

RQG – 77 – Hello Kafka!

Content Warnings

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BEN

Hi everyone, Ben here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of patrons. Jennifer Shepherd, Melanie Atherton-Alan, Autumn Jarvis, Jonathan Brian, Pedro Rizaro-Silver, Sarah Johnson. Thank you all. We really appreciate your support. If you'd like to join them go to www.patreon.com/rustyquill and take a look at our rewards.

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 77 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have

JAMES

James Ross

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

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LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

BEN

Ben Meredith

ALEX

And who are you playing?

JAMES

Sir Bertrand Macguffingham

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Sasha Rackett

BEN

Grizzop drik acht Amsterdam

ALEX

And on a scale of 1 to 10 how doomed are you?

LYDIA

We're not that doomed are we Grizzop?

BEN

Mildly.

LYDIA

We're at the top of some stairs which have collapsed with a bunch of zombies crawling out of the sewage waste below.

BEN

Doom in the basement. Moderate to good.

LYDIA

Yeah!

BRYN

I mean I'm a bit disappointed to find the bad guy wasn't in the shadowy curtains drawn box with the creepy hand coming out of it.

BEN

That was a sex hand and you know it!

BRYN

So narratively I'm very disappointed but I wouldn't describe myself as doomed as such.

JAMES

At most I may contain scenes of mild peril. And by contain I mean I've got the situation pretty firmly in hand.

ALEX

And with that in mind as a brief update you are all currently in an opera house. After shenanigans and getting split up etc. there has been a very creepy voice that has been simultaneously speaking into every, single person's ear simultaneously saying...

LYDIA

Simultaneously?

ALEX

Hello Prague. I'm not engaging with that joke. I'm just blasting past it! But as it stands...

LYDIA

I had fun and that's what matters!

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BRYN

The good news is that the rest of the wizarding council are likely alerted.

BEN

Yes?!

ALEX

Is that a mushroom cloud? Yeah we should go look at that!

JAMES

No, not directly! Shield your eyes!

BRYN

If you can see the cloud the other bit has already happened.

ALEX

Yeah a little bit. So as it stands we have Bertie and Hamid out in the corridor by the boxes with Bertie half naked. Top half not bottom.

JAMES

He's wearing an undershirt under his armour just to clarify.

ALEX

Well of course, of course.

BRYN

Normally you'd have some very light padding because it's quite heavy and it isn't comfortable.

ALEX

He's naked in all the meaningful ways by which I mean you're not wearing any flash garb, how are people going to know you're important or special?!

JAMES

I mean he's not emotionally naked. He's still quite buttoned down.

ALEX

Quite a lot hidden away down there! And Hamid having both exposed the Count and then watched as the Count and the Countess ran off, presumably to have a big fight. Meanwhile, down in the basement you're getting suspicious ripples from the water.

BEN

Your suspicious ripple

ALEX

So we will pick up exactly where we left off but with Hamid and Bertie first. You are in the corridor beside the boxes and have just heard the, Hello Prague.

BRYN

I'm going to go to the front of the box and open the curtains and check that everyone in the auditorium has heard the same thing that we've heard.

ALEX

Ok.

JAMES

Bertie's going to gather up his armour and put it back on.

ALEX

Ok. Putting back on your armour takes ages. Ages and ages. Just to let you know

JAMES

Alright.

ALEX

Hamid give me a perception check.

BRYN

17

ALEX

Also, give me a will save.

BRYN

No!

ALEX

Oh damn

JAMES

And yet you're doing it!

BRYN

17

ALEX

So you enter the auditorium into what is clearly an active magical affect. You can feel something try and impress itself upon you but you chase it off.

BRYN

Is it a fear based affect?

ALEX

Yeah

BRYN

19 then! Ha!

ALEX

Yeah you're good. You're good. Hamid, as you come to the balcony you see that the auditorium is awash in a red glow. It appears to be entirely unlit and all of the other lights have now gone out. It's not a very nice looking scene. All of the people are still sat in their chairs, perfectly still and staring at the stage. Upon the stage stands, what you recognise to be, Don Giovanni in the centre of the stage floating about half a foot above it with all of the black cloaking etc. slowly waving outwards in a wind that isn't there.

BRYN

Oh my god it's Voldemort guys!

ALEX

Gripping what's clearly a massive tome and everyone is sat perfectly still and just staring.

BRYN

How much did I bet that it was going to happen on the stage guys? You were like no pooh, pooh basement, pooh, pooh, basement.

ALEX

You have managed to so far go unnoticed Hamid. Meanwhile jumping to the basement, the second that the voice started that little kind of ripple that you saw, the much larger waves are coming closer and you are definitely hearing sort of scarping wet footsteps.

LYDIA

Ah man why did I stock up on fire stuff?! There's always water!

BEN

Well you know...

LYDIA

We'll stand there. What's the heavy thing? I don't have dark vision.

BEN

I do so I'm going to have a look. Can I see anything?

ALEX

You sort of poke your head. Give me a perception check.

BEN

19

ALEX

Ok so the water as it's getting more and more turbulent, first one massive shambling foot, then another massive shambling foot enters your vision and as it moves further you see a mahousive shambling mess. You...give me a knowledge religion.

BEN

Ok. That's an 8.

ALEX

An 8. It's big and it's definitely some kind of zombie. It's probably a big zombie. Like you're not necessarily going out on a huge limb there.

JAMES

Ahhhh! I see what you did there!

ALEX

It's large one...yeah thank you! But beyond that it's also not alone.

BEN

Are there other big 'uns or some small ones?

JAMES

It carries other zombie with it in's heart.

ALEX

There are a few smaller ones surrounding it which are moving closer.

LYDIA

Zombie friends!

ALEX

And then there is a second set of [footsteps sound] and a large zombie-esque creature is also shambling closer.

BEN

Ooh couple of big zombies and a lot of little ones. I'm going to start firing arrows now.

LYDIA

That sounds like a great idea. Power cables, that's what we need while they're all in water! Dammit!

ALEX

So before I jump into initiative order with you guys, jumping back to the box etc. Hamid, what are you doing next?

BRYN

I...I have concocted a plan. I am going to find a way to distract this man whilst I get Bertie down onto the stage behind him. So I'm going back out into the corridor to explain this to Bertie.

ALEX

Do so in character.

BRYN

Bertie...B-Bertie, he's on the stage. It's definitely Kafka. I think there should be a way down here into the wings and you might be able to lower yourself down. I'm going to go into the auditorium and try and distract him. You're going to have to sneak up on him behind him. Maybe you should leave your armour off.

JAMES

Ah stealth, my true forte!

(laughing)

ALEX

Little did you know!

JAMES

Yes! I am a man on many hidden talents. I mean...no, no, hang on no. I mean just because the woman can do it and she's poor as well doesn't mean I can necessarily do it. I'm going to be terrible. Truly awful at sneaking up on people.

BRYN

Ok, I'll sneak up on him. You go and distract him.

JAMES

Give me a minute. Just pop my armour on.

BRYN

Well let me help you.

ALEX

Jump back to initiative order, bearing in mind that the way initiative order works is one round is six seconds and it takes minutes for Bertie to put his armour on so we'll see how this plans out.

BEN

Ah this is definitely not Zolf! I roll a 23.

LYDIA

I got an 18.

ALEX

Oh good grief! Right.

BEN

It doesn't matter we're going first. There's zombies.

ALEX

One sec. On the bright side...

BEN

God you take all the magic out of it!

LYDIA

You take the fun out of it!

ALEX

Look, ok, the fact that I rolled single fingers for every single one is yet more evidence that even if you hadn't have known what was going on, the dice will just let the game play out how it should. It's all good.

LYDIA

The dice know. All hail dice!

ALEX

Right, with that in mind, Grizzop you're up.

BEN

Yeah so I activate my divine bond which, because I'm using a range weapon, means that every time I knock the bow the arrow catches fire with a holy light so it's like the air like a torch. It lasts five minutes and all of my arrows have the flaming quality so they're 6 damage.

ALEX

Excessive.

BEN

Yeah!

ALEX

Very well you have at least two massive targets with three smaller ones but obviously more are still coming in as you're there.

BEN

Brilliant so I'm going for massive target number one.

ALEX

Massive target number one.

BEN

Yeah I am taking rapid shots so I get to do two of those...is it within 30 foot of me?

ALEX

What's your dark vision sight?

BEN

60 foot.

ALEX

I'm going to fast forward time by about a few rounds, yes it is.

BEN

Yeah so I'm going to use rapid shot. So I hit on a...

ALEX

You assume you hit it!

BEN

20.

ALEX

You hit it so much!

(laughing)

BEN

I'm glad we had this talk! Right I'm going to...

ALEX

It's almost like massive things are really easy to hit.

BEN

Yeah so that's 5 fire damage.

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ALEX

5 fire damage. No weapon damage as well?

BEN

No that is...

BRYN

He was totalling.

ALEX

Ah ok.

BEN

5 damage that has flaming components and then my second shot hits on a 17

ALEX

Yes it does.

BEN

5 fire damage.

LYDIA

Are they on fire so I could actually see them? Can you describe how it's lit up?

BRYN

There's enough flame for you to see probably.

ALEX

So as you fire the first arrow it flies forward and there is a brief flash of light. To Sasha's eyes, without the dark vision and so on, it's more like a flash of lightening. Where you get a brief, this is the scene and then it goes away. What you see is at least two more massive things behind the first one and two and more like smaller zombies than you could realistically count at a glance. The first arrow slops, in comic talk, into the first big one. It does create a burst of fire and then does some damage and such but nonetheless it very much just went [sucking noise] into it because it is a bloated horrible mass. The second one lands exactly where the first one did and there's a brief second flash of light as it clearly has come out the rear of the creature and I'm going to throw you a bone, has buried itself into another one which falls backwards [splashing noise] into the water which then starts to douse the flames. There's loads of them. That's what you can see. Sasha, you're up.

LYDIA

Alright, so there's a lot here. Right ok I guess alchemist. Alchemist fire at the one that is...is it still on fire?

ALEX

It is not a flame, it has been hit by fire so you're throwing in the dark.

LYDIA

Am I throwing it in the dark towards a light.

ALEX

You're throwing it in the dark but they're so densely packed that I'm not going to get you to roll any kind of concealment for the simple reason that it's...

BRYN

So basically do you hit the big one or one of the others.

ALEX

It's reminding you of that time you had to literally throw daggers at a barn door.

LYDIA

Ah! Oh dear. Right. But a dead fleshy one!

JAMES

The barndoor did look at her funny.

BRYN

What you need to do is find some sort of barrel of oil to pour into the water.

BEN

Ah absolutely, that would be useful!

ALEX

Welcome to the next episode of Micro Siege!

LYDIA

Right ok, yes throw

ALEX

Give me the attack roll.

LYDIA

19

ALEX

That's a hit and what's more if you were aiming for the same one as Grizzop, you've managed to hit it.

LYDIA

Hurray! Yes I was.

ALEX

Even in the dark

LYDIA

Yay!

ALEX

It's really big. That helps.

LYDIA

And then I do 3 damage plus 1 splash.

ALEX

Ok the 1 splash hits everything in the room. Broadly speaking the creature looks basically fine. Flames are licking over it but it doesn't really seem to be burning but again it's quite soggy. So that might be what's going on. All of the creatures shamble closer. I'm going to jump back to Hamid and Bertie as you are still putting his armour on.

BRYN

This strap...is that...

JAMES

It goes just in there. You've got to loosen the buckle and then put it in.

BRYN

Ok, ok.

JAMES

Think of a half Windsor, it's sort of like that.

BRYN

Oh! Of course!

ALEX

And back to the action. Grizzop you're up.

BEN

Yeah it's same again. So I'm just going to speed this up. Right that is a hit on a 21 and a hit on a 15.

ALEX

Yeah, unless you are getting a single figure as your finished modified attack, you're going to be hitting.

BEN

Sure. And I deal a total of 15, 18, 20 damage.

ALEX

20! There we go! Now we're cooking. Now we're cooking. The creature, flames are definitely starting to catch upon it, gives a sort of [roaring noise] and starts trying to run closer however by virtue of it just being this massive mess, it just actually is more of less keeping the speed, it's just looking more agitated.

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BRYN

It's already wading so it can't really move faster.

ALEX

Yeah it's at its max speed already. Sasha.

BEN

There might be a lot of them but it looks like they're slow.

LYDIA

Alright I'm going to go find some oil. Something that will light them up like a...

BEN

Yeah alright, I'll hold them off.

ALEX

So what are you doing?

LYDIA

Heading to try and find something flammable.

ALEX

Ok give me a search check.

LYDIA

What do I add to that?

BRYN

Perception

LYDIA

Oh so 14.

ALEX

That was 3.5 Alex speaking. 14. Eventually you do manage to find a few more things that are flammable. You find a little cannister of gas for the lights and another similar item but you're going to be honest, you might be able to retrofit them into making a slightly more powerful alchemist fire but you haven't found anything with enough scale to really have an effect.

LYDIA

Well I assume that that took my turn?

ALEX

Absolutely. In fact that's going to have taken more than a bit. I'm just going to have to skip time ahead here. Jumping back to Hamid and Bertie, you have finished putting Bertie's armour back on. With a clink, the helmet goes on.

JAMES

Clunk, click, there we are. And that clip there.

ALEX

Rabbit around the houses, back down the street.

BRYN

I'm going to go through this door. I think it leads into the upper level of the wings. You get into the auditorium and stop him from doing his ritual.

JAMES

And provide a distraction?

BRYN

Yeah

JAMES

Yes, very well. Sir Bertrand Macguffingham off into the breach and by breach he means theatre. Bertie draws his sword and moves into the box.

ALEX

Into the box.

BRYN

Ok so I'm going to go to...I'm basing this on the theatres I've been in but there should be basically a locked door that leads onto the side of the stage. Now I can't open a locked door but I do have an infinitely castable acid splash. And I'm just going to point at the lock and keep casting.

ALEX

Splash! Splash! Splash!

BEN

If it's anything like the other theatre doors here, it just won't be locked!

BRYN

That's a point!

ALEX

But that wasn't Hamid's idea was it. That was Ben's! Splash! Splash! Splash!
Ok, Bertie you step into the box. You see a similar scene to what Hamid saw.
Also give me a will save.

JAMES

Bertie's modifier on this is 0. 8.

ALEX

BEN

+1 versus fear

JAMES

Oh +1 versus fear if it's fear. 9!

ALEX

9! Goodness me. I mean you've failed less badly.

JAMES

Let's not pretend that that was a question of skill. Carry on.

ALEX

So as you step in towards the auditorium and you see the scene before you. You still go unnoticed by, presumably, Kafka upon the stage however as you step in you feel a creeping dread sort of come over you. The closest familiarity you have with this is, you remember that dread you were having of all of the fallen houses.

JAMES

[shuddering noise]

ALEX

Well all of those fallen houses were Macguffinghams' and all of them fell because of your specifically and your dad is still around to be really annoyed about it.

JAMES

Father!

ALEX

So effectively how this is manifesting as, for now at least you are feeling frozen in place by fear and it's a new one for you, I don't think it's every actually come up in this campaign before. So it is a new experience for Bertie, it's just a you have gone to pieces. Like it's all you can do not to drop your sword currently and give me a perception check.

JAMES

A total of 2!

(laughing)

ALEX

You close your eyes in fear!

JAMES

Ironically I can see more!

ALEX

Ok I'm going to jump time ahead a bit. Sasha, you return with what you did manage to find to the doorway. Meanwhile in this time, unless you say otherwise, Grizzop has been slowing them down with arrows. Nonetheless eventually you did manage to topple the first one. You had enough time, they were moving so slowly through the water but there's at least another two of the big giant guys and loads of the smaller ones. The first big giant one has reached the...where the stairway used to be and is clawing up. It can't climb at all. The second one has also just reached it and is proceeding to climb and is doing better than the first one...

BRYN

It's climbing up the first one!

ALEX

It has a nice big mound to get a leg up and the smaller ones are all starting to swarm over the bigger ones. There is no coordination here, there's no plan. They're just War of Attrition-ing it. Sasha you rock up and are just seeing...like it's still dark unless you're carrying your light.

BEN

What have you got?

LYDIA

Er just this...weirdly they don't keep that many barrels of like enormous flammable oils here.

BEN

Alright have you got anything?

LYDIA

Just a couple of cannisters.

BEN

Throw 'em, throw 'em. I'll shoot them.

LYDIA

Throws one of the cannisters of gas and then I want to...it's basically dropping alchemist fire on them rather than throwing if they're coming right up beneath us.

ALEX

You're going to have to do an attack roll in order to see if you flob it but anything short of that you're fine. Yeah you're good. You're good.

LYDIA

Ok and then...

ALEX

To clarify she rolled an 11. It wasn't a 1, 2 or maybe a 3.

BRYN

Do the jaws thing, throw it in its mouth and then shoot it.

BEN

That was my idea!

ALEX

You do however have to an excellent one liner or you will be taking a penalty.
So be aware.

BEN

Ok I'll start thinking!

LYDIA

It better be good for this flame war! Light them up with dazzling wit!

BEN

Argh it's getting hotter than hell!

ALEX

Stop shutting down options.

LYDIA

I'm just gassing around!

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ALEX

Throw your dice for damage.

LYDIA

4 + 1 splash

ALEX

4 + 1 splash. Ok.

LYDIA

Now I only have 3 of those things.

ALEX

Okey doke. Grizzop you're up.

BEN

Sure, ok. Yes I'm going to fire an arrow and say, I've got to go but it's been a gas! There you go!

JAMES & BRYN

[cheering]

LYDIA

We don't need to go though.

ALEX

I mean it's not good enough for a bonus.

LYDIA

Sorry Grizzop could you just explain...I'm not always very quick on the uptake with these things.

BEN

Can't talk firing arrows! Ooh one of them was a critical failure. The other one was however a 23.

ALEX

A 23. So, the first arrow you fire, you line up the shot. It's a perfect dead shot. You say your line, you fire. At that exact moment one of the smaller zombie's heads comes straight into your field of view having finally clambered up the rest, takes it right between the eyes and falls backwards. You draw the second one, fire, that one does hit. It explodes dealing your normal damage, plus because, why not, it was lodged in its mushy, mushy head a further 2 D6 damage.

BEN

Cool. So that is 10, 12, 14.

ALEX

14. So what I'm looking at there with those dice is two are good, two are bad and you rolled 2 damage...2 dice for your weapon damage and so on right. So

your weapon damage, fantastic. It buries straight into the head. Gives a big roar. The liquid that you hit, bang, hits and proceeds to gush out and it doesn't actually really catch. The bonus damage is from your shot being really good. It turns out that this oil was seriously old, rotten, dusty and no good for anything.

LYDIA

Sorry!

BEN

I never was a chemist. No worries.

ALEX

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

And welcome back, so with that in mind Hamid. Splash, splash, splash. The door finally swings open.

BRYN

Ok I sneak into the wings, I look out into the auditorium and see that Bertie is doing nothing.

ALEX

Before you get to the wings you see that everyone else is frozen in place. All of the performers are frozen in place, all of the stagehands and you can see, give me a perception check.

BRYN

13

ALEX

13. Everyone within eyesight is frozen in place. It appears that all of them are clearly under the effect of something that you are not currently and the person...presumably Kafka. It's Kafka. It is Kafka, let's just skip the...

LYDIA

Ah spoilers! Ah Alex, there's so many options!

ALEX

So Kafka...

LYDIA

It could've been Shakespeare, it could've been Don Giovanni...

ALEX

...has his eyes shut, has his hands on the page...

LYDIA

...could've been Gragg in disguise!

ALEX

There's a lot of power sloshing around in here.

BRYN

I am going to quietly take out my crossbow, load it and aim very carefully, not aiming for Kafka, I'm aiming for the book.

ALEX

Ok give me a stealth check.

BRYN

15. No 17.

ALEX

You crawl into the auditorium...no you sneak out into the wings...the upper level of the wings. You get your crossbow out, you get the bolt and you go [loading sound] jams. Come on, come on. Jams again.

BRYN

Hamid swears, very quietly!

ALEX

It then misfires. It doesn't fire the bolt but there's a really loud [twanging sound] as it resets itself only cocked and so on.

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BRYN

Hamid swears slightly more loudly.

ALEX

Kafka stops. Turns looking directly at you with what are clearly glowing eyes, and everyone hears this, oh Hello.

BRYN

Hi!

ALEX

Cut to Bertie. Give me a will save.

JAMES

Fear...oh if it's versus fear then 16.

ALEX

16. You manage to shake off the affect however it's possibly the most effort that Bertie's ever done. There was something wrong in me and about me that I needed to change because my reaction wasn't right...this hasn't happened before!

JAMES

That doesn't seem right!

ALEX

Yeah basically you've managed to...

LYDIA

It was just a bit of gas! Oh I feel all unsettled inside. Was it those prawns?

JAMES

Blood foreign food!

(laughing)

He's got emotional growth! It's off soup. Monkey soup. Not feelings.

ALEX

Nonetheless you have managed to free yourself from it. You are very much aware that the affect that was having an affect on you is still sloshing around but you've risen above it and recognised it as something that's imposing upon you because you don't do fear. You are now stood upon the balcony overseeing and you are still unnoticed. Like wow, ok, yeah you're good. You're good.

JAMES

Bertie sees that he is unnoticed presumably.

ALEX

You are both aware that you are unnoticed and aware that he is presumably staring directly at where Hamid is. He is completely oblivious to you.

LYDIA

If anything that's offensive.

ALEX

In fact, you know what's happened. You know Hamid's original plan? It's going flawlessly!

(laughing)

JAMES

Good thinking Hamid! What a stroke of genius!

ALEX

He's completely distracted.

JAMES

Bertie takes a step off the edge of the balcony.

ALEX

Ok wicked.

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BRYN

And activates his boots of flame!

JAMES

Yes.

LYDIA

Yay!

ALEX

Ok give me an acrobatics roll. You can't fail this, this is just determine how stylish you look.

JAMES

Ok

BRYN

There's an actual skill called fly.

ALEX

Oh this is for the launch. We are not at the flight yet!

JAMES

3.

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(laughing)

If it's an acrobatic thing that's -7 in armour so -4.

ALEX

So you are still flying. You haven't flunked or anything but what's happened is you've basically...

LYDIA

You topple over!

ALEX

You've stepped off and gone ha, ha ooh ok and there's a lot of give in that and you kind of drop about 5/10 feet before righting. You're like left a bit...

JAMES

Bertie's foot clips a safety rail and ends up doing a slow somersault all the way down.

BRYN

It's like the very first time Iron Man launches.

ALEX

Yeah that's exactly what we're going for but you do manage to right yourself and you're ready to go. So back to Sasha and Grizzop. You are still in initiative

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order. I'm getting a mushy with time here just to keep things going. So Grizzop.

BEN

So where are these zombies? Are they still like right up in our...

ALEX

They are now...the two large ones are basically on top of one another at this point and all the small ones are scrambling up to the point where they are now starting to just come through the doorway. However you could just close your eyes and fire because it is a wall full of zombie.

BEN

Sure but instead of that I am going to mutter a pray to Artemis and channel positive energy.

ALEX

That would also probably work.

BEN

Two of my little hand uses. I'm channelling 2 D6 positive energy at people. They have a save, it's 16.

ALEX

Ok.

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BEN

So everyone is taking 9 positive energy.

ALEX

Ok one sec.

BEN

I heal a hit point!

LYDIA

Yay, I get healed! I was on 21

ALEX

Give me a second Sasha!

LYDIA

Oh!

ALEX

And what was the DC to resist it?

BEN

16

LYDIA

I'm not that undead. Only a little bit. Minorly dead. Moderate corpse.

ALEX

How much damage did you do?

BEN

9

ALEX

So I've got good news, bad news and worse news.

BEN

Yay?!

ALEX

The good news is...

BEN

No I want the worse news first.

ALEX

Ah ok, the worse news is Sasha...

LYDIA

Wait...no...hey...

ALEX

Give me the save.

LYDIA

No! I'm not that dead! I'm only very mildly dead. I'm like 6 dead. That's 6...

BRYN

It's a will save.

LYDIA

A will save. So 10.

ALEX

10. You feel currently nauseated. You have been channelled positive energy before and it didn't hurt. It hasn't healed you and you feel a bit sickened.

BRYN

Is she taking the condition sickened?

ALEX

You are currently taking the condition nauseated.

LYDIA

Oh!

BRYN

Is that -2 on everything?

ALEX

Nauseated means that she can only do one action.

BRYN

Oh that one!

ALEX

Until the nausea passes basically. The bad news is both of the big guys resisted. The ok news is that all of the smaller ones that were in range of it just

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got basically destroyed by it and fell down into the water. So you've managed to buy yourself a good chunk of time because the big ones are just...the height is too much and they can't climb.

BEN

Range of 30 foot.

ALEX

Yeah so like it washed over the big guys, they managed to shrug it off basically but all of the smaller ones have been obliterated that were within range of it but there are still more coming.

BRYN

Partial victory!

ALEX

That's the best kind.

LYDIA

That was great and I feel great too! Ha, ha! Totally healed me!

ALEX

Sasha, you're up. You can only do one action so you can either move or attack but you can't do...

LYDIA

Drop a bomb on their heads.

ALEX

Do you have any bombs left?

LYDIA

Well an alchemist bomb. I've got three left.

ALEX

Alchemist fire.

LYDIA

Alchemist fire, sorry. That is $13 + 7$. 20.

ALEX

It's a hit. It's a grand hit. It shatters right on its head.

LYDIA

Yay! And that does $2 + 1$ splash damage.

ALEX

There is a distinct [roaring noise] and splatters of it light up. You do now manage to catch its head sort of aflame, enough for you to actually see the scene. Again so it's not just darkness down there.

LYDIA

Urgh. That looks awful! But I feel fine about it! Really fine!

(laughing)

ALEX

Jumping back to Hamid. Give me a will save.

BRYN

Versus fear?

ALEX

Yes

BRYN

18

ALEX

So all of that energy that's been sloshing around is suddenly redirected to you Hamid and it is just coming straight for you. You are aware that potentially something that's citywide is now being aimed at you and you manage to shrug it off. Most likely it's maybe not ready or something. Give me a knowledge arcana.

BRYN

Ooh not very much. 18.

ALEX

18. You know what I said but...

BRYN

My modifier's better than I thought! Right, just...

ALEX

You know what I said but no more. You're no expert in this but you're very aware that he's messing around with a ritual on the fly in order to bare down on you but you do manage to shrug it off. He's visibly surprised by this. Bertie give me a perception check.

JAMES

Why do I even bother?!

(laughing)

6.

ALEX

6. All the people in the auditorium stir just a little bit. Presumably they're really impressed with you. Hamid, you're still up however I am now going to

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get you to roll initiative as well as Bertie and we're all in initiative order at that point.

BRYN

So we're considered synced up.

ALEX

Yes.

JAMES

Oh!

BRYN

Natural 20

JAMES

Both of us have natural 20s.

BRYN

On the most useless one ever!

JAMES

Yeah!

ALEX

Ok right, so Bertie's at 20 and Hamid's at 20.

BRYN

No we both have bonuses on this. You get a bonus of 2 and I have a bonus of 3. So 23 and 22.

ALEX

So Hamid goes first, goodness me. However I'm fairly certain that no matter how many modifiers he's got, Kafka ain't going to be...that's an 8. It wasn't great. He's not a quick character at the best of times.

BRYN

Kafka and the Zombies! [singing]

ALEX

You are in initiative order however he is going to say something to you so basically keep your responses short. It's just...and who are you? Is all he says. It is now your turn Hamid.

BRYN

I grab a rope.

ALEX

Yes!

BRYN

That's attached to a sandbag and step off the ledge making an acrobatics roll to land appropriately?

ALEX

Give me an acrobatics roll and a perform roll. These are two separate things.

BRYN

I don't have a perform roll!

ALEX

Give me an acrobatics roll.

BRYN

15.

ALEX

You succeed in the manoeuvre...

LYDIA

Your charisma bonus

BRYN

22 on the perform roll.

ALEX

So you succeed in the manoeuvre and you can give me a witty one liner as you land that everyone in the room will hear, because the acoustics are amazing!

BRYN

I'm the person that's here to stop you!

(laughing)

It's not witty but go with it!

ALEX

Yeah it's all good. It's all good.

LYDIA

Sorry about dropping in on you like this!

BEN

Maybe you should just be our writer!

ALEX

But not Sasha! Lydia, yes. Sasha, no. Bertie, you're up.

JAMES

Ok so where is Bertie exactly in relation to the stage at this point?

ALEX

You are hovering in front of the balcony of which you've stepped off.

LYDIA

Wobbling like a drunk astronaut.

ALEX

You are on...if you were sat in the audience, the left hand side of boxes and you are maybe 60 feet in a sort of straight line which obviously there's elevation and stuff between you and Kafka. He has still not noticed you and you are hovering over an auditorium of people who are all just fixed in their seats. They shuffled a little bit but they're basically still, still.

JAMES

Ok so how far off the ground is Bertie at this point?

ALEX

A good like 50 feet.

JAMES

It's at this point about 10 feet down from the box that he's just stepped out of that Bertie remembers, in this stealthy manoeuvre, that he has an invisibility potion.

ALEX

Yes! Yes he does. It's been a while.

JAMES

So Bertie is going to, as he gently wafts downwards go oh! Come to a very stealthy realisation about his inventory and as he gently does a somersault he's going to drink the invisibility potion.

ALEX

That's fine. You have taken the invisibility potion and I'm presuming you're approaching Kafka.

LYDIA

That's what I want fan art of!

(laughing)

ALEX

What an invisible Bertie here.

LYDIA

Bertie doing an upside down somersault with his legs everywhere trying to drink from the bottle while his little wings are going crazy as the invisibility begins to descend.

JAMES

It's an in-flight invisibility potion so it's a very small bottle.

(laughing)

Outrageously expensive!

ALEX

So we're going to see whether the tiny sound of [wing noises] from the wings. He does not roll anywhere near high enough. You are, for the first time in your life, silent death. You are stealthy.

JAMES

I am the night! Silent night

(laughing)

ALEX

I will give another roll if you're not careful! Right, so Kafka, facing Hamid obviously completely oblivious to the silent death winging its way on coral wings. His face starts to shift a bit. He looks angry and then he looks

apoplectic and then the frown is getting like down towards where his nose is. The grin on his face is getting...there's a weird warping of features. He mutters something to himself very, very quietly that gets louder and louder and louder until eventually he just chucks an arm out towards Hamid. Hamid, give me a will save.

BRYN

14.

ALEX

14.

BRYN

Wait, versus fear?

ALEX

No. So where before you thought you'd felt him rearrange that ritual to hit you, now you actually feel it hit you and it basically feels like for a moment you're like I can...oh god, and it just obliterates your mind effectively. So I'll give you a quick knowledge arcana as it's happening to see if you can recognise what it is.

BRYN

29.

ALEX

So it appears that what Kafka has done is cast an incredibly brutal feeble mind upon you. It has reduced your intelligence and charisma to 1 instantly.

BRYN

Ah barely alive.

ALEX

You can only be healed magically. Magic healing will fix it up but as it stands your charisma and your intelligence has just been obliterated so what happens is effectively he turns to you, there's a moment of I think I...oh no and he...you just get completely overwhelmed. It effectively just crushes your mind.

LYDIA

Wrong time to enter Ru Paul's Drag Race.

ALEX

You don't collapse or anything but you are just stood there swaying slightly and yeah, at 1, given that 10 is your average person, you're in a bad way.

BRYN

Hamid drops to all fours.

ALEX

Grizzop you're up.

BEN

Right I think it's firing an arrow into each of this giant zombie's eyes that's nice and near me.

ALEX

Ok I will let you, I'm playing loose and fast here. I'll let you do a called shot to hit the eyes but it will more difficult to do so.

BEN

I will take minuses. My attack bonus is currently +10 so lay it on me.

ALEX

Your attack bonus is +10 for the big guy you can see in the dark.

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Roll.

BEN

Right...

ALEX

You hit both eyes! For future reference the only way you could miss them with that kind of a modifier given that you can see is by rolling a 1.

BEN

Sweet. I love it. So the left eye takes 11 points of fire damage. The right eye takes 11 points of fire damage!

ALEX

So...

BRYN

I mean he's blind but I think it might also be dead!

LYDIA

His brain is literally on fire.

BRYN

It takes the condition blinded. It takes the condition dead. 1 is more useful.

ALEX

It is not dead. However...

BRYN

Yay!

BEN

What do you mean yay!

BRYN

Well now it did something!

LYDIA

It's got sticks coming out of his skull!

ALEX

They have gone through, the feathered...what's it called?

JAMES

Fletching.

ALEX

Yes. The feathered fletching of the arrows are now poking out from the eye sockets with the bolts...not the bolts, the heads of the arrows now poking out the back of its head.

LYDIA

Ooh an extra weapon!

ALEX

And it stumbles...it stumbles backwards, it's the one that's higher up. It falls backwards crushing a bunch of the smaller ones beneath it. And it's trying to stand and it's going [groaning noise] and it's just thrashing around. It was a very effective manoeuvre. Sasha you're up.

LYDIA

Ok. I feel great by the way. That was really great healing.

BEN

Oh you're welcome.

LYDIA

I'm going to throw an alchemist fire down there at I suppose, the one that is standing up still. I mean of course I can barely see.

ALEX

After this you will not be nauseated. This is your last round nauseated.

LYDIA

I rolled a 7 so 15.

ALEX

Yeah you're fine.

LYDIA

I only do 1. 6 + 1 splash.

BEN

That is going to be stacking up on those mini zombies as well.

LYDIA

One hopes!

ALEX

The zombies momentarily in disarray because basically a huge zombie has managed to fall and then mess around with them. They're all basically just kind of clawing until the big guy that you made blind can get itself back into the action because the distance the doorway and even the top of the giant zombie is far too large still.

LYDIA

It made falling through the stairs maybe was the best tactical move that we've made so far!

BEN

This is really good. This could've gone a lot worse!

ALEX

Hamid, you're up. Now bear in mind of course that your intelligence and charisma are at 1 so your personality's kind of gone by the wayside a bit.

BRYN

But perception wise and physically Hamid has not actually changed that much.

ALEX

Physically...in every other way, Hamid is absolutely fine. He's not been physically damaged. He's not hurt. He's not fallen off anything.

BRYN

Hamid's hands change into claws. The bracelets that he always wears slips off and his clothing essentially disintegrates leaving not a pair of purple shorts behind but some quite stylish underwear.

ALEX

Are they purple? Do they stretch?

BRYN

No. They're tasteful green.

ALEX

Of course.

BRYN

He looks horrifying.

LYDIA

This is where we're actually going to get the...

BRYN

As his claws has changed you can see the claw like pattern just start to spread across his body just very minorly and a couple of old scars that he's had have sort of shown up as ridges and his feet have started to change as well. And his shoes have fallen off as well. It's actually quite unusual for a halfling to wear shoes but there's no time to address that.

JAMES

You're going to the theatre. No shirt, no shoes, no service.

BRYN

And he scrabbles on all fours and leaps, mouth first at the book in Kafka's hand.

ALEX

Yeah alright.

BRYN

I'm going to be making a disarm check. So it's a combat manoeuvre.

LYDIA

These are all the things I don't know exist.

(laughing)

BRYN

Well technically a blind is also a combat manoeuvre.

ALEX

You could always say I want to do this thing and then I'll translate.

LYDIA

It's not how it works!

BRYN

17

ALEX

17.

BRYN

Combat manoeuvre defences are a flat thing.

LYDIA

A little rabid baby dragon here.

BRYN

And it shouldn't be very high because he's not really a combat character.

ALEX

Good point. So that was literally as close as it could possibly be because this is quite a brutal boss and I'm tired of you all defeating them instantly so I've brought the noise a bit.

LYDIA

Sorry.

ALEX

Yeah this creature that used to be Hamid ploughs into the momentarily...

BRYN

So literally claws and teeth first. It somehow manages to drag the book out of Kafka's hands.

ALEX

It momentarily...like in the surprise of Kafka having gone, I'm pretty certain I've just done ego death on you and then you turn into something and launch at...yeah he's surprised. You manage to basically grab and knock the book

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completely out of his hands however you also land a bit awkwardly but you manage to scabble back to your feet.

LYDIA

Poor little rabid, baby dragon.

ALEX

Bertie give me a perception check.

JAMES

Bertie...2.

ALEX

A massive dog has attacked Kafka. At just the right moment.

(laughing)

JAMES

Brutor!

(laughing)

ALEX

Bertie, you're up.

BRYN

Hamid is turning to flee. He doesn't have anything else to do but it's clearly that he's now...he's not picking up the book. He doesn't have enough intelligence to know that. He doesn't know anything except that he now want to run away.

ALEX

We'll say that that was the last vestiges of any kind of wisdom.

BRYN

It's because that's how he was pointed basically and his perception was still focused on the book.

ALEX

So there's now a rampaging Hamid to deal with. We'll get to that. Ok, Bertie. Some huge creature, you're pretty certain it's a dog has leapt and managed to knock a big old book from that guy's hand. You are now...

LYDIA

Brutor was always so intelligent!

JAMES

I was about to say that given that Bertie ended up with a 2 there can Bertie persist with the idea that he is...

ALEX

I will allow it. It's fine.

JAMES

Cool.

ALEX

Give me...if you want, you can now get to Kafka in this turn but you will need to make another stealth check in order to do so and another fly check.

JAMES

He's got an invisibility potion...

ALEX

You get a plus a massive amount. It's basically...

BRYN

20 while moving.

JAMES

Ok so can Bertie get to a position where he can attack Kafka.

ALEX

This turn, yes. Yes absolutely but you would need to give me both of those rolls or you could just forget the stealth and just go straight for a charge.

JAMES

I mean it's the flying but that's going to be the challenge rather than the...

ALEX

Yes it is and there's no way around that.

JAMES

Yeah!

ALEX

Do you have a potion of fly better? You don't. It's not a thing.

JAMES

I've got two bottles of cheap brandy.

(laughing)

So I've got a potion of think you can fly better.

ALEX

There's still time! There's still time.

JAMES

Ok...

LYDIA

That would've been incredibly useful for these frigging fire zombies.

JAMES

Bertie's also got a tanglefoot bag which would be quite handy.

LYDIA

I mean I was nauseated. I can't be expected to make decisions in that.

ALEX

Anyway, so what are you doing Bertie?

JAMES

Bertie's going to go for a flying stealth attack.

ALEX

Flying stealth attack.

JAMES

Going to swoop majestically like Christmas on the breeze.

BRYN

This is exactly what you want your tank to be doing in a standard role playing part. If anyone is looking for advice, yeah, absolutely do this!

ALEX

So give me the stealth check first.

JAMES

Stealth check. Oh that is...

(laughing)

Critical fail!

LYDIA

On the one that you had a 20 bonus! You had a bonus of 20!

ALEX

All you had to do was not roll...ok give me another roll for the flight.

JAMES

Oh that's 17. That is -7 because he's flying in armour. 10

BRYN

10 is enough

ALEX

I've got good news for you.

BRYN

You landed where you wanted.

ALEX

So I'm going to leave this up to you. You manage to get to Kafka and get the attack off however at the very last second he knows that you're there. What gives you away?

JAMES

Yeah Bertie does it by going, hello young man.

(laughing)

ALEX

He couldn't resist could he! Couldn't resist. In fairness...

JAMES

No. No used to being stealthy! It's just too much pressure. I just had to say something! Otherwise how would he know that I'm about to sneakily stab him in the spine.

ALEX

Give me the attack roll. You lose the bonuses you would've got for being unseen but you still are getting an attack in.

JAMES

That is plus...total of 22.

ALEX

Yeah just roll the damage. I'm not going to calculate that. Just roll the damage. This is a boss based entirely on you not getting near enough to do anything.

JAMES

That is 11 damage.

ALEX

Ooh! So as you plough forward, announce yourself foolishly and attack the invisibility immediately dissipates as you attack.

JAMES

Here I am!

ALEX

But you do get a really excellent slash across Kafka's chest. It throws him backwards and knocks him down to his knees. He turns that disfigured face upon you and just goes, oh you're next. And I'm going to end the episode there.

JAMES

Is the mechanically...mechanically is he still next to...

ALEX

Yeah.

LYDIA

We're all fine down here in the basement. We feel great. Totally really healthy.

(laughing)

ALEX

I'm sure everything's fine. I'm sure everything's going to go fine.

LYDIA

It's cool we've got a new mascot!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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