

RQG – 92 – Bringing Down the House

Content Warnings

- X
- X

BEN

Hi everyone, Ben here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of patrons. Gillian Mon, Heather Hartwell, MJ Erikson, Samantha Dawdy, Michelle Bankuid, Sara Williams, Yaqoob Yaqubson, Steven Gareheart, Moray, Trish M. 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 92 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have

BEN

Ben Meredith

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

HELEN

And Helen Gould

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Grizzop drik acht Amsterdam

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Sasha Racket

HELEN

Azu

ALEX

And the party's almost not split three ways.

LYDIA

I mean it kind of is.

HELEN

So close!

ALEX

But it basically still is.

BRYN

I dunno, like I wouldn't say that out loud because Lydia might decide that Sasha sneaks off instead of joining the fight.

LYDIA

Yeah. She's only known these guys like a week.

ALEX

I can magically, in the real world, summon one natural 1 per episode. I'm happy to use it on Sasha getting away. I used it on Ben to make sure that a bar brawl happened and I'm happy to use it here to make sure that Sasha doesn't get away!

LYDIA

It's one of his powers. His feats as a GM. Once you hear episode 90. Episode 30 he was just able to dodge thrown dice.

ALEX

I took evade plot. No sorry that was what you did isn't it!

LYDIA

Yeah. It was great!

ALEX

So...

BRYN

I tried. Repeated castings of invisibility.

LYDIA

I mean aren't you glad that I took half emotional damage from some of the stuff that you made go down in Paris?

ALEX

I mean it would've slowed...maybe, maybe. Anyway, anyway, Sasha is hidden in a bar called The Pharoah. Azu and Grizzop are making a scene in a bar called The Pharoah and Hamid is currently finding out that his father is so problematic and a little bit more complicated than just being rubbish and I am going to pick up with the combat that we left off last time. Specifically Azu-Grizzop.

HELEN

Yeah I was facing off against two guys.

ALEX

Yes you were. So I believe, for the sake of my own sanity, it's been more than a minute since the initiative happened. So I'm going to go back to the top of the initiative order if it's ok with everyone. So Grizzop you're up.

BEN

Right yes, so I'm going to scoot out from behind the table that was placed in front of me.

ALEX

You used the scoot action, ok.

LYDIA

Take on the condition.

BEN

Scoot scooted. And the thug that threw a chair at me I'm going to point the bow at his face and quickly go down to his knees and pop one off in each of his knees.

ALEX

Urgh! Take the attacks.

BEN

That's a nat 20.

ALEX

So roll to confirm the crit first. Yep

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

So that's a crit.

BEN

And then the other knee is an 18.

ALEX

That's a hit as well. So there's a crit and a hit.

BEN

Cool. So the critical...8, 9, 10 and then the non crit 5. Oh it's x3 goodness me!

ALEX

I'm going to take it as read but if you're aiming for his knees you're probably not trying to immediately murder someone.

LYDIA

You amputate his leg

ALEX

You amputate both.

LYDIA

Oh my word!

HELEN

Do you have a thing about...

ALEX

Let's put it this way...I don't! He made this happen! This has all come from Ben.

BEN

Wait, no. Hang on a minute.

ALEX

His characters. His attacks.

BEN

It's an arrow! Like one maybe because of the critical but both?!

ALEX

You absolutely annihilate this person and they dropped. They drop.

BEN

Like mechanically I wasn't...I shouldn't be able to do that.

ALEX

It's almost like you've left the lowly levels and headed into the heavy heights of...

LYDIA

There might be some scraps of flesh but basically that aint getting healed.

BEN

At this point I do that and go, [screaming] ooh sorry!

(laughing)

ALEX

The fight erupts around you. You still have a third attack if you...

BEN

Oh no, no, no I didn't do my...

ALEX

Is it just the two?

BEN

Otherwise I'd have had a much lower...

ALEX

Gotcha, gotcha, gotcha. The one that you're facing off against has already gone. Azu you're up. Grizzop just murked someone. Just straight up murked.

HELEN

I've got my back to him so I don't know.

ALEX

Also, before people complain, mechanically Grizzop leaned out from total cover, fired and leaned back in to total cover. There's a table in front of him.

HELEN

I don't care.

ALEX

You know that someone out there will.

LYDIA

Take the condition popped.

ALEX

So, sorry what do you do Azu?

HELEN

Ok so I've got two people who've just tried to throw things at me and then missed. I don't want to cut them with the great axe. I just want to bash them with it.

ALEX

So there's a thing that we can call which is called basically trying to deal non-lethal where effectively you're smacking them with the flat of the blade. You take a small penalty on the attack. I'll be honest unless anyone here is a really formidable opponent, it won't make a difference because you're quite good.

HELEN

Ok

ALEX

So you can just say I want to attack non lethally and I will make the maths happen.

HELEN

Ok then I just want to bonk them both on the head.

ALEX

Ok. Roll me a bonk attack.

HELEN

That's 18

ALEX

Hit

BEN

Consider themselves bonked

(laughing)

ALEX

One of them has been bonked.

HELEN

28 somehow

ALEX

Yeah they're extremely bonked.

BRYN

You have a very high attack bonus.

ALEX

Do you have a second attack as well?

BRYN

Yeah

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Do you want to roll the attack for the second bonk?

HELEN

Ok. Bonk one successful. Bonk two also successful I guess.

BRYN

19

ALEX

Yeah. So it was bonk one for no, bonk two yes. They are both now bonked.
Roll damage which is going to be just hideous.

HELEN

Ok so that's 9.

ALEX

And again.

HELEN

12

ALEX

They both are bonked into oblivion. You have bonked them and both of them fall unconscious.

LYDIA

O-bonk-lion

(laughing)

ALEX

Thank you for that addition there Lyd.

LYDIA

You're welcome!

ALEX

Some people worry...some people worry, 91 episodes in maybe things will slow down. Maybe the jokes won't be quite so quick and fast but they were wrong.

LYDIA

No! We've got them! The word play you thought only James Ross had but now I'm bringing it!

ALEX

We can mix nonsense in.

BEN

Well we bonk to differ!

(laughing)

ALEX

So yes, you have successfully taken out two. I can going to roll a check on something. Could both of you give me a sense motive on the fly.

LYDIA

A bonk well done.

(laughing)

A job well bonked.

HELEN

That's what I get on Tinder!

(laughing)

ALEX

What's that?

HELEN

That is a 1!

ALEX

Azu can't read a room.

BEN

I think that's a 7.

BRYN

That was a 7

HELEN

Really?

BEN

It's just a bad dice.

HELEN

Oh ok! It's a 7.

ALEX

Oh! That's disappointing.

LYDIA

I just would've loved like, this is me getting on Tinder, rolled a 1. No mate that's my life! That's my life, you got a 7.

BEN

13 for me.

HELEN

What do I add?

BEN

Sense motive which is down in the skills.

HELEN

Oh hey, so that's 18.

ALEX

So both of you know that you have so swiftly dispatched three of them that the rest, because grumps don't tend to last in terms of morale you might actually be able to just get them all to back off by sheer being a badass. Like

they're not...they're not a coherent unit and you might just be able to scare them away.

BEN

I shot a man's legs off!

ALEX

Grizzop, you're up. You just shot a man's legs off.

BEN

Oh! Ok...I'm going to run to the...drop my bow.

ALEX

You are not helping to terrify the thugs into submission. Carry on!

BEN

Run to the guy, grab both his legs.

LYDIA

Urgh! They're separate from his body now!

ALEX

They're still basically there but carry on.

LYDIA

The critted one is definitely separated.

BEN

So just squish them back into...and then lay on hands to try and put them back again. Sorry, I'm really sorry. I really meant to make that a warning, not a...

ALEX

Roll the cure check.

BEN

A heal check?

ALEX

A heal check. Sorry not cure.

BEN

I mean he's had his fatigue cured as well.

(laughing)

5 damage.

ALEX

5 damage. You don't really manage to manifest a huge, enormous amount of healing. You cure his hangover.

BEN

If I'm not murdered next turn I'm just going to pump another one into him.

ALEX

Azu you're up. Grizzop is not helping you to intimidate the crowd. He's currently apologising and helping him.

HELEN

I'm going to attempt to be intimidating.

ALEX

Ok

HELEN

So Azu steps in front of Grizzop to be like as you have seen we are formidable warriors...

ALEX

If this is an intimidation check, whilst you shouldn't be able to intimidate crowds, I disagree with this rule and always say that you can. Roll me the

intimidate check before you give me your threat. Because if it's a 1 you better be role playing a 1.

HELEN

Ok so I roll a 20?

ALEX

Yes D20.

HELEN

Ok

(laughing)

ALEX

Ooh!

HELEN

+ 7 is 8.

LYDIA

No!

BRYN

Why would you summon your 1 there Azu!

LYDIA

Listeners can't see Alex boogying.

ALEX

Would you please give me the natural 1 of trying to intimidate a crowd and doing the worse job you possibly could.

LYDIA

That's a critical fail.

ALEX

Right up with there with trying to look after Sasha with there, there.

BEN

That's a lot of critical 1s actually.

ALEX

Oh yeah, yeah.

LYDIA

For diplomacy.

ALEX

For diplomacy nothing but, almost. Do the worst you can.

HELEN

Well as...if you do not step back we shall de-leg the rest of you! Ha, ha!

ALEX

You hear from the back, get them before they get your legs!

(laughing)

BRYN

Is Sasha not in this initiative order as well?

LYDIA

I did roll.

ALEX

I am about to deal with Sasha if you will bear with me.

LYDIA

Translation: damn.

ALEX

Ok. Bear with me.

BEN

Are their rolls garbage?

ALEX

Maybe. Ok Azu, I know you've only just started playing this character but it's time we really discuss what happens if you die. You take 2 damage from a bottle that someone throws from the back of the bar.

HELEN

Ooh!

ALEX

We'll get into death saves if there's any kind of issues. Sasha, can you give me a perception check.

LYDIA

It's 22.

ALEX

Yeah it's definitely Grizzop and it's definitely Azu and they're definitely making things worse by the second. All you needed was a moment of peace. You know it's 50/50. If the thugs here are as good as the thugs that you grew up with they're in trouble but you know, it might be a different class of thug.

LYDIA

So Sasha would position herself between Azu and Grizzop and the nearest exit which may be a window.

ALEX

Ok.

LYDIA

One that Azu can fit through. I assume she can still move freely because she's not associated with the paladins.

ALEX

Well this is where your crowd dodger...

LYDIA

Ah yes!

ALEX

Would you care to remind listeners because we're probably going to have some people who have never even heard us mention this because it's not come for a while.

HELEN

I have not heard of this.

ALEX

Well there we go.

BEN

It's not come up since the first episode.

BRYN

No it has come up since but...

ALEX

It's come up a couple of times but not for a long time.

LYDIA

It's been useful. It's one of the things that makes my acrobatics and things.

So...

ALEX

So walk us through crowd dodger.

LYDIA

Crowd dodger is something she's had from the beginning which is +2 acrobatics move through creature's space.

ALEX

Yeah so that basically means that if you're trying to do a flip over someone or something she gets bonuses but we've also flavoured it that she's actually good at moving through crowds...given it's called crowd dodger. So I'm not going to get you to give a check to move through this crowd is what it boils down to. Other people...

LYDIA

She'd do really well.

ALEX

Yeah other people...

LYDIA

Like that +2 + her acrobatics is 15 bonus.

ALEX

Don't make me humble you. I will. I will. I just don't want to.

LYDIA

You have many times!

BRYN

He's already used his summon natural 1.

LYDIA

You've humbled her a lot.

ALEX

So you move through the crowds successfully. Where do you move to exactly between...

LYDIA

Between them and the nearest...is there an entrance that's within...or are they in the middle...are we in the middle of a hive of different bars.

ALEX

Basically the latter. They walked right into the middle going hello, hello. Paladins hello.

LYDIA

Idiots!

ALEX

So this is the middle of the bar. That's a lot of chest high furniture you've got there. Goodness me. A murder hole. Been a long time since I've seen one of them...like they're not doing well in this environment.

BEN

No we're doing very well in this environment!

LYDIA

Idiots!

BEN

But in the wrong way!

LYDIA

Ok she's going to move to within...somewhere between where they are and the nearest exit-y thing and then like...if there's a ring leader she's going...of any of the grumps, she's going to come up behind them and hold a knife to its neck and then say, call off your lads, they're with me. Except it's her so it'll be like stop it. All of this make it stop.

ALEX

Can you roll an intimidate check.

LYDIA

I know it's a lot of things but...

ALEX

Like mechanically it works out. Give me an intimidate check for the person that you're currently threatening.

LYDIA

I rolled a 17 but her intimidate is a charisma thing so it'll be -1 so 16.

ALEX

16. The guy that you hold...hold? I've gone Cockney. The guy that you hold is definitely intimidated. Do what she says. Do what she says. And you hear the distinct yell of someone else nearby going shut up Terry! Meanwhile jumping to Hamid. Total whiplash. I am not going to play out the entire conversation if you're just listening in for one important reason. No one is interested listening to me talk to myself for ages. How long...

BRYN

I dunno, it was pretty dramatic last episode.

ALEX

How long does invisibility last?

BRYN

Five minutes.

ALEX

Five minutes. So within those five minutes it seems like the manager who initially resists is actually ok with this as a solution to the problem. It would help deal with a lot of issues. They can't be blamed for a security breach from the person that is literally the head of the bank. That's not their fault blah, blah, blah. Long story short it looks like the deal's going to be going through ad

they're starting to work out the specifics of it. For what it's worth your father's holding up amazingly well under the emotional strain but he's kind of doing that iceberg thing you've known so much which is he lets nothing go and just trusts other people infer that everything's sort of in order. However the conversation is going to be a long one whilst they work out a lot of specifics and your invisibility is due to expire quite soon. What are you doing? They're currently discussing contracts and how they're going to handle this from a PR angle and that kind of thing.

BRYN

It's a pretty small featureless room isn't it?

ALEX

You're in a small boardroom.

BRYN

Well...

ALEX

[whispers] hide under the table!

BRYN

Yeah

LYDIA

Be a bulge behind the curtain.

(laughing)

ALEX

Was that lamp always there? What the one that's a replica of my son in body but not face because there's a lampshade. Yeah that one. Yeah always there.

LYDIA

Stand behind your dad and wink.

BRYN

No, I'm going to...

ALEX

Stand on the table and just point j'accuse

LYDIA

I am the Ghost of Banquo!

(laughing)

BRYN

I'm just going to secrete myself in the corner so they're not paying attention and let the invisibility wear off. I'm just going to have been there the whole time without them noticing. Like I don't...I don't want it to be a dramatic

reveal. It's just at some point one of them will notice that I'm there and I will be casually leaning.

ALEX

Ok. So the invisibility expires and you're in the corner.

BRYN

Looking nonchalant.

ALEX

Now we're going to find out how long it takes. First the manager. And then father. So manager and your father are talking. Your father's starting to sign some paperwork and so on. The manager is facing you. You're basically almost behind your father. Manager notices first. He kind of looks shocked at you and then basically mouths at you "what's going on" looking at you. Your father hasn't noticed that he has noticed or anyone else is there. He's still doing paperwork.

BRYN

I'm just going to give him a little frown and a tiny, subtle shake of the head.

ALEX

Er...sorry...your son is in the room sir.

(laughing)

I don't know for how long that's...it shouldn't have happened. Your father puts down the pen. Stands and turns towards you. And his face is reddening and you're basically seeing, finally that passivity, that façade is dropping and he is furious. He hasn't said a word. He is furious!

BRYN

I'm going to look over his shoulder at the manager and just say could you give us a moment. Because I don't want him to lose it in front of the manager.

ALEX

Before your father can even respond the manager takes his cue and exits.

HELEN

Smart man!

ALEX

What are you doing? Why? Why do you do this? I do nothing? I do nothing but try and make this work! Why? Why are you here? What are you doing?

BRYN

I don't say anything. I just go to hug him.

ALEX

He backs away. Just *get out* and let me fix the family. While you're hesitating, he literally picks up a chair, slams it against the wall. *Just get out!*

BRYN

No.

ALEX

He stands like right up towards you, *just let me fix this*. He's literally gold veins bulging. His hands are clenching and unclenching.

BRYN

You're doing an amazing thing and I am grateful and I have never had as much respect for you as I do right now but you need my help.

ALEX

He turns away.

BRYN

My body language is very deferential. I am not...I am trying to deescalate the conflict but I'm also not letting him get his own way.

ALEX

He literally just turns in place with his back towards you. His hands are clenching and unclenching. Clenching and unclenching. And he finally basically relaxes his hands and you see his shoulders arch downwards and he begins breathing again. Bearing in mind he was there for almost 15 seconds. What do you propose Hamid?

BRYN

You let me support you. That you let me be a part of this family. That you, for once, let anyone else in this family take on any responsibility. I will follow your lead. I will do what you ask me if you keep me involved. I know that I was a stupid kid. I know that I've made my mistakes but I want you to see the man that I have become. Trust me. Saleh was falling apart under the pressure and what you are doing is incredible but if this is your plan you won't be able to help him afterwards and this is not, unfortunately, the only problem he's created. If you are dealing with this one then I will deal with the other part of the situation that he's gotten himself into and we need to be coordinated in those responses. Father let me help you.

ALEX

Ok I am going to cut back to the shenanigans, as it were, because if nothing else, Alex isn't good with conflict. So Alex is going to jump away from conflict to a completely different, far more bearable...

BEN

Back to mechanical conflict.

ALEX

Mechanical conflict are fine.

HELEN

Then there are rules.

ALEX

Yes!

BEN

No conflicts, just fighting!

ALEX

With that in mind, Grizzop.

BEN

I cast lay on hands again. That's really bad. Another 4.

ALEX

Another 4.

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

You might be able to save one of them if you keep going.

BEN

Alright sorry. We're going, we'll keep going.

ALEX

Azu, you're up.

HELEN

Wait so someone...someone said that they're going to attack right?

BEN

Well they threw a bottle at you.

HELEN

Oh yeah! Ok but that...

LYDIA

It dinged.

ALEX

In fairness it dealt you 2 damage. You probably have a cut.

BRYN

You also heard someone say shut up Terry. You don't know why.

HELEN

Ok

ALEX

Oh and you know what, that was in English.

HELEN

Ok, alright so Azu touches her face where the glass was, and she's like ah, that's not happened for a while. And then she gets her axe ready and she's like I do not wish to do this but if I must...

ALEX

I kill the entire room! What do you do?

HELEN

I guess I look for whoever...

ALEX

You are surrounded by people who are not your friends.

HELEN

Are any of them moving towards me?

ALEX

All of them.

HELEN

Hm.

BRYN

Do you have the cleave feet?

HELEN

Yes!

BEN

Uh oh!

HELEN

I think I have a special cleave feet.

BRYN

You have great cleave.

HELEN

Yes

BRYN

Every time you hit one of them, you can just turn and hit the next one. You could literally potentially, you could hit all of them that are within range this round.

BEN

Because your...

BRYN

As long as you keep succeeding you will be able to hit everyone you can reach.

ALEX

Bryn is correct. You can keep going as long as each attack is against a new person and as long as your attack is successful, there's basically no limit.

BEN

Do you not have to KO them?

BRYN

No that's 3.5.

BEN

Ah

ALEX

But you can't cycle back to the same person. So you can't matrix it and...

BRYN

You can hit each person once

ALEX

Do you want to give it a go?

BRYN

And each starts the round in range and each attack is successful.

HELEN

I might as well!

ALEX

So give me the first roll. I'm not even going to get damage first. Let's just deal with this one at a time.

HELEN

Oh god, please don't be another 1. Oops.

BRYN

23

ALEX

That's a hit. Go again, same dice.

BRYN

24

ALEX

That's a hit. Go...

BRYN

I know she is technically taking a penalty for causing non-lethal damage.

ALEX

That's fine.

BRYN

15

ALEX

Ooh let me check something. Yeah carry on! They do not have high AC.

BRYN

27

ALEX

That's a hit.

BEN

How many are there?

BRYN

29

ALEX

Keep going.

EVERYONE

Ohhhh!

BRYN

Natural 1!

ALEX

So I'm not even going to get damage because this is going to dive down a rabbit hole. Five of them...

BRYN

You just wade through them swinging.

ALEX

It's like watching someone harvest corn!

(laughing)

Finally the last one is a huge wild swing and your axe manages to bury itself into their timber support. You tear it free of the support and the roof starts to crack in a bit. You hear a barman in the distance go no! Nooooo!

HELEN

Sorry, sorry. Can you help?

ALEX

Meanwhile all you see around you are ashen faces and everyone begins fleeing.

HELEN

Oh thank god.

ALEX

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

And welcome back. So Sasha can you now give me an acrobatics check with your crowd dodger ability.

LYDIA

So basically so she can continue standing there while people run past.

ALEX

Yeah basically it is a route. Are you getting swept along or are you just not.

LYDIA

So that would be an acrobatics thing?

ALEX

Yeah

LYDIA

5 + 13 + 2 so 20.

ALEX

20. Yeah you're fine. Basically everyone begins fleeing. They start beating up one another to get out faster so actually this starts turning almost into a brawl around you.

BEN

You know who isn't fleeing? The guy with no legs. Sorry, ok right.

ALEX

Don't you talk for my characters. He wakes up and begins shuffling away.

BEN

No, no, don't move. Don't move. It's going to be really bad. I'm trying to put them back. I'm trying to put them back!

HELEN

Let him go Grizzop!

ALEX

They begin yelling in a language you do not speak.

BEN

I try and...argh!

ALEX

Funnily enough argh is fairly universal!

BEN

Like I'm just going to try and get one more lay on hands because I'm pretty sure I can get at least one of them to stick

(laughing)

ALEX

You know what roll me.

BEN

Because I'm just trying to knit the flesh.

ALEX

How many more have you got? How many more have you got?

BEN

5

ALEX

Use 3 and tell me what you get.

BEN

Ok. 4, then that's 13, 16. No 19 sorry.

ALEX

19. Use another one and they might leave with their legs.

BEN

Ooh a further 10.

LYDIA

What both legs?

ALEX

So...

BEN

I'm trying!

BRYN

It's magical healing. It's pretty special.

ALEX

Do you want the good news/bad news?

BEN

No just good news please

(laughing)

ALEX

Fair enough!

BEN

You gave me the choice!

ALEX

So you managed to heal the legs so that at a glance, you know what they're scarred but they're there.

BRYN

Stuck one on backwards.

ALEX

He's...

LYDIA

One is missing a kneecap.

ALEX

He's not going to be walking away. So they're still there but he could probably get someone to get to a healer and do a fix up.

BEN

Ooh, I'm going to grab him. Not by the legs! By the shoulders. Try and drag him back to a bartender saying this man needs a healer. Get him to a healer alright.

ALEX

At this exact moment...

BRYN

Best combat ever!

ALEX

Sasha's drunken ally bursts into...like through the bar brawl and is stood there completely just...

BRYN

Naked?

(laughing)

ALEX

Just annihilated. Holding...

BRYN

It just sounded like that's where the sentence was going!

ALEX

Holding the empty gin bottle in one hand and what appears to be some kind of bin lid in the other.

BRYN

Oh my god, it's Captain America.

ALEX

And is just spinning around yelling incoherently. Yaaa, arghhh and he's just stood there. He's just now placed himself in your midst. As the brawl starts to

die down, as enough people get out that they can all fit out the door at the same time.

HELEN

I would like to stop him and be like you can put those down.

BEN

Roll your natural 1 then!

(laughing)

ALEX

Yeah roll me a diplomacy check.

HELEN

Yeah

BEN

It's still the same episode you're not allowed to do this.

HELEN

Yeah hmm. 15 + what?

LYDIA

7 I think.

ALEX

I'll let you be too effective again.

HELEN

Ok that's just a tick, I've got nothing in there.

BRYN

So your base charisma.

HELEN

So that's 20.

ALEX

20.

HELEN

It's alright.

ALEX

Is it though? Is it?

HELEN

No but...

ALEX

This always happens. It's my curse I'm so sorry!

HELEN

Your curse?

ALEX

I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry everyone.

HELEN

It's not...

ALEX

I brought this on you.

HELEN

No!

ALEX

This always happens. I am the worst thing that happened in Cairo. I'm the reason for the sand. I'm the reason...he just drops the bottles. It's me everyone! Just get me!

HELEN

Azu throws her arms around him.

ALEX

He's beating his chest. Why?! Why do I do this everywhere I go?! I'm so sorry everyone! I'm so sorry!

HELEN

What species is this person?

ALEX

Human.

HELEN

Ok in which case I...Azu just doesn't know what to do and just wraps her arms around him in like a bear hug so not only is he no longer planning. She's like it'll be alright. Whatever happened, we can fix this.

ALEX

So I'm going to cut back to Hamid. Hamid I'm not going to RP this because it's going to take a long time and unlike most campaigns we're on a bit more of a time limit. I am basically going to give you an info dump from your dad's side. You can tell me what you're going to tell him and then long story short, we need to figure out what your game plan is going forward but I'm not going to RP this entire conversation because just in terms of dramatic silences we don't have the episode time.

BRYN

Sure.

ALEX

So with that in mind basically your father's plan was a last ditch because when the meritocrats came into the arrangement with regards to this specific vault and the things it contains, it was with a sort of no wiggle room policy. Your father has made things sort of...he's tried to cover up debts before and things like that.

BRYN

Well he's done some covering up for me.

ALEX

But when it was you it still technically counted as an accident. This was not and it's frankly it's not in his ability to do and the fact it's on the meritocratic grounds means he's actually for the first time...he's plucking at straws and what it comes down to is he isn't even aware yet of the stuff to do with Barret really. Like your brother explained...

BRYN

So I am going to explain that and say that I have dealt with this person before. That I know someone who used to work for him who now works for me. Which is guess is only stretching the truth slightly and that that...if he can deal with the official meritocratic problems, I will be able to deal with Barret. That's my line.

ALEX

Then your father basically says, what it comes down to is the only way he can deal with the meritocratic problem is taking the fall and hoping Saleh...Saleh the Younger doesn't do anything stupid to mess up the plan. He doesn't have anything else. He doesn't have any other plan at this point.

BRYN

I'm going to explain that what Saleh needs and that what he's never had and what I needed that I'd never had before in the family is to be given responsibility. That, you know, that every mistake we every made was always fixed and we were never...although we were punished, we were never given responsibility and that's what makes people grow and so I'm going to say, look, if you can't be head of it anymore and I've got the mercenary company we have to make Saleh the head of the family business. And he won't be good a that. He's not...he doesn't have the head for numbers but with the right people around him and if we...he's not going to be able to have the full reigns like my father has but with the right people around him he is good at knowing other people. You know, he's...he makes friends well and he will be able to run it if he has the right people helping him and it is that level of responsibility and understanding the sacrifice that our father is making for him, will make him grow up. That's my pitch basically.

ALEX

Ok I'm going to jump into the RP at this point. That way we've compressed things a lot.

BRYN

Oh yeah because this was a tortuous difficult conversation.

ALEX

The manager came in and was basically told don't come back until your father steps out and did warn that he is going to have to notify the authorities. You're not both leaving this with everything still up in the air. Your father is looking haggard now. His tie's undone, his jacket's on the back of the chair and he's leaning across a boardroom looking at you.

BRYN

Hamid still looks immaculate.

ALEX

Won't work. I understand what you're saying and I'm not saying you're wrong but we have two problems here. One, he's not in a fit state now and two, even if he was, Hamid, your brother killed someone. I didn't want him to head into a meritocratic custody but that doesn't mean that we...he can't just...

BRYN

No, no of course. I'm sorry that was silly of me. He can't be rewarded.

ALEX

Saira can take over.

BRYN

Will she leave her current job? She loves it so much.

ALEX

Who is going to be better placed to deal with the fallout from this than your sister, a representative of Apophis.

BRYN

She'd be amazing at it. I don't deny that.

ALEX

As for your brother, just because I don't want him in a meritocratic prison doesn't mean that I'm going to make this disappear.

BRYN

You're right.

ALEX

Saira will head the family. I will need you to make arrangements so that your brother is kept away from people. I don't want him harming anyone else and then I'll have to go and I'll take the meritocratic sentence. I think that's the best that we can manage.

BRYN

Ok. Ok. I go to hug him again. Like he rejected my hug earlier on but...and I respected that but I'm going to try again at this point in the conversation.

ALEX

He steps back and instead offers you a hand. Like a handshake hand. But it's not aggressive and it's staring you dead in the eye and it's not a power move. This isn't a Trumpian handshake. Let's put it that way.

BRYN

I pause briefly. I look slightly disappointed but then I actually go for it and I shake hands with him the first time as hopefully equals.

ALEX

That's certainly the impression that you're getting. I am going to jump back to the pub. By virtue of everyone else fleeing it's kind of those times, you know when they say ask for volunteers and everyone else steps back. You're sort of left in the room Sasha unless you actively decide to flee.

LYDIA

No she's deliberately there. She picks up a miraculously unspilled glass.

ALEX

Of course there's always one.

LYDIA

And is just standing there sipping from it as people pour away.

ALEX

The bartender has basically taken your casualty off your hands.

BEN

Good.

ALEX

And the place is rather quiet and now all that's left are staff basically trying to clean it up and giving everyone a wide berth because they're also not foolish enough. You're paladins like...who's going to believe them.

LYDIA

Well thanks for that guys

BEN

Sasha!

HELEN

Sasha we found you!

BEN

I'm just going to run straight towards and leap up to be like yeah!

HELEN

I can't do that because I am embracing a strange man.

(mumbling noise)

LYDIA

Good to know that when a woman wants a quiet drink...

BEN

Halfway through this sentence, unless you dodge, I plough into your chest and grab you in a weird sort of spider hug.

LYDIA

Ok she just doesn't respond at all. She's just standing there and you're kind of...

BEN

So I'm basically hanging off your chest going, Sasha!

ALEX

It's more than Hamid ever managed!

BRYN

Hamid respects people's boundaries!

LYDIA

Yeah

BEN

Grizzop's a bit drunk!

HELEN

Oh yes I forgot about that!

LYDIA

Well great. You found me.

BEN

I'll drop off at this point. We were worried about you. You just disappeared.

HELEN

Yes we were worried. There, there. There, there.

LYDIA

I can handle myself.

BEN

Well...

HELEN

We couldn't lose you!

BEN

Yeah that's like...

HELEN

We didn't mean to...

BEN

Not because we thought you were in danger.

LYDIA

I was just trying to have a drink.

BEN

Friends stick...

HELEN

Together

BEN

Together

ALEX

[singing] ramalamama, didingy, dadingy dong.

BEN

Did we...did we screw up?

BRYN

No I'm not letting Alex get away with that!

BEN

I just ignored it!

BRYN

That is not ok!

BEN

I was just trying to have a good conversation and the GM swans in with a silly...

ALEX

That's what GMs do right, they have to sabotage RP.

BEN

Did we screw up or...

LYDIA

No I assume that Grizzop has slid down.

BEN

Yeah I dropped off when we started actually having a conversation. Kind of looking at you, like I don't know what I'm doing.

HELEN

Azu heads over dragging the crying human along.

LYDIA

No I just...I guess you guys...it's just a lot. It's a lot. But you're right, we've got a job to do.

BEN

That wasn't my point.

LYDIA

Let's get back to the job.

BEN

No I wasn't...that wasn't the point. I was just...we wanted to be here for you because you're a...you're a friend and we care. It's not...I don't know I'm not trying to fix it. Can't fix it.

LYDIA

I mean you should probably spend your time making friends with people that are going to be around.

BEN

I'm not in for like efficiency

(laughing)

LYDIA

I mean who are going to start your podcast projects with? Think about people's schedules.

BEN

I'm just going to poke in the, I guess height wise, the thigh and be like no we care about you.

HELEN

Yes, you specifically.

BEN

Cos you're you.

HELEN

And you're important.

BEN

Yeah

LYDIA

She looks at Azu a little blankly like we've had one conversation

(laughing)

Alright I guess. Look fine. Fine.

ALEX

[mumbling] Don't deserve friends like you!

HELEN

I also found a new friend.

LYDIA

What is he trying...I think the guy might know something about the weather.

HELEN

Azu picks the guy up and sets him on his feet. Do you know about the weather?

ALEX

This is all my fault.

HELEN

But why?

ALEX

Because I'm cursed. The curse! I'm cursed. He begins beating his chest and heading over to the nearest bottle that has alcohol in it. The curse!

HELEN

No, no, no...

LYDIA

I thought it was Hamid's family that kept killing people that sure it's your curse.

BEN

I'm going to grab Sasha while Azu's dealing with this guy and just try and swing you around so you're not looking at that guy and be like if you need time, take time. Alright. Look. I didn't come here to try and be like you've got to get back to work. So just don't...we're not trying to force you, right. Like just...take...

LYDIA

Work is...no let's get back to the job. Let's sort that out. It's always, you know, good to get things done innit. What's this curse mate?

ALEX

The curse!

LYDIA

Yeah that one.

HELEN

Ok Azu will attempt to calm him down. Ok she's not going to slap him.

BRYN

Knock his head clean off!

ALEX

It's ok Grizzop will heal it and then it'll be fine!

HELEN

Oh no!

LYDIA

He doesn't have any heals left does he?

BEN

I've got 1!

(laughing)

HELEN

She's going to gently tap his face and be like...

ALEX

[moaning]

HELEN

Oh! Is there something that I could make him not drunk with.

BEN

You might have create water. Does it say create water as a spell?

HELEN

No.

BEN

Ok

HELEN

Sorry

ALEX

Then no, I'm afraid you can't sober him up unless you have...

LYDIA

We're in a bar. Sasha goes and gets some water.

ALEX

...explicitly in Pathfinder they did mention that you can use cure poisons etc.
but I don't believe you have that either.

HELEN

No I don't.

ALEX

You're really good at hitting things.

BEN

I've got endure elements.

LYDIA

So do I!

BEN

Is alcohol an element?

BRYN

No!

ALEX

Don't need endure elements, got a beer jacket.

LYDIA

So Sasha's going to pour the drink she was drinking from over the guy's head.

ALEX

It's what I deserve. He drops to his knees and he seems to be as drunkenly as possible replicating the stereotype from every, single bad intro ever dripping with water

BRYN

It's Platoon.

ALEX

Yeah arms out to the side, whyyyy! Why do I do these things...

BRYN

I love this guy. He's such a drama queen!

HELEN

You have to pull yourself together...

ALEX

Only so the world can tear me apart again! Why!

HELEN

Well you were alone before and now we are here and we won't let it be torn apart by you or anyone else so explain. Please.

ALEX

I'm going to cut back to Hamid. So unless you say otherwise I'm basically going to have to montage this one.

BRYN

Yeah, yeah.

ALEX

The manager returns. Your father has a hushed conversation with the manager. However unlike before it is a conversation whereupon you and your father are side by side and he is talking with the manager and you are there as opposed to you are ancillary. The manager heads off and returns with a number of meritocratic...let's be honest, they're basically agents. It's plain clothes because of the bank and so on and they formally...and your father steps out and in the foyer surrounded by people, your father is formally charged. He offers himself up. He doesn't give you any sign of affection but

you do get a nod of recognition to you and while he was talking to the manager earlier, it was clear that the manager will work with you in terms of what the plan was for Saira to take over etc. etc. and your father's led out. The manager...it's not great, he starts to adopt the same manner with you as he did with your father and starts basically walking through the paperwork and it takes a while. Unless you're going to put any weird changes or anything he'll basically put the initial paperwork with you down there and then and then you can head out. However bearing in mind that there is a crowd waiting to talk to you outside.

BRYN

Oh yeah. We're a public entity. Yeah I'll be very pleasant with the manager like my father is stern and officious and Hamid is hopefully friendlier so perhaps that relationship can be on a better footing. And when he starts working with Saira she's also just very charming so that should be fine. God the press. Well...yeah I mean I'm going to go out.

ALEX

It's chaos. Like it's utter chaos. So combine the fact that the entire city's basically been in uproar thanks to both the storms and they don't this [whispering] you turning off all of the internet, plus now a big juicy scandal from the heady heights. It's...it's an absolute circus.

BRYN

I'm going to give a pretty evasive statement. I will say something like we're still trying to unravel the details. Obviously the Tahan family has been going

through some very difficult times recently. We've all been under a tremendous amount of stress. We'd appreciate our privacy but we'll have a fuller statement for you all in a little while. Thank you for your time.

ALEX

And then...

BRYN

And then I'll get back into the coach and go back to the family home and hope the others know to come back there at some point.

ALEX

Sure. All I will say is that it's chaos pretty much all the way. There's already chaos outside the gates. The gate guards are earning their pay at this point. Let's put it that way.

ALEX

I'm going to jump back to, I believe I left you mid apocalypse now.

BRYN

Platoon.

ALEX

Platoon. I'm so sorry.

HELEN

I've asked him to explain.

ALEX

What is there to explain!

LYDIA

Everything!

ALEX

I know!

LYDIA

Actually losing my patience. Right!

ALEX

Of course you would! The only friend I've ever had taken from me in its prime and it's no better than I deserve!

HELEN

Oh my gosh!

LYDIA

Alright maybe just leave him.

ALEX

It's all my fault!

BEN

During this conversation I'm just standing back a bit, just like concerningly looking at the back of Sasha's head.

ALEX

Yep.

LYDIA

Well I don't think this guy is our responsibility and he doesn't seem to have anything useful to tell us so let's go.

HELEN

But he knows about the weather.

LYDIA

Does he? Or is he a drunk?

HELEN

I don't feel right leaving him here.

LYDIA

There's spells to get rid of drunk.

HELEN

What is your name?

BEN

Oh good question!

(laughing)

ALEX

The person sort of stands, staggers, their clothing torn and they adopt what appears to be an attempt at a Byronic pose with someone with less than optimal balance.

LYDIA

Since we've met Byron.

ALEX

Yes...

LYDIA

If he's vertical then it's not a Byronic pose

(laughing)

ALEX

In which case it's an excellent Byronic pose.

LYDIA

He's slumped drunkenly. Yeah very Byronic yeah.

ALEX

Howard Carter.

LYDIA

Oh

ALEX

Thanatologist. World renowned stenographer...coder. And I...I am the cause of all that is wrong in the world. I brought this down. It was my fault. I delved too much and it's all my fault. The curse you see. The curse!

LYDIA

It's good to finally meet you person that's behind it all!

ALEX

I know! I know all I needed was the Rosetta translation. With that I could've done my studies and with the studies I could've finally exposed it but no. No!

BEN

Hang on a minute did you...

ALEX

I can't get my funding. Someone just takes that and goes. I can't get my Rosetta stone because apparently it can't be translated anymore and so I try and do it without don't I?! I try and dig around on my own and everything goes wrong!

BEN

I lean in from behind Azu. Do you know anything about...do you know anything about brain machines?

ALEX

Wait, what?

BEN

No? Oh.

LYDIA

Machines made of brains.

BEN

See I thought I'd caught up but...

ALEX

Nonsense. What are you possibly talking about.

LYDIA

Oh right.

ALEX

It's the tomb. The tomb has ruined the world. I was...it was hubris. I dared...I dared to delve. I dared to delve beneath the very base of Meri...dragon vaults and so I deserve it. I'm just sorry I took the world with me.

LYDIA

Well it's good that that worked out for you then. That sounds sorted. You did wrong and you got punished. That's not usually how it works mate so I'm kind of glad that's already wrapped up. Sorted.

ALEX

I'm going to end the episode there.

LYDIA

Good. Now we can be off.

(laughing)

BEN

Alright then. Bye!

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. Rate and review us online. Tweet us @therustyquill, visit us on Facebook, or email us at mail@rustyquill.com. Join our community on Discord, or via Reddit at [r/rustyquill](https://www.reddit.com/r/rustyquill). Thanks for listening.