

Smoke and Space Pirates (S5, E4)

Kim: The Critshow contains elements of horror, fantasy violence, and adult language. Content warnings can be found in the episode description.

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Hey, everybody. Rev here. Before we get into this week's episode, just a reminder that on Monday, the 29th at 7:00 pm over at [Twitch.tv/TheCritshow](https://www.twitch.tv/TheCritshow), we will have episode two of Lucid Inc. If you are not able to see the first episode of Lucid Inc, you can head over to our YouTube channel, and the first VOD is over there right now. And we have a special guest on this month's episode. We are going to be joined by the Game Master of Spout Lore, Shawn O'Hara. So I cannot wait to see what kind of character he has created, and what the Lucid Inc team gets up to this month. Again, Lucid Inc is every month, the last Monday of the month. And if you have not seen the first episode, it is very much in line with Inception and Nightmare on Elm Street. It was a blast to play. So we hope to see you there. Again, that is [Twitch.tv/TheCritshow](https://www.twitch.tv/TheCritshow), and that will be at 7:00 pm on Monday, the 29th. And with that, enjoy the episode.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Rev: The lights kick on, and Dion is there. Again, he is mid-stride. His ribcage is shifted slightly to the side, like he's got too many ribs on one side. And out of the other side is a metallic scythe coming out of his bottom rib.

Megan: "Oh ..."

Kim: "Hey ..."

Rev: DION: Is your friend all right?

Megan: "Uh ... Well like I said, we're having some difficulty breathing, so ..."

Rev: DION: Would you like me to take him to our Med Bay?

Megan: "Yeah. It seems like we definitely need to get a closer look, especially if we're going to disrupt these pods."

Rev: The two of you head down these stairs and step off onto the battlefield. And as you start making your way in the direction of this purple light in the back corner where this ship is, from behind you, you hear the hiss and release of a hermetic seal as one of the pods open.

Kim: I'm going to try to sneak up behind him and garrote this guy.

Rev: You give a tug. Dion's head comes off pretty easily, hits the ground, and rolls away. You don't take any harm, but you do take two Stress as all three of these protruding ribs rotate 180 degrees and clamp you to the back of his body.

Kim: [Gasps]

Rev: He reaches down, picks up his head, and starts to walk you back towards the room where Tass is in a pod, where the two workers are already preparing one for you.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: Jake and Megan, you have just come down the stairs off of the observation platform inside of this demonstration room. You have heard a gasket and a seal release, and one of the metal pods has opened. What are you both doing?

Megan: I'm flipping around. As soon as I hear that, like, hiss. I do a backflip.

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I just do a 360, back up the stairs. A 360 — a 180.

Jake: 360, continue onto the battlefield.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I want to rush over to that pod and see if there's any way to stop this opening.

Rev: Oh. Why don't you Use or Repair an Advanced Item?

Jake: OK. Snake eyes.

Tass: Don't forget your +1 ongoing.

Jake: And +2 Tech. That gets me to a five.

Megan: Can I try to help out?

Rev: Yeah. How so?

Megan: This is the thing that I'm good at. So if he's looking, like, around the pod, I'm joining in and looking specifically for, like, an access panel or something to shut this down.

Rev: Yeah, go for it.

Megan: Ten. Reroll your lowest dice.

Jake: Oh, boy. Which of my 1s do I want to reroll? Come on, motherfucker ... There we go. Now it came up 6. Ten!

Kim: Jesus.

Megan: Holy shit.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to rush over, and with Megan's help, force this door closed again as it is starting to swing open, and ... Oh man, you hack the thing, and ... Oh, you're in the network, and ...

Kim: You're in the mainframe?

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: Oof! We're getting outside your genre comfort, huh?

All: [Laugh]

Rev: You cross the wires, but not the streams, and the pod seals back closed.

Jake: Perfect.

Rev: But this was almost very bad. You both take two points of Stress from this experience.

Jake: Does it sound like there's any commotion within it?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: "Oh god, that was close."

Megan: "Shit. OK. We gotta get out of here before anything else opens up."

Jake: "Where to?"

Megan: Are we like in — just in the middle of this battlefield? Or are there any, like, doors nearby?

Rev: No. This is just an enormous open cavern. You are by one of the pods that makes the large circle. And then in the far back, there are the other pods where you saw some of them getting loaded into a ship, and that's where the dock is. But this room is just a big kind of open cavern, so that there's nothing to really damage when these fight.

Megan: "Well I mean, I guess we should look at these pods first and see how they're connected, or how easy it would be to disrupt them. And then get the hell back up the stairs."

Jake: "OK." Yeah. Can we scrutinize these things?

Rev: Yeah. Megan, why don't you Survey the Scene?

Megan: Nine.

Rev: All right, you get a hold 1.

Jake: Can I help?

Rev: Sure.

Jake: Same thing. Just kind of looking for inconsistencies and discrepancies and pointing out things that seem suspicious.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Assist.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: All right, so that gets you to a ten. So you get a hold 2, Megan.

Megan: What can help me?

Rev: As you look inside of this pod, I imagine you describing to Jake what you're seeing as you're looking inside. And it's kind of dark, but there is very clearly that large scorpion creature. And it's rearing back and scrabbling at the window, trying to get to the light outside where you are. And then you see some arms come down from inside and stick it with needles and it starts to go to sleep, and something lowers down and goes over its mouth. Seems like it's being fed, repaired. And you notice some markings on its underbelly. They almost seem like birthmarks. They are part of the skin. And with both of you looking at these, Jake, you clearly recognize that it is one of the ten symbols that makes up the circle.

Jake: OK.

Megan: Is there something important that I'm missing?

Rev: These pods, you heard from Dion, are designed specifically to heal, feed, keep these creatures alive. So if it's the creatures instead of the pods that are the ten elements

that are making up this specific circle of the three circles that you know to be here? Then if they're able to get back into the pod, they're going to be OK. They're going to heal. So if you were to destroy one of these, you have to do it in a way where it will not be recreated inside of the pod. So you imagine that's specifically why these were used, was because this is part of a business. They want to show these things off. So they're probably very well maintained.

Megan: "Oh, boy. So it's not just the pods itself. They're actually, like, making these creatures part of the spell."

Jake: "Yeah."

Megan: "OK. Well, if we destroy the creatures, then we also have to destroy all this. Because otherwise, it'll just regenerate them."

Jake: "So we've gotta take out the Immortals and their healing pods. Not just one or the other."

Megan: "Yeah, I think so. Or is it all of the healing pods, and at least one Immortal? Like, if they're all part of this spell, do we need to destroy the entire components, or just one of the elements? Can it be finished if one of them is destroyed and can't be reconstructed?"

Jake: I mean, I know from experience that, like, marring a rune is enough to screw it up, right?

Rev: Yep.

Jake: "As long as we take out one of them, and we make it so that it can't get back in its spot and be intact again, we're good."

Megan: "OK. I think we ... We need to get Kim and Tass back in on this."

Jake: "I mean, surely he's come to by now. Let's go see how they're doing in the Med Bay."

Megan: "Yeah. I mean, if we have to destroy these, it's gonna be loud. It's gonna be obvious. And I don't want them to be in a, you know, dangerous position if we're gonna start fucking shit up, so ..."

Jake: "What about these still unknown strangers in the corner here? Are we doing anything about them? Do we want to figure out what they're doing? Or are we just leaving?"

Megan: "I mean, we can try and get closer. We're here, I guess."

Jake: Yeah, I think I gotta know who these people are and what they're doing. Because I think I will be too nervous about how they might screw things up for us along the way if I don't know. So I want to try and sneak closer, to the point where I can see or hear something that'll tell me what they're up to.

Rev: How are you sneaking towards them? So imagine yourself on one side of the circle, them on the other.

Jake: Yeah. Kind of, like, hiding behind pods and, like, scooting to the next one and scooting to the next one, like around the outside of the circle.

Megan: Just weaving in and out.

Rev: So as you approach the first pod, you get about ten feet away from it and you hear this one start to make that hiss and the seal break.

Kim: [Gasps]

Jake: Can I do the same thing to prevent this one from opening?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: I'll do that. And then like back off of it again to Megan and be like, "Oh, OK. I think as soon as we get in proximity to these, they're gonna launch. So, fuck." [Chuckles]

Megan: "So not that, then."

Jake: I mean, is there, like ... The battle's over. Have like the lights gone down? Like is there enough shadow around the edges of this room that we could sneak that direction?

Megan: Or, if we know how to shut these down, can we just, like, get to the next pod, shut it back down. Get to the next pod, shut it back down. We know how to stop this from happening.

Rev: So, yeah. You can either sneak around and deal with the pods, or go to the edges of the room. Unfortunately, I think it's gonna be a Keep Your Head Down either way. It just depends on what direction you want to go, with the possible ramifications.

Jake: Yeah. What the consequences could be.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Or alternatively, we could just like march across there and try to talk to them, thus not having to do a Keep Your Head Down, and do something else instead.

Megan: [Laughs]

Jake: Let's try, at least. Let's try to just like sneak through the shadows. I feel like risking a single pod getting away from us is suicide, so ...

Megan: Yeah, I agree. If the ramifications are gonna be "we're spotted" versus "we're eaten," I'm going to go with "we're spotted."

Jake: OK.

Rev: All right. Give me a Keep Your Head Down.

Jake: OK. I got a four.

Megan: Can I assist on this?

Rev: Yeah. How so?

Megan: I'm so tiny and good at staying in the shadows that I'm watching when he's getting too far away from the shadows, and I'm keeping him in check. Like, "Press your back against the wall." Like, stay ... Like hold your breath and, like, move really, really close. Like watching him, when he can't see how far out he is.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Assist.

Megan: Eleven.

Rev: All right. So Jake, you can reroll one of those twos.

Jake: [Chuckles] I like that this keeps happening when I've rolled just bad doubles. Seven. Brought me to a seven.

Rev: So you will be able to sneak around the outside. But as you start to make your way up the ramp towards the hangar, you hear some footsteps coming in your direction from up the ramp.

Jake: I don't have a better idea than this, so I'm just going to look at Megan and be like, "Just go with this." And then just walk robotically up the ramp towards where I hear these footsteps coming.

Megan: Oh, no.

Rev: All right. You start to walk up the ramp, and you see like a head crest the top of the ramp and look down as you're walking that direction. And they stop, they freeze.

Jake: I want to kind of turn my head robotically towards them and just say, "Hello. I hope your loading is going according to plan. Please excuse me so that I may check some things in the hangar."

Rev: They step aside.

Megan: Can I gauge their reaction?

Rev: Yeah. Why don't you roll Get a Feeling?

Megan: Snake eyes.

Rev: So Megan, as you follow Jake up the ramp and this man steps to the side to let you both pass, you try to keep an eye on him to get a sense of what he's feeling, and he just makes direct eye contact with you and squints a little bit, and just watches you as you continue to go by.

Megan: I try very hard not to blink. [Laughs]

Rev: So the two of you come up to the top of the ramp, and on either side of the ramp there are a dozen of these large containers that hold the Immortals. And then further back, straight ahead, there are two people who are still loading a couple of them onto the back of a ship just slightly smaller than your own. And then you can see an energy field ahead of that that leads out to that kind of desert landscape.

Jake: Is there any sort of like control panel in this place? I'm wondering if there is a way that we could make contact or like view security footage of where Tass and Kim are, or anything like that from here.

Rev: Roll Survey the Scene.

Jake: Eight.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 1.

Jake: What can help me?

Rev: You do see that behind the containers on the right side, there is a small desk inside of a very small booth that has a computer built into the desk. And it seems like it's probably used to operate the security clearance for this particular hangar — probably used to power it online. But you could hack into it to use it for some other reasons as well.

Megan: Are we able to reach this booth?

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: Oh. Great. Yeah. I mean, if we're able to access this, I definitely want to try and figure out some communications.

Jake: Yeah. I just want to, again, just beeline it over there like I have every right to be here.

Rev: The two of you turn and head into that little booth. And the guy comes back up the ramp the rest of the way and turns and you see him look at the two of you inside of that, and then he moves towards the other two people who are loading up these containers and starts talking to them.

Jake: OK. Yeah, I think I'm gonna say, "You want to see what you can figure out here, and I'll go see if I can keep them off our backs?"

Megan: "OK. Be careful."

Jake: OK. Yeah, I'll walk back out of the booth and just walk right over to that group of people.

Rev: Yeah. So aside from the man that you already saw, there is another man and a woman, and they are all dressed kind of the same. They have patchwork pieces of armor on. But you do see that they have a very similar red insignia on their shoulder.

Jake: Does that insignia mean anything to me?

Rev: It doesn't.

Jake: OK. Then I'll just walk up and stop and say, "Hello. Is there anything I can help you with?"

Rev: SMUGGLER: No, I think we're all set here, if you have everything checked out on your end.

Jake: "Yes. Everything seems to be going just fine."

Rev: SMUGGLER: Well excellent, excellent. I think we'll just get out of your hair, then.

Rev: He nods to the other two, and they stop loading the one that is not yet on the ship and just go inside the ship and start to close the back hangar.

Jake: I think I'll keep looking at the one that they're leaving behind, but call over towards them. "Oh, are you exiting early?"

Rev: SMUGGLER: Oh no, we're just out of a room. Thought we'd get out of here and make sure that ... You know, we don't want to be in anybody's way when they're trying to get things done.

Jake: I want to start walking towards the ramp onto their ship and say, "Oh, please, let me take a look. I may be able to help you rearrange some things to fit this one in."

Rev: As you move onto and up the ramp to their ship, the two who had made their way a few moments ago onto the ship have pulled some large firearms from the walls and they have leveled them at you. And one of them goes ...

Rev: SECOND SMUGGLER: What do we do?

Rev: THIRD SMUGGLER: Ah, it's just a robot. Just shoot it.

Megan: Oh, no.

Jake: I'm gonna go ...

Kim: Wait wait wait wait wait wait wait!

All: [Laugh]

Megan: No, I'm full of blood! I'm full of blood!

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I'm a human boy!

Jake: Sort of, yeah.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Yeah. I'm gonna look at them, like eyes wide, and be like, "No, no. I don't think we need to do that. This seems ... Well, this didn't go according to plan. But I think we might be able to work out an arrangement."

Rev: Yeah. And all three of them — like as soon as you start talking normally, they all kind of look at you strangely. And the guy who's down on the ramp with you, you see him like start to reach towards his hip as well. But he stops reaching for it.

Rev: SMUGGLER: What do you mean, work something out?

Jake: "Well, it's not entirely clear to me why you are here. I mean, I see that you're taking the things. Which, you know, is fine. Do you work here? It doesn't seem like you work here." And I wanna give, like, a wink. Like a — I'm his buddy, as I say that.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Influence Someone.

Jake: OK.

Rev: And I think this is a ... I'll make this perfectly clear. I think this is a Influence Someone for him not to draw on you.

Jake: Yeah, fair. [Sighs] Nine.

Rev: SMUGGLER: You better start explaining yourself real quick. You work here?

Jake: "No. No. It seems like we might both be sorta ... Not on the same side, but maybe like an enemy of my enemy is my friend kind of thing?"

Rev: SMUGGLER: Uh-huh.

Jake: "It seems like you're here to take some of these things. Fine. We're here to find some stuff and be a little bit disruptive. So — I say we, not just us two." And I gesture between me and Megan. "We've got other team handling things elsewhere in the facility. Just in case you were thinking that you might be able to just gun me down and get out of here scot-free. I just want to put it on the table — that's probably not the case. But I don't need to get in your way. In fact, I think I might just request that you take a particular one of these things out of here as part of your prize. And no harm, no foul. That'll help us get our thing done. Are you just looking to resell these? You looking to use these? You just looking to fuck over Alkali?"

Rev: SMUGGLER: Use some, sell others.

Jake: "Whatever. Not my business."

Rev: SMUGGLER: So what do you mean, take a particular one?

Jake: "Well, you know, some of these critters that are out here on the battlefield, they're just reusable, right? They come out, they do their show, they go back in, they get healed up. I just want one of those to disappear."

Rev: SMUGGLER: Yeah. All right.

Jake: "Now, when the pod opens, it's gonna come online. So do you have a way to remove the pod outright, or you think we can handle one of these things and get it contained again and out of here? Well, I'm sorry. What's your name? How rude of me."

Rev: STUBBS: Name's Stubbs.

Jake: "Stubbs, I'm Jake. It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance. Not a robot, by the way. Just in case ..."

Rev: STUBBS: Yeah, I started to gather that.

Jake: "Cool."

Rev: STUBBS: Yeah. I mean, we got a device in here to keep these things asleep until we get them where we want. I assume we got a couple more. Well, you can take the one off of this one.

Rev: And he gestures towards the one that they had not loaded up. And you can see that there is a very clearly homemade piece of equipment almost soldered to the side of it, that has some flashing lights on it.

Jake: "Sure. That works for me."

Rev: STUBBS: All right. Any particular one?

Jake: I think I'll point out the one that we know has the mark on it. The one that almost opened.

Rev: STUBBS: All right.

Rev: And he gestures to the two that went inside, and they come down and pull out a couple of tools from their pockets and remove the piece from this one.

Rev: STUBBS: Well, after you.

Jake: Yeah, I'll — absolutely. I'll walk down there with him. I'll like shake hands with the other two as they come off the ship, and like introduce myself. And as we're walking over there, I just want to be like, "I notice you guys have a pretty bitchin' logo there. Who you all affiliated with?"

Rev: STUBBS: We're members of Newfound Hearth.

Jake: "What are you? Are you like an army, or just a set of mercenaries?"

Rev: STUBBS: No, we're a group lives outside of one of the neighboring solar systems. Just trying to kind of make our own way. Don't particularly like being a part of some of the other colonies and leadership groups. Decided to start our own thing. But you try to start your own thing, people get upset and want to fight about it.

Jake: "So these are kind of like a self defense tool, in your case?"

Rev: STUBBS: Yeah.

Jake: Does he ... Does he seem like he's shootin' me straight, or not?

Rev: Why don't you roll Get a Feeling?

Jake: I'll try. Oh, no. I've negative Heart. Come on, dice. For once! Nine.

Rev: All right, you get a hold 1.

Jake: Wait, ten!

Rev: All right, you get a hold 2.

Jake: Are they being honest?

Rev: ...Yeah. You get a sense that they are a group of people who ... [Laughs]

Kim: [Laughs] That was the most qualified "yes."

Rev: ...Yeah.

Megan: Yeah. Well, about ...

Rev: Yeah. It's subjective.

Jake: I've got another one. I'll follow up on this.

Kim: [Laughs]

Rev: Yes. You do get the sense that he is being honest about who they are and what they are. Maybe not so much about how they plan to use these.

Jake: Are they hiding anything important?

Rev: As they were making this agreement with you, I think you kind of think back. And you remember the two in the ship, after they put the guns away, kind of looking at their wrists pretty frequently. And you notice Stubbs do the same thing. It seems like they're very aware of how much time they have spent here, and they're trying to get out as fast as they can.

Jake: OK. I'll help them get this pod ready for stealing.

Rev: Yeah. They begin to attach this to the new pod that you have indicated to them. And then with some effort, the four of you are able to wrench it free of the attachment that is keeping it here on the ground and start to move it back towards the ship. And as it breaks free, it's very subtle, but you're very familiar with this. You feel this small release of pressure that has been built up, as part of this spell loses power.

Kim. Dion has started to move you towards the room, and you can see inside that two of the other workers are setting up another of these sacks of fluid.

Kim: OK. I want to try to grab one of my smoke bombs and set it off, and then use that to try to get away.

Rev: Yeah. So I think this escape is going to be an Act Under Fire. And I think you get a +1, because you're using the smoke from this smoke bomb at your side.

Kim: That's a five. I'm gonna spend Intuition to bring it up to a full success.

Rev: Smoke fills the room, and you are able to wrench your way out of Dion's grasp. Where are you going?

Kim: Out of this room, down the hallway, trying to find a place to hide, I think.

Jake: Bye, Tass. [Laughs]

Kim: [Laughs] There's nothing I can do for him right now!

Megan: He's in the safest position of all of us.

Jake: Good luck, my bag friend.

Kim: Yeah.

Rev: [Chuckles] My bag friend, from Bag End. Yeah. Where do you want to head? Do you want to head down towards the Radio Room and the room where you know that the food comes from? Do you want to head back down the hallway towards the elevator?

Kim: Radio Room it is.

Rev: So you set this smoke bomb off, and there is some commotion inside of the room as they try to figure out what has happened. You are able to sneak out of the door and down that hallway and into the Radio Room. You open up that door and close it behind you. It's very dusty in here. Not like how the elevator was dusty, but just that it seems like this has not been used in a very long time. And this room is filled with a lot of old equipment, and there's even just boxes of other things in here as well. But you are in here alone.

Kim: Looking behind me at the door, does it look like it locks in any way?

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: OK, I'm gonna lock it.

Rev: OK.

Kim: Is there a heavy thing I can push in front of it?

Megan: Is there an EMP machine I can set up right by the door as a trap?

Jake: Waiting for, like, she locks the door. And then a Dion fist punches through, holding his own severed head.

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: And, "Here's Dion."

Kim: Great. I lock it. But like, these robots probably have fucking keys.

Jake: And scythes for bodies, what for getting through doors.

Rev: I like the thought, though, that this room is super dusty. They never utilize it. And so they don't think that anybody would go here.

All: [Laugh]

Kim: That's true! Why would they? Because they have radios in their head.

Megan: Oh, yeah! That's why it's dusty.

Kim: So, maybe!

Megan: You're so smart, Kim.

Jake: "Where'd she go? The Radio Room? No, nobody would go there."

Rev: "Why would anyone use that?"

Megan: "What's a radio?"

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: Yeah, you look around the room. There isn't anything like big and heavy that you could drag over here. But there are boxes that you could stack in front of the door so that if anyone were to peek through, they wouldn't see anything but boxes.

Kim: OK. That seems like the best I can do, in this situation.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to stack up a bunch of boxes and make yourself a little ... A little radio fort.

Megan: Aww! This is really cute, if it wasn't so terrifying.

Kim: I want to hang some blankets.

Rev: This is really cute, if you weren't gonna die in this room.

Megan: [Laughs] Yeah.

Kim: Set up some fairy lights ...

Rev: Megan, so all this is going on. Why don't you roll Use or Repair an Advanced Item to try and hack into the system?

Megan: Can we say that this is a stressful situation? I don't know what Jake's going through right now, and I'm very worried about him pretending to be a robot.

Rev: Yes. I ... This started when Jake walked away. So it is, at the moment for you, currently stressful.

Megan: Great. Then I got a +1 to this. Nine.

Rev: All right, so pick two issues.

Megan: I'm gonna go with, it doesn't work for as long as you need it, and there's an ongoing negative side effect.

Rev: So what would you like this to do, as you hack into the system?

Megan: I am trying to find some way to open up communication between the different places, to see if I can find Kim online anywhere. Or I'm looking for like video footage, so I can see where they are and what's going on.

Rev: You hack into the system and are able to access the network of cameras that are all throughout here. And you start to scroll through them, trying to figure out where Tass and Kim are. And after just a couple of moments, you come up to a camera that shows the room that had all of the hanging sacks with the scorpion creatures inside. And you

see Tass hanging from the ceiling, inside of one of these sacks as well. And in the bottom corner of the screen, you see Dion — headless — and Kim pinned to his back. You are watching as Kim is kind of carried into that room. She reaches down to her side, smoke starts to billow out. And then the smoke clears a moment later, and Dion and two of the other workers are there looking around. And Kim is no longer there, but Tass still is. And then it cuts out.

Megan: [Quietly] "Shit."

Rev: Kim.

Kim: Looking in this Radio Room, is there something that I can turn on, activate, use? A radio, perhaps?

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: Yeah. I think that you are able to see that there is equipment in here. Not a lot. But there are some older computers and some monitoring equipment. So you can Use or Repair an Advanced Item to get all this up and running.

Kim: Hmm. OK. That's a ten.

Rev: So you can use this without a problem. You know, the technology actually is very reminiscent to what you were used to using, where you came from.

Kim: Oh, hell yeah.

Rev: So it would be advanced for everyone else. But for you, it seems ... You seem to get the hang of it pretty quickly.

Kim: Excellent.

Rev: And there are two screens. One of them is a layout, a map, and it has some dots on it that are moving around. And then the other one is a camera feed, and it's got a three digit number at the bottom of the screen.

Kim: Cool. [Laughs] I'm the worst person to be in this situation, because I have no mind's eye. So I can't — I can't envision what I'm seeing, here. [Laughs] So the like map with the dots, is it just of The Forge, or is it this whole operation?

Rev: It's just The Forge. And the dots on it that you see? Like you see two dots inside of the room that you just came from.

Kim: Uh-huh.

Rev: So you, I think, pretty quickly get the idea that it's monitoring the location of the workers of The Forge.

Kim: Magnificent. OK. Is there an ability for me to scroll to different maps, or is The Forge the only map I got?

Rev: The Forge is the only map that you've got, but the other screen does have a scrolling feature.

Kim: Yeah, I'm going to start flipping through video feeds.

Rev: Yeah, you start flipping through the camera feeds and pretty quickly you come up to a very wide shot of the cavernous room where the demonstration was going on. And you can see that all of the pods that are used in the demonstration make out a large circle.

Kim: Oh, shit.

Rev: But there are four figures around one of them, and they have pried it up and they are carrying it away off screen.

Kim: Uh, OK. Do I recognize any of those figures?

Rev: Yeah, I think that you can make out Jake's clothing.

Kim: That's true. It would be — it would be fairly ...

Rev: Distinct, compared to the others.

Kim: We have established that he looks the same coming through this portal, so.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: So this is the Radio Room. Is there a radio feature? Can I radio this Product Testing?

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: Yeah, I do.

SFX: SPEAKERS CRACKLE WITH FEEDBACK

Kim: [Through static] "Jake, it's Kim. I don't — I don't know if you can hear me."

Rev: So Jake and Megan, both of you. There is a crackle of old speakers turning on, and you hear Kim's voice come over, just booming throughout this cavern.

Jake: I think I, like, flinch.

Kim: [Through static] "Sorry!"

Jake: And I say to the rest of these people that I'm with, "Oh, speak of the devil. See, I said we had people elsewhere in the facility." And I'll look around and wave my hand.

Kim: [Through static] "Oh, thank goodness. The whole situation here is fucked."

Jake: I look at all the people I'm with, nervously.

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I come out of the booth and I'm just like, "Is that Kim?"

Jake: "Sounds like it. Sounds like there might be some other things that need our attention here, so ..."

Rev: And Kim, now that you have this room selected, you can hear them talking in that room.

Kim: [Through static] "Oh, I can hear you! Great! Um, OK. Tass is inside the Med Bay and inside, like, a pod or something. And I pissed off Dion and a whole bunch of robots, and they're looking for me. But I have locked myself in this Radio Room. And I'm not sure how long Tass is gonna be in a pod, but they tried to shove me into one, and I got away."

Rev: STUBBS: We're just gonna keep loading this up. It seems like you've got some things to deal with.

Jake: "Yeah, seems like we do. I don't suppose you have any interest in some more shenanigans, do you?"

Rev: STUBBS: Oh god, no. We got — we gotta get out of here. Time's ticking away.

Jake: "Yeah, I noticed you've been kind of checking the wristwatch. What's the deadline? What's going on? What's going to happen?"

Rev: STUBBS: Just after a certain amount of time — we got our ship cloaked from the security. And once that counts down, I think they'll either be able to sense that we're here, shoot us out of the sky, that kind of stuff.

Jake: "Hmm. That is rough."

Rev: STUBBS: Yeah.

Megan: "How did you cloak it?"

Rev: STUBBS: Oh, I don't know. It was one of the technicians back. There's a device on the side of the ship he built and got some codes. Said it would confuse the ground defenses they have here.

Megan: "Hmm. That maybe gives me an idea. We gotta get back and help her if she's barricaded. I don't know how we're going to get to her. Are we gonna fight all of the robots up there?"

Jake: "I mean, maybe they wouldn't make the leap that we are also going to hurt them. Maybe they fought back against Kim, and won't fight back against us? That's, again, optimistic. But I don't know what else to do but head that direction."

Megan: "Yeah. Let's go. Kim, just stay there. Stay hidden. And we're on our way right now. We'll come find you."

Kim: [Through static] "OK. Hurry."

Jake: Can I pull out the magic coins that change into, like, whatever the local currency is? Like can I see if they are some local currency?

Rev: They are. They are coins that you do not recognize.

Jake: OK. I want to hold one of them up to him and be like, "Is this a little? Is this a lot?"

Rev: STUBBS: Depends. What do you want?

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Ooh.

Megan: It's a — it's a penny. [Laughs]

Jake: "I just wanna know if I'm going to be insulting you if I give it to you."

Rev: STUBBS: Oh. I see, I see. It's not a substantial amount.

Jake: "Great." And I will hold it out to him.

Rev: He takes it.

Jake: "Thanks for helping us out with this. Do me a favor: don't, like, go do terrible things with these creatures. All right? You said you were gonna use them for protecting you and

your own. That — I don't totally believe that. But I'd really appreciate it if I didn't have to come back and come looking for you because you were doing some heinous shit. Cool?"

Rev: STUBBS: Oh, look, sometimes the best defense is a good offense. That's all I meant.

Jake: "I don't super jive to that. But I'll tell you what: you seem OK. I would like us to be friends. So, behave. If you need me for anything in the future, just kind of put the word out. I'll see if I can get back to you. All right? And don't spend all that in one place." \

Rev: STUBBS: All right.

Jake: And then I'll gesture for Megan to start running back, so we can reroute to where Kim is.

Rev: So the two of you start sprinting back across to the stairs, up to the observation deck inside of the glass tunnel that is above Product Testing. Back inside the Radio Room, Kim, you see that Jake and Megan have torn off and are climbing back up inside of the tram's tunnel and are headed back towards the lobby. You see the small ship close its back hangar, lift up, and take off out of the hangar. There's kind of a bright flash of light as it leaves, kind of sending that screen into static for a moment. And as your eyes kind of go over to the other screen, looking at this map, it catches your attention that all of the rooms are labeled. And that the room Tass is in is labeled as Bioengineering Lab.

SFX: OUTRO MUSIC

Carolyn: The Critshow is a Critshow Studios production, edited and produced by Brandon Wentz, with music by Jake Pierle. You can find more information about us at thecritshowpodcast.com. To keep up to date with upcoming live shows, contests, and other special events, follow us at The Critshow on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. For even more weekly content, join us at Patreon.com/TheCritshow.