

Megan: Oh, good. So super cute.

Rev: All right, so Megan is keeping her concentration on the dog. Kim, you have seen Jacob melon drop the ghoul that just had you by the neck. What are you doing?

Kim: Um, whipping my censer around and seeing if I can just smash it in its face.

Rev: Yeah, I think because Jake has just dropped this to the ground, it doesn't have the chance to strike back at you. So there is no risk here. So how much damage does your censer do?

Kim: 2-harm, silver.

Rev: All right.

Kim: In that case, I'm just wailing on it, then. Just ...

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Just absolutely smashing its head with the censer, and then whipping it around myself and smashing it again.

Megan: It can't hurt me? I do all the damage.

Kim: Listen! Listen. I've seen a zombie movie. You can't be too careful!

Rev: Yeah, that's fair. So after a couple of moments, I think Megan, from the corner of her eye, and Tass, walking over from where he has just slain one of the ghouls, sees Jake just covered in gore, and Kim just still smacking the censer down. [Laughs]

Jake: And a look of ...

Rev: Pure horror.

Jake: Yeah, on Jake's face.

Tass: Opposite. I think I'm strolling up with a shit-eating grin. "Kim? Kim?"

Kim: "What?"

Tass: "I think you got it."

Kim: "OK. Good."

Rev: And with all three of these down, Megan, you don't feel the pushback anymore of this dog. Like before, you could feel it pushing against, trying to move, and now it's settled.

Megan: Yeah. I look around and see that my friends aren't fighting these ghouls anymore. And I look back at the dog. "OK. Good dog. I'm gonna ... I'm gonna let you go now." And I drop my hold on it.

Rev: You let it go, and it walks over to you and sniffs very slowly.

Rev: KIRKEGRIM: [Sniffs]

Rev: And it moves over to the rest of the group and just kind of sniffs in the air. And after it gets done sniffing all of you, it walks over to this dried up creek bed and it dips its head down like it's going to drink, but there's nothing there. And it turns and walks back up the hill and lays down in front of the building and just lets out a ...

Rev: KIRKEGRIM: [Sighs]

Kim: Aww ...

Tass: "I ... Am willing to admit that I have made a tactical error ..."

All: [Laugh]

Tass: "In assessing the situation, and I apologize."

Jake: "It's okay. There's no way any of us could have known."

All: [Laugh]

Rev: There's no way that three of the four of us could have known.

Kim: [Laughs]

Rev: That was the most fails we've had in a very long time.

Tass: Yeah.

Kim: Especially like right at the beginning, in terms of, like, establishing the situation. And it's like, "Yeah, no. You all get bad reads from this."

Rev: Yeah. And just consecutively in a row.

Tass: I hold up a hand for Kim. "High my five. That was brutal."

Kim: [Chuckles] I return it. "Yeah, thanks? That was terrifying."

Tass: "Well, you came, you saw, you kicked its ass."

Kim: "I did. And it doesn't look like the dog is digging our graves, so ..."

Tass: "The dog isn't digging our graves, yet."

Jake: "Cool."

Kim: "OK ... Cool."

Jake: "Good clarification, thank you."

Kim: "Yep."

Megan: "I think it'll be fine as long as we don't start trying to eat any skeletons. That seemed like that's what it was mad about. So I think if we're cool, it'll be cool? But ..."

Jake: "Well, good news. I have no plans to eat any of these skeletons."

Rev: Well, you don't know how long you're gonna be here.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I think I would eat everyone in my party —

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Before I tried to eat the skeletons.

Kim: "So we needed water from the river, right? But there is no water."

Megan: "Yeah." I want to go over to the trench, basically.

Megan: Yeah. As you go over to scope this out, why don't you roll Investigate a Mystery?

Megan: Thirteen.

Jake: Nice.

Rev: All right, you get a hold 2.

Megan: Where did it go? Where did this water go?

Rev: As you start to move around this little stream that has been formed around this hilltop, you can see that the clearing for it goes up the hill and into a cave. And you can hear the very faint sound of running water in the distance. But inside of this dried up stream bed, you can see all of the tracks from the ghouls. And there's way more than what you fought just here. And as you continue to head up the hill towards this cave opening, where you can hear the sound of water, about 20 feet ahead of you, you can see the water coming down and then dropping off into a hole that's been dug.

Megan: What is being concealed here?

Rev: So the thing that's being concealed here is that the water should flow down around the church, and that this dog protecting the graveyard must be a Kirkegrim, which is the dog that is specifically placed to protect the burial ground around sacred sites. And so without this water flowing, some of its protection, some of its strength is missing. And if the water is not returned, this Kirkegrim will not survive very long.

SFX:

OUTRO MUSIC

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