

## **RQG – [31] – [Water Way to Go]**

**[Show Theme - Intro]**

**ALEX**

Hello and welcome to episode 31 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me for another adventure is

**JAMES**

James "Helpful" Ross.

**BRYN**

Bryn Monroe

**LYDIA**

Lydia Nicholas

**BEN**

Ben Meredith.

**ALEX**

And who are you playing?

**JAMES**

Sir Bertram MacGuffingham.

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**BRYN**

Hamid Blah!!!!

**ALEX**

Ah!

**LYDIA**

Sasha (*imitating gurgling/drowning effects*)

**BEN**

Zolf – Ah!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So as you may have noticed, we're in mid-scene. As it stands currently while Zolf was exonerate – well I say exonerated – bought his commission after being arrested for being a navi who ran away effectively – you're still on the way to Paris.

**LYDIA**

Yay

**BEN**

Paris, yeah, that's definitely resolved. I remember!

**ALEX**

I remember – it's been a while now!

**LYDIA**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

But the party's had a bit of a split – turns out Bertie's not as suicidal as we all thought.

**JAMES**

No.

**ALEX**

And has decided to – isn't there – there's a bet isn't there?

**JAMES**

There is a bet yes.

**LYDIA**

250 gold now!

**JAMES**

Oh Bertie's silenced for three whole days!

**ALEX**

Oh the stakes are high!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Bertie, having failed to rescue a single person on the way through Dover is currently making his way towards the Charlton. Meanwhile, Mr Smith ...

**BRYN**

While Sasha's just gone overboard!

**ALEX**

Yeah Mr Smith is watching as Sasha is about 50 feet away in a massive stormy water and Hamid's doing exactly nothing to help cos if he lets go he's gone as well, so.

**LYDIA**

And Sasha can't swim! Sasha is splashing and sinking.

**ALEX**

So, in classic TV fashion, rather than following the cliff-hanger...

**LYDIA**

*Imitating sounds of drowning*

**ALEX**

We'll start with Bertie.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So you are making, you have made it through to the specific Channel Tunnel and station.

**JAMES**

Terminus.

**ALEX**

Yeah – it looks like there are a bunch of staff and they are all having a discussion outside the gates and there's a queue of angry looking people at the entrance.

**JAMES**

Right – Bertie – is it a queue or is it a crowd?

**ALEX**

Is it a loose queue as in it is a queue but it's not particularly orderly – you get the impression that some people are trying their luck and pushing ahead and so.

**JAMES**

Okay – are there staff at the front of the queue?

**ALEX**

Yes, there is a steel great shutter which is closed halfway across, so there's a little space that you could fit through but it looks like they're trying to decide whether to close or not.

**JAMES**

It's Victoria Underground Station during rush hour!

**ALEX**

Pretty much.

**JAMES**

Okay, so Bertie, noticing that there is a queue, in inverted commas, stands at the back of the queue cos he wasn't raised in a barn but announces to the front of the queue – does anybody know what's going on here? Why is there such a queue and a delay?

**ALEX**

Now, now everyone calm down! It's just we have to wait and check for damp – I mean there's a slight delay – we may end up having to close today – at which point there's a massive “argh-rah-rah-rah” from everyone – it's mostly merchants who appear to be carrying valuables. So, it seems to be like there's a lot of people who are trying their luck thinking you know what, if I transport

this expensive stuff via the tunnel it's better than having nothing transported. So, it's a very posh clientele comparatively.

**JAMES**

Stand aside please ladies and gentleman – important Meritocratic business. I am Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham on a singular mission to get on that train – and Bertie confronts the people at the front of the, the start, the front, yes?

**ALEX**

Yeah.

**JAMES**

Now I understand that this might be shut – is that correct?

**ALEX**

Well we're still doing the engineering examination, if you'll just give us an hour or so we'll know and from there we'll be able to tell you whether we're going to be open today. If I'm honest, we're probably going to close – he's yelling out over your head, everyone's going "oh this is ridiculous" and things.

**JAMES**

That's outrageous! I am on important Meritocratic business!

**ALEX**

Well that's great – would you like to drown? I mean I don't know what you want me to do.

**JAMES**

Well what seems to be the problem?

**ALEX**

Well we have to do a check, we have to make sure there hasn't been a breach. It's just large, it's not exactly you know, old technology that we're using here – you've got to check that it's all intact.

**JAMES**

So the newer the technology is the more work needs to be done – is that correct?

**ALEX**

I'm just saying that you know, all the kinks aren't worked out yet. Honestly, just wait in line, we'll deal with you when we get to you.

**JAMES**

Ugh! Nothing can be done to expedite matters I take it. No, no gold to grease the wheels perhaps, nudge-nudge, wink-wink etc. etc.

**ALEX**

Give me a diplomacy check just for what you did – I won't allow unclear 04:20.

**JAMES**

Yeah, oh natural 20.

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

Whenever he needs it, it comes out.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Natural 20, the sort of station master takes him and goes...it's very expensive to expedite a train – I mean a train's big – that's a lot of gold greasing a lot of wheels.

**JAMES**

How many wheels and what rate per wheel?

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Starting with Sasha, I will need a swim check from you just to stay above water, so?

**LYDIA**

Oh 3 minus 1!

**ALEX**

You drop below the water.

**LYDIA**

*Imitates bubbling/gurgling noise.*

**ALEX**

You're now holding your breath.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

For listeners who can't see it, she's literally holding her breath! It's interesting viewing! So if you're under water because of failing the swim check, or you know you're under intentionally, you must hold your breath obviously and you can hold it for the number of rounds equal to twice your con score.

**LYDIA**

Oh!

**ALEX**

So that's a bit complicated so that's each round is second seconds, your con score, so not the ability modifier, your actual score.

**LYDIA**

Oh right.

**ALEX**

So what's your con score?

**LYDIA**

12.

**ALEX**

12 x 6 being 72. So you can hold your breath for 72 seconds but that's only if you...

**BEN**

It's nearly twice your con score.

**ALEX**

Yeah, sorry so that'd be 144 seconds but that's assuming you do nothing to stave the situation – that's you literally just holding your breath, so if you are trying to swim back to the surface and so on, it starts cutting into that. It's a bit complicated – long story short.

**LYDIA**

This is a new situation for me. I don't do this very much.

**ALEX**

Sure.

**LYDIA**

Apart from panicking, I'm probably not holding my breath ultimately.

**ALEX**

Sure.

**LYDIA**

Since that's already so low.

**ALEX**

So, with that in mind, picking up where we left off, Sasha is currently now under the water holding her breath.

**BEN**

Okay I will whip out a knife.

**ALEX**

Okay. Put her out of her misery!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

Put it in my teeth! Argh!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

How to sacrifice!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

It's clear what Poseidon wants!

**BEN**

So slam it down on the corner brace of the sail, so that it flaps up, like it doesn't leave but it stops being so billowy.

**ALEX**

Yeah, it's just, it's a drag at this point. The ship lurches when you do so obviously.

**BEN**

Yes, look at Hamid – say stay down and hold on! And then what I'm going to do is javelin my Trident into the sea.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BEN**

And start screaming at the sky – no! If you're going to do anything, take me! Don't take her! And then take my chainmail off, throw that into the sea.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BEN**

And dive in after it.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BEN**

And go for Sasha.

**ALEX**

Okay, so you...

**BEN**

That'll take a while.

**ALEX**

Spike your trident into the water - gone without trace – chainmail – gone without a trace – you jump in.

**BEN**

Gone without a trace!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

Okay cool. I lose the minus 4 physical for having chainmail so that's good. It takes a number of rounds for people to do armour checks, to remove armour – four rounds then.

**ALEX**

I'm factoring it in so I'm gonna get him to do his dive and then we'll factor into how much time you've got left.

**BEN**

10.

**ALEX**

10, okay, so you...

**BEN**

Unclear 07:29.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Well they'd say this generally works won't they because...

**BEN**

That's true.

**JAMES**

Because he can swim – if you fall in, it would be better for him to drown quickly rather than like drag it out for days.

**ALEX**

Well I'm afraid you...

**BEN**

Oh hang on a minute, no sorry – 6.

**ALEX**

6.

**BEN**

That's not an armour check penalty – that's a leg penalty.

**ALEX**

Yeah it is – so you're under the water too.

**BEN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Struggling to breath – you're now holding your breath. Hamid, do you do anything?

**BRYN**

I hang on to the boat.

**ALEX**

Okay – we'll cut back to Bureaucracy!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

He's starting to get a bit befuddled by your maths – so per wheel, if it's ...

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

The train has 60 wheels including carriages but you're only including prime numbered carriages.

**JAMES**

Also it's going at 60 miles an hour in the direction of Paris!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

There's another one going at 35 miles per hour in the opposite direction.

**ALEX**

Yeah, okay, so...

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So is that 50 gold?

**JAMES**

50 gold, yes of course it is. Oh hang on, no according to my maths it's actually 25.

**ALEX**

What?

**JAMES**

Yes. I'm glad you agree! You're wiser than you look you know!

**ALEX**

*Laughs* – at which point, someone else comes up and is muttering in his ear and he goes ... do you reckon we can risk it? 30?

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

He gives you a really canny look like he's totally got one over on you. 30?

**JAMES**

Oh well you drive a hard bargain, yes – well, well – ah...couldn't... oh...  
theatrically taps his pockets to big clanging noises.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Yes, well of course, well I mean if it were possible to negotiate first class, particularly for myself and my hideous daughter.

**(Group laughter)**

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**ALEX**

My dear Sir, this is the tunnel – it's all first class.

**JAMES**

Oh excellent! Well good, super, well...

**ALEX**

She kind of holds her hand out meaningfully.

**JAMES**

And puts Bertie unclear 09:20 as subtly as Bertie can.

**ALEX**

Thank you for your donation to the maintenance offer – a lot of the merchants are kind of raising eyebrows but no-one's about to rock the boat, as it were, given the fact that you're getting the train running – fine, right, he pulls it open – sorry for any inconvenience everybody, water's coming into the station a little bit – as he's pulling open the gates.

**BRYN**

One of the other themes of this campaign is institutions just fragrantly ignoring health and safety rules.

**ALEX**

You've only been in Britain!

**(Group laughter)**

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**JAMES**

Bertie turns to the crowd.

**ALEX**

You wait till Paris.

**JAMES**

And in France it will be even more unclear 09:51.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Bertie turns to the crowd and goes, ladies and gentlemen, another victory for private sector intervention into the railway sector.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Presumably you splash down into the underground station.

**JAMES**

Splash down into the underground station.

**ALEX**

Okay, as you're doing so, give me a reflex aid.

**JAMES**

2.

**ALEX**

You manage to instantly, the second you step on to the incredibly wet tiles as the water's rushing past you underground fall flat on your back and - *imitates sound of tumbling* – down the whole stairs.

**JAMES**

I'm fine!

**ALEX**

Not fine in any way but ...

**JAMES**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Yeah, it's clear that they've closed it for a totally legitimate reason and you're putting loads of people at risk.

**BRYN**

He may not be hurt but his **social damage is ruptured**.

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

Is your armour dented?

**JAMES**

Oh!

**ALEX**

The armour is not dented. The armour is not dented. It was more sort of toboggan unclear 10:47.

**JAMES**

Brutor's on the front.

**ALEX**

Brutor had a whale of a time.

**(Group laughter)**

*Imitation of dog barking*

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Is that dog's pittle on the stairs?

**LYDIA**

Ah!

**ALEX**

So, nonetheless, we'll skip ahead a bit and say cos obviously a decent amount of time has passed for the rest of the party – you manage to get on to the train.

**LYDIA**

I hope not!

**ALEX**

And as you are getting on to the train, the water is rushing over the platform on to the actual tracks beneath – bearing in mind just as a bit of flavour, this is an underground station, it's large, it has a high vaulted ceiling, if Sasha was here it'd feel reminiscent of Other London in some ways for that, that industrial style, however, the train is not steam by any stretch – there are old style carriages with walnut panelling, they actually have some stained glass in the windows and things like that – it's very opulent.

**JAMES**

Is Bertie going to have a communion or something?

**ALEX**

Well it's just one of those things.

**JAMES**

Fair enough.

**ALEX**

Because they can, I get the impression. There are a large number however proportionally of cargo even though there are as I say three carriages full of people, there are three carriages, four carriages for actual just cargo and

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freight and so on and the engine at the front is huge, it is massive, it's a good sort of 20 foot tall so the tunnel must be fairly sizeable and you have no knowledge of engineering or anything like that do you.

**JAMES**

No.

**ALEX**

For the sake of being able to picture it, it's more reminiscent of a diesel engine, that sort of snub nose without any outlets for steam or anything like that and you can see arcs of lightning patterning across the outer hull a little bit – as water drips down you'll just see a (*imitates sound of lightning*).

**JAMES**

I think it's more in flavour that I don't take a perception check – I'm just like, yeah, that seems fine.

**ALEX**

That's what trains do!

**JAMES**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Cutting back to the storm – Sasha, what do you do?

**LYDIA**

I do another swim check to try and get up to the top.

**ALEX**

Go for it.

**LYDIA**

This might be a very bad idea, but you know – oh gosh, 5.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

That was a 9.

**LYDIA**

Oh was it? Oh okay, so 8.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

You remain under the water. Zolf – you don't sink though, you're just beneath the water – Zolf, you are in the water and currently under the water also holding your breath **unclear 12:59**.

**BEN**

I am going to swim for where I saw Sasha.

**ALEX**

Give me a perception check to see if she's still there.

**BEN**

Oh good – that's a critical fail.

**LYDIA**

We're actually both gonna die!

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

Hamid's going to be adrift with the boat.

**ALEX**

Not only have you ....

**JAMES**

Someone's going to win a bet!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

So fancy rock band anyone?

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So not only do you lose sight of Sasha, you get turned around, turned around – give me a swim check to see if you get above the water.

**BEN**

12.

**ALEX**

You don't get above the water, but you don't sink any further and you lose sight of the boat with the driftwood because of the natural one. So you are now currently fighting for your own life, never mind Sasha's. Hamid, you saw Sasha get whipped away instantly, Zolf chucks all of his stuff in the ocean and dives in after her – he's gone without a trace as well.

**BRYN**

I'm just shouting to Poseidon don't take her, take me.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

What do you do, the untrained person on the driftwood?

Unclear 13:59.

**ALEX**

I should point out, the wind is still so strong that you will be taking penalties to the strength check just to let go of the boat.

**BRYN**

I'm just clinging on for dear life.

**ALEX**

Sure, at which point, a huge wave again comes crashing across to the boat. It tips on to its side, doesn't capsize, it's still floating thankfully, it's made of driftwood. Suddenly seems like a good idea but it doesn't sink but it is now at an awkward angle, water sloshing in against you and all kinds of things but you're not under water or anything like that.

**BRYN**

I'm gonna crawl slowly and as carefully as I possibly can towards the centre of the boat and the bench where the ...

**ALEX**

The rower would sit.

**BRYN**

The rower would sit.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

I'm basically taking 10, I don't care if this takes me several rounds.

**ALEX**

That's fine, it will take you four rounds.

**BRYN**

That's fine.

**ALEX**

But I won't be making you a check to literally get blown over.

**BRYN**

I'm taking ten.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

That's fine. I realise we're expanding and contracting time a little bit – cutting back to Bertie. So, the train's on there, you're hearing an argument with the driver of the train. You're in your compartment. It's nice and quiet – there is a bookish fellow sat opposite you – he's holding a notepad and it's got a little bit of an ink stain on it and he's just sort of dozing – he's got his spectacles down and he's dozing opposite you – he looks very like a lecturer or something like that and looking out into the corridor there's a few merchants who are kind of settling themselves down and you can see an open argument between the guy that you bribed, the station master, and the driver who's going "we'll all die, we will die, we're going... you can't – what are you doing?" and the station master going, "come on, you've done this before, it's fine, honestly, it's a minor inconvenience, the second that you're a bit further out it'll be fine" and the driver's having none of it.

**JAMES**

I think Bertie is gonna be listening on this – I want to Bertie to sort to sense motive on the part of the driver.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**JAMES**

Like basically what Bertie is trying discern whether he's actually done this before.

**ALEX**

Oh sure, give a sense motive.

**JAMES**

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A sense motive, it's minus one, cos it involves other peoples' feelings!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

That is 6 minus 1, is 5.

**LYDIA**

He seems to be using his mouth to form words!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

He's slapping some face meat.

**(Group laughter)**

Unclear 16:15.

**LYDIA**

That was strange!

**ALEX**

Basically you've no idea.

**JAMES**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

These are all people who frankly you're not sure they have motives.

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

We've all been there.

**ALEX**

The argument and basically the station master goes, "look I'm not doing this with you again – this is worth a lot of money, okay, you're going to do it" and he just leaves – just leaves the driver stood there holding some, like a large key in one hand and holding like a ticket thing in the other and he's just stood there a bit nonplussed.

**JAMES**

I say there driver, driver.

**ALEX**

Yeah?

**JAMES**

I understand that you're going to be driving this train.

**ALEX**

Well if you can call it that.

**JAMES**

I wonder what time we might arrive in Calais.

**ALEX**

Never – we're all going to die.

**JAMES**

Now, now! Such pessimism! But you know, were we not to die?

**ALEX**

As you're talking, he's turning round and putting the key in the lock to get to the driver's compartment – you're at the front most passenger carriage.

**JAMES**

Were we not to die, what sort of time might we expect to arrive?

**ALEX**

He just opens the doors, steps through, turns to you – “doom”.

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

He seems a cheery fellow.

**(Group laughter)**

**BRYN**

He should be Ben's back up!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

I should be station master!

**JAMES**

Even Bertie would notice that!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Well – says Bertie – he just kind of you know, potters back into the carriage – he seems like a cheery fellow he says to Brutor.

**ALEX**

At which point there's (*imitates sound of lightning*) huge amounts of lightning outside arcing off the walls and so on and then the train begins to pull forward slowly as lightning is literally arcing along the sides of the tunnel, not inside the train.

**JAMES**

Yeah, Bertie has enough knowledge of how electricity works to maybe consider taking off his armour. So I think that's when he removes his armour and wears something more appropriate for travel so he's not wearing armour at this stage.

**ALEX**

As you're removing the armour the bookish fellow opposite you sort of wakes up. Are we moving now?

**JAMES**

I believe so, yes. I am Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham, a pleasure for you to make my acquaintance. You will be enjoying my company for the next "doom!".

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

If the young man driving the train is to be believed.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

This is Brutor, my hideous daughter.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

I wonder, you seem like a well-equipped and bookish fellow – would you have the materials required to make a tiny, adorable river boat **gabbener's** outfit?

**ALEX**

He just looks at you and then we'll cut back to the actual...

**BEN**

A strong opening gambit!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

He's not going to forget you any time soon!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So Sasha – you are currently as far as you are concerned alone in the middle of an ocean in the biggest storm you've ever seen in your life. What do you?

**LYDIA**

I don't have time to be depressed.

**ALEX**

Not really.

**LYDIA**

Not existentially anyway. I'm going to try and swim for the surface.

**ALEX**

Got for it.

**LYDIA**

Oh God, 11 minus 1, 10.

**ALEX**

10. You manage to break the surface.

**LYDIA**

Yay! Do I get some air?

**ALEX**

You get some air.

**LYDIA**

Yay, back to 24!

**ALEX**

However, by no means you have any control of your situation – you have just got some air.

**LYDIA**

I'm not drowning now! Well I probably am.

**ALEX**

Zolf, cutting to you – you are currently also effectively alone in the ocean.

**BEN**

Yes.

**LYDIA**

You do **unclear 19:41** existentially.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Zolf makes time I think.

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

Sets something aside every day. Right, great, fabulous, okay – I do have that.

**JAMES**

What, are you being correct, great and fabulous.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

That's three rounds, right, you can take 10 on all.

**BEN**

Hey-hey, this guy!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Don't be afraid, I'm gonna die, now he thinks his jokes are funny! I see, I see what's happening.

**BEN**

Not **unclear 20:09** but drowning.

**BEN**

Having not prepped any super useful spells today, which is great, I will continue to try and swim towards Sasha.

**ALEX**

Go for it.

**BRYN**

You don't where Sasha is.

**BEN**

Yeah, I'm still gonna try! 5.

**ALEX**

5 – you are still below the water, never mind trying to find Sasha – you're starting to struggle yourself.

**BEN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Hamid – another huge wave comes ploughing into the boat and it begins to actively capsize – not sink, but it is tipping over on you. You are in the middle of the boat currently holding on to the mast so it is beginning to tip effectively over and on to you – what do you do?

**BRYN**

Hang on.

**ALEX**

Okay – the boat tips – I'll allow you to just take the 10 on that because all you're doing is maintaining and you find yourself in an air pocket as the boat has tipped up.

**BRYN**

So it's full turtle?

**ALEX**

It's full turtle at this point – you are in the air pocket beneath. You hear the storm raging outside, but this is the first modicum of calm you've had the entire time you've been there although obviously the water level's powering up right towards your eyes and then back down again and it's not pleasant at all.

**BRYN**

Oh dear.

**LYDIA**

I hate to rush you but some of us are drowning.

**BEN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

No, no, no – all of you are drowning!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

That's fair.

**ALEX**

Oh I do hope that out of all you, Bertie's the only one that drowns!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Thanks Alex!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Of all of the people at this table, I hope you're the only one that drowns!

**ALEX**

I'm gonna be honest – irony is more important to me than playing characters!

**BRYN**

I'm gonna stay in the air pocket.

**ALEX**

Sure.

**BRYN**

And hang on just for a little while.

**LYDIA**

Could your coat of many colours become like a diving suit?

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Fully functional aqualung.

**BRYN**

Yes.

**BEN**

Just a rocket ship.

**LYDIA**

Could it be a boat? Cos if you're dressed in a boat.

**(Group laughter)**

**BRYN**

Can it become a wetsuit so at least I stay warm – I mean, yeah, I probably can.

**LYDIA**

I would assume that.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**LYDIA**

Or a dry suit.

**BRYN**

Yeah, that's what I'll do – I will at the very least, I will change my outfit so that it's something that doesn't drag me down.

**ALEX**

Sure – functionally you aren't able to change into something that's keeping you any warmer.

**BRYN**

Even just a swimsuit.

**ALEX**

Sure.

**BRYN**

Like, if I can't do a wetsuit cos they don't exist yet.

**JAMES**

The kind of thing that would you keep at the same temperature but wouldn't drag you down was just you're smothered in goose fat all of a sudden.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Like an inch of goose fat.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**JAMES**

And your pants – that's all you're now wearing.

**BRYN**

That's all I'm now wearing.

**ALEX**

Goose fat and pants okay.

**JAMES**

Hear the helplessness.

Unclear 22:45 crosstalk.

**BRYN**

New fashion statement – have you seen ze goose fat and pants look?

**JAMES**

An inch across his body.

**BRYN**

I will be decadent.

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

That's my round.

**ALEX**

So we'll cut back to Bertie underway – the train is going and then it kind of judders and slows then it picks up speed again and suddenly...

**JAMES**

Somebody's obstructing the doors again – when will they learn!

**ALEX**

It is an uncomfortable journey. Meanwhile ...

**LYDIA**

Oh really?! Is it?!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Bertie's mildly perturbed – Bertie has this sort of daydream about being smothered in an inch of goose fat – mmm, delicious.

**ALEX**

Meanwhile, the bookish fellow opposite you is sort of taking unclear 23:25 and going, I have to say, you're not actually what I expected at all, that was really interesting, so the... I suppose if you were to use an extended lapel – and he's just discussing the nuances of how you could make this suit for your ugly, ugly daughter.

**JAMES**

Yes, well this is all fascinating – what is your name?

**ALEX**

Campbell – he holds his hand out and shakes it - pleasure to meet you. Obviously you need no introduction,

**JAMES**

No of course.

**ALEX**

Gives a sort of snigger and carries on writing in his notebook.

**JAMES**

Either does not notice or pretends not to notice, either way.

**ALEX**

And he proceeds to go, may I ask, may I sketch you?

**JAMES**

No of course. This is my best side – and Bertie just looks to him straight on.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

He begins sketching Bertie and at that nice gentle note, whilst most of the party are genuinely facing complete death, we'll take a break and we'll come back in a couple of minutes.

**JAMES**

Not just partial deaths.

**ALEX**

Complete death.

And welcome back, so Sasha – you're currently the only party member who's head is above water.

**BRYN**

My head is above water.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

It's also beneath the boat.

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

I suppose I look for the boat.

**ALEX**

I'll tell you what – give me a general perception check for Zolf and the boat.

**LYDIA**

9 plus 8 – 17.

**ALEX**

17 – you see Zolf.

**LYDIA**

Ah!

**ALEX**

The boat is still out of sight but you see Zolf – Zolf fighting to get above water. Honestly, you see matted hair occasionally breaking the surface and then disappearing underneath again. You could probably swim to him – in fact, you're quite close.

**LYDIA**

Okay, gosh, okay – it would be the kind of thing I do to risk staying...

**ALEX**

Life and limb.

**LYDIA**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

It's the Sasha work.

**LYDIA**

Yay! Oh gosh 17.

**ALEX**

17.

**BEN**

That did hover on that one! I was watching that dice.

**LYDIA**

16.

**ALEX**

Let's just say that was a really important roll that you just succeeded – it will take you a few rounds but I'll make the single swim check for the sake of speed.

**LYDIA**

Yay I like that! That's good, that's good – we only need one check from now on! I don't think that you ever need to check my swimming ever!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

She's got a certificate, that's what you need.

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

I can do the width on my back in boots!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Get a brick from the bottom while wearing pyjamas, that's the main thing.

**LYDIA**

Goggles.

**ALEX**

If you want to swim down for the brick at the bottom.

**BEN**

Tony the Tiger approves.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So you manage to make it to Zolf – you are not able to pull him up or anything, you're not that competent but you literally have a handle on him, I'll give you that. Hamid, all of this is going without you being aware – is there anything you can do?

**BRYN**

I am going to again, I'm never ever letting go of the boat.

**ALEX**

That's fine.

**BRYN**

I'm always going to have one hand as securely as possible.

**ALEX**

Very wise.

**BRYN**

I am going to drag myself round to the outside of the boat.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

And try and get out of the water up on top of it.

**ALEX**

Okay I'll give you...

**LYDIA**

Still in goose fat? Cos that's quite slippery.

**BRYN**

Not on my hands.

**ALEX**

I will give you a strength check to get yourself like up on to the outside but I'm not giving you any penalty for being blown off, short of an absolute fumble, but you're not hauling yourself on top of the boat without a check.

**BRYN**

Yeah, that's fair – I will just fail rather than risk losing...

**ALEX**

Totally.

**BRYN**

My grip on the boat.

**ALEX**

That's what I'm giving you as an option.

**BRYN**

Yeah – that's a 3 and my strength modifier is minus one.

**ALEX**

The second, the second that you are outside of the boat – everything just freezes, latches up and you can barely hold on to the boat.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

So cutting back to Bertie – Campbell’s finished unclear 26:53 and he turns it round and he’s done an amazing drawing in the time that you’ve been waiting.

**JAMES**

Gosh I am handsome.

**ALEX**

Not only is it a good drawing, but to really spell it out – it’s what Bertie thinks he looks like.

**JAMES**

Wow!

**ALEX**

Yeah.

**LYDIA**

Unclear 27:08.

**ALEX**

It’s an incredibly flattering – there’s some subtle shading that might be a halo – it’s hard to tell, but it’s also done despite whatever you’re wearing – you’re wearing sort of breeches but no shirt and it’s all very like artistically manful.

**JAMES**

Am I just emerging from a lake?

**ALEX**

Yeah, that kind of thing.

**JAMES**

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It is the kind of thing, is it like, a little bit like Putin riding a horse?

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Yes!

**JAMES**

Okay!

**BRYN**

Cross Putin and Mr Darcy!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

I wouldn't go so far as to say it's as good as Putin thinks he is.

**JAMES**

Right, okay.

**ALEX**

Cos that's a bit extreme.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

But nonetheless, it's incredibly flattering.

**JAMES**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

And he just sort of shows it to you. What do you think? I mean...I think it's quite impressive.

**JAMES**

Bertie and Campbell's eyes lock across a crowded portrait.

**ALEX**

Give me a little roll.

**LYDIA**

Is this a flirt check?

**JAMES**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

You don't need to give a roll – Campbell just sort of goes, oh, no, sorry, oh – total misunderstanding here – this is, oh this is really awkward, you're fantastic ... I was wondering if you'd be willing to be in one of my books as a, sort of as a character?

**JAMES**

Well, yes of course, no that's fine. Admiring me platonically is also understandable. I am the ideal of a man, particularly when in a cave.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

As lightning's still arcing now – like there are actual the occasional thunder clap as the lightning mis-sparks outside of the train and it's still juddering and

Rusty Quill Gaming – [31] – [Water Way to Go]

uncomfortable – he starts going, do you mind if I ask you some questions about yourself, just get a bit more depth?

**JAMES**

Ah but of course!

**ALEX**

He proceeds to launch into a series of questions – I'll let you decide at a later date how much you share. Cutting back to Sasha – you have Zolf.

**BRYN**

I haven't had a turn yet.

**ALEX**

Yeah, sorry – Zolf.

**BRYN**

Unclear 28:56 whoa, lose a round's worth of air, cos I've just been grabbed and then yeah, try and get my head above the water.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

That's better. 12.

**ALEX**

12. You manage to get your head above water.

**BRYN**

See Sasha?

**ALEX**

Yes.

**BRYN**

We need to go back to the boat.

**LYDIA**

Really Zolf, do we?! Really?!? Great!!! Good job boss!

**ALEX**

At which point, give me a swim check Sasha.

**LYDIA**

6 minus one.

**ALEX**

You managed to get a sarcastic quip out before immediately going back beneath the water.

**LYDIA**

Right good job ... *(imitates sound of voice disappearing beneath water)*

**BRYN**

We're still holding on to each other.

**ALEX**

Oh yeah, you're still holding on. Hamid – try again for the top of the boat.

**BRYN**

No.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

From where I am, keeping one hand tightly, tightly latched on, I cast a prestidigitation.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

Putting a spray of red sparks as high into the air as I can manage.

**ALEX**

You're stretching prestidigitation into dancing lights territory. I'll allow you to do but bear in mind that the strict rule of no strict function means it's gonna be for flavour and nothing more.

**BRYN**

Yeah – sparks in the air which don't technically help – like, I think that's what Hamid would do.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**JAMES**

Unclear 30:10.

**BRYN**

Unclear 30:12.

**ALEX**

Okay, there is another huge wave – give me a reflex save Hamid.

**BRYN**

15.

**ALEX**

15. The boat gives a massive shudder and you take a small blow to the head, you're not receiving damage for it but it is a "dunk", cos it's very difficult to hold on.

**BRYN**

I reflectively turn my hands into claws to give myself a better grip on the boat.

**ALEX**

Do you notice that you've done so?

**BRYN**

Yes, but it's the least of **unclear due to laughter 30:41.**

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Okay, in which case, cut back to Bertie, at which point the train sort of gives a judder – you're well into your sort of biography as it were – edited for only the best bits obviously – he keeps giving sort of questions regarding like romantic liaisons – he keeps steering you back towards it – he's like, so any women, any men, both? Neither? He just keeps steering it back into romances and romance and romance and have you had any partners blah-blah-blah-blah – nothing sordid but it's like when you mention that you have a maiden aunt and all that, he's just like, oh I bet she was trying to pair you up eh? It feels like

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he's very much trying to turn this into something it's not, so the train judders and then stops and...

**LYDIA**

You need a perception check.

**JAMES**

18 minus one is 17.

**ALEX**

You hear a muffled thump – “doom!!!!”

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Doom!!! We're all doomed!!! From behind the driver's door.

**JAMES**

Presumably therefore I'm in the carriage that's immediately ...

**ALEX**

You're in the compartment immediately behind the driver's compartment.

**JAMES**

What??? What??? Ah goodness – Bertie consults his watch – I've got a bet to win – barges out of the corridor, knocks on the door of the ... and realises part-way through the knock why must Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham knock but just opens the door.

**ALEX**

It's locked.

**JAMES**

Punches the door!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Bang! He opens the door slightly – it’s on a chain and he looks at you –  
“doom!!!”

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Now we appear to have stopped.

**ALEX**

Doomed!!!! Have you seen? It’s awful, we’ll never leave.

**JAMES**

Aren’t you gonna get out and push or something? Come on!

**ALEX**

Are you?

**JAMES**

Will you help?

**ALEX**

No!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

He closes the door!!!

**JAMES**

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Bertie punches the door again!

**ALEX**

He opens it – what???

**JAMES**

Is there any way that we get this train re-started?

**ALEX**

What do you think I'm trying to do?!?!?

**JAMES**

Well answer my questions poorly, in which you are succeeding estimably!

**ALEX**

He closes the door again.

**JAMES**

Bertie punches the door again!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

He opens it – what do you want?!?!?

**JAMES**

Bertie now punches the door very hard in an attempt to break the chain.

**ALEX**

Give me a strength check.

**JAMES**

17 plus 3 is 20.

**ALEX**

You break the small chain and throw the driver backwards on to the control panel and he's just up against going, oh, ah!

**JAMES**

You know I've always wanted to be in the driver's seat of a train – this looks very fancy!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Cut back to ...

**BEN**

And don't call me Shirley.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Sasha, first.

**LYDIA**

I'm underwater – a swim check.

**ALEX**

Yeah.

**LYDIA**

10.

**ALEX**

10 – you remain under the water.

**LYDIA**

No!!!

**ALEX**

You're still holding your breath. Zolf - you have hold on each other though.

**BEN**

I cast stepping stones.

**ALEX**

Okay. Describe the effect and describe how it plays out.

**BEN**

Okay, so with the hands not grabbing hold of Sasha, I grab the dolphin **unclear**  
**33:31** dolphin and scream contrition to Poseidon in general terms.

**ALEX**

Give us a small sample – don't scream cos the mics can't handle it!

**BEN**

So, I grab my driftwood dolphin and just scream to the heavens, look I'm sorry  
all right!!!! I'm sorry!!!! I'll do better!!!! Don't kill my friends!!!!

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BEN**

Casts the stepping stones.

**ALEX**

Stepping stones works.

**BEN**

Grab hold of it, and try and haul Sasha on to it.

**ALEX**

Okay, give me a strength check to do so.

**BEN**

4.

**ALEX**

A 4 – you keep hold of Sasha, but nonetheless, you do not manage to haul her up. But you are yourself holding on to the stepping stone which is now in a fixed position.

**BEN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

The waves are all over the place but you're holding on to Sasha. Hamid, give me a perception check.

**BRYN**

24.

**ALEX**

24 – you see the stepping stone burst out from the water, and what might very well be Zolf.

**BRYN**

I shout as loudly as I possibly, my tiny little lungs can manage.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

Just to try and...

**ALEX**

Just anything.

**BRYN**

Literally just...

**ALEX**

Just “argh”!

**BRYN**

Yeah, just to give them a sense of what direction I’m in.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BRYN**

Cos I know that we will have to try and come back together at some point.

**ALEX**

I’m messing around with round order a bit – both of you give me perception checks.

**LYDIA**

I am under water but...

**BEN**

Sound travels better under water!

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

I still got 24.

**ALEX**

24.

**BEN**

8.

**ALEX**

Sasha, there's a moment where you've above the water – you hear where it is and then go immediately below the water again.

**LYDIA**

Helpful!

**ALEX**

Yeah, I know. So, cutting to Bertie – you are currently sat in the driving seat of the train – it skips ahead sometimes.

**JAMES**

Toot-toot!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

Pressing buttons and moving levers and the driver's just sat there looking at you going, it won't make a difference, won't make a difference.

**JAMES**

Well what will make a difference? What is the essential problem here?

**ALEX**

Water! There's water in the tunnel isn't it? We're doomed!!!!

**JAMES**

How far through the tunnel are we?

**ALEX**

Good question! He sits down, gets out a pocket watch and actually sits and does some maths... right, we've been going for about an hour so we're about a third of the way.

**JAMES**

Third of the way – and how – what is the distance remaining in miles?

**ALEX**

17 miles.

**JAMES**

17 miles, and would you regard the distance ahead as traversable by a heroic man?

**ALEX**

No!!! You'd be doomed!!!

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Why would I be doomed? Would you please explain to me slowly and without the word "doomed".

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Why I would be ... mmmmed?!?!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

He takes a moment and he goes, you would be....mmmed cos water – he’s talking as if to a child despite the fact that he’s barely above Halfling height, so there’s a discrepancy there – water plus lighting equals – taps on you – cooked chicken! You’d be mmmmed!!!

**JAMES**

Very well.

**ALEX**

If I turn the whole train off so that you can walk the remaining distance.

**JAMES**

Well I think it would be necessary if someone were to reach the end and seek help then turning off the train might well be the best move.

**ALEX**

They’re gonna know before you get there anyway – the time it would take us to get there on the train – right? They’re gonna know when we’re late sooner than you’re gonna reach them anyway.

**JAMES**

And what will they then do?

**ALEX**

Presume we’re ... late!

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

Is in the Late Train....

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Well under those circumstances – and Bertie is like, he’s putting on his must speak down to your level voice.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Under those circumstances, what mechanisms are there for the retrieval of the train and the clearing of the line?

**ALEX**

He looks at you as if you’re an idiot – well obviously they send the engineers down the line and clear out the water so that then they can get to the train and we restart the train and we go! What’s wrong with you?!?!

**JAMES**

Well very well, no, that makes perfect sense. How long would that take?

**ALEX**

Oh, about a day.

**JAMES**

Aargh.

**ALEX**

Cut back to ...

**BEN**

Everyone is getting on really well aren't they? They're almost there!

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

In Bertie's head we're on kind of like the owl and the pussycat.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

It's a pleasure cruise in Bertie's mind, you're all holding pina coladas.

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

Playing shuffleboard on the deck.

**BEN**

Is there a little stop motion like to the animation – we're all just smiling?

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

Just going up and down on the waves?

**ALEX**

It's a certain mouse who you can't name for copyright reasons.

**BEN**

Oh yes, yeah.

**LYDIA**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Okay, so I'm gonna start just for the sake of sanity...

**LYDIA**

I'll see if I can breathe...

**ALEX**

And say Sasha, given that you're holding on to Zolf and have bashed into it a couple of times, you know there's a surface there so rather than swimming I'll just allow you to do a strength check to pull yourself up.

**LYDIA**

Great.

**ALEX**

For the sake of speed.

**LYDIA**

And still my minus one!

**ALEX**

10 – you don't let go.

**LYDIA**

Yay!

**ALEX**

Zolf?

**BEN**

I will actually just try and heft Sasha on my own power.

**ALEX**

Right go for it.

**BEN**

I just need to not roll rubbish.

**ALEX**

That'd help!

**BEN**

11.

**ALEX**

11.

**BEN**

Rolled average.

**ALEX**

You're all still holding on but neither of you are pulling yourselves up.

**LYDIA**

Is my head above water at this point? Yay!!!!

**ALEX**

In fact, I'll throw you a **bow** – you can tell the direction of the bow because Hamid is still “argh-argh”!!!!

**LYDIA**

Yay!

**ALEX**

It is a decent distance away and getting further.

**LYDIA**

Oh no.

**ALEX**

So, Hamid, are you still just yelling?

**BRYN**

No, no I've probably stopped.

**(Group laughter)**

**BRYN**

Six seconds of yelling sounds about right.

**(Group laughter)**

**BRYN**

I don't want to lose my voice!

**ALEX**

Suddenly, an eerie calm starts coming across.

**LYDIA**

Woooooohhh! Calm in a bedsheet with eyeholes cut out.

**BEN**

A bunch of old people from **unclear 39:15**.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

The waves begin to slowly being to lessen and there's not beaming sunlight but there's a definitely a sense of sunlight behind the clouds immediately overhead only. Looking around, however, you seen that on literally all sides, it is massively tempestuous again.

**LYDIA**

This is your ...argh, is this your boss?

**(Group laughter)**

**LYDIA**

*Imitating breathlessness.*

**BEN**

Yeah I think this might be upper management – and try and get her on the stepping stone.

**ALEX**

Give me a profession sailor check Zolf.

**BEN**

20.

**ALEX**

You are in the eye of the storm.

**BEN**

Oh God.

**ALEX**

I will, for the sake of speed and ease say Zolf, you manage and Sasha manage to get yourselves up on to the stepping stone – is it wide enough for two? If you scrunch up?

**BEN**

Oh no, I'm not getting on – I will be kicking cos I will provide motor power to it.

**ALEX**

Ah gotcha. You manage to get Sasha...

**BEN**

I will be kick.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

We'll say that you manage to get Sasha on the stepping stone – we'll say that Hamid manages to get on top of the boat, for the sake of speed, while you've got this brief reprise and you are kicking just to keep things moving. Cut back to Bertie and the driver's just sat there with his head in his hands.

**JAMES**

Well I've formed a plan of action – now you are gonna switch off the train, I'm gonna get off the train and walk which I will be able to do safely because you will have the train switched off – correct?

**ALEX**

Ah....fine!!! Fine!!! I see no problems with this whatsoever!!! I see no problems turning off the train that has a lightning elemental inside it!!! he then proceeds to – before you even say anything – start pulling levers – *(imitating uttering words of frustration under his breath)* and still turns down. There's still lightning arcing from the sort of what would be the boiler of a normal train, but sort on that snub ahead of the driver's cabin – you can still

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see the water dropping and (*imitating sounds of lightning*) and the water sort or arcing.

**JAMES**

How far ahead is it arcing out and looking dangerous?

**ALEX**

It's arcing from the train to the wall and occasionally across the floor, that has about a foot of water in it.

**JAMES**

Right. Is there any way of deactivating a lightning elemental?

**ALEX**

You can have a go.

**BRYN**

Kill it.

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

It's a creature like a monster.

**LYDIA**

Really annoy the train.

**BEN**

Really annoy the elemental.

**JAMES**

I've paid for my ticket.

**ALEX**

I feel like you should be asking in character rather than out.

**JAMES**

That's true – well is this stuff that Bertie would know?

**BRYN**

You would probably know what a lightning elemental is.

**ALEX**

You know it's a creature.

**BRYN**

It's a creature made out of lightning is what your knowledge would be.

**JAMES**

Is it...

**BRYN**

It's something that you would have encountered in children's stories because you know, lightning elementals are real in this world.

**JAMES**

Is it intelligent enough to talk to?

**ALEX**

They can be, depending on the elemental.

**JAMES**

Right, so...

**ALEX**

They are not mindless.

**JAMES**

Okay, so I'm going to attempt to negotiate with the lightning elemental.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**LYDIA**

Pomp and pageantry and intimate elemental.

**ALEX**

Could you do me a favour and just propose that in character, just aloud.

**JAMES**

So, this seems a little more on the electric side than I was hoping for with the deactivation of the train. Perhaps I could speak to someone more on the supply side of the electricity. Perhaps the lightning elemental itself, hmm"

**ALEX**

Do you have any idea what would happen if we release that lightning elemental for even a moment?

**JAMES**

No!

**ALEX**

DOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

And I'll end the episode there!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So yeah, not a lot of progress made sadly but...

**LYDIA**

Hey, I think it's a massive amount of progress!

**BRYN**

We made huge progress in the not dying.

**LYDIA**

I began the episode under water and I end it flopped over essentially a bit of a door while Leonardo Di Caprio is kicking away and ...

**JAMES**

"Never let go!"

**(Group laughter)**

**JAMES**

**What's the point** in letting him go because in character with that, with Rose, she lets him go cos he's an entirely disposable member of the working class – off you go, off you trot, I'm gonna live my wonderful rest of my life!

**BRYN**

I look the photo they have of her just kind of like slumped over the door and just like space there, space there.

**JAMES**

Yeah.

**BRYN**

We can just bit on it.

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

I should have fit a door into this! I should have fit a door into this!

**BRYN**

So have we got a Titanic thing in there?

**LYDIA**

You didn't say what kind of driftwood the boat was made of.

**BRYN**

Maybe it was a door!

**Crosstalk 43:31.**

**JAMES**

Maybe that door was a partially frozen aristocrat, who was secretly the villain of the film.

**ALEX**

It turns out it's just loads of discarded aristocratic furniture. It's just all cobbled together. Anyway, I think we'll reconvene next week and try to get you out of just the worst situation, just the worst! And I'm speaking for all of you cos the idea of Bertie having to have a situation that he can't punch is just ...it's just terrible, so until that time...

**LYDIA**

We feel for you!

**(Group laughter)**

**BEN**

He is metaphorically lost at sea!

**(Group laughter)**

**ALEX**

So until that time, we'll see you again next week so bye-bye.

**EVERYBODY**

Bye!

**[Show Theme - Outro]**

**ALEX**

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Rusty Quill Gaming – [31] – [Water Way to Go]

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