

# The Necropolis Below (S4, E37)

**SFX:** INTRO MUSIC

**Rev:** So I heard through the Discord that some new Mountain Dews were tried.

**Megan:** [Laughs]

**Jake:** Well, I'm glad you've asked.

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Jake:** I'm glad you've come to me.

**Rev:** Yes.

**Megan:** [Laughs] For an expert opinion.

**Rev:** Because looking at the name of one of them, I'd rather die.

**Jake:** Was it Flamin' Hot?

**Rev:** Yes.

**Jake:** Yeah. So I tried Flamin' Hot, because I saw it the other day at Kroger in a 12 pack.

**Rev:** It blows my mind that like you go to Walmart or Kroger or wherever you get groceries, and like Flamin' Hot and all of these ... All the wild flavors, but I can't find, like, Code Red.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Megan:** That's what I was saying about, like ... I want to get like a ... You know, like a large pack of, like the space Cokes. But you can only get them in like the little baby cans,

or like in a bottle. But like you've got the most ridiculous flavor of Mountain Dew, and they're like, "Hey, you need three cases?"

**Jake:** Yeah. Flamin' Hot Mountain Dew gets a red carpet.

**Megan:** Yeah.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** Yeah, I saw it in the 12 pack. And like, I started to go for it, and I was like, "I shouldn't start here. I need to find just a single bottle of this." So, yeah, we saw just the bottle at Walmart. I got it, I was walking out to the car, and some random guy was in his truck looking at me, and he goes, "Is that the Flamin' Hot Mountain Dew?" And I was like, "Yeah, have you tried it?" And he's like, "No, I haven't. Have you yet?" And I was like, "No." And Megan was like, "Do it right now. Just try it." So I cracked it open and I took a drink, and it was nothing. There was nothing at all. There was like no flavor. It was like drinking seltzer water. And then like a five count, and then someone whispered Flamin' Hot Cheeto at the back of my tongue. Like ... It was just irrelevant. And like I took another drink, and same thing. It's like, this is flavorless, it's flavorless, there's a tiny bit of heat, it's gone. So I told the guy that. I was like, "It's not very good. Try it, though. You should learn for yourself."

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Megan:** It was like in Willy Wonka, when Violet Beauregard tastes the chewing gum and she's just like, "These are all the flavors I'm going through in my mind right now." But it was just like a live play by play of this Mountain Dew, and the guy looked so disappointed. [Laughs]

**Rev:** Before you tell me about the other one.

**Jake:** Yeah.

**Rev:** Everyone here — I know Tass is mostly off of soda now because of caffeine — but everyone here partakes of soda in a decent quality and quantity.

**Megan:** Decent.

**Rev:** Do you imagine that it might taste different in the can? Because I always find that especially Mountain Dew is less kind of exuberant in a plastic bottle.

**Tass:** Yeah, I prefer a can for my Mountain Dew excursions. Way back when, when I was still on the caffeine.

**Jake:** Man. I mean, maybe. Like I ... I definitely agree that things taste different in a bottle versus a can.

**Rev:** Not enough to get twelve. [Laughs]

**Jake:** But I'm not gonna find out. If somebody handed me the can, I'd try it again and I'd be able to give a ... Empirical feedback.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Megan:** I found that it was maybe the least sugary Mountain Dew I've ever tasted.

**Jake:** Yeah. Like it wasn't — and like I didn't expect it to be sweet, because it was Flamin' Hot, but it was just flavorless overall. And so I threw the bottle away. Like I didn't — I was like, I'm not gonna power through this.

**Megan:** I was like, "You should have gave it to the guy in the van."

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** But then I mentioned that in the Discord, and one of our Discord people said that they like the Plum Berry that is available at Circle K. So went to Circle K, found that it's a fountain drink. They don't have it in bottles or anything. It is one of the fountain exclusives. Along with a Goji Berry ...

**Megan:** It was like Goji Citrus.

**Jake:** Goji Berry Citrus or something Mountain Dew, that is also like a fountain exclusive at Circle K. Tried both of those. Plum Berry's awesome. It's like the closest to Pitch Black, probably, of any of the Mountain Dews that I've had.

**Tass:** That was my favorite, for sure.

**Jake:** Yeah. It's super good. Goji Berry was really sweet. Like even understanding how sweet Mountain Dew is? Couldn't really do it. It was too sweet.

**Tass:** That might have been my jam, then.

**Jake:** Maybe. I mean, I don't know. Fall off the wagon and find out.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** I'm gonna give you a title. I'm gonna go ahead and crown you as our DewRu.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** I accept, and I will put it on my resume.

**Tass:** Nice.

**Rev:** And just a reminder, this is the last week if you want to join in on our swag and t shirt cycle over at [Patreon.com/TheCritshow](https://Patreon.com/TheCritshow). With that, it's time to let the recap roll.

**SFX:** RECAP MUSIC

**Rev:** BABA YAGA: Cara Ó Dubhghail. 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.

**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. 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."

**Rev:** 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:** "These are not innocent fucking people, Tass!"

**Rev:** This dog protecting the graveyard must be a Kirkegrim, which is a 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:** RECAP MUSIC FADES

**Rev:** You are all deep beneath the earth inside of this ancient burial site. Megan has just discovered that the water flowing around it that helps give it protection, give it power, has been rerouted and is dropping away into the earth.

**Megan:** "Hey, do you guys see this hole? Look, the water's dropping off into it."

**Jake:** How deep does the hole look?

**Rev:** You cannot see the bottom. But it's also dark in here. But the water is just ... Like it's not filling up, or anything.

**Tass:** Like how wide and like — what is the size of the hole? Just, you know, up here?

**Jake:** Diametrically.

**Rev:** Yeah, yeah.

**Tass:** Yes.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Rev:** So the creek itself is probably eight or nine feet across, and the hole covers the bulk of that area. It's probably like eight feet.

**Tass:** OK. So I could ... I could lay down across it with my feet and my hands holding on, and the water could flow over me into the creek.

**Rev:** Uh ... No. [Laughs]

**Tass:** I'm pretty sure. I'll spread my wings out, it'll be fine.

**Rev:** Maybe.

**Tass:** "Shit. What do we do about a giant hole?"

**Jake:** "I mean, filling it in seems out of the question. I have no idea where this ends, but it's not filling up."

**Tass:** "Yeah, like if there's some underground stream shit going on, it's just dumping dirt down here. It's just gonna flow away, even if it isn't just eternally, you know, deep."

**Megan:** "Well, I think we've got to figure out how to get it flowing again. We've got to get to the water." Can we actually reach where the water is flowing in there?

**Rev:** Yeah. Yeah, you can easily walk around the other side of it. But this hole happens before it splits to go around the burial ground. And so you imagine that's why the dog can't get to it. It seems like it can't leave the burial ground.

**Kim:** "Do we just want to fill up our vial right now? Just a ..."

**Jake:** "Yeah, that's probably a good idea."

**Megan:** Yeah. If I can reach the water, then I'll take the crystal vial that we got from Baba Yaga and fill it up right now.

**Rev:** OK. Yeah, it starts to glow a very faint blue.

**Tass:** "Like, OK. So, great. So we can do our thing, right? But we can't leave it like this."

**Megan:** "No, that that dog is not gonna make it very long. This was very strategically placed here. Whoever did this knew that it was gonna make the dog weak, and I don't know how much longer it has."

**Jake:** "It's weird. These seem like run of the mill ghouls, but they wouldn't have the intellect to, like, nip an opponent in the bud like this. So they must still be having their shots called."

**Megan:** "Yeah, and look at these footprints. There were a lot more than what we just fought off. And if they were just here to feast on graves, I imagine that they would have all done that."

**Tass:** "Yeah, either some of them fell down here as they were digging, or ... Or the pup took out a whole slew of them before we got here."

**Kim:** "Well, unless this is just like another ghoulish tunnel, right? They could all just ant farmed their way back into their lair from wherever this water is going."

**Tass:** "Very possible."

**Jake:** Are there trees in this burial site?

**Rev:** There are not.

**Jake:** I just want to look around and see if there's anything that I could use as like a ... Like a building material, to try and cover this hole instead of fill in this hole. I don't know if there's remnants of the tombstones, or anything?

**Rev:** Yeah. I mean, I think the only thing that would be big enough and plentiful enough would be taking rock from the ... Like, the sides of the cavern.

**Jake:** "Well, we could try to stonemason this. I don't have any particular expertise in that area, but I don't see anything else around here that we can pull enough material from to cover up this hole." It's a shame that my combat magics are lightning and fire, and thus I can't make a wall of anything that water could travel over.

**Kim:** [Laughs]

**Rev:** Where's your earth bending?

**Jake:** I didn't pick it. [Laughs] Almost did. Got real close.

**Tass:** I think my mind splitting a little bit here of like, what do I think we could use that's around that would cover this? Or even, like, the idea of kind of damming it to go around? Like stop it up so it doesn't go into the hole and like dig something out so it'll go around and go right back. Literally, I don't know how any of this works. So I think I'm just trying to focus on the materials, see what's here, see what's possible. I would love to Trust My Gut.

**Rev:** Yeah, roll it.

**Tass:** Thank you.

**Rev:** It's been a while.

**Tass:** It has been a while.

**Rev:** Oh, sorry. I was just mentioning my favorite song.

**Jake:** [Sings] It's been a while ... I don't know any of the words to that song.

**Tass:** That's an eleven.

**Megan:** Nice.



**Rev:** Yeah. So as you look around here, looking at the path of this creek, looking at the materials at hand, it seems like your best option might be to divert the flow of the water and get it to, like, curve around and connect back past where the hole is. That would be a good in the now solution. But I think you can tell that something could just come along and dig again. But that would solve the problem for now.

**Tass:** OK. Yeah, I'm still just kind of nodding as Jake is finishing what he was saying and laying out that thought. And I think I'm spotting pieces of stone that are, like, flatter and, like, squared off. Stuff that's broken away in that. And that idea is growing. "I mean, this stuff is gonna be heavy. But if we work together, we could ... We could jam some of these flatter pieces down before the water hits. Like, you know, it's gonna be soft on that side anyway, just from the flow. We could get that in, dig out a little bit on the sides, line more, you know, shale, rock, whatever else we got, fill in the gaps with some of that softer clay, and it'll just dip right back around into the flow. Instead of having to try to find tons of this stuff to cover and flatten out that will probably just shift with the water anyway, let's just build a dam."

**Jake:** "Boy, you sound like you know what you're talking about, so I'm inclined to follow your lead."

**Tass:** "I did build this really cool table out in Hoosier National Forest with a piece of river shale. It's still there, too. It was like, literally, like 15 years ago. So I like to think I'm pretty handy."

**Jake:** "That sounds made up." [Laughs] I know you've told me —

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** You won't stop talking.

**Tass:** I know.

**Jake:** I can't count how many times.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Kim:** "I mean, that sounds like a great idea and something that we should definitely do. But then won't the ghouls just widen the hole?"

**Tass:** "Yeah. I mean, that fixes this for now so that our boy over here can get water and get his strength back. But I mean, short of diving in that hole or hunting down who's doing this, finding a clue to who's doing this ... Yeah, that's a whole other thing. We gotta figure out how to stop whoever has designs on this place."

**Jake:** "So I would guess that the ghouls can't cross this water then, right? Is that probably ... I mean, in addition to weakening the dog, are we guessing that they had to divert it so they could get into the burial ground?"

**Tass:** "I mean, the only way that's possible — if that is the case — is they dug in from underneath and made this hole from the bottom up. Because if they can't cross this, they certainly didn't get down into the creek bed to dig it out, right?"

**Jake:** "Yeah."

**Tass:** "So ..."

**Jake:** "That would have been my guess. That's how the ghouls — they come from underground."

**Tass:** "Sure. So yeah, so then this has to be some kind of tunnel. If that's the case, if they can't cross the thing on their own. They might just be trying to weaken the dog so they can do whatever they want."

**Jake:** "Why don't we ask the dog?"

**Tass:** "I'm sorry?"

**Jake:** "I don't think I've gotten to use this yet. I want to walk over to the dog and I want to cast a spell."

**Rev:** All right. Roll Use Magic.

**Megan:** [Gasps]

**Kim:** No.

**Jake:** Snake eyes. Got a four. Oh! But I have Could Have Been Worse. When you miss a Use Magic roll, you can choose one of the following options instead of losing control of the magic.

**Kim:** Yes!

**Jake:** And I'm gonna do This Is Gonna Suck: The effect happens, but you trigger all of the listed glitches but one. You pick the one you avoid.

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Kim:** Yep!

**Rev:** All right. Which one do you avoid?

**Jake:** Uh ... [Laughs] The magic draws immediate, unwelcome attention. That's the one I avoid.

**Rev:** All right, so what is your effect that you want to have happen?

**Jake:** I want to communicate with something that I don't share a language with.

**Rev:** All right. So first off, mark 1-harm.

**Jake:** Yeah.

**Rev:** So you walk over to the dog and cast this spell, and it raises its head up and looks at you. And the first thing that you notice is that you hear voices all around you, a cacophony of different voices fading in and out. And I think it dawns on you in this moment — and this is the problematic side effect — that this dog probably isn't a real dog. It's a spirit of some kind. And you realize you can hear the spirits of the other people

buried here, and it's unintelligible. It's just like Ebenezer Scrooge-esque Jacob Marley wailing. And this is very loud, but you can slowly feel it getting quieter. And I think you have the sense that once it's silent, it won't be working anymore.

**Jake:** OK.

**Rev:** But the Kirkegrim is looking at you.

**Jake:** "Those creatures that we were all fighting. Have you seen them before?"

**Rev:** KIRKEGRIM: Yes.

**Jake:** "Can they cross the water?"

**Rev:** KIRKEGRIM: Water gone.

**Jake:** "When the water was here, could they have crossed it?"

**Rev:** KIRKEGRIM: Yes. Easy to catch.

**Jake:** "Was there anyone here besides those creatures?"

**Rev:** KIRKEGRIM: No. One looked different.

**Jake:** "How was it different?"

**Rev:** It gets up and it walks over to the one that Kim had repeatedly beat with her censer. And part of like the skull is fractured off of the head, and it knocks that piece away with its paw.

**Rev:** KIRKEGRIM: Inside. Pulse. Glow. Cunning.

**Jake:** "OK. We want to get the water flowing again, but we're trying to figure out how to stop them from just coming back. Do you think if we take out the one that's cunning, the rest of them won't think to come back?"

**Rev:** KIRKEGRIM: [Pants]

**Jake:** "Damn it! All right."

**Megan:** "Did you just talk to that dog?"

**Jake:** "Yes."

**Megan:** "Teach me. Please teach me."

**Jake:** "It's .. It's magic. It's ..."

**Megan:** "I'll learn."

**Jake:** "OK. On your next level up."

**All:** [Laugh]

**Megan:** "What did it say?"

**Jake:** "It said that it has seen them before, and that they can cross the water, and that there was one that I think like its brain was actually firing — like it was thinking. He said it was clever. So it seems like there is like a leader ghoul."

**Tass:** "Well, that's terrifying in its own right."

**Megan:** Can I go over to one of the graves that the ghouls had been digging in, to get to the skeleton?

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Megan:** What does the headstone say? Like, who's buried here?

**Rev:** They're names that you don't recognize. But they are like hand-carved names on these tombstones. And I think as you look at them, they span — like the types of names

span generations. So like, it doesn't all seem like old timey names or modern names. It's a mish mash.

**Megan:** Gotcha.

**Kim:** I want to go back over to the hole and get down on my hands and knees and look down into it and try and see if I can force a vision.

**Rev:** I think first, I'm gonna ask you to Act Under Pressure to go over to this hole in the ground where there used to be a lot of water, and kind of try to peer inside of it. It's dangerous.

**Kim:** Yeah, that's fair. And as I'm walking up, I think I have seen a scenario just like this, where I lean over and fall in. And so I am moving to another side of that hole. I'm gonna spend my hold from I Can See Through Time.

**Rev:** All right. So roll with advantage.

**Kim:** Boxcars.

**Rev:** Yeah. You are able to go over, no problem, and kneel down at the side of this hole in the creek bed and peer down inside. Why don't you roll Investigate a Mystery to try to get a sense of what exactly is going on with this hole in the creek bed.

**Kim:** That is a ten.

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

**Kim:** Well, I'm gonna use my free hold to ask what happened here?

**Rev:** Yeah. So as you plant your hands down into this mud, you get a reading off of the earth itself. And this vision comes to you of a pack of ghouls in a tunnel, lit by these small torches. And in the ceiling, there is this very dull green glow that's just dripping down. And one of the ghouls is sitting underneath it, and you can hear it chittering at the others. And it has an intelligence behind its eyes. And that green drip, as it comes down onto the ghouls' head, every now and then it wipes it off and it licks it from its hand, or it tilts its

head back to catch it in its mouth. And as it chitters at these other ghouls, you get the sense that it's instructing them on tactics, ways to get around things, find new places with better food, convincing them essentially to follow it. So what happened here is that eventually this ghoulish clan came across this burial site, and the leader had time to examine it and figure out how to circumvent the water to weaken the Kirkegrim.

**Kim:** And so now for my actual hold, what is being concealed here?

**Rev:** So I think the thing you're all trying to figure out is why is this ghoulish intelligent.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Rev:** And you've seen this green dripping goo. It very much seems like the thing being concealed here is that these ghouls made their hive underneath a place where toxic waste had been buried, and it was just leaking through. And something about the radiation interacting with this ghoulish started some of its synapses firing in a way that they weren't before.

**Tass:** It's like evil Master Splinter.

**Kim:** It's like the Toxic Avenger. For my last one, where did it go?

**Rev:** All of the marks from these ghouls do come out of this hole. You don't see any, like, on the sides of the creek where it was routed. So you imagine that down into this hole, somewhere in an offshoot cave, is the new lair of these ghouls.

**Kim:** Cool. I'm going to very gingerly scoot myself away from the opening of this hole.  
[Laughs]

**Rev:** So while Kim is doing that, I know you all had discussed rerouting this water. What do we think this is?

**Jake:** Knowledge: Engineering.

**Rev:** Just a good old fashioned some time, or ... I mean really, you're trying to dig.

**Tass:** I'm a kick this hole's ass.

**Rev:** Yeah, like ... If you want to spend some time, I think it just takes time. You all can dig, I assume.

**Jake:** I can't imagine what else it could be. I could maybe Use Magic to do something beyond human limitations, to accelerate this a little bit? By like single handedly move some stones —

**Kim:** To try to like move earth?

**Jake:** Or — yeah. Or earth?

**Rev:** Right. Because right now, like how — are you just guys digging bare-handed?

**Jake:** Yeah. [Laughs] Just kicking very hard at the ground. More like — more like tamping a trench. You know, just stomping to make the ground compress.

**Rev:** Yeah, that won't ... That'll take a very long time.

**Jake:** Are you sure?

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Jake:** I don't know.

**Megan:** Probably using, like, some broken pieces of rock, and ...

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Megan:** Something that's, like, kind of like a natural spade to help carve this out.

**Jake:** It's a shame we don't have a ghoull here.

**All:** [Laugh]



**Rev:** Yeah. So I guess that's what I'm asking. Is anybody doing anything supernatural, otherworldly, to expedite this? Or is this just the four of you and some elbow grease?

**Jake:** I'll try to do something beyond human limitations.

**Rev:** All right, roll Use Magic.

**Jake:** Six.

**Kim:** Wow.

**Tass:** [Tentatively] Can I try to help?

**Rev:** I almost said no out of hand, because there was a question mark.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** A question about whether the question is a question.

**Rev:** [Laughs] Yeah.

**Jake:** I need to know if this is going anywhere, before I expend the effort of coming up with how it could possibly work.

**Tass:** Well, I just imagine ... You know, I have these wings now. So if I could, like, literally help anybody with some of the heavier stuff by like getting a hold, using my wings for leverage. You know, getting up in the air instead of just having to like lift and roll, I'm flapping along to move big pieces. Stuff like that.

**Rev:** I don't think that helps him perform magic.

**Tass:** Look.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** You can take your literal interpretation, and stand by it. Because it makes sense.

**Jake:** I think you would have had better luck if you just said you gave me an encouraging word.

**Rev:** Or like, I feed him some of my demon blood. It's filled with magic.

**Tass:** Listen, I give him a kiss on the cheek no matter what he's about to do.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Jake:** So I always have a +1 forward.

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Megan:** [Laughs] that's adorable.

**Rev:** All right. So on a fail, you lose control of the magic.

**Jake:** Yeah. I'm going to use my other effect from Could Have Been Worse, which is Fizzle. The preparations and materials for the spell are ruined. You'll have to start over from scratch with the prep time doubled.

**Rev:** OK.

**Megan:** OK. If that doesn't work, can I try to use Telekinesis to move this earth?

**Rev:** Yeah. Roll it.

**Megan:** Eleven.

**Rev:** All right, so what are your two options? And mark 1-harm.

**Megan:** I'm gonna go you suffer one less harm.

**Rev:** OK.

**Megan:** And you can fling something bigger than a person.

**Rev:** All right. You focus in and you push this earth out of your way, telekinetically. It's a pretty violent throw. It's almost like there's something burrowing underground, and it's just pitching earth and grass and bits of stone as it tunnels around, making a new connection into this creek bed. As it connects, the water starts to flow down and back around this loop of the graveyard. The Kirkegrim gets up and trots over and starts to drink from this creek, and he more than triples in size. And a lot of his gray turns back into black.

**Megan:** Yay!

**Tass:** "Whoa! OK."

**Jake:** "All right. Well, this place has a competent defender again, but we still need to deal with that hardcore ghoul. Or else they're just gonna wear him down again, probably."

**Kim:** "Yeah. I got eyes on the ghoul that we're looking for."

**Megan:** "What does he look like?"

**Kim:** "You know, just like a normal ghoul. But there's like a green kind of, like, glowyness, and just an intelligence behind the eyes. And he kept slurping this, like, green toxic waste."

**Megan:** "Ugh."

**Jake:** "Gross."

**Megan:** "These things are the worst."

**Jake:** I'm just, like, looking up at, like, the crust above us. Like, where are we that we are close to somewhere that toxic waste is dripping into the ground?

**Kim:** Chernobyl?

**Jake:** Oh, god.

**Tass:** Yep.

**Jake:** I mean, it seems like then we could either ... We can either go down this hole and kind of follow this trail backwards, or we could, like, go in from Chernobyl.

**Kim:** No. [Laughs]

**Jake:** And try and, you know, nip the toxic waste drippings in the bud.

**Megan:** [Laughs] Yeah. Let's just go fix Chernobyl real quick.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** Yeah. Let me clarify, just in case. So Kim saw like the origin of this ghoul. So yes, that might be where it started, but that was a while ago. So there isn't like a direct tunnel from Chernobyl to this this hidden burial site.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Rev:** But you do know that the current hive for these ghouls is somewhere down that hole.

**Megan:** "OK. Is that something we should do first? Do we want to try and find Cara first and get the answers we're looking for, before we go hunting this ghoul?"

**Jake:** "I guess we probably ought to, in case we've got to make an unexpected exit from that situation."

**Megan:** I want to go up to the dog and see if I can say hello and go inside?

**Kim:** Give it some greenies, scratches.

**Rev:** Yeah. You head over towards the entrance of the stone building, and the dog doesn't raise his head. Just watch, as you go by. And inside there are a fair number of

statues, probably half a dozen. But the one at the center does have a placard that says Cara Ó Dubhghail. And the statue, Kim, is almost exactly what you saw in your vision. A tall, slender woman holding a spear.

**Tass:** Does the spear look familiar?

**Rev:** It does not.

**Tass:** OK.

**Megan:** "This seems to be her."

**Kim:** "Yeah, that's exactly the woman that I saw in my vision."

**Jake:** Does this seem like it is a headstone, basically? Like, is she buried underneath this? Or is there like an alcove behind it or anything?

**Rev:** It seems like she would be buried underneath this.

**Jake:** "Help me scoot this statue."

**Tass:** All right, I'll help him out.

**Rev:** OK. With some effort, you're all able to get this statue scooted back. And underneath it is the top of a stone casket.

**Tass:** I'll lift it up for him.

**Rev:** Tass lifts the top off of this stone coffin. And relatively well preserved, lays the body of Cara Ó Dubhghail.

**Megan:** Yeah. I'll uncork the vial and pour this water into her mouth.

**Rev:** As you do, the glow from the water, you can watch it flow into her mouth. And as the water pours into the mouth, it forms a tongue that glows. And you can hear very faint breathing.

**Kim:** "Cara? Are you with us?"

**Rev:** CARA: Yes. The distance is far, but I sense you. Can hear you.

**Kim:** "I'm the next Oracle of the North Wind. And we had some questions about the ritual that you did to seal away Death."

**Rev:** The body unmoving, but the tongue still continues to move in the mouth as the words form.

**Rev:** CARA: What are your questions?

**Jake:** "In the vision, you and the Oracle and Baba Yaga were standing off to the side while the gods did their part. What was your function in the ritual to seal Death away?"

**Rev:** CARA: I was to deliver the blow.

**Jake:** "What were the functions of the other two standing with you?"

**Rev:** CARA: The Oracle of the North Wind sensed the moment. The Master of Magic fed the power.

**Jake:** "What exactly was the ritual? Because we have seen a future where we have to do this to someone who is not Koschei. So what was the explicit function of this ritual?"

**Rev:** CARA: To separate death from its vessel?

**Jake:** "Where did you all learn how to do this?"

**Rev:** CARA: The idea came from us. The people, those who chose me. I was the Chosen, because I spoke for the people living through the things happening. The Oracle found me. Together, we found Baba Yaga. We went to the gods, pleaded our case, convinced them that Death could not be allowed to run amok any longer. It was they who came up with the ritual, we who had to enact it.

**Kim:** "So what was the role of the gods in this ritual? What were they doing in that circle?"

**Rev:** CARA: This I do not know.

**Kim:** "When I've talked to the previous Oracle about this ritual, she can't seem to remember the details of it. But you seem to recall it perfectly. Do you know why?"

**Rev:** CARA: This ritual is the last thing I experienced. If the Oracle is still alive, I cannot explain.

**Tass:** "So the last thing you experienced. Doing this killed you?"

**Rev:** CARA: Yes. It was a sacrifice I made willingly to protect those I love.

**Tass:** "The nature of this spell. Did you have to be the Chosen to be the one to deliver that blow?"

**Rev:** CARA: The Chosen represents the hope. The hope of all those who live. The energy could only be put through someone that others had great belief in.

**Kim:** "Did you know that it was going to cost you your life?"

**Rev:** CARA: Yes.

**Kim:** "Where did this ritual take place?"

**Rev:** CARA: There is a place where the gods exist. Sometimes we could see it, but we could never be there. For this ritual, they brought us to their home.

**Kim:** In the vision that I saw, comparing the two visions that I saw — and I know that the one that I saw of our future was a little fuzzy. Did the locations look similar?

**Rev:** They didn't.

**Kim:** OK.

**Rev:** The one you saw of the past was kind of specific. The other one was very foggy and nebulous.

**Kim:** Gotcha. OK.

**Jake:** "So the ritual was to remove Death from its vessel. The way we've understood it is that Koschei is the god of Death, and sort of is death incarnate. Is that not really the case?"

**Rev:** CARA: We removed his connection to his physical being. The heart, the god that was sealed away, was the power. The body, the mind, made it irrational, made it strike out, made it enjoy what it was it had to do. Without the human vessel, it would once again simply perform the tasks.

**Tass:** "OK. So you let death just happen naturally, instead of being focused by a bad person. Got it."

**Megan:** "Is there a way to talk to the gods without being, like, picked by them?"

**Jake:** "I've never spoken with them when I wasn't divine. But also when I renounced The Executioner, I just kind of put that behind me and haven't really tried."

**Kim:** "But Cara, Strohm, and Baba Yaga sought out the gods. That implies that it's possible."

**Megan:** "Yeah. If they went to plead their case, there must be a way."

**Jake:** "Well, maybe it's something that one of us can do. I can certainly try. I know kind of how it feels when it works, so ..."

**Megan:** "Cara, to your knowledge, was there anything other than your abilities that you needed to finish this ritual? Was there anything you had to collect or bring with you?"

**Rev:** CARA: No.

**Tass:** "All of the gods were there, right? Watching?"



**Rev:** CARA: Yes.

**Tass:** I think I take a step back. And I am like ... I am tunnel vision on another thought right now that I don't think she can answer. So I think I — yeah, I think I step back.

**Megan:** "Well, from our understanding, Nash is the vessel for The Devourer, right?"

**Tass:** From off from the side, I just point at Megan. "That's exactly what I am spiraling about right now."

**Megan:** "Yeah. So before, all of the gods were on the outside of the circle to separate Death from its vessel. I guess if we're having another one of the gods in the center, we're just down a person? Or do we have to fill that spot?"

**Kim:** "We're not down a person. There were eight people in the circle of the gods."

**Megan:** "Yeah, but this time The Devourer will be in the center."

**Jake:** "I mean, it could be that if it took the eight gods to unbind Death, that maybe we're going to need Death to help us unbind The Devourer. Unfortunately, we have removed him from existence."

**Tass:** "Well, we removed the vessel that was using that energy in a devastating way from existence."

**Jake:** "That's true. I wonder if it could be, like, harnessed into someone else."

**Tass:** "OK. Yeah. So we could try to do that, and try to find where the energy of The Builder went when TJ died. We don't know if it was also obliterated like he was. Because if that's the case, then so would the energy of Death."

**Jake:** "And people are still dying."

**Tass:** "Right."

**Jake:** "And buildings are still getting made."

**All:** [Laugh]

**Kim:** People are still building stuff.

**Megan:** Stuff's getting invented.

**Rev:** People are still building sandwiches, bridges, and relationships ...

**Megan:** "I think ... I think we gotta talk to the gods. We've gotta figure out what it is they did in this ritual. What was necessary, what were the components, to figure out what it is we need. We know what it looks like. At the very least, we know how many figures are going to be there. But we just don't know what they're all supposed to represent yet."

**Jake:** "We're also going to have to locate or manufacture a Chosen, it sounds like."

**Tass:** "Well, look. If we're gonna be real frank about this, we know you three. We know what role you fill in this. I am not ever going to ask someone else to sacrifice themselves for this. If it comes down to it, I'm doing it. And I am not going to argue with a single one of you about it."

**Jake:** "I can't think of what else we can get from her, though."

**Rev:** CARA: I'm right here.

**Jake:** "I know."

**Rev:** Every question that's asked, she's mumbling answers to. "Wait, do we know this?"  
[As Cara] "I don't know."

**All:** [Laugh]

**Kim:** What's the afterlife like? Is it also mouth filled in this, or is that just Perilous Tides?

**Rev:** CARA: It's mouth filled, but in a good in a good way.

**Megan:** In a good way.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Tass:** I just jump off the highest thing right now.

**Megan:** I'll sacrifice myself.

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Megan:** I volunteer.

**Rev:** I volunteer as tribute.

**Tass:** Rev, I am just not smart enough for this. I ...

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Kim:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** I just — I almost feel like this is a cop out, but I am spiraling again, I think, like I usually do before Trust Your Gut kicks in. Does that — would that help me at all to kind of narrow down where my thought path needs to go?

**Rev:** What is it focused on? Like you have stepped away and spiraled down the idea of it sounds like ... Like, what happened to the energy of The Builder, what happened to the energy of Death. Is that correct?

**Tass:** Yes.

**Rev:** Yeah. Roll Trust Your Gut.

**Tass:** OK. Eleven.

**Kim:** Nice.

**Rev:** This is just burrowing into the back of your brain, now that you've had this thought of Death being separated from the vessel and what happens to that energy. And you get the very strong instinct that you need to go to the North Pole.

**Tass:** OK. I think I just hang on to that for now. I think I look up to Jake with ... Not concern. I'll bet it'll read as concern. [Laughs] But then another thought strikes, as I kind of hold on to this idea of where we'll have to go. "I still don't think this is a question for you, Cara, I'm sorry. But at least for the rest of you, it sounds like this whole ritual, now that we understand it, is separating a godly essence from the vessel. Right? We can agree that that's kind of the case. Is that just the whole goal with Nash, is separate The Devourer from him?"

**Kim:** "It seems like all that would do would just remove his ability to eat the gold. It wouldn't change his ultimate plans, would it?"

**Tass:** "No, but I suppose that's why there's one person that has to be ready to strike."

**Jake:** "Yeah. I mean, it would make him theoretically kill-able, at least. I think."

**Tass:** "Just like we did with Aiden. Someone ready to do this at the right time, when he can't devour what we want. In Death's case, it was the moment when Death is vulnerable."

**Megan:** "Yeah. He won't be immortal, but he'll be just a regular whatever kind of vampire he is."

**Tass:** "Cara, do you have any advice?"

**Rev:** CARA: If you were truly going up against one of the gods, it is a dangerous endeavor. Make sure there are safeguards set up for those you care about.

**Jake:** "Cara, I don't suppose you recognize the name Grigori Nash, do you?"

**Rev:** CARA: I do not.

**Jake:** "Well, that's good. At least he's not that ancient."

**Tass:** "He's not that ancient yet."

**Jake:** "That is how time works."

**Rev:** [Chuckles]

**Jake:** "Cara, who were you that you were the logical, Chosen One?"

**Rev:** CARA: I was a mother. A leader. Someone respected in the community. Someone who had seen what Death was doing, and decided to raise as many voices as we could to take a stand.

**Jake:** "How did you do that? How did you bring so many people into the fold?"

**Rev:** CARA: I went to them. They did not come to me.

**Jake:** I'm trying to think if there's like anything else. If we're gonna have to pick someone to represent the Chosen, like, can we ask her anything that will help us narrow down who we're looking for? Or, you know, like keeping an eye out for somebody who's already doing something that kind of, like, matches the criteria? Like, I understand that, like, Tass was a Chosen and Lana was a Chosen. Like, it picks a person. But like, could we start narrowing down a list of reasonable next candidates based on, like what we know, what we can learn about her, what we know about Lana, and what we knew about Tass.

**Rev:** Why don't you role Investigate a Mystery? Like this seems like you're trying to piece together, like, how these things work versus how it worked for her. And you have all done extensive research at one point or another about The Chosen, about The Divine, about the gods, so ...

**Jake:** Yeah. Fuck yeah! Twelve!

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

**Jake:** What can it do?

**Rev:** Like, in the sense of ...

**Jake:** Like, The Chosen-ness. Like, how does it bounce? How does it pick?

**Rev:** Yeah. OK. The world was a much smaller place when she did this. And so the idea that you're getting from her is that she almost ... Was that she traveled around and talked to people, saw what was going on. And because of that, her name spread for the deeds that she was doing. And then whatever this energy is of The Chosen was imbued into her. You know, that she was the first Chosen.

**Jake:** Mmhmm.

**Rev:** And now, the world's a much larger place. And it's like the collective consciousness just picks a person who could embody those things. You've seen a number of people that have that gem inside of their head who could be a potential Chosen. And so to try to like figure out who or how or when, it could either be keeping an eye out for that spark again, to see like someone doing things otherworldly that you guys don't know about. Or, you've also seen someone being in the right place at the right time when that energy was released.

**Jake:** What is being concealed here?

**Rev:** The thing that's being concealed here is the longer you have talked to Cara and this magical glow in her mouth, you notice that it's become slightly fainter. And further up, behind her brow, you see just the slight pulse of gold. Like when she died with her Chosen energy, it didn't leave her.

**SFX:** OUTRO MUSIC

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