

Silver Strings (S5, E10)

Tass: 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, I just wanted to take a moment to thank everyone who showed up for our subathon over at Twitch.tv/TheCritshow. Jgame_Z and myself did in fact go to a haunted house just this last Friday night. We both had GoPros on us. I have got the footage. So once I am caught up on editing the show, I'm going to sit down and put together some video clips from our time inside of American Horrorplex in Louisville, Kentucky. We do have to get those approved by that group before we release them, but we will share some of that on social media, and also probably on Twitch and in our Discord. So thank you again to everyone who showed up to make that possible. We had a ... [Laughs] We had a good time, despite the amount of adrenaline dumped into our system from going through that as only a group of two, as opposed to the other groups which seem to be like four or five or more. And as always, you can find our video content over at Twitch.tv/TheCritshow. Or if it has expired, you can find a number of our episode listen-throughs and let's plays over at YouTube.com/TheCritshow. And if you subscribe, you will get a notification anytime we post something new there. So I hope you're all doing well and that your first couple of days into October have been wonderful. With that, it's time to let the recap roll.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Rev: Something has closed this door and welded it shut. But at the bottom, you can see that the door has been pulled back a little bit out of its track, the metal bent. Leaving about maybe a four inch triangular section where there's space to get underneath.

Megan: "What's strong enough to pull this back, but small enough to get through there?"

Rev: Very faintly from the other side of the security door, you can hear ...

Rev: VOICE: Help me!

Kim: "Oh, shit. Oh, shit."

Megan: "What?"

Kim: "Someone is hurt and calling out for help, beyond that security door."

Megan: "Who's there?"

Rev: There is no call for help still, but you can hear very labored breathing.

Tass: Yeah, I start moving down this hall.

Rev: In the far corner lays a man, his back propped against the wall.

Jake: Hold up my med kit and, like, head in his direction.

Megan: I'm shining my light around them, trying to see the rest of this room.

Rev: You adjust your light more squarely onto this man, and you can see thin lines of this metallic thread stitched tightly around his neck.

Rev: INJURED MAN: Help me.

Rev: And as he says this again into the space, Megan, you get the sense that Kim is in the most danger. Because just above her, the ceiling has started to undulate and droop, that quivers as it prepares to drop down onto her.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: Megan, you have noticed this metallic thread running from a corridor to your right behind this man controlling his breath and his speech, and then you have noticed the ceiling start to undulate and begin to quiver as it starts to fall towards Kim. What are you doing?

Megan: I'm yelling out, "Oh, no, it's a trap! It's a trap. Kim, watch out!" And I'm pointing up at the ceiling.

Rev: Kim, what are you doing?

Kim: So looking up, what do I see?

Rev: It almost looks like a organic metal teardrop. It is very big, and it is getting ready to drop upon you.

Kim: Yeah, I'm trying to move out of the way.

Rev: Yeah, roll Act Under Fire.

Kim: Hey, that's a four. So I'm gonna give you another 2 hold, Rev, to bump that up to a mixed success.

Rev: So you're gonna be able to get out from underneath this before it drops. But you're gonna leave something behind, you're gonna make a lot of noise while you do it, or you're gonna have to step back into the darkness behind you that no one has really looked into yet.

Kim: I mean, realistically, if Megan is shouting at me and there's a very spooky thing above me, I don't think there's a way that I'm not making a lot of noise as I'm backing away from this thing.

Rev: How do you get out of the way?

Kim: Honestly, I think it's just a very ungraceful scramble back towards Megan.

Rev: OK. Jake and Tass, you have just heard Megan yell that it is a trap, and you have heard Kim make quite a kerfuffle behind you.

Kim: [Laughs, then yelps]

Rev: What are you both doing?

Tass: Whirling around to see what she's shrieking about?

Rev: You whirl around and you see this big blob of fleshy yet metallic looking goo hit the ground and start to kind of roll towards Kim and Megan.

Tass: "Do I shoot it? I'm supposed to shoot that, right?"

Jake: Man, yeah. Can I, like, assess this thing in any more detail? Does it seem to be moving with malice? Or does it seem like just kind of like a ... Like a yucky natural phenomenon that just kind of shlorped to the ground and is rolling away?

Rev: I'm gonna ask you to Get a Feeling. And hold on to it. Keep it dear to you.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Is it fair to say that I'm currently going through a stressful situation?

Rev: Yes.

Jake: OK, cool. Then I get +1 Heart from my field kit.

Tass: We're stressed at the table right now! Certainly, we're in it.

Jake: Ooh, ten!

Rev: All right. You get a hold 2.

Kim: He has all the feelings.

Jake: Are they being honest?

All: [Laugh]

Jake: What do I notice about them that's important?

Rev: So as I have described this, it's fleshy, it's metal, and you notice that it is moving along one of the silver threads on the ground. You know, you don't see any real sensory things on it. So it's following along on this silver thread that's running on the ground that leads it towards Kim and Megan.

Jake: OK. What are their intentions?

Rev: Everything that it rolls over as it rolls past, think of it kind of like the blob. That everything it passes over, that space on the floor is completely clean after it moves past. So it seems like it wants to take in matter.

Jake: "Yeah, it's kind of like a gelatinous cube. I think it's just gonna eat whatever it comes across. So I don't know if shooting it's gonna do any good, but I don't think it's gonna do any harm. It's following these little threads though, so get off that path."

Kim: Yeah. Looking, is there a patch of ground that does not have a thread on it?

Rev: Yeah. Why don't you Survey the Scene?

Kim: That's a nine.

Rev: All right, You get a hold 1.

Jake: Could I help out? Having, like, specifically pointed out the threads?

Rev: Yeah, for sure.

Kim: Cool.

Jake: That's an eight.

Rev: All right, so that bumps you up. You get a hold 2.

Kim: Nice. Thanks, Jake.

Jake: You're welcome.

Kim: OK, so with a mind to trying to find a place that is not covered in threads, how can I get out of here?

Rev: This room is very dark and illuminated by this very dull green light. And I envision you kind of spinning around and really taking in the room fully for the first time. There's the ladder behind you that you came down. And then to your right and up ahead is a corridor that goes to some place you can't see. And then behind you is another corridor. The one going out to the right, you see a very thick one of these threads, like and it's kind of plumped up from the ground and it's pulsating a little bit, feeding into the man that Jake and Tass had went to. And you don't see a similar thing in the corridor behind you. So either the corridor behind you, or the ladder seem like the best options.

Kim: Cool. For my second hold, is there something important I'm missing?

Rev: As your light falls across this room and you're trying to figure out the best way out, there are different thicknesses of these threads woven into the wall and the floor and the ceilings. And it's a very small shift, but as this is moving towards you, you notice that it moves past one of the thicker threads that kind of branches off, and a very small amount of it breaks off and goes that other direction. And so it seems like the thicker the thread, the more of this mass it can hold. And as it gets to thinner areas, it has to break up before it can reconnect.

Kim: Cool. Also, gross. Yeah so I will shout that to everyone else. "Either up the ladder or down that left hallway. I don't think it can follow us there."

Tass: "Yeah. Go, go, go." And I'm gonna try to, like, maneuver between it and them. And I want to see if I can start shooting at some of these threads, to see if my gun will even do anything to them? I just want like the idea of if I'm severing some of these, maybe it can stop or at least slow its progress.

Rev: So your intent here really is to try and hamstring its movement, not damage it?

Tass: Yeah, I think so.

Rev: All right. Give me an Act Under Fire.

Tass: Eight.

Rev: So where were you trying to clear a path to? Like where were you trying to clear these threads away from?

Tass: I feel like where it dropped, the ladder is probably harder to get to, right? Like, we'd have to sort of get around it to get to the ladder?

Rev: You and Jake, yes.

Tass: OK.

Rev: Kim and Megan have kind of easy access to either that back corridor or the ladder.

Tass: Then I think overall, if they have sort of 50/50 access and we're on the other side, I'm gonna try to blast it so that we can get to the hallway.

Rev: OK. So yes, you are able to clear some of this away from the hallway. You blast the cannon into the ground, and the floor here chars. And you see that these lines of organic material shrivel up. But as they do, the other lines in the room get thicker and plumper.

Tass: [Chuckles] OK.

Kim: [Gags]

Tass: I'm just waiting for you to throw in a "throb" in this.

Kim: No!

Megan: Yes!

Rev: But you have cleared the path to that back corridor.

Tass: "Come on, kids, Let's go."

Kim: Yep. Booking it.

Megan: Yeah. I'm just hopscotching over threads and trying to get to the corridor.

Jake: Before I take off for that corridor, can I just, like ... Can I confirm — I mean, I'm pretty sure this man is dead and a puppet. But like, am I 100% sure of that, or do I need to take another look here just to be positive that we're not leaving a man to his doom?

Rev: Yeah, I think that there's no roll here. As you start moving towards the Tass. [Laughs]
The Tass.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: I insist on being called The Tass from now on.

Rev: As you start moving towards the path that Tass has created, you glance back over your shoulder and you see this silver, this same techno organic material, pushing out from underneath this man's shirt. And you can see that his ribs are stripped clean.

Jake: Oh ...

Rev: And it is starting to, like, raise him off of the ground.

Jake: Oh yeah, fuck that.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: To the hallway.

Rev: Yeah. So you all head into that hallway, and the first thing you notice as you go down the hallway is that there is another one of those security doors, and it is busted open. It leads into another large open room with a security door, again, directly across from the room. But this one is sealed and intact still. Inside of this room, the floor and the walls and the ceiling have very, very fine threads. You don't see any large masses of this techno organic material. But there are the threads in here that it seems like it could come from other places to get here.

Jake: Thinking back, does it seem possible that we might have missed any of these threads earlier in this facility?

Rev: Yes.

Kim: Hmm.

Jake: OK.

Jake: Is the damage on this busted door reminiscent of like what we saw upstairs? Like, does it seem like this creature could have caused all of these busted doors?

Rev: So the first door you came across had that just small triangular corner ripped out.

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: If it was the same thing, it's much larger now.

Jake: It was a lot littler then.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah, OK.

Rev: And I think that if you had missed these threads in previous rooms, it's because the rooms that you encountered before were like sterilization rooms and the initial hallways that were all metal, and you're now starting to get what seemed like more living quarters. So there's nicer tile floor or carpeting — well, probably not carpeting in a space station. But you get the idea.

Megan: Mmm, just like home.

Rev: Just like home.

Megan: [Laughs]

Jake: "Man, I don't know what that thing is, but it kind of seems like maybe it's caused all this havoc and it's growing as it goes."

Tass: "Great. So it's just eating enough to get that big?"

Jake: "I don't know. Is it like consuming metal as it goes? Is it metal? It looks like mercury."

Megan: We finally found Mercury.

Kim: We found it.

Rev: I will say that the man that you went to examine, with the exception of his head, you notice that all of the ...

Jake: He'd been ate?

Rev: Yeah. All the fleshy parts are gone.

Jake: OK. "I think it eats man flesh."

Kim: "Oh, so Megan and I are fine."

Rev: [Laughs]

Jake: "Yeah. So why don't you guys go have a chat and —"

Megan: "Deal with it?" [Laughs] I want to look at the closed security door. Does it look like we can maybe get through this one the same way we did the first one?

Rev: Yeah. It looks exactly like all the others you've encountered so far.

Megan: "Where's the — where's the patch?"

Jake: I run forward with it.

Rev: Yeah. You run forward towards this door, and it slides open.

Jake: All right. Get in, get in, get in.

Kim: Yep.

Megan: Piling in.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: As you all step through this door, it slams shut behind you, and there is a red light filling this room. And two figures with large rifles spin and point at you.

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Hey, what are you doing?

Tass: "What are you doing?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: [Sputters] Hey. Hey, I asked you first.

Tass: "No, you're right. Sorry. Panic response. You're like — you're alive."

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Yeah. Are you?

Tass: "Yes. Silver thing. Blob? Webs?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Open your mouth.

Tass: "Ahh."

Kim: "Ahh."

Rev: He steps forward, and —

Jake: Shoots you.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: The only way we know if you're real is if you can take damage on the soft palate. It's unfortunate, because ... You'll be buried with honor, but ...

Jake: Unfortunately, you don't really come back from it.

Rev: You don't survive.

Tass: Oh, this is a Salem witch situation. Oh, no.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: But he steps forward and he pulls a light from his vest and shines it inside of your mouth. And he moves down the row and does this to all of you. And he clicks it off and puts it away.

Rev: RIFLEMAN: How did you get in here?

Jake: "We followed like a voice that was calling out for help. And then when we got to it, it was somebody who was dead and being puppeted by this thing."

Rev: RIFLEMAN: It was the captain. It got the captain.

Tass: "From the look of most of this place, it got a lot of people."

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Yeah, it's got about half the station.

Tass: "Good lord."

Megan: "Half? Where's the other half?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Well, this is ... It's a symmetrical station. It's the same thing on one side as the other. It's gotta be, for the centrifugal force that we use to create the gravity. So what you pass through will seem familiar to you, but ... Well, this way.

Rev: And he points back towards the corner of this room that has another of the security doors.

Kim: "For how long have you been dealing with this thing?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: About three months now.

Kim: "Jeez."

Megan: "Where did it come from?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: We don't know. We got an alarm that there was something inside of the docking bay. We went to investigate it, and, man, it was ... It was ready for us. It was just the little thing. It got on to a couple of the workers, and just ate right through all the skin and the organs and everything. Just left bones behind. We tried to lock up as best we could, but it tore through a good part of the station. Seems like the bigger it gets, the stronger it gets.

Tass: "Have you found anything that can hurt it yet?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: No, not really. We got folks up in the command center working on that right now. But it's not been good. Mostly it's just we got two points of egress into the places where it controls, and we guard both of them.

Tass: "Yikes. Well I mean, I know this sort of blast can at least sever some of those threads that it travels on. But I didn't get a good clean shot at the blob."

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Yeah, we kind of started shooting it the way that it travels. It seems like it just makes it so it can move more of itself through other ... I don't know, veins or threads.

Tass: "Yeah, make it stronger in one spot, but with less place to go?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Yeah.

Tass: "Yeah, OK."

Megan: "So what's kept it out of here?"

Rev: RIFLEMAN: I don't know. Their working theory is that it spreads itself out. More room it takes up, the less strength it has? That make sense? Because it's gotta distribute that strength throughout all of the places it's at.

Tass: "It needs more food."

Rev: RIFLEMAN: Yeah.

Tass: "Well, OK. That's not exactly a weakness, but it's something we can work with. Hey, what's your name, pal?"

Rev: RILEY: Name's Riley.

Jake: "What is the point of this whole place, Riley?"

Rev: RILEY: Oh that's more of a conversation, I think, for Carrington. She's the one in charge. What do they say? Above my pay grade, to talk about why we're here.

Tass: As he's answering this, I'm, like, looking them over. Like I know, just at a glance, human. But, like, do I get any monstrous vibes from these people?

Rev: You don't.

Tass: OK.

Jake: Do they seem inclined to hurt us still, at all?

Rev: They don't. They are in uniform, and the uniform matches the insignias that you saw out in the docking bay. But no, they have lowered their weapons and seem to be open to conversation and taking you to talk to the people who are actually in charge.

Jake: OK. "Yeah. If we could get a word with Carrington, that might be good. Maybe we can all figure out a strategy together to take this thing out, or get everyone out of here at least."

Rev: RILEY: Yeah, Sounds good. Now, follow me.

Rev: And Riley leads you further into this room, and you do pretty quickly recognize that it's a mirror of the room that you encountered the creature in. There is a corridor that heads off to the left at the end of this room, and there are some makeshift bunks set up in there. And then there's a ladder that goes up, and they lead you up the ladder into a corridor that is lit on both ends. There are those locked security doors. And then about halfway down the hallway, there's a much larger security door on your left hand side. It's got some clear material on it so you can see inside. And as you pass by, there are these two large metal spheres spinning around each other. In this room, you can see that that silver metallic thread is everywhere. He nods at it as he walks by.

Rev: RILEY: This room that makes the gravity and everything, I don't know why it hasn't tried to fuck with it. It doesn't do anything to it. Just checks in.

Tass: "Maybe it wants or needs the gravity, too?"

Rev: RILEY: Yeah, maybe.

Tass: "Which also dictates the level of intelligence."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, no, it's — it's smart, whatever it is. That ploy it tried on you with, uh, Captain Bowlegs ...

Jake: [Laughs]

Kim: I'm sorry?

Tass: Is that like a family name? Or ...

All: [Laugh]

Rev: Yeah, it's a big family. Called the CritCrew.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: RILEY: But it's, uh ... When it first set that trap out, it got quite a few of us.

Tass: "God, I'm so sorry."

Rev: RILEY: Yeah, well, come on down this way.

Rev: And he leads you down to the end of the corridor, and it opens up into a square room. The far corner of it is a hallway that leads to another security door, and then there is a security door just to the left of you. And he leads you straight ahead into that corridor that opens up into a large room that has half a dozen people inside of it, and they all spin and look in your direction. At the front, you can see that there are large, transparent walls that look out into space. And there are three women in particular who turn from the group and start walking towards you. The one in the middle has long white hair.

Rev: CARRINGTON: Riley, what's the meaning of this?

Rev: RILEY: Oh, they got on here somehow and made it through. I don't know. They want to know what we do, and I didn't feel comfortable talking about that. And they're not infected. I checked them.

Rev: CARRINGTON: All right, so what's your deal?

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "That's a great question. I wish I could answer it. Well, we were at the facility on the surface, and we noticed this up here, and it seemed odd. So we came to check in. And when we got here, things were pretty grisly. So we started looking to see what was going on and if anybody needed help. And now we're here."

Megan: "And apparently, yes."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Well yes, you're not wrong.

Rev: And the blonde-haired woman next to her speaks up.

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Yes. We've been stuck here for about three months. It's been quite a mess. We have not been able to get this thing shaken from us.

Kim: So remind me, because it's been — it's been a minute. The storm seems to maybe be coming from this facility? Is that ...

Rev: Mmhmm.

Kim: Yes. OK. And the storm first showed up three years ago?

Rev: Has been locked into place three years ago.

Kim: Has been locked into place three years ago. But they have only been dealing with this monster for three months.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: OK.

Megan: "Have you reached out for help with this situation at all?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: No, not yet. We have a strict protocol that any of the Strider bases, we are supposed to be self sufficient. We are scattered throughout the galaxy. We do not call for help, for aid, for reinforcements, until we have dealt with a situation that seems unmanageable by us for six months.

Jake: "As Riley said, he was uncomfortable answering this. But what exactly is the purpose of this facility? We just, by sheer luck, spotted this up here."

Rev: The blonde-haired woman who gave you the description of why they haven't called for help yet, she tilts her head.

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Where are you from? You have not heard of the Striders?

Jake: "No. I mean, we're ... We're from quite far away. So if this is on a relatively small galactic scale, here. Yeah, it would have escaped our notice."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: We are an intergalactic peacekeeping force. We keep eyes on things that start to seem shady, seem to have problems. Areas of galaxies where crime has begun to run rampant, or testing to see if new civilizations are prepared to join in the alliance.

Kim: "So you were keeping an eye on Hydarnes."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Yes.

Kim: "That makes sense."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: But you have never heard of us, but you're capable of space travel.

Megan: "Yeah that's kind of new, though, for us."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Oh.

Megan: "Just personally."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Interesting.

Tass: "I've been to space three times."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Oh, I see. Are you ... So you are the leader of the group. You've been to space the most. Your civilization, your society, just get space travel?

Tass: "Yes I am. Yes, I am."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: I see, I see.

Jake: I look admiringly at Tass. Leader.

Tass: [Chuckles] "So in keeping an eye on this place, is it more keeping an eye on the facility that makes all those monsters down there? Or is it keeping an eye on people trying to do the crime and stuff to them?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Yes, it's more so trying to keep an eye on the people making purchases.

Tass: "Oh, OK. Because I was gonna say, y'all clean missed — I understand why — the situation. Like some pirates have been going down there and taking stuff. Like it's all — it's wild."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Oh, that's not good.

Tass: "Yeah, well, I mean, you're a little indisposed."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Yes, that is unfortunate.

Kim: "Y'all are also seemingly causing one hell of a storm down on the planet's surface. Is that something you're consciously doing?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Oh, yes. It's the way that we disguise the ship. It generates a storm. It's a storm type that is local to this planet. So as we move around the planet, we would not draw unnecessary attention to the location of our station.

Kim: "I see."

Megan: "Can I ask why you're in this spot in particular?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: This is where, when everything shut down, we have not been able to move. We've just been stuck in synchronous orbit with the planet.

Tass: "Oh."

Megan: "OK. Well, what needs to happen for that to change?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: We are not quite sure. Whatever this is, it's controlling some of our systems. I think we have to get rid of whatever this life form is. It has very strong technical abilities. Whatever it gets into, it can control. And so we have to get it out of the ship before we can take full control and resume our normal pattern.

Jake: "Now wait, you said you've been stuck in place since everything shut down."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Yes.

Jake: "Three years ago?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: No. Three months ago.

Jake: "You've been in the same place for three years."

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: No, three months.

Tass: "Oh, no ..."

Jake: "I think there is some substantial time dilation or something going on here. Because from the surface, this storm has been raging from the exact same spot for the last three years."

Rev: And I think it's Riley, behind you, goes ...

Rev: RILEY: Oh shit, that's probably what it's doing in the room that makes the gravity. It's making a stronger gravity, making time pass slower for us. For us, it's been three months. You're telling us that outside of this station, it's been three years?

Tass: "Yep."

Megan: "How long have we been here?"

Kim: "Oh, no."

Tass: "Like ... Half hour?"

Kim: "I can't do math. What is that? Who's got a chalkboard?"

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: So, yeah. For you, about a half hour. But it seems like to the outside world, about 6 hours.

Kim: Oh, no.

Megan: "Do you have a radio? A means of outside communications that I could borrow really quick?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Yes. But if time is working differently, if you send the message out, it's going to be, what? Hours, days, before we get a response?

Tass: "And it might sound really slow? Or fast?"

Jake: "Well, the response start coming back immediately," [Slows down voice] "But it's gonna be like this ..."

Rev: The blonde-haired woman, her eyes get really big.

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: That would explain the strange messages we've been getting. If they are slowed so much, we need to take and compress them by ... Oh, god. OK, I have to go.

Rev: And she goes over to one of the panels and starts working.

Megan: "OK. Yeah. Still, it might take a long time. That's better than nothing, right?"

Rev: BLONDE WOMAN: Yes. Yeah. Please, come over here.

Megan: Yeah, I go over and I take out the note that Mari gave me to be able to communicate to her.

Rev: OK. What is everybody else doing?

Tass: I want to ... I think I'm talking to Riley, because he seemed to be tracking that room? That like — the gravity room?

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: "What does it take to get in there?"

Rev: RILEY: Just two sets of key cards, but one of them's got to be from one of the folks in charge.

Tass: "OK. I think maybe a pretty critical thing, besides taking that thing out, is clearing its connection to all that. Because if we can clear that connection, we might all sync back up. Right? Does that track?"

Rev: RILEY: Oh hell, I don't know.

Tass: "Oh, boy. Well, it's something."

Rev: RILEY: So you want to open the doors?

Tass: "Not at this instant. Let's do a little planning. But yeah, I think so. We've gotta one way or another. Whether it's find a way to kill that thing, or at least get time back on our side."

Jake: I'm gonna turn to Carrington. "Do you guys recall three months ago, to your perspective, a visit to the facility on the surface from a particular person, name of Nash?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Oh, that's not really something that I deal with. Addy, come here. He's got some questions about the way the facility runs, or the laws that you enforce.

Rev: And Addy comes over.

Rev: ADDY: Uh, what was the question?

Jake: "Do you recall a visit to the facility on the surface three months ago from an individual named Grigori Nash?"

Kim: "And a ship called The Argonaut."

Rev: ADDY: I don't. But I suppose if we go check the records, it probably would be in there. We can scan ships as they come through the atmosphere.

Jake: "All right. Yeah, let's do that. Let's confirm that."

Rev: Yeah. And she takes you over to one of the other consoles and pulls it up. And yeah, it confirms the same Argonaut ship that came and went. And it was not at the station below for very long. And it was that same day that everything on this base started to break bad.

Jake: I mean, I kind of want to address everybody in here who has a hand on this ball right now. "OK. Yeah. This aligns. This whole thing started when Nash was last here. So maybe he planted this creature to cause this exact problem, to make sure that this storm kept raging where he wanted it to cover the thing he needed covered on the surface."

Kim: "Fuck. That sounds exactly correct."

Tass: "Where ... OK, where are we in space? Is this, like, directly above? Like, is the station ... Could it have its own circle, and this thing is the thing? You know, the creature, the transfer item to the little one below that's in the storm? Or am I just not ... Is that just not it?"

Jake: "I don't know. I mean, maybe." Because we have not — out of character, we have not yet figured out ... We knew where the one that mattered was, at the base of a crater that we think is the one being protected by the storm. Well, no, no, but this is not above that crater, right? We're on the edge of a storm being generated by this ship.

Rev: Correct.

Jake: Yeah. OK. "So the crater's on the very edge, this would not be above it. So no, unless once upon a time, this was directly above the crater when, like, the spell popped

off. Then this creature would have been in the right place, right time, maybe. But where we are now? No. We are above and like, offset from the circle that we know is important, that we are suspect is in a crater on the surface."

Tass: "OK. OK. That at least answers that."

Jake: I mean, I'll ask. Like, what was the trajectory of this facility before it stopped? Like, I want to know if I can get an idea of like what direction it did come in from. Is it possible that at some point it was directly over that crater or that spot where we know this circle is?

Rev: Yeah. She goes through some of the details, and they have not moved since everything shut down. There has not been any drift. And she shows you that the ship, while much smaller than the storm, does generate the effect that creates the entirety of the storm. The ship is not directly above the circle is correct. It is in the storm generated by the circle, but it is not directly below. So over with Megan, what message are you trying to send to this ... To this number?

Megan: I'm trying to kind of fill Mari in on the time difference and that there's this creature here. And I think I'm asking ... I'm gonna ask the person that brought me over here what their name is.

Rev: SROKA: Sroka.

Megan: "Sroka. Right. OK."

Kim: I should have guessed, by the accent.

Megan: Yep. "Have you tried any ways to damage this thing that you have found does not affect it like, at all?"

Rev: SROKA: Oh, that would be a question for Riley. He's the one who heads up our munitions.

Megan: Is Riley still in this room?

Rev: Yes.

Megan: "What have you done that has not affected it at all, so I can send this message out?"

Rev: RILEY: I mean, everything is affected a little bit. We don't use projectiles, obviously, because space. Burning it leaves a lot of the ... I don't know, the metallic material behind, but it kind of dehydrates it. And that's mostly what we've been doing. Just trying to clear paths. Like, I'll be quite frank. Right now, it's just a game of keeping it out of the places it's not in.

Megan: OK. Then yeah, I'm sending a message to Mari. And I'm saying, "A creature up here affecting time. One hour equals 12 hours. Techno-organic, fire does not kill. Help? Question Mark?"

Rev: OK.

Kim: Love you. Bye.

Rev: [Chuckles]

Jake: I want to ask Riley, "Have you guys tried gamma on this thing?"

Rev: RILEY: No. We don't typically try to deal with much radiation, because confined space and reusable water and everything. Food. But, no. But it could work. I don't know.

Megan: "What about freezing? Have you tried using, like, fire extinguishers or something?"

Rev: RILEY: Yeah. On our first encounter, some of the fire suppression systems went off. I'll be honest, I don't know how it did. We were kind of evacuating that room by the time it happened.

Jake: Yeah, I'll look to Tass. "I mean, as far as getting in there and trying to sever some of its ties to the gravity balls ..."

Kim: [Snorts]

Jake: "Like, we could try the gamma gun. I mean, this thing seems pseudo-organic, and I know this affects organic matter. So maybe it'll do the trick."

Tass: "Yeah, maybe. I mean, even this, like, energy blast at least burnt the threads a little bit away. I mean, it cleared them. But I don't know if it was more of a like, you know, severing a spider web, or if it actually like hurt it. You know what I mean?"

Jake: "Yeah, Maybe we need like a peanut butter in your chocolate, chocolate in your peanut butter thing. Like maybe we need both."

Tass: "Cross the streams!"

Jake: "Yeah."

Tass: "OK."

Megan: "Yeah. I mean if fire burnt away the organic part, but there was still this like metallic kind of technology aspect to it left behind, maybe we just add some tech to a organic killing gun."

Jake: Fresh out of gear points with which to do so, unfortunately.

Kim: We do still have that EMP that you made us.

Megan: Yeah, I'm still holding on to that, and ...

Kim: Take out this whole space station.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Yeah. Let's just — let's throw that in the room with the gravity balls. And it's like, "We're free!"

Rev: —Falling!

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Crisis averted.

Tass: We just tell them, "Trust us. Set off this EMP when we tell you." And we're just waiting in the ship with the dock open.

Megan: I mean, our ship is up here, so my workroom is available.

Jake: We just have to go right back, past the monstrosity.

Tass: "OK. Here's my thought. We gotta test this. We've gotta figure out what for sure will hurt this. So I think a couple of us need to go back out, try a few shots, try a few things, and see what we can do. This is just food for thought, though. We understand that if this thing splits up, it's technically, you know, weaker in a way. It's got these threads everywhere. So if bits of it are moving around all over the place, it might be easier to deal with. If we figure out what can hurt it? We all work together. We open up everything we can open to try to goad it to as many places as possible. It's high risk, but it's very high reward if we have something that we know will hurt it, right?"

Rev: RILEY: Yeah, Unless it eats one of us and then it gets stronger.

Tass: "Yeah. That's why we have to be sure we have something ready."

Kim: "Yeah. And also making sure that we have enough of whatever is a weakness to it."

Tass: "Yeah. Anyway, yes, that will all come when we figure out what we can. Because if we only have one avenue of harming it, then we need to figure out how to sever enough to get the bulk of what's doing it in one spot. So one or the other. Who's coming with me?"

Jake: I'll go. I got a sweet gun.

Megan: "Man, I really love the idea of, like, wrapping this EMP grenade in some meat and then letting it absorb it and then setting it off remotely while it's inside."

Kim: "Like a dog treat."

Megan: "Yeah. Like hiding it in a piece of cheese."

Tass: "I love that."

Kim: "That's also how Tass takes his pills."

Megan: [Laughs]

Tass: "Yeah."

Rev: RILEY: Well, you know, like, walls and stuff don't stop EMP. Like it's a magnetic pulse. So if you set that off in here, you're gonna get, like, the life support that's keeping us alive and things like that.

Megan: "I wonder what the range is on this thing. Because if we go to the other side where there is nobody, then there is nobody to need life support over there."

Jake: [Laughs]

Kim: [Laughs]

Jake: "I don't know. I mean, it's a grenade, right?"

Megan: "Yes."

Jake: "So it seems like it'd have like grenade range. So if all the systems are already like shut down over there? Which they seem to be."

Megan: "Yeah."

Jake: "Then yeah, that might be OK. Because it might not get as far as like a live system that would then be shut down and like, mess up everything it's connected to."

Rev: RILEY: Yeah. If you can figure out how far that thing goes. I mean, we got schematics of the ship to try to figure out where you could set it off, where it wouldn't hit like an engine, or ...

Kim: I just love all these discussions that were having about setting off an EMP inside of a space vessel. And we're just like, "Have we mentioned that we're new to space travel?"
[Laughs]

Jake: "Let's go blast some of those tendrils by the gravity balls. Like if nothing else, it will start to answer some questions for us about what can do what. It might make that thing aware, if it can kind of like feel through these tendrils. But it hasn't been able to get through that door so far. So we'll have a little bit of time left, even if that's the case, I think. So let's go answer some questions."

Tass: "Yeah, OK."

Kim: "All right."

Jake: Yeah. Can we get Riley and one of the folks in charge, who's got the other requisite card, here.

Rev: Yeah, everybody ... You talk about this idea out loud, and everybody turns and looks to Carrington.

Rev: CARRINGTON: We could let you in. I'm not exactly comfortable with leaving you with one of the leaders' badges. Especially if you were to get eaten by this creature, give it that information.

Jake: "That's fine. I would appreciate an escort."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Oh, we're not going out there with you. We'll open the door, let you in, and close it behind you.

Jake: "Yeah, OK. That's fine."

Megan: "Yeah. As long as you let us back in, if we need it."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Yes, of course. As long as you're not infected.

Tass: "Yeah, yeah."

Kim: "Infected. You keep saying this. Infected by that thing?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Yes.

Kim: "How can you tell?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: The same thing that they did when you came in the other airlock.

Kim: "What were you looking for?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Silver threads running down your throat.

Kim: "Gotcha."

Megan: "So has this creature been trying to trick you by killing people and then making them seem like they're up and walking around, and ... Do you have to look in its mouth? Does the threat exist on its own, separate from the creature?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Yes. Until it devours them from the inside.

Megan: "Then the threads eventually connect back? Or ..."

Rev: CARRINGTON: That's our understanding.

Megan: "Shit. I didn't think about this thing completely separating and still existing."

Rev: SROKA: I think it's like, uh ... Almost using them like a seed. They go into a room and get devoured, and then it creates a spot of origin for it to connect to that room now. It spreads out from that organic material. It feels odd to call my old crewmates organic material, but it then connects to other threads once it can find them.

Kim: "So if someone has been infected, what do you do? Do you just leave them back out there?"

Rev: RILEY: We haven't yet found anybody who's been infected before. They were already taken over one of the rooms.

Kim: "Gotcha. So checking the mouth thing is more of just a precaution."

Rev: RILEY: Yeah, the idea now is just put you back out. I don't think anybody wants to shoot anybody, but it's kind of like a ... I don't know if you're all familiar with zombie movies. But if it's in you, it's in you. And I guess it's your call. If you want to be put back out in the room or shot, you can let me know before you go through the door.

Kim: "Jesus ..."

Tass: "I mean, if we're connected to this thing, I assume we're not alive anyway."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, I don't know. I haven't been.

Megan: "What all weapons are we taking with us now? What are we trying? What are we narrowing it down to?"

Jake: "If it's organic, the gamma gun will mess it up."

Tass: "I have my cannon. It's energy. So I mean, I don't think it's gonna specialize in anything, but we know it at least severs the thread. So it can hurt it to a degree. I just don't know if it's the degree that'll put it down."

Kim: "Yeah, I have a plasma pistol." And mechanically it doesn't have any special tags that might differentiate it from just standard damage.

Megan: "OK. I have, like I said, this EMP grenade, but that will affect things that are inorganic. But it's kind of a one time use. So maybe hold on to that for now until we are able to pick a place that safe to use it and know that we need it. Otherwise, I just got this big wrench, so ... I guess we can see how melee weapons affect it."

Kim: "That's true. I could also try to slice it into smaller and smaller cubes with my garrote, but I don't know how effective that will be."

Jake: "OK. I feel like I'm the only one who needs to go into this room. Because like, we've seen Tass's ... Yes. You know we can hurt it. We know what your gun is going to do to it. So there's nothing to puzzle out there, right?"

Tass: "Yeah, right."

Jake: "And if Kim's gun doesn't do anything special and we can't use Megan's thing without killing all of us in that room, like we couldn't — we couldn't test the EMP grenade. So there's no point in doing that. But I also have a knife. So if we're testing melee damage and organic damage, I'm the only one who necessarily needs to go in there and risk exposure."

Rev: Yeah, And I will say, you all know mechanically that Inflict Harm, on a mixed success, you will take damage back. I mean, this thing is going to touch you. On a full success. You don't take harm back necessarily. You do take Stress, but it might be kind of a Act Under Fire to see whether it touches you back as you are striking out at it with a melee weapon.

Jake: OK. So we're maybe testing melee damage.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: OK. So then still mechanically, though, it doesn't seem like both Kim's gun and Tass's gun need to go in. Like, either one of those will answer the same question because they do the same general type of damage?

Rev: Yeah. What are your tags, Tass?

Tass: 4-harm, midrange, recharge.

Kim: Yeah. So I guess for the purposes of this, a plasma pistol and a blast cannon are doing kind of the same kind of damage?

Jake: Yeah.

Rev: Yours is just a much smaller version of his.

Kim: And that would make sense. I'm a much smaller version of Tass.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "OK. So then two of us could go in this room, learn everything we can safely learn right now, and then hopefully survive it and exit the room. The other two can stay safely on the other side, though, in case anything does go terribly wrong?"

Tass: "Or be there to shoot us if we get infected."

Jake: "Yeah, well, that's included in 'in case things go terribly wrong.'"

Rev: RILEY: Yeah, I know that the one with the blue hair said she wanted to cross that bridge when we got there. But do either of you have a preference? You get infected, you want to be left in or you want to be shot?

Jake: "I would like to be left in, because I love to believe somewhere in my heart of hearts that I could figure out a way out of this." [Chuckles]

Rev: RILEY: You know what? You keep that hope alive.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: He gives you a punch on the shoulder.

Tass: "Same. Because if you live long enough, you see yourself become the villain or something."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, that's not good.

Tass: "Yeah."

Megan: And I can't wait.

Kim: I can't wait to become the blob monster.

Rev: [Laughs] All right, so Tass and Jake going in?

Jake: Yep.

Tass: Looks like it.

Kim: Do we have, like, a video feed or something that we can watch here of the boys?

Jake: There's a porthole.

Kim: We can peek through the porthole and see.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Yeah. You'll be able to see our fucking bloody infected hands slam up against the glass and then slide down.

Kim: Great. I can't wait. It's very genre savvy.

Megan: I kneel down and grab Kim and lift her up so she can see through the window.

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I'm like, "All right. Pay attention. You're gonna have to describe everything that's happening, because I can't see either."

Kim: Hell yeah.

Rev: So Carrington and Riley walk the two of you down to this door, with Kim and Megan following. When they open this door, what is your approach into this room? Like are you sneaking in? Are you, like, tromping in and just starting blasting? What is your plan once you're through the door?

Jake: I would say trying to, like Kim did in the room with the monster, trying to spot like, uh, where can we step in here gingerly and not be in the threads and have like our corner here, from which we try to take our shots and from which we try to fall back if necessary?

Rev: I think that there's no roll for this. Just even glancing through the porthole into this room, it is the densest in this room that you have seen out of any of the rooms. And it originates, like, in multiple locations. There are thick veins of it in a lot of places. Like it seems like it wants to be able to get to this room very quickly if it has to.

Tass: "OK, Jake. So we don't have a lot of room in here. So should I understand that you need to shoot first, and then I shoot at it to see what that does after we see what your gamma does?"

Jake: "Yeah, that seems to be the case."

Tass: "OK."

Jake: "I mean, it's possible that you could shoot it, and then I could gamma it afterwards, and that would also do something new or additional. But we at least already know what happens to it if you shoot it first."

Tass: "Yeah."

Jake: "So we'd be kind of creating a whole new line of puzzling if I shoot first."

Tass: "All right." And I give him a solid nod. "I'm following your lead."

Jake: OK. So is it not possible to shoot from, like, when the door is open, to shoot in? We have to go in?

Rev: Yeah. You have the impression they're not willing to leave the doors open any longer than it would take for you to step through.

Jake: But there's nowhere in here we can go that we are safe from touching threads?

Rev: Why don't you Survey the Scene?

Jake: I'd love to.

Rev: I kind of gave you the thread-filled room for free, but let's scrutinize it a little more.

Jake: Thirteen.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 2.

Jake: I think I'm gonna start with, is there something important that I'm missing?

Rev: So as I said before, this is the most concentration of these threads that you have seen. It seems like this might be its nexus, its hub. And I think the thing that you might be missing is that if this is the location that it keeps a bulk of its mass because this room is important to it, but you don't see the mass in the room, it might be on the outside of the hull.

Jake: OK. What can help me?

Rev: From what you've seen of this so far, you know, it has a certain amount of mass that it can break up and move to various locations. And it seems like it has a lot of mass stored near here to protect this area. So if you could draw it away to other locations to kill it, you might be able to cause enough of a stir to make it think this room doesn't need protected, since no one has gone into it yet. If you go into this room, it might move all of its mass here to protect it from now on.

Jake: "All right. I am second guessing this idea. Because it does feel through its little tendrils. It feels through these threads, it knows what's going on. And it's got so many of them in here that we know it considers this very important. So if we go in here and kick up a fuss, it might, like, lock this shit down. Like it might all come in here. And this is a very fragile area that is keeping us ... If this goes out, I think something catastrophic probably happens. So we might be better off staying away from here and getting its attention in multiple other places, to then draw its mass out of this room? One of you

guys already had that idea, I think, but I don't remember who it was. I feel like one of you guys already pitched that notion."

Tass: "I mean, I did talk about splitting its attention. Yeah."

Jake: "Than that. Then you are correct. Mea culpa."

Rev: And maybe not even splitting its attention. Just if you're gonna run tests, you might not want to run tests in the place you ultimately want to make an assault. Because it's going to move there.

Tass: Sure, yeah.

Jake: "Also, I think this thing can get outside. And it's giving me real golem on the outside of the Eye of Horus vibes." I want to look at Riley and Carrington. "Have any tragedies befallen any of your crew members in the last three relative months? Or like, just before that?"

Rev: RILEY: In the last three months? Yeah. You listen to the story we've been telling you the last ...

Jake: "Sorry, sorry, sorry. Like, right before that, Like, right before this thing showed up and started doing its dark deeds."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, no.

Jake: "OK. Well, probably not a poltergeist controlling a golem, then."

Tass: "Seems like we should backtrack and find another little spot that's further out. Something that might have a little more concentration. And same thing, just not here."

Jake: "Yes. I still think this experiment is worthwhile. But yeah, somewhere other than the heart of things."

Megan: "Yeah. I also want to test what it's like to be able to hit it with something from further away. So maybe if we go to a room that isn't as concentrated but has a little more

of these threads. I don't love the idea of like separating its attention, especially when we don't know what can hurt it if we're limited in what we have. But getting its focus to a different location is probably gonna be our best bet, yeah."

Jake: "Well, how far do we want to go away? Do we want to go all the way to the opposite side of this station through a bunch of infected, blasted grounds? Or do we want to go through this door?" I'll point to the one that's like at the other end of this hallway from where we came from. "Which to my understanding, is infected on the other side?"

Rev: RILEY: That's correct.

Jake: "So that's not super far away, but it's not right here. Because obviously the further away we get, the more of this we just have to make our way safely past in the first place. And in the second place, after we shoot at it."

Kim: "Yeah, I don't feel great about getting like really deep into enemy territory, here."

Tass: "OK, so where is a spot that's big enough that if we need it, we can huck that EMP? Like, is that super far away from all the meat and potatoes of running this place?"

Rev: Megan, I think that having examined the blueprints, you know a lot of this, obviously, because it is a space station, is three dimensional. You know, they've got a couple of ladders that go up, a couple that go down. All of these spaces are pretty tight together. Your EMP covers about 75 feet. Really, the only place that you could stand that wouldn't hit the graviton, the whatever ...

Jake: I've called it the gravity balls.

Kim: The gravity balls.

Rev: The gravity balls.

Jake: Stick with it.

Rev: Would be right inside of the docking bay.

Megan: Where our ship lives?

Rev: Correct.

Megan: Cool. That sounds bad for our ship.

Rev: And also the force field that's keeping space out of the docking bay.

Megan: OK. So I'm looking over the blueprints. "There's literally not a safe place to set off this bomb in this entire place. Unless we create a safe place. Unless we somehow use the materials that we're able to get a hold of here to make a room essentially like a Faraday cage and contain the pulse as it goes off. Otherwise, our ship's gone, the force field is gone that's like keeping us alive in here, or the whole damn ship falls out of the sky."

Tass: "Either way, if we want to build something, we have to get all the way back through to the ship anyway, which is its own huge gamble. And we're gonna have to probably deal with this thing one way or another on the trip. So EMP, I think, is probably just out of the cards. At least on our test run here. If we can get some shots in, get its attention, get it moving away from the gravity balls and see what we can do, at least learn something about it. Then we'll have a plan of which way. Do we come back here and report and take action? Or do we keep going towards the ship, where you might be able to cook something up? Does that sound agreeable?"

Megan: "Yeah. I would rather narrow down our options of what we have available to us before we use something that's a one use shot, anyway."

Tass: So like, how big is our ship? Just the question I really have is how many people are here, and how many of them can jam into our ship if necessary?

Rev: [Laughs] That's a great question. I think that you could get everybody inside of it uncomfortably. Like it's, uh ... I mean, it is a four door sedan that has transformed. So comfortably, six.

Tass: Sure.

Megan: This is about to become an ad for the Mini Coopers.

Kim: Yeah, but you could fit people in like the trunk if you needed to.

Rev: Yeah. And that's like the Med Bay.

Tass: Yeah.

Kim: OK.

Rev: You could strap someone into the bed at the Med Bay.

Megan: Strapped to the roof? [Laughs]

Tass: We could clown car it.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: OK. OK, OK, OK. Just keeping that in mind.

Jake: Can I use one of my Scientists moves here?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: The, 'When you're stuck on a problem you can't solve, roll +Head?'

Rev: For sure.

Jake: Because ... Yeah, I mean, it feels like we are very, like ... We're like, we can't use this EMP grenade. So I just want to see if I can find any insight into, or can we?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Fucking boxcars!

Kim: Nice.

Jake: So on a 10+, the Speaker must answer one question to help you. That's the only ... That's all that happens on a 10+.

Rev: And just a question of your choosing?

Jake: "When you're stuck on a problem you can't solve, roll +Head. On a 10+, the speaker must answer one question to help you. On a mixed success, they give you a hint. On a miss, your problems get worse."

Rev: Yeah. Ask away.

Kim: Ask ... Think so carefully about what you ask him. These are genie rules.

Rev: And much like a djinn, be very careful how you word your question.

Kim: [Laughs]

Jake: I don't know. I don't know which — I don't know what question to ask.

Tass: Nobody help him!

All: [Laugh]

Kim: I asked people for help all the time when I had this move!

Rev: I want complete silence while Jake contemplates his question. [Laughs]

Jake: All right. What is the most safe and viable way to utilize this EMP grenade?

Rev: So if you want to use this EMP grenade in a way that it will not be entirely dangerous for the ship. You know, it is not an enormous space. There's a lot of overlapping areas. You know, Megan got the idea that really the only place that you could use it would be inside of the docking bay. That being said, this is a space station. Clearly, they have space suits. This is an advanced world where space travel is the norm,

and EMPs can occur naturally in space. So the emergency gear for a space faring society would probably either be able to survive an EMP, or at least boot back up fairly quickly after being exposed to one. So with one of these suits on, someone could use the EMP in the docking bay, get sucked out into space, let the EMP pulse move past them, and then kick the life support system on. And hopefully, do it all before being pulled into Hydarnes's atmosphere.

SFX:

OUTRO MUSIC

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