

## RQG – 85 – Proper Hospitality 2.0

### Content Warnings

- X
- X

### BEN

Hi everyone, Ben here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of patrons. Emma Bogan, John, Victoria Wetherington, Jack Merryman, Alexandra Sipe, Nadia Heller, Charlotte, Stephen Gilbert, Internought, Maz Dickson. Thank you all. We really appreciate your support. If you'd like to join them go to [www.patreon.com/rustyquill](http://www.patreon.com/rustyquill) and take a look at our rewards.

### [Show Theme - Intro]

### ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 85 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today for another episode, I have

### BEN

Ben Meredith

### BRYN

Bryn Monroe

**LYDIA**

Lydia Nicholas

**ALEX**

And who are you playing?

**BEN**

Grizzop drik acht Amsterdam

**BRYN**

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

**LYDIA**

Sasha Rackett.

**ALEX**

And how are you feeling about sand? Are we pro sand? Do we like sand?

**BEN**

It gets in all my crevices! I didn't even know I had that orifice.

**ALEX**

So the party may be in the middle of a sandstorm with no idea of exactly where they are, how they are or why they are.

**BRYN**

I wish I could remember how the song Sandstorm by Darude went because I would totally be humming it right now.

**BEN**

[humming Sandstrom]

**ALEX**

Are we in the chorus? So...

**BEN**

After that rousing rendition.

**ALEX**

The party has apparently been teleported at least away from the university or there's a sandstorm in Einstein's office. Who knows? With that in mind I'm going to pick up where we left off.

**BRYN**

Stay together!

**BEN**

Cairo's horrible.

**(laughing)**

**BRYN**

Just don't get separated. Hold on to each other.

**BEN**

Alright.

**ALEX**

Everyone give me a perception check.

**BEN**

18

**ALEX**

18 for Grizzop.

**BRYN**

19

**ALEX**

19

**LYDIA**

19

**ALEX**

And 19.

**BEN**

Alright!

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

So you all are able to see one another and grab one another.

**BEN**

Ok I don't think we're in the centre.

**BRYN**

Probably not. I guess we just pick a direction.

**BEN**

Has anybody got a compass?

**LYDIA**

Which way does wind blow?

**(laughing)**

I don't know. I grew up underground.

**BEN**

Did you?

**LYDIA**

Yeah.

**BEN**

Oh right. Well sort of so did I actually.

**LYDIA**

Oh right. Does wind blow from the north or something? Can anyone see a star?

**BRYN**

That's not how wind works.

**BEN**

Look for a building.

**ALEX**

Everyone give me a con check.

**LYDIA**

Oh dear.

**ALEX**

Shocker the paladin does well at a con.

**BRYN**

I think you mean a fortitude save

**ALEX**

I do mean a fort save. I've been playing...

**BEN**

Yeah that was a 29 with a natural 20.

**ALEX**

29.

**BRYN**

11

**LYDIA**

8

**ALEX**

8. So Grizzop...

**BEN**

Yeah

**ALEX**

You're basically fine.

**BEN**

Great.

**ALEX**

Everyone else, you're starting to find it hard to breathe. You haven't got any prep, you haven't put anything across your mouth yet and already you're clogging and...

**BEN**

So the way I'm going to skin that fortune thing is I read a book once where they wrapped cloth around their nose and mouth so I'll do that and just go wrap cloth around your face to help you breathe.

**ALEX**

You both are not able to talk currently. Just [gagging noise].

**BRYN**

I start doing that. I'm going to try to drag the other two to the ground to sit and if the three of us can just sit with our backs to the wind for a little while.

**ALEX**

Ok. Yeah you're able to do so. There's a very clear direction to it however sand begins immediately piling up against your bags. From your perspective though Hamid, if this is Cairo, this is a fluke. This is a fluke sandstorm. Yes you can get a sandstorm, maybe even in the middle but if so, it is an absolutely fluke and your luck must be incredibly bad.

**BRYN**

We need a plan. We're probably not in Cairo. We're probably just nearby. Maybe we should set up some sort of barrier and try and wait out the storm.

**BEN**

Do you recognise any landmarks?

**BRYN**

No!

**ALEX**

Visibility is about half a foot.

**BEN**

We might be standing really close to one.

**LYDIA**

I mean, I guess we're in a desert.

**ALEX**

All of this of course is [mumbling noise]

**BRYN**

You wouldn't get winds like this with the buildings nearby. We've just got to get a barrier in place and wait it out.

**LYDIA**

Well I picked up a cloak.

**BEN**

Yeah unless you want to climb into a bag of holding, I don't think we can.

**LYDIA**

I'm going to put a cloak up.

**ALEX**

Ok. It immediately starts getting heavy as the sand starts piling up on it.

**LYDIA**

Ah this is awful. I hate Cairo!

**BRYN**

I've still got a tent somewhere. We can't set up the whole thing but if we just set it up as a windbreak.

**BEN**

Alright do that then. You're from here right?

**BRYN**

So I'm going to dig into my adventuring kit which is inside my bag of holding. Get out the tent and...

**BEN**

I'll help.

**BRYN**

Yeah I mean I'm going to be terrible at this. But just basically set up the tent just stretched between two poles, dig the poles in and try and create a...

**ALEX**

Begin with a survival check for Hamid and Grizzop you can help if you want unless you physically take the stuff away from him and do it properly.

**BEN**

Oh no, I can't do it properly. I'm an urban paladin.

**BRYN**

My survival skill is 0.

**BEN**

Mine is -1.

**BEN**

Cool. So I got a 4.

**ALEX**

You fail to help.

**LYDIA**

Mine would be 2.

**BRYN**

I rolled a 4.

**ALEX**

Nice.

**LYDIA**

I guess I could try.

**ALEX**

Go for a help. Go for a help.

**LYDIA**

Is that...I'm saying 2 because I assume that would be my wisdom.

**ALEX**

Yeah, yeah, you've got it right.

**LYDIA**

But then surely the rest of you have higher...

**ALEX**

Nope! You're the wisest party member.

**BEN**

Paladins are charisma based.

**ALEX**

So are sorcerers.

**BRYN**

I have high intelligence and high charisma.

**LYDIA**

Ah I'm often right but no one listens.

**ALEX**

Yes that's...yes that's mathematically correct.

**LYDIA**

So I got  $3 + 2 = 5$ .

**BRYN**

So we all rolled 5 or less.

**ALEX**

All of you are immediately like, uh, uh grab that...no pass that...right, ok.  
Eventually all three of you...

**BEN**

What does this pole do?

**ALEX**

...are holding one pole and go right, put it in the ground. You raise it up, you jam it down and it immediately snaps in two. Clearly you tried to drive it straight into rock or something similar.

**LYDIA**

And you live here?!

**BRYN**

No! I live in a house like a normal person!

**ALEX**

The tent is starting to get caught sand inside and it's wrapping around you.

**LYDIA**

Can we like ride it like a...

**ALEX**

Do both of you let go?

**BRYN**

No

**LYDIA**

No.

**ALEX**

Ok. Carry on.

**BRYN**

I cast flare.

**ALEX**

Ok.

**BRYN**

It's a new spell I have and what it does is it sends a flare. You can target it at a person which means that it essentially dazzles them or you can just send it into the sky much in the manner of a flare.

**ALEX**

So you send the flare into the sky. After half a foot it disappears from your vision.

**BRYN**

I'm then going to cast dancing lights.

**ALEX**

Ok.

**BRYN**

I can do both and they're just going to start swirling around us in the storm and make...probably not visible but we might get lucky.

**ALEX**

Occasionally you all can't see them. The second that they go more than about half a foot away. The only way that you can even talk is by going forehead to forehead. It's a mess and this sand is just painful. Any inch of you that is not covered is really getting abrasions and stuff.

**BEN**

It is really rubbish!

**BRYN**

It is horrible! There's a reason we don't go in the desert very often.

**BEN**

Well you're the one who lives round here.

**BRYN**

It's not what Cairo looks like!

**BEN**

No but like...if I was in a forest, I know it doesn't look like Amsterdam but it's still close by. It's the same biome.

**(laughing)**

**BRYN**

What's a biome?

**BEN**

It's an environment. You know...Amsterdam is arboreal and quite wet. It's flat lands.

**BRYN**

I don't see how that's helping right now!

**BEN**

You should be helping right now!

**LYDIA**

Are either of you saying anything useful down there?

**BEN**

No!

**BRYN**

I haven't lived in Cairo for nearly ten years!

**BEN**

You've got a memory!

**BRYN**

I was a kid! I lived in a nice, fancy house with proper walls and a warm bed and baths whenever I wanted!

**BEN**

That explains a lot!

**LYDIA**

Yeah that sounds lovely.

**BRYN**

It was!

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

At this point the sand has reached to shoulder height. There is one...from you backing against it. There is one benefit which is that it doesn't seem to be settling around you but that's mostly because the wind is so strong it's like being sandblasted. It's just [shooting noise], the only place it's piling up is where you are all sat and there it's piling up incredibly quickly.

**BEN**

So my breastplate's being polished?

**ALEX**

Yes. Well it'll look dull at first but if you then polish it afterwards it would look lovely.

**LYDIA**

Yeah abrasions.

**ALEX**

Yeah, yeah, really nice. Do we have a plan?

**BRYN**

No!

**LYDIA**

No! We've got no plan!

**BEN**

Die in a sandstorm.

**ALEX**

I guess so! Everyone give me a fort save.

**BEN**

Do I?

**ALEX**

Yes

**BEN**

I've got critical success. Is it worth nothing?

**BRYN**

24.

**LYDIA**

21

**BEN**

28

**ALEX**

Carry on and we'll deal with the next fort save when it comes.

**LYDIA**

I mean my options are basically to stab the sandstorm or maybe throw a thunderstone into it.

**ALEX**

Don't throw into the wind that's my advice.

**BEN**

Hamid, if you don't do something we're going to die.

**BRYN**

There's nothing I can do! I can't magic away the sand!

**BEN**

Why not!

**LYDIA**

It sounds like something magic people could do!

**BRYN**

Let's just start walking. Let's walk away from the wind.

**LYDIA**

I think that's our only option.

**BEN**

Yeah pretty much. Alright we'll go until we...

**BRYN**

Keep our arms linked.

**ALEX**

Ok so you begin walking in the direction of the wind.

**BRYN**

No so the wind is at our backs.

**ALEX**

Yeah so you're walking in the same direction as the wind. Yeah.

**BEN**

Wait hold up. I'll tie us together with some ropes.

**LYDIA**

Good idea!

**ALEX**

So you start walking. It's basically a shuffle because you're...you're almost leaning...having to lean what would feel like 45 degrees backwards.

**BEN**

No we just jump up and it takes us a bit.

**LYDIA**

Unless I can dodge the sand none of my skills are valuable here.

**BEN**

Yeah likewise it doesn't need healing or shooting

**ALEX**

This is your conversation as you shuffle forwards trying not to lose your footing. Occasionally you do.

**BEN**

Bearing in mind that both Hamid and I weigh under 40 pounds.

**ALEX**

Yes, yes. I'm getting there.

**BEN**

Although to be fair my breastplate probably...yeah my breastplate is two thirds of my body weight. Additionally.

**ALEX**

So yeah, as it stands, currently you are all struggling but you are basically managing to keep your footing right up until Sasha, give me a reflex save.

**BRYN**

Reflex?

**ALEX**

Sasha, give me a reflex save.

**LYDIA**

I get to dodge the sand. Hurray! Ah yes, ok 21.

**ALEX**

21. There is a brief moment where both Hamid and Grizzop are bodily lifted off the ground and start dragging you forward and you manage to sort of, grab hold of them and push them back down as the gust finishes.

**LYDIA**

No flying!

**BEN**

Sorry!

**LYDIA**

Actually maybe we could fly.

**BEN**

I'm not a kite!

**LYDIA**

Well...why not?

**ALEX**

Everyone give me a perception check.

**BEN**

21

**LYDIA**

I rolled a 2 so that's only 14.

**BRYN**

I rolled a 2 as well and got 13.

**ALEX**

21, a 13 and?

**LYDIA**

14.

**ALEX**

A 14. So yeah you keep going, keep going. You're starting to lose your footing.

**BRYN**

Very tired.

**ALEX**

Grizzop.

**BEN**

Yes

**ALEX**

You find yourself in front of a camel.

**BEN**

I've found a camel!

**ALEX**

And by in front of, I mean it's within half a foot of your head.

**BEN**

Ok I'll duck under it and get on the other side of it so that it's sheltering me from the wind and sand.

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

Yeah ok. That works.

**BRYN**

It's adapted to this environment! We're not!

**ALEX**

With that in mind...

**BEN**

I mean I've found a windbreak.

**ALEX**

You are now all hid behind a camel. Continue.

**LYDIA**

Hello camel.

**BEN**

Thank you.

**LYDIA**

Do they talk?

**BRYN**

Well normally no.

**ALEX**

Everyone give me a perception check.

**BRYN**

28

**LYDIA**

30

**BEN**

13

**ALEX**

Either the camel has extra legs or there is someone upon this camel.

**LYDIA**

I should point out that was 30 not 13.

**ALEX**

They're definitely someone upon this camel and they are extremely...

**BRYN**

With a 30 and a 28 I'm pretty sure we can see the person on the camel.

**LYDIA**

That's a lot of sand mate.

**ALEX**

Visibility is half a foot.

**BRYN**

Hello?

**LYDIA**

Excuse me! Is this Cairo?

**HELEN**

Yes, who...are you in need of help?

**BEN**

Yes we're in a sandstorm.

**LYDIA**

Very much so. Is that not obvious?

**HELEN**

Well hold on.

**BEN**

Ok. I hold on to the camel.

**LYDIA**

Literally holding on.

**BRYN**

I hold on to your foot that's hanging from the camel.

**LYDIA**

Do you occasionally lose your footing?

**BRYN**

Pretty much!

**ALEX**

Just stay...I will guide you towards the hospital. That's where I'm heading.

Where are you? Wait...

**BRYN**

Just anywhere to wait out the sandstorm...

**LYDIA**

We were just having a lovely stroll to take in the local sites.

**ALEX**

The camel begins walking at a right angle to the direction that you were walking.

**LYDIA**

I'm staying behind the camel mate.

**BEN**

Yeah!

**BRYN**

We were teleported here...

**BEN**

No we...

**BRYN**

By accident.

**BEN**

Yes. Terrible accident.

**LYDIA**

Yeah we've got no idea.

**BEN**

Magical accident.

**BRYN**

We were trying to get to Cairo. I assume we're not very nearby.

**HELEN**

No, this is Cairo.

**ALEX**

You find yourselves...you find yourself reaching some steps. You nearly stumble upon them.

**BEN**

Weird desert.

**HELEN**

No this is main street.

**BEN**

What?

**ALEX**

You find yourselves at a very large pair of wooden doors which are closed shut against the storm.

**BEN**

Is this normal?

**HELEN**

No there's been terrible, terrible for days and days. Something terrible has happened to the weather.

**BEN**

Right.

**LYDIA**

That's not familiar at all! Yeah.

**BEN**

Balls!

**HELEN**

Storms in Alexandria, sandstorms here. Nothing is working. We're...it's terrible.

**BEN**

Ok yes thank you by the way.

**ALEX**

We will skip ahead to the door opens, you head inside upon camel. The rest of the party stumble inside, the door is closed.

**LYDIA**

How high are these doors?

**ALEX**

They're massive.

**LYDIA**

Ok.

**ALEX**

They're really, really big. You find yourself in a lovely, clean corridor at which point I feel I should probably address the Helen in the room.

**(laughing)**

Hello Helen this is me addressing you!

**HELEN**

Hello!

**BEN**

Good human interaction there Alex!

**ALEX**

I'm so good at talking!

**BEN**

You may remember Helen from other such Rusty Quill episodes as Shark Wolf!

**ALEX**

Shouting, the three part special!

**HELEN**

They may not actually remember me though as a whole thing.

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

That's very fair.

**BRYN**

Well played, well played.

**ALEX**

So I would like to introduce to everyone our new fourth. Thank you for joining us Helen.

**BRYN**

Oh my god!

**LYDIA**

How long have you been sitting there?

**HELEN**

Seven hours!

**ALEX**

With this in mind I will not be introducing your character for the simple reason that you can do so in character and then we can get a bit more detail...

**LYDIA**

The magic of role play.

**BEN**

Does that mean that Helen's character looks at us and then describes what they're wearing.

**ALEX**

I was going to do physical description but then that was it. That was it. That was all I was going to do.

**LYDIA**

But be really careful because he got stuck in annoying doctor for five episodes and he's going to get stuck in Einstein. He's going to get stuck in Einstein.

**ALEX**

It'll happen and I won't be able to get out of that. It'll be awful.

**BEN**

It'll be critical, urgh.

**ALEX**

So bringing this train wreck back on board. Helen please describe your character for Ben's benefit specifically because he couldn't possibly wait.

**HELEN**

Ok I am playing a 6 foot 6 orc who towers over you.

**BRYN**

Yasss!

**LYDIA**

I mean how specifically much do you tower over them by?

**HELEN**

At least double your size.

**BEN**

Yeah specifically about double for both of us.

**BRYN**

Well it's double our average because I'm 3 foot 2 and you're 3 foot 4.

**(laughing)**

**HELEN**

I am perfectly sized to carry both of you in each hand.

**BEN**

So we're basically up to your mid-thigh.

**ALEX**

Ish.

**HELEN**

Yes. Now Azu looks down on you with kindly, kindly eyes, shaven head.  
Enormous, built like an absolute...like a shed. A shed in orc form.

**ALEX**

An orc-ish shed. Let me tell you orc-ish sheds are sturdy.

**BRYN**

They know how to build them!

**HELEN**

This will be a main point...

**BRYN**

This shed must last generations!

**LYDIA**

Marble upon marble shed. Inlaid with granite and a floor made of obsidian.

**ALEX**

No, no. More...more balustrades.

**HELEN**

She is wearing armour. And gigantic axe. Also a morning star. Also two other smaller axes.

**(laughing)**

**LYDIA**

Just in case we come across a smaller tree. More precision chopping.

**HELEN**

All of these things are glowing pink.

**BEN**

Wait, what?

**LYDIA**

Wait, what?

**ALEX**

You heard!

**LYDIA**

Like mechanically glowing.

**ALEX**

Oh yes.

**HELEN**

Absolutely.

**ALEX**

They have mechanical effects.

**BRYN**

This is like the falcon armour all over again.

**ALEX**

I want you all to know at no point did I give her a design brief and say you have to hit these points. This has arrived all on her own. I'm so proud.

**BEN**

Do you have any iconography or symbology?

**HELEN**

I do not but you as a Priest of Artemis will know that the colour of Aphrodite is pink.

**ALEX**

They tend not to go in for symbols so much as just a really, really clear colour scheme.

**HELEN**

Yes and also all the personalities. They're all very friendly.

**BEN**

Ok.

**ALEX**

Excessively problematically so.

**HELEN**

Yes.

**BEN**

Right well thank you very much.

**LYDIA**

I guess we'll go our separate way then.

**BRYN**

We can't go back out there.

**HELEN**

No you must stay, we must...

**BRYN**

Thank you. But where are we?

**HELEN**

I told you this is Cairo. This is the main street.

**BRYN**

This building specifically.

**HELEN**

The Hospital of Aphrodite.

**BRYN**

Ohhh.

**BEN**

Oh right.

**HELEN**

Do you not know from the armour?

**ALEX**

Looking around, it's all pink. It's extremely clean. There's little bits of sand that you brought in with you but you're in a long-ish corridor that ends in what's clearly a foyer of some kind that's about 10 foot/15 foot distance. Marble flooring, marble walling and to shake things up a bit of a marble affect on the ceiling and yeah it's that sort of rosy colour and there are people in the foyer all just staring at you.

**BRYN**

Presumably I've been here before?

**ALEX**

Yes you have. There was an incident where you broke your leg as a child. They fixed it really, really quickly and easily.

**HELEN**

They're lovely, just lovely.

**BRYN**

Thank you for helping us. My name's Hamid. This is Grizzop and Sasha.

**HELEN**

Oh of course. My apologies. The dust and coming across strangers...

**ALEX**

Azu is still upon a camel. Just throwing in some context there.

**LYDIA**

How high then is the camel?

**BRYN**

11 foot.

**HELEN**

Azu is like...

**BRYN**

We're shouting slightly upwards.

**LYDIA**

We're just dripping sand...

**ALEX**

Just everywhere.

**BRYN**

I don't know what you're talking about. I look immaculate.

**HELEN**

Azu dismounts and offers her hand to you.

**BEN**

Grizzop. Paladin of Artemis.

**HELEN**

Yes you said but my name...my name is Azu.

**BEN**

Good to meet you.

**HELEN**

It is wonderful to meet you. Now are you injured?

**BEN**

No.

**HELEN**

No not at all? What about you? Are you injured?

**BRYN**

No just a few scrapes but seem to be fine.

**HELEN**

How about you? Slightly taller person.

**LYDIA**

Well I mean not straightforwardly.

**(laughing)**

**HELEN**

Ooh I like the sound of that!

**ALEX**

Azu give me a perception check.

**HELEN**

Oh. Wait which one am I looking at?

**BRYN**

Down there on the side there's perception.

**HELEN**

13.

**ALEX**

13. Ah yeah she's got some kind of wasting illness. People tend to be quite sensitive about that kind of thing.

**HELEN**

I'm very sorry for your condition.

**LYDIA**

Well I mean it's not like I'm...I mean there's upsides.

**HELEN**

Really?

**LYDIA**

I'm very fast.

**BRYN**

We can get into the details later. Hi, we're the London and Other London Outstanding Mercenary Group.

**HELEN**

The who?

**LYDIA**

Should you really be telling everyone that?

**BRYN**

The London and Other London Outstanding Mercenary Group.

**HELEN**

I grew up in the mountains. I do not know...I've only been here for five days myself.

**BEN**

To be fair we've only be called that for...

**LYDIA**

About a week.

**BRYN**

Like a week yeah.

**HELEN**

So you are...you are an adventuring troop?

**LYDIA**

Basically.

**BEN**

Pretty much yeah. Well no, Paladin of Artemis first and foremost then bounty hunter.

**HELEN**

Artemis you say?

**BEN**

Yes...yes...I...yes

**HELEN**

Hmmm

**BEN**

What?

**HELEN**

An equally worthy faith.

**BEN**

*Thanks*

**ALEX**

There is a call from the foyer going, I'm fairly certain that what they're after is some kind of succour rather than merely standing in the corrido Azu.

**HELEN**

Oh of course, of course.

**LYDIA**

What's succour?

**BRYN**

Food and drink and other forms of...

**BEN**

Nice stuff.

**LYDIA**

Oh right. Yeah I like them. Yeah.

**HELEN**

Hospitality. Friendliness.

**ALEX**

You're still talking Azu.

**LYDIA**

I don't like that.

**HELEN**

Come and meet.

**BRYN**

It's fine we were just introducing ourselves. Hello.

**BEN**

Hello.

**LYDIA**

Hi.

**HELEN**

Oh! I almost forgot the most important person that you could meet. This is Topaz T. Camel. My trustworthy steed.

**BEN**

Oh the camel.

**BRYN**

Hi Topaz. Thank you for helping us. What does the T stand for?

**ALEX**

To be clear, sorry, the character that was speaking was not the camel. I feel it really important to actually spell that one out for you. That was coming from the foyer, not the camel.

**LYDIA**

Snooty camel!

**HELEN**

This camel might be snooty as well.

**LYDIA**

Oh right. Alright camel. It's a weird horse.

**HELEN**

Much better than a horse.

**BRYN**

What does the T stand for?

**HELEN**

The. Topaz the Camel. Topaz T. Camel.

**(laughing)**

I confess I'm not the most inventive.

**LYDIA**

It's a nice name.

**ALEX**

You're still talking Azu. Still talking.

**BEN**

We like talking. Sorry hello.

**ALEX**

You can't see this person, they're in the foyer.

**LYDIA**

Is this another disembodied voice? We've got bad history with voices coming out of walls?

**HELEN**

Azu scoops up the two...the halfling...

**BEN**

Well hang on a moment! Put me down!

**ALEX**

Stranger danger!

**BEN**

Put me down!

**BRYN**

I am completely accepting and I quite like it!

**BEN**

Put me down! Put me down!

**ALEX**

I'm going to take a break there.

**LYDIA**

I don't think he likes it.

**ALEX**

And welcome back. We'll pick up exactly where we left off.

**BEN**

Put me down! Put me down!

**HELEN**

No, no, do not worry I will not harm you.

**BEN**

I can walk. I can walk! I'm a paladin. I can heal myself. Put me down!

**LYDIA**

He's quite fast.

**BEN**

I'm going to try and scrabble out of her grip.

**ALEX**

Sure.

**LYDIA**

Wait, are we doing a combat manoeuvre check.

**ALEX**

Yes!

**BRYN**

No escape artist. Escape artist. Simple skill check.

**ALEX**

You can choose.

**BRYN**

Do not engage the complex rules.

**LYDIA**

Oppose grapple check.

**BEN**

I'm going to make an escape artist check. Or acrobatics.

**ALEX**

Oh ok.

**HELEN**

Can I make a check to hold on?

**ALEX**

Yes, yes you can. Can you give me a combat manoeuvre check so roll the D20 and Bryn's pointing out the one you add to it.

**HELEN**

That is 22.

**BEN**

Am I able to use my acrobatics?

**ALEX**

Yes. Oh no, sorry it's escape artist or combat manoeuvre only.

**BEN**

Ok well they're both 3. So 9.

**ALEX**

9. No. No.

**BEN**

I just end up upside down. Put me down! Put me down or I'll shoot your knees off. Put me down!

**ALEX**

Azu is pulling you into...

**HELEN**

You cannot reach my knees!

**BEN**

I've got a bow and arrow. I can reach your knees if you want to.

**ALEX**

Azu this is a place of worship. Quiet worship

**(laughing)**

Calm, quiet worship and healing.

**HELEN**

I'm not the one making the noise.

**BEN**

Will you put me down. Will you put me down!

**HELEN**

You wanted me to bring them to you.

**BEN**

Just please respect my personal space. I am also a paladin. This is disrespectful. Put me down!

**ALEX**

Put the minute person down.

**HELEN**

Very well. She deposits Grizzop and does not let go of Hamid.

**BEN**

Who is what? Curled up and asleep?

**BRYN**

No. I'm just cradled in the crook of your arm. I'm fine with being carried around.

**ALEX**

If it's nice, just roll with it.

**HELEN**

She is ushering Sasha along with a hand on your back.

**LYDIA**

Don't touch me!

**HELEN**

Oh, of course.

**LYDIA**

That was some respect for my personal space!

**BEN**

Well if you're sure!

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

So the foyer again is large and grandiose. It has lots of cornicing and so on. The way that Artemis was very sort of functional, defensible and robust and the Poseidon lot were kind of austere and...

**LYDIA**

And really wet. Really, really wet.

**BEN**

Just generally cold and horrible.

**LYDIA**

Full of water...

**ALEX**

And the Apollo lot were all radiant...

**BRYN**

Damp. Moist.

**ALEX**

Mostly what this place has contours and by that I mean if a building could have frills it would.

**LYDIA**

It's a lot of things that we probably couldn't say on a Podcast.

**ALEX**

It's curvy. It is a curvy building on the inside.

**BEN**

It's undulating.

**(laughing)**

**LYDIA**

That is the kind of thing that an automated...an automated checker of propriety would never catch...

**BEN**

Undulating is a perfectly normal word.

**BRYN**

It was how you said it. Where your hands were while you were saying it.

**BEN**

I normally talk like this. What are you talking about? I need to get the shopping.

**(laughing)**

**LYDIA**

Oh Matt Berry get out of my head!

**ALEX**

So the foyer itself is extremely large like I said. It has a lot of curves and so on to it. It has a huge mural on the wall exactly opposite you. There's a desk before that mural and then the corridor splits into two; one going left, one goes right. The mural itself is a huge depiction of...it is a very famous piece of art that you'll all probably be aware of anyway. A certain goddess within a certain clam.

**LYDIA**

Right, yeah.

**ALEX**

Yeah. It's kind of straightforward really.

**LYDIA**

Is the goddess human shaped in it and is the clam...

**BEN**

Clam shaped

**LYDIA**

Clam shaped as we would recognise it? Or is it like a big dragon egg claim?

**ALEX**

No, no, it's just a big ol' claim. It's exactly as the actual piece of art...

**BEN**

Do you know what it's definitely not called?

**LYDIA**

What?

**BEN**

Venus rising from the waves. Because that's bad.

**ALEX**

Bad!

**BEN**

Bad. So bad.

**LYDIA**

Wait so did Aphrodite take on human shaped form? That's quite prejudiced. They're all human so far. All the gods.

**ALEX**

Yes, you noticed it didn't you. Yeah. Moving on. In the foyer itself there are seating against the walls and so on and there are lot of people on them...

**BRYN**

Isn't Hephaestus a dwarf?

**HELEN**

No he has a hunchback.

**BRYN**

Oh I think in this world he might be.

**HELEN**

Oh!

**ALEX**

Around the walls are people sat. Most of them appear to need care and most of them appear to be taking shelter from the storm. They are also covered in sand. Behind the desk is a very, very tall, very, very slender figure. An elf. Very clearly an elf which again is pretty rare actually. And they are looking very

austere. They are very put together. Again in robes of pink and they are keeping an eye on the rest of the foyer. Occasionally you'll see another priestess or priest wandering around and administering people and it's that person that was speaking earlier.

**BEN**

Well look for one I'm not a minute person alright. Name's Grizzop. Paladin of Artemis so you stop it.

**HELEN**

I have brought you these wanderers. I saved them from the storm.

**ALEX**

Yes, yes I can see that Azu. Why don't you go ahead and administer to them and then we can all return to quiet contemplation.

**BEN**

I don't need any administration...

**ALEX**

Quiet...

**BEN**

I'm being quiet.

**ALEX**

..contemplation. Quiet contemplation. Would you like something to calm you?

**BEN**

Would you stop it? If you try and kiss me, I swear.

**HELEN**

Perhaps you'd like a lie down.

**BEN**

No I'm perfectly fine.

**BRYN**

Thank you for your hospitality. Some food and drink would not go amiss.

**BEN**

Hamid you ate 15 minutes ago.

**BRYN**

That was at least half an hour.

**BEN**

I think my point still stands!

**ALEX**

I am going to...

**BRYN**

Feels like a week ago.

**ALEX**

I am going to cut to, you went down one of the corridors and further into the temple. And you have found yourself in a similarly quite heavily occupied, for lack of a better word, canteen but this is a canteen. It's tasteful. It's well done. There are chandeliers. It's a very, very gorgeous canteen as far as canteens go. Very much more to your tastes Hamid.

**LYDIA**

It's more Soggy Admiral than it is Soggy Cabin Boy.

**ALEX**

Very much so. Very much Soggy Admiral yes. And it's again, full of people sheltering. These people have clearly been cleaned up a bit and have had a chance to get out of the storm.

**LYDIA**

Without the chance to clean up, Sasha's just going to stand in a corner and shake so all the stand falls out. Like a Pomeranian dog.

**HELEN**

Oh would you like a hand? I could shake that off for you.

**LYDIA**

Please, no don't touch me.

**BEN**

I'll stand behind her. I'm unbuckling my breastplate and as I do [swooshing noise]

**ALEX**

There's piles on the floor.

**LYDIA**

That was another third of your weight.

**BEN**

Oh that feels better.

**ALEX**

You can see all of the members of the Aphrodite religion looking, seeing all the sand and going "hmm" and then going back to what they're doing. You find yourself seated more or less in the middle of the canteen with food brought for you. It's simple but very good fare. It's a solid, warming stew of some kind.

**HELEN**

Azu has a gigantic bowl.

**ALEX**

Just massive.

**HELEN**

Azu's not even hungry but this is...she wanted to share companionship. So you are adventurers. Tell me of your quests.

**BEN**

Ok well...

**HELEN**

How many people have you helped to save?

**LYDIA**

It doesn't work like that.

**BRYN**

We've saved the world twice. So everyone.

**HELEN**

The whole world?

**BRYN**

Yeah pretty much. It's not as glamorous as it sounds.

**BEN**

Well we only saved Prague...

**BRYN**

It's pretty horrible.

**LYDIA**

Oh and I guess we did save that person from the basement of Kew.

**BRYN**

We saved quite a lot of people. Anyway the reason we're in Cairo...

**LYDIA**

We've killed a lot too.

**BRYN**

...is for my sister's funeral.

**HELEN**

Oh. My new friend. I do apologise.

**BEN**

Bit forward.

**ALEX**

My new immediate best friend.

**BRYN**

Thank you.

**HELEN**

Azu reaches out and grapples you into a hug.

**BRYN**

Hamid hugs back for all he's worth. Which is quite a lot. He's really good at hugs.

**ALEX**

Could you give me a perform hug check please. Roll me a D20 and just add your basic perform modifier.

**BRYN**

I'm going to do the same.

**ALEX**

Just getting Helen into the Pathfinder system now.

**HELEN**

17

**ALEX**

17 plus what's your perform? Charisma based so...

**HELEN**

That is 20.

**ALEX**

20.

**BRYN**

Mine was only 13.

**LYDIA**

Subpar hug.

**ALEX**

It's a good hug. Like in fact it's almost the maximum that a...I think it might be an optimum hug. I think it might be the maximum that a standard human could hug.

**LYDIA**

This makes Sasha so uncomfortable that she is holding a dagger.

**(laughing)**

**BEN**

And I'm just sitting there with my head in my hands, my elbow on the table like, yep this is how this goes.

**BRYN**

Thank you.

**HELEN**

Do you feel better now?

**BRYN**

A little.

**HELEN**

Then I have done my duty.

**BRYN**

So how long has Cairo been like this? What's going on?

**HELEN**

I have only been here for five days but we heard rumours of the technology, it just stopped. The banks are not working. The food...no one can pay. There have been riots. There have been terrible suffering.

**BEN**

Yeah do you want to tell us again how much good we've done.

**ALEX**

I'm pretty certain Grizzop's in the clear right now.

**HELEN**

Right it's...

**BRYN**

That wouldn't cause the sandstorms.

**LYDIA**

I don't know how much they were paying off the sandstorms

**(laughing)**

**BEN**

Talk about focusing on the wrong thing.

**HELEN**

Nobody knows what has taken place. The tears of the orphans and the terrible injuries from the riots.

**BRYN**

Leave the orphans alone...having their brains harvested to take over the world!  
Anyway...

**BEN**

What a strange thing to say.

**ALEX**

Everyone in the room goes quiet and just stares.

**BRYN**

Look it's been a really stressful few days.

**BEN**

Sorry my friend is having a bit of a breakdown. He's prone to his stories. Come on Hamid, no look there aren't any brains going on. Weird, weird, very strange.

**LYDIA**

Yeah grief does strange things to people.

**HELEN**

It does indeed. I learned that in seminary.

**BEN**

So you've come down to deal with the riots and stuff and the crying orphans.

**BRYN**

There can't be many riots out in that!

**HELEN**

Well it's not always sandstorms but when there aren't sandstorms there are riot. And when there aren't sandstorms or riots there's some sort of starvation and when there aren't any of those things there's other diseases.

**BEN**

So you just generally turned up to help right.

**HELEN**

Of course I am on a quest.

**LYDIA**

What's your quest?

**HELEN**

I shall be the high priestess of Aphrodite.

**LYDIA**

Right. That sounds more like a career goal.

**BEN**

I mean I'm just a junior under paladin.

**HELEN**

Well it is both. I must achieve the quest to reach the ambition. I must help more people than other paladins.

**ALEX**

Everyone give me a perception check.

**LYDIA**

Natural 20

**BEN**

Natural 20

**BRYN**

Natural 1.

**ALEX**

Nice!

**LYDIA**

Hamid's in a bad place!

**ALEX**

You're kidding me, Hamid's still reeling from that hug!

**(laughing)**

**HELEN**

I got 18.

**ALEX**

So, Sasha and Grizzop you both notice as Azu keeps going on about this and completing her quest the rest are sort of rolling their eyes a little bit like oh, uh huh. Azu, you also notice this. But again no one's saying anything. Everyone's carrying on, it's just that sort of, hesitate, [sighing sound], go back to their work.

**HELEN**

Azu ignores any hints

**BEN**

So looking around and seeing this reaction I just like Azu a bit more.

**HELEN**

And so you see I must save as many people as possible. I must heal and I must defeat any evil villains that I come across.

**LYDIA**

We've actually got a bit of an opening for someone that is magically compelled to do good in the world.

**(laughing)**

**HELEN**

You do?

**LYDIA**

Yeah.

**HELEN**

How do I apply?

**BEN**

I think you are.

**BRYN**

Yeah basically there's...

**LYDIA**

There's an entry fee.

**BRYN**

We like you already...

**LYDIA**

My high entry fee.

**BEN**

My application...there wasn't any entry fee for me.

**LYDIA**

Ah ok.

**HELEN**

Azu drops to one knee and places her hand on her heart and says...

**ALEX**

Everyone else, ok.

**HELEN**

My dearest and newest friends. I wish to join you on your quest to save the world once again. Will you accept my fealty?

**BRYN**

Well it's not really fealty. I mean it's a contractual thing. We're a mercenary company.

**HELEN**

Then where do I sign?

**BRYN**

But we'd love to have you on board. Probably just probationary until we're all certain about each other but I really like you so I can only see it working out.

**BEN**

Wait a minute. I didn't have a probation.

**BRYN**

Well you helped us out with those zombies. You're just really impressive.

**LYDIA**

That was a very quick...

**HELEN**

Ooh tactless!

**BEN**

Well thank you very much.

**LYDIA**

It was a very quick...

**BRYN**

I mean you saved us from the sandstorm and that was pretty brilliant.

**LYDIA**

Yeah and she has that weird horse.

**BRYN**

And the glowing pink armour. That's a camel.

**HELEN**

Yes my camel is part of the deal. We're a duo.

**BRYN**

I think you'd fit in pretty well. So welcome aboard.

**LYDIA**

Wait, wait, wait.

**ALEX**

There's a call coming in from the corridor. Again it's from that elf. If you...speaking of which if you could dismiss the camel, we'd really appreciate it Azu.

**BEN**

Wait, has that elf been listening to everything?

**HELEN**

Well he is wise. He must have ears...

**BEN**

Wise?! That's just nosy.

**HELEN**

Well you cannot speak that way of Priest Fairhands.

**ALEX**

Everyone give me another perception check.

**HELEN**

Me too?

**ALEX**

Yeah.

**LYDIA**

16

**BRYN**

25

**HELEN**

18 again

**BEN**

23

**ALEX**

Ooh! The rest of the priests and priestesses aren't fans of you talking about Fairhands that way. Oof. Quite the faux pas.

**HELEN**

He is the best healer in the entire world.

**BEN**

Yeah it doesn't stop him from being nosy.

**LYDIA**

Wait? In the whole world?

**HELEN**

The entire...well as a priestess of Aphrodite one must swear to heal as...all of the wounded....

**LYDIA**

That sounds like a bulk deal rather than a skill one.

**BEN**

To be fair if anyone can sort out your thing, it's them.

**LYDIA**

Hey!

**BEN**

But remember...the thing.

**BRYN**

It's probably not the time or the place to talk about it.

**BEN**

The speedy thing.

**LYDIA**

Wait...I...

**HELEN**

Speed is not an illness. That is not my...

**BEN**

No but we're talking about...it's got benefits...

**BRYN**

It's not the time or the place.

**LYDIA**

Could we not talk about this here!

**BRYN**

Yeah we'll discuss it later. Maybe. How long have these sandstorms been lasting? I mean we only want to go three streets away or something, probably. But it seems like a bad idea to go out in that.

**ALEX**

Even within the last five days there has been one prior to this one and one lasted about a day. Best part of a day, not much more than that. I mean assuming it's going to be the same. For all you know it could be weeks!

**HELEN**

No longer than a day.

**BEN**

Has this happened anywhere else?

**HELEN**

I don't know, I came...I journeyed...

**BRYN**

The Poseidon lot were talking about there being a lot of storms in the various ports. I'm guessing...

**LYDIA**

That happened before the thing...

**BRYN**

Well exactly...

**LYDIA**

So you can't blame...

**BRYN**

You can't blame the weather on us.

**HELEN**

I was not trying to.

**(laughing)**

**BRYN**

Thank you. I appreciate that.

**LYDIA**

Good. I...

**BEN**

Nor was I.

**HELEN**

What have you to do with the weather? The weather is...

**LYDIA**

Nothing at all! Absolutely nothing!

**BEN**

Wait hold on a minute. Do you have something to do with the weather?

**LYDIA**

Probably.

**BRYN**

No!

**LYDIA**

No...

**BEN**

The way you said that really implied that you had something to do with the weather.

**LYDIA**

I don't think so.

**BRYN**

We're just very worried.

**ALEX**

Everyone in the canteen has just given up the pretence of not just all staring and listening.

**BRYN**

Some very complicated things have happened to us, ok, and it's just a bit overwhelming.

**BEN**

I'm going to stand on the table...

**BRYN**

It feels risky to make any sweeping statements.

**BEN**

So I'm going to stand on the table and just look at them all.

**BRYN**

With definitive answers on any question of what we may or may not have impacted alright? Look I'm very tired.

**BEN**

I'm going to stand on the table, look at everyone else and go, do you mind, we are having a *private* conversation.

**ALEX**

Everyone starts to look away again.

**BEN**

Yeah I thought so.

**LYDIA**

I think maybe we should put Hamid to bed.

**BEN**

Yes

**(laughing)**

Do you have some beds? Could you carry him in and then tuck him into bed.

**HELEN**

You do not pay for anything here. For we are now, not only friends but adventure colleagues.

**BEN**

Yes adventure colleague is the correct term.

**HELEN**

Quest buddies!

**(Laughing)**

**LYDIA**

Colleagues.

**BEN**

Quest friends.

**BRYN**

Comrades in arms.

**HELEN**

Yes that was the phrase!

**LYDIA**

Contractually joined acquaintances.

**(laughing)**

Is more accurate.

**BRYN**

That is exactly how Sasha would describe it to be fair.

**HELEN**

That sounds like a marriage.

**BEN**

Wait hang on a minute that wasn't...are we...is this...this isn't...

**BRYN**

We're not married, no.

**BEN**

Ok I hope not. I'm not ready, ok!

**ALEX**

Cut to, after eating you were led upstairs and despite everything that is going on there are still beds available. Admittedly you are right up to the top floor of the building etc. and all of the windows are both closed and shuttered and so on and the storm is raging outside. But there are some beds in an obscure corner of the hospital that you are led to. It is closer to a dormitory than anything else really. Clearly most of the healing that's happening is magical rather than mundane. That said obviously there's cabinets of medicine and poultices and the various accoutrement you'd expect and yeah you are shown into the dormitory and that's where we will pick up as a bunch of time has been passed otherwise it will just be that conversation for hours.

**BRYN**

Well excitingly we've all levelled up.

**ALEX**

Yes! You have.

**BRYN**

We did it off screen but now that we've had a proper rest we get to click the little button in our character portraits and apply new points.

**ALEX**

With that in mind and having this brief breather, I think it's probably worth addressing what have you done with your levelling? If there's anything you want to share? And do you have any fancy, new swag.

**BEN**

Level 6 isn't an interesting level.

**BRYN**

Disagree!

**BEN**

For paladins it's just kind of...my save's got higher.

**BRYN**

So I got a new spell guys. Guess what spell I can now cast if I want to?

**BEN**

Er....

**BRYN**

Fireball! Oh my god I'm so excited.

**ALEX**

That's going to be useful in a hospital.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**BEN**

Cauterising wounds just lots of them at once.

**ALEX**

Everyone line up. Wounds facing first.

**BRYN**

I nearly cast it at the sandstorm just to show I could! I mean it's already a sandstorm, how much worse could a glass storm be.

**HELEN**

Probably a firestorm would've happened. Just one of those tornado fires, yeah.

**LYDIA**

I mean all that's different about me is I can climb better.

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

I feel that that's a pretty succinct description, yeah.

**LYDIA**

Yeah, that. A few extra...more skill points than a human could count.

**ALEX**

Pretty much. Pretty much. That was the simplest explanation we've had yet.

**BRYN**

I've got some fancy new swag but I was going to describe it when I actually put it on. I'm still carrying it in my bag for now.

**ALEX**

Ok cool. So you're all shown up to the dormitory. Azu, I leave it up to you whether you stay in your own apartments or keep them company. It's very much up to you.

**HELEN**

Oh no of course not. No she...

**LYDIA**

New travel buddies. Yay!

**HELEN**

She pushes two beds together.

**(laughing)**

**BEN**

One for the camel or...

**HELEN**

The camel has to stay downstairs

**BRYN**

The camel's back on the celestial plain.

**HELEN**

Yeah well she always does what Aran Fairhands tells her to.

**LYDIA**

Does it hop in and out of existence?

**HELEN**

Yeah I can summon a camel.

**BRYN**

It's a celestial camel.

**LYDIA**

That's so cool.

**BRYN**

It's basically an angel in camel form.

**ALEX**

It's an angel camel. She has an angel camel.

**LYDIA**

Wow!

**ALEX**

Grizzop's bow glows. She has an angel camel.

**BEN**

Hey, it's a good bow!

**(laughing)**

**HELEN**

So much better than you!

**ALEX**

So as you're all settling down to sleep. Hamid. You hear a voice in your head.

**BRYN**

That sounds ominous.

**LYDIA**

Or does it? We don't know. How does it sound?

**ALEX**

[funny voice] Hello!

**(laughing)**

Not that! No.

**BEN**

Have you been mis sold PPI?

**(laughing)**

**ALEX**

I'm afraid. No, not that either.

**LYDIA**

This episode is in part supported by the Alfred P Sloane...no. Mattresses.

**ALEX**

It is accompanied by your hand feeling quite hot. One of your rings.

**BRYN**

Oh.

**ALEX**

How are things?

**BRYN**

Erm...fine...

**ALEX**

I think it's time we had a chat about your family.

**BRYN**

Oh!

**ALEX**

And I'll close the episode there.

**(laughing)**

No context! No, no, none of that needed. Well welcome Helen. Thank you for saving the party from dying about 15 feet from a hospital. I was tempted to let

that play out. It would've amused me but no. So again, welcome and welcome with your **Gius** buddies, your adventure pals, your quest friends, whatever the phrase is...

**LYDIA**

Contractually....

**ALEX**

Contractually

**LYDIA**

Obliged colleagues that must spend time with each other for work only.

**HELEN**

She is going to win all of you over. That is her secondary goal.

**BRYN**

She's already won Hamid.

**BEN**

I'm getting a very Steven Universe vibe from her.

**HELEN**

Well yeah his power is heart.

**BEN**

That's true.

**ALEX**

Well I think we will close there and we can continue this heart based quest next week. Bye guys.

**EVERYONE**

Bye!

**[Show Theme - Outro]**

**ALEX**

Rusty Quill Gaming is a podcast distributed by Rusty Quill and licensed under a creative commons attribution, non-commercial share alike 4.0 international license. Today's episode was directed by Alexander J Newall and produced by Hannah Preisinger. To subscribe, buy merchandise, or join our Patron, visit [rustyquill.com](http://rustyquill.com). Rate and review us online. Tweet us @therustyquill, visit us on Facebook, or email us at [mail@rustyquill.com](mailto:mail@rustyquill.com). Join our community on Discord, or via Reddit at [r/rustyquill](https://www.reddit.com/r/rustyquill). Thanks for listening.