

# Crumbling Ships (S5, E33)

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

**SFX:** INTRO MUSIC

**Rev:** On the way to the studio today, I was behind a horse trailer. Like someone was taking their horse to a show or to a different farm or whatever.

**Jake:** Cool.

**Rev:** And whenever I have seen those before, they have like either the double doors that open and it's kind of like a gate, or it's like a half gate. This one was a gate, and then a single bungee cord across the other side.

**Megan:** [Laughs]

**Rev:** And the horse's butt was on that side. So this horse was just shitting onto the highway.

**Megan:** Oh, my god.

**Tass:** Amazing.

**Megan:** No!

**Rev:** Actively.

**Kim:** I mean, if you could, wouldn't you?

**Jake:** Dave Matthews Band got in a lot of trouble for something very similar to this, so ...

**Kim:** [Laughs]

**Megan:** Oh, yeah. [Laughs]

**Jake:** This is a crime, I'm pretty confident.

**Rev:** Yeah. But like even aside from just the horse crapping all over 465 at 55 miles an hour, the thought of a single bungee cord being what's keeping that horse from backing off of the horse trailer.

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Rev:** It seems ... Seems dangerous.

**Kim:** We place a lot of faith in bungee cords all the time for far more serious things.

**Rev:** Oh, but just like a — like a moving bungee cord. Like the two hooks on the end.

**Jake:** I think this guy was trying to do some sort of horse insurance fraud. I think he was like ... You know, like it's like where you almost sever the cord but not quite, and then you can claim it was an accident?

**Rev:** Maybe it was like this guy's wish. He is a horse for a day. He's like, what do you want to do? He's like, want to shit all over people's cars.

**Megan:** You got it. You got it, pal.

**Rev:** You got it, bud. Let's go. Don't back up.

**Jake:** Legally, we have to put some kind of barrier there. But I'll just do a bungee cord, and I think we'll be fine. Go for it. Go nuts.

**Megan:** Yeah. And in relation to the Dave Matthews incident, as it's well known ...

**Rev:** [Laughs]

**Megan:** Technically, the horse can't get in trouble for this. The horse is the only one doing anything illegal, but it's not illegal for him because of horse laws.

**Rev:** Yeah, that's fair.

**Jake:** How do you try a horse?

**Kim:** Is he like an ambassador? He has diplomatic immunity?

**Megan:** Diplomatic immunity! [Laughs]

**Rev:** I claim horse immunity. But I think that just saves you from getting bit by horses and turning into one.

**Megan:** And turning into one, yeah.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Megan:** I've been slowly building up my tolerance to horse venom.

**Rev:** Uh ... Well man, it's time to let the recap roll.

**All:** [Laugh]

**Megan:** Well, now I have a new life goal.

**Rev:** Yeah, I'm going to build up my horse venom immunity.

**Megan:** So I can shit on the highway.

**SFX:** RECAP MUSIC

**Megan:** I am going to invoke my knowledge of Estin not wanting to work alone. He likes to utilize other creatures to help do his bidding. So I'm gonna turn that against him. And I think as the ghoul that Kim stunned falls, one of its claws, like, digs into the kraken. And in fury, it lashes out and hits Estin.

**Tass:** His hand lashes up to the alcove and he weakly pulls himself in. Landara, he's next to you, just breathing heavily, spitting up blood, barely able to move.

**Rev:** I don't think there is a moment of, like, introspection or pondering. Like I think it is just, here he is. Instantaneous shoot him in the face.

**Tass:** The moment you do, you're in this space again with this massive skull with tentacles made of human skeletons. Even though it doesn't move, you get this feeling of it nodding.

**Tass:** DEATH: Good work. Your next name is Tass Allgood.

**Rev:** Tass. You open your eyes, and you're looking up at a blue sky with thin clouds running through it. And as you tilt your head around, you find yourself in a very familiar setting. You're laying in the lawn outside of your childhood home.

**Tass:** "Oh god, not this shit again."

**SFX:** RECAP MUSIC FADES

**Tass:** Landara, when you wake up from this vision of Death, you look below and see your team still atop this well kraken. But it has mostly stopped moving. It seems to have wilted. And you three below, the moment that Landara shot the top of Estin's head off, that was the moment that the beast sighed and stopped moving.

**Megan:** I want to lay down on it and just kind of give it a hug and kind of like stretch out onto it and say, "I don't know if you understand me, but it's gonna be okay, and you're free now. So just rest, and everything will be all right."

**Kim:** "Also, sorry for bouncing atop you for a whole battle."

**Megan:** "It was so fun."

**Jake:** I drop 75 Alka-Seltzer into the water. I'm like, "You're gonna need these."

**Kim:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** [Laughs]

**Megan:** It's like the scene in Jurassic Park, when he lays on the Triceratops?

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Megan:** It's like that. But I'm just sprawled out on top of this kraken.

**Tass:** Megan, as you lay here, you can feel that this thing is trying to, like, communicate. Like it's shifting around. One of the tentacles is like gently laying over you. Not trying to wrap around you, but, like, it's trying to make a connection. So give me a Size Up to gauge this, since you are like this close with it.

**Megan:** Eight.

**Tass:** Okay, you get a hold 1. Or you can gain an extra if you want to stick your nose where you shouldn't.

**Megan:** How can I safely release this kraken from whatever this dark corruption cloud is that's overtaking it?

**Tass:** I think the vibe that you're getting is that this thing is still hungry and still angry. There is just this malevolence that encompasses it. And even as a tentacle just lightly touches your back, there's this feeling that you know it wants to wrap you up and eat you and consume you and do violence. And it's fighting against that urge. This connection that you've made, like the vibe that it's trying to communicate to you is, get everyone out. This thing needs to not have food. It needs to not be able to feed this darkness inside of itself. And the only way to do that is if there are no people close to give it that energy of fear and horror and connection that it's made.

**Megan:** "Uh, everyone, we ... We gotta get out of here. Right now."

**Rev:** I'll throw the rope down.

**Jake:** I'm gonna scoop up all the broken pieces of that treasure that got crunched before we go.

**Tass:** Okay. And I think since you're near the edge, Jake, now that there's not imminent danger, you're able to see in the water that this thing is, of course, taking up most of this well. It's got a little room to wiggle. But, you know, very big well, very big beast. But it is that sort of translucent. And now that it has wilted and flattened into the water a bit? Underneath it, you can see the bottom of the well pretty clearly, and some of the connections into the ducts that the tentacles are moving through. But you also see a familiar pattern directly under the beast, that is the magic circle.

**Jake:** "Uh, I don't know if we can go yet. The circle's way down there at the bottom of the well. We need to mess it up, right?"

**Megan:** "Oh, yes. Okay. Uh, I think we have to do that. But also, whatever the corruption that is taking this thing over? It's making it want to eat. It needs to be able to starve it out, which means it needs nobody here. It needs to not have access to anybody."

**Landara:** "Nobody here — like us in the well, or in the city?"

**Megan:** Well that's a good question, Tass. Did I get the vibe when it said get everyone out? Did it seem like it was like, get out of the vicinity of where I am? Or get everyone out of this town?

**Tass:** I think the initial vibe was it's urging you to leave before it eats you. But thinking on that, like you can see how far it can reach. So if it can reach something to feed, it will.

**Megan:** "I think both? I think it just needs to eat, and it's gonna grab us if we're here. And if it can't find us, it's gonna find someone else. So we just need to get its access to food cut off."

**Landara:** "All right."

**Rev:** And I'm going to pull out my flask and pour out half of the contents on Estin's body, and then hold my pistol down there and fire it without anything in, so that that makes a

spark and sets him ablaze. Because I don't know if he can come back, but I don't want him to.

**Tass:** Absolutely. I think also now that there's no pressure, and you're doing this and getting close, you know, most of the top of his head is just gone, as is his jaw. And that low, near his face, you see that familiar pattern again mirrored on the roof of his mouth.

**Kim:** Oh ...

**Landara:** "He like tattooed himself or something at the roof of his mouth to link into this or to become a part of it. I don't know if he was hijacking it, or what."

**Kim:** "So did we already mar the circle by killing Estin? Or should we ... We should probably just fuck up the circle just to be super careful, right?"

**Jake:** "Yeah. I mean, I guess we don't know yet. Like which one's the one and which one's a relay."

**Kim:** "Mmhmm."

**Jake:** "So probably ought to hit both for safety, until we find the next one. And then we'll kind of know what we're dealing with."

**Kim:** "Yeah. No, that's smart."

**Jake:** How far is it to the bottom of the well?

**Tass:** It's swimmable.

**Jake:** Are my clubs down there?

**Tass:** Yeah, they sure are.

**Jake:** Okay. I'll do it. I've got to go collect more of my things, anyway. I will dive in and try and, like, hands on the kraken, like working my way down its side so that I can feel if it, like, is gonna, like, lash out or anything. Like I can feel its body before it does anything to

any of us. But try and get down there and get a club, and I guess like slam it on the ground to try and break something up.

**Tass:** Yeah. You also, I think, are getting these vibes, now that Megan has mentioned what it has intended. And you're really understanding how exhausted this thing is from whatever control Estin had over it. So you get a pretty good idea you've got some time, here. So you're able to do this — mar the runes and get back up.

**Jake:** "Okay. So if we need to evacuate the whole town, I mean, hopefully everybody's mind fog is clear now. I guess we should get up there and see if they're gonna be receptive to just getting out of Dodge."

**Landara:** "Yeah."

**Megan:** "Yeah. We saw tentacles coming out of the buildings on all the different tiers. This thing has a very long reach. So I don't know where it's gonna be safe, but hopefully they have somewhere nearby they can go."

**Jake:** "One way to find out."

**Kim:** I'll climb up.

**Tass:** All right. You all make your way up. And as you get out of the well, you realize how completely different the vibe is up here now. People are milling around in confusion, in clumps. You see a few people sitting on curbs, like holding each other and crying. You see some people just grabbing things and sprinting away. Like there's clarity in people's eyes. Jake, you would notice that in particular, having studied that odd cadence that they had all had, especially down at the docks, that that seems to have been broken.

**Jake:** All right. Which of us do we think should make the town address here, to convince all of these people that they need to leave immediately?

**Megan:** I don't know. Which stat is this gonna be with?

**All:** [Laugh]



**Jake:** This seems like textbook Polish. I mean, what? What came over me?

**Kim:** [Laughs]

**Rev:** I think that like as we're looking at the group, I just want to turn to whoever.

**Landara:** "Who runs this place?"

**Tass:** There's a young man that has just an armful of, like, cabbages, and he stops as you speak to him and looks around.

**Tass:** CABBAGE MAN: Well, I don't know now. Seems like it used to be that ... That jawless guy.

**Landara:** "Yeah. He's dead."

**Tass:** CABBAGE MAN: Oh.

**Landara:** "Who was in charge before? Was it like a mayor or lord?"

**Tass:** CABBAGE MAN: Yeah. I mean, we had a mayor quite a long time ago, but most folks left when the ... The creatures started coming in. And there's a few of us that stuck around. Just, you know, this is our home. And we fought off some of the beasties and seemed to secure it a bit. But, I mean, there's really nobody in charge besides some of the militiamen, but most of them are long dead.

**Landara:** "It's like a council?"

**Jake:** [Laughs]

**Landara:** "Sounds like a democratic thing."

**Kim:** "Explain your system of government."

**Jake:** "I think it's anarchy."

**Landara:** "Yeah."

**Jake:** "I mean, I think I literally just saw somebody looting. So it's going wild here."

**Tass:** Yeah. I mean, he's shaking his head, like ...

**Tass:** CABBAGE MAN: Really. Like we were holding strong for a while, and then ... And then it was like some malaise came over our minds. And I don't know about the rest of them, but it would hurt if we said anything that wasn't what it wanted us to say. We knew it was that jawless fella. He'd almost taunt us with it. Some folks held strong and they'd go against whatever his wishes were, but they'd get sicker and sicker, coughing up blood, and eventually die.

**Megan:** "Are there any children in this town?"

**Tass:** CABBAGE MAN: Not that I'm aware of. Most folks that had children, they went northeast a long time ago.

**Jake:** "What's northeast?"

**Tass:** CABBAGE MAN: The continent.

**Jake:** "Cool. Um ... You need to go there."

**Tass:** CABBAGE MAN: Oh, I'm on my fucking way.

**Jake:** "Good. Everyone. Start spreading the word. Everybody needs to get out of this town as quickly as possible. If that thing has anybody left to feed on, it's gonna ensnare you again. It's gonna start killing people. So we need this to spread like wildfire."

**Tass:** He nods and takes off. But a couple of other people are hearing you talk. This big guy is rubbing his forehead. Actually, you recognize him as the barkeep from the first level.

**Kim:** "Oh!"

**Jake:** "Hey. What's up, man?"

**Kim:** "Hey, dude."

**Tass:** He gives you a nod.

**Rev:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: You're that little fellow that disappeared up into my duct.

**Jake:** [Laughs] "Don't think you need to be airing our private business in the middle of the street."

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: What's this all about leaving our city?

**Jake:** "The jawless man was controlling the creature in the well. Are you guys aware of the creature in the well?"

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Aye. It seems like it's been quite corrupted. If we kill that, we can take our home back.

**Jake:** "No. No, no, no. You can't kill it. It is corrupted. But it is, at its core, a benevolent force. And once this corruption clears, it will be again. It is the reason that this city has been able to thrive. If you kill it, this place is dead anyway. We just need to give it its space. We need to start working on things overhead, so that it can be purified again. And then it can start working in your favor and the town can thrive again. But until then, it can't control itself. We need to get everybody to a safe distance."

**Tass:** Roll a Parley for me. And I don't believe we've done this one, so ... When you parley with an interested party, tell them what you want, give them incentive, and roll Polish. Think it's clear you have incentive here. You're looking for their longevity and ability to survive, whether they think that's real or not. On a hit, they're compelled to take the bargain. On a 10+, your words carry real weight, gain a bond with each other if you are generous and forthright. On a 7 to 9, they want you to do something for them first. Do it, or they can ignore the compel.

**Jake:** Okay. I'm going to spend the one luck that I have, because Polish is my bad stat.

**Tass:** Okay.

**Jake:** Seven.

**Tass:** He nods along with your words, and scratches at his big admiral mustache.

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Well, seems like wise words, what coming from a monkey and all.

**Jake:** "I don't know what you're talking about. I'm just a little boy."

**Tass:** [Laughs]

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Look, most of us wouldn't survive just heading north into the wilderness. We need our ships. We need to go up river. But most of them were in shambles. We need a week or two to fix them up so that we can get everyone out of here. So if you're sincere, I'm gonna need you to stay here with us. Watch our backs while we fix this. Keep those tentacles from getting to us as we fix the ships.

**Jake:** Man, I think I look around at the rest of the team with a bit of a scowl.

**Landara:** So with my first contract with Death fulfilled, it grants me a boon. Either dark knowledge, a dubious gift, or I can clear all my black marks.

**Tass:** Okay.

**Rev:** Would it count as dark knowledge to be able to figure out how long this monster has to starve itself before it would be clear of the corruption?

**Tass:** Yeah. If you want that specific knowledge, I'd count it.

**Rev:** I'm kind of loathe to use it this early, but we went through a lot of effort to save this thing. And if the people could come back here eventually? Yeah.

**Tass:** All right. You're granted that knowledge. It needs — and when I say it, I mean this corruption — needs to be starved for at least a year. It needs to have nothing close that is sentient enough to feed that sort of fear response.

**Landara:** "I think if they need help getting ships together and stuff to get out of here, we could also use that time to set up some precautions to make sure no one else comes here. It's gonna have to starve itself for a year before it's free of this. So we gotta make sure that for a year, when they leave, if we put up some signs, plague or whatever, to make sure people don't come here. Because anybody that comes in during that year, they're gonna reset it."

**Kim:** Excellent. I start writing Don't Dead, Open Inside on every wall I can find.

**Tass:** Yeah, solid.

**Jake:** [Laughs] Not even like double doors.

**Kim:** Nope.

**Jake:** Just any solid surface.

**Tass:** Admiral mustache guy, uh ...

**Kim:** Admiral mustache!

**All:** [Laugh]

**Kim:** He's really had, like, a promotion in the last two seconds.

**Rev:** I used to be a bartender. I realized there's no one in charge. Now I'm an admiral. I'm going to lead this flee you're going to build me.

**Tass:** [Laughs] The barkeep keeps scratching his chin and listens to this.

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: A year. You're telling me we might be able to come back if this thing gets cleansed, and it'll be sort of back to normal?

**Landara:** "As long as it hasn't had anything to eat for a full year."

**Megan:** "And that's what it wants. It let us know to get everyone out of here so it couldn't feed, so we can be back to its actual self. It wants to help you."

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Even it's fighting. That's noble. All right. We might even be able to patch a little bit of your ship.

**Jake:** "Okay. I guess we don't have any other choice. We can't kill this thing. We can't leave these people. Just two more weeks."

**Landara:** "What if we closed off all the points from the well into the aqueduct, so it couldn't reach you? Then you could be on the first level and it wouldn't be able to get down there."

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Oh, it's possible. I'd want to make sure it's nice and tightened up myself.

**Landara:** "May not save us all the time, but it could save us some."

**Tass:** ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Yeah, we could patch a bit of your boat. It'd only take a week. You wouldn't have to stay the full couple or two or three, if you really feel like it's not gonna get through.

**Jake:** I think we should spend the week trying to barricade this well. Because if it works, then we can get out a little bit early. And if it doesn't, then we have probably lost a little bit of time, but at least we tried. And then we can still stick around and help in the way that he suggested to begin with. Tass, I don't do magic in this world, but do I still like ... Do I understand magic? Like looking at the circle, it's the circle from our world and stuff, right?

**Tass:** Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you didn't lose the knowledge you have.

**Jake:** I'm wondering if we should, rather than like brick and mortaring off all of the openings, try to magically ward the well. Because, like, we've got a magic circle at the

bottom. And that would be — based on the terms of the spell, whatever we come up with — like definite, nobody's gonna get in and this thing's not gonna get out.

**Landara:** I mean then would the people even have to leave?

**Jake:** Probably not?

**Landara:** Although they wouldn't have anything to drink.

**Jake:** Yeah.

**Kim:** Yeah ...

**Jake:** It'd be a handy safety feature, but then we wouldn't have to be so worried about like, oof, if any person walks into town ... Like if somebody had to come back, the odds are pretty solid that they're going to be okay.

**Rev:** Yeah. How do we do this in a way where it can be undone once we're gone?

**Jake:** I feel like that could just be the terms of the magic. Because the magic in this world is like you just kind of say what you're trying to do. It's like Big Magic, right? So I feel like if we're like, yeah, this spell will last a year and a day and then expire ...

**Rev:** Oh, okay.

**Jake:** Would that just be how it works?

**Tass:** Yeah, I'd take that. I mean, there are some extremes that I might argue with. But like a year and a day, sure.

**Kim:** Okay. I feel like I have more faith in, like, a magic spell keeping this thing contained than, like, our skills as stonemasons.

**Rev:** Yeah, that's fair.

**Jake:** Yeah. I mean, it is like a supremely magical being, so ... I don't trust as much a mundane barrier to stop it.

**Kim:** That's true.

**Rev:** Yeah. Like it might be nice for them to not have to leave, but probably better safe than sorry in the longevity of their lives.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Jake:** If they opt not to, then you're welcome. We spent a week helping you fix your boats. [Laughs] Like you can do some commerce, I guess.

**Tass:** Right. Which on that I'll give you the option, since you're helping them out too. Over this week, if you want, they will fix one wreck for free. Or if you want to go ahead and spend the couple of treasure and take that normal downtime like it should work anyway, it will fully heal your boat.

**Jake:** Do we have the money? I have a treasure.

**Kim:** Yeah, we've got the money. I've got ... I've got two treasure.

**Rev:** How much is fixing the boat?

**Tass:** Two treasure.

**Rev:** Would it be one, since they were willing to do one for free before?

**Tass:** Ooh ...

**Jake:** The local hero discount?

**Kim:** Hagggle.

**Tass:** Yeah, I'll take it.



**Rev:** Okay.

**Tass:** And speaking of that, the shards of that thing that broke, Jake, amount to one treasure. Just some, like, broken, very thin crystals that made some sort of statue before it got wrecked that was probably worth a lot more.

**Jake:** Do I have any reason to believe that this statue is anything but a valuable trinket?

**Tass:** No reason to believe that. It was pretty damn valuable, and now it's not. I'm so sorry.

**Jake:** Okay.

**Kim:** What else did you get from that well?

**Jake:** I got a scroll tube and a something else. I haven't had the time to examine them yet. But I'll probably do that over the course of this week as well.

**Kim:** Cool.

**Rev:** Yeah. I think if we're taking this week, I will help at the dock. Because I'm not gonna be any help with this magic ritual.

**Tass:** Okay.

**Rev:** I'll help with the rebuilding of ships and stuff.

**Tass:** Nice.

**Megan:** I'm actually gonna use this downtime to work on writing another book.

**Tass:** Oh, okay.

**Megan:** So this is kind of part of my questions in my playbook that we didn't quite have an idea of what we wanted to do yet at the time. So I think I have it all figured out now. So this would be a good opportunity to do that. So in addition to your kit, you have your

magnum opus, only half written. Completing it will take a great deal of power. What do you need to finish it? What can it do when it's done? So this is also kind of part of my main playbook move called Wordsmith. So when you write a book using paper and ink during downtime, begin the work. Tell the Fates what the book is about, what you want the book to do when you read it aloud. The Fates give you a quest you must complete before you finish it, selecting from the following list, and they may add up to four additional quests for more powerful and complex books. So you must first experience [blank], the book must be made from [blank], the ink must be infused with [blank], and [blank] must give the book their [blank]. It's just an awful Mad Libs. [Laughs]

**Tass:** Okay. So is this when you tell me about the book?

**Megan:** Yeah. So since it was already like half written when I got into this world, I think it makes sense for it to be something that I already had on me. So I think this is what the copy of the information we got from Sherri turned into. So all of the information on how they set up that world that functions well for supernatural beings and humans to kind of live in harmony.

**Tass:** Okay.

**Megan:** So like I said at the beginning of this arc, I am focusing kind of on this information. I'm putting a lot of my ... My kind of hope and my faith into it as this kind of building block of this future that I want. So I think what it turns into here is kind of the same kind of thing. Like this building block, this foundational book. And it turns into a book of pirate ABC's. So it's only half finished and I don't know how to finish the book. [Laughs]

**Tass:** Yeah. [Laughs] I'm always just stuck at M.

**Megan:** Yeah. I'm at M. I can't — I don't know what comes next. I can't wait to find out. But what I would like it to do when it's done is to kind of be a source for answers. Like it is the foundation of everything going forward, how the world should fit together. So if I'm kind of not sure what direction I want to head or where I need to be looking, I can kind of have that thought in my mind, that question. And then if I'm able to successfully read this book, I can kind of get an idea, an answer on what is the right path to take.

**Tass:** Okay. I really like this. Like I'm imagining the letters literally acting as like a cipher for the answer to your question, or at least a direction.

**Megan:** Yeah, exactly.

**Tass:** All right. I think I have three quests for you then, from the list. I think that you must first experience something undead. And like, up close and personal experience, in a tactile way. You have to touch something that is undead. That being, I think that's your conduit to information that has even passed on beyond the realm of the living. And is that connection to all knowledge that helps the magic of this cipher. Then, the ink must be infused with one drop of blood of something that can shapeshift, which will also add to the letters being able to act as this cipher. And lastly, someone from this world has to give the final draft of this book their blessing.

**Megan:** Okay.

**Tass:** All right. So Megan will be working on that.

**Jake:** I feel like I should be involved in the ritual, except I don't have anything strange. And that is a requirement to perform a ritual.

**Kim:** I have something strange. My rapier has the strange tag.

**Jake:** Are you comfortable doing a ritual?

**Kim:** I would maybe love to have you down there to help, like, advise the symbols that I would be carving into this magic circle. But yeah, I could do it.

**Jake:** Okay. Tass, if I am not doing a downtime move of my own, can I kind of jump around and like accomplish or help with multiple things?

**Tass:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Jake:** Okay. Then yeah, I will probably help Kim do the ritual. And then I also want to use my Good for Thievin' move again. So I imagine like as we are setting up for the ritual that

I'm going back through this kind of duct system and like trying to find anything that might help us or that might make this more useful or accelerate getting people out or anything.

**Tass:** Okay. So it looks like we all have some moves to roll here, but let's hit a few other things first before we get into that action. Firstly, I would certainly say that you all have succeeded on a bounty or a job.

**Jake:** Yeah.

**Kim:** Yeah.

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Megan:** Yeah.

**Tass:** Big win there. So your ship now, as The Ramshackle, has renown 1. Because you have succeeded on a bounty or a job you are at renown 1. So at the end of the downtime, we get to roll a fun little move. We'll get to that, but that doesn't go until the end of the downtime.

**Kim:** Cool.

**Jake:** Okay.

**Tass:** Also we are at a chapter's end, so I get to ask you all: have you defeated a great foe, claimed great treasure, or accomplished one of your character's big goals?  
Absolutely.

**Rev:** Yeah.

**Kim:** We definitely defeated a powerful foe and accomplished one of our character's goals.

**Tass:** For sure. And destroyed some treasure. But that's okay, because there's other things. There's other things that weren't destroyed. That's fine.

**Jake:** It's still treasure. It's just less treasure.

**Tass:** It's just less. Yeah, that's fair. So you get to replenish all of your bonds, and you get to mark your luck if you have a Spitfire score. So you can refill that. And then choose two — you can either mark an experience, gain one bond with someone you've bonded with, mark two luck, or heal two harm. And so you can do — you can double up on those. Like you could mark two experience or heal four harm, or whatever it is that you want to do. I should say this too, that at the end of a downtime you do either get to choose to heal all harm or get rid of an applicable trouble. So if that changes minds on needing to heal up versus, you know, getting rid of a trouble and that kind of thing at the end of this downtime, keep those in mind.

**Jake:** I am going to heal two harm and mark two luck.

**Megan:** I'm going to mark one experience and heal two harm.

**Tass:** Okay.

**Megan:** Also my trouble, Worried, had the clear condition "when the dust settles." Can I assume that's clear now?

**Tass:** I would say so, yes.

**Megan:** Wonderful.

**Kim:** I'm going to mark bond with Megan. We did a lot of adventuring together on this chapter in terms of trying to trick all the people at the well, she bounced me in the moonbounce, I dove in after her after she jumped into the well. So yeah, I think we've definitely bonded even more than we already have. So that brings me up to three bond with Megan.

**Tass:** Nice.

**Megan:** When you double jump someone on trampoline, it does create a bond for life.

**Tass:** Hell yeah.

**Kim:** And since I'm at three bond with Megan, I get a point of experience, don't I?

**Tass:** You absolutely do. When you mark three bond with somebody, you automatically gain one experience.

**Kim:** Nice. And then I'm going to mark an additional point of experience.

**Tass:** Nice.

**Rev:** I'm going to mark another bond with Jake and then take a point of experience.

**Tass:** Okay.

**Rev:** And actually take another point of experience because I am at three with Jake now.

**Tass:** Oh, hell yeah.

**Jake:** Before we get into all of the solid work of the week, can I check out these other things that I recovered from Estin's cove?

**Tass:** Yes, absolutely. What do you want to look at first? The other box or the scroll case?

**Jake:** The scroll case.

**Tass:** All right. You pop that baby open, and it is a map. And you've seen a map of this continent that you're on the southern edge of. And this especially closer areas of this river that leads up from the ocean to the south. Just, you know, from being on the ship and those navigating, looking over all of that. This is a similar map, but it's much more south. Like you can only see kind of the bottom edge of the continent, and then various islands below. And there is a very clear triangle marked. One of the spots is Last Bay. One of them shows a direct line to what is marked as Plankton. And the third edge of the triangle makes this not a perfect triangle, like it is much further to the south and a little east of where you are. And it doesn't have a name. It just has a little star marked, and there's no island there. It just seems to be open ocean. There's also what you can see is like an old ... It's not quite erased lines, but there's creases of where a more perfect

triangle had been, and had been like marked out, and this made new. Near the center of what had been the perfect triangle, the old one, is also a ... Like a large circle that is represented by a black cloud.

**Jake:** Okay. Yeah, I will show this around to the rest of the squad as I open the box.

**Tass:** In the box there is a folded letter with a broken seal. And as you open it, it reads as, "Estin, we've made the move. Expect Cotton soon. Do anything you can to kill or dissuade him. If you possibly can, capture him. Plankton is under my control. We are still dealing with insurrectionists, but they should be quelled soon. Send word when you've dealt with Cotton." And it is signed Dr. White.

**Jake:** Boy, I will read that aloud to the rest of the team also. "Well, that seems to suggest at least that Cotton is indeed on our side, right?"

**Kim:** "Yeah. He told us that he left Plankton in the hands of a trusted lieutenant. Is that this Dr. White guy? Did he turn? Or did Dr. White kill the person who was left in charge?"

**Megan:** "I think we're gonna have to get over there to find out."

**Jake:** "Yeah. I mean, in our experience with Dr. White, he was trying to be cool and that was sort of taken away from him? So, you know, as far as parallels across worlds go, hard to say. There might be redemption in it for Dr. White. He could have been a trusted associate who accidentally turned bad?"

**Landara:** "It does say insurrectionist. So it seems like it was taken by force, and at least people are still trying to fight back."

**Jake:** "Yeah."

**Megan:** "I mean, the kraken here was corrupted by whatever this cloud is. Maybe this Dr. White is also."

**Jake:** Tass, is this letter dated? Or is there any way to even take a stab at how old it is?

**Tass:** Uh, no. I mean, it's not like super old. It's not like a decrepit, you know, falling apart letter. So it seems pretty healthy? [Laughs] Probably the wrong word.

**Kim:** [Laughs]

**Jake:** But we knew Cotton had been away for ... What do he say? A couple months?

**Tass:** Yes.

**Jake:** A few months?

**Tass:** Yeah.

**Jake:** And so I don't know if this is since he departed Plankton, or like prior to departing Plankton, or maybe like this coup was in action before he left or like, right when he left. I don't know. Um. Yeah, I also want to, like, pointing at the map. "I wonder what was at this third point that it seems like they decided was not good enough. Or maybe ... Maybe one of their things died and they had to change course. Pick a new third point to complete the triangle." But only the little triangle has the dark cloud in the center of it, right?

**Tass:** Correct.

**Jake:** I mean, would that dark cloud make sense to still be the center of the new triangle?

**Tass:** Yeah, like it still is in the triangle, you know, just not exactly centrally located.

**Jake:** Okay.

**Kim:** "Cotton said that one of the important places vanished beneath the ocean? I don't know if that's what happened to the old triangle, and that's why it moved to a different place? Or if that's the point of the new triangle."

**Jake:** Can we compare this against a bigger map and like what Cotton told us, and see if what sunk below the waves is more likely to be the old point or the new point?



**Tass:** Yeah. Based on what he told you and just the amount of time it would take for him to have traveled to these, what he assumed it would take for you all to travel from where you started, and so on? It seems like the one that made the perfect triangle is the spot that he couldn't find anything where he thought there should be. So this new point, this further point, seems like something brand new.

**Jake:** Oh.

**Landara:** "Is that map magical? Or ..."

**Jake:** I sniff it. I listen very closely to it. "I don't — I'm not sure." Do I get any magical vibes off of it?

**Tass:** No. Nothing to roll.

**Jake:** "I don't think so. But I am just a monkey here, so."

**Landara:** "Okay. I was wondering if, like, maybe it was moving and the map is like tracking where it moved. But if it's not magic, then guess it couldn't do that."

**Megan:** "I mean, maybe it did move. Maybe it was a place, but for some reason it — like the island itself or whatever it was — like got moved to a different location."

**Jake:** "Oh."

**Kim:** "That could be. Cotton thought that maybe the Seaborn had something to do with that third point."

**Jake:** "So maybe it didn't like sink below the waves. It just moved. Maybe this is like on the back of a lion turtle or whatever. Like this whole place swam away."

**Landara:** "Oh, god."

**Jake:** "That's cool."

**Megan:** "I wonder why it would need to be moved."

**Landara:** "If it was something alive, it could just be ... Like, maybe it migrates when the water temperature changes a certain time of year or something."

**Megan:** "But it was part of Nash's original circle, right? If it moved all around, he couldn't guarantee that whatever was in the center would stay in the center."

**Landara:** "This is a lot of weight on ... This is a lion turtle."

**Jake:** "I know. And we really started running with that. And I love it. And I hope that that's the case."

**Landara:** "I'm not even sure what that is."

**Jake:** "I don't think we've got sufficient evidence even remotely to operate on that assumption. But I'm going to. I'm going to." [Chuckles]

**Landara:** "I know we haven't talked about this too much. But when I met Jake, he and I worked for the same employer. And that's who got ahold of me here. That's how I knew Estin was around. I'm assuming that this Death is like the Death that we dealt with. That it's not moral one way or the other, that it just wants us to get rid of things that either shouldn't be here or have somehow perverted how long they've been around. When I killed Estin, it gave me the next name of who has to die. It's Tass."

**Kim:** "What?"

**Landara:** "Yeah."

**Megan:** "But Tass isn't in this world."

**Landara:** "No. Death, it only knows the inhabitants of its world. So what I'm saying is there's gonna be another Tass here. And I've traveled a lot because of what Trog and I were able to find out in Estin's old lair. This won't be the first Tass I've had to kill. I don't know what it is about your influence, Jake, but almost every Tass breaks bad, and it's ugly when it happens. So I'm saying this to get you all prepared. He's probably gonna look familiar. But if he's on Death's list, there's a very good reason. And I have yet to

encounter another Tass and another world that wasn't like the guy you described to me in the cracked mirror."

**Jake:** "We kind of saved that guy, though."

**Landara:** "Did you?"

**Jake:** "I put kinda in there. I mean, is it impossible to redeem a Tass without killing a Tass?"

**Landara:** "I mean, Death isn't about redemption. I'm just trying to prep you for what you might see. Like Death didn't ask me to redeem Tass. Said he shouldn't be here, and he is. And that question you just asked me is exactly what might get you killed when we meet him. Because you're gonna hesitate."

**Jake:** "Yeah. No fucking shit, I'm gonna hesitate. But that might be what keeps him alive and gets him off Death's list."

**Landara:** "How would you get off of Death's list?"

**Jake:** "I don't know. I don't know what's going on with this Tass. But if there's a way to get on it, there's gotta be a way to get off it."

**Landara:** "Yeah. The way you get on it is either not being from this world or perverting the length of your life. You know this. You worked for Death."

**Jake:** "Yes, I know. And it wasn't quite so personal at the time."

**Landara:** "That's why I wanted to tell you now before he's standing in front of us."

**Kim:** "No, it's good to know."

**Megan:** "If you get on Death's list by not being from that world, does that mean we're gonna end up on there?"

**Landara:** "I mean, that's how I met James. Like it knows that I'm not supposed to be here. And yet, for some reason, it chose me as one of its emissaries."

**Jake:** "Hopefully, we're not going to be here that long."

**Megan:** "Well maybe this Tass is corrupted as well. Maybe he is doing something to manipulate his lifespan in some way, and maybe that's not his choice. I agree with Jake. I think we should always keep in mind that there's the potential that we can help. And if not, we'll figure it out then. But I don't like the idea that Death has it out for any Tass, and we gotta do what we gotta do going into it. Just feels wrong."

**Landara:** "I mean it didn't feel wrong when it was Estin. We didn't try to redeem him."

**Kim:** "No, but we're trying to redeem the kraken."

**Landara:** "Sure, but the kraken wasn't on Death's list."

**Jake:** "Why are you so gung ho about killing Tass? Why is everybody so — why is Tass so gung ho about killing Tass? I fucking watched him shoot a him to death without hesitation. I don't understand it."

**Landara:** "You've never seen it, Jake. You've never seen what it's like when he goes bad. He feels it. That's why he works so hard. And I've seen it firsthand. This conversation is the exact reason I'm so gung ho. This pause in everybody? We'd all be dead by now."

**Jake:** "Then I'll probably be dead. So good luck carrying on the hard work, I suppose, when I'm gone. But you may very well have fucked yourself by bringing this up with me in the first place. Because I can't imagine a reality where I just go, oh, right, I remember. Go ahead, shoot him."

**Landara:** "Well, wait till you see what he's done first."

**Jake:** "Do you know what he's done?"

**Landara:** "On this world? No. But I know what he's done on countless others."

**Megan:** "I mean, we know Tass."

**Landara:** "You know a Tass."

**Jake:** "All right, so where does that bring us? You need to ditch us? Take a ship on your own? Go kill him without us in your way?"

**Landara:** "You brought me along because I would do the things that Tass would do. The stuff you all have a hard time doing. So I'm going to do the thing that Tass would do when the moment comes."

**Megan:** "I'm not saying it may not be necessary. I'm saying we don't know the situation. I'm saying we should have hope that there's a chance, and we should look for that chance and do everything we can to take that chance if it's available to us."

**Landara:** "We're not talking about the Tass from your world, and we're not talking about this Death has a list of people on it because they're corrupt and evil. It has a list of people on it because they're supposed to be dead and aren't."

**Jake:** "You're the one who just introduced the idea that all other Tasses are evil. What — if we're talking about two different things, that's your fault."

**Landara:** "I was saying that to make you aware of what you might encounter when you see Tass."

**Jake:** "Look, we've spent a lot of time working together. Do you still trust my judgment?"

**Rev:** Landara looks in your eyes for quite a long moment.

**Landara:** "Yeah."

**Jake:** "Then I need you to trust me that there's no such thing as irredeemable. And I need you to give me some time when we come across him to figure out what's going on. Please don't just pull the trigger, because I don't know how to live with that."

**Landara:** "All right. But you gotta promise me that you'll be honest with yourself about what you do see, not what you want to see."

**Jake:** "Sure."

**Landara:** "All right."

**Tass:** All right. So as we go into this week, I think there's a lot of little things happening. It takes a couple of days for any indication that the well kraken is getting its strength back. And even then, it's still drunk. It's probably halfway through the week even before you all have to really worry about these tentacles trying to sneak their way out and try to ... Essentially, hunt. But you know what to look for, and so you're able to kind of assist with that while everyone's going about their tasks. Let's start with Landara. You're helping with the docks?

**Rev:** Yeah. And I think while I'm doing this, I'm gonna try and Get the Scoop.

**Tass:** Oh, okay. So we'll read this downtime move. When you get the scoop on something in port during downtime, roll +Vinegar. On a hit, you get two. On a 7 to 9, you get to ask one. The questions are ... What do the locals know about [blank]? Where can I find [blank]? How can I get the locals to [blank]? And what are the hidden dangers if I [blank]? And on a miss, I will tell you why you didn't get the answers you seek, and you will take a trouble to ask one if you choose.

**Rev:** Okay. Seven.

**Tass:** All right, you get 1.

**Rev:** I think after the conversation that we had, it's gotta be what do the locals know about Tass Allgood.

**Tass:** They absolutely know that name. He hasn't been seen in a while, but they know that he is a vicious pirate that travels with a crew known as The Founders aboard the ship The Argonaut. He wasn't the captain or anything. He was just a fighter. But his name across the seas is the Gilded Death. A reason that they have given him this nickname is that he wields a golden saber. And if he engages in a fight, it is to the death. There is no

friendly duel. If he gets into a fight, he aims to kill, and he is still alive. So he has never lost a fight. So Jake, what are you doing over this week?

**Jake:** I am helping set up the ritual with Kim. So I am trying to swim down and modify the runes in the existing circle and like going around the well. And I think that as I am doing this and going around the well and like through this aqueduct system, I would like to use my Good for Thievin' again, because I'm squeezing into somewhere that others can't.

**Tass:** Okay. Go ahead and roll it.

**Jake:** That is a ten. So I get to tell you where I get to, and if I want to find a secret that I didn't expect. I do. So I think where I end up is the ... I can't think of another term but the control center, but like where mechanically the water flow can be turned on or shut off.

**Rev:** Where the main aqua duck lives.

**Jake:** Were the aqua duck lives, and I battle him for control. [Laughs]

**Megan:** Now I'm the aqua duck.

**Tass:** Yeah, I really like that. Like you find this spot where you're able to essentially give this level of control to how any of this is going to flow. And even in a lot of cases, what those tentacles would have reached to anyway while still keeping enough water to keep the actual physical beast alive.

**Jake:** Yeah. I want to otherwise shut off the water flow out of here so that nobody could accidentally show up and like, drink any and give this thing any control.

**Tass:** Absolutely you do. Do you want to find a thing?

**Jake:** I do, yes.

**Tass:** Okay. Then I think that this area is just sort of downstream enough from the main well that you find at first what looks like maybe a pile of rope, or could even be like old seaweed or something that's all clumped together. Like there's a lot. There's a big pile of this mass. And what you quickly discover is that these are lengths of the tentacle that it

seems like for some reason or another it has to shed them to regrow more. So all of this excess that it has removed from itself has washed to here. So I think you realize that with these barbed suckers, these incredibly strong barbs on the lengths of what are essentially now long thick ropes, could be an extremely powerful weapon against a massive aquatic beast like the Father Goroga.

**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](http://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](https://Patreon.com/TheCritshow).