

Dead in the Water (S5, E34)

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

SFX: INTRO MUSIC

Rev: Tass. Man, I am back on my old bullshit.

Tass: Oh, what did you do?

Rev: I am back into Destiny.

Tass: Yes! Okay. How's it going?

Rev: Oh, god. It's ... Like it was so complicated to get back in, because I opened it up and nothing looked familiar. All the planets are different. And there were just a bunch of flashing things. I was like, I don't know where to start.

Jake: [Chuckles] There's so many buttons ...

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: Words ...

Rev: I asked somebody on the Discord, they're like ... You know, she has been playing it the entirety of the time, hasn't taken a big break like we did.

Tass: Nice.

Rev: And she's like, just start here and it'll make sense. I was like, okay. And so I started going through it and it, like, has this system now where as you go through the story, it checks off missions. Like you don't have to hunt down missions — you get them as you

go, and they're kind of in their own little category. So it tells you like step one of what. And now I'm gonna start going back and playing through like all the stuff that I missed.

Tass: Okay.

Rev: But there was a whole conversation on the Discord about people who, similar to us, had fallen out of Destiny.

Tass: Yeah.

Rev: Like, I want to get back into it, but I don't know how. So there are like ten of us now, I think so far. I know that Joe and Jessie got it the other day.

Tass: Yeah. And I may have it in my cart right now.

Rev: Yeah. So if you are someone ... This is so random, but if you're someone who plays Destiny and you're looking for some folks to play with, we did start a Critshow clan. It is just called The CritCrew. So if you are not part of a group and you're looking for some folks to play with, we're starting to set up raids and stuff inside of the Discord server. But you can find us just by searching the clan thing and it should be open invite, so ...

Tass: Nice.

Rev: Yeah. We've got ... I think ten right now, but the numbers could grow!

Tass: Yeah. I've been feeling the itch. I've seen people talking about it, and I just ... Just the physics of that game make me so very happy. Like, things shoot the way that I feel like they should shoot. Jumping, gliding, grenades, everything just works the way that it makes sense to me more than any other game of that type.

Rev: And now as a warlock, you can like throw a grenade that explodes and makes like little monsters that run at people.

Tass: Are you — is it — are you — are you saying this as a mean, dirty lie to excite me because you know that that's amazing and hilarious, or is that a thing?

Rev: It's a thing. And they kind of look like ... You remember Maggot from X-Men? He had the giant maggots?

Tass: [Laughs] Yeah.

Rev: They look like that, but green. Like they look like big angry pillbugs.

Tass: I'm gonna hand off the notebook to whoever wants to run this, and I'm gonna go home.

Megan: I'll take it. I feel like this conversation isn't for me. I've just been sipping boba over here.

Rev: Yeah.

Tass: [Laughs]

Tass: Which is something you can do in Destiny too now, apparently.

Rev: Yeah. There's a boba emote, so you can just hang out and drink boba.

Megan: All right. I'm in.

Rev: Perfect. The clan grows.

Tass: [Chuckles]

SFX: RECAP MUSIC

Landara: "When I killed Estin, it gave me the next name of who has to die. It's Tass."

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

Landara: "Death, it only knows the inhabitants of its world. So what I'm saying is there's gonna be another Tass here."

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."

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."

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

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."

Tass: Jake, what are you doing over this week?

Jake: I am helping set up the ritual with Kim. 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: 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.

SFX: RECAP MUSIC FADES

Tass: Jake, you've been able to manipulate the controls to the waterways in the well, and now you are looking at a pretty big pile of discarded tentacles that might be valuable in fighting other very large underwater creatures.

Jake: Well, I think that once my setup part of the plan is complete, that I will go collect some of the people crewing our ship to help pack these up and out of here and onto the boat.

Tass: I think Jeffrey and Edwin are pretty stoked about this find. There's certainly some talk that is a little hidden from you, but not so much that they're like actively trying to pull one over on you. But you can certainly hear them talking about how valuable these might be.

Jake: "No. No, no, no. These can't be for selling. We're going to need these."

Tass: JEFFREY: Well I mean, there's a there's a bunch of them, isn't there?

Jake: "Well, there's an unknown and possibly unspeakable fight ahead of us. So do you want to risk it?"

Tass: JEFFREY: Can we use what's left after?

Jake: "Yeah, man. Fuck it. I'll be gone then. I don't care."

Tass: JEFFREY: All right.

Tass: They high five. But you know — pirate. In a pirate-y fashion.

Jake: [Chuckles] Pirate high five.

Tass: Yeah.

Jake: The high hook.

Megan: The pirate equivalent.

Tass: They get tangled up. It's great.

Megan: [Laughs]

Tass: I think while they're asking you about this, too, this is, you know, by the time you've gotten down to the ship and you're loading on what are now these just crates of these now kind of dried tentacles. So like Landara, Kim, you know, you probably are able to see this bounty that they're bringing to the ship. I assume Megan is working on your book unless you're, you know, out kind of doing it out in the sun, you know ...

Megan: Yeah. Oh, for sure. I'm having class outside. Definitely.

Kim: Listen, that's an important part of writing a novel, is taking a lot of breaks.

Tass: That's true. That's accurate.

Jake: I slap the top of one of the crates like the car salesman meme. I'm like, "Get a whiff of these bad boys." [Gags]

All: [Laugh]

Landara: "What's in there?"

Jake: "A bunch of the barbs that came off of that well monster."

Landara: "Oh."

Jake: "Reckon they might be good for fighting a big old beastie. Say, whatever's in the last circle."

Landara: "Oh, like drop them in the water, and ... Like caltrops?"

Jake: "Oh hell, I don't know what the thing is. I mean, maybe we take them and javelin them at a creature, or ..."

Landara: "Oh."

Kim: "Like, fasten them to the front of the ship, and like ..."

Jake: "And ram it. Yeah."

Kim: "Yeah."

Jake: "Who knows."

Landara: "Feed them."

Jake: "Yeah. Put it in its cereal, whatever."

Landara: "Well, I was able to get some information on the Tass here. He runs with a group called The Founders and they sail on The Argonaut. He's known as the Gilded Death, and he's their ... Not their leader, but seems like their lead fighter. Fights with a gold sword. And he only fights to the death."

Megan: "The Argonaut. What is — what is Tass doing on the Argonaut?"

Jake: "I mean that would suggest that he is somehow in league with Nash."

Kim: "I mean, we know that Nash has been able to put people under his thrall before. He was trying to do it with Aiden."

Jake: "It's also quite possible that the Tass in this world died, and Nash brought him back as a thrall. Maybe that's why he's on Death's list and why he's such a bad news here."

Landara: "Oh, and why he fights only to the death, and has never lost."

Megan: "Oh, I hate that."

Jake: "If that's the case, it might make deciding what to do when we encounter him a little bit easier. You know, Tass wouldn't want to exist that way. So if it came down to killing him when he's in that state, that might actually be a mercy."

Megan: "Well, we gotta find him."

Jake: "I imagine if we keep doing what we're doing, he'll find us sooner or later."

Landara: "Yeah, they said that it was a pretty well known pirate group. Pretty ruthless. But no one's seen him in a while."

Jake: "Huh. That's kind of weird. If we're following the idea that maybe he's like a tool being used, then maybe he's being held back for a particular purpose right now."

Megan: "I wonder if the he hasn't been seen in a while is when the other Nash took over."

Kim: "Or maybe he's a recipient of power from a circle and that's why we haven't seen him."

Jake: "Well, maybe we can keep asking around as we travel and see if anybody's got any more complete information."

Landara: "Yeah, and it might be worth seeing if we can find anybody who knows anything about the other founders. Because, I mean, for all of you, that was the people who started your organization, right?"

Jake: "Yeah. Hell, I suppose it could be all the same people who have met the same fate. And it seems like the kind of mean thing that Nash would do. Just like a spit in your face, I took the yous of this world who work against me and turned you into my lieutenants."

Landara: "Oh ..."

Megan: "That's awful."

Jake: "Just keep an ear out for information as we go." I'm gonna start moving these crates below decks.

Tass: All right. You get down to where the rest of the crew had been loading the couple other crates of them. And of course, Jeffrey and Edwin have one of the tentacles out and they're like wearing it like a sash. And they see you.

Tass: EDWIN: Oh, no, nothing!

Tass: And they're tucking it all back away.

Rev: They're having a slap fight with them.

Tass: [Laughs] And you also notice that there is another large trunk at the back of the sort of storage area.

Jake: That I haven't seen before?

Tass: Yeah, I don't think so. Like walking up to it, it just has the initials TA in the corner. And I think the memory occurs to you that right before Tass had been frozen in place, loading up the IPT cruise, that he had put one of his own crates in the trunk.

Jake: Oh! Yeah, I want to see what's inside.

Tass: All right.

Rev: It explodes.

All: [Laugh]

Kim: That's what I thought! We've done this beat before! In a ship, opening a box ...

Tass: Well, it might. It is just now, in this form, it is a long wooden crate. And you have to get, like, a crowbar and crack off the top. And for a second, what you're looking at, you just think it's a crate full of pineapples. And you look a little closer and realize that there are a couple of different sizes. Some of them are just about the size of a pineapple, like you would expect. But you touch it and it's this weird material. It doesn't feel like anything natural, and it certainly doesn't feel like a real pineapple. There's a couple more just like it, but they're much larger. They're almost cannonball sized. And all of them have a fuse coming out of the top of the leaves.

Jake: I will very gingerly pick one of them up and carry it upstairs. And I will say, "Does this look like a hand grenade to anybody else?"

Megan: "It looks like a pineapple."

Kim: "Where did you find that?"

Jake: "In Tass's trunk below deck."

Landara: "Is that a wick?"

Tass: "Yes, it is. I'm guessing he puts some grenades in the trunk, and this is what we came out with."

Kim: "Like, how many grenades are we talking about?"

Jake: "Oh, like ... I mean, there's — there are various sizes and shapes, but like a cool baker's dozen, probably."

Kim: "Oh, my god. That's so unsafe. We went through a whole fight. A tentacle could have hit that, and then we all would have exploded."

Jake: "Well, I think you need the fire, so that's good. Nobody did fire at us yet."

Megan: "Does it smell like a pineapple?"

Jake: I smell it.

Tass: No, it certainly smells more chemical than anything.

Jake: I bite it a little.

Kim: No!

Tass: Your head is gone.

Kim: "Gang, I've heard about how unstable dynamite is. Like, let's please be so gentle with these."

Megan: [Laughs] We see Jake smell it, and then just go to take a bite of it.

Jake: I'm sorry. I love pineapple. I don't know what I was thinking.

Megan: "Well, that's a nice gift from Tass."

Jake: "I'm going to go tuck this away again. And just keep them in mind if we see an opportunity for them."

Landara: "Yeah. I feel like at some point we should light one."

Jake: "Just to find out what happens?"

Landara: "To know, yeah. As opposed to like, hey, it's the moment we should use these, then find out they maybe do something different than we expect."

Kim: "True."

Megan: This sounds like something Jake would have convinced you of. I love that you're already just like we should just light grenades and throw them off the ship.

Rev: No, no. When it comes to testing weapons, I think it's always best to do it before you need them.

Jake: "I mean, now would be the time. We're in a safe harbor. Not worried about, like, people hearing us or anything. So ..."

Landara: "Maybe like when we get a day out of harbor. I think you'd probably freak out townspeople with an explosion."

Jake: "We'll pin this."

Landara: "Yeah."

Kim: "Okay. Just maybe put the big trunk of bombs somewhere on the ship that we feel will be the least likely to get hit by a cannon. Real deep in the ship."

Jake: "Well, I mean, this is what I've learned from Sea of Thieves, is if you put it in the crow's nest, then they can see it and they can shoot it and blow up your mast. But if you put it down below deck, then it's gonna do the most damage to your hull if it does get detonated. So there's really no safe place to put these."

Kim: "Fun."

Landara: "Yeah, I mean, really, this is just the pirate's life. I'm literally carrying a couple of small kegs of gunpowder on me as we speak."

All: [Laugh]

Landara: "It's part of my kit."

Megan: "We should build just like a big slingshot. Then put the pineapples in there and then light it and then shoot it out over the ocean."

Landara: "Or if we find an enemy who loves fruit. And then we could just lay a pineapple out and light it, and they'd be like, oh, look, a pineapple. And then ..."

Jake: "It's burning. I love that."

Rev: Has this gone off the rails?

Tass: [Chuckles]

Jake: Hugely. I return this pineapple delicately to its chest.

Tass: Okay.

Megan: "Uh, hey, Landara. Can I get your help over here real quick?"

Landara: "Yeah."

Megan: "I think I need your help with this book that I'm writing."

Landara: "Oh. How so?"

Megan: "Uh ..." And I hold out my hand. "Can I touch your hand?"

Landara: "Yeah."

Rev: I hold my hand out.

Megan: I touch her hand, and I check my book. Does this seem like it has met the qualification of touching something undead?

Tass: God damn it. I can't believe I've done this. I don't know why not. I have a question for you. So, like, when you do this, does something happen? Like I'm sure the book doesn't just, like, fill in by a third, but, like, is there any physical manifestation of it?

Megan: Yeah. Like, the first third of this book isn't done. But like, portions of each chapter are, right? So like, I think at this point I don't really have the words yet, but there are like the illustrations.

Tass: Oh, that's cool.

Megan: Have started to kind of fill in. And there's like the fancy, like, first letter of each like alphabet appears on the page.

Tass: I love it. That's so cool. So the rest of this week goes on as you all prepare for this ritual. Kim, I think we're to the day. What's gonna happen here? What is this gonna look like?

Kim: So I think it's just with Jake's help and advice, using the tip of my magic rapier to adjust the runes on the magic circle that are already here to bind this creature to the well for a year and a day.

Tass: Excellent. So we are there. We are at the moment. So I have some questions for you in Perform a Ritual.

Kim: Okay.

Tass: So Perform a Ritual is a downtime move that reads thus: when you have something strange and want to perform a ritual on it or with it during downtime, roll +Spitfire. Take a +1 for every true thing.

Kim: Okay.

Tass: So let's go ahead and ask these as we go. You're familiar with this ritual?

Kim: So, like, kind of? And I think this is where, like, Jake is helping me. Jake is helping me be familiar with this ritual.

Tass: Yeah. Like he has certainly used a ton of magic for binding creatures.

Kim: Yeah.

Tass: So this is kind of a grander scale of that. I like that. So there's a +1. You sacrifice something strange? So the strange tag being a magical item of some sort.

Kim: I mean, I certainly can't sacrifice my rapier because then I couldn't do this ritual.

Tass: Sure.

Kim: I don't know if we have anything else that's strange or magical yet, so I probably can't do that one.

Tass: Okay. And you can mark a trouble to see it through?

Kim: Oh, yeah, I'll do that.

Tass: All right. Let's call this trouble Feisty.

Kim: [Laughs]

Tass: I think this sword, there's this innate, like, swashbuckler sense that you're using the sword for something that isn't, like, big and flashy and fighty. So I think you have a -1 to

Spitfire until you're, like, in a good fight. Until you're swinging the sword in earnest. But that won't pop off until after you roll the Perform Ritual.

Kim: Cool. Sounds good.

Tass: Now we're gonna take a -1 for every true thing. You're flying by the seat of your pants? I would not say so. You are not strange, so there's a -1. That gives us a total +1 from the pluses and minuses.

Kim: Okay.

Tass: And then plus your Spitfire. So on a 10+, you do have to choose one from this list. And on a 7 to 9, I will choose another. And we'll talk about a backfire if we hit that. So let's go ahead and roll this Perform a Ritual.

Kim: Oof. Okay. I'm stressed out about this, so I'm gonna spend a point of luck in addition.

Tass: Okay.

Kim: Eight.

Tass: All right. So you're going to choose one from the list, and so am I. The list is, the ritual's effect is not quite as planned, you must sacrifice something important, or you are cursed or changed in the process.

Kim: Uh ... Cursed or changed is too attractive and interesting. I'm cursed or changed.

Tass: Okay. So what is like, the final moment here? You've etched in the runes the way that you like them. It's all ready to go. Like, what is the activation moment?

Kim: I think it's just waiting until the last minute to sort of scratch the final piece into the floor here with my sword.

Tass: So the first thing that you notice is this pulse of magic, and then you're rising swiftly out of the well from the bottom, past the Kraken up and out into the air. And you see

others, your friends, anyone else that was sticking around to watch and help, as they are propelled out of the third tier of the city.

Kim: Oh, no.

Tass: None of you take harm. This is just a little road rash maybe from being pushed across and out and down the roads. And it occurs to you that this didn't quite go as planned. Where you were hoping to sort of hold the creature where it is to bar it there? Instead, this is more like barring a place from anything but the kraken. And so you've all just been pushed out of the third tier. So anything anyone else might have had up here, any important items left to gather, supplies ... You know, a lot of the food and things like that were up on this level.

Kim: Cool.

Tass: All of that is just gonna be there and nobody's going to be able to get to it for a year and a day.

Megan: You got to dig up from underneath.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: The lone guy who was up on deck four is like, "Huh. I, uh ..."

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I guess I'm in charge up here now.

Kim: Yeah. Do you think if you were on level four, could you just kind of, like, hop off and just kind of like, ride the invisible wall down to two?

Jake: Whee!

Tass: Yeah, I think it's kind of like hitting a trampoline where you just boing, boing, boing, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. Um ... And as you screech to a halt, Kim, the sword in your hand, your signature sword, your swashbuckler's pride, looks a little

different. The handle and the hilt all look the same. But instead of a blade, it's a long sinewy sort of clear tentacle.

Kim: [Laughs] Uh, okay. I want to hold it out and just sort of take a few like practice swishes with it, and see. Does it ... How does it function as a sword?

Tass: Great. It functions great. Like it moves sort of with your will. It's a little bit more like a whip, but it can kind of move like a sword when you will it to. So the main change here is that it has lost the stun tag and gained the grappling tag.

Kim: Cool.

Tass: But it's worked. And the people get up, dust themselves off, and give a half hearted cheer with questioning looks to you all.

Jake: I'm like looking around at all the people cheering like smiling, giving a thumbs up, like, "Hey, we did it. Kim, what happened?"

Kim: "It seems that instead of binding the kraken to the well, it maybe just made it so that no one but the kraken could be on the third level for a year and a day? I mean, it's effectively the same thing."

Jake: "Is it still prevented from reaching beyond its tier?"

Kim: "Yes."

Jake: "Okay. Well then, yeah, I guess that's effectively the same thing. I had a half a hoagie left up there that I was really looking forward to, but ..."

Kim: "I'm sorry. I'll buy you another one."

Jake: [Chuckles]

Tass: The barkeep comes up with a big smile, despite a nice little chunk of his mustache on one side being kind of road burned away.

Kim: Oh, no ...

Megan: Ow.

Jake: "Oh, Admiral. Oh, I'm sorry."

Tass: ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Well, it seemed like it worked.

Jake: "Yeah, exactly as planned."

Kim: "Exactly as planned. Yeah. How's everything on your end? Are the ships good to go? People ready to leave?"

Tass: ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: Aye. We've still got a little work on a few of ours, but yours is good to go. And we'll only need a few more days before we can ship off. If it's well and truly trapped there, you can go."

Jake: "Okay."

Megan: "It is 'well' and truly trapped there."

All: [Laugh]

Jake: "So that's a little something from our world called humor."

Tass: ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: I didn't follow it.

Jake: He's like, "What the fuck do you mean, your world?"

All: [Laugh]

Tass: ADMIRAL MUSTACHE: No, that I understand. I just don't get jokes.

Rev: He's like, "No, I've listened to the show."

All: [Laugh]

Rev: I think as we're having this conversation with the Admiral, Landara's eyes just keep slowly drifting down to Kim's sword. Then, like, back up to the Admiral and back down to the sword, like trying not to acknowledge it.

Tass: It's just kind of casually bent over and is wrapping around your ankle.

Kim: I think, just like I can't help but just sort of like give it just like a couple like little swishes now and then because like it's so — it's such a strange ... The movement is so curious.

Megan: I imagine you playing with it like a cat toy.

Kim: Yeah.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: But yeah, I mean, if you head down, like the ship looks great. They did a really good job.

Jake: "Well, if we're good to go, then I think we ought to."

Kim: "All right. Where to next?"

Landara: "That letter seemed to indicate that Cotton might be in some trouble. Should we head there next?"

Jake: "I think so. I mean, we don't have any particular reason to try and find the other place yet, but we got motive for this one."

Megan: "Also, if somebody is trying to get control over this Plankton, maybe even if they've gotten ahead, the upset of power will give us enough of cover to get in and figure out what's going on."

Landara: "All right."

Rev: I'll start charting a course as best I can.

Tass: So we get to use a ship move. Yay!

Jake: Yay!

Tass: So this one is Navigate. When your ship's crew navigates towards a difficult or new destination, the navigator rolls +Spitfire. On a 10+, you get there without trouble. The crew takes a downtime during the journey, and the Fates will tell you what strange sights you see on the way. On a 7 to 9, you encounter trouble on the journey and must contend with it before reaching your destination. And on a miss, you face serious trouble that leaves you hopelessly lost. So no pressure.

Rev: Eight.

Tass: All right, so you will encounter trouble on the journey and must contend with it before reaching your destination.

Rev: That sounds about right.

Tass: You start out on your journey. Also, remember you are at the end of a downtime now, so you get to either heal all harm or get rid of a trouble.

Jake: And Navigate has the potential to give us another downtime, right?

Tass: It does. On a 10+, you get a downtime and see the strange sights and fun stuff. So it's much more relaxing than what Rev rolled.

Rev: Hmm.

All: [Laugh]

Megan: I will go ahead and use this to clear my Book Fever vice.

Tass: Nice. Okay.

Kim: I'm gonna heal my harm.

Tass: Okay.

Rev: Same.

Jake: I'm gonna clear Bleeding Out.

Tass: So most of this journey is pretty chill, actually. Again, I think you're all learning a little bit more about the ship. Jeffrey and Edwin are very good about literally teaching you the ropes. And of what you would think is about a seven day journey, it's the sixth day when I get to use my favorite Rev phrase — that a few things happen at once. The first is that a pigeon lands on the railing near whoever is navigating at the moment. We'll say Landara, still? Now that you're kind of in the home stretch?

Rev: Sure.

Tass: Yeah. There's a pigeon that lands there. And on its little foot there is a little tube tied off with some paper in it.

Kim: [Gasps]

Rev: I'll try to reach over for it and pluck it up and take the paper.

Tass: Yeah. It seems trained. It hops into your hand and lets you pluck that little scroll case off.

Rev: Yeah, I'll set it on like my shoulder and open the scroll case and see what's inside.

Kim: You're like a Disney princess.

Tass: [Laughs] It is just a tiny little scroll that you have to, like, unfurl. And it has a very, very small seal that is — it just looks like a little cotton plant. And when you break that and unscroll it, it says, "Don't come in until night. Douse all lights. Enter with the red ships." And that's all.

Landara: "There's a bird here from Cotton. I assume it'll go back to him. Is there anything you want to tell him? It's got to be tiny, though."

Megan: "Well, he knows we're on our way, I guess."

Landara: "Yeah. This pigeon just landed on the deck, and it's got his seal."

Kim: Is it possible for us to compare this letter from Cotton with, like, some other writing on, like, the map that we got from him? I'm just like, I'm so worried that, like, anyone could have bought a seal that has a cotton on it.

Tass: Yeah. I don't think you need to roll anything here. That the handwriting from what was signed as Dr. White is very different than the handwriting you see here.

Kim: Okay.

Rev: I want to size up this pigeon.

Tass: [Laughs]

Kim: Yeah.

Tass: It attacks immediately.

Rev: Oh god, I knew it.

Tass: It only does like pigeon damage, though, so it's not too bad.

Jake: "Do we want to warn him about Dr. White?"

Kim: "It's probably a good idea."

Jake: "I suppose there's the danger that it could be intercepted, though, but that seems worth the risk."

Kim: "Yeah."

Megan: "Yeah. Let him know."

Landara: "All right."

Rev: Guess I will write on the opposite side of ... Like, the unused side of the paper, and try to cram it back inside the scroll.

Tass: No problem. You squeeze in your new letter, and when you throw the pigeon, it ...

Megan: [Laughs]

Kim: Throws. Just, like ... Like a shot put.

Tass: Yeah. I said what I said.

Rev: I didn't understand how this worked. I spiked it.

Tass: [Laughs] Oh, god. It gets up and falls drunkenly off the ship, swims its ass back.

Rev: [Laughs]

Tass: No, yeah. When you release the pigeon, it turns and flies directly back the way it had come, which is directly the direction you're heading.

Landara: "I guess that's a good sign."

Kim: "Yeah. I mean, Cotton said that he had some gift of prophecy. It could be that he saw us coming and wanted to tell us how to best get there."

Megan: "Hopefully he also saw that this Dr. White wants him dead. But if not, at least he'll have a heads up."

Tass: Suddenly, Edwin from the crow's nest starts yelling.

Tass: EDWIN: Something on the horizon coming our way. Small ship.

Kim: "Is it red?"

Tass: EDWIN: Too far to see. Sails are kind of a gray. Looks like single mast. Must be small.

Landara: "Edwin, you ever heard of a ship called The Argonaut?"

Tass: EDWIN: [Incredulous] Yeah.

Landara: "How many masts has that got?"

Tass: EDWIN: Like four.

Megan: "Maybe they're friendly. I guess let's keep an eye out. Do we have a spyglass or something?"

Tass: EDWIN: I do. Should I come down?

Megan: "No. Stay up there." And I look at Jake. "Do you want to climb up there quick and take a look? I mean, I feel like of any of us, you'd recognize the most people."

Jake: I crack my fingers, and then crack my foot fingers ...

All: [Laugh]

Jake: And then swing my way up through the rigging to the crow's nest.

Tass: You get up there and he hands off the spyglass, if you want to take a look.

Jake: Yep.

Tass: Let's see a Size Up. This is a pretty nice spyglass, too. So you get a +1.

Jake: Nine.

Megan: Uh, can I help out?

Tass: Sure. Probably. How?

Megan: [Laughs] I think, you know, just as I say that, as he's climbing up. "Just keep an eye on it and wait until it gets close enough where you can see somebody on deck. But try to think of the people that we haven't seen in worlds yet, because ..." I don't know. I'm making shit up.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: Wait till you see the whites of their eyes!

Megan: Yeah. I'm like, I don't know. Because Tass has maybe put somebody we hadn't seen in here? So ...

All: [Laugh]

Jake: That felt more TJ than anything somebody who isn't TJ has done in this whole show.

Kim: Think of all the people you've ever met!

Tass: Yeah, sure. We like it. Spend the bond. [Laughs]

Megan: [Laughs]

Tass: So that gets you to a 10+.

Rev: I just imagine Megan on the ship yelling out the gibberish she just said to Jake, and everyone on the crew just going, "Are you okay? You feel all right? What do you mean Tass put people on the ship?"

All: [Laugh]

Jake: Uh, what here is useful to me or my crew?

Tass: I think when you're trying to keep that jumble of words in mind ...

Megan: Hey!

Tass: You're trying to spot somebody. You see some figures moving on the deck. It doesn't seem very many, because it is — it's a small little ship there. But after taking a moment to focus, you realize that you're not gonna be able to make out any specific features of anybody, because they're all skeletons.

Jake: Oh. Well, how about that? How can I safely ... Trying to think of how to word this. I want to say, maintain this journey?

Tass: You get the idea that you have definitely been spotted. You are a slightly bigger ship than they are. If you can see them, they can certainly see you. So if you want to do this safely, you've got to outmaneuver them. You've got to be able to skirt them in a way that they can't follow. And, you know, you've got time. You've got plenty of time. You know, you guys are still scoped out pretty far so that you can hardly even see that they're skeletons. So you have time to try something if you want to get around them without engaging.

Jake: All right. I will call down to the rest of the crew. "It's a boat full of skeletons, and I think they mean us ill. So we should probably take evasive maneuvers?"

Megan: "Oh, okay."

Kim: "Do they have any, like, particular flag? Or ... It's probably just the skeleton and the crossbones, right? I mean, that would be pretty explanatory."

Tass: Really, it's pretty bare bones.

All: [Laugh]

Tass: Like there isn't even there isn't even a name on the ship. Like it's just raggedy, and the wood looks old and cracked. The sails are a little tattered. There's not much in the way of detail.

Megan: It's just a regular human head with two arms crossing in front of it.

All: [Laugh]

Kim: Oh! That's so good.

Tass: [Sighs]

Jake: Yeah. I want to call out for whoever's steering to try and outmaneuver this ship.

Tass: All right, so in this case, there is a move called Outmaneuver. But I think what we're trying to do here actually, is escape, right? You don't want to engage with them. You're not trying to, like, put them at a disadvantage. You just want to avoid the fight, right?

Kim: Yeah.

Jake: Correct.

Tass: Okay. So whoever is navigating, whoever's heading this up, we're gonna roll Escape. Which is, when your ship's crew gets an opportunity to escape a situation, roll plus the ship's speed. On a hit, you get away, but choose one. On a 7 to 9, it's by the skin of your teeth, and the Fates choose one as well. The choices are, you take damage on the way out, you leave something important behind, or you leave a trail and something dangerous will follow. And on a miss, I will tell you the terrible sacrifice that you must pay to escape. Pay it or be caught.

Kim: Oof!

Jake: Good luck.

Rev: Thanks. Thanks.

Megan: At least it's like none of us is better at this than anyone else. Because we're using the ship's stats.

Rev: That's true.

Tass: That's true.

Kim: Yes. So does anyone else want to roll this and be responsible for the safety of the ship?

Tass: I will point out, Jake, if you did it, you would have the +1 from your Size Up.

Jake: Great point. I'd love to.

Tass: All right. So Jake the monkey slides down the ladder and takes over.

Rev: Yeah, I step away.

Kim: Just starts, like, whipping that wheel around with your long monkey arms.

Megan: The way it was meant to be.

Jake: Just like salt spray in my face, looking sternly at the horizon, my monkey hair blowing in the sea wind.

Rev: Just holding on to it with hands and feet, like a person who gets darts thrown at them at a carnival.

Jake: Using my tail to push off.

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: All right. I'm also gonna spend a point of luck.

Tass: Okay.

Jake: And that gets me a ten.

Tass: Nice! So you only have to pick one from the list. You take a damage on the way out, leave something important behind, or you leave a trail and something dangerous will follow.

Jake: Our ship was fully fixed up in this town, right?

Tass: That's correct.

Jake: Okay. Then I think we'll take some damage on the way out.

Tass: Okay. I think you're able to start skirting in a way that you're using the wind to your advantage. And they're still oncoming, but you know that you've caught a stride here where you're gonna have to get pretty close. But with your picked up speed, you're going to blow past them and get well out of sight before they're able to come about. That said, you're in range for a little bit. And the one cannon on their broadside takes a few shots, a few sail over, a few sail short, but one clips the aft of the ship, jarring you all a little and the ship takes one wreck.

Rev: Can we get any more details on this group as they pass by close enough to shoot at us?

Tass: Yeah. I don't think you need to roll a Size Up, here. Just you're able to see it looks like half a dozen what look like pirates. Just ratty clothes. And they are moving skeletons. They're quite mobile, limber, you know, running around, taking their shots. A few of them level some pistols and some long rifles that they're also firing towards you. And they're scrambling around trying to turn the ship about. But, of course, you know, they don't have any chance of catching you. But there's really there's nothing marked on the ship, nothing like that.

Landara: "Hey, what the hell is your deal?"

Tass: SKELETON: [Hisses, clacks teeth]

Landara: "Oh, okay."

Jake: I'm stuck trying to understand how a skeleton hisses. I'm, like, hissing as we go by. I'm like, [Hisses] does it need skin? [Hisses] Is that just off the bone? [Hisses] Huh.

Tass: I think you get the idea that when they open their mouths, it's the wind, like going through their open cranium. Yeah.

Megan: Do these count as people?

Tass: Yeah.

Megan: Uh, excellent. So as we are getting away, the closest we get to them, I'd love to try and use my Fox-Eyed oddity. So you may spend one luck to see the secret thoughts and feelings of the people around you.

Tass: Lovely. So you absolutely get thoughts from this crew. And it's pretty simple. It almost seems more like programing than actual thoughts. You know, you're used to connecting with people's minds. What you're getting here is almost like on a loop, this idea of protect the town, protect the doctor, kill anything that moves.

Megan: "Uh, these work for Doctor White. They're meant to kill us. That's all they're thinking, is protecting the doctor, and they're just wanting to kill us."

Kim: "Oh, shit. What if Doctor White already took over Plankton And that's why Cotton wanted us to wait until night and to douse all the lights?"

Jake: "That's probably the case." What is our timeline on this trip? Are we fortunate enough that we're going to be arriving at night, or are we gonna have to kill time?

Tass: You might have to kill a little time. But like, you know the vicinity of where you're going. If you just cut wide and go like around for a little bit, you won't be in too much trouble.

Rev: And so we aren't arriving ... We're on the sixth day right now. If we swing out, we can arrive during the night of the seventh day?

Tass: Correct?

Rev: Okay.

Jake: "Well, the longer we spend on the ocean here, the more of these things were probably going to have to contend with. Although I guess it's probably safe to say that they're also on land when we arrive." Or not land, right? Plankton's like a series of ships and boards and stuff, but ...

Rev: Deck on decks.

Jake: Yeah. But I guess we just need to keep a weathered eye.

Tass: Yeah. I mean, I think now that you know what to look for and you realize that this is happening, you know, everyone's on high alert and watching from every possible angle. And you absolutely do see a couple more ships on your journey, but you spot them quickly enough to take your evasive maneuvers and go wide. So on the evening of the seventh day, it's starting to get dark, and you see smoke on the horizon. You see these big billowing plumes of smoke coming up from some central spot on the horizon. And as you get closer, it's pretty evident that this is certainly where you'll find Plankton. And you're able to continue circling wide until it starts to get dark. So what's the approach here? Who's heading up trying to get into town?

Rev: What Jake said a second ago, like I wasn't even thinking about that we're trying to ... We're not trying to pull into a dock. We're trying to pull up to a bunch of other ships.

Tass: Mmhmm.

Rev: As we take this wide swing around, can we, like use the spyglass and get a sense of where ... Like, where's a space? What places look like they've been there a long time. It seems like if we pull up next to something that like comes and goes and hook on, they'd be like, well, you should know not to park here because this boat moves, or ... I don't — know what I mean?

Tass: Yeah, absolutely. Go ahead and give me a Size Up.

Jake: Here, take the spyglass that I stole from Edward.

Rev: Thanks.

Jake: Or Jeffrey. I'm not sure.

Tass: Edwin, thank you.

Jake: Ed Wynn. I love him.

Tass: [Laughs]

Jake: I love his ... I love his roles.

Rev: Nine.

Tass: You get one, or you can stick your nose somewhere you shouldn't and get an extra.

Rev: How does bond work with non-player characters? Like say that I have a bond with the ship?

Tass: Mmhmm.

Rev: How do I spend that bond?

Tass: That is pretty much just for standing your ground.

Rev: Oh, okay.

Tass: The ship can't spend its bond with you, so to speak, because it doesn't have bond with you.

Rev: Yeah. Gotcha, gotcha.

Tass: So it is your spendable thing for what might benefit it.

Rev: Okay.

Kim: Yeah. I mean, you can spend bond with NPCs to like, inspire them to greatness or to like, find their weakness. But I don't know if that really applies to, like, a ship.

Rev: I would like to inspire the ship to greatness and be faster.

Tass: [Laughs] I kind of like that, actually.

Rev: How can I safely dock at Plankton?

Tass: That's a good one. So as you zero in with this spyglass, you see this bizarre city floating in the ocean. The plumes of smoke you see coming mostly out of the center of what is thousands of ships. And they're not just floating there with planks between them. They've been, like, built together. There are huge chunks of docks that have been built that connect many of the ships so that they're all one large unit. Like they've literally built these things together to be this city of wood floating in the ocean. You see that some of the smoke is from buildings that are on fire. You see little flashes in the dimming daylight that you think must be gunfire or explosions of some kind. And this entire city is turning. Looking at it from this far with the spyglass, you get the idea that if you were to look at this city from above, from the air, it would look kind of like a giant ship's wheel, with big chunks of the ships and docks and things that were built out like the spokes. And it's ever-turning. There are ships on the outside that seem to be rigged up with their sails up to keep the city moving in a counterclockwise orientation. And as you're watching, you see some of the ships are pretty messed up. They've been destroyed, set on fire. Both some of the ones on the outer spokes and some of the ones that make this city what it is. But every two or three ships seem to be painted the same color, or at least have big splashes of paint on them. It might indicate some sort of districts or something like that. And as it shifts around, one of the smokiest, most on fire, most in-duress seeming districts, the outer ships are painted red. So there's a lot of smoke cover here. There's a lot going on. So if you were to enter, as the message says, you might be able to get in there pretty easily and overlooked by anyone that's watching.

Landara: "I think that's the spot. He said to wait for the red ships. I was thinking, wait, like we were gonna get an escort. But wait for them to turn around this circle. This city is moving in a circle. Wait for them to come around and dock there."

Jake: "All right. Let's see if we can't sneak that direction."

Landara: "Better douse the lights."

Megan: Yeah. Go around, start doing that.

Kim: Yeah.

Tass: Okay. I think this is going to be a Break In or Out, if you want to make it into the chosen area without being detected. And so, Landara, if you lead the charge on that, you get your +1 from your Size Up as well.

Rev: Okay.

Kim: Jeff is never getting that spyglass back.

Tass: [Laughs]

Rev: I am going to spend a point of luck.

Tass: All right.

Rev: [Quietly] Yeah. With my point of luck, that's a five.

Kim: [Gasps]

Jake: What?!

Megan: Oh ...

Jake: What did you roll?

Megan: Snake eyes, with a +1 Blood, with a +1 from my Size Up, with a +1 on the point of luck that I spent.

Kim: Man, welcome to being a player on The Critshow.

Rev: Oh, my god ...

Tass: [Laughs] Okay. So you maneuver the ship towards this spinning wheel of a city. As you get closer and closer, you are all clearly able to hear gunshots periodically ringing through the city, the occasional cry out of a voice in the distance. This is a battleground, for all intents and purposes. This city is under siege. As you make your way between these large spokes to get in a little deeper to an area where you think you can get docked while the city is moving, you actually nestle in pretty handily to a spot where there's a building on fire, giving big plumes of smoke that's gonna cover your approach. And as the crew runs to throw out lines and hop down and start binding the ship, holding it in place, part of the building explodes. Pieces of this wooden structure crash through the ship, splintering a piece of the hull and lighting your sails aflame.

SFX:

OUTRO MUSIC

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