

RQG – 19 – Oops!

Content Warnings

- Undead & skeletons
- Physical violence & injury (inc. against animals)
- Fire
- Bodily remains
- Financial threat
- Comedic sexism
- Mentions of: explosions, burns, blood, rot, food, death
- SFX: fire & explosions, smashing, water, loud vocalisations

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello again and welcome to episode 19 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall in London, as always, and with me again is:

JAMES

James Ross

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

BEN

Ben Meredith

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LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

ALEX

And who are you playing?

LYDIA

Oh, it's back to me, ohI'm not really used to this! Okay, I'm playing Sasha Racket and she's fine.

BEN

(Laughter)

Zolf Smith, who is not going to tell you about his back story.

BRYN

Hamid the halfling sorcerer.

JAMES

Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham, the best one.

ALEX

Ah yes.

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JAMES

If you listen to our fans.

ALEX

Yes.

BEN

Hey, hey, hey, everyone will get a moment to shine. If you chose to be a roaming id you would get the attention too.

(Laughter)

BRYN

You missed three letters off of that last word.

(Laughter)

ALEX

So, before we start, I want to give a quick shoutout to Paul, you know who you are, thanks loads for the assets that you sort of chucked my way. Effectively, what it is, is ...

LYDIA

You're being vague enough that I'm going to assume that it's something really good.

ALEX

No, I'm going to follow it up. Are you ready? You ready? Currently we've been telling everyone about the SRD, the online system reference document which is free, 'cos it's open source gaming system. There's a pay version which is very, very cheap available from iPad which is called PFRPGRD which is the same thing, it's just available offline which helps 'cos we have to turn obviously Wi-Fi off and things like that when it comes to the recording equipment and it also allows me to do things quicker and organise things. It has sped up the process for prepping certainly a lot for me and certainly it will be doing in the next session. Also who put me on some other fun programmes called **I Crypt** and **I Fumble** which instead of just leaving it as a big wishy-washy oh you do extra damage, no, no, no, no, if I so choose we can have it so that it generates really awful effects instead, you know, do you remember when I once said when Hamid mucked up his magic and something bad happened and we went, "Yeah I'll let him off this time"? Not anymore.

(Laughter)

Oh no. Now I've got all of the tools I need to ruin your days.

LYDIA

Yay.

BRYN

It's cool, I'm pretty sure I'm rolled my full quota of wands for this campaign.

(Laughter)

JAMES

I think we all have.

(Laughter)

ALEX

So, quick recap, obviously everything with the Simulacrum, you guys are now investigating the scrapbook which was found after your first investigation. It led you via Beaming Gussets Emporium let's call it and after a brief stint of Zolf definitely not sharing anything but discovering there was some true adamantine from that metal shard, you decided to head off to the British Museum to chase up the origami swan.

JAMES

Wherein a powerful visual metaphor for the decline of Bertie's dynasty.

(Laughter)

Incompetence.

(Laughter)

An artefact previously was knocked over blasting a massive hole in the wall and creating a lot of chaos and now probably some violence.

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ALEX

Oh, it's so exciting.

LYDIA

Yay!

JAMES

It was knocked over by Bertie's only artefact which is an incompetent dog.

(Laughter)

It got me both figuratively and literally.

ALEX

He's your only bit of Brutey.

JAMES

Yeah, oh God, he is as well.

ALEX

Protective.

JAMES

Yeah.

ALEX

So, we'll pick up where we left off. The curator had just run outside, you guys were dashing to just get out of the immediate area and as that swirling cloud of sort of grey blue mist starts expanding and expanding from that broken vase, or vase, I know, I'm going to keep doing that, we have US listeners, they get very annoyed at me, and as it expands and expands and expands it starts to coalesce suddenly into four distinct forms.

LYDIA

No, they could be squares, triangles.

JAMES

We released those French bandits from that thing.

ALEX

Four skeletons.

JAMES

Ahhhh.

ALEX

The first one that forms has a glowing crown hovering above its head, a blue flame, it still has the tatters of clothes upon him what looks like was once a bandolier has slumped and is empty but he wheels in one in each hand a simitar.

LYDIA

Oooh.

ALEX

Then three other skeletons appear again coalescing from the dust dotted out and they are wielding broadswords. Now, of these, the lead skeleton, let's call it, the one with the crown, immediately places itself and takes stock of its surroundings as do the other three and we will enter **UNCLEAR initiative?** **04:21** order.

LYDIA

Yay!

ALEX

So the first thing that you guys will notice as well is that the explosion appears to have blocked off one of the side entrances from the room so there is only one way in, one way out, the way which the curator legged it. So to reiterate, in the middle we have an enormous tank full of flesh golem, to the left a crystal of banshee which appears unbroken and one hopes it stays that way, to the right of the statue of Everard, at the back is one of the stages which has been knocked over along with a big display and what was the vase, vase, is now long gone and the weapons are actually near where Sasha and ...

BEN

Zolf.

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ALEX

Zolf are currently loitering. Hamid is nearest to the statue and Bertie is probably nearest the banshee. So, without further ado, the first skeleton charges Sasha.

LYDIA

No!

ALEX

It takes a swing with a broken simitar and misses formidably

(Sword sound effects)

About its turn. Then, Hamid, you're up.

BRYN

Hamid backs off behind Zolf and casts magic missile at the skeleton in front of Sasha.

ALEX

Yep.

BRYN

And does 3 damage.

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ALEX

3 damage.

BRYN

D4 feels so pathetic to roll.

[Laughter]

Just no weight or noise to them.

BEN

No.

ALEX

Okay, then ...

BEN

...a hammer.

ALEX

Then the king skeleton, we'll call him the king skeleton, you have no more context than that, the guy with the floating crown above his head is not that big a leap, surveys the situation, seems significantly more intelligent than the others which are just a bit like

(Wailing)

Whereas ...

(Laughter)

That's my Skeletor, I'm glad you liked it.

You banged my head. I'll get you He-Man. So the larger skeleton king creature, wielding its two simitars, looks around, looks left, looks right and then just straight out charges Bertie. Then it takes a double slash at Bertie.

JAMES

Oooo.

ALEX

Now, gets critical. What's your AC Bertie?

JAMES

20.

ALEX

20?

JAMES

Yeah.

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ALEX

Doesn't confirm but it does get a hit. Deal it. 4 and then the second attack does not hit. So it gets 1 attack, hit, that does 4 damage.

JAMES

Okay, so now on to 19 health points.

ALEX

Yep.

LYDIA

A lot of us would like to stop.

(Laughter)

ALEX

It takes attack and then opens its mouth and goes

(Wailing)

LYDIA

You're going to really enjoy editing.

ALEX

Oh, it's going to be great, I'm going to hate myself so much.

LYDIA

Hearing that through all the different mics at the same time.

ALEX

Oh yes, at which point the second skeleton in order makes a dash for Brutor.

LYDIA

No! Brutor! Does Brutor notice? We'll see.

ALEX

And probably doesn't hit, let's see.

BRYN

What is a dog's AC?

ALEX

Does not hit.

BRYN

Ah.

ALEX

Does not hit.

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BRYN

But it's a small creature so it won't be terrible.

ALEX

Mm hmm at which point the other skeleton takes its attacks.

JAMES

How badly did we all roll?

ALEX

Pretty bad.

JAMES

Well, I was fine.

ALEX

And takes a swing at Zolf.

BEN

Cool.

ALEX

Your AC's also high isn't it?

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BEN

18.

ALEX

Misses. So Sasha, you're up.

LYDIA

I stab the dude that stabbed me twice.

ALEX

(Laughter)

Make your attacks and you get both of them 'cos you're not moving and, yeah, go for it.

LYDIA

Okay, first one 2. Dammit.

ALEX

That's a miss.

LYDIA

That's a miss, alright. 18.

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ALEX

18?

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

18 is a hit.

LYDIA

Yay! Then I roll my meagre D4 minus 1. Nought. I do nought damage. I do nothing, I do 1 minus 1.

ALEX

Well it's obvious though, I mean what happens is Sasha goes ah! An enemy! I'll get it in the liver!

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

Or kidneys.

LYDIA

Yeah.

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ALEX

Oh! What's happening?

LYDIA

I get one of them in a really nice, practised angle right under the ribs.

ALEX

And do nothing.

LYDIA

Nothing.

BEN

A xylophone.

(Laughter and noises)

JAMES

The thigh bone's connected to the ...

ALEX

(Laughter)

Follow that thought 'cos it's your turn.

JAMES

Right, so Bertie is facing off against King Skeleton.

ALEX

That's the one.

JAMES

Who's just made what noise?

ALEX

(Wailing)

JAMES

(Wailing)

Right back in his face.

(Laughter)

Direct eye contact with him during that and then Bertie swings his magic sword.

ALEX

Yep.

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JAMES

And draw it first.

ALEX

You will have to draw it first so you will be basically provoking an attack of opportunity by virtue of drawing.

JAMES

I have no real choice about that do I?

ALEX

You could not draw.

JAMES

That's worse.

ALEX

Oh, there's no better choice. That's not what you asked, you said there was no other choice.

JAMES

That's fine, I will draw my magic sword.

ALEX

Yep, that's fine, it decides to take the attack opportunity and does not hit.

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JAMES

So magic sword and I swing it.

(Wailing)

Roll?

ALEX

Yep.

JAMES

That is 11, my attack bonus is 7 with the bastard sword, so that's 18.

ALEX

18 is a hit.

JAMES

Lovely. What are we on now?

BEN

D10 is it?

JAMES

D10 plus 4 for damage.

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ALEX

There you go.

LYDIA

Oh.

JAMES

6.

LYDIA

Yay!

ALEX

Okay.

JAMES

So 10 in total. Yes, 10 total.

(Over speak)

Killing machine. Made of murder.

ALEX

The skeleton goes

(Wailing)

As you hit it.

JAMES

(Wailing)

(Laughter)

BEN

UNCLEAR The fun of playing? 09:55 Simon.

(Laughter)

ALEX

Zolf, you're up.

BEN

Okay.

ALEX

In a nice small room where you don't have to run everywhere to get involved.

BEN

Yes, I'm going to take a 5 foot step here.

ALEX

Ooo, 5 foot step between the two skeletons.

BEN

Yes, basically because it gives Sasha more of an opportunity to flank someone if she wants to.

ALEX

Wise.

BEN

And then I'm going to prod the one nearest Hamid and give it scurvy.

(Laughter)

ALEX

Can you read me the description of scurvy?

BEN

So it's a touch attack, they get a **UNCLEAR same verdict with? 10:29**, 4 negates it, and he's got spell resistance so ...target contracts advanced scurvy, constantly fatigued, and this is the important bit, suffers from bone pain.

(Laughter)

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So I don't know if this will be any worse for skeletons.

ALEX

Now what I'm looking up is quite literally whether this affects skeletons and if it does if it affects them worse or better.

BEN

That's minus 1 strength and deck space checks, wounds easily plus damaged feet, UNCLEAR bleed effects? 10:53 loose teeth.

(Laughter)

BRYN

That's going to look really stupid on a skeleton.

BEN

And slow to heal.

ALEX

Okay.

BEN

So yes, I don't need to roll.

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ALEX

And can you read me the technical stats? 'Cos it may be immune to this.

BEN

UNCLEAR 11:10 target living creature, touched, living. There you go.

LYDIA

Oh no!

BRYN

So you can't ...

BEN

It has to be a living creature.

BRYN

Can't give a skeleton scurvy.

LYDIA

That's so awful.

ALEX

So yeah, looking it up, it's not a living creature 'cos it's a skeleton. Skeletons aren't living as much as you want them to be and that would be terrifying so no you cannot give a skeleton scurvy. That's your fun fact for the day.

LYDIA

I heard that we all have a spooky, spooky skeleton inside us.

ALEX

It's a myth! I will allow you to not have used that spell for the simple reason that I would hope that a trained curate would know that they can't give a dead thing a disease.

BEN

That is probably true. Okay, fine. Then I'm going to ...no, actually, burning disarm.

ALEX

Burning disarm.

BEN

That's the one with the broken simitar right?

ALEX

Okay.

BEN

Yeah the target has held metal items, living creature, yeah range is range, **UNCLEAR draining? 12:02** instant, saving throw reflex negates.

ALEX

Okay, so let's do that save and see how it goes. Really well. Amazingly well. So yeah the skeleton, the item in his hand glows first red then white hot in a flash and you see a "sss" coming from its hand.

BEN

Cool. So it takes 2 D4 damage.

ALEX

Yeah.

BEN

'Cos my cast level is 2. 4 damage.

ALEX

And it takes the 4 damage so what happens is it goes "sss" you see it almost like let go and then hold on which was clearly a mistake. It holds on, it holds on and then its whole hand just bursts aflame. The flame leaps up the arm accelerated as if the magic's having some kind of an effect and actually

(Wailing)

It basically ...the arm explodes and takes the rest of the skeleton with it and it just collapses into a pile of dust.

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LYDIA

Wow.

BEN

And I'll use my **UNCLEAR free episode, Fire hurts them? 12:54.**

(Laughter)

BRYN

I hate to spoil the party but don't you take **UNCLEAR the maximum? 13:04** opportunity for casting in threat range?

LYDIA

Yes.

BRYN

There would have been two attacks whilst you did that.

ALEX

Which let's say that they'll take because I'm that guy.

BRYN

You could cast defensively.

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ALEX

That's a miss and another miss so it's utterly irrelevant. We played it by the numbers and you still annihilated one of them with ...

BEN

That's how clerics do.

(Laughter)

ALEX

Good move, good move. We like that move. Brutor!

LYDIA

Woof, woof, woof, woof, woof.

(Over speak)

BEN

He loves bones.

(Over speak)

BEN

Take the bones.

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ALEX

You know what, for the first time I will allow Brutor an attack.

BEN

Right.

ALEX

The attack fails.

BEN

And no one is surprised.

ALEX

Brutor notices a skeleton and goes “oooo” and then goes to bite and just misses because Brutor is really slow and is misnamed. Okay, Hamid, you’re up.

BRYN

I cast magic and start again. This time I cast magic missile at the skeleton in front of Zolf.

ALEX

Mm hmm.

BRYN

And I do 4 damage.

ALEX

4 damage. So you fire it off and let's say you capture it right in the midriff. The vertebrae snap and separates itself in two and as it separates the two parts start burning away with a sort of black flame leaving only dust. Okay.

BRYN

We're doing well guys. I'm scared.

ALEX

The head skeleton now takes another double attack at Bertie. Misses against a ridiculous, ridiculous AC, and misses again. Oh!

(Sound effects)

Just cannot get through that armour no matter how hard it tries.

BRYN

Falcons are good for something.

ALEX

The remaining skeleton that is not a king takes another attack at Brutor.

(Over speak)

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BRYN

To draw the attention away from us.

ALEX

Hits.

LYDIA

No Brutor!

BRYN

Animal cruelty. Monsters.

BEN

Brutor makes a noise that we can all imitate.

LYDIA

We are all Brutor.

BRYN

In many ways this is simply the nemesis that comes after his **UNCLEAR humorous? 15:24** for playing with THE staff in the first place.

ALEX

Dealing 5 damage against Brutor.

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LYDIA

No! Brutor!

BRYN

Grim for such a small creature.

ALEX

Yeah, Brutor is not unconscious but Brutor looks messed up ladies and gentlemen, messed up. Sasha, you're up. You've currently heard a

(Wailing)

LYDIA

If I go round the back of that skeleton and am I flanking it?

ALEX

Yes you are, you wouldn't get both attacks but you'll get the sneak attack.

LYDIA

Cool, can I do that?

ALEX

Yep, bish bash bosh.

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LYDIA

So I roll to hit. 14.

ALEX

Just misses. Just misses. Again, you're just really thrown by bits that you would attack.

LYDIA

I avoid bones.

BRYN

Plus 2 for flanking.

ALEX

Oh! Bryn saves you the day. That's a hit.

LYDIA

Yay!

BRYN

So that's that plus D6?

LYDIA

So then I do a D6 plus a D4 and the D4 is minus 1 but the D6 is plus 1.

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BRYN

Yes.

LYDIA

6.

ALEX

As the sound of Brutor

(Makes noises)

Sasha, quick as lightening, dashes across and having learnt her lesson this time, what would you attack? What would Sasha do?

LYDIA

She would just go for it, she'd slip it between the sort of vertebrae I think.

ALEX

Zip.

LYDIA

So he's in halves.

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ALEX

Yeah and again those two halves just burn away. There is now only King Skeleton left of the enemies. Bertie, you're up.

JAMES

Bertie is going to have a power attack on the King Skeleton.

ALEX

Very well. At which point the skeleton's special ability goes off.

(Gasps)

It gets a free attack opportunity on Bertie.

JAMES

Because I made the power attack.

ALEX

Because you made an attack at all.

JAMES

Oh!

ALEX

Yeah.

JAMES

It's probably going to miss.

ALEX

It misses on but because, again, because of its special ability it gets both with both simitars, it's a very specific creature, and hits.

JAMES

Oh my goodness.

ALEX

About time.

BRYN

It only took, what, six attacks?

ALEX

It deals 8 damage.

LYDIA

Ow.

BEN

You're fine.

JAMES

Down to 11.

ALEX

Bertie winds up his power attack.

BEN

Welcome to my world.

ALEX

Bertie winds up for his power attack and the skeleton seeing his opportunity an evil glint comes into its flaming eyes and with crown slightly askew it makes a jab, a quick jab that leaps beneath the armour in beneath the armpit and nicks the underarm.

JAMES

If want my underarms ...if I want my underarms shaving I'll let you know.

ALEX

Now you may take your power attack.

JAMES

Right, so D20. 7 plus attack bonus of 6.

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ALEX

You do not hit.

JAMES

Ah.

ALEX

So, Zolf you're up.

JAMES

Bertie's bleeding like actually bleeding.

BEN

Goodness gracious me. I'm going to take a double move towards the skeleton.

One two, that's one move, three.

BRYN

You've got a range of 10 foot, you can ...

ALEX

You've got a reach weapon mate, you can move an attack.

BEN

Oh, okay, cool, so that would count as flanking 'cos I can ...

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ALEX

Yep.

BEN

Oh brilliant, I'll do that then.

ALEX

Get your plus 2 to hit which Bryn was very kind to remind you of.

BEN

That's 18.

ALEX

Okay, that ...

BRYN

No, it's not, you have an attack bonus surely?

BEN

A flanking bonus so it's 20.

ALEX

Yeah, that's a hit, that's a hit.

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BEN

Okay, cool, and that is 1D8. 7 damage.

BRYN

7 plus 1 presumably?

BEN

Yes 'cos plus 3, God, put things on your character sheet Ben.

ALEX

Okay so you attack the skeleton, you jab it in the back.

BEN

So I just put it in his ribcage and wiggle it around.

ALEX

Yep, that's the one.

(Laughter)

The skeleton goes

(Wailing)

Drops both its simitars.

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BEN

Ah, could I just tickle it? Like, oh stop!

(Laughter)

ALEX

Oh the inside of my ribs are so ticklish. Brutor proceeds to flee and cower beneath Everard's statue having taken a blow.

BEN

Thinking it's Bertie.

(Laughter)

ALEX

Hamid, you're up.

BRYN

I cast magic missile, that's a surprise to everyone, it's all I've done the entire combat. There's only one remaining enemy which is the Skeleton King. It's on the other side of the room but magic missile is unerring and I do 5 whole damage.

LYDIA

That's a lot of damage!

BRYN

Not bad.

ALEX

You blast the skeleton from the side. It loses half of its ribcage but it's still just staggering around. Now it's wielding no weapons. It's missing half of its ribcage. It quite literally looks one blow away from being completely annihilated but it has one turn left. The remaining skeleton, angry, annoyed, enraged, it takes a final swing but what's this? It takes a 5 foot step and takes the swing at Hamid, that's not Hamid, takes a 5 foot step and takes a swing at Zolf.

BEN

I mean it's a dwarf in a horned helmet, I don't know how that looks like a sorcerous banker.

(Laughter)

BRYN

What's it swinging with? It dropped its weapons.

ALEX

Ah, ah.

BRYN

It's nothing without a crown.

ALEX

It now gets two claw attacks. It takes its first claw attack. Takes his first claw attack and misses.

BEN

Ha ha!

ALEX

It takes its next claw attack and then it activates its surge ability allowing it an additional 6 definitely hitting Zolf.

BEN

Cool.

ALEX

It deals a formidable, not that formidable, 1 plus 2 damage.

BEN

Arghhh.

ALEX

Zolf takes 3 damage and the skeleton, knowing the enemy is near, goes ...

(Wailing)

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BRYN

Which is skeleton speak for ...

ALEX

This is frustrating.

(Laughter)

BEN

I am quite annoyed!

ALEX

Sasha, you're up.

LYDIA

Stab in the non-existent kidneys.

BRYN

Go to there and you get your flank.

ALEX

And you'll get your flanking bonus again so you'll get the one attack plus your sneak attack damage, you get your minus 1 and your plus 1 which will cancel one another out. Hit? That's a no.

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LYDIA

That's a no.

ALEX

I know the maths.

LYDIA

Oh!

ALEX

That's a no.

BRYN

6 plus 4 plus 2.

ALEX

Bertie, you're up.

BRYN

You just took a 5 foot step.

JAMES

I took a 5 foot step and am I also flanking ...

ALEX

Yes you are. To start off our listeners because we've been talking a bit and not necessarily spelling it out, we now have this mythic skeleton with Sasha behind it on one side, Zolf facing it down, Bertie behind to the right, it's looking very, very bad for the ...

BRYN

Hamid is safely out of the way casting magic missiles from across the room.

ALEX

Okay, cool. Bertie, what are you doing?

JAMES

Bertie is going to make a power attack on the back of this skeleton.

ALEX

Yep. Go for it.

JAMES

Oh, 1.

BEN

Oh that's really bad that we're both here as well.

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ALEX

We get to finally play with my new fumble toy.

BEN

This is the point at which we're doing really and then you just straight up dissect one of us.

LYDIA

We're going to get about three 1s in a row now. That's how it always plays out.

BEN

Oh, it's got a little sword fight noise.

ALEX

You take a minus 1 penalty on all attack roles until you score a critical hit. For this combat.

JAMES

Oh right okay.

LYDIA

A lot less challenging than I thought.

JAMES

And how does that occur narratively?

ALEX

Narratively what happens is you take your huge swing at the skeleton, you miss, it reaches out with its hand and basically scratches at your inner gauntlet causing it to lock as it catches one of the straps so now your hand is locked at a kind of really, really abrupt wrist angle making it really difficult for you to basically wield your sword.

JAMES

Like a T-Rex trying to use a typewriter?

ALEX

Yeah.

(Laughter)

That's a very specific reference, but yes.

JAMES

Okay.

ALEX

And it will remain that way until the end of the combat at which point you can sort of undo that strap and sort yourself out.

BEN

I'm going to prod him with my trident as is my tradition. That is 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

ALEX

It activates before that damage resolves itself. it's special ability for attacking 'cos you're attacking.

BEN

Of course.

ALEX

With a miss and a second miss. It takes two big claws and then realises too late, 'cos it's a skeleton and they're not sharp, that there's a massive trident between it and you and then it can do that as much as you want and the trident is massive.

BEN

That's fair.

ALEX

Attack, resolve 2.

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BEN

17.

ALEX

17, hit.

BEN

Lovely. That is another 5 damage.

ALEX

You have managed to kill the skeleton. How would you like to say that went down?

BEN

Again, put it in the ribcage and spin the trident, just kind of flinging it across the room.

(Laughter)

LYDIA

So it's limbs will spin outwards like it's doing a star jump.

BRYN

It's like a pinwheel.

ALEX

So we're saying your trident jam in and one prong between three different ribs and you share, your eyes lock for one moment, and the skeleton goes

(Wailing)

(Laughter)

Zolf with his little squint twists the trident. The skeleton is thrown off its legs, its limbs already weakened, fly off in all directions and it literally explodes into bone like confetti that burns away into dust.

LYDIA

None of which hit anything like the banshee and the fresh golem are not to do anything, right?

ALEX

Hitting the tank in the middle which cracks and water starts gushing out.

LYDIA

Oh dear.

ALEX

And at that, we'll take a break.

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BEN

Ahhh.

ALEX

And we'll get back to this in a couple of minutes.

And welcome back, so yeah water's gushing from the tank holding the flesh golem. The water continues gushing, the cracks grow wider.

JAMES

Zolf, can you do something about this?

BEN

Unless you fill a tank full of more water, that's about all I can do.

ALEX

The cracks spread, the tank shatters.

BEN

Oh for goodness sake.

ALEX

The water gushes out everywhere and the flesh golem flops forward and just goes

(Splashing)

BEN

I mean that is probably going to be quite expensive.

ALEX

And then ...

BEN

It's going to be difficult to clear up.

ALEX

And splits and bits of out kind of ...

BEN

Sounds horrible.

ALEX

And it smells vile.

BEN

Literally two days ago swing around and poo and that's worse.

ALEX

The stitching comes undone from parts and one of its arms drifts across the remaining water and just bumps up against the Everard statue.

BEN

Well that's just grim.

ALEX

You see Brutor reach out, sniff and recoil back beneath the Everard statue. It's all gone quiet. Is everybody dead?

BEN

Yes.

LYDIA

All the bad ones.

ALEX

Sort of pokes his head in and you just see the curator's face.

BEN

They smashed the jar.

LYDIA

They were trying to smash us though so this is actually the better outcome.

BEN

Bandit lords and their jar smashing.

JAMES

Another glorious victory for the House for MacGuffingham. I think this is a day that will live in memory and song and song and memory.

BRYN

The problem is Bertie, normally the damage isn't all to the property of your own family.

BEN

I mean to be honest it might live on ...

ALEX

Technically, actually, the way the donation system works it's the property of the museum which was a very generous ...where's the dog?

LYDIA

He's there under the statue.

ALEX

The curator just goes over, comes back. I am very sorry about your dog, Sir Bertrand, but in lieu of the payments that are already missing in addition to the

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damages that have just been done, I mean, I very much appreciate all of your efforts to ...

LYDIA

We saved your life!

ALEX

I appreciate it, I do, I do, I do but nonetheless, I mean ...

LYDIA

If we hadn't stood here these guys would have like run amok, you know so many people.

ALEX

If you haven't stood here they never would have come here in the first place.

BRYN

To be fair actually although you couldn't afford any magical security, you could have maybe put the vase with the trapped spirits of four bandit lords maybe in a glass case.

ALEX

Now excuse me, excuse me, I would rather you didn't speak to me in that tone. There was a velvet rope and it was well signposted.

BEN

I think you may have a slightly skewed idea of what security is but ...

ALEX

Mr Smith, if you would excuse me ...he sort of tries to pull Bertie aside briefly. Forgive me Sir Bertrand but honestly, given the recent damages, our need for your payment is rather immediate. As it is, I mean, I'm going to have to bring in specialists just to clean up ...

BRYN

Bertie, it sounds like this guy's trying to extort money out of you.

JAMES

Oh, how much would be required sir?

ALEX

Well the MacGuffingham family is still contractually obliged for a 1,000 gold donation quarterly payment and that's not in addition to the damages but you are quite right in that you did help to mitigate the disaster so I suspect we could be able to just skimp on Mr Carter's expedition and possibly redirect the funds but it would still require at least the 4,000 and I'm very sorry, Sir Bertrand, I don't know what to say.

JAMES

Mm mm.

BEN

What's the ramifications of not paying this?

ALEX

Well I want you to understand this isn't my choice but breach of contract is technically a criminal matter. Now we would not want it of course it to reach that far, I mean there's no need to, of course, the MacGuffingham family name, I mean. I don't think you quite understand, I mean this is not a drop in the pool.

BEN

Excuse me. Just one moment. Huddle.

LYDIA

We huddle.

(Over speak)

ALEX

Certainly, he sort of ...I was going to say he backs off. He just stands there crestfallen occasionally squelching through what was left of the flesh golem.

BEN

Breach of contract is definitely not a criminal matter, it's civil at most. Legally speaking.

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(Over speak)

BEN

They're going to sue to recover their losses.

JAMES

There are certain additional complications which I'm not at liberty to divulge. Needless to say the consequences of even a civil pursuit of this matter would be really most grave.

BEN

Right well I've got 2,000 sitting around. I ain't spent it yet.

JAMES

I have 1,000.

BEN

We need another 1,000 from someone.

ALEX

Everyone give me a perception roll.

JAMES

25.

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BEN

18 minus 1 is 17.

BRYN

16.

LYDIA

19.

ALEX

All of you notice this then. As you are having your discussion, two very non-descript figures step forward simultaneously through the double doors. They are both medium sized gnomes.

BEN

Ahhh.

ALEX

Wearing very sharp ...

BRYN

Sorry, medium sized is a technical term.

ALEX

Sorry, agreed.

BRYN

I don't think you mean that.

ALEX

I mean they are medium for gnomes by which I mean of the small category.

BRYN

Average height.

ALEX

Average height is a better way of putting it. Incredibly non-descript gnomes but in incredibly sharp suits. All black. Every single layer, down to their shiny, shiny shoes and their very, very sharp ties with a single silver tiepin for each of them with what looks like it may be a diamond, it's hard to tell at this distance, and they just stand there, survey the area and then both of them simultaneously turn to Bertie and give a slight nod.

BEN

Who on earth were they?

JAMES

They are gnomes. Now you see a gnome is ...

(Laughter)

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BEN

What would their profession be?

JAMES

They are gnomes who wear suits and dark suits, possibly they are artists, models or mannequins of some kind.

BRYN

Well they just wandered into a museum and nodded sinisterly at you.

BEN

They've been following you about for a while Bertie, I keep seeing them around.

JAMES

Anh accusation that I am being followed by gnomes is paranoia.

ALEX

The gnomes then proceed to walk towards your group. The curator looks confused but doesn't really stop them.

LYDIA

Nothing to be ashamed of if you're being followed by people, Bertie, just tell us.

JAMES

Oh goodness me, is that the time? Look, a bee!

ALEX

At which point they are upon you and in unison, good afternoon Sir Bertrand. It is a pleasure as always. We understand there has been some damages to the museum exhibit. That does seem a great shame. Can we be of assistance to yourself?

JAMES

Ah yes well of course now these damages were of course accrued and accumulated in the pursuit of noble glory for the house of MacGuffingham, this is simply collateral damage, look at these things, they fall over in the heat of combat you know when the blood is up.

ALEX

Would you have said that there would have been imminent danger to any of those present should you have not intervened?

JAMES

Oh absolutely, danger of the most mortal and perilous kind.

LYDIA

There were skeletons.

BEN

Show them the wound Bertie, they wounded you.

JAMES

Look here. At this point Bertie lifts up his armour, I mean look, spring break, and he's got a huge wound.

BEN

So as he lifts it, it goes above his head, catches his helmet and his helmet is just balanced on top of his ...he extends to about 8 foot tall.

ALEX

The gnomes sort of look at each other and turn back. That would count in your favour.

JAMES

I'm bleeding really like lots, like loads. Bertie at that point wipes some blood onto his hands and says look, look at this and then rubs it on the gnome. Loads, loads of blood.

ALEX

The gnome that you wiped blood on reaches out, takes a hankie and slowly dabs itself down. They then turn simulatively to Sasha. Would you consider yourself a damsel in distress?

LYDIA

Um ...

JAMES

Really damsel-ally, look at her, I mean, you know, there's this leather jacket.

ALEX

If you would excuse us Sir Bertrand. Would you consider yourself a damsel in distress?

LYDIA

I mean not generally ...yeah ...I'm totally ...I am ...yeah ...have you not seen how ladylike I am? I am distressed right now. There's nothing that distresses me more than ...

JAMES

What are you the fairy-tale police? What is this?

LYDIA

Lawyers, I mean skeletons, I mean lawyers.

(Laughter)

LYDIA

I mean skeletons.

(Laughter)

JAMES

Clearly driven delirious by her traumatic experience. You know how damsels are, you know, it's all of the cinching.

ALEX

You will allow us to confer. They step aside and just turn their backs to you and have a conversation.

JAMES

Counter huddle.

LYDIA

What's a damsel?

BEN

Are they lawyers?

JAMES

They are lawyers. They're very lawyers.

BEN

Our greatest foe yet.

LYDIA

Why do the lawyers need to know if I'm a damsel?

BEN

Do you owe them money?

JAMES

I'm unfortunately not at liberty to disclose under the terms of the thing that I cannot disclose anything that may or may not be disclosed and there's no disclosing.

BEN

Are you on a list?

JAMES

I cannot possibly say, confirm or deny whether or am or I am not on a list, I barely know what a list is.

ALEX

At which point the two gnomes return. The curator by this point is going look now I'm being patient but frankly if no one tells me what's going on, at which point, in perfectly synchronised movements, the gnomes, one plucks a pen from its pocket and the other one plucks out a chequebook and the first one tears the cheque from the chequebook the other one is holding, like perfectly synchronised, they just write a cheque and hand it to the curator. We think

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you will find that this covers all expenses and the in lieu payments which have previously been overlooked by the MacGuffingham estate managers. We hope that this suits yourself. The curator sort of looks at it, oh yes, I am again so sorry for the misunderstanding and we will get someone in to clean this up right away, thank you as always, your generosity is greatly appreciated Sir Bertrand and friends. Yes. I am going to go. Yes and then he heads off.

LYDIA

Bertie, you have got the spookiest fairy godmother that I've ever encountered.

JAMES

You should have met my real mother.

(Laughter)

ALEX

At which point the gnomes again, in perfectly synchronised, pocketing all of their items, so Sir Bertrand, it beholds us to tell you that all previous actions are now considered nullified by the advanced payment that has had to be made. Pray that you make sure that you meet your terms and then without another word they reverse and they walk out, take a left and you just hear them fading away.

BEN

Well that was deeply unsettling.

LYDIA

That was worse than being exploded that time.

JAMES

Well it all seems to be sorted and over now. There's no need to talk about this any further. I consider the matter settled and resolved. Thank you very much for your cooperation gentlemen and lady.

BRYN

Bertie, as your employer, that's going to impact your ability to work for me.

BEN

I feel like we've met Sasha's maybe slightly evil family, Zolf has this weird ring that he doesn't want to talk about.

BRYN

A lot of people have weird rings.

(Laughter)

(Over speak)

Bertie has these mysterious gnomes. I should probably just say right now, I got kicked out of university 'cos then it won't be a surprise when it somehow comes along very soon maybe.

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LYDIA

Well we've all got our dark pasts.

JAMES

What were you kicked out for?

BEN

I don't want to talk about it.

(Laughter)

I'm glad we now established we all have some sort of dark secret which we're keeping.

JAMES

I don't have a dark secret at all. Look, a distraction!

BEN

Nice try Bertie.

BRYN

I just feel like that I should just share with all of you with things.

JAMES

Well you can fit in and be popular, that's not a problem.

BRYN

But in all seriousness, Bertie, is this going to have an effect on your ability to work for us? Do you have any commitments which you're going to have to attend to?

JAMES

Well the pursuit of glory is a transcendent goal which will have nothing, no impact whatsoever, seeing through this mission to completion.

BRYN

So what do you need to get out from under their thumb? What do they want from you?

JAMES

What thumbs? I don't even know what thumbs are.

BRYN

They are things on the ends of your hands.

JAMES

Look, a distraction!

BRYN

Still not working.

JAMES

Oh.

BEN

Maybe we should just move on. There's things we all don't want to talk about.

BRYN

Sure. At some point we can all get ice-cream and share. Right, what's next on the list.

LYDIA

I've never had ice-cream.

BRYN

Really?

LYDIA

I mean, they don't really do it in **UNCLEAR 37:48**.

BRYN

Not even rat flavoured?

LYDIA

Dirty ice. You can get like strawberry but I think it's blood.

ALEX

I mean, what a grisly detail about the place you grew up in.

(Laughter)

Hamid, where to next?

BRYN

The bank I suppose.

BEN

We probably should.

LYDIA

That's where all the nice families hang out right, the ones who were so lovely to us.

BEN

Yes, I feel like with all the friends we're making in London we might have to wrap this bit up and get to Paris soon, so ...

LYDIA

Yeah I've got mates in Paris, I mean it'll be fine.

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BEN

We've heard about bit. There's that bloke that is a brother, you're in love with, I don't know, something. Anyway.

BRYN

Too many characters.

(Laughter)

(Over speak)

I watched the two most charisma characters but try to high five.

(Laughter)

Surely high fiving is deck space not charisma.

LYDIA

No and also mine's 8 not 9.

ALEX

Fair enough. Moving on. Presumably you guys head off.

LYDIA

To the bank.

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ALEX

Yes, to the bank.

LYDIA

Okay.

ALEX

Yes you head out and yeah you start heading down the stairs. At first you realise that you're trailing a little bit of flesh golem down the stairs but ...

BEN

Oh, like toilet paper stuck in your shoe.

BRYN

Maybe it would be best to clean up and have a meal before we go to the bank?
I mean it's going to be open for a few more hours yet.

BEN

Well you go and **UNCLEAR 39:33** can't you?

JAMES

I'm bleeding quite heavily.

BRYN

Oh sorry about that.

BEN

I will convert advanced scurvy.

(Laughter)

Into a healing spell.

LYDIA

Scurvy.

BEN

D8 plus 1 'cos it's a level 1 style 1 converting.

ALEX

9. so you're healed for 9.

BEN

So I'm up to 20.

ALEX

So as you are heading out, the curator is sort of coming out from the back office and he's all smiles again and he runs over again, before you go, thank you so much, I appreciate that it was quite the misunderstanding and the generosity of the MacGuffinghams, the fact that we get to finally make the extension to the MacGuffingham wing, honestly, we did not expect such

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generosity. Like father like son, like father, father. I hesitate to ask but, given that you've proven yourselves quite capable, I have to confess I was having a little bit of a listen, did you mention that you were heading to Paris?

BEN

Probably yeah.

LYDIA

Maybe. Who wants to know?

ALEX

Well I have to say that well quite frankly we have something of a valuable nature and given that ...to be blunt Sir Bertrand, you will be travelling quite well, significantly better than I must any courier would. I was wondering if you would be able to deliver a small delivery for us?

JAMES

Oh right, certainly, of course.

ALEX

I greatly appreciate that he **UNCLEAR 41:04** they developed the Rosetta programme which we believe may actually be able to finally break the hieroglyphics. It's all very exciting you see.

JAMES

Goodness.

ALEX

And well we've got a sample sheet in here and if you happen to be passing by then I would greatly appreciate it if you could deliver it. I mean, we have copies, don't worry, it's not an original, but if you're heading that way anyway frankly we could do with saving the cash where we can. I mean, especially if we're expanding the MacGuffingham wing. Am I right?

JAMES

Oh yes, of course, no, it would be an absolute pleasure. Where does it need to be taken? Will you possibly provide me with the address?

ALEX

Oh, yes it's all there on the ...feel free to peruse it at your desire.

JAMES

Excellent, excellent. Thank you.

ALEX

Well again, thank you, I realise it was a bit of a shame that we lost some exhibits but certainly with this we'll be able to arrange some more.

BRYN

Would you like us to speak to the press at all?

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ALEX

Oh ...

BRYN

About what happened?

ALEX

I can quite happily make a statement. Is there anything that you'd rather I ...I didn't catch all of the surnames you see.

BEN

No well actually you can say that it was the ...

BRYN

We haven't got a name yet.

LYDIA

Not really one for branding.

JAMES

The Mighty MacGuffinghams.

BEN

No.

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ALEX

Right, okay.

BEN

No.

JAMES

Quick guys.

BEN

Can I make a marketing role?

(Laughter)

ALEX

You've got three seconds between you. ready? Three, two, one ...

BEN

The Mighty Morphing Mercenary Rangers.

LYDIA.

No!

BEN

No?

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LYDIA

The Rangers. The London Rangers.

(Over speak)

ALEX

I've got Rangers, that's what I've got.

(Over speak)

BEN

Oh goodness me.

(Over speak)

JAMES

I haven't seen this ...last time I saw you, you were a big ...

BEN

He still is.

BRYN

Ha. Ha. Ha.

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BEN

I'm just having some fun. Hey I'm short too.

ALEX

Right well ...

(Over speak and laughter)

I will sort all this for you.

LYDIA

Do you have a wing as well Hamid?

BEN

Probably own the building.

JAMES

We are of course about to head up on some perilous adventures across the continent and indeed beyond.

ALEX

So perilous, I feel like I might be having to take my capsule back.

BEN

No, Paris isn't the perilous bit.

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JAMES

Paris ...

BEN

Paris is Paris but the perilous bit is post-Paris.

JAMES

Oh, of course yes.

BEN

Potential post-Paris peril.

(Laughter)

ALEX

I'm so sorry Sir Bertrand, you were saying?

JAMES

I apologise for them.

BRYN

That is a first.

JAMES

Isn't it just. Now well of course as I am carrying the MacGuffingham name, throughout the world and this realm, further realms beyond this very sphere of experience, all saving the world perhaps just throwing that idea out there. I wondered perhaps if there is anything from the MacGuffingham collection that might be taken out on loan perhaps, something of my ancestors that might spur me on in my quest of succour and assistance in these difficult times. Adventuring you know, sailing forth once again, burnishing the name.

ALEX

Sailing, yes. Give me a pomp and pageantry diplomacy check.

JAMES

13.

ALEX

13?

JAMES

Yeah.

ALEX

Then in which case the curator looks at you, kind of looks confused for a moment and goes again I appreciate your situation, we could certainly arrange for you to purchase one of your ex-family heirlooms at a discount but we wouldn't be able to part with something necessarily. What I would say is we

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would be able to offer you a very fair price for anything you brought back from your own adventures.

JAMES

I seem to remember **UNCLEAR 45:04**.

ALEX

The shawl.

JAMES

The shawl, I'm terribly sorry. Not much with the fancy female you see and it was my recollection that if one was to put it on that one would gain a second soul. Is that ...?

ALEX

That's a gross over simplification but carry on.

JAMES

Well I am the layest of persons so if I were to perhaps acquire that and put it on.

BEN

You would most likely die.

BRYN

That would be a very bad idea. It was a 50/50 between losing your soul and getting some more.

JAMES

Mm.

ALEX

I cannot condone a death on these premises. As it is, I've already had to deal with all those deaths, I think that's quite enough. I appreciate you. It's very clear he's starting to usher you slowly out of the building. Again, I appreciate your ...

(Over speak)

We do hope that you can ...

(Door slamming)

JAMES

He says to the closed door. Damn.

(Laughing)

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BRYN

Well given that we've saved so much money, why don't we buy you something nice?

JAMES

Gift shops probably closed.

(Laughter)

ALEX

And we'll use that to assume you're heading on to the bank alright?

BEN

After lunch.

ALEX

At which point then let's call it there. We've had a good session and I think we're going to end it there and we will re-join everyone next week.

LYDIA

Bye.

BEN

UNCLEAR 46:28

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ALEX

We were hoping you were traipsing through London stinking of hundred year old dead flesh.

BEN

And we don't want to end an episode dirty.

(Laughter)

ALEX

Right well thanks from everyone and I look forward to meeting you all again next week. Bye!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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