

# Malevolent Maine

## Episode 14: Crinkle Face

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Malevolent Maine is a horror podcast, and may contain material not suitable for all audiences. Listener discretion is advised.

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### INTRO

A cranberry bog that steals a boy every generation, only to every now and then bring them back. A famous singer's whose spirit still lingers around the place where he died, seeking revenge for his wrongful death. And a cryptid that trawls the Downeast shores. These are the stories we're working to bring you in the coming weeks. Our show continues to grow because of listeners like you. You've shared our show with your friends and family, promoted us on social media, and waited patiently for each new episode.

If you'd to support us further, consider purchasing a shirt from our merch store available on our website or becoming a Patreon supporter. In the coming weeks we'll be releasing some behind the scenes content and interviews with our screw. Those will be released exclusively on Patreon, so join our Malevolent Mob at [www.patreon.com/malevolentmaine](http://www.patreon.com/malevolentmaine). Thank you.

You see something out of the corner of your eye, but when you turn there's nothing there. You could've sworn you saw a pair of dark eyes staring out at you from a crooked, broken face. There it is again, in the reflection of the window pane. Every time you try to focus on the face, it disappears, but you know it's there. It's watching you, this crinkled face, but more than that. It's inviting you. It wants you to join it.

This is Malevolent Maine.

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Guys, what was that?

I saw it with my own eyes

No, seriously, what was that?

It's just not scientifically possible.

I can't explain it.

Oh my God. Oh my God. Oh my God.

This stuff is wild, man. It's real wild.

But... what was that?

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Heads up, MMers, today's story is a warning to you and your loved ones. We'll admit, this one is a little more aggressive than our recent stories, but we felt the need to get this out there, to alert you to the potential dangers you could experience around any corner.

You may have heard of the nation-wide "Crinkle Face" trend that's been making its way across Instagram, TikTok, and the rest of the internet. It's a viral image that once seen, has some unsettling side effects. While there have been Crinkle Face sightings all over the United States, including Houston, Texas, Boston Massachusetts, and Buffalo New York, the origins of this disturbing image have their origins right here in our home state, and as recently as just this week, there have been confirmed Crinkle Face sightings here in Maine.

So what is Crinkle Face, exactly? Crinkle Face appears to be a doodle or drawing of a cartoon face, not too dissimilar to the famous yellow "smiley face" that everyone knows. The lines appear to have been done with a trembling hand, as the face isn't a perfect circle, but rather shaky or "crinkled." There are two shaky X-es where its eyes should be and a wrinkled smile

stretches from one side of its face to the other. A single strand of hair, styled in a loop-the-loop sprouts from its forehead. That's it. It's a simple doodle that can be done in seconds, and yet it appears to be so much more.

Now, disclaimer, we have not seen a real Crinkle Face drawing. For reasons we'll get into shortly, it would be impossible for us to see an actual one and still be able to bring you this podcast. What we're describing, and what we've reproduced for this episode's cover art, are based on descriptions collected from several Crinkle Face victims, though they may not be in the right mental state to be taken at face value. It is unclear just how one can create a true Crinkle Face, but the facsimile we're using does not carry the devastating curse of a true drawing. We would never subject our fans, nor ourselves, to something so dangerous. Be warned however, there are true Crinkle Faces out there, and their power is nothing to scoff at.

Crinkle Faces have been reported as doodles in the corner of subway advertisements, graffitied onto abandoned buildings, and drawn into the first and grime on old cars. It has been found on abandoned notes and scribbled in the margins of obscure books. There appears to be no rhyme or reason to where the Crinkle Face appears, nor who is creating them.

Seeing a true Crinkle Face has horrific results. Over a short period of time, perhaps three days, maybe a week, the viewer will begin to see more and more Crinkle Faces, usually out of the corner of their eyes, sometimes reflected in a window or bathroom mirror. As time passes, these Crinkle Faces will become more and more abundant, popping at the person's favorite shopping and dining spots, their place of work, and even their home. When the victim turns to look closely, the Crinkle Faces seem to vanish and the person is left to question whether they truly saw what they thought they did.

Over time, Crinkle Faces begin to appear everywhere, replacing the faces of people in photographs and eventually in real life. One known victim claimed that wherever he went, Crinkle Face was

watching him. This unfortunate victim had recently attended a county fair and claimed everyone there was Crinkle Face, before getting into his car and ramming it repeatedly into anything he could manage in the crowded parking lot.

The final stage of what the experts are calling Crinkle madness results in the victim seeing a Crinkle Face in place of their own. This seems to be the last break from reality. The victim snaps, often disfiguring their own face, cutting and smashing their features so they more resemble the terrific sight they see in the mirror. In the end, a Crinkle Face victim will attempt an act of mass violence and destruction. They will not relent from this heinous crime and more often than not they must be stopped by use of lethal force.

One victim in Cincinnati, went door to door in her apartment complex, smashing the faces of anyone who answered with a hammer she kept under her sink. Another victim suddenly started pushing people into oncoming traffic on a busy L.A. street. A third person in Vermont blocked the doors to their church one Sunday morning, then lit it on fire. In all of these cases there were multiple fatalities, including the Crinkle Face victim.

We tell you this not to glorify the terrible acts of violence but to express the severity of these actions and provide you with necessary warnings. Unfortunately, the rest of this story doesn't get any better.

Crinkle Face victims have been confirmed since 1985, though we have begun to suspect they have been around for much, much longer. The victim often leaves behind a startling amount of Crinkle Face evidence - faces in pictures that have been scribbled over, notebooks filled with Crinkle Face drawings, and deep carvings into wooden surfaces. These images don't seem to have the same impact as a true Crinkle Face, and it is unknown at this what makes them different.

Several internet theories offer some suggestions. One is that while in the throes of late stage Crinkle Madness, the victim

cannot create an accurate depiction of what they are seeing pop up all around them. Another claims that it is not until the final stage, now driven completely mad, that a Crinkle Madness sufferer can recreate the cursed image. They are said to leave one behind, usually in an obscure place to be passed onto a next victim, before committing their final, murderous act.

The idea of a cursed drawing isn't new. Author Robert W. Chambers wrote of the Yellow Sign in his book, *The King in Yellow*. Seeing this symbol of glyph would cause insane insanity to anyone who observed it. Vikings claimed that a certain rune, if carved correctly and viewed under the light of a full moon, would drive a man mad. And there are many more examples passed down from ancient history.

Could Crinkle Face be a modern example of these historic cursed images?

With more and more cases popping up all over the country - and it does appear to be a uniquely North American problem - we sent Tom to do some investigating on the origins of this strange drawing.

Researching a cursed image is not without its own inherent dangers. We cautioned Tom to take every precaution and double and triple check before digging deep into unknown sources. The last thing we wanted was for Tom to become a victim of the very thing he was studying. We would also advise our listeners who may want to further investigate this mystery themselves to be extremely careful. One glimpse of Crinkle Face is all it takes for the curse - of that is what in fact it is - to take hold.

Tom is still on the road, heading back from his latest investigation. Here he is with what he found in the initial stages of his investigation.

**TOM:** Right. So, surprisingly enough, it seems that Crinkle Face started right here in Maine, a lot earlier than anyone ever predicted. In 1918, Brian and Mary Packard, of

Orrington, just south of Bangor, gave birth to a son, Charles. Brian had served three years in France, fighting in World War 1, and would later claim that it was his exposure to the chlorine gas in the trenches that caused the deformities in little Charlie..

Charlie Packward was born with facial irregularities that warped his features out of recognition. Several surgeries corrected the worst of these deformities, but left his visage scarred and twisted. The Packwards were heartbroken, but determined to love their son and treat him as normal as they could.

**TOM:** Charlie went to school, and unfortunately, like many kids, his peers were cruel to him, often calling him Charlie Crinkle or, even more vicious, Crinkle Face. They would often circle Charlie and chant "Crinkle Face, Crinkle Face," over and over again. It was more than the Packards could bear. By the time Charlie was ten, his parents had pulled him from school and secluded him at home. He wasn't seen outside for nearly fifty years.

The Packard home is still there, located on Fields Pond Road. It's well worn, though attempts have been made to maintain it. It's a small home, two bedrooms, with a single bath. It has been converted into a camp whose current residents live in Massachusetts and sometimes rent it out on AirBnB. Looking at the house it's hard to imagine a young child being confined in this house. As far as local stories go, Charlie never went outside. There were some rumors he would go for walks late at night, and some night-owls returning from trips to Bangor would claim to see a Crinkle-faced youth walking the backroads. These stories, of course, remained unconfirmed.

What is known is that Charlie Packard, known as Charlie Crinkle, lived in the house on Fields Pond Road for his entire life. He was rarely seen, and even then mostly just glimpses from a window as someone drove by. He became a local legend, akin to the character Boo Radley from Harper Lee's classic novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Brian and Mary hardly ever left their home,

only going to work and into town for food and supplies when the need arose.

The Packards were shunned by the town. Old friends suddenly found themselves too busy and no one came to visit. No one asked the Packards for donations for the holiday church drives, no one stopped by with an extra casserole, or asking to sign a petition. The Packards were left alone in their corner, and the town did its best to forget they ever existed.

Still, it's hard to imagine the whispered rumors about the boy with the wrecked face wouldn't somehow find their way back to Charlie, and that, especially, as he grew older, he wouldn't understand how much he had been shunned.

Records indicate that Brian Packard died in 1956. If Charlie attended his own father's funeral, there are no records to indicate this. Life remained much the same for the Packards as it had been. That all changed in the summer of 1976.

Here's Tom again:

**TOM:** So... a couple of unrelated incidents converged in July of '76. The first was that Mary Packard passed away, most likely of natural causes. She was eighty-two. No one is sure exactly when she died, but at some point, Charlie Crinkle left the house, possibly going into town for help. The second was the Heather Winn case.

Many of our long-time listeners will probably remember hearing about the Heather Winn kidnapping. It is one of Maine's most famous cases in that it caught national attention and nearly the entire state turned out looking for the missing nine year old.

On July 5th, the day after the Bicentennial celebration, Heather Winn was abducted about a block from her home in Bangor. At the time no one knew who had taken the girl or why, but a strange note demanding money and expressing the need for "sacrifices to open the door" was found not far from where Winn was kidnapped.

The entire state of Maine went into a panic. Rumors began to swirl that the little girl had been seen being forced into a green sedan seen driving south. Search parties were hastily put together, combing the area not just around Bangor, but the entire state. Several innocent drivers were pulled from their vehicles and accosted on the side of more than one country road. There was even talk of a Satanic cult that had invaded the state and people began whispering about the Happy Sun Folk and whatever ritual they had been performing the night of their massacre back in 1967.

The five days that the state searched for little Heather Winn was some of the most tense days Maine had ever experienced. There was a palpable fear in the air, and the old timers still talk about the sense of dread that seemed to hang thick in the air that summer.

It was on the fourth day of the search, July 8th, that Charlie Crinkle set out from his home, seeking help after the death of his mother. He was fifty-eight years old and hadn't been seen outside his home for fifty years. He had no way of knowing his first steps from his door would be his last.

**TOM:** So, before I go any further, I want to be clear that in no way was Charlie Packard responsible for or connected to the disappearance of Heather Winn. In fact, she was found safe and sound, with her estranged father in Dover, New Hampshire less than a week after her disappearance. It seems the man had kidnapped his daughter and taken her to a hotel. The strange note found near her last known location appears to be unrelated to the girl's disappearance. To this day, no one is quite sure what the note was talking about. Its author and meaning are a complete mystery.

So, Charlie had nothing to do with the Winn girl's disappearance, but that didn't stop what was coming next. See, the whole state was on edge. Everyone was out checking the woods for her. Some of these groups were organized by

the police, but many of them were just bands of men getting together in someone's pickup and cruising the backroads looking for traces of the girl.

Now, the rest of this is hearsay, but I have it on pretty good authority from people who were there at the time. A couple of young men, nineteen and twenty year old, got into the back of a truck and began looking for the missing Winn girl. They packed a cooler of beer and a couple of baseball bats. This was really just an excuse to drive around and cause a little mischief, under the guise of helping search.

These guys, former football players at Brewer High, came upon Charlie Crinkle walking up the side of Fields Pond Road, about two miles from his house. They knew the rumors about him, of course. Everyone in the area did. In the decades he had been in seclusion, Charlie Crinkle had become something of a local boogeyman. When these guys came up on Charlie, generations worth of fear and hatred rose up. What they did next was horrible.

As near as we can tell, the men pulled up beside Charlie and began yelling at him. They apparently did not like his answers and pulled in front of him and got out of the truck. They continued to question Charlie and it became evident that these good ole boys believed Charlie responsible for the girl's abduction. Whether they truly believed this, or bolstered by beer and a historical mistrust of the so-called Crinkle Face, they simply allowed themselves to believe it, is unknown. What is known is that the shouts and accusations soon turned to shoves and heavy punches.

Charlie, who hadn't spoken to anyone other than his immediate family in the last fifty years, was scared and tried to run away. The ruffians chased after him, swinging their baseball bats and aiming kicks at the prone man. They chased him to the shores of Fields Pond. There, caught up in their own violence, the five men severely beat Charlie Packard before drowning him

in the pond. By the time they were done with him, Charlie's already disfigured face was distorted beyond recognition.

It was only the confession of the young men, themselves, parading the body back to the local police station, proud to have caught the child abductor, that allowed the authorities to make a positive identification.

**TOM:** They never charged the men with any crime. With the actual kidnapper caught and the entire Packard family now deceased, the matter was quietly swept under the rug. The local boogeyman was no more, and the less said about it, the better. For a time the story of Charlie Crinkle was forgotten.

But as long-time listeners of our show are sure to realize, the story doesn't end there.

Four years later a twenty-five year old man, Lonnie Jones, went on a murderous rage at the local watering hole, Ray's Tavern. The reports from that day indicated that Jones walked into the bar around four in the afternoon. He pulled an eight-inch kitchen knife from a pocket of his jacket. He began slashing and stabbing. In the end, nine people were killed, and another four suffered serious injuries. Jones was only stopped when the owner, Ray Sullivan, came out from his back office with the shotgun he kept back there for security, leveled it at the attacker, and pulled the trigger.

Witnesses described Jones as insane, raving and spitting nonsense. They said his face was twisted in a mask of rage, but that it was hideously scarred. It was later determined that Jones had sliced his own face in the hours before he ventured into the tavern. Twenty-three lacerations were discovered on his face.

Police also discovered that all of the pictures in Jones' home had been defaced with a twisted version of a smiley face with x-ed out eyes.

We were unable to get anyone familiar with the case to admit on the record that Lawrence "Lonnie" Jones was one of the young men who had accosted Charlie Crinkle that day in 1976. Off the record however...

As near as we can tell, Lonnie Jones was the first Crinkle Face victim, but he would not be the last.

The following year in Merrimack, New Hampshire, forty-three year, Norman White took a crowbar into the local grocery store and started smashing everyone he encountered. Twelve people died in the attack. Again, White was discovered to have disfigured his own face. A spiral bound notebook was discovered in his trailer. It was filled with the same crinkle faces Lonnie Jones had drawn on his photographs.

From there Crinkle Face spread throughout the country. As near as the records can determine it's not a one to one ratio, with one Crinkle-Faced person infecting one new victim. Nor is it a geometric progression. This is no zombie apocalypse scenario. Instead it appears there are often one to three new infections for each Crinkle incident. There are entire websites dedicated to tracking Crinkle crimes, though the data is not a direct line. Often assumptions are made linking cases. Investigators do the best they can, but it is often impossible to track the Crinkle Madness victims, as very few of them survive their experience to explain their motives.

That isn't to say that all viewers of the cursed image die. A handful of them survive their violent final act. They are often kept in psychiatric facilities, often sedated. Crinkle victims are often vocal, though very little of what they say makes sense. They spend the rest of their days in a chemical induced haze, restrained and isolated.

As part of his investigation, Tom visited the Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center, in Bangor to speak with Maine's only known survivor of the Crinkle Face infection, Callum Brown.

Brown is a 46 year old man, who in 2002 brought a 3 foot length of 1 inch thick chain into a Friday night showing of *Sweet Home Alabama* at a Lewiston movie theater, and under the darkness of the theater, started swinging. Thirteen people were killed, four more were permanently injured, and one victim remains in a coma to this day. Movie-goers were able to restrain Brown until police arrived.

At his 2003 trial, Brown was determined to be incompetent to stand trial and was instead sentenced to life the rest of his life at the Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center. With permission from his family and the facility, Tom was allowed to interview Callum Brown, though not record it. Both his family and the facility had early access to this episode and were allowed to edit parts of Tom's report they deemed inappropriate. We thank all parties for allowing this interview and hope that the insight gained from the experience will help us better understand this disturbing phenomenon.

Out of respect for the victims of Brown's attack, we have not mentioned any of the individuals or the violent act itself. Some of the things Brown told Tom are quite unsettling, and more sensitive listeners may want to skip this portion. Here's Tom...

**TOM:** Right, so I was led through some brightly lit hallways and through I don;t know how many sets of double doors. The deeper we went the more the doors appeared to be locked and required a key card to get through. I was accompanied by Dr. Jessica Young and an orderly named Josh.

Callum Brown is a small man, maybe five and half feet tall. His face was covered with a day or two of gray stubble, and had a wild mop of white curly hair on his head. He was wearing a white jumpsuit, shackled at the ankles, and chained to the table at each wrist. He looked whimsical, like some sort of cartoon character, but that was before I saw his face.

Callum's face was a mess of scars, thick white lines that criss-crossed his face. One eye was smaller than the other, which I learned later was because he had shattered the orbital bones around it by smashing his face into his bathroom mirror over and over again. His lips had been sliced in half, with the left half of his lower lip gone entirely. His nose was crooked and overall I had the impression of a broken face.

At first I don't think he realized we were in the room with him. He seemed to be looking at something in the corner of the empty room, but then his eyes darted around. It was like he was watching a bird flying around the room.

Finally I was able to get his attention. His voice was high-pitched and melodic. There was a soft, fuzzy quality to his speech that I assumed was because of the medication they kept him on. He greeted me warmly, like we were old friends and agreed to answer my questions as best he could.

I asked him about where he had seen the Crinkle Face image, but Dr. Young stopped me. They don't use that term as it upsets Callum. Instead they call it "the totem," a more generic term meant to maintain his tranquility. Callum couldn't or wouldn't tell me where he had first seen it, but he did tell me about the first time he knew something was wrong with him.

He said he woke up in the middle of the night and went to the bathroom. As he finished up, he glanced into the mirror over the sink. He said he saw Crinkle Face over his left shoulder. He screamed and spun around, but of course nothing was there. He turned on the light, convinced there was something in the bathroom with him. When he couldn't find anything, he said he spent the next six hours scrubbing the bathroom mirror, convinced it must have been a smudge or a stain.

Tom said Brown wouldn't talk any more about the madness that rapidly descended over him. Nor would he talk about the heinous act he committed that night at the movie theater. He claimed to have no knowledge of that whatsoever. At one point he started to shut down, rapidly squeezing his hands open and shut, and closing his eyes tight, shaking his head back and forth. Dr. Young tried to end the meeting, but Tom begged for one more question.

**TOM:** I asked him to tell me about his face and why he had done that to it. He told me - and I wrote this down as fast as I could so I could get it word for word - he told me, "The face I saw wasn't my own. But I wanted it to be. It was my real face. My *secret* face. It had always been mine, I just never knew it. And now that it was out and in the open, I *needed* it to be my face. Then he started chanting or singing. It was like a kid's nursery rhyme. It freaked me out, gave me goosebumps, but I wrote it down word for word:

"Crinkle Face, Crinkle Face  
He is hiding in your space  
When you see him it's too late  
Crinkle Face has sealed your fate."

After that, Tom said, Callun Brown began smashing his face into the table and laughing. The orderly restrained Brown who continued to shriek with laughter and Dr. Young escorted Tom out of the room.

The Crinkle Face phenomenon has spread to nearly every state. There are not many attacks each year, but the ones that happen are quite devastating and often make the national news. Because of the unique nature of these crimes, or the information discovered later, the truth of the attacks are not always reported.

The danger of the Crinkle Face drawing is clearly dangerous. The curse placed upon the crooked face is an insidious one,

infecting an unsuspecting victim who has done nothing more than seen the doodle sketched somewhere. The question remains however, just what is the drawing?

In life, Charlie Packard, the little boy who grew into a man confined to his own home, was, by all records, a harmless person. Unlike the literary Boo Radley who stabbed his own father with a pair of scissors, there are no reports of violence in Charlie's history.

Still, a life of forced seclusion, hidden away from others, watching as children played games, teenagers found their first loves, and adults started families of their own, must have worn on the man they called Charlie Crinkle. Decades of watching the world move on without him must have caused resentment to flourish in his heart. Trapped alone with no one but his mother as a companion, could Charlie have grown bitter and spiteful?

The whispers, the rumors, the name-calling and the jump rope chants, all mocking Charlie Crinkle and warning others to stay away from the innocent boy, must have reached Charlie's ears, if only muffled through the glass panes of his windows.

Could the sorrow at the loss of his mother, the fear and pain of his own brutal assault and murder, and the lack of justice for those involved caused Charlie Packard's spirit to seek revenge?

That is one of the leading theories involving the Crinkle Face drawings. Somehow, Charlie Crinkle's spirit is haunting the world, paying back a world that hated and feared him. His soul yearns for revenge against a world that left him behind.

The other theory regarding the Crinkle Face drawing that appear not just in Maine but all over this country, is that all of the negative energies Charlie felt, especially those in the moments of his death, have manifested themselves into a deadly symbol that infects the world, attacking innocents, just as Charlie himself was.

The drawing or, sigil, as one paranormal expert called the crooked smiley face, is not sentient, not thinking or feeling. In the moment of death, Charlie Packard's negative emotions condensed, concentrated into a singularity, represented by the drawing. It is all hate and rage, and it seeks a host, albeit a temporary one, to act upon those dark emotions before being passed on.

After all his research, we asked Tom what he thought:

**TOM:** Me? Personally, I tend to think it's the second theory. Charlie was misunderstood and needlessly shamed, but I don't believe he was a bad person. I have to imagine he would just want some well-deserved peace, not vengeance.

To date, there are no cases of the Crinkle Face image transferring insanity through a shared intent image, as best as we can tell. In most cases the crinkle faces seen on internet forums and social media groups appear to be the benign kind, like those discovered in Lonnie Jones' apartment, in Norman White's notebook, or sometimes inexplicably drawn on the walls of Callum Brown's cell. Viewing them only creates that general sense of unease one experiences when viewing the childhood possessions of a serial killer or reading the inane teachings of a deranged cult leader.

With that said, we would advise our listeners to be careful digging too deep. One never knows when one will come across a true Crinkle Face image. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to who gets infected - men, women, children, and the elderly. The chances of actually seeing a true Crinkle Face are fairly low, nearly nonexistent, but...

All it takes is one glimpse. If you think you have seen a true Crinkle Face, there is not much you can do. Your best bet is to try and seclude yourself away from others. Contact your authorities or mental health professionals. You do not have much time before the Crinkle Madness sets in and you lose control of your actions. Remember, as impossible as it seems, you will

become a threat to the public, and you should do what you can to mitigate this.

To date, there has been only one Crinkle Face sighting this year in Maine. Luckily that person was stopped before she could commit an act of mass violence. That does mean there is most likely a true Crinkle Face sigil out there. Hopefully, it remains undiscovered and whatever dark power it holds fades with time, rendering it inert. History tells us the chances of that happening are slim, however. Usually we ask our listeners to keep their eyes open, but this time, perhaps it's better to keep them closed.

Before we go, as this is our last episode before the end of the month, we would be remiss if we didn't wish all of you a Happy Halloween. All Hallow's Eve is a holiday that is near and dear to our hearts. It's a day where the spirit world is just a bit closer to our own. It's a time of ghouls, ghosts, and goblins, and fond memories of haunted houses and night time trick or treating no doubt influenced us in fundamental ways. This Halloween, put out your jack o-lantern, light your black flame candle, and set out your Ouija board. Keep your eyes open for any spirits whose path you may cross. You never know... you may just end up on a future episode of Malevolent Maine.

Stay safe out there, Maine.

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Malevolent Maine is Lucas Knight, Lucas Wilson, and myself, Chris Estes.

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While there, don't forget to check our merch store. And, if you're so inclined, support us on Patreon at [patreon.com/malevolentmaine](http://patreon.com/malevolentmaine)

Thank you for listening to Malevolent Maine.

And as always, stay safe out there, Maine.

