

## **RQG – 30 – In Too Deep**

### **Content Warnings**

- X
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### **[Show Theme - Intro]**

#### **ALEX**

Hello and welcome to episode 30 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me for yet another exciting adventure, I have

#### **JAMES**

James Ross

#### **BRYN**

Bryn Monroe

#### **LYDIA**

Lydia Nicholas

#### **BEN**

Ben Meredith

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**ALEX**

And who are you all playing?

**JAMES**

Sir Bertrand Macguffinham

**BRYN**

Hamid

**LYDIA**

Sasha Rackett

**BEN**

And Zolf Smith

**ALEX**

Yes. So for us this is the first recording we're doing in the New Year. So hello everyone, Happy New Year!

**(cheering)**

**JAMES**

Only to us really.

**LYDIA**

Happy middle of the year, I don't know how much backlog we've got.

**JAMES**

Everyone's broken their resolutions already, am I right guys!

**LYDIA**

Happy 2017?

**BEN**

Given when this is coming out Happy Valentine's Day would be more appreciate.

**ALEX**

It's not my fault that we're so on it.

**LYDIA**

Happy Valentines Day is never appropriate!

**ALEX**

But little bit more admin before we start. We're going to be a lot more people in Rusty Quill. Basically the team is growing. We have our new podcast coming up. I know a lot of people have been asking about the Magnus archives. Just know that we're working, literally, glad out to get it out. It'll be out...

**BRYN**

We have to send it into the seventh level of hell where it will pitch battle against the demons. Soon we will be victorious and they shall release the tapes!

**ALEX**

But anyway that should be out, if it's not out as I'm talking to you now, it almost certainly will be imminently. And on top of that we're looking at growing bigger, better, so expect lots of updates and things like that. But just thanks for everyone who was with us in that first six months or so and from now on expect bigger and better things.

**LYDIA**

Huge things!

**BRYN**

Alex has promised me that before and has disappointed. It's not bigger nor better.

**JAMES**

It's just not an appropriate excuse.

**ALEX**

The equipment doesn't work!

**BEN**

Even after you spent so much money on it!

**JAMES**

Just show him a catalogue of audio parts to get him a bit more excited. Give him 20 minutes.

**ALEX**

So last thing that was happening is you were all in Dover and things were going a little pear shaped as Zolf had been arrested. Skipping ahead a lot you managed to get unarrested by buying up commission and through the efforts of a single female lawyer and a dog in a suit.

**BRYN**

That's how I remember it!

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA**

Interrupted by romance novels.

**ALEX**

Oh yeah, don't forgot the romance novels.

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**LYDIA**

Dinners.

**ALEX**

Lots of dinners. Lots of soggy dinners

**BEN**

Lots of soggy dinners.

**ALEX**

And finally you made it to the Cult of Poseidon headquarters, well the...

**BEN**

Temple of Poseidon

**ALEX**

Temple of Poseidon Headquarters

**BEN**

Poseidon Head office

**LYDIA**

Is that what we call churches. God HQ

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

So you made it to God HQ but this was obviously after the navigator rocked up and was very, very unhelpful and loud and domineering so presumably you're here to have a bit of a wrap on the knuckles. And where we left you, you were currently heading down the streaming face of Poseidon which looks a lot like James Ross. Had just made yourselves past some jewelled gates, stepping into darkness and the sound of waves.

**BEN**

So continue on through and there were some guards which...

**ALEX**

So you headed through the large, elaborate gates and stepping into the room, it takes a while for all of your eyes to adjust and the first thing you notice is it's mostly unworked stone. It looks like natural caves and so on and amongst the craginess of it, whilst there is decoration and there is some guiding, ultimately they've tried very hard to keep it looking naturally as it were. So...

**LYDIA**

Sort of like exposed brickwork in an hipster bar?

**JAMES**

Like that bar in Angel that they just haven't finished and the ceiling that's kind of fine in some ways and you can see the vents. Come on!

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**ALEX**

So there's...

**LYDIA**

And remind us what outfit Brutor's in?

**JAMES**

Brutor is in a tasteful little sailor suit.

**BRYN**

Tasteful!

**JAMES**

He's also got a little bit of a wig like Shirley Temple on Good Ship Lollipop. So he's got charming blonde ringlets and he's in his little papoose as well. And the papoose has got an anchor on it.

**LYDIA**

So does it look like you have a very ugly daughter just strapped to you.

**JAMES**

It looks like I've got an extremely ugly daughter strapped to me.

**BEN**

Victorian school child.

**JAMES**

In such a position that it might, if I were not wearing armour, be taking the nipple. That's where we are.

**(laughter)**

**BRYN**

I met an actual dog last week that when you went [barking noise] would reply [barking noise] so I immediately thought of Brutor.

**JAMES**

That's where we are. That's where we're at. So because Brutor is going to church he's in his Sunday best and because it's a sea church he's in his sea best.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

I have no problems with this. So stepping in there is large flowing water running through the middle of the room. The floor is not levelled or anything like that, it is natural rock formation. The ceiling is arched and again has outcroppings and so on. As you step through however and you can see that there is another opening at the other end and the other opening leads to a huge, massive cavern and you're probably in some smaller answering room like I was saying. There are a few people dotted around, mostly have quiet

conversations. There's still the sound of chanting coming up from amongst the varying caves. There are a few caves leading off from this one and no one really pays you any heed as you step in and looking through into the larger cavern you can see amongst the far side of it and so on, there's the reflection of lots of light on water. The dappling and all that. So what do you do?

**BEN**

Does it sound like there is an active ceremony going on in this larger room?

**ALEX**

From your knowledge religion, which I won't even get you to roll, probably not. It sounds like just a background susurration.

**BEN**

Ok well I'm here to see the Navigator. Do people like him have an office effectively, like a Reverend would have an office in his church.

**ALEX**

Almost certainly you're going to just have to announce yourself to someone and then have them take it from there.

**BEN**

Right in which case, I shall wander into the large cavern and survey the scene. At this popped I stopped ushering so I'm just expecting these guys to follow on.

**ALEX**

So stepping through into the large cavern you find yourself on the side of a balcony. The only piece of work stone that is there is effectively a railing and even then it's got a sort of craggy aspect to it. And it is a huge, huge cavern. It looks like it's almost some kind of counsel chamber or something. There's lots of balconies fronting on to it. Lots of torches flickering. Almost certainly magical. There is what looks to be a waterfall running down through the middle of it into a large pool at the bottom. Everyone give me a perception check. Apart from Zolf, I won't require it from you. What are the numbers?

**BRYN**

11 – 1 is 10

**JAMES**

15

**LYDIA**

I got 4 but +8 so 12.

**ALEX**

12

**LYDIA**

So still better...

**JAMES**

Bertie notices that he's indoors.

**ALEX**

But doesn't know doors. It's all so confusing. Then we'll just leave it at the water is falling down into a large pool at the base. There appears to be a sort of semi-circular arrangement of chairs down towards the base of the pool in a tiered aspect so there's one chair higher, then two chairs higher, then three chairs and so on and it's leading away from the pool and the balconies are all overlooking it. For the rest of you looking around it's clear that the chanting is coming from lots of multiple places around the cavern.

**BRYN**

I'm going to very quietly cast for detect magic just for the next few minutes I have magic goggles that will make magic things glow so I can see what's magic.

**ALEX**

Go for it. Obviously like I was saying all of the torches, magical. The water falling down to the pool, non magical. The pool itself, magical. There's nothing hugely powerful but it is...

**BRYN**

I have to study it to kind of get more than just the barest bones

**ALEX**

Yeah it is all over the place. This is a magical rich environment but it's not like there's one thing in there which is dazzling and it's an astonishing power and also ultimately a lot of it is from clerical schools and things like that so you're going to be less familiar with it than you would be if it was...

**BRYN**

Yes, it might be helpful.

**ALEX**

Detecting magic is rarely a bad idea.

**BEN**

Especially if there's someone really magical hiding behind a wall and they can kill you!

**BRYN**

Everything you can see with your normal eyes now glows.

**BEN**

Oh right ok.

**LYDIA**

Like it's an item in Final Fantasy.

**ALEX**

It's not as useful as you'd hope. There is someone on that balcony, you see that there is a staircase leading off down it. It circles around and obviously connects to multiple balconies and leads down towards the pool in the middle and there's a guard there. He's not slothenly but similarly he's not raptured to attention or anything. Let's say he is Aquan. Which is extremely...an Aquan is a race that Zolf will have encountered. I don't know if the rest of you would. It would depend on your knowledges. There are a water race. They tend to spend most of their time underwater.

**BEN**

Like merfolk.

**ALEX**

Yeah similar.

**LYDIA**

Does he have a fishy tail?

**ALEX**

So he's got webbed feet which are bare, unshod. He's got webbed hands. He has sort of the suggestion of ears but there's not really much there.

Pronounced gills on the neck. His eyelids seem to be blinking sideways rather than up/down. His mouth has little in the way of lips but multiple extremely sharp teeth. Clearly some kind of meat eater for anyone who's never see an Aquan before.

**BEN**

Right what rank is he or just a guard?

**ALEX**

He appears to be a boatswain so not particularly high rank. More than man who trudges around doing Poseidon like healing and things.

**BEN**

So me.

**ALEX**

He's one step above you.

**BEN**

Which would make me...what's just below a boatswain

**ALEX**

Able seaman

**BEN**

Ok. Excuse me boatswain

**ALEX**

Yes

**BEN**

I'm here to see the Navigator, I was just wondering if you knew where he might be

**ALEX**

Very well bear with me. Just steps down. You hear him sort of give a slight announcement on various balconies. It's not big and echoey and various people part. He makes his way all the way down the bottom of the cavern. It takes a good sort of 4/5 minutes for him to just get there.

**BRYN**

I'm going to cast detect magic.

**BEN**

Is there just a nice period of us being like so...

**ALEX**

Little bit.

**LYDIA**

This is nice Zolf.

**BEN**

Yeah this is a pretty grand one. I think this is the main base in England. So they've put a lot of effort into it. I've only been here once before when I was first ordained officially.

**JAMES**

Is that a pun?

**BEN**

Oh right, fish. No, no it wasn't. I was just talking about it being official. As in proper.

**JAMES**

Is that a pun?

**(laughing)**

**BEN**

That time it was, well done!

**(laughing)**

You got me!

**ALEX**

At which point, we'll presume some kind of awkward silence to fill in some gaps.

**BRYN**

Hamid makes several brilliant, inspired fish puns.

**LYDIA**

Which we don't have time to cover now

**ALEX**

But they were astonishing.

**BEN**

Actually after a couple of minutes of that I will turn around and go, I just want to remind you this is my religion actually. As funny as that might be so cut it out. Ok.

**BRYN**

I'll stop carping on about it!

**JAMES**

We don't want to make you feel out of place!

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**BEN**

I know I'm not going to get anywhere with Bertie so I'll just leave him

**BRYN**

I think he's haddock up to here with us

**JAMES**

What a load of codswallop we're spouting

**LYDIA**

I think he's eeling down about our...eels are the only thing I know...

**(laughing)**

I feel really, really bad that we're saying this.

**BRYN**

Zolf will burst out laughing in about...

**ALEX**

A guy from the sea rocks up to you. If you will accompany me, you will be seen immediately.

**BEN**

Yes.

**JAMES**

He's seen immediately.

**BEN**

Not now!

**BRYN**

Hamid tries really hard not to laugh. Bryn fails not to laugh.

**ALEX**

Yeah the Aquan knows what's going on. He's not very happy.

**BEN**

My colleagues, does the Navigator wish to see them too?

**ALEX**

They will wait here.

**BEN**

Very good.

**JAMES**

So we won't have sight of the Navigator.

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**BEN**

Don't get in too much trouble.

**LYDIA**

Are you ok?

**BEN**

I'm fine. I'll deal with this. Just try not to get in a fight.

**LYDIA**

You don't want backup or nothing?

**BEN**

Zolf hesitates trying to work out if that's a pun

**(laughing)**

Decides it's not. No, no, it's fine. This is just an official meeting

**ALEX**

As a small detail the Aquan is taller than Bertie but incredibly slight with it. So he's capable of looming. He does so a little bit, looks at each of the party that isn't Zolf and goes you are accountable for though within these halls.

**BEN**

Seriously stay out of any trouble. Please. I don't want to be arrested by these guys.

**LYDIA**

As they walk off, Sasha's going to step into a shadow and wind up her explosive wrist sheathes. Just in case.

**BEN**

You never know!

**LYDIA**

I think just daggers because fire doesn't seem that effective.

**JAMES**

If Pokémon has taught me anything...

**ALEX**

Dagger is super effective!

**(laughing)**

**BEN**

Just stabs a guy, it was awful.

**ALEX**

So heading down into the incredibly sombre cavern. You head down through the various layers. There are effectively a bunch of ritual and so on and the Aquan keeps leads you down. Eventually he heads down to the pool, kneels and gestures for you to step into the pool.

**BEN**

I will do so.

**ALEX**

Ok at which point he immediately leaves. Is the rest of the party watching what's happening or are they more occupied with themselves?

**BRYN**

I'm watching.

**JAMES**

Bertie's usually preoccupied with himself and seems no reason to change that now.

**LYDIA**

Yeah as soon as I'm done with the daggers I'm watching.

**ALEX**

So Hamid you'll notice a brief surge in magic. As Zolf steps into the pool the water parts away from him to the point where as he steps forward he's eventually stood beneath the waterfall. The waterfall separates into two separate ribbons on either side and the water is in a perfect sort of circle around Zolf dry and it's receding from him.

**BRYN**

That's cool. I'm glad I saw it.

**ALEX**

He looks great

**BEN**

I whisper under my breath to myself, magic.

**ALEX**

Facing the chairs, you see the Navigator in the highest position with a number of elderly men and women of various races along the sides. There is an Aquan halfling, there's actually an orc and then the rest are human.

**BRYN**

An orc or a half orc?

**ALEX**

It is an orc. An actual orc.

**BRYN**

I mean, I'm not there I can't see it but it might...

**ALEX**

From that distance you wouldn't even be able to discern the race. They're all covered in ridiculous amounts of regalia and the Navigator leans forward on his chair and someone steps forward from behind him, whispers in his ear and then looks down. So Mr Smith we presume.

**BEN**

Yes Navigator.

**ALEX**

Do you know why you are here Mr Smith?

**BEN**

Er, not precisely

**ALEX**

You are here because you are behaving like little more than a greedy merchant. You load yourself in commitments other than your church as one would expect such a merchant to load himself with trinkets. You are in danger

of capsizing yourself Mr Smith. I am given to understand that not only are you a representative of this church, you are a member of the meritocratic forces, a member of a band of...and I'm quoting "free traders" and run your own business. Is this or is this not correct?

**BEN**

Your information is not current Navigator. I'm no longer with the free traders as you say and I am not officially working with the meritocratic forces. I've been requested. They are effectively a client to my new business which is dedicated to travelling and with the ulterior motive of delivering justice where justice needs to be dealt. I thought this was the most efficient way to gain the means with which to travel widely and spread the word.

**ALEX**

You explain yourself well Mr Smith but nonetheless we find that hard to believe given the fact that the waters around you are failing to touch you. Given this we cannot but presume that you are less than in good favour with Poseidon.

**BEN**

In order to keep the peace with some of my new colleagues I had to release an appropriate sacrifice.

**ALEX**

And now we come to it. So often we see this, there is more to being a Priest of Poseidon than sacrifice. Sacrifice of others is easier than sacrifice of the self.

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How often have you been putting your other commitments ahead of your commitments to your own deity?

**BEN**

Er...

**ALEX**

The favour of your deity is not a tool to be used. It is a boon granted to the faithful. Should you be found unfaithful, should you be found to be taking these gifts for granted it is little surprise that you find yourself in your current predicament. Tread lightly Mr Smith.

**BEN**

Yes Navigator. I believed that I was doing was in pursuit of the church but...

**ALEX**

We'll cut to the balcony with the rest of the party at which point the Aquan has stood at the top of the stairs making it very clear that the rest of you are definitely not going down and proceeds to make a point of just examining each of you very, very disdainfully given the previous comments.

**LYDIA**

Just looking over the balcony.

**BRYN**

I just lean and whisper in Sasha's ear, I think we hurt his eelings

**(laughter)**

**JAMES**

Bertie just continues every time he thinks of a fish based pun, which would qualify as a micro aggression in this context, he just blurts out with it and laughs to himself. And that's it. That's all he does.

**ALEX**

Despite the pale skin of the Aquan, nonetheless, you see what could be knuckles tightening around a trident and then a couple of other people in the antechamber look up, give very, very...

**BRYN**

I make sure no one else can hear

**ALEX**

No chance with Bertie. There's a little bit of an echo when you speak Bertie.

**JAMES**

And even inside his own head!

**(laughing)**

**BRYN**

I might ask Bertie to stop. After the first two or three.

**LYDIA**

I think this is a bit of an assault on their ocean going...

**JAMES**

That was a good one! Like that. Getting into the spirit of it now.

**LYDIA**

But seriously Bertie be quiet.

**ALEX**

Cut back to the base of it. Given the current situation how would you remedy the situation Mr Smith?

**BEN**

Depends on the context of...I...I'm obviously not educated enough to answer that question hence I'm in this situation.

**ALEX**

Which do you believe is a more fitting tribute to a deity? A sacrifice of someone who means very little, not upon the sea for crimes not against the people of Poseidon. Or the dedication of a follower sworn in and fulsome in its appreciation of the gifts given.

**BEN**

The second one.

**ALEX**

Yes!

**(laughing)**

You're doing well!

**JAMES**

Now for the bonus round!

**BEN**

I look very, very, very downcast. This lesson would not pass an OFSTED check, that's all I'm saying.

**ALEX**

You can hear the conversation that's happening. It's clearly been amplified magically but nonetheless you can't actually see the speakers but the Navigator's voice is fairly distinctive. Zolf, he steeples his fingers and leans towards you. It shames us and shames yourself to be, he gestures to the waters that aren't going near you, in such a predicament. So it behoves both of us to find a solution to this problem. Now, given the nature of the problem it seems that an act of faith, an act of recompense, a show of dedication to your beliefs is in order. Wouldn't you agree?

**BEN**

Er yes Navigator.

**ALEX**

With that in mind you will do two things. If you expect to remain within this order and remain unpunished, everyone strays but it's not too difficult to bring them back if they're willing. Firstly you will cease this incessant belief that mere sacrifice is enough to appease a lord who demands dedication. It is not that sacrifice is frowned upon, it is merely not the entirety of a belief system Mr Smith.

**BEN**

Yes Navigator.

**ALEX**

Secondly, what would you say the weather was like outside?

**BEN**

Wet.

**(laughing)**

**BRYN**

Eloquent.

**ALEX**

Some would say tempestuous but wet will suffice in this situation. Would you consider the level of storm that's been happening normal?

**BEN**

Obviously not.

**ALEX**

No. Would you be surprised to learn that this has been the case in multiple locations around the globe simultaneously.

**BEN**

No

**ALEX**

Were you aware of the fact that this situation has been worsening over time.

**BEN**

Yes

**ALEX**

He seems a little bit...just a little bit annoyed that you happen to know something. You didn't hide it very well. Given this we are taking steps to investigate the situation. You will be our agent in this matter. We are given to understand that you are travelling far and wide from these shores

**BEN**

Yes

**ALEX**

You will collect all the information you can regarding these phenomenon in an attempt to find a cause and you will report in regularly your findings.

**BEN**

Yes ok.

**ALEX**

Finally the situation stands that you are out of favour. We cannot very well have an agent of our own out of favour. There is a ship waiting for you at the base of these cliffs. An act of faith would go very well in redeeming yourself in the eyes of your deity. We understand you are to be travelling to Paris, is that correct?

**BEN**

That is correct.

**ALEX**

We would suggest that taking a ship would be an excellent decision.

**BEN**

Very good advice Navigator.

**ALEX**

Very well. Well you're still here. He gestures for you to leave.

**BEN**

I will leave

**ALEX**

As you step away obviously the waters slowly close back in on the place that you were stepping away from and we'll say that you head back up the cavern stairs, all the way back to the party who have been waiting for you at the balcony by an Aquan who's visibly shaking with restrained anger because of the nature of the place he's in.

**JAMES**

Hey!

**(groaning and laughing)**

The Aquan glares through the fourth wall

**ALEX**

You know what at that we'll take a break and be back in a couple of minutes.

**LYDIA**

Water load of trouble you've got yourself into.

**ALEX**

And welcome back. So you've just re-joined the party and are about to prevent the murder of the entire party by an Aquan.

**BEN**

Yes

**BRYN**

I reckon we could take him.

**BEN**

I'm going to roll perception, see if I notice. No. I am oblivious.

**ALEX**

All is well.

**BEN**

All is well. Right so we need to take a ship.

**LYDIA**

We got that, yeah.

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**BEN**

You could hear that?

**LYDIA**

Yeah. Good quizzing. You quizzed well.

**BEN**

Right, well in which case let's do the thing which you all just heard.

**BRYN**

Ok

**JAMES**

Very well.

**LYDIA**

I've never been on a boat, this is going to be well exciting.

**JAMES**

Looking at the Aquan, sea you later.

**ALEX**

He actively starts to step towards you and puts the trident into his second hand at which point a couple of people who have been in the antechamber,

see this, rush over visibly and restrain him and begin leading him down the cavern saying soothing words and leading him away.

**BEN**

Bertie if you continue like that I'm going to dock your pay.

**(laughing)**

No! That's a perfectly valid use of that word!

**ALEX**

As this happens, another person steps forward from the antechamber. This is a halfling woman and she steps forward and is already against you guys, having heard all of this, and begins to lead you down through a side corridor which effectively runs around the outside of the cavern. It's much narrower, much less grandiose and just leads down and down and down and down. It takes a while.

**BRYN**

I will not attempt to make conversation.

**ALEX**

You're really wise today. Really playing that wisdom score. Eventually you make it to the base of the stairs. As you've been walking the sound of the waves have been getting louder and louder and louder. Finally stepping out, have you been continuing your detect magic Hamid?

**BRYN**

Yeah I mean it only lasts three minutes but I can recast it as many times as I like.

**ALEX**

Sure. So as you step out, you step out into a cavern which is clearly against the sea. So the base of the cliffs there is a pontoon set there with a number of ships all in dock. The thing that's fascinating to watch is that there is an ambient glow of decent strength magic at the mouth of the cave, the waves are huge, they're crashing against the cliffs. It's enormous. There is no discernible barrier yet the second that you step within the confines of the cave all is calm and still and there's the gentle up and down of the waves.

**LYDIA**

So the ship that we're going to take is going out there Zolf in the...

**BEN**

Yep

**LYDIA**

Is it only you that needs to do this thing because I mean....

**BEN**

You can get the train if you want.

**BRYN**

We should stick together I think. It won't be too bad Sasha.

**BEN**

It will be pretty bad.

**ALEX**

At that point a particularly large wave that's higher than the cave mouth [crashing noise] against the side of it.

**BEN**

I will not blame any of you. This is my fault and I'm atoning for something that I have done. If you want to take the train, take the train.

**LYDIA**

Well they said that the train wasn't running for a while didn't they. Oh dear. Is water supposed to do that? I don't know...is it usual...is the ocean usually like this?

**JAMES**

Water is usually less cross.

**ALEX**

The halfling gestures down the pontoon to the ship. You don't know which one yet. There are varying sizes. There's some multi masters there. The cave

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mouth is pretty high but some of them have removable masts and so on.  
There's some large ships there.

**LYDIA**

Zolf, is this going to be ok?

**BEN**

Maybe.

**LYDIA**

You don't sound very faithy

**BRYN**

You probably won't feel very well for a little while Sasha but you'll survive

**BEN**

And also the question is my faith so well see how Poseidon feels shall we.

**JAMES**

Well let's see which ship we're getting first. I mean that one for instance will be perfectly suitable. That one, somewhat less so.

**BEN**

You realise we're going to be restricted in size by the fact that I'm the only relevant crew member.

**JAMES**

Ah!

**ALEX**

So the halfling leads you and leads you up a gangplank onto a large ship. Multi decked and there are multiple crew running around

**BRYN**

And then takes you to the lifeboat!

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

Leads you across the deck, down the second deck plank, onto...

**LYDIA**

Ah this is looking alright, this is fine.

**JAMES**

Yeah lovely.

**BRYN**

Like a bucket with a hole in it.

**LYDIA**

The dog could get a nice run around.

**JAMES**

I could hold him up at the front and go I'm flying. Look you're flying.

**LYDIA**

I could totally climb up that mast by just stabbing daggers into it.

**ALEX**

So heading down the second gangplank you find yourselves looking at a ship that appears to be made entirely of driftwood. It's built together. It's the shape of a small one man boat. It has a single mast with a sail. It has a rudder. There is the space for a pair of oars and nought more. You will all fit but that's more or less the sum total of it.

**LYDIA**

Zolf if you say this is going to be ok then I'll get on the boat but it's...

**BRYN**

It's essentially a dinghy.

**ALEX**

It's as close to a dinghy as you're going to get and still have a sail.

**JAMES**

I've seen canoes bigger than this. Where's first class?

**ALEX**

Give me a knowledge religion.

**BEN**

Yes. Oh, not great. 14.

**ALEX**

14. You know that most of the Temples to Poseidon have ceremonial rafts of some kind or another which actually is constructed of driftwood and its purpose is for initiations and things like that. So the fact that they're actually giving you this to do your journey in, means that they're invested in you. They're not just giving you something completely expendable in the hopes that you die.

**BEN**

The fact that there's a storm indicates that...

**ALEX**

However, nonetheless it's...it's a big ask to get it across the channel in this siltation.

**JAMES**

Bertie looks to Hamid. Is this in any way magical? I mean is this in some way like a fantastic magical boat that is in some way wonderful and fantastically protected against that, pointing at the huge waves crashing against the front of the cave.

**BRYN**

Yes

**ALEX**

And that was with a roll of?

**BRYN**

That was a bluff check.

**ALEX**

Yeah it was.

**BRYN**

7 + 9. 16.

**ALEX**

For once, I don't normally call for rolls in this situation but if you want to discern whether that's the truth or not, I'll allow you to account a roll for once.

**LYDIA**

So it's protected then, right. Sasha wants this to be true so she's not...

**BEN**

I'm going to fix you all with a...you're not very religious are you?

**JAMES**

No.

**BEN**

Didn't think so, no there is no magical protection on that boat.

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

Just shut down the only hope there!

**LYDIA**

Right so, like...

**BEN**

I am not going to lead you into a very dangerous situation under false pretences.

**JAMES**

Vote for train. Bertie raises his hand and raises Brutor's paw.

**BEN**

So that's two.

**BRYN**

I'll come on the boat with you Zolf.

**LYDIA**

I look at Hamid. Yeah...the idea of being on that storm or having to spend the journey with Bertie...

**(laughing)**

**JAMES**

Come with us young lady, he'll wear a little station master's outfit. It'll be adorable.

**LYDIA**

Half a dozen of one and half a dozen of the other and all of those things are awful! Right I think...I mean you're going to need someone that can, you know, sneak around on a boat won't you? Yeah.

**JAMES**

Where is there to hide? What are you going to hide under?

**LYDIA**

I do a very good job of hiding from the situation behind the mast.

**JAMES**

The only thing that's on that boat that you can reasonably hide behind is possibly false hope. That's it. I'm getting the train. Bertie stomps off. He is not getting on that. He is dressed in a tank. He is going to drown you.

**BEN**

I am also quite pleased because I was thinking plate armour row boat, no. that ends in Bertie's death.

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**JAMES**

Right, well see you in Paris.

**ALEX**

So the votes are in.

**BEN**

Going aboard?

**LYDIA**

Yeah I'm just checking my swim skill. My swim is -1. Right I'm not going to regret this at all.

**JAMES**

Bertie gives Zolf the address of a hotel in Paris that is splendidly appointed that he will be staying at. You may send me a message there when you have arrived.

**BRYN**

Should we not maybe meet on the other side of the channel and then travel to Paris together? Would that not be a bit more sensible? We could meet in Calais. Isn't that where the train comes out?

**JAMES**

If you think you can predictably end up in Calais then very well.

**BRYN**

I think we'll be fine.

**BEN**

We should be ok.

**LYDIA**

I look at Hamid desperately. Yes we'll be fine.

**JAMES**

Well I have no knowledge of hotels in Calais so I shall meet you at the best hotel in Calais. Look me up there.

**ALEX**

Ok so..

**BRYN**

We'll race you.

**BEN**

Do you want to make a bet?

**JAMES**

Very well sir I shall offer you a wager.

**BEN**

Right

**JAMES**

What are the stakes?

**BEN**

Your silence for three days.

**(laughing)**

**LYDIA**

Well done, that's the longest I've actually seen him quiet!

**JAMES**

Bertie's visibly thinking. You can visibly feel a bar filling up in his head. Very well and in return I shall ask for money. Perhaps more important. 200 gold pieces.

**BEN**

Very good.

**JAMES**

Done!

**BEN**

Shake

**JAMES**

Brutor shakes

**BEN**

I'm not making a bet with Brutor.

**JAMES**

Even if I made him a little riverboat gambler's outfit.

**BEN**

Especially that. If you make a convincing riverboat gambler outfit by the time that we arrive in Calais I will give you an extra 50 gold.

**JAMES**

Done. Shakes hand. Shakes paw.

**ALEX**

The halfling has watched and heard all of this, raise an eyebrow, turns to Zolf and says this is exactly what the Navigator's talking about.

**JAMES**

The race is on! And Bertie stomps off.

**LYDIA**

Wait, does that make this less of a journey of faith now?

**BEN**

No, this makes it a journey of, and I'm looking at the halfling, about managing people.

**ALEX**

She just shrugs her shoulders. Better you than me. And walks off. Pulls the gangplank so you're now ready to cast off. Presumably Bertie you're off like a shot.

**JAMES**

Oh Bertie, now that there's money involved and the possibility of a riverboat gambler's outfit for Brutor.

**LYDIA**

Stitching as you go.

**JAMES**

Oh yeah he's improvising borderline racist sea shanties all the way up back through the Temple of Poseidon.

**LYDIA**

Do you survive getting out?

**ALEX**

We'll see. So we'll start with the majority of the party. Presumably you cast off.

**BEN**

Yes I will ask somebody to cast off automatically.

**LYDIA**

I get a dagger out to chop the....

**BEN**

No, right. Actually if you two just sit there and yeah. Just sit there. I will cast off.

**ALEX**

Ok so you cast off. Can I get a profession sailing check to make it out of the cavern amidst the storm.

**BEN**

Yes 17.

**ALEX**

17. You make it out the cavern. So this small little driftwood boat starts pulling away, first with oars just to get it out through the still waters of the harbour, would you call it. I don't know. The pontoon. And as you're pulling away you can see clanking up the stairs with a halfling chasing up behind him. Bertie effectively racing back up the way he's coming out. A second look for your guys.

**BRYN**

Do you think he'll make it.

**BEN**

Do you think he'll end up in France?

**BRYN**

Yes

**BEN**

Are you sure?

**BRYN**

Do you think he knows the way.

**JAMES**

[singing] echoing through the cavern

**LYDIA**

It's the sort of guy that always manages isn't it.

**BRYN**

The question is how many casualties there'll be on the way.

**ALEX**

At which point the boat hits the first waves outside of the cave and [crashing noise]. There's massive lurches. Can everyone apart from Zolf give me a fort save.

**LYDIA**

Perfect 20. Natural 20. Plus my 2

**ALEX**

Natural 20 from Sasha.

**BRYN**

8.

**ALEX**

8 from Hamid. Well Sasha, you know what, there was always that risk that you might be seasick. Oh no. Oh no. This is great. This is brilliant. It's like a free ride. The salt air, the tang, the excitement of it. You feel actually like invigorated and good. I'm going to be giving you a bonus on a couple of rolls for this. Hamid, welcome...

**LYDIA**

Can I climb up the ropes like, I'm starting rigging...

**ALEX**

You got a natural 20, I'll allow you to climb up the mast but bear in mind the mast is only about 12 foot tall.

**LYDIA**

I've got really strong escape artist. I might be naturally good with ropes.

**BEN**

Also considering the fact that we don't have any rigging.

**BRYN**

As the boat rocks, the mast rocks exponentially more.

**LYDIA**

Yeah but like in Mad Max...

**ALEX**

I will allow you without the climb check for that natural 20 and are now sat atop the mast in the middle of a storm. Hamid on the other hand...

**LYDIA**

Poseidon favours me!

**(laughing)**

**BRYN**

A tiny boat in the middle of a storm is definitely the right place to risk the wrath of Poseidon.

**ALEX**

Hamid on the other hand is discovering what it's like not to travel in style across the sea.

**BRYN**

Normally I get a little bit of sea sickness but oh dear!

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

As you say that you plunge downwards about 30 feet and then immediately back up another 30 feet on the other side.

**BRYN**

Hamid grabs tight to the rail and leans over it and we pan it to leave him some shred of dignity. He's done far too much vomiting in this campaign.

**JAMES**

To actually vomit you cast prestidigitation at it in mid-air just to evaporate it.

**ALEX**

Just twinkle

**BRYN**

I vomit glitter! That would require a concentration check!

**BEN**

Feel free to lie down if you need to.

**BRYN**

I'll be ok.

**LYDIA**

Does your coat of many garments turn into like warm...

**BRYN**

Yeah it could be an anorak, yeah. I put on a...

**BEN**

You've got a southwestern on.

**BRYN**

Yeah, absolutely.

**ALEX**

So last but not least, can I get a profession sailor check from anyone for navigation. In order to find out where you're going.

**BEN**

20

**ALEX**

Natural?

**BEN**

No. Unnatural 20.

**ALEX**

Ok. Since...profession is trained only so it means that if you had a profession you would have that bonus but you would only get in that profession.

**LYDIA**

Ah ok.

**ALEX**

So we'll pan away further and further and further disappearing into the clouds. You see this tiny ship amid towering waves breaking barely 50 feet away at the base of the cliffs. Things that could destroy huge galleons and you're off in your little ship. And we'll cut to...

**BEN**

Well to very quickly describe my methodology.

**ALEX**

Oh go for it.

**BEN**

I'm very much going with the current. I'm not trying to fight the waves. I'm trusting effectively Poseidon to not kill me horribly. So I'm trying to direct it in the right way but other than that

**ALEX**

Sure. So we'll cut to Bertie. So clank, clank, clank, clank, clank straight up through the stairs and you make it to the antechamber. The ...

**JAMES**

Is the Aquan still there?

**ALEX**

The Aquan is still at the top of the balcony with two people talking to him. When he sees Bertie he starts pulling against them again and then just keeps saying, remember your faith, remember your faith, remember your faith. Words are not injustice.

**JAMES**

Cheerio! Lovely to see you, see you later. Off we go. Clank, clank, clank.

**LYDIA**

Oh thank goodness you're distracted by the bet.

**JAMES**

Nice place you've got here and the sea you later but I done that before.

**ALEX**

So we'll skip ahead. You go out through the gilded metal gates, out to the screaming moor of James Ross...sorry, Poseidon. You're very high up at this point, looking down. Give me a perception check.

**JAMES**

6 minus modifier is 5.

**ALEX**

You're pretty certain they're already dead!

**JAMES**

Oh well!

**ALEX**

So presumably you're heading back...

**JAMES**

Oh and then they can't pay. I'm sure I can claim against his estate. Never mind, on we go.

**ALEX**

Presumably you're heading back to Dover.

**JAMES**

Yes

**ALEX**

So you begin to set off on your walk. We'll say it takes you a couple of hours to make it back to Dover just because of the nature of it and it's so blustery and windy

**LYDIA**

And you're in a tank.

**ALEX**

You're wearing a tank so...

**JAMES**

I have armour proficiency.

**ALEX**

True but I think on a cliffside in a storm it might require baby steps. So eventually you make it back to the soggy avenue, the centre of Dover.

**JAMES**

The soggy avenue, the centre of Dover, the soggy avenue.

**ALEX**

There is a river running down the middle of it. People are being escorted out of the various shops. Some shopkeepers are arguing with some of the navy soldiers and the policemen are all there helping out and some of the shopkeepers are arguing saying I'm not going to leave now. It took me 30 years blah, blah, blah but the navy officers, rather the police, the police are handling it quite gently actually. The navy officers, when someone argues too much, you just see them bodily removing people and taking them away. But looking down towards the dock, the dock isn't there anymore. It's completely subsumed already and it's a bit of a mess. You also see amongst all of the police bringing people out the jailer who's out on the beat wearing his hat and he looks entirely out of his depth; both figuratively and literally.

**JAMES**

Fair enough. So Bertie in terms of transport options we have the under the sea, the steampunk Eurotunnel.

**ALEX**

Yeah pretty much.

**JAMES**

So I'm heading towards the steampunk Eurotunnel rail terminal.

**ALEX**

Ok you don't have knowledge local do you?

**JAMES**

I do not have knowledge local. Well I know that I don't have knowledge local so I will ask a passing pedestrian which way to the rail terminal.

**ALEX**

Bingo! That's fine. We'll just skip ahead and say you ask around. A lot of people aren't listening, they're going [shouting noise]. A couple of the policemen ask if you'll help with the evacuation of the street.

**JAMES**

Would Bertie do it?! Well at the same time it's an opportunity to look heroic publicly

**ALEX**

High publicity. High publicity. What matters more? The look on Zolf's face when you win or...

**JAMES**

And money

**ALEX**

And money. Or, the publicity. What is it?

**JAMES**

I think at this point Bertie is going to...ok, so Bertie is going to help the police by intimidating people out of their homes.

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

In one single attempt or multiple little ones?

**JAMES**

I'm going to go for one particular street and I'm going to attempt to, as it's on my way, Bertie will knock on doors and intimidate people along that street out of their homes. Just basically hamming up how terrible the flood is going to be

**ALEX**

Ok if you do pomp and pageantry it will take you about half an hour to walk the length of this street because it takes so long per door.

**JAMES**

I will do that. Half an hour is an acceptable length of time.

**ALEX**

Ok then give me the roll.

**JAMES**

Ok so  $3 + 7 + 1$  is 11.

**ALEX**

Ok that is a poor attempt. It's insufficient for basically anyone. Please role play me just one, as a sample so bang, bang, bang. You're at the door. Someone opens it. Hello?

**JAMES**

Hello. You're about to drown. Get out.

**ALEX**

What?

**JAMES**

This, you see that, points at the sea. That's the sea. It's cross. Get out! It's about to flood your house.

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

I'm not entirely...

**JAMES**

Shush. No words. Leave

**ALEX**

Go away

**JAMES**

Bluuurgh I'm the sea, bluuurgh.

**ALEX**

Slams the door in his face

**JAMES**

Right well you're past helping. Let's move on.

**(laughing)**

Can't say you weren't warned.

**BEN**

It's just that 20 times

**JAMES**

Yep. Very little change between acts. You'd think I'd learn but no. You'd think with the wisdom of 8 I have no sense of pattern recognitions.

**ALEX**

So Bertie...

**JAMES**

Sorry, did my best lads, sorry, best of luck.

**ALEX**

Cut to the group on the storm and I say on the storm because you're that high you feel like you're hitting the clouds. It's awful. Like more than once you're almost capsizing. In fact once you effectively have and you just hung on and it managed to right itself. Turns out that having a boat made of driftwood means that it floats really well but nonetheless it is awful. Hamid you feel atrocious,

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to the point where I'm going to be doing penalties for you if you were attempting any rolls.

**BRYN**

Yeah I'm sickened. It's a condition.

**ALEX**

Oh yeah and so with that in mind can everyone give me a perception check.

**LYDIA**

6 + 8 so 14.

**ALEX**

14

**BRYN**

Well 27. I rolled a 19.

**ALEX**

I'll allow that to mitigate I think.

**BEN**

20.

**ALEX**

20. Presumably not natural?

**BEN**

No.

**ALEX**

Ok. So Sasha and Zolf you just about have a sense of where you started. However you're fairly certain that whilst you're going across the channel you're pretty much going sideways. The journey that you're taking is completely unrepresentative of what Zolf's doing. Presumably you're running around keeping it all trimmed or are you just accepting whatever happens?

**BEN**

I'm keeping the boat afloat and I'm trying to keep it in vaguely the right direction but if a wave wants us to go in a certain way it takes us there.

**LYDIA**

Can I give you any supporting roles? I've got a lot of rope and I have a lot of things to do...

**BEN**

You might need to lash the boat together.

**LYDIA**

Yeah, yeah

**ALEX**

I'll tell you what if you want to try and lash the boat together, go for it.

**LYDIA**

I've got acrobatics, climb and escape artistry. Surely I can tangle things up.

**ALEX**

Here's an interesting one which I have issue with in the Pathfinder system. They changed using rope and tying people up and things to be a combat manoeuvre which I take issue with. I don't think it's particularly good and representative.

**LYDIA**

I mean to be fair I don't have the background where I'm hugely not savvy. It's something that I need to be able to unpick

**ALEX**

What I'm going to do because I disagree with the idea of rope being a combat thing. I'm just going to get you...

**BEN**

I'm going to fight this piece of this wood!

**JAMES**

Cluedo would disagree with you!

**LYDIA**

I'm very good at jumping around the boat and fetching things that you need.

**ALEX**

I will get a dexterity check. Just so...the D20 plus the dex.

**LYDIA**

So 16 total.

**ALEX**

16 total. Yeah you're tying up a few knots here and there. You add some extra layers of rope to anywhere that looks like it might be at breaking point. Let's put it this way, you're helping a lot more than you're hindering and that's no small feat. However as time passes and we're talking first like a few minutes and it just stretches on and on and on. Zolf to your practice you know you are taking a pretty random route. You are just awash at this point.

**BEN**

I'll just focus on keeping the boat up

**ALEX**

The wind gets stronger and stronger and stronger to the point where the ship is tipping based on the wind, never mind based on the waves. The waves are huge, towering huge.

**LYDIA**

I'm going to tie Hamid to a big bit of driftwood just so that he doesn't get blown over.

**ALEX**

If you are going to do that you will need to do another check. It will require a DC10 check just to move and not get blown overboard with the strength of the wind.

**LYDIA**

Oh right ok, so...

**ALEX**

So at this point doing anything apart from literally just holding on is going to be checks not to get blown straight overboard just by the wind.

**LYDIA**

Hamid. Are you alright?

**BRYN**

I'm ok, yeah.

**ALEX**

With you Hamid, being small, there are a couple of moments where you're holding the side and your arms and legs are quite literally almost wanting to blow over the side.

**BRYN**

Yeah all I'm doing is holding on. That's literally all I've done since we...

**LYDIA**

I want to go around the boat and tie him to the boat because I see that and I don't want him to fly off.

**ALEX**

In which case I'll require a strength check to get him and then the dex check.

**LYDIA**

Ok. A natural 1 and my strength check is -1 so...

**ALEX**

Natural 1 on a strength check

**JAMES**

Getting the railway with the little riverboat gambler isn't seeming like such a bad idea then is it.

**LYDIA**

No I'm still feeling very well. I'm just feeling well probably a long way from the boat.

**ALEX**

You start climbing a huge wave, a massive, massive wave and the wind actually starts to die down. You see your moment and you stop, stepping across the boat, still holding on to the mast, you're not being a idiot. And as you crest the wave the full force of the wind hits you. It instantly catches in your leather coat, your fingers slip off the mast and you are gone like a shot. Gone. Straight over the side. Hamid and Zolf give me a perception check.

**BEN**

Nat 20.

**BRYN**

17 but obviously still with my sickened abilities.

**ALEX**

Yeah Hamid you basically see Sasha reaching out with a rope to help you out with a sort of comforting smile and then gone. Gone instantly. Snapped away. You've no idea where.

**BRYN**

I swear emphatically and then vomit again

**ALEX**

Zolf, you manage to keep an eye on where she lands in the water but it's a good distance, as in, it's more than just reaching an arm out. She's a significant distance. She was bodily carried away.

**BRYN**

As a sailor presumably you would drop the sail at this point.

**BEN**

That's what I'm about to do.

**BRYN**

People may not be able to see on the podcast but I raised my hand at that point to indicate that I was speaking out of character because Bryn has sailing knowledge but Hamid does not.

**ALEX**

So Sasha's overboard and the wind is picking up. Hamid's basically incapacitated. Bertie's failing to bully people. What do you do Zolf? What do you do?

**BEN**

I, in desperation grab a...

**ALEX**

I tell you what, tell me next week

**(groaning and laughing)**

**LYDIA**

Splashy, splashy, splashy

**ALEX**

Oh it's all gone a bit dramatic. Well that's a fun one and finally the first time we've split the parties significantly. One of you is going to have to get so lost. That's the rule.

**LYDIA**

One of us already is!

**(laughing)**

**JAMES**

Basically drowning!

**LYDIA**

I've got -1 swim check and I don't know what I'm doing.

**JAMES**

This is your first time on the open sea and you're nearly drowning so I can't help that might inculcate some long term phobia.

**LYDIA**

I'm having quite a hard time.

**BEN**

Or a new career as an adrenaline junkie

**(laughing)**

**LYDIA**

New career!

**BEN**

Next base jumping in a tornado. Let's do it!

**ALEX**

Well depending how it goes there may be an opening at the Temple of Poseidon for a new follower.

**LYDIA**

Yeah or I might need to write up a new character.

**ALEX**

They're all options! We'll come back next week and we hope that you tune in too so until then...

**LYDIA**

I hope that I get to tune in as well!

**ALEX**

Bye all!

**EVERYONE**

Bye!

**[Show Theme - Outro]**

**ALEX**

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