

Faraday (S5, E12)

Jake: 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, uh ... To ... I got nothing. There's nothing this week to tell you about. And I'm alone here, just myself and Harvey, so I can't even have good banter because Harvey's asleep. So ... Yeah. Hi. I hope you're doing well. Yeah, you. Enjoy the episode.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Kim: "So when you say come with us, you just mean like go to Hydarnes?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Oh god, no. I'll just go wherever you're going.

Megan: "I honestly don't know if that's an option. Not because we wouldn't want it, just ... Can we bring someone back through with us?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: What do you mean, back through?

Kim: "We're talking other dimensions."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Oh.

Megan: "Which is why we didn't —"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Why you didn't know about the Striders.

Megan: "Yeah."

Rev: CARRINGTON: I see, I see.

Megan: "Not a common name, where we're from."

Rev: CARRINGTON: That's fine.

Jake: "What about your post?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Oh, I don't work here.

Megan: "But you're in charge."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Well, that's just because they were in a bad situation and they saw fit to put me in charge.

Tass: I am looking around the room at everyone else with the thought of, what the hell is going on?

Rev: You have this thought and her eyebrow quirks up and she smiles a little bit and turns towards you, and she takes a step over to you and rests a hand on your cheek.

Rev: CARRINGTON: I'm only not concerned about the monster because it's not my ship. But I, under no circumstances, want to die here. No, I think Earth sounds quite the treat.

Rev: And for a brief moment, Tass, your mind kind of flares up into a panic, because you realize none of you ever said Earth.

Tass: Mmhmm.

Rev: But then the calming touch on your cheek washes all that away. And you know that with Carrington by your side, it's all gonna be fine.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Rev: Carrington removes her hand from the side of your face, Tass, and turns back to the group.

Rev: CARRINGTON: So what exactly is the plan now? You will have Riley along to help you. Is there anyone else from the crew you want to help you?

Kim: Who else — who else we got here? We got Riley ...

Megan: Sroka.

Kim: Sroka.

Rev: CARRINGTON: There's Sroka ... and then I'll be honest, I don't remember all of their names.

Kim: "Oh, that's fair. There's a lot of — yeah."

Jake: "What is — what's Sroka do?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: She was the second in command underneath Captain Bowlegs.

Jake: "May he rest in peace."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Yes. She's the computer expert, I believe? She was one who helped you with the radio transmission thing, right?

Megan: "Right. Sroka."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Yes. So she's good with radio waves, or ...

Kim: "Speaking of radio, would we have ... I have no — I can't even comprehend how long we've been here, nor how long time is passing down there. Would we have heard from Mari by now? Or never? Or ... I'm not sure."

Rev: CARRINGTON: That's a good question. We could go back and ask Sroka. Are you all wanting to get to your ship now, or do we want to go back to the deck and assess?

Jake: "Let's just ... Let's go to the ship. The whole point of this was to buy ourselves a window so we could move through an infected area. So ..."

Kim: "Yeah."

Jake: "That window is shrinking every moment we're staying here."

Megan: "Yeah, let's ... Yeah, let's move. At the very least, we have to get Jake back to the Med Bay."

Rev: CARRINGTON: All right. Good luck. Um, here.

Rev: And she gives you back Jake's patch, and then also one of the officer key cards.

Rev: CARRINGTON: Now don't let any of that stuff in.

Megan: "We won't. We'll be back."

Rev: CARRINGTON: All right.

Tass: I'll take point and lead us back around the far side of where we just caused a ruckus.

Rev: OK. And so Riley is with you now. Jake needs a little bit of help getting along. Who has what?

Tass: I think I have the gamma gun, if that's okay with you, Jake. If I'm gonna sort of take point and try to move us through here, we know that we need to sort of douse stuff with that first. So I feel like I should have that. Does that make sense? Does that sound OK.

Jake: I mean, we know that it's a beacon for this thing. So you're gonna draw any heat by being the one that carries it.

Tass: Mmhmm.

Jake: However, I may as well not have arms right now, so it's not like it's up to me to carry it. This is on you. So yeah, good luck.

Tass: OK. Then yeah, I think I just have the rifle slung across my back, and I have his gamma gun out.

Kim: OK. Who has Jake?

Megan: I think it's probably Riley. Does Riley have a weapon?

Rev: He does. He's got a blaster rifle.

Megan: OK. Then I think maybe Riley is taking most of Jake's weight, and then I'm kind of helping facilitate, but have my bowgun ready in case I need to focus on fighting instead.

Rev: OK.

Megan: Yeah.

Rev: And you still have the EMP tucked away?

Megan: Yeah, the grenade is definitely, like, in my fanny pack. [Laughs]

Rev: Tass, why don't you give me a Keep Your Head Down for the group to, as stealthily and as quickly as possible, get from here to your ship via the shortest route.

Tass: OK. That's a four.

Kim: Is there a way that any of us can help out with this? I'm not sure, because he's rolling for us as a group.

Rev: Yeah. How would you help?

Kim: I am the only one of us that is not carrying a heavy weapon or carrying Jake. I'm also someone who has made great use of trying to find my way safely through scary passageways.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: So I think I'm just sort of taking point with Tass.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Assist.

Kim: How's a thirteen, baby?

Tass: Oh!

Rev: That'll do it. So Tass, reroll your lowest die.

Tass: Can only go up or even from here. Six.

Kim: Fuck!

Jake: [Laughs]

Megan: Hey, that's up!

Kim: It is up!

Megan: Yeah. It's not high enough, but it's the right direction. You're getting the idea. Just one more time and it'll be better.

Rev: So you all start to make your way towards the docking bay. And as you make it down the ladder and come across that first security door that you used the knife to open, the one that stayed open, you see that these metallic threads are starting to weave through the floor of the hangar. They have not gotten far enough to be around your ship yet, but you do notice them climbing up very slowly and weaving into some of the other ships. So you are here, but this room is getting a little crowded. It's not fast, but it's in this room now. And it was not when you first arrived.

Kim: [Sighs]

Tass: "Oh, this isn't good. Are you seeing this?"

Kim: "Yep."

Megan: "OK. First thing's first. We have to find a spacesuit. We have to get Jake to the Med Bay. We have to start going through the Med Bay and taking apart x-rays to do whatever Riley wants to do. And I need to start working on a Faraday cage."

Tass: "Finding a spacesuit is grunt work. I'm on it." And I'll start looking around.

Jake: I'm gonna go patch myself up in the Med Bay.

Rev: All right. So are you going to take the time and heal up for good, or do you want to make a roll?

Jake: I think it would be too much time, since this thing's creeping in here. I don't think we've got the time.

Rev: Yeah, that's fair. As a reminder, because you're using the Med Bay, you're gonna roll Use First Aid. On a full success, you're going to heal 3, and on a mixed success, you're gonna heal 2.

Jake: OK.

Rev: The bonus for using the med bay is 2 if you're rolling it on someone else, 1 if you're rolling it on yourself.

Jake: Eleven.

Rev: All right. So you heal 3. And because it was a full success, you do stabilize as well.

Jake: Neat.

Rev: While Jake is healing himself and Tass is going out to find a space suit inside of the hangar, is there anything in particular that you are doing, Kim or Megan?

Tass: I gotta get ahead of this. I'm not looking in the hangar. I'm teleporting to it, like a museum.

Rev: Oh, yeah.

Tass: And I'm gonna steal a spacesuit.

Megan: The spacesuit.

Rev: I think I have a scene for that. I can just drop in here.

Tass: Perfect.

Kim: Let's just drop that in.

Megan: And any time it says Jake, it just cuts out, and Rev goes, "Tass."

Rev: [Robotically] Tass.

Tass: Yeah, that'd be perfect.

Megan: [Laughs]

Rev: And you can tell it's in a different quality microphone. Like, I recorded it from my phone.

Megan: I'm gonna get started on making the Faraday cage for the ship.

Rev: Megan, I don't think it's going to require a roll to make the Faraday cage. I think it's just gonna take time. Role 2d6.

Megan: Four.

Rev: And what is your Tech?

Megan: Is this a stressful situation?

Rev: Not yet.

Megan: +2.

Rev: OK, so -2. So it's gonna take 2 hours for you to do this.

Kim: Yeah. So I don't think I'm going to be very helpful when it comes to either making a gamma bomb or a Faraday cage. But I would like to take a look at this hangar and the silver threads that are infiltrating, and see if there's a way to maybe slow this process?

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

Kim: Eleven.

Rev: You get a hold 2.

Kim: OK. So what my friends are working on is going to take some time. These threads are starting to infiltrates slowly, but infiltrating nonetheless. I don't want it to touch our ship or anything that is near and dear to us. So what can help me, in the way of trying to maybe further slow this thing down?

Rev: Really, the way to get it to go slower is to give it other places to spread. Because you do know that it only has currently X amount of mass, and some of that has been destroyed. So if it had a new room to spread out into, you imagine that the time that it's spreading through this room would be doubled.

Kim: Hmm. OK, OK ...

Rev: Really, the only truly viable room that you could give up would be the one that you found Riley stationed in with the ladder.

Kim: Uh-huh.

Rev: Or the room that they said they didn't feel super comfortable with, up in the top right corner. The room that's right before the bridge.

Kim: If I give up the room that Riley was stationed in ...

Rev: Mmhmm.

Kim: Does that impede our movement to, like, get to the gravity balls or anything like that?

Rev: Eventually it might, but not right away.

Kim: OK.

Rev: It would take over that full room before it would work its way up that ladder and into the hallway.

Kim: And that's a pretty big room.

Rev: Yeah, it's a much larger room than the hangar. So it would — it might even slow it down by three or four times as much.

Kim: Well, that sounds like maybe a risk worth taking. I can't, like, go open up that room and still hold on to this hold, can I?

Rev: Yeah, I think that would be kind of a new location.

Kim: Yeah. So then I guess, like, we can always just go with old faithful. Is there something important that I'm missing?

Rev: I think that having gone through this station now and been in areas where the electricity is working, the lights, the life support, you've been inside of the rooms that are infected where electronics aren't working, but life support still seems to be working. So for some reason this is not spreading through the vents. And so I think that you in particular, with your abilities, could probably find a way to maybe shortcut some of this travel between the two uninfected areas, using the vents.

Kim: You know I love traveling through some vents. Yeah. While everyone else is working on some group projects, I'm just gonna take to the vents.

Rev: She just Among Us ... Among Us's.

Kim: Yes.

Tass: That's sus.

Rev: She climbs back through and it's just her torso with a bone sticking out the top.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: Yeah. So Kim is gonna duck into the vents and head back towards the safe area.

Tass, you have found one of the spacesuits. What are you doing, as Kim is taking off into the vents?

Megan: Sealing it behind her. [Laughs]

Tass: Welding it shut.

Rev: Wondering where Kim went.

Kim: [Laughs] So small, it's so easy to lose track of her.

Jake: I was watching the security cams. It's Kim. It's Kim. Kim's the imposter.

Megan: Tass is like, I'm asking our new leader, Carrington, what we should do now.

Rev: She was just pretending to clean out the air vent.

Tass: I think my time is split between keeping an eye on the growing encroaching threads and just bothering people because I don't know what to do.

Rev: Yeah. Kim, can I assume that you told somebody your plan or did you just vanish?

Kim: No, I would tell someone.

Megan: [Laughs]

Kim: Especially since, like, Tass is also trying to keep an eye on, like, the threads.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: Yeah.

Tass: Yeah. Like she yells it across the hanger, and I've already got my arm, like, up the back of the suit, and I'm making him talk for me. "Be safe. Do not pass Go."

Megan: [Laughs]

Tass: Yeah. I'm like lifting the visor to be the mouth.

Rev: It's got like a Pac-Man mouth.

Kim: I'm just like hanging from the vent, like I'm on the monkey bars.

Rev: So Kim, as you start to move through the vents, why don't you give me a Keep Your Head Down?

Kim: Sure.

Rev: It is not spreading through the air ducts, but obviously you are passing by vents where it is below or hanging on the ceiling closely below you.

Kim: So with my +1 from Survey the Scene, that is a ten.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to get back to the room where you found Riley and his partner, and the partner is there and Addy is now there as well. And they are very surprised when you come out of a vent, and they level the guns at you again, and then recognize you and lower them.

Kim: "Hey, hey, hey, it's me." And I'll like, open up my mouth.

Rev: ADDY: Oh, OK.

Rev: And Addy comes over and she takes out the flashlight and checks your mouth.

Rev: ADDY: All good.

Kim: "Thanks. So we need to slow the movement of this thing as much as possible, and that means that we need to give it a lot of room to grow. So go with me on this. If the two of you could go up that ladder and make that the new place that you are barricading, I think that if we let the threads come into this room, it's gonna really slow down all of its growth everywhere else on the station, like by like three or four fold."

Rev: ADDY: Oh man, where are we going to sleep?

Kim: "I mean, listen, we're talking about ... What my friends are working on in the hangar is going to get done in a couple of hours, and then hopefully very soon right after that, we're gonna kill this thing. So you'll be able to sleep wherever you want tonight, probably."

Rev: ADDY: Oh. Well, can we get everybody to come get their stuff at least?

Kim: "Yeah. Yeah, yeah, sure. But just like quick, OK?"

Rev: ADDY: Yeah. All right. Let me ... Let me go up and get everybody, and we'll get our belongings and take them upstairs and see if we can figure out a way to block off the ladder.

Rev: And they head up the ladder to go get the rest of the crew. Back inside of the docking bay. Jake, you have healed yourself up. What are you doing now?

Jake: With Riley's help, I am going through some of the equipment in the Med Bay, and I am going around and, like, finding scraps and breaking pieces off of some of the other ships in here. And I am just kind of rambling to Riley about this thought of, "If I can pull the reactor out of the gamma gun and then I can put it between a couple of parabolic dishes, I might be able to make the radiation bounce back and forth and amplify itself. And then we might be able to turn this into more of a gamma bomb than a gamma gun, and actually cause a significant blow to the creature before we have to fight it." And I'm trying to use Technobabble — no one knows what you're saying, but they know it's

smart. Once per crisis, you can throw together an item from any nearby scraps to help get yourself out of a sticky situation. It breaks afterwards.

Rev: All right. So you can take apart your gamma gun and create this. It is going to break after the fact. And I think as Riley is helping you, you know, tear pieces off of ships and just kind of get all of this set up. He's like ...

Rev: RILEY: Boy, I saw what your gamma gun did to you. Like, what's it gonna do to us? Like if we're in here with it when it goes off?

Jake: "If we're in here with it when it goes off, that's bad. But the idea is to toss this into the gravity balls room once it's in there, and like ..."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, I see.

Jake: "Deal it a major blow. Yeah, yeah, yeah."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, I see. So you're not gonna set this off here with all of us. Turn this into, like, a big microwave or something?

Jake: "God, I hope not."

Rev: RILEY: OK, that's great. I'm glad. I don't want to be cooked from the inside out. '

Rev: So yeah, Jake, you are able to piece this together. It kind of looks like a disco ball.

Jake: OK.

Rev: Kim, the rest of the crew comes down and they shuffle into the makeshift bunks and they grab their things and start heading up. And Carrington comes over.

Rev: CARRINGTON: Has it spread someplace new?

Kim: "Yes, it's gone into the hangar, which is where we're trying to, you know, set things off."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Right. That's where the ship is.

Kim: "Yes. Any way that we can slow its progress in the hangar would be beneficial to all of us."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Yes. Well, carry on, then.

Rev: And she turns to one of the other crew members and starts talking to them.

Rev: CARRINGTON: Do you think you could, I don't know, take anything with this door and make a hatch or something at the top of the ladder? Or are we just gonna have an open hole down to this thing and just hope that we time it out better?

Rev: And they're like ...

Rev: CREW MEMBER: Well, I guess we could try maybe making like a seal on like a submarine, maybe? Just something that kind of tightens closed. It won't be anything automatic, but we might be able to make something that's airtight.

Rev: CARRINGTON: Oh, yes. Why don't you try that?

Rev: CREW MEMBER: All right.

Rev: And they go over and they start messing with the door, taking pieces off of it in preparation to help you open it and leave it open.

Kim: Fantastic.

Rev: So I think unless there's anything else anyone wants to do, the two hours that Megan needs to create this Faraday cage pass. Kim is able to get back to all of you inside of the docking bay. The crew of the ship, with the exception of Riley, have moved up the ladder, and they have put together a somewhat stable seal at the top of the ladder. And the spread of this has slowed significantly.

Kim: Excellent.

Rev: What's the plan now?

Megan: Uh, well, I think we need to get everyone else in place. I try on the space suit, see how cool I look, first of all.

Rev: Rad.

Megan: Yes. I knew it. I knew it.

Rev: But like radiation-rad, unfortunately.

Megan: Oh.

Jake: A lot of rads.

Rev: Jake's gamma bomb has some leaks.

Megan: [Laughs] Oh, no. Oh, no.

Rev: He was supposed to use it right away, I think, in the move. And he's holding on to it for 2 hours. [Laughs]

Megan: Yeah. So I get suited up and I think I turn to everyone. "So I'm gonna set this off." And I'm holding up the EMP grenade. "Should hit everything except for the important systems that we don't want to get knocked out. But this forcefield will go, and I'll go with the ship and then I'll fly back, right? But what have we gotta do to get the forcefield to come back up? How am I gonna actually, like, land?"

Rev: RILEY: Well, usually with EMP, if it's something that's been knocked out, just a matter of time rebooting the systems. I imagine Sroka could probably do that from the bridge. She still has control over this room, assuming that ...

Rev: He indicates towards the creeping veins of metal.

Rev: RILEY: Assuming that hasn't gotten into the system yet. But the lights and everything are still working, so I assume it hasn't.

Megan: "OK. Well then let's make sure we have her set to do that as soon as possible. Where are we gonna meet up?"

Jake: "Are we still planning to get everybody out here and on the ship?"

Tass: "Those that want to go? Yeah, I think so. Though if we clear all of this shit out, you know, they will have leave to call the rest of the ... What are they? What are you? Striders?"

Rev: RILEY: Yeah.

Tass: "Yeah. So that's really kind of up to them."

Rev: RILEY: Oh hell. If you guys do this right, we won't have to call them. This little incident can stay on board. Well, except for all those deaths, I suppose we do have to ...

Jake: "Somebody's probably got to know about that."

Rev: RILEY: Yeah.

Kim: "Families might ..."

Megan: "Might appreciate that."

Jake: "Yeah, well, their families probably considered them dead for the last two and a half years or so."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, fuck. Right. Cause time.

Jake: "Yup."

Megan: "A lot of communication is gonna need to be caught up to speed."

Rev: RILEY: Oh, yeah.

Kim: "Speaking of, we've been up here for a day and a half, everybody."

Jake: "Woo. Yeah. I mean, I guess it depends how long we think it's gonna take for what's left of the creature to collect itself in the gravity balls room before we try to blast it all to kingdom come. Because if it's gonna take a moment, we might as well try and route people out towards the hangar in case of hasty escape. But if it's gonna snap back in there instantaneously, then the fight's gonna start before we could get anybody out anyway."

Tass: "Yeah. I guess, again, part of that just depends on how long it takes Sroka to reboot. Because we can't send them out to the hangar."

Jake: "That's true. I suppose we'll just kind of play that by ear. We'll have everybody on the bridge ready to evac if the signal's given. Otherwise, everybody will just need to bear down while we take this thing out."

Kim: "So where are we going to be, when Megan is setting this off?"

Jake: "On the bridge with everybody else, or else it's gonna fry our stuff, too."

Kim: "Yeah."

Jake: "And then we'll just have to move into that hallway and watch through the porthole and see when this thing comes home to roost."

Megan: "Flawless plan."

Jake: "We've had worse."

Kim: "Oh, yes, absolutely."

Tass: "We caught a guy in midair in a car. I think this is gonna go OK. I think this is gonna go OK."

Jake: "All right. Megan, good luck. This is a sick maneuver. Take lots of selfies as you go. Oh, wait, phone. No, the phone will be okay. It's in the ship."

Megan: "Is there — are there cameras? Can you like, record this? So I have proof later?"

Rev: RILEY: Well, it'll record, like, right until the moment that it shuts down.

Jake: "Right until the moment anything cool happens."

Megan: "Damn it."

Kim: "Yeah."

Tass: "Wait. Just take another 10 minutes. Make a tiny little Faraday cage around the camera."

Jake: [Laughs] For one camera!

Kim: Put it in a plastic baggie, like you're scuba diving.

All: [Laugh]

Megan: Yeah. I give everyone finger guns and I take my position.

Tass: Oh, god, no. You get just a giant hug.

Kim: Yeah.

Tass: "You got this."

Megan: "Nope. We're good. I'll see you ..."

Tass: "You got this."

Megan: "Of course I've got this."

Tass: "I know you do. This is just dope."

Megan: "Yep. OK, Get safe. Get safe. I will be back soon."

Kim: "No. No, that's what people say in movies when they're not going to be back soon."

Megan: "I'll be right back." [Laughs] More finger guns. And then I ...

Rev: Throw the grenade.

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I kick Kim backwards through the door, close it.

Kim: Ow.

Jake: I say, this is how it had to be.

Rev: All right, so who's gonna lead you all back to the safe parts of the ship? And what path are you taking now, knowing that another room is gone and it's kind of a submarine hatch at the top as opposed to a door that will open automatically when you approach?

Kim: I think it should be me, because I was the one who most recently was moving around down here and keeping track of the movement of the threads. But as far as I can tell, the way that we took to get to the hangar in the first place should still be accessible.

Rev: Yes, that is correct. And you do have both of the types of key cards to get through, so you will be able to access that doorway. So Kim, why don't you give me an Act Under Fire to lead everybody through here? We've been doing some of these as a Keep Your Head Down, but you're now moving to a place that really can't be infected unless something really gets messed up. So I think this move makes more sense.

Kim: Hmm. Cool. It's a four.

Jake: Can I assist?

Rev: How so?

Jake: I'm back at — well, not peak shape, but I'm in decent shape again. And so I am able to, like, help move ahead and keep an eye out for these things. We've passed through this room several times during which I've had no choice but to just kind of be faced towards the ground, sort of osmosis absorbing the situation in this room.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: So now I can put that to use.

Rev: All right. Roll Assist.

Kim: Please, please.

Jake: Eleven.

Kim: All right.

Rev: All right, Kim, roll your lowest die.

Kim: It's only up from here. OK. So an eight. Thank you.

Jake: You're welcome.

Rev: So you will be able to get back. What is your chief objective here? Is it to get everybody back safely? Is it to get everybody back without being noticed? What is your ... What is your best case scenario, here?

Kim: I feel like safety is the top priority.

Rev: Yeah. OK. So I think everybody's gonna take a point of Stress. Not a lot, but just a little. Because you've got Riley here and you don't really know him, and you're leaving Megan behind. It's kind of a stressful situation. So this trip will just really kind of grate on everybody a little bit.

Kim: Honestly, that makes complete sense. Like, I'm very stressed, leaving Megan behind.

Rev: OK. Yeah. So Jake and Tass and Kim, mark down one Stress. But you are all now safely back inside of the uninfected part of the space station.

Kim: Cool. Yeah. I want to find Sroka.

Rev: You all head to the bridge and Sroka is there, as is the rest of the crew with all of their belongings. [Laughs]

Jake: [Laughs]

Kim: "Hey. So Megan is about to set this off, which means that Sroka, you need to be ready as soon as possible to re-engage the force field. Once you're able to. That way, Megan can drive the ship back in here and, you know, not die in space."

Rev: SROKA: Oh, so reboot the ... Yes. OK, I got you. Restart the room after ..."

Kim: "Restart the thing ..."

Rev: SROKA: Yeah, yeah.

Kim: "Yeah."

Rev: SROKA: I wonder how long ... It'd be interesting to see how powerful it is. I wonder how long room will be down. It'll be a good test of how powerful her, uh, grenade is.

Jake: "Why are there so many duffel bags in here?"

Kim: "Oh, I had everybody move their stuff out. And I kind of surrendered their bedroom to the thread monster."

Jake: "Oh."

Rev: All right, So back in the hangar. Megan, describe to me exactly how it is you envision this working. You've got the Faraday cage built, you've got the grenade. You're

gonna throw this grenade from outside of the ship, obviously, because you don't want the ship ... You don't want to set it off inside the Faraday cage.

Megan: Yeah.

Rev: Are you then trying to run and get to the ship before the grenade goes off? Are you being sucked out into space in the spacesuit and trying to get to the ship? Is the spacesuit just worst case scenario? Like, what is your ideal version of how this goes? What does this look like?

Megan: OK. I want to grab some, like, ropes or like straps from like the cargo hold.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Megan: And I'm gonna tie them to myself, like around my waist. And then just to like the chair, like the control chair in our ship. So I'm gonna have the door open. I'll throw the grenade — that goes off. Then the shield will go down. I mean, the ship — were both sucked out into space. The EMP wave passes us. I turn on the spacesuit. Boom. I can breathe again. I pull the rope. Do, do, do, do, do, do. Back into the ship, to the control panel. Turn the ship on. Fly back.

Rev: Gotcha. So you and the ship are being sucked out into space, but tethered together. And then you're gonna pull yourself back into the ship. And you're leaving the ship's door open.

Megan: Yeah.

Rev: All right.

Megan: I'll just have to go under the netting that I did for the mesh — Faraday cage.

Rev: OK. You throw this grenade. It bounces along the ground, and there is a pulse of energy that ripples out. The room goes dark, the blue light of the shield cuts out, and then you are yanked backwards into space. You are able to reach down and start touching at the suit, trying to get its systems turned on. You've got a minute or so of air. And it takes a little longer than you're comfortable with, but it's not more than a minute

before the suit is ready to turn back on. You get the suit turned on, and the lights inside of the visor turn on, as well as the lights outside. You feel the respirators start to roll. And for a moment, it's a beautiful scene. You see the turquoise glow of this nebula. You see the planet below. And you are just weightless. What are you doing?

Megan: I'm immediately grabbing for the straps around my waist and pulling myself back towards the ship and getting underneath the netting of the Faraday cage that I had overlaid.

Rev: All right. I think this is an Act Under Fire to pull your way into the ship as its greater mass is moving faster than you are towards the gravitational pull of the planet.

Megan: Ten.

Jake: Woo!

Kim: Yes!

Rev: From inside the bridge, the three of you feel the shake of this whole station as the grenade goes off. Not because there's any impact from it, but all of the systems shutting down for a brief moment. And out of one of the large windows, you see your ship start to go by. And you see Megan, arm over arm, just pulling herself very quickly inside and the door shuts behind her. A few moments later, the lights kick on, the engines fire up, and it hovers almost directly in front of the bridge.

Tass: "Yeah!"

Kim: I know we said that our phones don't really work as phones. Can I have tried to have recorded this from outside the window?

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: Absolutely.

Kim: Hell, yeah.

Tass: "That's our cue. Let's go."

Rev: So the three of you and Riley, describe to me what you're doing.

Jake: Heading back towards the gravity balls room and watching through the porthole and seeing when this thing seems to amass within. Whatever's left of it.

Rev: By the time the four of you get out of the bridge, through the connecting room, down the hallway and to that door, it is almost impossible to see into the room because it is so full.

Kim: There we go.

Rev: You have a sense that this is what is remaining of this. It has moved here to protect the thing it knows it is here to defend.

Jake: "OK. This is gonna be fucking dangerous. But we've gotta open that door, get this thing in there, and close it again, or else we're all getting gamma-ed. So who wants to be in charge of the door, and who wants to be in charge of the bomb?" And I hold my finger to my nose.

Tass: "Either."

Kim: "Either."

Jake: I will hand the bomb to Tass, and I will kind of like hover —

Kim: I breathe a deep sigh of relief.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I will hover like near the control panel with Kim in the hopes that, like whichever of us is quicker on the button will be the one that gets the door closed again.

Rev: And Riley takes a step back, puts his back against the hallway that is directly across from the door, and is just aiming his rifle in.

Rev: RILEY: Open it up, I'll clear you a hole.

Tass: I'm looking at Jake. "That is an awfully full room. Are we sure this is what we're doing?"

Jake: "That thing is going to fucking liquidate that room. So, yes."

Tass: I give him the nod.

Jake: I'll hit the open button.

Rev: As you do, Riley opens fire. And some dense holes are punched into this metallic flesh, making a little bit of a tunnel. Tass, what are you doing?

Tass: I'm gonna huck this thing into the hole that he just made.

Rev: Give me an Act Under Fire.

Tass: OK.

Kim: Oh, god ...

Tass: And I got The Nod for violence in an unsure situation, so I have a +1.

Rev: All right.

Tass: Thirteen.

Kim: Yes!

Jake: Oh, thank God.

Rev: Tass, you are able to throw this gamma grenade into the room, take a step back, giving the nod to the two of them. The door closes. You all drop to the ground as a blinding green light flashes out of the window. It leaves residue and char where Riley had

been standing, when he was in a position to be even with the window. There is a scream that resonates throughout this station. It is this digitized scream that drags out and then fades into nothing. You pop up, you look inside of the window, and there are these metallic crystals all over the room. It is filled with them.

Tass: "How long do I gotta wait before I can go start crushing these things?"

Jake: "What, you mean for, like, the radiation to fade away?"

Tass: "Yeah."

Kim: "I think the half life of this is, uh, pretty significant."

Jake: "Oh fuck, dude. I don't know. I mean, you blasted me with it, and I'm okay. So get in there, champ. I'll patch you up."

Tass: I'm gonna pop the door.

Rev: All right. Riley follows you in.

Kim: Yeah, I'll follow him.

Jake: I don't have a gun, so I'll just — I'll take my knife and I'll throw it at one.

Rev: It takes maybe two and a half minutes. It's a long time for what it is you're doing, which is just laying waste to this room. But this thing right now is inert. It is inactive. And after a while, the floor of this room is covered in the dust of these broken crystals, and the life form is dead. Megan, outside, you sit in the pilot's seat of the ship and you see lights start to kick on inside of the docking bay. And then the blue field comes on. You're able to pull the ship back in, set it down, and meet back up with the rest of the team.

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: And that brings us to end of Crisis. So I have got some questions for all of you.

Megan: Hit us.

Jake: OK. So did anyone's connection with another spacer change? This can be a plus or a minus 1, if desired.

Tass: I don't feel like I have any grounds for that. I think everything went ... Well, it went. [Chuckles] As far as our things go, pretty smooth. And honest and accountable on all parts.

Rev: I mean, I think everybody gets a +1 with Carrington, for sure.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: Is there any ... And this is me oddly as someone listening to it, not someone running it. Is there any change from Megan being the one to do the kind of wild, daring plan, as opposed to the folks who normally do that kind of "put your life at risk" stuff? Like, I feel like that was a big ... Kind of a big new thing for Megan. Does that change any connection between any of you and Megan, or vice versa?

Tass: You know, that's fair. I mean, I feel like when it's something like that, I'm usually trying to volunteer for it just based on my like Mighty Mouse syndrome.

Rev: Mmhmm.

Tass: And she just whole-ass did it, and it was spectacular. Yeah, I think that's a good point.

Rev: So -1 now, because you feel less needed on the team?

All: [Laugh]

Megan: Do I become your new leader?

All: [Laugh]

Megan: Do I now fill Jake's role in your life?

Jake: I'm like, "Tass, go through that door." And he's like, "I don't think I listen to you anymore."

Megan: He's like, "I don't know." And I'm like, "Yeah, I think you should." "You know, now when you put it like that ..."

Tass: [Laughs] No. Yeah, I do. I think it goes up by one.

Megan: Yeah. I think my stat with Kim definitely would have gone up at this point, just even solely based on the amount of communication we've had to do in between like her and the communications thing, and us getting up to the spaceship and figuring out, all right, where do we need to go? Who's the best person to go where? I feel like her and I had a lot of strategy of working through those. Or like when I lifted her up to get into the plane. That didn't go great, roll wise, but it was a lot of, you know, women supporting women, helping out. So I feel like that would have gone up.

Rev: OK.

Kim: Also, we agreed to have a third roommate, so.

Megan: Great. So now I'm at a -1 with Kim.

Kim: [Snorts]

Rev: Perfect. What was the most tense moment of this Crisis?

Kim: Hearing that voice saying, "Help me," and all of us following it.

Megan: Absolutely.

Kim: Knowing that that was probably a bad idea. But also knowing, because we are who we are, we couldn't risk it ... Like, there was a chance that someone genuinely needed help.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: Yeah, I was gonna say another moment, but this one was like unplanned. So there was the level of fear, as well as the creepiness to it. So that's fair. I think popping off the plan at the end and everybody kind of moving when they're supposed to ... You know, Megan taken the ship out the dock and all of that was tense. But we, like, planned for it. So at least there was that.

Rev: You know what? I got a question coming up you can use that for.

Tass: Oh, boy. All right.

Megan: I think Kim's right, though, with hitting that point of being who we are. Like that idea of, "This is a trap. But cool, I guess I'm gonna walk into it," was very, very stressful.

Rev: I'm gonna say, sitting at the table watching everybody's reactions, the most tense moment for me was when the creature dropped onto Jake. Everyone's reaction at the table of like, "Oh, it's on him. What the fuck are we gonna do?"

Megan: Yeah, that ... I was thinking about that later, because it was like, how much of a lead up we had to like, if this thing touches you, it will take you over and essentially, like, possess you.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: And being like, it's on him. And then I definitely had like a panic moment of like I can't get near it without also suffering this fate. I guess I'm gonna have to shoot Jake.

Kim: I think another like stressful moment or at least tense was gradual, but all of us being mind controlled by Carrington.

Jake: God!

Kim: And knowing sort of like out of character being like, this is such a bad idea. But in character, having to be like, I have no reason to suspect that there's something going on. And the moment that I suspect that there's something going on, I'm going to be mind controlled by Carrington.

Jake: Yep. I was just facing Tass, as he was the last one. I was just mouthing, "Save Us."

All: [Laugh]

Rev: That was one of those, "I wonder if this is ever gonna come up." Because she gave such bad answers for such a long time before Jake finally went, what is wrong? Like, what's her deal? What was the best moment? Tass, say your thing now.

Tass: Yeah. Yeah, the plan worked.

Rev: Nice.

Tass: Megan went tumbling out into outer space. We did some blasty blasts. There was a bomb hooked into a room. It all went. It was cool.

Jake: I was very pleased with the hunch about the gamma gun being correct.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: Like the reveal that it's, like, this thing is honed in on that. Fuck yeah! All right, this is the thing that's gonna hurt it.

Rev: Yeah. And mechanically, you know, that was the ... Kind of the design of the creature, was that it had X amount of organic damage, X amount of inorganic damage for it to be destroyed. But you had to deal with the organic before you could get to the inorganic. So it was — that all worked out really well.

Kim: Gotcha.

Megan: Also, I'm gonna be honest, one of the best parts for me was finding out the revelation of where that voice was coming from, and just the like understanding of what the situation actually was. And how awful but clever it was, was really cool.

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: Not good for us, but I enjoyed it.

Rev: Yeah. What would anyone change, if anything?

Jake: I wish one of us would have gotten ... Would have figured out Carrington's shit.

Rev: Hmm.

Jake: But only because, like, as a character, I wish. Like, you know, I don't know that, obviously. But, like, as a player, this is hilarious. But as a character, like, there was such dread of, like, oh, come on, we're all gonna get snowed by this, aren't we? And there's fucking nothing we can do about it.

Kim: The mere act of trying to investigate Carrington set it off. So the moment you were like, something sus is going on. It's like, no, never mind. Everything is all good.

Rev: Yeah. And Tass figures it out by assessing, like, the situation instead of the person. And then actually, that's — I'm gonna go back, because I think that was the best moment too. Of Tass being like, "When she said that, I would 100% think, is she being honest? And I know as a player what that triggers."

Jake: [Laughs]

Tass: [Groans]

Tass: "I cannot stop that impulse of like, does she mean that? Oh, no!"

Tass: Oof.

Rev: And what is everyone looking forward to next? Just more space shenanigans?

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Yeah, I'm looking forward to fucking shutting all this down.

Megan: Yeah, I think we've gone through this first dimension and figured out what we were supposed to do in a completely new place, and we've gotten so many of the

pieces. I'm looking forward to figuring out how to wrap this leg up and having that knowledge that we can do this.

Kim: Yeah, I was like, you know, barring anything going drastically wrong ... Which, you know, there's always a chance for with us, it seems like we are close to being done here, which is cool. Congrats, guys.

Jake: Yeah. We got two down, one functionally down soon. Probably.

Kim: Yeah.

Jake: Unless something goes very sideways.

Tass: I just want a meal that isn't processed meat crackers.

Kim: [Laughs]

Jake: Man, they were good.

Megan: Jake's like, "Oh, I've already loaded up the IPT Cruiser with them. I'm bringing this home with me."

Rev: [Laughs] I got the recipe from the machine.

Jake: I can't wait to see what these turn into when we go back through.

Rev: They're Kind bars. That's weird.

Jake: [Laughs] The dark secret of Kind bars.

Megan: [Laughs]

Rev: All right. And everyone gets two points of experience and two gear points to spend. Does anybody level up?

Tass: I do.

Megan: I do.

Kim: Yay!

Rev: What are you gonna take?

Megan: I'm gonna take an improvement to one of my stats, and I'm gonna bump Head up to +2.

Rev: OK.

Tass: I'm gonna take another The Muscle move. And it's called The Old One, Two. You've been around the block once or twice, or maybe you just lifted it. Either way, whenever you do 3+ harm to something in one hit, you can follow up with a bonus attack. And I can do an additional 1-harm if they're within melee range.

Rev: Ooh.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: And is anybody getting anything with their gear points?

Tass: Yeah, I think I want to modify my blast cannon.

Rev: Hmm. Mmhmm.

Tass: I would love to add a tag.

Rev: What tag is that?

Tass: Versatile. So this gun is already mid range for its range increment. So versatile will make it so that I can also use it in close or far. So I now have three ranges.

Jake: It's a hell of a gun.

Rev: Yeah. I imagine that it's just adding two other handles, so that you hold it in different spots depending on if you're shooting it close, near, or far.

Tass: Yeah. Nothing changes. Just three handles.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: I'm out a gun now, so I need to get a new weapon. So I'm gonna ... I'm gonna get a cyber glove.

Rev: Jake, that's not a gun.

Jake: I know. I said —

Rev: That's a glove.

Jake: I said I'm out a gun, so I need a weapon.

Rev: Oh, OK. OK.

Jake: 0-harm, inorganic, stun, touch.

Rev: Oh, so you're moving the opposite direction. Before you were organic, now you're inorganic.

Jake: Yeah. And I think this is largely just a matter of availability. I think this is just like I had my Nintendo Power Glove with me when we came through.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: I forgot about it and I'm like, oh, yeah, this thing. What's this do now? Ooh, zap, zap.

Rev: Something on the ship that's malfunctioning — this is my weapon now.

Jake: Yeah.

Megan: I'm gonna take a mini sentry turret? [Laughs]

Rev: What are its tags?

Megan: Its tags are 1-harm, mounted, and remote. OK, here's what I'd like to do ...

Rev: Uh-huh.

Megan: Can I mount it to me?

Rev: Like, on your shoulder? Like, just a little ...? Yeah. Because it's a light weapon. It only does one damage. So I don't see why you couldn't, like, mount it onto your shoulder armor.

Kim: I'm just adding another harm to my plasma pistol. So it does two now.

Rev: All right. So before we jump back into the story, we've solved the problem here on the Striders' base. Is there anything else in particular anybody wants to do before you take off here? Because I think this will kind of determine where we cut back into what you're all doing, where you are when we when we jump back in.

Megan: I mean, before we kind of head into this last part, the only thing I had in mind was I want to make sure that I get that access patch back.

Rev: Oh, the one that you found inside the ship?

Megan: Yeah. Like, it may come in handy. But if not, it's just a cool patch, and I kind of want to add it to my jacket, so ...

Rev: OK. I don't think there's any problem with that. It was inside of one of the random ships. They would notice the leader's key card, but they wouldn't notice that patch going missing.

Megan: Cool.

Jake: I just want to give Riley like, a stern look that says, like, don't start doing any murders. I'm watching you. You know?

Rev: And it awakens something in him.

Jake: Oh, no!

All: [Laugh]

SFX: CRITSHOW STINGER

Rev: So we find the five of you in the ship, headed back towards the Welcome Center. The Strider base has been cleared. It is starting to move again, so the storm is moving. And you have got a passenger who is sitting happily in one of the back seats, just watching the view go by as you head down to the welcome center.

Jake: I'm so thrilled to have Carrington on board. I just can't — I can't overstate.

Rev: Yeah, she's super happy to be here.

Kim: A really comforting, calming presence, I would say.

Jake: [Laughs] An aura, of sorts.

Rev: So what's the plan?

Jake: Well, we have now freed up the opportunity to go destroy the last circle.

Tass: Yeah. Which seems dangerous to just fly straight down there, right? Because we would be dealing with the defenses of the facility?

Rev: Yeah. It's a very tight window that it has open for ships to come in and out. You could probably try to fly to it, but it would be a roll. Because it would be a very low to the surface flight, trying not to get above a certain level so you didn't get shot at.

Jake: Spoilers for Top Gun: Maverick.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: I've been playing this game online with Sean from Spout Lore, and it's just this big open world where you're trying to like, get rid of like a drug cartel. And we stole a helicopter. And he flew it around for a while and then we landed. He's like, "OK, you fly." And I was like, "OK." And I start to fly, and he's like, "Oh, we gotta get out of here. Go up." And so I went up very high. And then I got a notification that said, "Beware of flying too high, because you will be targeted with missiles." As missiles started to fire at us out of nowhere. That's what I'm envisioning for both of you.

Tass: Oh, good. Good, good, good. I mean, I could also just, like, take the spacesuit and walk out there. It's only like a half hour walk. And just scout it, see if there's a monster or something, see what's going on with that crater.

Kim: Everything on this planet is only a half hour walk away. [Laughs]

Jake: Ain't that just a geographical oddity?

All: [Laugh]

Jake: It seems needless to send one person by themselves, though. There were more space suits on the station, right?

Rev: Yes, they did have two additional ones inside of the bridge.

Jake: Um, would it be fair to say that we borrowed one of those before we departed? If we want to send, like, more than one person on this walk to the crater?

Rev: Oh, sure.

Kim: I'm sure Carrington would have smoothed all that over for us.

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: [Laughs] Carrington's like, "Oh, I took them both. I don't care about any of those people. I need to ensure our survival."

Rev: Yeah. She's wearing one.

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: In the ship.

Jake: She's going on the walk, then. Because something is still broken on our ship, right?

Rev: That's correct.

Kim: [Laughs] Oh, right.

Megan: let's, uh ... Let's maybe find out what that's about.

Jake: Yeah. This seems like a good opportunity to maybe park and have somebody fix the ship, depending on what it is, while some other people go do the walk to destroy the circle.

Tass: And another quick point of interest on our little collection of things to do here: it's been, what? A day and a half? Two days, down here?

Kim: It's been, I believe, a day and a half from like when we set everything off? Like that was — that was the sort of time jump of like building the gamma bomb and things like that. So then it's just however long it took us to do the plan and get off the ship.

Rev: Yeah. So it's probably been 38, 39 hours by the time you're landing at the Welcome Center.

Kim: So does that mean that Lane's about to show up?

Tass: That is my question. We're under the impression that Dion made a call. Has anything changed down here, as we're talking?

Rev: There's no roll for this. You know the person in charge of communication. You could ask them if any calls went out.

Tass: I like it. I like this. I like this very simple, obvious logic. I like it a lot.

Rev: Yeah.

Kim: It would also probably be good to check in with Mari to be like, "Hey, that weird message we sent you? It's all fine now." Yeah.

Tass: OK —

Rev: Oh, go ahead.

Tass: OK. So we're on the way down. We're calling Mari. We're gonna get the scoop on that as we get docked. If possible, look over the ship to see what's broken. If we can get to work on that? Great. While a couple of us take the walk out to the crater. And of course, that's all assuming that we get acceptable news to do any of this from Mari, which is step one.

Rev: Yes. So you contact Mari, and she tells you that no, you know, everything is routed through her. No messages went out. Whoever this Dion character was must have been making it up.

Tass: Oh, OK.

Kim: You're telling me that Dion lied to us?

Rev: I know.

Jake: Dion doesn't seem the type to fib like that.

Rev: Yeah. Some might say he lied out the back of his head, that was attached to his neck.

Tass: Oh, he lied right down into his body.

Rev: Right down his own neck hole. Which one of you is checking over the ship?

Megan: I will.

Rev: OK. Megan, roll Survey the Scene.

Megan: Thirteen.

Rev: All right. You get a hold 2.

Megan: What happened here? I know something went wrong, but I don't know what it was.

Rev: Yeah. As you start to go through the console, you find a number of pieces that are just blown out from the surge of energy coming through the portal, coming through the gravitational pull that you now know was there from the space station, as well as entering this planet's atmosphere. And you've traveled now twice since this part has blown out, but you've traveled to a fixed location. What's blown out is kind of the external sensors, which would be the thing that would help you find where the portal is to get back.

Kim: Oh.

Jake: That's important.

Kim: [Laughs]

Tass: I'm sure we can just wander around in space for a while.

Rev: Fly in these three dimensions for a bit.

Kim: Imagine if we forgot to fix it and we were trying to leave to go back through the portal, and just ...

Jake: Wait. Something is wrong.

Kim: I thought it was over here.

Rev: All this space looks the same.

Megan: Yeah. So I guess, what can help me? Or, how can I get out of here?

All: [Laugh]

Megan: This plane of existence?

Rev: Yeah. How can you get out of here? Fix the piece. What can help you? This piece is made up of, obviously, components that you aren't entirely familiar with, but the shapes and ...

Megan: Colors. [Laughs]

Jake: It's like that bucket of children's toys where you gotta put the right hole in —

Kim: I gotta put the square in the square.

Rev: But the components for it, you know that you have seen on a number of different pieces down in The Forge. So you could splice something together from elements in The Forge to recreate this missing piece of the navigation.

Megan: "Oof. OK. Yeah. It looks like if we want to get home, we're gonna have to find a lot of pieces to replace all of this." And I just kind of gesture to the ... [Laughs] Sparking console.

Jake: "OK. Where do we think all that stuff is? Is this a split up situation, even just to retrieve materials?"

Megan: "Potentially. I mean, I think everything I need's gonna be down in The Forge, which isn't too far away. So I can stay and work on this, and you guys can go take care of the circle. Or if someone wants to try and lend me a hand, if this becomes too much, I could use another set. But overall, I think we can get all the things that we need pretty easily."

Jake: "Yeah, I can stay and try and help you fix the ship."

Kim: "All right. It looks like I'm on Team Crater, then."

Rev: CARRINGTON: Yes, I think I will be staying as well.

Jake: "I wouldn't have it any other way, Carrington."

Rev: CARRINGTON: I would just miss both of you if I have to get in that suit again and go out into god knows what's out there.

Megan: "Yeah, I don't blame you."

Tass: "Oh, so we're chopped liver?"

Rev: CARRINGTON: Well, absence makes the heart grow fonder, so I will miss you more by the time you get back.

Jake: She's got a fucking answer for everything, doesn't she?

Kim: Silver tongued devil.

Rev: [Chuckles]

Tass: All right, I'm gonna start suiting up.

Rev: OK.

Kim: Yeah, same.

Rev: So Kim and Tass get suited up. Jake and Megan head down into The Forge, and Carrington lays down in one of the cots on the ship and takes a nap.

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Queen.

Rev: You're able to go down into The Forge. This place is very empty now. And you're able to scavenge among all of the various pieces that are on the wall and the ceiling and find the components that you need. Why don't you give me a Use or Repair an Advanced Item to make the component?

Megan: OK.

Jake: And don't forget, you got a +1 from Surveying the Scene.

Megan: I'm assuming that this is gonna be not a stressful situation since we kind of did that last ...

Rev: Yeah.

Megan: OK. Well then that would have been a -1. But the +1 from Survey the Scene puts me at a +Nothing.

Jake: Wait, no,. This is what I — this is why I stayed behind. I have two cymbals, and I'm just crashing them together behind her head.

Megan: [Laughs]

Jake: To stress her out the whole time.

Rev: Oh, I see. I was like, "How is this ..." But now I understand.

Jake: [Laughs]

Megan: Also, I think while I'm down gathering all of these little components, that's when I find this cute little mini sentry turret.

Rev: Oh, yeah.

Megan: And that's when I'm like, "You're coming with me."

Rev: Yeah. I think it's the same sentry turret you saw mounted on the shoulder of one of those creatures in the opening video. When you all first entered the Welcome Center.

Megan: Oh, nice. I am just imagining those little, like ... Those little robot dogs that you used to get, that you could hook up your iPod to? And they would like play your songs and like little lights would light up.

Rev: Except now you plug it into your iPhone, and it shoots 60 bullets.

Megan: Yeah. [Laughs]

Jake: Shoots 60 bullets to the tune of a Dashboard Confessional song.

Megan: Thirteen.

Jake: Nice.

Rev: Yeah. You are able to make this without a problem.

Jake: I'm just practicing karate with my power glove in the background the whole time.
[Laughs]

Rev: You've set up some of the melted and destroyed workers, and you've made one, like, into a makeshift sparring partner.

Jake: Just like a Bob? Just like a dummy?

Rev: Yeah.

Jake: I'm just, like, doing dive rolls and Vulcan neck pinching this thing. Ha ha!

Kim: The one alive robot in The Forge is looking so nervous.

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Just a drop of oil, like sweat, running down its forehead.

All: [Laugh]

Rev: Kim and Tass, you have had to essentially walk out of the hangar to then make your way around. As you head this direction, it is about a half hour walk. And when you arrive, you do see what you had anticipated: that there is a crater that has been stuck in this storm. The bottom of the crater is that same kind of featureless black metal that you saw before underground, Tass. And at the center of it is another one of these small circles. Again, the same size as the one that you found at the end of that tunnel.

Tass: "Yeah, all right." I'm gonna slide down to it.

Kim: Yeah.

Rev: Yeah. You head down into the crater. It's very warm in the crater, like even through this suit.

Tass: "Oh, god. You feel that?"

Kim: "Yeah. This is why I moved from Arizona."

Tass: I'm like, scanning around. Like, I don't know. I don't know what to expect, I'm waiting for Lava Monster to pop out. I don't know.

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

Kim: [Laughs] Oh, no!

Tass: Love it. Five.

Kim: May I help him?

Rev: Yeah. How so?

Kim: I was out here on the surface of the planet once before, and so I think I would be hyper aware as to any dangers that might be out here.

Rev: Yeah. Roll Assist.

Kim: That's only a nine.

Tass: Brings me up to a six. I'm proud of it.

Rev: Yeah. The heat is all being generated from this circle. You can't see what the source of it is. You know that there must be other circles in other places, because you don't see whatever it's stealing from here. At least you currently don't see that. But you know that, boy, this thing is impossibly hot to the touch right now.

Tass: "Shit. I don't know if we want to try to mess this thing up. Like it's very, very hot. I don't know that this kind of metal is going to mess up much with just laser blasts, but ..."

Kim: "I mean, we have to mess it up, don't we?"

Tass: "Yeah." Do I think ... Like, I've got this sputtering thermal knife. Like, do I think I could possibly, like, maybe even sacrifice it to do damage to this plate? Like knowing that the plate's really hot and it's all, like, dangerous down there. If I, like, get down and huck it in so that the blade is just sputtering and messing up the circle, and knowing that I'll probably lose it because it'll be too hot to either retrieve or even melt the thing. Could I sacrifice my little buddy?

Rev: I think so. If you want to try to do this, this is gonna be an Act Under Fire to get the knife into the right spot. Because, you know, you need to mar this circle in some way. And technically, you would be marring it if you could get this lump of metal that is the base of the blade over one of the lines and then have it melt. It would break the line.

Tass: OK.

Kim: "Remind me. When you mar one of the runes on this magic circle, is whatever creature ... Whatever creature was powering it, does that get released?"

Tass: "Mmhmm."

Kim: "OK. Fun. Really fun."

Tass: "So what turned out to be a little scouting mission might be us just trying to break this and running like hell. Is that okay with you?"

Kim: "A half hour run in a very heavy atmosphere?"

Tass: "We can say no. That is a — it is a perfectly acceptable no."

Kim: "Tass, we can't say no. We have to do this."

Tass: I'm gonna turn and huck this knife.

Rev: Roll Act Under Fire.

Kim: I'm tightening the laces on my space boots.

Jake: [Laughs]

Rev: Oh no, Kim put on moon boots. She's just bouncing the whole way.

Kim: [Laughs]

Tass: [Laughs]

Megan: You could run so much faster if you just wore your normal shoes. Why did you insist on wearing these?

Kim: It matched the outfit.

Tass: I got a twelve.

Kim: Yes!

Megan: Nice.

Jake: Thank God.

Rev: Yes. You are able to throw this thermal knife onto one of the runes. The heat from the metal of these runes instantly melts the base of the thermal knife and creates just slag over it, breaking the lines. Again, there is this little pulse of energy that ripples out from this circle. At the same time, Jake and Megan are coming up out of the elevator from The Forge, and the two of you, and Tass and Kim outside, all see the same thing: as this energy ripples, there is a pulse from the top of the tower on the Welcome Center. And high above you, that turquoise nebula, you see part of it sputter out. And for Jake and Megan, the light inside of this room dies down a little bit as the light from the nebula starts to fade. And underneath the now faded turquoise light in that small section of the nebula directly above you, is the faint glint of a dark metal structure built just above the surface of this dying star.

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.