

RQG – 61 – Skyships and Harlequins

Content Warnings

- X
- X

BEN

Ben, here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of our patrons, Lacy Ruff, Julia Morgan, Nope, Liz Coleman, Francesca Todd, **Elina McerLekey**, Matt Wear, JST1138 Christen Bonner, thank you all. We really appreciate your support. If you would like to join them, go to www.patrion.com/rustyquill and take a look at our awards.

ALEX

Hi guys, so this is kind of embarrassing, umm... yeah... turns out that I didn't just get the episode number wrong, on one episode, I got it wrong on two... So, when the episode starts, and I say it's episode 59, that's wrong... you can just ignore that. My bad - enjoy the episode.

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 59 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have

JAMES

James Ross

Rusty Quill Gaming – RQG 61 - Skyships and Harlequins

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

BEN

Ben Meredith

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith

LYDIA NICHOLAS

Sasha Racket

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

JAMES

Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham

ALEX

And you might actually make it out of Paris.

LYDIA

I don't believe there are any places beyond Paris. We simply exist in Paris. Paris is all there is. There is no escape from Paris.

BRYN?

I'm waiting for us to crash into Eiffel's Foley.

[group laughter]

ALEX

Now there's an idea...

GROUP

Oh no...

ALEX

So, as a brief recap, you manage to reconvene with Wilde. He told you effectively you should all be moving on to Prague. As a brief [sojourn? unclear: 1:47] via locksmith...

LYDIA

And then a tank.

ALEX

And then a tank...

BRYN?

We basically became the target of a small war.

LYDIA

Running away, running back, running back away...

ALEX

Pretty much. Long story short, you made it to the aero port...

LYDIA

Yeah...

ALEX

And in the aero port...

BEN?

An Aeroplane...

ALEX

You managed to find an aero boat...

BEN?

Oh...

ALEX

As it stands, you are now aboard a ship. It is a ship that looks... to Zolf's eye, as an actual seafaring vessel, that has been modified beyond belief.

LYDIA

And to clarify this, we are passengers.

BEN?

Yeah, we are... [unclear: 2:18]

ALEX

You are paid...

BEN?

We bought tickets.

LYDIA

We are actually passengers...

ALEX

There's a brief misunderstanding. Maybe you going to kill them all, may be not. Who knows...

LYDIA

No, we're passengers.

BEN?

I suppose that drug Bertie [gave us..? unclear: 2:28]...

[laughter]

ALEX

But you are currently aboard a known run vessel. Facing an equal parts, practical and completely impractical captain. She has raised her goggles and welcomed you as passengers. We will pick up exactly where we left off.

BEN?

Alright boy...

LYDIA

Can I have a go of taking it off. Can I... is there... how do you take it off?

ALEX

I like you, you can come with me.

LYDIA

Alright...

ALEX

The rest of you, I need names, go...

BEN

Zolf.

LYDIA

Well I am Sasha but you don't need my name. I'm just the one that's keen on the ship.

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan.

JAMES

I madam am Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham, and Bertie gives a very formal and impressive bow. A pleasure for you to meet me him hmm...

ALEX

Who's the zquit...

JAMES

Fine vessel... umm...

BRYN?

That will be Oscar Wilde.

ALEX

Her face drops instantly. All pleasantness, all fun and all of that is gone to complete stony face.

BEN

Oh Oscar, she has heard of you.

LYDIA

Yep. Don't worry. We're not his best fans either.

ALEX

Oscar is currently kind of stood behind Bertie, and he sort of pocks his head out from behind the armour... Hassel, get him off my ship. We can go anywhere you want. If he's on my ship, either goes or I am probably going to have to arrange for everyone to be kicked off this ship.

JAMES

Ah... either this Wilde goes, or we must...

LYDIA

Ha-ha, that's good, that's good. If you know what that is, that's really good.

JAMES

Thank you, you're welcome...

LYDIA

Everyone, maybe give that a google.

[laughter]

LYDIA

That's... that's a good line.

ALEX

I'm... I'm going to go ahead yeah... James... you know what, that was a good line.

JAMES

Thank you, you're welcome.

LYDIA

[laughter] that was Whitty.

JAMES

Bertie picks up Oscar Wilde, by the scruff of the neck, and goes... oh... just drop him off here or...

ALEX

I mean, if you'd kill him first, that would be best...

JAMES

Yes I know...

ALEX

Wilde's there, just looking at the... female gnome, whoever it is, and just goes... let them fly, I'll get off here. I'll make my own way.

BEN?

Alright, see you later Oscar.

ALEX

Wilde just goes... look is there no way you can... and then the female gnome pulls whatever contraption she has on her hip, and levels at him and says "get off... my ship... right... now... you... meritocratic dirtbag".

JAMES

Bertie takes one step away from Wilde and goes "I..." and points a little "I'd shoot probably about here".

ALEX

She lowers her aim accordingly, and gives you a wink...

JAMES

If we do get to pick where Bertie points down at his crutch...

LYDIA

[laughter]

ALEX

She leans down and gives you a wink with a different eye.

[laughter]

ALEX

Wilde kind of looks to the rest of you...

LYDIA

I mean, could we keep him asleep or something? In a sack?

ALEX

He looks... he looks back to whoever the gnome is, and then says... “what I’d like is one minute to speak to them. Can I have that?” She says “fine, you’re doing it on the deck and under my supervision”. Wilde then nods and quietly gestures for you to come over.

BRYN?

Right, what do you want Wilde?

LYDIA

Is she your ex or something?

ALEX

Wilde leans forward “she wishes”.

BEN?

So it’s that kind of charm that gives you reactions like that.

LYDIA

Yeah, that’s what I can see. I can see how popular you are.

ALEX

It’s more important that you get to Prague.

BEN?

Yeah I know, that’s why I’ve asked you to leave.

LYDIA

Yeah, so you go.

ALEX

Then it is that we arrest her. Go ahead.

LYDIA

She sounds great.

ALEX

Go ahead to Prague. Do not tell her that you are under my supervision, claim to be prisoners, I don’t care. She cannot know that you are working for me. She will probably kill all of you.

BEN?

It’s alright, you’re just an idiot we picked up.

LYDIA

Yeah, we found you unconscious.

ALEX

I'm fine with that. I'll try and make my own way to Prague.

BEN?

Alright, see you later mate.

ALEX

"Alright". He looks at the rest of you.

BRYN?

I shake him by the hand and wish him luck.

ALEX

He's taken aback and returns it in a very, very sincere un-Oscar Wilde like way and doesn't make a pun at your expense.

LYDIA

Sasha looks at him slightly warily and then kind of leans forward to shake his hand. I mean... I like the tank. That was amazing.

ALEX

He's much more wary of Sasha...

[laughter]

ALEX

He's willing to reach his hand out, but he's clearly waiting for the dagger to come out, as he's reaching out to shake her hand.

LYDIA

No, she's genuinely impressed by all of the stuff that's happened.

ALEX

I know this, he doesn't.

LYDIA

Yeah. But Sasha is more dangerous close up than anyone is. That's just... I mean she can do a tumble turn, which seems to be her most dangerous move right now. So yeah... she shakes his hand really enthusiastically. Yeah, the flying thing, that was amazing. Although this is a real flying thing, but that was great. No, you should... I really hope I get to see you [unclear: 6:53] and some of those again. I hope you don't die.

ALEX

The female gnome again yells "get him off the boat, or I'll have to kill all of you".

LYDIA

You should probably go, 'cause I want to fly this ship.

ALEX

Wilde gives Zolf and Bertie a nod, and starts to leave.

LYDIA

I hope you survive, and I get to see the flashy stuff again.

JAMES

I hope she gets to see the flashy stuff again.

ALEX

Female gnome basically... gun still trained on his back, watches him off and as he is about to step on to the gang plank, she just kicks him, and he falls a

decent distance, like.... Maybe like 15 feet onto a lower scaffolding. He's getting hurt by that. Lands, staggers up and continues to go down a scaffold, and limp... clearly injured or whatever.

BEN?

I go to the rail, lean over, look like I'm just watching him leave, and as subtly as I'm able, cast a message...

ALEX

One sec. OK.

BEN?

And just ask if there's anything we should be watching out for, if he doesn't trust this captain. What should we be on the lookout for?

ALEX

There's not a lot. How many words does he have? Or is it just a conversation?

BEN?

It's just a conversation.

ALEX

OK. Cool. So he's continuing to walk away?

BEN?

Yeah...

ALEX

He doesn't turn or in any way acknowledge what's happening. He just... basically, effectively whispers back to you.

BEN

Yeah. It lasts 40 minutes, but only 140 feet in distance.

ALEX

He's walking, and just goes... she's a separatist. If you have anything to do with Meritocrats, she will cut you off, and push you off that boat, while its in flight. Just don't let her know, and just try and stay out of trouble, and watch out. Prague is... complicated. And then he heads out into the rain.

BEN?

I thank him.

ALEX

The rest of the gnomes... the female gnome just looks around you and goes... "right, you" ... points to Sasha, "with me... you... I like you, with me". And then...

LYDIA

That was to Bertie...

ALEX

Yeah... to Bertie.

LYDIA

[Yeah? unclear; 8:46] to Bertie, because that wouldn't be obvious.

[laughter]

ALEX

To Bertie...

LYDIA

Because that wouldn't be obvious...

ALEX

To Bertie, at which point...

JAMES

Well, she's a villain...

[laughter]

ALEX

At which point she immediately turns, holsters what you presume is a weapon, none of you, apart from Sasha have seen anything even vaguely like it before. And strides back to take her position.

BEN?

Right, so I'll just stand here shall I?

ALEX

The rest of the burly gnomes have finished loading up the ship, and are closing doors and so on, and basically climbing aboard and all taking positions. They are all taking positions by various equipment. So, it's not like their manning sails or anything like that. So, to your practiced eye, you can see that the ship, they've done a really bad job of retro-fitting it, and there's the remains of what probably were the masts, two of them, against the deck. But, it's serviceable, but, whoever did it, cares more about the machinery, than the actual... vessel.

BEN

That's fine, and Zolf's never been like madly in love with ships...

ALEX

Sure... so, without further ado, the female gnome takes a moment, gives a gesture... a spinning finger... and then reaches down and her hands ablur begins pulling various leavers, turning a couple of valves and so on. There is a groan from the machinery behind her, and the plumes of smoke change colour, from lime green to bright blue and starts... [sound effects]. There's

clearly some kind of deep engine in there. There's the squeal of pressure and so on, and then suddenly begins vibrating, violently, extremely violently...

LYDIA

Ahh... this is amazing.

ALEX

You're finding it hard to keep your balance, it's shaking in that juddery.

BEN

Yeah, Zolf is not looking happy about this.

ALEX

At which point, it begins to rise, and it rises about 15 feet off the floor. It is nearing the roof of the warehouse.

BEN

So, as soon as it leaves the floor, Zolf turns like a... really, really off shade of green, and just hits the deck like...

ALEX

Yep...

BEN

He lies flat on his face on the deck.

ALEX

The captain gets her goggles [sound effect]... pulls them onto her face, pulls on a pair of ridiculous gloves. They're covered in what seemed to be like... luminous jewels, probably not precious stones, but its just ostentation for the sake of it, at this stage.

LYDIA

Sasha feels the blooming' of a crush...

[laughter]

ALEX

And then she goes... right, everyone ready... hold on... she braces herself, pulls a lever [sound effects], and you begin to really slowly pull out from...

[laughter]

ALEX

It's a really sedate. The second that you've stopped rising, it's just... just gently pulling out, really, really smoothly. Really carefully.

LYDIA

The tension begins... [laughter] to ease... in kind of an awkward... [unclear: 11:16].

BEN

Does the crush [unclear: 11:17]...

BEN?

I'm going to find someone who doesn't look immediately busy, and ask to be shown to my cabin.

[laughter].

ALEX

So, you ask one of the gnomes, they distractedly look away from one of the valves that they're measuring and just go... when we've finished this then, and they just continue back to it. The vessel pulls out, into the torrential downpour... unfortunately you're getting wet, that's fine, like, I will deal with you, as you've done so. The vessel then takes about 20 degree angle,

something like that, steep, but not unmanageably so, and begins a clear ascent. The engines are sort of roaring. Interestingly, it seems very little effected by the buffeting winds. Hamid, as you're heading below deck, you know for a fact an airship could not take off in a storm, even if it wanted to. Even if someone had been trying to, in this kind of weather, it would have been too dangerous, because the bag would have been all over the place. This ship, for whatever reason, its managing it much better, and it begins a slow and steady ascent.

BEN

Is the deck covered in anything or is it just open?

ALEX

The deck is currently open to the elements. Heading below deck, Hamid, you head below deck and are immediately bowled over, briefly, by a heavy gnome coming out, and just going... "what are you doing... move!" Heads out onto the deck, presumably you still head down.

BEN

Yep.

ALEX

You find yourself heading down, and there are pipes running everywhere. Bits of steam and so on. There's loose equipment, which is kind of hanging from walls, but if there's any kind of organisation to it, it eludes you, and you head down. For the rest of you, you start seeing the burly gnome start coming up to you, and basically explaining to you that there are guide lines. They hand you effectively harnesses or belts. For Bertie, they just kind of look at you a bit nonplussed.

LYDIA

Do they put one of the like gnome size guide lines round each of his trunk like legs?

ALEX

STOP BEATING ME TO MY OWN PUNSHES!!!

LYDIA

I'm really sorry. I'm really sorry.

[laughter]

ALEX

Yes, they do. To have run away...

LYDIA

I'll be quiet.

ALEX

They talk [unclear: 13:14]. You see them quickly retrofit, and then they come back and hold up something that kind of looks like it might be a harness, but it is genuinely two gnome ones that have just been welded together.

BEN

Like harness underpants...

ALEX

Pretty much.

[laughter]

ALEX

For the rest of you, they have them to fit. They actually have a dwarf one, like a properly dwarf.

BEN

That's cool, if they can fit it on me, from where I am, that's fine.

ALEX

Again, they come over to Zolf, with a harness, and then look at the legs and go... umm... err...

BEN

It's alright...

ALEX

They just hand it to you...

BEN

Yeah, thanks...

ALEX

And then they show all of you that there are, on either side of the deck, there is actually a very thin cable, not like cheese wire or anything, but a thin cable, and the idea being that you can basically clip yourself on, and you are now clipped on to the boat and they show you... you've got two lines here, clip on to the middle one. If you're going to go to a different part of the ship, clip on to the next guide-line before you unclip from that one. Really basic you know health & safety stuff. The vessel continues climbing. It's peculiarly domestic the way that they're taking all of this in stride, when there is lightening crackling quite near the vessel, and you know gusting winds, as you're continuing to rise, you see what are actual explosions from the far side, the side that you saw the hangers with movement. There are genuine explosions going on. You continue to rise and jumping back to you Hamid, you have found yourself in what is clearly an engine room. May be not the engine room, but an engine room. It's just full of lots of gnomes very busy. And the second that one of them turns and sees you, they just start yelling at you to get out.

BEN

If I open a door [to the engine room? unclear: 14:45] I'm not going in.

ALEX

Oh yes...

BEN

I'm not exploring the ship, I'm looking for somewhere to sleep.

ALEX

The second that you open it, they're like... "GET OUT... OH MY GOD, GET OUT". Obviously you...

BEN

I apologise...

[laughter]

BEN

Very politely...

ALEX

Doubling back, you find yourself heading down... if you... you've headed down the stairway, the door that was facing the stairway was an engine room. Doubling back beneath the stairway that you came in. You find yourself in a corridor which has more cabin like structures. You open a couple of doors and you see empty hammocks and so on. Eventually you open a door that has a very, very rudimentary pair of bunkbeds.

BEN

I'll sleep in a hammock, or a bunkbed. Hamid is not bothered. He doesn't want in get in anyone's way.

ALEX

Sure.

BEN

So he'd like to find something that has been... it's occupied, so that he's not sleeping in someone else's bed, that he's finding somewhere to sleep.

ALEX

Sure. Cutting back to Sasha and Bertie, at the front. So, the captain is basically accelerating upwards, and then turns to both of you and begins explaining how the vessel works, assuming that both of you are on the same path.

LYDIA

Yeah...

ALEX

So, to Sasha, she's like... "OK, so here you've got pitch, here you've got yaw, you've got roll on the wheel, obviously you don't want to use too much roll otherwise everyone's going to fall off!, obviously now"

JAMES

Obviously...

ALEX

"Here you've got the pressure regulator"... she turns to Bertie. "Now, obviously we're running a lot of our chemical [reactants? unclear: 15:59] from tank A to tank B. We can shift to the reserves..." and she just continues talking to Bertie...

JAMES

Those are liquids...

[laughter]

JAMES

Yessss....

ALEX

Give me a diplomacy roll...

[laughter]

BEN?

Not bluff...

ALEX

No... no...

BRYN?

No diplomacy.

ALEX

Give her a diplomacy roll.

JAMES

That is $9+4$ is 13.

ALEX

So, as she critically failed her sense motive on you, and trying to get the measure of you, you're clearly a gearhead like her, because you're taking this in stride. So she's just over the moon, she's prattling now. As you continue to rise up.

LYDIA

Sasha has never heard most of these words before... But she's beginning to... so it's like a car, but in four dimensions...

ALEX

Yeah... yeah... exactly. And then, the conversation keeps happening. She keeps mentioning the word "vectors". Vectors start coming up a lot in the

conversation. Meanwhile, as you continue rising, you start rising up towards cloud level. You've actually been rising for about, you know, half an hour, at a fairly steep incline. You're not fast, but the manoeuvrability of this thing, seems kind of independent of the weather. It's bizarre. There's probably some magic going on in that as well. Hamid, you manage to go to sleep.

BEN

Yeah...

ALEX

Your dreams are not haunted. In fact your mostly just exhausted.

BEN

Yep.

ALEX

For the rest of you, what are the rest of you wanting to do? Currently you are on the deck, guide-lines to two things, and lots of gnomes are just looking at you, pityingly and continuing with their work.

BRYN?

If I can fall asleep through my nausea, I will fall asleep. Either that, or I will remain nauseous and awake.

ALEX

On the deck, in the rain?

BRYN

I am not moving.

ALEX

OK.

BRYN?

I cannot move.

ALEX

You will not be able to sleep in this kind of downpour, but...

BRYN

That's fine. I am staying here.

ALEX

OK, that's fine. You continue rising, and then...

BRYN

[unclear: 17:45] an explosion...

ALEX

Eventually, the captain, meanwhile, is now basically telling Bertie... "right, so if you control everything on the left hand side, and... what's your name again... what's your name again...."

LYDIA

Sasha...

ALEX

Sasha.... Exactly... you control everything on the right. Now obviously Bill... I want to say Bill... Bill... Sorry Bertrand... of course... sorry... OK... so... Sorry Bertrand, just make sure that the pressure doesn't go above 200 otherwise we are in trouble....

JAMES

[unclear: 18:12]

LYDIA

Sasha's eyes widen... I think... I think Sir Bertrand might actually... he has a bit of a knock on the head earlier, like it was hard protecting...

JAMES

No, no I'm fine... perfectly willing to give this a go.

ALEX

He seems fine to me. Oh, Sasha, careful, you've not been turning your hydraulics there... we'll fall out of the sky...

LYDIA

Alright, but....

ALEX

"We've got about 3 seconds unless you that lever... 2 seconds..."

LYDIA

OK... I'll pull it...

ALEX

There we go...

LYDIA

Just maybe keep an eye on both of us then, right.

ALEX

"Are you ready for a bit more speed now"?

LYDIA

Oh... it's high...

ALEX

“Yes, let’s go... OK”.

JAMES

That even looks like the reddest one...

ALEX

That’s the one Sir Bertrand. You give that one a go.

JAMES

I am a natural at this, aren’t I?

LYDIA

Sasha could not believe that she might be in this position, and not enjoying it.

[Laughter]

BRYN?

Bertie ruins everything.

LYDIA

This might be one of the first times in her life, she feels real dread and fear...

[Laughter]

LYDIA

About physical danger.

JAMES

Bertie... he’s selected the correct one, and that choice has been affirmed by the captain... so...

BRYN

Don't know what you're talking about...

LYDIA

A stopped clock and twice a day spring to mind as part of a relevant phrase.

BRYN

Yes, he's a vile posh misogynist of course he's you know... it's the Top Gear thing...

LYDIA

Yes.

JAMES

He's a natural expert.

[laughter]

LYDIA

If a woman can do it, [unclear: 19:24].

[laughter]

BRYN

[The Jeremy Clarkson of ...? unclear: 19:28]

ALEX

I can't unsee it. As you enter the cloud cover, and you are accelerating faster and faster... again you're not zipping along, by any stretch, but you are... you are getting a decent lick of speed. The captain then turns to both of you and goes... "right OK, well, we're basically... umm... in the final part of the accent so... err... screw it, OK, Sir Bertrand, you go first, I recon I've given you enough of a briefing, you... and then Sasha, you can go second". She just lets go of the

wheel, and just goes “go for it”. The vehicle begins slightly listing to one side, as the wheel begins to drift.

JAMES

Sir Bertrand puts one steadying hand on the wheel and rights it gently, evening out the course.

ALEX

Do you have any relevant skills whatsoever?

LYDIA

No.

JAMES

I have confidence...

[laughter]

LYDIA

And an animal yeah...

BRYN

Bluff ride...

BEN

Like genuine ride is...

LYDIA

The closest thing.

ALEX

So you reach your hand out and take control of it, and...

ALEX

“You’re alright... You’re alright”... she occasionally reaches out and just slightly corrects, as you overcorrect because it was like a little to the right, so you turn too much to the left, the standard learner driver stuff, and suddenly this boat’s rocking, Zolf, your not feeling great, as it begins to rock more and more.

BEN

A slight trickle of vomit just appears...

[laughter]

ALEX

Thankfully its still raining in the cloud cover. You’re not high enough yet.

BEN

So then it washes out.

JAMES

So, this is really easy...

ALEX

Oh... Sir Bertrand, watch your pressure again... Honestly... I mean... you’ve got another blind spot for the red gages aww...

JAMES

No...

LYDIA

Sasha is terrified.

ALEX

She reaches out and just goes... “do you mind if I just” ... it’s kind of minor stuff. She begins shifting a few of the pressure valves. You notice the pitch of the

engine drop down from... you know... threatening high to a bit more gentle engine noise. Eventually you don't manage to crash the vessel and she goes "cool, Sasha, do you want a go".

LYDIA

Yes, yes... yep, yep, yeah... I'll give that a go. Right yes... like both from the desperately of trying to take over from Bertie, who she thinks is the most incompetent individual that has ever lived. But Iso, being so in awe of this opportunity that she's actually beginning to get a kind of stage fright. OK, alright...

JAMES

Now, young lady, what you do, is you hold your hands at ten to two...

LYDIA

OK, she's actually letting Bertie show her what to do... so like... sort of... err.... right.... err...

ALEX

She has a weird gleam in her eye, or alternatively she reaches out and just spins the wheel....

[sound effects]

ALEX

You are both tied up, it does a full barrel roll, all of the gnomes you hear go oh really... honestly, for god's sake... errr...

[laughter]

ALEX

It does a full barrel roll...

JAMES

Somebody's [unclear: 22:17] off by rising [unclear: 22:19]

[sound effects]

JAMES

And then sprays in a [unclear: 22:23] like an acidic [unclear: 22:25]

ALEX

It's gross...

[Unclear: 22:29]

ALEX

Gross. Hamid, give me a will save.

BRYN

Oh turned into a marlock. 15.

ALEX

15?

BRYN

Hamid clearly stays asleep.

ALEX

You're... you see... you stay asleep...

BRYN

Because once he wakes up oblivious at the end of the journey, and go... "that was really easy".

ALEX

For the listeners, not for Hamid... Hamid tips up towards the top, it turns out, the bunks are padded on both the top and the bottom. You sink into the top...

BRYN

I'm in a hammock... and the hammock is just...

ALEX

A full 360.

[laughter]

ALEX

But yeah...

LYDIA

Incredibly gently...

ALEX

You do a full barrel roll and then effectively she just finishes it, hands it to you and goes "honestly it's a lot more robust than you think.

LYDIA

Sasha just keeps her hand on it. This is the best day of my life.

[laughter].

ALEX

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

LYDIA

Hey... hey... you... yep... no... you with the face... yeah... I know I shouldn't be here but... I got in like a wet ferret slipping through the hands of a moisturizer

salesman, you know me... I just needed to let you know about this deal right? You head over to Rustyquill.com and follow the links to the store, or go on redbubble.com and search for us. I've been appraising the stuff and it is good. There's all sorts of stuff in there, you want Brutor's face on a mug, you've got it. You want Hamid's face on the wall. It's there. You want Bertie's face, why? Yeah... well I've got to go now, but you just remember, right... head over to rustyquill.com, follow the links. Tell them I sent you... just umm... tell them I sent you. Just wondered though, are you going to eat all that quiche?

ALEX

And welcome back... so... Sasha you are currently operating the machinery...

LYDIA

Having an amazing time... now that Bertie is standing away from most things, it is actually quite an amazing time...

ALEX

Give me a disabled device check?

LYDIA

Oh, only a 2. But then + 11...

[laughter]

BEN?

Oh I thought there was going to be some danger there...

LYDIA

So 13.

ALEX

So you're getting a little bit disappointed, because it's less intuitive than every dream you ever had. That's about it.

LYDIA

[unclear: 24:47]

[laughter]

ALEX

So what it is, what it is currently is... you can see how it works, but there's a better way of doing this. I mean there objectively is. Like, you shouldn't be controlling velocity in a lever that is so far from the steering wheel you have to let go, let it list a bit, go alter the speed, and then come back to the wheel.

LYDIA

It's almost like it's been retrofitted.

ALEX

Yes, it's [unclear: 25:08] design.

LYDIA

And by people that really enjoyed the look of cogs and levers but not necessarily the function.

[laughter]

ALEX

Something to discuss later I think. Punks that like steam.

BEN?

Yes, I was going to say that but I was worried that I would be told that I would be alienated the audience again but...

ALEX

Yes... yes... yes...

BRYN

Those known hipsters are the worst.

[laughter]

BRYN

If there are any known hipsters...

[laughter]

BRYN

Then frankly, you can take your custom elsewhere....

BEN

You tell um Bryn...

[laughter]

ALEX

The ship finally breaks out from above what turns out to be very low cloud cover, although it is cold. The gnome crew start easing off from all of their various duties, monitoring the equipment. Obviously things are settling down and you level out at exactly above cloud level. So there's the pleasing wake of disturbed cloud behind the vessel as it's travelling.

LYDIA

Such a shame that this beautiful pure moment, has been ruined by the fact that Bertie was quite good at it.

[laughter]

LYDIA

Genuinely [unclear: 26:09] everything that she wanted to be, but Bertie was also...

JAMES

And now we're all up in the clouds up there, and Bertie, I've just remembered from his SyQuest that he's got like a full series of cold weather furs. So he's looking majestic, like in his full snow leopard outfit.

BEN?

I feel like if Brutor was still around, Bertie would go to the prow and hold out his arms...

[laughter]

JAMES

That is completely what he would do.

ALEX

So the gnome crew begin opening crates that are right next to where the masts used to be, and bringing out serviceable furs, they have enough for everyone to fit and they're a bit beaten up, but they're serviceable. The capital looks to Bertie as Bertie begins donning his cold weather gear that is compatible with his armour and so on, and just...

JAMES

And it looks fabulous...

ALEX

It looks amazing. She just...

JAMES

It looks better on me, than it did on the snow leopard...

[laughter]

ALEX

She just turns... to Sir Bertrand and goes... “you must put me in touch with whoever put that together”.

JAMES

You must put me in touch with your haberdasher...

[Laughter]

ALEX

She then slowly takes command back from Sasha...

LYDIA

[unclear: 27:10] everything that Sasha wanted...

JAMES

I really enjoyed this, we're really getting on.

[laughter]

JAMES

What a lovely time I'm having of this new skill that I happen to have just lying around...

LYDIA

Sasha's hands are on the wheel and it just... eventually she kind of like begins to... she does want to grip the wheel, it's almost like it's sort of acidic...

[laughter]

LYDIA

There's some bits from...

BEN

It's probably Zolf's vomit from earlier.

ALEX

The captain yells out over the side of the raised platform, where all of the controls are, and just goes 15 - 15 to me. One of the crew runs over and he... he basically implies he's going to take over from the controls from you, if that's OK.

LYDIA

Yeah... she... sort of her hands sort of spring away and... she just looks a bit urgh...

ALEX

He takes over with practiced ease and adopts an expression that can only really be described as quite bored, like he's done this a million times before, and the captain basically comes to you and goes... "well, Paris ai... wow!

LYDIA

Yeah, it was interesting.

ALEX

Oh, I apologise. Before I forget, she pulls the weapon and holds it to Sasha's head. "Why were you with Wilde? Give me an answer that I believe, and give me an answer that makes sense?".

LYDIA

We were running away from a job and we found him unconscious. And then he said "go this way". He seemed to know what he was doing. We don't really know Paris that well, we are... mercenaries from London. We got told there was an interesting job in Paris. And then all of this stuff has gone down, and we just know that our next job is in Prague, so that's kind of like why. Right.

ALEX

OK, now give me the bluff roll.

LYDIA

OK. Oh... CRITICAL FAIL.

ALEX

Critical fail?

LYDIA

CRITICAL FAIL!

ALEX

If it's any consolation, she got an actual 20 on her sense motive.

LYDIA

Alright, so that was never going to go well. And maybe with that discrepancy, that's even particularly bad.

ALEX

Her eyes go very, very cold. She cocks the weapon [sound effect] and starts applying pressure, where, effectively your only choice is to either step back, like slowly as she applies the pressure, or literally bat her away. Those are your only options.

BEN?

Am I aware of this occurring?

ALEX

Give me a perception check.

BRYN?

Sure. Oh 25.

ALEX

Yes you are.

BRYN?

[Forsafe? unclear: 29:35]to get over my air sickness, like because oh dear...

ALEX

Yeah... give me the [forsafe? unclear: 29:39].

BRYN?

18.

ALEX

Yes, actually. You get yourself together, and you can see the captain gun, effectively, to Sasha's forehead, slowly walking forwards in such a way that Sasha is being slightly edged closer and closer to the edge of the edge of the vessel.

BRYN?

Ow... what's going on here?

JAMES

Bertie draws his sword, and is about to attempt and intimidate check on...

ALEX

The second that she sees you draw the sword, the captain yells out... "One through twelve on deck now full arms".

LYDIA

Alright, alright, alright, he gave us the job, but we don't actually know who he is.

BRYN?

Hang on a minute... what's the problem?

LYDIA

She wants to know, how we know Wilde. She doesn't believe that we actually hate him as much as we do.

JAMES

I definitely do. Let me count the ways for you my captain on which I hate Oscar Wilde...

BRYN?

Here we go... look... look... look... He's Bertie's ex-lover.

ALEX

She stops. Turns to Bertie...

JAMES

I want to cut off his skin...

[laughter]

ALEX

A bunch of heavily armed gnomes break out onto the deck wielding weapons none of you have ever seen before. You couldn't even guess their purpose, and they are armoured as well, in slightly weird armour, but nonetheless.

BRYN?

[unclear: 30:59]

ALEX

The captain is just looking to Bertie, then is canny enough to know that to see the truth she looks to Sasha and just tries to read Sasha's face.

LYDIA

Err... yeah they are. It's disgusting.

[laughter]

LYDIA

But whatever they talk about is gross. Right they're just constantly making pervy remarks, as if they stop being lovers is even worse... It's just filth.

[laughter]

BRYN?

It's all this like sexual tension thing going on.

LYDIA

And so he offers us a job, but it was... there was money, so we did it, but he's awful.

ALEX

She yells to the rest of the crew... "grab the dwarf" ...

BRYN

What?...

ALEX

She then... holding the gun, comes in, close to Sasha and just goes, "why Prague?".

LYDIA

Just... we know there's another job there.

ALEX

She steps down. "The dwarfs in charge right?"

LYDIA

Err... yes technically.

BEN?

Oi... And its Zolf.

ALEX

The captain heads down.

BEN

Yeah...

ALEX

Releases the gun from Sasha, with a flourish, pockets it, pulls out a... what looks to be a cutlas actually and starts heading towards Zolf. She approaches Zolf, and basically gets the cutlas under his chin, and just gestures him to get up from where he's been sprawled, basically on the deck and just standing up.

BEN

As I'm getting up, it's like... if you expect me to fear death, you're going to be sorely disappointed.

ALEX

Give me a perception check.

BEN

Er... that is twenty... err.... five.

ALEX

As she lifts Zolf up, basically at the tip of her cutlas to stand, raising his chin a little bit, her eyes flit to Zolf's ring, and then flit back to his face. She gets a confused expression, grabs his hand, without asking, and then has a look at it.

BEN

Eh... what...

ALEX

Releasees it...

BEN

What is it about people and that ring?

BRYN?

What's your chapter?

ALEX?

What?

ALEX?

What chapter are you from?

BEN?

Err...

ALEX

Sorry, what's your suit?

BEN

Er... I'm not wearing a suit. Thanks Brutor...

[laughter]

BEN

Look - this is a ring I got off my brother, I don't know...

ALEX

What is his name... What was his name?

BEN

Ferin... Ferin Smith.

ALEX

Who's your father?

BEN

Herold?

ALEX

Oh... she takes the cutlas, puts it back. Oh, I'm so sorry here, come on, come on come on, I'm so sorry. It's ok, it's ok. Everyone back to work, it's fine, it's fine. Oh you should have said. Why didn't you say.

BEN

I didn't...

ALEX

Oh no, come on, come on come on, oh where the... where did the halfling go? He's fine. He's got nowhere to go. Dinner at mine. You know the standard pirate ship thing that you have, where you have the upper deck that has the wheel, then beneath it is effectively your captain's cabin, nearly above deck,

that, she starts walking towards it, and obviously with practised ease is clipping and unclipping as she goes. Very, very safely, and heads to the door and just opens it and goes “good”.

BEN

I’m going to kind of like... Zimmer frame...

[laughter]

BEN

Fall over... Come on guys.

LYDIA

Sasha rubs the point in... where was the gun pointed? Because the gnome is short, so it’s not going to be at the forehead?

ALEX

It was... let’s say chest...

LYDIA

Oh OK. It’s less... it would just be entertaining, if it was like rubbed a little... the indented circle... in her forehead...

ALEX

Just say you did, because I said forehead originally... It doesn’t matter. It will work.

BEN?

She had a box...

LYDIA

Maybe she had some steps... yes... Sasha rubs the indented circle on her forehead, slightly grumpy, but, she’s quite used to fortunes flipping around [unclear: 34:22]... so what’s for dinner?..

[laughter].

JAMES

That is a good question.

ALEX

So you all head into her cabin. The door shuts behind you, she has a whispered conversation with a gnome who was in there. The gnome heads out. The cabin itself is... it's not as you'd expect, given how... you know... flashy she's dressing. It's full of stuff... like engineering things mainly. Gears, and big brass telescopes, things like that but at no point... what I mean is there is no opulence there. There's no... there's no bed...

LYDIA

That is exactly what Sasha, if she had all the money in the world, would have in her bedroom. So there's like... shiny mechanical things, in a big shiny mechanical ship, that goes around nicking expensive stuff from exploding cities. There is no understanding of how it could be more awesome.

BEN?

Are there any written bits and pieces knocking around?

ALEX

No, nothing.

BEN

Nothing at all.

ALEX

There is a large circular table, in the middle, which is covered in stuff. She just looks at it and goes, err... pushes a button that's on the desk beside her, and then the whole thing, the middle flips, just scattering bits all over the floor, inverts and then replaces itself into... there is like plates fixed into it.

JAMES

Like magnetised... or?

ALEX

Yeah, yeah... basically. And then there's some cutlery to it as well. So it's now set, ready for food.

BEN?

This is Wallace and Gromit level engineering...

[laughter]

ALEX

It's just scattered stuff everywhere, and she just... she just walks quite casually, just treading on all of what... to Sasha's eyes is incredibly complex equipment, and quite valuable.

LYDIA

It's beginning to get confusing.

ALEX

And then she....

LYDIA

And the emotional turmoil...

ALEX

She just pulls up a chair and goes... "food will be here in a sec... umm... I had to send someone to get your halfling... I figure we should all probably talk together".

BRYN?

Yeah... yeah...

LYDIA

He's good at that...

BRYN?

It's an emotional barrel roll.

[laughter]

BRYN?

A physical one we did earlier.

LYDIA

I'm really confused.

BEN

That's nausea I imagine.

ALEX

Anyway, I will accept...

LYDIA

She's fine, jumping around...

[laughter]

ALEX

I will accelerate time a bit where... Hamid, you are basically gently woken, and led back to the captain's cabin.

BRYN

Fine, I need me spells back. I haven't had eight hours.

ALEX

You're kidding me. It's a bright sun shiny day above the clouds...

BRYN

Oh....

ALEX

So, you are led back into the captain's cabin. Meanwhile, while this has been going on, the captain has just been shooting the breeze, mainly travel. She's just asking... where've you been, what've you been doing, but it's only really travel innocuous stuff. She's not really engaging in anything real.

LYDIA

Yeah, no we crossed the channel by boat. It was eventful.

ALEX

Why I mean there's a Gyropter riding London. Why would you not catch a Gyropter?

LYDIA

I asked that question.

ALEX

Exactly. Anyway.

JAMES

Trains, madam, trains are the answer umm...

BEN

Zolf is distracted. He's looking at the ring.

[laughter]

ALEX

Hamid, you are shown in and food is being dished up, basically, being brought in behind you.

BRYN

I look very sleepy, and not very happy, until the food appears...

[laughter]

BRYN

Which is when I perk up.

ALEX

It's done by a dumb waiter, she just serves herself. It is not particularly like...

JAMES

Don't do yourself down. If you apply yourself...

[laughter]

JAMES

Sorry, carry on.

ALEX

And she sits down and goes... cool, so... umm... what are the Spades doing in Paris?

BEN?

The spades?

ALEX

“OK, I’ve got to ask did you inherit maybe that ring?”

BEN?

Yeah...

ALEX

OK. I mean do you know anything about what it means, why it’s there?

BEN?

My parents were miners.

ALEX

Yeah, OK. Right.

JAMES

They were underage.

BEN?

No, in Somerset, miners... they mined things.

JAMES

What is there to mine in Somerset?

BRYN?

Tin, primarily I think.

JAMES

Oh yes, no, quite right. Yes carry on.

BEN?

Living in this fantasy land, probably mineral-anium

[laughter]

ALEX

Yeah, shame about...

LYDIA

Easily obtainable...

[laughter]

BEN?

An hour and a half away from London...

[laughter]

LYDIA

[Conveniently? unclear: 38:22]

BEN?

A mithril mine in Somerset.

ALEX

She just pipes up and goes... "umm... I was sorry to hear about your brother. I'm sorry about that".

BEN?

Yeah... me too.

ALEX

“So, I hear you’re going to Prague? I mean you should have said you’re Spade. She reaches in and then grabs the bag of gold that Hamid just goes and throws it back. I mean obviously it’s kind of irrelevant. You should have just packed them earlier.

BRYN

Oh thank you. Well I just wanted to make sure everything was on the up and up, do things properly you know. I didn’t want any unpleasantness, that’s all.

BEN

Just... spades? What...

ALEX

You genuinely, genuinely don’t know do you?

BEN

No.

ALEX

“Hearts, clubs, diamonds, spades. You’re... your dad’s from the spades, he gave the ring to your brother, but you know... he unfortunately... I kind of assumed that if you had the ring, you would have been briefed on this”.

BEN

It was just like super keen to mine. He wanted to be a miner, like my dad, and like his dad before him I would have thought.

ALEX

“OK, well. I don’t know how to tell you this then. It’s not really my place. Err... your dad and your brother were kind of with the... Harlequin...

BRYN?

Anyone know what the Harlequins are?

LYDIA

Would Sasha know?

BEN?

Knowledge, history maybe... knowledge nobility.

ALEX

Sasha, give me a wisdom check. So D20 plus whatever your wisdom on fire is.

LYDIA

She's not very wise. Oh she is a bit wise.

ALEX

I would also allow knowledge history...

LYDIA

Err... she doesn't have any knowledge history so just 15.

JAMES

Bertie has a total of 18 for knowledge history.

ALEX

Sasha, you vaguely remember an overheard conversation between **Ray Fyne** and your tutor. So this was way back in the dim and distant. You got in trouble for listening in actually. It was one of the only time that **Ray Fyne** actually got annoyed at you, like properly angry. You never really saw him angry. The only things that you really made out were the word Harlequin, which at the time you didn't even know what it meant.

Rusty Quill Gaming – RQG 61 - Skyships and Harlequins

Bertie, Harlequin might refer to a bunch of things. There certainly was in England, there was a group called the gestors, and the gestors basically set themselves about. They were sort of vaguely libertarian society, like more than 200 years ago at this point. It was kind of a fad. Like a rich person's fad that never really caught, but it... that's the closest tie you can get, but even you know that that is pretty tangential, and that's a pretty big stretch.

It means nothing to Zolf. So your dad was with the Harlequins.

BEN

I don't know what that is?

ALEX

"Really, wow" ...

BEN

Nothing. Just... Zolf Smith and the Smith family... mining away...

ALEX

"You didn't think Smith was a weird name for a dwarf and family".

BEN

I assumed we married into it, or took it on. Because you know immigrants usually like to not to stick out as much.

ALEX

"OK, yeah... well... bombshell time... ha... your dad is with... well was an anti-meritocratic society".

BEN

Right...

ALEX

"I mean" ...

BEN

OK.

ALEX

“A bit awkward, but I mean... anyone who is good with you, she gestures to the rest of the group... is good with me”.

JAMES

Oh yes, Mr Smith and I are firm friends. Yes...

LYDIA

It's alright Zolf, we've all got weird family mysteries...

BEN

I didn't think I did... but... fair enough, that's a weird family mystery.

ALEX

“Yeah, I can understand why your dad didn't tell you. It makes sense”.

BEN

OK.

ALEX

“He quit... sort of. He basically distanced himself from the whole thing. I heard your brother was interested, and your dad didn't tell him no, but your dad didn't want anything to do with it, really”.

BEN

Well that explains a lot.

ALEX

“He did... he was very important, once in the day, but he kind of backed off from it, really”.

BEN

Sure, alright. Well. It’s good to know I guess.

ALEX

“I mean once the whole separatist thing set up, it was kind of dangerous to be linked... so, he thought it best to just kind of cut that cord”.

BEN

Yep.

ALEX

“It’s a shame, he’s a... very, very smart man. I kind of regretted him ending up in mining. He was wasted on that”.

BEN

He was a good miner, I guess.

ALEX

“Amazing tactician, really amazing tactician”.

BEN

Right. OK.

LYDIA

Oh, there you go Zolf, that’s where you get your choices like hiring Bertie and err... arranging us... you know we’ve got tactics...

JAMES

Tactical masterstroke, then. I would recommend that... I would say that was your finest move, Mr Smith. Umm...

LYDIA

We've done lots of tactical stuff.

BRYN

Hamid chokes on one of the things that he's stuffing his face with.

[laughter].

BRYN

And quickly covers it.

JAMES

Glittering the pinnacle of tactical excellence. Not just tactical, because that would imply short term... hmm... The hiring of Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham is a strategic masterstroke, against our enemies... yes...

ALEX

"Well in fairness, I mean that was Ray Fyne's job. He was the big picture guy and then you had umm"...

LYDIA

Err...

ALEX

"Excuse me?"

LYDIA

Nothing... nothing... just began to chock on this...

ALEX

Roll my incredibly high modified sense motive... Pa pow! Give me a bluff check, because you're trying to hide it.

LYDIA

I'm just chocking on this water. Oh 19+6 so 25.

ALEX

You know what, she rolled low enough. It turns out, she's more willing to believe that you're incompetent enough to chock on water, than she is willing to believe that you're lying.

LYDIA

Yeah, just... umm... just chocking on this water. I'm really... I'm not in anyway able to do incredible... like tactical, like slight of hand... umm...

ALEX

Use your words...

LYDIA

No, it's fine... it's fine. Sasha is torn between desperately wanting to hide stuff, and not wanting to seem like an idiot in front of all the people that she has admired the most, which she has never met.

JAMES

A whole chapter in son's Zolf's revised art of war that's just my face.

[laughter]

BEN

Wait, didn't Gusset say that **Ray Fyne** had this...

LYDIA

Yeah... umm... thanks Zolf, yeah... no... umm...

ALEX

“Who’s Gusset? What’s a Gusset. I assume you don’t mean like a gusset... gusset?”

LYDIA

Look...

ALEX

She gets a weird cheeky grin, that’s kind of inappropriate for the situation.

LYDIA

So maybe I knew **Ray Fyne**, it was you know a passing thing, just you know... a few years in...

ALEX

“Sasha... Yeah”?

LYDIA

How does everyone know me?

ALEX

“How’s **[Eladryun? unclear: 44:48]**? Oh, she was a looker”

LYDIA

Err... well... like... we haven’t stayed in touch.

ALEX

“Shame. Did you run into her in Paris at all?”

LYDIA

No, I really... really we haven't stayed in touch.

BEN

Hamid, any relatives that the captain might know... or anything like that, no?

BRYN

I don't think so.

BEN

Actually, that's a point, you haven't introduced yourself.

ALEX

"Oh... err.. Amelia... Everyone calls me M".

BEN

Right, OK. Well nice to meet you Amelia.

LYDIA

My name is just made of body parts.

[laughter]

ALEX

"so" ...

LYDIA

And I found that weird.

ALEX

"So you're heading to Prague. I mean can you give me the truth now. I mean... come on, you're clear and free here".

BEN?

Yeah, we're on a job. We're being sent to Prague to...

JAMES

I am going to go to Prague to go to the university, not simply in the pursuit of knowledge for let us be candid. I have all the knowledge that one could possibly require.

ALEX

"Oh, you do not want to go to the university. Stuck up prigs all of them, all of them".

JAMES

Well there is one particular faculty that I must tend to. I don't know if you saw in the newspapers the tales of my adventures in the search for Hannibal's [unclear: 46:00]...

ALEX

"you're the one with the feather boa aren't you?"

JAMES

I'm the one with... WHAT!

[Laughter]

ALEX

"Oh my god"

[laughter]

ALEX

And I think we'll end the episode there.

I'm never going to let that go... never ever.

JAMES

This is the reason... this is Bertie's arc, is he gets to murder Oscar Wilde.

[laughter]

He has to turn properly evil, and into a leech in order to do it, that's why. That's now the objective. If we can find Brutor, and turn Brutor into a leech as well...

[laughter]

JAMES

An adorable leech dog.

ALEX

And your love would last forever...

JAMES

It would wouldn't it... Yeah...

LYDIA

You could put your hearts in the same jar.

JAMES

Exactly...

BEN?

He wants to leave Oscar Wilde lying in a gutter...

JAMES

No, just lying in a gutter... with his eyes cut out...

ALEX

And on that gross note, I think we'll end there. So thanks for listening and we hope you come in next time and we'll find out what else is happening, as you travel on the way to Prague, finally out of Paris...

EVERYONE

Hurray...

ALEX

Bye guys...

EVERYONE

Bye...

