

RQG – 38 – Brutor Is...

Content Warnings

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[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 38 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host, GM and dog punisher Alex Newall and with me today, I have

JAMES

James “dog murderer” Ross

BRYN

Bryn....Monroe

(laughing)

I don't have a joke!

ALEX

I gave you no prep time!

LYDIA

Lydia “frantically trying to sketch out an alternative character” Nicholas

BEN

Ben “two tiles” Meredith

(laughing)

ALEX

And who are you playing?

JAMES

Sir Bertrand “I’m very sad now” Macguffingham

BRYN

I am Brutor! I had a joke after all!

(laughing)

Hamid

LYDIA

Ow.

BEN

Zolf “two tiles” Smith

ALEX

So yeah before we jump into the episode, just a quick little bit of admin to remind people. If you haven't already do give the Magnus archives a listen. It should be up and playing right now and one can only assume, being fantastically successful given that this is the future. So I have literally no idea but if you haven't listened to it give it a go. iTunes, all the other podcast providers. Rate, review, subscribe. As you should be for us if you haven't already.

LYDIA

And a friendly wave to our upcoming robot overlords. A glorious future.

ALEX

Now picking up where we left off last. We have a little bit of an awkward situation. Let's start...

JAMES

#Brutor's life matters

ALEX

Let's go a little bit further back and via Dover and Zolf's arrest and via the journey across the channel which was tempestuous. Both under the water actually and sort of under the water when you think about it.

LYDIA

We were under the water as well.

ALEX

You made it via Calais, made it to Paris, found a presidential suite at Lattery, held in Sasha's name, in perpetuity, paid for Brock apparently. A list of names from the same source, apparently. Also heading to l'Arc de l'Ordineateur. You did a brief investigation only to find that Sasha's memory had been changed. Then to try and chase up was...oh of course Hamid arranged a date. Let's not forget that.

BRYN

I haven't!

(laughing)

ALEX

Then...

LYDIA

Can choose from literally anything...

ALEX

Trying to investigate what was happening with the investigative reporter, the parties stumbled upon an old very swearsy man in a very rundown part of Paris who has so far, done a very good job at really punishing the party. Sasha is currently having had a massive drop, in a lot of pain. We'll find out where she is. Brutor, having had...

LYDIA

Just likes listening to bass.

(laughing)

JAMES

You waited for the drop and then it happened because Bertie accidentally dropped a dog off a building [dropping noise]

ALEX

You are all making light of a situation that I know I'm going to have people on the forums going crazy at me specifically for.

BEN

I will be one of them frankly.

LYDIA

I'm genuinely upset. About my character.

ALEX

I will spell out that whilst Sasha, we know, is ok, there is a very, very significant chance that Brutor is dead and the only person in this room who knows is me.

LYDIA

No, not Brutor!

BEN

And god!

ALEX

Well, you know, god's...

LYDIA

Poseidon knows!

ALEX

Poseidon knows

LYDIA

But does he care?!

(laughing)

He is...

BRYN

There's probably a god of dogs.

ALEX

Zolf turns up, tries to heal Brutor. Noooo.

BEN

Not a horse or a dolphin so I'm not interested!

(laughing)

ALEX

So picking up where we left off, Sasha, we're still initiative order. You have just plummeted the whole depth. You've had pain in your back, a really sharp pain. It feels like you fell onto rubble or something. You're currently buried underneath some stuff. You can't see anything, there's corrugated iron on top of you. You're coughing from the dust. It is your turn what do you do? Oh and you heard clearly the sound of a dog in immense pain thumping with an incredible amount of force feet away from you.

LYDIA

It didn't land on the corrugated iron.

ALEX

It didn't land on you and did not damage you more.

LYDIA

I am going to try and get to my feet which may involve pushing the corrugated iron up.

ALEX

Give me a strength check to get yourself out from all of that detritus.

BRYN

That's a good roll.

LYDIA

Yeah it is. 17 – 1.

ALEX

16. Yes. You succeed. So you push...

LYDIA

Not happy about it though!

ALEX

Pushing up you manage to get the corrugated iron and shift it. It's clear that there's actually quite a lot of weight behind it. What you're doing is sliding it off you rather than physically pushing it up and you manage to wiggle your way out.

LYDIA

Can I see the dog?

ALEX

You wiggle your way out and find yourself face to face with Brutor. His eyes are closed. You can give me a heal check if you want for the rest of your turn to see whether he's alive or not. You cannot tell at a glance, you have no training and there's a lot of dust in the air. He is bleeding openly. There is blood slowly coming out from underneath.

LYDIA

Dog! Dog! I mean Sasha's less adoring of animals than the rest of the party and our said players.

BRYN

Hamid really dislikes Brutor.

BEN

Yeah I mean I didn't...

LYDIA

I mean Sasha has left him assuming he was dead on the floor before just...like when there was the swarm

ALEX

There shouldn't be a precedent for abandoning the dog for dead!

BEN

I threw him onto the floor much to Bertie's chagrin.

LYDIA

Yeah. I think...I get the feeling that she'd be moving sort of slowly and that it wouldn't necessarily...I mean, the fact...I suppose she would check.

BEN

Maybe you've got the action film video game where the camera's all fuzzy and you can hear eeeee and everything's echoey. It's Ohama Beach but in Paris.

LYDIA

I'm going to perform a heal check which, in Sasha's case, involves poking the dog. It's plus that 2. 20.

ALEX

20. Dog. Dog. What did you roll a 20?

LYDIA

I rolled an 18 and then I had my wisdom which I think modifies it +2

BRYN

20 is the DC for treating deadly wounds. Just in case.

ALEX

I will chuck you a bone and say not only do you know whether Brutor is alive or not, you would be able to fulfil some other actions to give him healing if he is.

LYDIA

Right

ALEX

Brutor is...

(gasp)

Just alive

BEN

Also just so you know Alex moved his mouth to form a “d” sound. You can hear that.

BRYN

He’s a monster.

ALEX

When I say just, mechanically speaking...

LYDIA

Is he ko'd?

ALEX

Your heal check is letting you know he is haemorrhaging.

LYDIA

Sasha's ability to heal is basically her going hold the blood in. Hold with the hand.

ALEX

You won't need to give me another roll. Your first heal check, we'll say covers it. You kind of have to check someone is alive in order to...

LYDIA

I hold his blood in. Like pretty much, pretty physically, that's about the extent of...his ribs are beginning to move slowly apart as if...hold the body together.

JAMES

Like turning from a solid into a liquid.

(laughing)

Like mercury dog!

LYDIA

But blood!

JAMES

Yeah!

ALEX

Ok mechanically...

LYDIA

We're losing listeners! The dog is alright is what matters

ALEX

Mechanically, you have managed to stabilise Brutor at the lowest level that he could be...

BRYN

-9

ALEX

If you had not healed him this round he would've been dead by the time the round finished. He has never been that close but yeah, we'll say that you managed to pick up a tiny...we'll say that in Other London Sasha picks up a few tricks, nothing huge...

LYDIA

To hold dogs together.

ALEX

Basically apply pressure, maybe tie a tourniquet if there's a missing limb or something. In this case it is just...

JAMES

What do you tie a tourniquet to if there's a missing limb?!

ALEX

Oh well, no...

LYDIA

You tie the limbs together!

JAMES

You tie it to the phantom limb perhaps.

ALEX

Hey, if you want I can say that he has a severe head wound and she was forced to amputate but I'm....

(laughing)

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What I would say though is covered in wounds. Like proper, severe damage.

BRYN

More wound than dog.

ALEX

And Sasha, that would be the end of your turn. Just stopping Brutor being dead.

LYDIA

That's what she does then. Even though she lost three quarters of her hit points and is not very well. Selfless.

ALEX

The elderly man, I will have to do a check now. Bear with me.

BEN

He's on a slopy roof.

ALEX

Ooh. So the elderly man...

LYDIA

Elderly as well as poorly

ALEX

Oh yeah elderly and poorly, turns his back on you. Does a running jump and just, like slams into the side of the building but manages to scabble his way up and is on the far side of the building but barely. As in, as close to dropping as he could. And he isn't looking back. He's already just gone straight across. Nearly lost his footing on that sloped roof. Leap to the five feet alleyway and then has landed on the next building. Hamid, you have just seen Brutor fall and an old man is running away having been slammed in the face by a magic missile.

LYDIA

But you've also seen me get up.

BRYN

Brutor! No! How could you?! I echo my previous action and cast magic missile.

ALEX

Go for it.

BRYN

This time I do 8

ALEX

Ooh. The old man takes it to the shoulder hard. Very hard. He stumbles, he pulls himself up against an air vent which is, sort of, part of...on top of the

buildings. He looks in a bad way. You've hit him pretty hard. Ok Zolf. You have heard from the alleyway the sound of an enormous of disruption.

BEN

I mean I'll scoot in more closer and wave.

ALEX

As long as we're....

BEN

Oh this sounds bad!

ALEX

Bertie, you cannot see Sasha or Brutor at the base of that alleyway. There is just dust. You heard some movement at the bottom but that could've just been stuff settling you don't know.

JAMES

So Bertie could run all the way around the long bit or he could attempt to do a running jump over...

ALEX

So I should spell this out for listeners a bit more. I haven't gone into too much detail about the rooftops until now but at this kind of decision point we should be clear. So you are currently on top of the building of Le Gazette Grand. There is a roof access doorway which is Sasha had continued going up

would've probably reached eventually. There is, what was a corrugated iron rooftop walkway between the two which is obviously demolished now. The next building is smaller, it has sloped roofs on either side and what looks like a washing line or something similar connecting it to another extremely sloped rooftop to its right hand side. The Gazette is currently bordering another building with no gap on the right hand side from where the fire escape was so Bertie could loop around onto that other building all the way around, go across the actual building in a sort of dog leg, back along the curved rooftop and back along a washing line to get to the first rooftop or do a 15 foot jump onto another building which looks in poor repair. There is...the elderly man is one building again beyond the slightly sloping roof which the corrugated iron connected to and he is beside but not amongst some chimneys and vents, things like that.

JAMES

Ok so what Bertie would probably do in character, although it's probably the wrong move mechanically.

ALEX

Do what you want.

JAMES

Is, in rage, take a running jump across the 10 foot while wearing full armour.

BRYN

And they go ha ha.

ALEX

So yes we will say you use your move action to move back up a bit and then take the running leap. Give me an acrobatics check.

JAMES

With a -8 penalty

ALEX

Roll well.

BRYN

Enhanced by rage!

JAMES

Yeah.

LYDIA

Pomp and pageantry

JAMES

If you can actually pomp and pageantry this for +1

ALEX

You cannot pomp and pageantry this

JAMES

In combat. Fair enough. That's fine. Ok. Oh 11 – 8 is 3.

ALEX

Give me a reflex save. Roll well.

JAMES

That is 4

(laughing)

My reflex is 2.

ALEX

So 6.

BRYN

What was the DC on the actual jump?

ALEX

There was a -8 modifier.

LYDIA

So 3 in the end.

BRYN

Yeah that's bad. The result of your acrobatics check is the distance jumped so you jumped 3 feet.

(laughing)

BEN

You jumped and realised and went no.

ALEX

We will say Bertie backs up, fury in his eyes, charges forward, jumps, the tip...just the tip of his toe clips the ledge as he goes. He does a full somersault immediately, rapidly spinning. He tries to reach out then slams into the full wall, even though the three foot...we'll take a bit of flavour. He slams into the far wall...if he had made his reflex save he would've gone through a window instead into a different floor. He failed. Bang. He hits the wall taking, just for that 1 damage. He then falls...

JAMES

Maybe hits his head, not a sensitive area.

(laughing)

LYDIA

A falcon breaks off.

ALEX

Are you ready for some damage James?

JAMES

Yeah

ALEX

3, 2, 2, 1.

LYDIA

Oh my god! As someone that took...what was it?

BEN

18 I think

LYDIA

I think I took 17 because it was 6, 5, 6 and then I took another 5.

JAMES

I've taken a total of 9 damage.

ALEX

It's getting worse. Sasha. Roll me a reflex save.

BRYN

Oh no!

BEN

Brutor's there!

BRYN

No, no, no, Sasha and Brutor were clearly underneath the corrugated iron and the way James moved his piece was a good five foot away from them.

ALEX

Nice try! Brutor was thrown here. Sasha crawled her way out.

BEN

Oh god yeah, that's true.

ALEX

Give me the reflex save Sasha.

LYDIA

I'm not underneath! Argh!

BRYN

You are if you moved to where Brutor's lying.

LYDIA

Ah +6 is 10.

ALEX

10. So...

LYDIA

Ah no, Bertie!

ALEX

You're going to be taking some damage from Bertie. How many hit points have you got left?

LYDIA

7

BRYN

Effectively 17 until you're dead, dead

BEN

Effectively 16 sorry

ALEX

I'm checking with...

LYDIA

I think Sasha's quite aware of this.

BRYN

Ooh I felt that bone break!

ALEX

Sasha looks up. Give me a Bertie fall.

JAMES

Arghhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh [yelling noise]

BEN

It's fun for the mics.

ALEX

You get a brief moment...

LYDIA

No

(laughing)

ALEX

Of...

LYDIA

Denial that this is happening.

ALEX

A rapidly somersaulting Bertie slams into you dealing 15 damage.

BRYN

Oh you're out for the count.

LYDIA

I am out. Ok. I am on minus....

BRYN

I can't get there I'm not fast enough.

LYDIA

-8

ALEX

There is an enormous...

BRYN

I'm not fast enough to stabilise in time.

LYDIA

-8. -8. I'm going to die!

ALEX

It's a very real possibility.

BRYN

You get a con roll to stabilise yourself. Ooh, ooh, ooh I'm looking at rules. I'm looking at rules.

LYDIA

Does it say Sasha doesn't die?

BRYN

The first D6 is non-lethal damage.

LYDIA

Ooh.

BRYN

At this point it would've wrapped around but the first D6 was a 6 so you've actually taken 3 less damage than you thought you did. Oh yeah! Rules!

BEN

Yeah rules!

ALEX

So as far as I'm aware you can just make it Zolf, I believe.

BEN

I think I can. Actually also I'm acting this around and if difficult terrain into there I can half move speed move and then full move myself.

ALEX

And channel energy is an area so you wouldn't need to make that whole distance.

BEN

Yeah

ALEX

Well that hurt. You lot.

JAMES

Do I take any more damage for having hit Sasha?

LYDIA

I mean I do have I think...I've got like 12 daggers.

JAMES

Are any of them pointing up?

ALEX

You're in full armour. You're fine. What I am going to do is find out whether you hit Brutor as well.

BRYN

That will just kill Brutor. He will splatter.

LYDIA

No, no, no!

ALEX

I'm not kidding. I have rolled it. I know whether you have or not. Don't hate me!

(laughing)

LYDIA

We do hate you! Listeners hate you and listeners can't even see your face. They can't even see your grinning face.

ALEX

So Brutor's going to splash Sasha. You're unconscious correct?

LYDIA

Yeah. Very.

ALEX

We'll skip ahead a little bit. The old man turns his head around, frowns briefly and then continues out of sight behind smoke and steam coming out from vents.

LYDIA

Like out of sight, I mean Hamid's the only one that's still up there.

ALEX

Hamid can see him. Whether Hamid's paying attention is another matter. You've basically....

BEN

It's all gone a bit wrong!

ALEX

It's the swarm all over again. Everyone around you is just disappearing instantly.

LYDIA

Everyone keeps making stupid...

JAMES

If you can keep your head whilst...

ALEX

Whilst everyone else plummets four storeys in front of you. Hamid, you're up.

BRYN

Zolf [crying noise] we need help!

(laughing)

BEN

I'll definitely hear that. I won't be able to make the move any faster unfortunately.

BRYN

I cast magic missile.

ALEX

You have no line of sight on him now because of the smoke and the fact that he's behind a chimney for a start.

BRYN

Scoot, scoot. This man is going to pay. I back up, I take a running jump.

EVERYONE

Noooooooooooo!

BRYN

No of course I don't! Come on people!

(laughing)

I've just seen two characters nearly die and I have way fewer hit points than them.

ALEX

Brutor's a character too. There's three that are currently critical.

BRYN

Oh boy!

ALEX

What do you do Hamid?

LYDIA

Flail and cry

JAMES

There are four major flaws that have brought us to this situation. They are the first floor, the second floor....

(groaning)

The third floor and Bertie's hubris. Those are the four flaws that have brought us here.

LYDIA

Desperately looking for any spell.

ALEX

For listeners Bryn's just sat there with a tablet with the rules on it. Rules all around him. Papers, papers everywhere. There must be something. There's something.

LYDIA

The whole point is, so in four seconds basically what you're saying is that you can't decide what to do because you're trying to think of all the different things he could do and the round is like four seconds long.

ALEX

It's like that moment in a law show where some prosecutor's had a massive, massive breakthrough witness and you've seen the defence fumbling around with all of their stuff.

BRYN

Yeah I'm going to run to the stairwell and start heading downwards.

ALEX

The door is locked. Just to make you hate me even more.

BRYN

I'm just going to stay where I am and watch in horror.

ALEX

You don't know the door is locked.

BRYN

Ok I run over to the door and find out it's locked.

JAMES

Can you cast acid splash on the lock or something like that?

BRYN

Well yeah but not this round.

ALEX

It's padlocked on the outside for what it's worth.

BRYN

Yeah I'll do that next round.

ALEX

You've only used a move action to get there I think.

BRYN

Oh yeah, then I'll cast acid splash on it.

ALEX

It comes off. It's a very poor lock. An extremely poor lock.

BRYN

Cool. That's my action.

ALEX

Zolf, you're up.

BEN

So I'm almost out of the alleyway, so I get to the last tile of the alleyway which is half of my movement with my first move with a 1 and now I...

ALEX

Trailing rubbish and all kinds of stuff.

BEN

Yeah and now I can do my full move to 2. Can I see these people because there's...oh, just knocking Sasha.

BRYN

Perception.

ALEX

Roll a perception check.

BRYN

If you have to ask, that's the answer.

BEN

15.

ALEX

15. It is carnage. There is splinters of wood.

BEN

Is Bertie unconscious?

ALEX

Yeah, yeah. Corrugated iron. There is masonry

LYDIA

Some daggers

ALEX

There is blood, like sprayed up against one of the walls and stuff. It is awful. You see Bertie, sort of groaning and rolling around face down with, what looks like, Sasha's legs poking out from underneath him and possibly Brutor's broken form behind them. It's hard to make out. There's dust but it's beginning to clear. It is...I cannot stress this enough it looks like there's a good chance they're all dead or dying.

BEN

Silver lining, you didn't use the word corpse so that's good.

BRYN

Yeah but he was careful not to.

BEN

Oh for goodness sake!

ALEX

And we'll take a break there and be back in a couple of minutes.

And welcome back. So Zolf you've just witnessed some of the carnage. Bertie, you're currently on top of most of the party.

JAMES

Bertie is not happy. He's not doing well.

ALEX

There's a lot of blood on you. Both yours on the inside and an enormous amount of Sasha's now. Interestingly, all over the outside.

LYDIA

Who knew a little woman could hold so much blood.

JAMES

Bertie pushes himself up, gets up. Young lady, young lady!

LYDIA

You would not ask after Sasha!

JAMES

Well I've just landed on top of you.

ALEX

He's literally like...you're his torso. There's a Sasha shaped smear on the ground and he's stood up and you're...it's that awkward moment when he stands up and you sort of peel off his

LYDIA

Urgh!

JAMES

The next thing I say which is looking at what remains of Brutor. Brutor! Much sadder. A bit sad don't get me wrong but much sadder about Brutor. Sorry.

ALEX

To clarify, Brutor looks worse than Sasha. Clearly broken limbs and it's a train wreck. Mechanically Brutor is literally as bad as a dog can possibly look and Sasha is almost as bad as she could possibly look.

BEN

Five rounds away from being the worst she could possibly look.

ALEX

A little bit!

JAMES

Mr Smith. Mr Smith! Where are you?

BEN

Behind you.

JAMES

Ah! Fix this!! Fix this!

(laughing)

Do it quickly!

BEN

Are we out of initiative or...

ALEX

You are still in initiative

BEN

I'm not able to because of the mechanics of the game!

(laughing)

Hamid has to do something first!

BRYN

That's very Deadpool of you.

ALEX

I'll tell you what. I'm going to throw you a bone.

JAMES

Is it one that's thrown out of either Brutor...

(laughing)

LYDIA

It's my inner ear.

ALEX

Bertie, as far as you can tell you hit Sasha and again, I can promise you I'm not fluffing this, I did roll for it, you missed Brutor. You only hit Sasha.

(cheering)

LYDIA

Wait, why am I cheering?!

ALEX

There was a 50/50 chance that you would've crushed Brutor under your own body and you got lucky!

JAMES

That is a very different alternative character arc that sees...

ALEX

Yes, you got very lucky.

LYDIA

We see like a shadowy future...

ALEX

I love you heading off into the sunset a broken man, coming back 15 seasons later

BRYN

What on level 20 ante paladin.

JAMES

Yes, ok, so...

ALEX

So far you've stood up and yelled some things.

JAMES

It's more or less where I am with this. Ok obviously in terms of the mechanics I should clearly be trying to stabilise you. I am going to be stabilising the dog. I am going to attempt to stabilise the dog.

ALEX

That's fine. Given that you have no knowledge, you're going to have to roll to even see if anyone's like dying, dead etc. So for the sake of speed by the way...

LYDIA

I mean there's blood everywhere but you can't be sure!

JAMES

You can't make assumptions you know! $13 - 1$ is 12

BRYN

You successfully save...

ALEX

You successfully stabilise the dog that didn't need stabilising.

JAMES

I know! Yeah.

ALEX

Sasha, roll me a fort save.

BRYN

It's a constitution check.

ALEX

Sorry, it is actually a constitution check. Bryn's right. As opposed to a fort save. So you are just rolling a D20 and adding your modifier to constitution

LYDIA

Yeah and then hoping to get over what?

ALEX

Hoping to get over...

BRYN

You subtract the number of negative hit points you have from the roll and if you get a 10 or higher after that you stabilise.

LYDIA

20!

JAMES

Natural 20.

BRYN

It's an automatic success on this roll.

ALEX

You stabilise!

BRYN

You stop...you do not lose any further hit points.

LYDIA

Yeah! Yeah I do!

BEN

Sasha's body is like no, this is not how this is going to go down.

LYDIA

I am not dying from a fall! No!

(laughing)

JAMES

Especially not somebody else's.

(laughing)

ALEX

So...

BRYN

Ah laughing in the face of death!

ALEX

How very human of us. Sasha has also been haemorrhaging. This is genuinely the worse this has ever looked for a group.

LYDIA

I got blown up to lower hit points than this.

ALEX

But there weren't other people also. Brutor's not people. I keep forgetting Brutor's not people.

JAMES

Brutor is people! How dare you!

LYDIA

I got blown through a wall on fire. So...I mean this might be...this might be the worst it's ever looked but really only slightly.

ALEX

Ok, so, I'm going to drop us out of initiative order at this point. You failed and the old man has got away. You failed pretty hard. If I'm honest. So you're out of initiative order. There is blood everywhere. Sasha is unconscious. Bertie is conscious. Brutor is unconscious. Zolf you're finally on the scene.

BEN

Classic cleric I'm going to just walk up and resolve the situation.

(laughing)

I move up...

ALEX

Kiss and make it better!

BEN

Basically I grab hold of my symbol, whisper some catechisms to Poseidon and channel positive energy and yeah, heal everyone in a 30 foot radius or certainly not the undead that are lurking about.

(laughing)

because it's a 30 foot sphere....

ALEX

Bodies just fall out of all of the surrounding buildings. Hundreds of them.

BEN

Ooh we're in the zombie district. Heal everyone for 12 damage

ALEX

Nice. Good work.

BEN

So everyone including Brutor and myself...oh I didn't do anything.

ALEX

Sasha are you conscious yet?

LYDIA

Yeah I've got 7 hit points.

ALEX

Nice

JAMES

I'm now back to...I'm back to 34. I could've been on 37. You over healed me if anything!

BRYN

Even after that fall you still had more hit points remaining than I normally have!

JAMES

Yeah!

ALEX

Sir Bertrand Macguffingham, he deserves to die but he won't!

(laughing)

BRYN

I want *that* on a t-shirt. I'm going to go over to Sasha who I'm assuming is stirring.

ALEX

Before you do, Sasha, you have to pick yourself a scar. Make it a good one.

LYDIA

Oh.

ALEX

Given the scale, big is the order of the day.

BRYN

Is it a falcon imprint in your chest?

ALEX

Oh my god!

LYDIA

Yes, that sounds epic! There is a falcon imprinted deeply into my back on my...right across my back.

ALEX

We'll say because of the level of detailing, you know, like scarification is a thing. So it's not a tattoo but you are going to have scarring in effectively a perfect imprint of a Maltese falcon, outspread wings, up over to the shoulders.

LYDIA

It's like massive and of course that overlaps with all the burning she's got down one side of her body from being blown through a wall on fire. Go Sasha, go.

ALEX

Brutor meanwhile, has lots of small scars across his body, like chunks of fur missing. He's looking a bit worse for wear and a scar, top of the forehead, down between the eyes and across the cheek. A big...

JAMES

Oh like Omar from The Wire? That's really cool.

ALEX

Yeah, big, big, big one. It's closed because the way that the healing machinic works is that it effectively accelerates non healing but it doesn't get rid of scaring unless you're a higher level and so on. You're not a sufficiently high level. He has a very, very visible and painful looking scar right across his face on top of all the chunks of fur missing and all kinds of stuff.

LYDIA

Awwww but he looks cool.

ALEX

He looks...he's looking steadily cooler.

BRYN

He's the Bruce Willis of dogs.

ALEX

Brutor stands. Bit unsteady on the feet. Turns, looks at Bertie, growls [barking noise] and then charges off. Disappearing down the alleys.

LYDIA

Is he still wearing his little hat?

ALEX

The hat, as he charges off...the hat caught on a small piece of rubble gets brushed off, drifts, flutters down and lands in a puddle of blood at Bertie's feet.

BRYN

Credits roll.

LYDIA

Wise dog!

JAMES

Bertie just looks and then...the little bit...the press card has fallen out as well.

LYDIA

Floating down the river of blood. Sasha is unimpressed because it is her blood!

ALEX

It goes down the trickle and the press card just drops through a grate into the sewers.

BRYN

And there's a zombie going, oh that hurt. Ow!

BEN

So as we're looking at Bertie's face as he's staring at the thing. In the background you can see Zolf stomp over to Sasha and help her up. And as I grab your hand convert my second level spell into cure moderate wounds.

ALEX

Ok so how much do you heal them for?

BEN

It's 2 D8 + 2.

ALEX

2 D8 + 2

BEN

So I'm going to do a roll. That is 15.

ALEX

Now Sasha your leather jacket...

LYDIA

The one that she was so proud of.

ALEX

As you're standing and Zolf is sort of helping you up. Zolf, you can see there's clear tearing, like the back of the leather jacket is completely in tatters. There's blood coming out form it. As you watch, incredibly quickly, the leather reknits and heals and is completely fine again.

BEN

Good old magic items!

ALEX

You've got to love it!

LYDIA

But underneath did you see there was a massive scar?

BRYN

Perception check!

ALEX

I'm not even going to get you to roll it. It's so clear she has massive scarring.

BEN

But does it look like a falcon?

ALEX

You don't know that yet.

BEN

Perception check.

ALEX

Ah go on then!

BEN

Yeah! I don't know that.

ALEX

Are you happy? Are you glad...

BEN

At least I tried!

LYDIA

Not very good at looking at people who's clothes have torn in violence. You don't look directly at her because you're a polite dwarf.

ALEX

Hamid you burst out of the door immediately behind Zolf.

BRYN

Is everyone ok?

JAMES

Bertie's just stood inside looking at the corner behind which Brutor disappeared.

BEN

I'm actually going to show a modicum of tact, walk over to Hamid and just say, Brutor ran away. I think he's angry at Bertie.

BRYN

Oh dear. What happened?

BEN

He threw him.

BRYN

Well I don't blame Brutor then!

BEN

Right so that went...is everyone alright?

LYDIA

Well to be fair at least this time I didn't go through a wall and I wasn't even on fire so I guess, really, it's an alright day in the scheme of things isn't it.

BRYN

So the guy got away I think.

LYDIA

What?! You let get him away. Why didn't you go after him?

BRYN

Well because three people had already fallen down this gap. I didn't want to land on any of you.

LYDIA

You could've run around!

BEN

Let's put a lid on that encounter.

JAMES

While all of this is happening, Bertie has just quietly walked off around the corner.

BEN

I think trying to stop him might be a really bad idea.

LYDIA

Why because he's upset...because he landed on me.

(laughing)

BEN

No!

LYDIA

That doesn't sound like him. Maybe he is more...maybe he is nicer.

BEN

No, he's upset.

LYDIA

That's really...I mean that is...I didn't think he had any feelings in him.

BEN

Sasha! Sasha!

LYDIA

But I mean maybe he's sorry and he can't tell me.

BEN

He only cares about the dog. The dog is angry at him so he's sad.

LYDIA

The dog is angry at him?!

BEN

Well apparently he threw him off a roof.

BRYN

He was trying to throw him across the gap and he didn't get far enough.

LYDIA

Right. I'm with the dog then!

BRYN

That's what I said!

BEN

Anyway, so, look, Bertie knows where we live so I think we should probably just let him...

BRYN

Where we're staying.

BEN

Where we're staying yeah. No where Sasha lives in perpetuity. Whatever, I'm getting distracted. Anyway I had time to think while I was crawling through that alleyway.

(laughing)

LYDIA

Drowning in that sewer, yeah.

BEN

We didn't need to chase him. He didn't have anything on him did he?

BRYN

We don't know.

BEN

Well I assume what was happening....

LYDIA

He might have knowledge in his head.

BRYN

He seemed to be running away from Sasha.

BEN

Yes and that might be because he's not supposed to be in the newspaper office and was nicking stuff.

LYDIA

No he weren't though. He was writing. When I went up I could hear him writing.

BEN

Let's see what he was writing.

LYDIA

Then I said hello, how are you and he popped off and then he tried to throw a bottle at me so I thought oh he's probably got information. So...

BRYN

He dropped that thing over the edge which broke the bridge, like, he...

LYDIA

He dropped it on me. He tried to drop it on me, I'm sure and then like, it missed and so then I just fell and then I got squashed. This is not a good day in the scheme of things.

BRYN

I agree, we should go and check.

BEN

And everyone we've met has been pretty murderous so that's par for the course really.

ALEX

Ok we will say that Bertie's off on his own. We will deal with that eventually. We will return to the rest of the group. Presumably you head into the office that he was in.

BRYN

What room did you find him in?

ALEX

Ok, in which case, could each of you...because I'm assuming you will all be taking part in this. Give me a perception check and each of you tell me what you're focusing on looking for. You can still stumble on other stuff if it's rolling high enough but I'd like to know what you're keeping an eye out for specifically it will help.

BEN

I will be looking through the files for...

BRYN

They would be in French.

BEN

I won't be looking through files because I can't read it so I don't know what's important. I'll be looking for safes, lockboxes, places where people keep valuable things.

ALEX

Sure

BEN

Mainly because they might have artefacts.

ALEX

Ok and Sasha?

LYDIA

I will be looking at the thing...at whatever is on top of the pile, what he was most recently writing.

BRYN

I'm going to look through the files later. I figure I've got plenty of time to do that. The first thing I'd like to find out is if he was alone in these offices.

ALEX

So you're going to search the wider.

BRYN

I'm going to search wider. I'll say I'm going to come back and help you guys in a minute. I want to look around the building and see if there's a sign of other people being based here. Because he clearly is not Amelie Rose.

(laughing)

ALEX

There is that!

LYDIA

I will point out as we're walking up though that I followed...this is the track that I followed going up.

BRYN

I'm just going to check some of the other rooms. I think you're probably right.

ALEX

So Zolf give me the roll first.

BEN

That is 16.

ALEX

16. You find in one of the desk drawers there is a small lock box, locked. It takes a while. You find covered in just a pile of old rancid, rotting newspapers.

LYDIA

Massive!

ALEX

Massive newspapers.

LYDIA

Unfold...unfold and unfold and unfold and unfold and unfold.

ALEX

Let's say it's the original...

JAMES

Their archive looks more like a laundry

ALEX

We'll say it's one of those original roll prints so they haven't cut them yet so it is actually enormous sheets of newspaper. A safe, a full sized safe which is also locked.

BEN

Cool.

ALEX

Sasha give me the roll.

LYDIA

16

ALEX

16. Glancing at the desk in French that you can follow it's very vernacular. Dearest Lumiere, if you are receiving this then I guess they've got me too. I don't know how...and that's all you've got. Also you find all over the desk bills. Money owed, money due etc. Lots of red ink all over the place.

BRYN

Final demand.

ALEX

Final demands.

BRYN

Final, final demand. Like seriously this is the last demand.

JAMES

Guys just money.

(laughing)

ALEX

At which point you also find a bunch of notes and you recognise some of the names, particularly Dr Paul Edeloop, Celine Soucier, Jacques Piaggio, Vivienne Messier and Francois Henry.

BRYN

Is this the same list?

ALEX

It's the list. It's the same list. You have, next to Paul Edeloop archaeologist as well and it has next to it, it's in sort of short hand but there's enough to glean what's written there. It appears that she quit her job investigating the Parisian catacombs and volunteered for another dig. It doesn't say where. For Celine Soucier you just have the word "affair" written with a circle and underlined. By Jacques Piaggio you have Soucier underlined and a line pointing to the affair notation. For Vivienne Messier you just have the words "Japan" and Francois Henry has been written extremely angrily, very deep, cutting through some of the sort of notepaper underlined, scratched and rubbed out. Hamid give me the perception roll to search the rest of the building.

BRYN

17. 25.

ALEX

25. You search the rest of the building, things that you find of note. There is a printing press in the basement. It appears to have been shut down fairly recently. There's ink that's still blotting on the pads and so on.

BRYN

So days or weeks?

ALEX

Days

BRYN

Days

ALEX

Days. There is obviously paper for storage and so on.

LYDIA

Massive paper!

ALEX

It's...it's becoming readily apparent that they were closing up shop. There were sort of sheets over things and it's clear that it was closing down. You do find actually a doorway to a cellar and even just poking your head down, you see that there's a manhole cover in the basement. But again that's not an unusual thing really in a city of this size and this age. Also you see that it's clear that this building had the walkway lead through into the building behind and that it was definitely sort of part of this complex, let's call it. There's a hole in the wall. It looks like they just beat it through roughly and put it through. Again it doesn't look necessarily illegal just so much as rudimentary, get the job done, keep going, kind of work and it's very clear that they retrofitted some old style Parisian apartments and trying to turn into a business. Lots of holes knocked through walls to make trolley space and things like that. It's in bad disrepair but you get the impression it was in bad repair even when it was running. It looks very much like a just get the job done. Just get it done, get it done, get it done for too many years and it's really started to show in the building but there's no one else there. Not a soul.

BRYN

Is it clear that only that office has been occupied for a few days, maybe a week?

ALEX

All the other offices are cold with stuff upon them. That office had a small heater, like a coal brasier.

BRYN

Ok I'll re-join these guys.

BEN

So what did we find?

LYDIA

Well this is the same list as Brock had in...or someone claiming to be Brock back in the hotel. It seems like, of course, although you can't read French they're just names.

BEN

I can read the names, yeah, yeah.

LYDIA

And the fact that affair is just affaire with an accent on the e, so you're...I'm explaining very carefully, these are names right. And so you can see this one they seem to have had an affair with the other one.

BEN

So it's a story being run. They've investigating them.

LYDIA

Right, yeah! That actually sounds a lot more likely than what I was thinking!

(laughing)

BRYN

I mean, so the names that aren't on this list are Amelie Rose. So it might be her list.

BEN

That's what I'm thinking. She works for this newspaper and they got put out of business because they were doing a story on...

LYDIA

I assumed it was a hit list but that is a lot more likely

(laughing)

BEN

I can't blame you given your background.

BRYN

The other name that is not on this list is Jean Luc Boulier.

BEN

Yeah but Amelie was looking out for him.

BRYN

Well she was looking for him.

BEN

Yeah so she may have found him which means he's not on the list.

BRYN

Yeah but I just think it's worth noting.

BEN

Yeah I think he might be a...possibly a weak link if these are the main antagonists of whatever they were investigating and he's not on there but he was being looked for, he might be someone we want to talk to.

BRYN

Probably.

LYDIA

Maybe someone's got a hit out on him.

BEN

Maybe

LYDIA

Oh right ok, good. I mean bad but like...

BEN

Well that guy ran from us so I assume...

BRYN

You say there was a note. Who was it addressed to?

ALEX

It was Dearest Lumiere.

LYDIA

Dearest Lumiere.

BRYN

That's not a name that's been on any of the lists is it? No.

BEN

Right so I've got a...there's a lockbox. Or a locked drawer?

ALEX

There was a lockbox in one of the drawers which obviously you've pulled out and plonked on the desk and a safe hidden away under loads and loads of paper.

BEN

There's that and the other.

LYDIA

As you guys have begun to talk, I've already picked up the smaller one and begun lockpicking it.

BEN

So I found...well that and there's a safe under this paper. Hopefully if they hadn't moved out completely there might have some clues or something in there.

ALEX

Give me a disable device check for the lockbox Sasha

LYDIA

19.

ALEX

19. Sure. You open it up. In there is a single cigar. Looks like it's very good. There is some small change, maybe 10 gold tops.

LYDIA

Pocket it.

ALEX

And there is some more, what looks like a few letters.

LYDIA

I hand the letters over to these guys.

BEN

I hand the letters to Hamid.

BRYN

Hamid reads the letters.

ALEX

It's more discussions with Lumiere. Do you want to take the time to actually....

BRYN

Yeah

ALEX

Ok

LYDIA

Also I light the cigar.

BRYN

Do you have a lighter?

LYDIA

I've got an adventurer kit...

BRYN

Because spark

(laughing)

LYDIA

Yeah, you see me like...

ALEX

I love the image Hamid's just searching through the papers and then you just absentmindedly....

BRYN

Yeah I will spark the cigar for you.

LYDIA

Yeah I was looking in my bag of holding for the thing and then notice.

BRYN

I go wait, what is...that's a clue or it's poisoned or a weapon or something.

BEN

I think it's just a...if it's got change in there it's just his....

ALEX

It smells amazing. It's very, very fragrant. Even people who don't...

BRYN

I start coughing.

ALEX

Even for people who don't smoke it's not rancid. You definitely begin coughing, it's smoke but it's a very floral, fragrant smell.

BRYN

Could you put it out?

BEN

Oh right, I stub it out on an ashtray.

ALEX

Summon water

(laughing)

BRYN

I think we should keep it. It might be important.

LYDIA

It was really nice.

ALEX

Hamid, reading through the paperwork, there's a lot of letters with this Lumiere and it paints a very dark picture for whoever this gentleman was. You notice that it all seems "To Lumiere, From Lumiere" but nonetheless within the actual paper it starts off going in chronological order, they start of kind of like going, Amelie Rose has got something interesting, I've got some people on my back blah, blah, blah. And then it's...Amelie Rose has gone, I've put my other people on it but...

BRYN

Are there any dates on any of them?

ALEX

So the dates for Amelie Rose is about six months ago.

BRYN

We know she was at the arc about three months ago looking for Jean Luc Boulier.

(gasping)

BEN

Intrigue!

ALEX

So she's...

JAMES

That is not the results of an epistolary novel that he's working on.

ALEX

So it goes, Amelie Rose has dropped off the map, I'm putting some other people on that and then it starts taking a bit of a bleaker turn. They haven't come back. Jacques has quit and suddenly you start reading through it, once you start piecing it together it becomes readily apparent loads of them are quitting and not just sort of, you know, ooh rats in a sinking ship kind of quitting, like spontaneously and with no warning. He's really confused. Two days ago I was speaking with Russo and he was completely fine but suddenly, today, he's just quit and the list goes on and on until eventually he's...it's, obviously the debts are mounting up and it's getting very, very bleak and then he says, the penultimate letter before the one he was writing was, I think it's what Amelie was working on. I think it's l'ordinateur's.

BRYN

Francois Henry messing with people's minds.

ALEX

And then he just closes with, I'm going to see what I can find. This might be my last letter. And that's the last one that's in the strong box. These...the reason that all of these letters are here is that on the reverse of them are the replies. It's an old thing that you used to do to save paper. The replies are quite banal. I've been working on the device, it's all couch but it starts quite humorous. They clearly joke around a lot. I've been working on the device, it's coming along quite well. I really think this might put Gazette on the map. Ooh, we've had a bit of a setback, one of the pieces is broken. I'm having some trouble sourcing enough platinum blah, blah, blah and slowly it just becomes very conciliatory but there's not really much content to it. It's just ah I'm really sorry for you, you know that you can always come back with mama and papa if you need blah, blah, blah but there's not really any content really to the replies that he's had.

LYDIA

Sulking over the fact that her cigar has been taken away, Sasha is going to work on the safe. 8. Oh wait +9. So 17.

ALEX

17. I'll tell you next week.

(cheering and groaning)

Rusty Quill Gaming – 38 – Brutor Is...

Goodness me! Drama, death, Bertie running off!

BRYN

Brutor running off!

ALEX

Everything's wrong!

LYDIA

Sasha being alive!

ALEX

Plus marks!

LYDIA

It's great to hear your enthusiasm!

ALEX

I just...I never thought it would be an old man in alleyway that did you all in.

BEN

The most deadly of opponents!

ALEX

I should be more careful. Anyway I think we'll close there like I said and we hope you tune in next week for yet more intrigue, mystery Parisian adventure. Bye all!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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