

RQG – 62 – (Sky) Ship in a Bottle

Content Warnings

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BEN

Hi everyone, Ben here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of our patrons. Foo Lord, Justin Riley, Chris Taylor, Felix Merlie Anderson, Chris Mahoney. 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 62 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

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

Rusty Quill Gaming – 62 – (Sky) Ship in a Bottle

BEN

Ben Meredith

ALEX

And who are you playing?

JAMES

Sir Bertrand Macguffingham

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Sasha Racket

BEN

Zolf Smith

ALEX

And you're all flying. You're in a wonderful flying machine.

LYDIA

Weeeeeee

BEN

A whole new world.

BRYN

I just want to sleep.

ALEX

You don't want sleep you want stealth. Let's be honest.

BRYN

Different words for the same thing!

LYDIA

I just feel like my experience of flying was completely undermined last time.

ALEX

Oh it was, it was.

LYDIA

This was gonna be such a wonderful, wonderful freeing identity crafting character moment and then....

BEN

Bertie ruins everything.

BRYN

Bertie joined in.

JAMES

Just naturally good at stuff. That's how aristocracy works.

ALEX

So let's do our quick recap. Our quick recap being you all manage to escape Paris

(cheering)

Despite the best efforts of La Gourmand's people. You also met up, obviously with Oscar Wilde, you made it to the aeroport however at the aeroport you sadly ended up running into a captain who was quite cool but...

BRYN

Ship of gnomes and they tried to flee from us and I was like no, I want to pay you money! Ah ok.

ALEX

So upon the airship of gnomes you met the captain however you also had to kind of leave Oscar Wilde behind.

LYDIA

Yeah made him not get on.

BEN

Which is pretty much...

LYDIA

That says a lot of him.

BRYN

We also found out that they are separatists

ALEX

Yes so as far as you...

BRYN

Therefore we have to keep quiet our connections to the meritocrats. Oooh.

BEN

Yeah or they'll probably chuck us off the ship which will be...because I doubt they're going to give us a parachute.

ALEX

So ship took off, obviously there was a brief piloting lesson for both Sasha and Bertie and you...

LYDIA

Fine, fine, yes fine.

ALEX

...ended up being the captain's cabin, Hamid being denied yet more sleep.

BRYN

I'm so tired!

ALEX

And then we had a bit of an info drop regarding Zolf's backstory.

BEN

Yeah

BRYN

I think that happened while I was still asleep. I don't remember being there.

BEN

No, no we were at the bar....at the dinner table.

ALEX

Nice try. You didn't get any useful sleep. You're fine.

BRYN

So I kind of got that hour and a half which just makes you feel worse.

ALEX

Yep. So what did you learn?

BEN

So it turns out that my daddy, Hiralld knew Rakefine and they were both part of an organisation of separatists and thought the meritocrats were bad news.

ALEX

Yeah, known as the Harlequins or the Jesters depending on which...

BRYN

To which the gnome captain also belongs.

ALEX

Picking up the conversation where we left off, a crew member bursts in through the door and runs over to the captain, whispers something in the captain's ear and runs out.

BRYN

Perception to hear what he whispered.

ALEX

Go for it.

JAMES

Same

LYDIA

Same

BRYN

That's quite a good roll actually.

BEN

I was just thinking about my dad.

BRYN

27

JAMES

12

LYDIA

12

ALEX

The 27 you pick it up. It's just...

BRYN

I don't speak gnomish.

ALEX

It's just...

(laughing)

BRYN

I forgot they might be speaking gnomish.

ALEX

No let's have this, let's have this. You really strain and really perfectly manage to angle yourself to hear – meh, mo, meh. You're absolutely certain it was – meh, mo, meh.

BRYN

They might be speaking French I don't know.

BEN

That could've happened.

LYDIA

I mean to be fair my sign language and lip reading does not specify whether it is gnomish sign language.

BRYN

It is a language you otherwise know.

JAMES

It's a shame because Bertie speaks gnomish. He doesn't know speaks gnomish...

(laughing)

...but he speaks perfect gnomish.

ALEX

So...

LYDIA

Bertie will be like why are these gnomes speaking French.

ALEX

So the captain stands and – I think we should probably all head outside if you'll all come join me for a second. She steps over, hops over the detritus that's covering the floor.

LYDIA

So we did finish the food?

ALEX

You did not finish the food

LYDIA

Ohh.

ALEX

She opens the door, steps outside...

BRYN

Hamid grabs the largest item of food he can carry from off his plate...

BEN

An important distinction

BRYN

And slowly follows.

ALEX

It's a ham hock intended for human sized creatures, not yourself.

JAMES

Bertie complains...

BRYN

Off my own plate?

LYDIA

Sasha nicks a drumstick.

BEN

I also nick a drumstick.

JAMES

When I get back in I'm gonna have to order the cheeseboard.

LYDIA

It's these kind of details that keep tuning in week after week.

ALEX

We want to be really pulpy so we can skip all of the minor details. Sure. But this is the drumstick that I specifically picked.

LYDIA

This is really more Game of Thrones style.

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BRYN

Everyone remember to add the item of food to your inventory.

ALEX

Have you factored it against you carrying capacity?

JAMES

I've added in wish for the cheeseboard

(laughing)

To the item that Bertie is carrying.

BRYN

I'm pretty sure we described, many episodes ago now, that the lobster banquet with cheesecake afters in loving and exquisite detail

LYDIA

Oh yeah, yeah

BRYN

I mean maybe it cut but I enjoyed it.

LYDIA

No we did and then the rack of different seafood restaurants when we were in Dover. The Soggy Admiral, Soggy Captain..

BRYN

The Soggy...

BEN

The Soggy Cabin Boy

LYDIA

The Soggy Cabin Boy which was just a cabin boy standing in the rain with a bunch of weird sausages and...

BEN

Prawns in his jacket.

LYDIA

...prawns in his jacket.

JAMES

He was just holding a prawn in his grimy pain. You have to eat it. He tried to keep his palms flat but he doesn't always do it because he's got scurvy.

ALEX

Heading outside...

(laughing)

Heading outside...

BRYN

Hamid's moving at like half speed and has been ever since you guys woke him up.

BEN

Yeah I vaguely wander out.

ALEX

So on the deck of the ship your incline as I was saying last episode obviously is starting to get less steep. You are now heading out up to and above the cloud cover and the crew are going around their jobs and the captain, as previously, is clipped onto the guideline and I'm presuming that you all clip on to your safety lines and all that as well.

She climbs up to where the original steering column was and is looking out the starboard side of the ship. All of you give me a perception check.

JAMES

BRYN

14

LYDIA

20 added up, not natural.

BEN

23

ALEX

Ok Sasha and Zolf looking over to that direction you can discern something in the distance. The rest of you can't at this stage.

BRYN

Hamid is scared of being blown away because he's very light.

BEN

Weighing himself down with a ham hock.

LYDIA

I mean really Sasha should be since that did actually while we were...

(laughing)

ALEX

So Zolf and Sasha you see there's something moving at an extreme distance around the clouds. The clouds are beginning to become...

LYDIA

Is it the dragon? Is it the dragon?

BRYN

Sky whale!

LYDIA

Is it the dragon destroying Paris behind us?

ALEX

It is something big but very, very distant. The captain...

BEN

Thar she blows.

ALEX

The captain looking, just a very, very grim set to her face. The rest of the crew start working and start heading over to the starboard side. There's a slight lean to the ship now. Both Hamid and Bertie you can now start to make out whatever it was that was moving in the distance. It's big and it's directly over, more or less, the middle of Paris.

LYDIA

Sasha sits quite a lot of times – is that a...well, I, erm – but then realises that she's not supposed to know that much about meritocrats or the plans that the plans that the meritocrats might have to raise the centre of Paris.

BEN

To stop the cascade of **turity** – what was that then?

ALEX

No one responds to you. In fact no one pays you any attention.

BEN

Alright. Rude.

ALEX

As starting distant but getting deceptively loud a huge, echoing roar. Very distant growing louder and louder. In fact what you're realising that what it must be is an incredibly loud sound that you are effectively like hearing almost a doppler affect as it's coming towards you. Finally the roar arrives. It is a *huge* roar. A [roaring noise]. Like huge, echoing but it's extremely distant. You know that if you were where that noise has come from you would probably be getting hurt just by the volume of that roar.

BEN

Taking some form of sonic damage.

BRYN

It brings a small, wistful smile to Hamid's face.

(laughing)

He doesn't know why.

ALEX

Then a pair of wings break from the cloud cover. They are massive. They are easily the biggest living thing that any of you have seen. In fact it's arguably possibly the thing that most of you have seen full stop. The wingspan is huge and the head arcs over the top. It is entirely of gold and it just begins to catch glints in the shine of the rising sun and it is dazzling. But when I saw gold, it is a pure, untarnished gold that is shining and as the sun begins to rise the light just spreads...

LYDIA

Sasha appraises

ALEX

...wider and wider. You get an appraise overload. You are now stunned.

(laughing)

LYDIA

That sounds realistic. In character – yep, yep.

ALEX

It beats its wings once and its entire mass makes it way above the cloud cover. For a split second you see it in a huge action pose arced out with the rising sun just catching its wings.

BRYN

And it folds them to its side and arrows itself...

ALEX

Yes it does!

BRYN

...to drop like a stone straight back through the clouds.

ALEX

The beginnings of some bright pyrotechnics are basically happening beneath the cloud cover. You can't see what it is but this thing jets down and then there is a moment of stillness and quiet. You then don't hear anything but you see there is that much commotion the cloud cover itself disturbs and rocks away from it. You then see there is a definite wave of disturbance moving through the clouds towards you.

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BEN

That has become dragon destroyer of worlds.

ALEX

The captain...

LYDIA

I hope everyone got out.

ALEX

The captain, as an aside, just goes – brace. And with a really grim set you see every, single person hold on.

BEN

Likewise

LYDIA

Yeah join in that.

BRYN

I hold on to the ham with my teeth...

(laughing)

...and use both hands to grip the ship.

ALEX

Everyone give me a reflex save.

LYDIA

Ha!

BEN

A critical fail.

ALEX

That's a natural 1 from Zolf.

JAMES

14

ALEX

Yep

BRYN

22

LYDIA

12

ALEX

So everyone apart from Zolf, as it's approaching you grab something, you brace. The ship rocks, you manage to hold on. Zolf.

BEN

Yes

ALEX

You run over and grab the railing, realise that this is the place that's going to get hit most so you run over and try and grab some kind of mast but the mast is probably quite high, the centre of gravity won't be right and as you agonise over what is going to make you least likely to get blown overboard, gets blown overboard.

BEN

I'm also gonna say that I have a bout of sea sickness as well.

ALEX

It's only going to make it worse.

LYDIA

Beautiful. Breaks cloud cover in a shining arc.

JAMES

As the dawn light rises across it.

(laughing)

Purest gold.

ALEX

So you get thrown overboard. You are connected by the guideline. What actually happens is that you are thrown over the side and then get caught on the line and immediately slam into the side. You find yourself face to face with someone looking out of a porthole, looking extremely shocked.

BEN

Get me out!

ALEX

The rest of the crew hearing that run over and haul you up using the guideline and bring you back on. They're unconcerned, they don't check you're ok, they just go...

BEN

I flop to the deck hyperventilating.

JAMES

With vomit on your lapel.

BEN

I don't own lapels!

BRYN

Hamid breaks you off a piece of ham and offers it to you.

BEN

I vomit a bit more.

BRYN

Hamid shrugs and eats it himself.

(laughing)

BEN

Urgh disgusting

ALEX

The noise, whatever it was, was clearly some kind of big explosion and there was a wave of warm-ish air that came with it. What that is though, is considering the distance that you've already travelled from Paris, that was quite big.

BEN

Something, something, nuclear weapons.

ALEX

Then the ship continues to rise and eventually...

BRYN

[Singing] We'll meet again...

BEN

I'm not riding back...

BRYN AND JAMES

[singing] Don't know where, don't know when...

(laughing)

BRYN

Just one phrase was fine. It was beautiful.

JAMES

I thought so. We harmonise very well.

ALEX

So, the rest of the crew, again similarly grim looking, begin going about their work. The captain, without another word, stomps down back into her cabin and slams her door.

LYDIA

That's where all the food was, wasn't it.

BEN

I'm gonna get some sleep.

BRYN

Me too

BEN

And I'm going to crawl off. Literally crawl.

ALEX

Literally crawl

BRYN

I'm going to take the remains of the ham hock, go back to the bed I was in before.

ALEX

I think that is wise. Sasha? Bertie?

JAMES

Bertie's still hungry so he's going to try and get back into the...

ALEX

The captain's cabin?

JAMES

The captain's cabin.

ALEX

Ok. Sasha?

LYDIA

Sasha's...she's got her drumstick. Right now sleep would be nice.

ALEX

I think that's wise. So the rest of you head below decks and it's very easy to find yourselves a couple of cabins with hammocks and so on that are empty and the gnomish crew are more than accommodating. They let you in and one of them actually shifts out of his bunk so that you guys can sleep there, it's all fine. You do notice there were a couple of humans wandering around. They appear to be passengers but they're just getting up so they're sort of padding around wearing some kind of dressing gown and so on. They're not really aware of what's been going on. Bertie?

JAMES

Mm huh

ALEX

How do you attempt to enter? Do you knock or do you just enter.

JAMES

The door's closed near the captain's cabin and Bertie respects ranks so he will knock.

ALEX

Ok. There's a delay. The captain then opens the door and looks at you. She looks weary and she opens the door and goes – hmm, yeah?

JAMES

Good morning captain. Now I wondered when and where the completion of breakfast might take place.

ALEX

Oh you can probably find something below decks. My appetite's kind of gone. What is it you want?

JAMES

Breakfast.

ALEX

She goes...she closes the door, comes back, a hunk of cheese in one hand and a baguette in the other. Plants them both in your hands and goes – breakfast

JAMES

Excellent. Thank you.

ALEX

Closes the door.

JAMES

No further investigation of that required. Excellent. Down below decks, nom, nom, nom, nom. Bertie takes the baguette and does here comes the airplane to his own face with the bread. Airship. Tilting.

ALEX

Give me a perception check.

JAMES

12

ALEX

As you are heading below decks you briefly have to push past someone who's padding down the corridor wearing a dressing gown and you recognise them and they recognise you. It's Harrison Campbell, the author that you met on the...

BEN

The one you were going to throw into the lightning and then decided not to.

JAMES

He didn't know that.

BEN

Yeah but you knew that.

ALEX

He looks at you....

BRYN

He did realise what a terrible person you were.

ALEX

He looks at you, his face opens. He looks extremely shocked, doesn't say anything and goes – mm huh.

JAMES

Ah Mr Campbell

ALEX

And then hurries, keeps hurrying...

JAMES

Yes, delighted to see you again

ALEX

...hand on the door that he's going to. Stops. Hello Sir Bertrand wasn't it?

JAMES

Yes. Still is Mr Campbell. Hmm. What a pleasure it is for you to see me again.

What a surprise. What a surprise. You know, people do fetch up in the funniest of places.

ALEX

So we're already in the air.

JAMES

We are yes. All majestic. Like this baguette, vroom...vroom...

ALEX

Yes he's just looking at you. He's clearly afraid. Not afraid that you're going to flip out, just afraid that there's a good chance that everyone's going to die because you are on this ship and you know this. And he's just kind of smiling and nodding, the way that you would with someone who's holding a big gun.

BEN

So he now has phobia of Sir Bertrand.

ALEX

Correct. It's a growing condition with an increasing prevalence in modern society.

JAMES

Can I do sense motive to see whether Bertie picks up on that.

ALEX

You can do a sense motive on Harrison, yes.

JAMES

4. Bertie has no idea that...

LYDIA

He seems very affected by your presence doesn't he.

BEN

That's awe. That's awe.

LYDIA

Yeah that's definitely awe. Possibly...maybe a crush

(laughing)

JAMES

I had so many adventures since we last met Mr Campbell. Let me tell you about them. And Bertie opens the door of Mr Campbell's cabin and walks straight in because he's got an attentive audience and will do for the next six to seven hours.

ALEX

We will skip ahead.

BEN

Fade to black.

ALEX

You all wake up.

BRYN

Fully rested?

ALEX

Let's build to that. You all have all of your limbs. Bonus.

LYDIA

Woo!

BEN

Oh well...

ALEX

Close enough

BRYN

All the limbs we started with.

ALEX

You all slept without dreaming. You slept well. You are well rested however you're well rested for the first time in days.

LYDIA

That means that my hit points are refilled right?

ALEX

Yep

BEN

Oh yeah

ALEX

Your hit points have been returning nicely. There is however a little bit of awkwardness. Sasha, when you wake up, you have a look at the bunk you've

been sleeping in and you see that there's lots of blood stains in the hammock bunk that you've been sleeping on from your back. Give me a perception check

LYDIA

26

ALEX

Also you seem to have a scar. When you're getting dressed and having a wash. All of them have a basic toilet and sink in the rooms.

BEN

Wow

ALEX

Yeah it's a good ship.

LYDIA

Fancy

ALEX

But you notice that you have a scar and it's a scar that...it's not something where you're like...it's big. In fact broadly speaking it runs from each shoulder down towards the middle of your chest and the middle of the chest on the front down towards around the naval.

LYDIA

I look like I've had an autopsy

ALEX

Yes you do.

BEN

You don't look like, you have had an autopsy

LYDIA

Yeah but she wasn't aware of that.

(laughing)

ALEX

You know that there was no scarring there before. You checked. The scarring is now there and it was not there before. It does not look livid or anything like that.

LYDIA

So I've got scurvy, is a thing, right because the actual way that scurvy works is that because it breaks down the collagen that you have in your body all of your old scars including the ones that are invisible or might be internal...

ALEX

Begin to show up.

LYDIA

...begin to open up again which is why you end up losing your teeth but it's much grosser than that because you end up all your old surgery scars and things. So...

ALEX

Let's put it this way...

LYDIA

...she eats a lemon.

(laughing)

ALEX

Problem solved, it's all gone away. No.

LYDIA

Well Sasha would be very aware of...

ALEX

Oh scurvy's a thing.

LYDIA

...of scurvy and rickets because of course she grew up underground.

BEN

And we know of scurvy because I can do magical scurvy.

LYDIA

Oh yeah that's a good idea, yeah.

ALEX

To your eye it might be scurvy. You're no expert but yeah, this looks a lot like scurvy.

JAMES

So...I mean cutting away if you're finished.

ALEX

Yeah go for it.

JAMES

Cool. So I mean Bertie's been talking to Harrison Campbell for hours and hours and hours.

ALEX

So what has actually been happening...

LYDIA

But he's an extrovert so he gained energy from the fact that he was sharing stuff about himself.

ALEX

So as you begin to all potter around Bertie managed to have a good, let's say, five hours of one sided conversation with poor Mr Campbell.

BRYN

Recounting his adventure in Hannibal's' Tomb.

ALEX

And then managed to basically go for what he thought was an afternoon nap. You have all woken up having slept through an entire day.

LYDIA

Ooh nice.

ALEX

So you have actually now been in the air for at least a day.

BRYN

Yay!

ALEX

You are waking up the morning after you went to sleep in the morning.

JAMES

And Bertie also has these autopsy scars?

ALEX

No. Only Sasha.

LYDIA

No you weren't autopsied.

JAMES

Sorry

ALEX

Just Sasha

LYDIA

I got autopsy from the time I was dead.

BEN

We didn't sleep in a...

LYDIA

He's just like I wanna be part of this!

JAMES

Just checking.

ALEX

Although I'll tell you what as a story, you're on this lovely, lovely ship, you all wake up having been autopsied. Woo

BEN

Amelia Frankenstein

(laughing)

JAMES

That's what I thought you were going for.

LYDIA

That is where we do have a sister horror podcast.

ALEX

So you are all basically padding up on to the ship proper, you notice...

LYDIA

Sasha isn't. She's very carefully dressing her wounds.

ALEX

Ok true. But as you're all getting together you become aware that the layout of the ship is broadly speaking, there is the top deck which is for the sailing. There is the middle deck which you're all currently on which is the first deck below the actual top deck which is basically passengers. It is not particularly luxurious but it's fairly impressive given...Hamid you've been in airships before, there are an impressive amount of facilities given how small it is and there are about three other rooms, not including the rooms that you are split across.

LYDIA

So we all shared a room?

ALEX

Zolf and Hamid were in their own room together. Sasha you had your own room to yourself and Bertie you ended up actually having a room to yourself because there's not that many passengers. So there is also, on this deck, a lounge and in that lounge you can be provided some food. The very bottom deck is entirely based in engineering and crew quarters. You're encouraged not to go down there. No one particularly cares but Bertie, you'd have a hard time fitting.

LYDIA

Ooh it's built in gnome height.

ALEX

So we will skip to, you are all in the lounge. You have done your morning ablutions. You are looking out at the sky and appear to be flying over, vaguely, mountainous terrain. It is a lovely clear day and we will take a break there and be back in a couple of minutes.

LYDIA

Hey, hey, you. Yeah you with the face, yeah. I know I shouldn't be here but got in like a wet ferret slipping through the hands of a moisturiser salesman. You know me. I just needed to let you know about this deal, right? You head over to rustyquill.com and follow the links to the store or go on redbubble.com and search for us. I've been appraising this stuff and it is good. There's all sorts of stuff in there. You want Brutor's face on a mug, you got it. You want Hamid's face on the wall, it's there. You want Bertie's face....why? Yeah well I gotta go now but you just remember right, head over to rustyquill.com and follow the links. Tell 'em I sent you. Just wondered though, er, are you gonna eat all that eel keesh?

ALEX

And welcome back. There was our first ever ad break where no one was in peril. How was it? Did you like it? Was it restful?

BRYN

I took lots of pictures of the scenery. I'm going to remember this moment.

BEN

I'm sitting as close to the middle of the room as possible and not looking at any windows at all.

ALEX

Give me a fort save.

BEN

Yeah, ok. That is 18.

ALEX

You are better than you were.

BEN

Good I'm getting used to it.

ALEX

You are not happy but you are not nauseous.

BEN

Screw you in her ears.

LYDIA

Sasha has spent the time feeling distinctly uncomfortable. Gradually moving over to Zolf to...I'm – so just had a thought. I think I might have scurvy.

BEN

Right, ok. Have you tried eating a lemon?

LYDIA

Well the thing is I eat as many lemons as everyone else, right.

BEN

Alright but...

LYDIA

But I keep – and she takes off her leather jacket.

BEN

Tell you what, should we just go back to a cabin and I will actually do a proper medical examination.

LYDIA

But, but...but like you already did that right? And then it's all...

BEN

Yeah but I've actually had a nice sleep and can do so not from a wheelchair. So shall we have like a proper one now and just get it sorted.

LYDIA

It's the awkwardest – I guess, alright. Yep. It's fine.

BEN

I mean if you don't want to, it's fine.

LYDIA

It hurts and also I look like I've been taken apart and been put back together again.

BEN

Yeah also I've healed you properly. It shouldn't...yeah let's go have a look and see what I can do.

ALEX

So let's assume that you head to Sasha's room. The empty one that's just her one.

LYDIA

Where he sees that the hammock is soaked in blood.

ALEX

Yes

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BEN

Not a good sign

ALEX

Giving an examination, give me a heal check.

BEN

16

ALEX

16 total.

BEN

Do I get any bonuses? Actually, no...no I take 10.

ALEX

Yeah you can. You can take 20 if you want.

BEN

Yeah I'll take 20.

LYDIA

I dunno, it might get too awkward after 10.

(laughing)

BEN

I like the idea of failing a medical exam. No idea I've actually been looking...ooh awkward

ALEX

You've got this weird fossette, I don't know where that's come from. So, yeah I;;I allow you to take 20 on this specific check.

LYDIA

Gosh it would be nice if the NHS done that.

ALEX

Good news/bad news. The good news is whatever's wrong with her appears comparatively superficial. You run through, do you have any symptoms, got any headaches, do you have any pain and as much as you said it hurts, in truth not really. It's not that you feel like you've been injured or anything like that. You're actually the perkier you've been in as long as you can remember. You've actually rested. You've actually had a night's sleep. So you're in a weird situation Zolf where her self-diagnosis of "I think I might have scurvy". Yeah actually that's not necessarily a bad call, it has a lot of the hallmarks of scurvy but she's missing a lot of the symptoms of scurvy because a lot of new scars have shown up in her. Scars that she has forgotten she's ever had but you feel fine. You genuinely feel...

LYDIA

Perky. Woo!

ALEX

...perky and you're still zipping around. You've not lost any balance or anything like that like I said. So it's a bit of a weird one where she has, let's say, a very obvious symptom of scurvy and that is it.

LYDIA

And also is the first time...let's say if she shrugged off her masterwork leather armour and let him see her back, he can see the fact that is just a perfect imprint of a falcon.

ALEX

Yes it is the clearest it's ever been.

BEN

Quick question, when did you...you got that when...

LYDIA

I got squashed

BEN

By Bertie

LYDIA

Yeah

BEN

I see, interesting.

LYDIA

It hurt.

BEN

Yeah. Might wanna, just a suggestion aesthetically, might wanna get a tattoo to break up the outline of that because he ever sees it he's going to be absolutely insufferable.

LYDIA

I don't really intend him to ever see my back. I'm quite careful about really always facing Bertie.

(laughing)

Don't really trust him enough.

BEN

That's fair enough. Well each to their own. Yes I am going to...can I actually make a knowledge arcana and knowledge religion supplemented by my heal

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skill because if it's not a health thing and it's something weird then it might be the magic or gods because that's usually...

ALEX

Give me knowledge arcana

BEN

So that is 19 not including the supplementary

ALEX

So that 19 will chuck in a couple of points because you've done a full medical examination so you can eliminate a bunch of things. There's a magical affect going on here but it's a really hard one to pin down. It's not something that you are specifically familiar with. It is likely that whatever it is, is going to be getting worse. You believe that your healing magic will keep it at bay whatever it is but you will need to go investigate this properly.

BRYN

So in our pulpy high adventure, high fun season two you've given Lyd's character a mysterious...

BEN

Degenerative...

BRYN

...degenerative disease.

ALEX

Yeah.

(laughing)

This is what people think is fun

JAMES

Yeah a fun pulpy one. A high octane buzzing adventure.

ALEX

Her body's slowly going to degrade into a pulp. This is what you all asked for. I don't understand.

BEN

Right...

BRYN

He's a psychopath but we respect his craft.

BEN

So I've got good news and I've got bad news. What do you want first?

LYDIA

I don't really believe in good news.

(laughing)

ALEX

Oh god, that's a catchphrase. I love it!

BRYN

That's amazing! On a t-shirt.

ALEX

Absolutely. Job done.

BEN

So shall I just give you the bad news then?

LYDIA

Well I'm assuming that one is a cover for the other so like cut to the chase.

BEN

No not really. Alright, you've got a degenerative magical disease.

LYDIA

Yeah that doesn't sound like any good news.

BEN

Well that was the bad news.

LYDIA

Right

BEN

This is why I said two separate things.

LYDIA

Well I don't think any good news can really balance that out.

BEN

Well...

LYDIA

You've got a degenerative magical disease *but* you're starting to go glittery.

BEN

No, I reckon...

LYDIA

A nice haircut could sort it out.

(laughing)

BEN

I know people deal with bad news differently but for goodness sake, what I'm saying is, right got a degenerative magical disease, don't know what it is but we are going to research it. That's great. We've also got Hamid, I'll bring him in once you've got your kit back on. What I am saying...

LYDIA

I've got my kit back on. All I let you see was my back.

BEN

I meant your bandoliers.

(laughing)

What I'm saying is that I think my restorative powers can just keep it at bay, right. So it's not like you're gonna wither away and die straight away. As long as you're with me you should be fine and let's get...I've got limited working knowledge of how magic works that's not divine so get Hamid in, he can have a look and see what's what.

LYDIA

I thought getting blown up on the regular was bad.

BEN

Well I mean this is just magically blown up.

LYDIA

But slowly, right. I guess you can say that all things are getting blown up.
Entropy is...

(laughing)

BRYN

Common knowledge on the streets of Other London.

LYDIA

She had two years of people trying to put her in school and it not really working out.

ALEX

If there was ever a system that would teach people entropy, it's Other London.

BEN

So shall we...let's go and see Hamid.

LYDIA

In character, yes she really loves entropy.

BEN

Shall we go and see Hamid then?

LYDIA

No...

BEN

Alright

LYDIA

Just...let's just wait until there's an actual specialist.

BEN

What?

LYDIA

He's not a specialist, he doesn't even...Hamid will just get freaked out and throw up, right.

(laughing)

BRYN

I'm doing my shocked and appalled face for the listeners at home.

BEN

Ok that is, at worst, a 50/50

(laughing)

BRYN

This scene's been perfect.

LYDIA

And don't tell Bertie for the love of...

BEN

Why would I tell Bertie? He can't shout the problem away. Anyway...look...

LYDIA

Look if you just heal me up now, we'll talk to some expert and then love to explain the fact that I'm dying...

BEN

You've got wizard scurvy.

LYDIA

Ok I've got wizard...is it catching?

ALEX

Zolf, you spend...I'm just gonna skip this ahead. You spend a cure light wounds. That's all it takes.

BEN

That's cool, I'm going to spend it with one of those spells that I've definitely written down and I prepared down.

ALEX

Yeah you spend a cure light wounds. What affect it actually has is it reduces everything down however the new scars that have appeared are still visible but nothing is bleeding, nothing is separated. You just have a very fine scar now. The autopsy scar is very fine and visible unless someone's literally coming you and giving you a medical examination, no one's gonna see.

LYDIA

Are there mechanical affects in terms of either hit points or flexibility of movement.

ALEX

No there are not.

LYDIA

Right

BEN

See I reckon it's something to do with the rubbish that Mr Ceiling put in you.

LYDIA

Really? Really? I hadn't put that together Zolf because I thought it might've been about...

BRYN

Well Mr Ceiling did.

ALEX

Cut to Hamid and Bertie. While this has been going on.

BRYN

This vintage is lovely Bertie, don't you think so? What a splendid view.

JAMES

Isn't it charming – and Bertie and Hamid are...shall we say we're promenading around the deck for the...

BRYN

Oh no Hamid isn't going above deck if he can avoid it. I'm in the lounge. In comfy chair.

JAMES

Ok fair enough.

LYDIA

Smoking jackets

JAMES

Yeah

ALEX

There are smoking jackets on a hook by the door if you want one.

BRYN

I'm wearing my own.

ALEX

Oh of course. How gauche of me.

LYDIA

So obviously Hamid can but does Bertie carry...

BRYN

He's in his armour the whole time.

ALEX

The door briefly opens. Someone appears to peek in the door and immediately close it and you hear footsteps padding away.

JAMES

Bertie does not notice.

BRYN

15

ALEX

You notice but you've no idea who it is.

BRYN

Hamid goes back to sipping the wine.

ALEX

It's good wine. Cut back to...

JAMES

Must be a draught. And here is a draught...

BRYN

It really is the only way to travel.

JAMES

I think so.

ALEX

Back to Zolf and Sasha.

LYDIA

Alright well I guess I'd better go back to...I don't know, just waiting to degrade and die.

BEN

No look...

LYDIA

I could do that at the top of the rigging. I think that'd be quite fun. Alright, see ya. Opens the door and walks out.

BEN

I'm not gonna let that happen to you.

LYDIA

Goes up and is then on the rigging.

ALEX

Give me a perception check Sasha.

LYDIA

20. Not natural.

ALEX

Sure, sure. You notice someone comparatively well dressed quickly rushing away, very suspicious looking in their movement away from the lounge. They run down the corridor and up the far stairs presumably to the top deck.

LYDIA

Well that's where Sasha's going anyway because she wants to go up onto the deck.

ALEX

Following the person

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

You don't even need to do a stealth check. They do not notice you.

LYDIA

Oh she's not following them to follow that, she just wants to climb up some rigging.

ALEX

No I merely mean, walking behind the person. They head upstairs and on the top deck, they have a look around, guideline themselves and on shaky feet go right to the prow of the ship and seem to sequester themselves in a little nook. Not hiding, they've just found a out of the way bit of the ship and have hidden away.

BRYN

They're not standing at the front doing Titanic.

ALEX

No they are not. So I am going to skip time ahead unless anyone has any big plans for today. Does any have any big plans for today?

BEN

I'm going to ask the captain if she has any textbooks on magic or medicine.

ALEX

Ok

LYDIA

Sasha is going to try and make friends with some of the gnomes that are climbing up the interesting ship rigging and sort of get some odd jobs to do while being acrobatic and fun going up and down all the fun things to climb.

ALEX

Hamid, any particular plans?

BRYN

No.

ALEX

No, is a good answer as well.

JAMES

Bertie is going to make friends with the wine list.

(laughing)

ALEX

It is not particularly extensive. So going around the table, I will deal with Sasha first. Roll me a knowledge local

LYDIA

Oh that's a thing right. I need to get to know some people to get that. So 21.

ALEX

21. You have a bit of friction at the start insofar as they don't really want to talk to you. They'd rather just continue going about their business and they speak almost exclusively in gnomish. However, it becomes rapidly apparent

that you are actually useful and you're not one of those passengers that they get who's like "oh I definitely want to help, here let me tie this knot. Oh I don't know how ropes works". So you manage, it takes the whole day but you manage to ingratiate yourself to the point where they know your name, they'll have a chat...

LYDIA

She's not that interested in talking that much just – so can I get you anything?
I just like climbing.

ALEX

What you discover whilst speaking to them is that they actually were in Paris on totally legitimate business and what they were rushing out of the warehouse was their legitimate shipment and the only reason they were trying to rush out is they didn't want to be caught up in other people's things because for a trader, that's really bad news.

LYDIA

And the whole dragon fire is kind of bad news.

ALEX

And they are carrying a shipment of cheeses.

LYDIA

Nice.

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ALEX

They have loads and loads of cheeses upon board.

BEN

Don't tell Hamid this.

ALEX

Hamid and Bertie both of you give me a perception check.

JAMES

Drinking and carousing. Yes. 9.

BRYN

12

BEN

Do they get booze penalties.

ALEX

You manage to get yourself pleasantly tipsy

BRYN

I was worried I might roll less than Bertie for a second there and then I remembered my bonus is +9

ALEX

Hamid, you don't get particularly drunk but what you do notice...

BRYN

Oh I'm very...I don't drink a lot, I drink slowly.

ALEX

Yeah you're enjoying it. What you do notice is as you're doing things around the ship, maybe you nip out to go to the toilet and come back with someone. Someone's definitely trying to avoid you two. They're not following you but any time that you've accidentally run into them in this, comparatively small, space they've immediately turned tail. That's been your whole day. You've mostly spent it...there's a selection of decent enough novels on a bookshelf. There are also some travel accounts of the European tour.

BRYN

I'm just watching the scenery go by.

ALEX

The scenery's gorgeous. It's absolutely gorgeous. You're heading across what is mostly either rural farmlands giving way to wild but in a well maintained way so clearly there are people...

LYDIA

Deer parks

JAMES

Managed forests.

ALEX

Yeah managed forests, things like that. It's probably the nicest view. It's the nicest time you've had in weeks

JAMES

Are there any other people around in the lounge coming in and out.

ALEX

There is one woman who comes in. She's extremely dowdy and doesn't want to talk. She places herself in a corner, pulls out a slim volume and begins reading and isn't particularly interested in any kind of conversation unless you chase that down. She doesn't seem to approve of either of you.

JAMES

No in that case, Bertie has no interest in this person I don't think.

ALEX

Zolf

BEN

Yes

ALEX

We will skip to you are in the captain's cabin, the table has been reverted back to charts etc. and she is in a much better mood today. Back to how affable she was after Wilde got kicked off. The faint smile's back. We will skip to you basically have sat down.

So what is it that I can do for you? It was Smith wasn't it?

BEN

Zolf, yeah. I need to distract myself, very airsick I suppose.

ALEX

Oh sure, sure

BEN

So I dunno if you happen to have any textbooks or volumes on magical medicine.

ALEX

We have a healer onboard. He's ok. Don't tell him I said that. He's a lovely guy but, er, he can deal with bumps and scrapes. Anything big we have to pull into port. She goes over to a bookcase that she has, runs her fingers along the spines, goes – mm – reaches over, pulls a lever, the bookcase drops down into the door and another bookcase seems to rotate its way around. She goes through again – ah there we go. She pulls out a couple of volumes, puts them down. They're extremely out of date medical journals. They're accurate but

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also there's nothing particularly insightful which, you know, liver goes her, kidneys go here, you should probably have two

BEN

Two livers?

(laughing)

ALEX

Yes both.

JAMES

Party time. Got my spare party liver in.

ALEX

You're only looking at the sylph page. Just skip that, get back to humans and stuff.

Listen Zolf, while I have you on your own actually Zolf. So you mentioned that you were going to Prague. I'm...for another member of the Harlequins yeah, I'm happy to redirect. It's a long haul anyway.

BEN

Thank you

ALEX

I have to ask, the rest of your group, how much do they know about...I'm assuming that you have another mission beyond whatever they're coming along for.

BEN

No. Remember the whole part where you told me my dad was a member of Harlequins and I was like, that's news to me. No idea.

ALEX

All I'm getting at is that I get the impression that this Prague thing is important. Can I give you a hand is what I'm asking? Beyond just getting you there.

BEN

No. It's fine.

ALEX

She casts a critical eye over what you're wearing which is basic at best. How would you describe what you're wearing?

BEN

Some underclothes

(laughing)

I'm in a onesie

(laughing)

JAMES

Long johns...it's like...

ALEX

Listen, Zolf...

JAMES

A woodsman's onesie

LYDIA

But from the knee down they're soaked through because of course...

BEN

No they're not, that's part of the magical properties, they don't actually get things wet.

LYDIA

Ah you don't leave wet footprints.

BEN

Don't leave wet footprints.

ALEX

Maybe a slight mildewy smell but that's about it

(groans)

BEN

My personal hygiene is very good thank you.

LYDIA

Yeah this water is refreshing.

ALEX

Listen Zolf, I realise that you weren't aware of your father's history and things like that but you are a member of the Harlequins. It's not a thing that you choose whether you act on it is none of my business but...

BEN

So it's like Judaism.

(laughing)

ALEX

But the thing is Zolf, is...I mean as a Harlequin you can ask for the help. That's ok. I'm looking at you and what I'm seeing is someone who needs some help.

BEN

I'm going to one of the places with the highest level of magical artifacts in the world so I'll just buy some stuff, that's fine.

ALEX

We can outfit you here. I can outfit your people as well if they're with you. It's no bother. We can do this. It's not particularly difficult. I mean you're not going to get Prague level enchantments and stuff but I can certainly hook you up.

BEN

No that's fine then.

LYDIA

Just slap the GM in the face. Boom, slap, slap.

BEN

If you don't...

LYDIA

Slap

(laughing)

ALEX

Argh. This is bad listening.

BEN

If you don't have anything...

LYDIA

Uppercut

BEN

...particularly special then no, that's fine. Yeah.

ALEX

Ok.

BEN

I can borrow a jacket.

ALEX

Sure. In that case, yeah you have the run of the ship. I ask you obviously don't disturb the other passengers and we'll be in Prague probably...there's a decent enough headwind so I'd say probably going to be a couple of days more at least.

BEN

Alright well you've got this doctor of yours. If they're up to snuff and they need a bit of a hand I'll offer it as part of the passage payment.

ALEX

Oh well it's kind of you to offer. I'll send anyone your way if they actually get hurt. Mostly things tend to run smoothly. You know when it's not exploding. Have a good one.

BEN

Yeah you too. Alright, bye.

ALEX

We'll skip ahead to the evening, you're all in the lounge together. Does anyone have anything particularly interested to roleplay or I'm going to keep accelerating time.

JAMES

Accelerate time.

ALEX

It's the next morning. Do any of you have a big plan for the day?

BEN

No

BRYN

Nope

JAMES

I feel like I should do something with my time. Explore the ship further. What other facilities are available on the ship?

ALEX

Mostly it's everything I already said. There is the captain's cabin on the top deck, there is the top deck as I said. The actual facilities for guests are actually...as impressive as they are, it's still basic stuff. In your room there is a toilet and there is a sink which fold away. The lounge has books, a nice big view sized porthole oval shaped.

BRYN

A chess set, a backgammon set.

ALEX

Yeah

JAMES

Ok Bertie is going to try and find somebody to buff his armour because it's needing a clean-up so he's going to find a shoe shine boy but like a full body shoe shine boy.

ALEX

I'm not even going to get you to roll for this one. There is no one aboard who is willing to shing your armour for you and the other guests are avoiding you.

JAMES

Does Bertie notice that they're avoiding him

ALEX

Give me a perception roll.

JAMES

16. 15.

ALEX

Yes.

(laughing)

JAMES

Bertie's going to go and visit Harrison Campbell. He doesn't care that he's avoiding him.

ALEX

Where do you go to find Harrison Campbell?

JAMES

Harrison Campbell's cabin

ALEX

He's not there.

JAMES

Bertie waits

(laughing)

ALEX

One more perception check

LYDIA

Is he hiding...

JAMES

18!

LYDIA

Oh you see Harrison Campbell on the roof, his legs and arms stretched out, quivering, on the ceiling hoping that Bertie doesn't look up.

JAMES

Ah Mr Campbell

ALEX

Not canon. Not canon. You do see...

BRYN

Can we let Lyd GM this game.

ALEX

Let's be honest, she's bringing all of the pulpy to this adventure right now. I'm just bringing disease. So as you are waiting inside Harrison Campbell's cabin, it wasn't locked even though there's a keyhole, you see...you hear footsteps approaching the door. Then you see a bit of movement at the keyhole and then before you can react you hear the distinct sound of footsteps rushing away.

Evening draws in, you are heading to sleep, Harrison Campbell has not returned to his bedroom.

JAMES

Bertie getting bored starts searching through Harrison Campbell's stuff

(laughing)

Idly at first and then he's like ooh, yeah.

BRYN

Manuscript of unpublished novels

ALEX

You know what I'm gonna end the episode there and we'll find out what was there next time.

BEN

Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god.

LYDIA

All the Bertie fanfare is all there.

BEN

I was thinking about my romantic novels.

(laughing)

Too excited to talk!

JAMES

Is Harrison Campbell the novelist?

BEN

He's the novelist that I really like.

ALEX

The fact that you don't know has only aided your RP'ing.

(laughing)

BEN

I don't know what he looks like.

ALEX

You've never seen him, there's no photos

BRYN

You have no idea he's here.

JAMES

Bertie, I think does know that you like Harrison Campbell

BEN

Yes because you have one of his books.

JAMES

Yeah

LYDIA

He's starting to put two and two together. So he's seen...

ALEX

We'll do a wisdom check next episode and let's see if you realise but I'm closing it there.

LYDIA

I hadn't put that together!

ALEX

I hope that you all tune in next time and we will continue this adventure but mostly sitting around having a lovely time.

LYDIA

Yeah lovely

BRYN

This has been the best episode in ages!

ALEX

See ya guys!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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