

RQG – 100 – Disappearing Acts

Content Warnings

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ALEX

Rusty Quill presents. Hi everyone, Alex here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of our patrons. Amanda Gracier. Scott Shin. Chainsaw Hunter. Rodder Prime. Morgan Fitzmorris. Alex Weltlinger. Jeanette Arstrand. Sazandorable. Erica Gritzer. J Jenazelli. 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 100 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast.

EVERYONE

Wow!!!

ALEX

I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, for our hundredth episode, I have:

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BEN

Ben Meredith!

BRYN

Bryn Monroe.

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas.

HELEN

And Helen Gould.

ALEX

We've spent more time in here than I think I've spent outdoors in total.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

That's only this studio. Or the other four before!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

What, you used the word studio for the ones before now, that's adorable!

LYDIA

Corridors.

ALEX

And who are you all playing?

BEN

Grizzop drik acht Amsterdam

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Who's asking? That's Sasha Racket.

(Group laughter)

By now you might have figured it out.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

And Azu.

ALEX

And for episode 100, I thought I'd do something really special. Which is start with the party already TPK'd.

EVERYONE

Yay!!

LYDIA

Celebration! It's a balloon!

ALEX

It's avant-garde. It's really pushing the boat out, but I think that we're really going to get on the map with this episode.

LYDIA

Thanks for this treat, Alex, so does that mean that we just get to rest while you describe what happens to us?

ALEX

So basically, what we'll do is we're going to sit here quietly...

LYDIA

Aw, nice.

ALEX

We're going to call the episode Long Rest.

LYDIA

Awww!

ALEX

And then at the end of it you'll all be awake with all your abilities again!

LYDIA

Yay! Like that 7 minutes of silence.

ALEX

And completely new characters.

LYDIA

What? Wait...

HELEN

Ah, no, no, no, no, no.

ALEX

So...

HELEN

I just made this character.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Yeah. Yeah.

BRYN

No this – you've had it for ages now!

HELEN

It doesn't seem...

BRYN

Like, 15 whole episodes or something, that's forever.

HELEN

Really?

BEN

15 sessions is quite a – that's quite a decent campaign, actually.

ALEX

And given how dense it's been, that has worked out as about 15 hours that you've been Azu, I think, about, in game time.

BEN

Just bring back, like, I don't know, her sister, Bazu!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

I mean that's the longer...

HELEN

All the way through the alphabet!

HELEN

End it with Zazu, who is a bird!

(Group laughter)

BRYN

For the special, we've got Rowan Atkinson!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Oh, my gosh.

LYDIA

A real treat.

ALEX

So. As a minor recap, I believe you were all transporting the Heart of Aphrodite...

EVERYONE

Yes.

ALEX

To...

BRYN

Oh, the most powerful object in the world! That it was super-important that we not let it fall into the wrong hands? That one?

BEN

Yeah, yeah, the one they just gave us...

HELEN

That we got from a dragon.

BEN

They gave us a coach with like four guys and we're like, yeah, off you go, it'll be fine.

HELEN

It was an armoured coach? I think?

BEN

With four guys!

ALEX

Well, plus you lot.

HELEN

And us!

LYDIA

We're supposed to be good at this.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

I mean, technically speaking, you're approaching the best the world has to offer, take a moment and consider that.

BEN

Look.

HELEN

Oh dear.

BEN

Demonstrably that is not the case.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

And yeah, you may have gotten a bit ambushed by, we had a technical term for them and I cannot remember what it was.

HELEN and LYDIA

Blokes!

ALEX

That's it! Yes.

LYDIA

Blokes. Blokes.

BEN

Loads of blokes.

ALEX

(laughing) Loads of blokes.

LYDIA

Load of blokes.

HELEN

And some lads.

ALEX

Oh yeah, there was, it was interspersed with some lads, but nonetheless, the lad/bloke combo managed to just one, two punch you guys all to the ground. And the last thing that happened was Azu passing out. Overwhelmed by both lads and/or blokes.

HELEN

Yeah, that's, that's... a Saturday night!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Zing!

ALEX

Right.

LYDIA

Just a big heap of them.

BEN

I like the idea of being overwhelmed by lads and blokes, you're just in a club, you're like, (big breath) oof!

(Group laughter)

So many lads and blokes here, I just need to – oof!

HELEN

Yep, they're all in suits and top hats!

(Group laughter)

I'll take the gentleman route!

BEN

Doing a choreographed dance number – and all for me!

ALEX

So. First things first. Can everybody give me a fort save, please.

HELEN

It's my happy place, Alex.

ALEX

You all know the episodes start well with saves.

BEN

Er, fort save?

ALEX

Yes.

BEN

22.

ALEX

22 for Grizzop!

HELEN

(laughs)

ALEX

Did you...?

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HELEN

Roll a natural 1, yeah, that is what I did!

ALEX

Natural 1 for Azu.

BRYN

Welcome to episode 100!

LYDIA

Yeah!

BRYN

14.

ALEX

14 for Hamid.

LYDIA

9.

ALEX

9 for Sasha. Can everyone give me another fort save, please.

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BEN

Oh, come on, two in a row!

ALEX

That's the best kind of save!

BEN

Ha!

HELEN

Just so you know, that first one was actually 10, because I have 9 in total I think.

ALEX

I'll put a zero in brackets on the side.

BEN

28 for my second one.

ALEX

28 for Grizzop.

BRYN

18 for my second one.

ALEX

18.

LYDIA

15.

ALEX

15.

HELEN

26.

ALEX

26! Goodness me!

BRYN

Paladins!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

They're the worst!

HELEN

Yeah, well, my first one was terrible. So, you know, I'll have a slight limp.

ALEX

OK. Grizzop.

BEN

Hello? I mean, eerp!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

What would you like your new character to be called – OK, right.

(Group laughter)

So.

BEN

I've already got two.

ALEX

Oh yeah, I'll just dip into your massive backlog of characters, shall we?

BRYN

Zolf's coming back!

BEN

Zolf Smith!

ALEX

Oh, you know what, you wake up in, looking into the face of both Zolf and your other character...

EVERYONE

Chelvar!

ALEX

I was getting there!

BRYN

Yeah, no you weren't.

(Group laughter)

BEN

“Hello Grizzop! You all right?”

(Group laughter)

“Aaah!”

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

I'm so here for this episode!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So. Grizzop, you awake. You awake to...

BEN

Good.

ALEX

Basically pandemonium.

BEN

OK.

LYDIA

But like good pandemonium, right?

ALEX

You have no idea at this stage.

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LYDIA

Yeah, like a festival of pandas.

ALEX

Give me a perception check?

BEN

OK? (rolls) Oh, nat 20!

ALEX

Natural 20?

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

So.

BRYN

You work out the entire situation instantly.

ALEX

Longitude and latitude is... So, you awake immediately surrounded by other people's feet and...

BEN

I've deduced I'm on the floor.

ALEX

Yeah, shocker. Quickly you stand and have a look, and you find yourself smack in the middle of a pitched battle between the Aphrodite lot that Azu saw on their way and what seem to be the remnants of both blokes and/or lads. The battle appears to have turned in your favour. However, no-one's paying attention to you and it's literally a pitched battle in the middle of Cairo.

BEN

Er, do I have my bow?

ALEX

Your bow is basically beside you, you can pick it up, yes.

BEN

I'm going to pick it up and I'm going to move narratively, but I'm going to start shooting lads and/or blokes, looking for the rest of the party.

ALEX

That's fine, give me a perception check?

BEN

Bah, bah, bah, bah, bah. That is an 18.

ALEX

An 18? Great. I will return to you, Grizzop. Azu.

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

You come to. Everything seems dark at first. Give me a perception check.

LYDIA

Is it night, or do you have a hat on?

(Group laughter)

HELEN

I also...

ALEX?

Place your bets!

HELEN

I also roll a natural 20!

(Group laughter)

Paladins! Whoo!

ALEX

You roll onto your back.

HELEN

Oh good.

ALEX

And find yourself surrounded by blokes and/or lads.

HELEN

Mm-hm.

ALEX

They are currently basically just all over and they seem to be patting you down, as if looking for something. Shocker.

HELEN

Hmm...

ALEX

You hear the sounds of pitched battle all around you. You have one round before I jump onto other players. What do you do as your immediate thing?

HELEN

I check for the Heart of Aphrodite.

ALEX

OK. Hmm... I'm assuming you'd like to do so in a way that they can't immediately see you go, "Yep, there it is!"

HELEN

I pat myself down, I guess! (laughing)

ALEX

Whilst being patted down by all of the blokes and lads.

HELEN

I hope they don't notice my hands in all of theirs!

BEN

It's a pat race!

ALEX

OK. Can you give me a slight of hand to try and pat yourself down?

LYDIA

The fate of the world rests on this pat-down!

BRYN

Oh, dear. This is going to be a terrible...

HELEN

19.

ALEX

19?

BRYN

Ooh!

HELEN

In the deli, baby.

ALEX

You successfully manage to pat yourself down in such a way that the people surrounding you patting you down don't notice. They...

BRYN

Wow.

ALEX

They failed their perception check, really quite poorly.

HELEN

But do I find the Heart of Aphrodite?

ALEX

I'll return to you.

HELEN

No!

LYDIA

(gasps)

ALEX

Hamid.

BRYN

Er, hey!

ALEX

You awake to the sound of a distant pitched battle.

HELEN

Ooh!

LYDIA

Oh dear.

ALEX

You – give me a perception check?

BRYN

Hm. 15?

ALEX

15? Somehow, you have no idea how, you seem to have been thrown right clear of the fight and are basically buried in a shop window, more or less.

(Group laughter)

You are covered in mannequins and in fact on closer inspection you realise you're in a haberdashery. There are just hats everywhere and you are just covered in hats. That's currently your thing. There is a massive pitched battle happening about 50 feet, 50 yards, whatever, away from you, just laid out in front of you.

BRYN

Cool.

LYDIA

He just gradually stands up, looks at this incredible scene through the window, and has about seven hats on top of his head.

BRYN

Each one looking more stylish than the last.

(Group laughter)

BEN

I just love the idea of what happened to get you there, which is a bloke grabbing you, going, Heart, heart, heart – no! And throwing you away!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Maybe!

BRYN

Um, is there an area in the battle where there are only enemies and no allies?

ALEX

You cannot tell. There is a very clear, like the Aphrodite lot are clearly chasing off the blokes and/or lads...

BRYN

Can I see anyone else from the party?

ALEX

Give me a perception check?

BRYN

Er, 19.

ALEX

Yes! You see Grizzop, right in the middle where the two sets are fighting one another? Just (fighting sounds) going to town.

BRYN

I cast magic missile.

ALEX

OK.

BEN

At Grizzop?

(Group laughter)

ALEX

“Finally, my opportunity!”

LYDIA

“I always hated you...”

BRYN

One missile each at the three people closest to Grizzop.

ALEX

OK, one sec, I am just checking something quickly. OK, Grizzop?

BEN

Hello?

ALEX

From your perspective, you know, pew, pew, **(arrow SFX)** you've having a looking around, Bertie McGrew, and as you're sort of drawing your bow for a shot. The person that you're aiming at keels over. **(Magic missile SFX.)** As you look around, like...

LYDIA

“Wow, I'm good!”

ALEX

The other one keels over and then the third one gets hit in the face by something and is still standing, but immediately in front of you (**magic missile SFX**).

BEN

I'll shoot him in the chest, so, as he falls I see Hamid in the opening that's created.

ALEX

Yes you will.

BEN

Throw him a wink and a thumbs up.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Can you give me an attack roll for this one person, however.

BEN

Um, yes. That's 26 – 27.

ALEX

I already rolled earlier to see what his health is, yeah?

BEN

I thought the lad/bloke was probably not going to be...

ALEX

Lad/bloke is down, that's fine, and yes, as the crowd parts, you have a moment of eye contact with Hamid, Hamid with Grizzop.

BEN

Nice one!

ALEX

You both look awful.

BRYN

I tip my hat.

BEN

I don't...

HELEN

Which one?

LYDIA

Plural, yeah.

BEN

I don't comment on Hamid's looks.

ALEX

Oh, of course.

BEN

There are more important things right now.

ALEX

To be more specific, you both look like you have been absolutely beaten up, woken up, then beaten up again. You look *awful*.

BEN

That's a good point, we were sort of dragged off. Do I still have the four hit points that I had when I sort of went down, or are we on 1 hit point?

ALEX

1.

BEN

OK.

BRYN

So I haven't taken any damage when your stupid spell...

ALEX

1.

BRYN

Right.

HELEN

I was on 5 hit points.

ALEX

1.

HELEN

What?

LYDIA

What, I, er, um, I don't, I mean... I know.

ALEX

Sasha?

HELEN

Good noises going on here, yeah. Answer them!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Give me a perception check?

LYDIA

So I do wake up?

ALEX

Did I say that?

BEN?

Well, she can't roll a perception check if she's not awake!

BEN

You're in the land of the dead!

LYDIA

Oh yeah, I wouldn't put it past him. 23.

ALEX

23. So you see only bones – no. Um, so...

LYDIA

Made one of my other characters very happy!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

You come to, to the sword and spear points of three Aphrodite paladins, all basically guarding you with weapons pointed at your face.

HELEN

Oh dear.

LYDIA

Judgey McJudge.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So, what I am happy to do is focus on you for a bit, Azu, if I may, due to the fact that you have the Heart (whispers) – spoilers!

BEN

Yeah, all right, go on then, fine.

ALEX

Azu.

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

You are currently surrounded by people, and you are the furthest from the Aphrodite lot. You have realised you *do* have the Heart of Aphrodite.

HELEN

Good!

ALEX

It is, I believe you placed it upon your neck and buried beneath your armour?

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

Yeah, it's still there. It's almost like they don't even really know what they're looking for.

HELEN

Hmm.

ALEX

They are just like checking the soles of your feet – they're just checking randomly and, as it is, they, a couple of them peel off and just...

HELEN

Looking in my nose, I get it!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

A couple of them peel off and just leg it and it's clear that you're dealing with a bunch of people who are about to begin just legging it, really.

HELEN

I'm going to try and intimidate them.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

OK, give me...

LYDIA

Intimidate their backs as they flee!

ALEX

Give me an intimidate check.

HELEN

No, but like, but only a few have run away, there are still people around me and...

ALEX

There are still people around you, yeah.

BRYN

The patters.

HELEN

Yes. I'm going to intimidate the patters. Um, I'm just going to check, I've got a 7 in intimidate over there. (rolls) Well, that's an 8! (laughs)

ALEX

An 8. It's almost like lying on your back...

BRYN

That was a natural, that was a natural 1.

ALEX

It's almost like lying on your back...

LYDIA

In fact some of them gain confidence...

(Group laughter)

BEN

Bloke? Oh, bloke, bloke, bloke, bloke. Continue to pat.

ALEX

Seems like my plans have gone awry. They notice you as you sort of grab – in fact, how would you attempt to intimidate them?

HELEN

So, Azu intends to sort of rise up, like...

ALEX

That's as far as you get, they knock you out.

(Group laughter)

These things happen!

BRYN

I'm still scanning the crowd for other members of the party.

ALEX

Can I get everyone in initiative order please?

BEN

10.

BRYN

15.

ALEX

Mm-hm?

LYDIA

12.

ALEX

Mm-hm.

HELEN

Do I add anything to this?

EVERYONE

Yes.

HELEN

Oh, that one. -1.

(Group laughter)

BEN

So no!

LYDIA

No you do not!

ALEX

Do you add anything – sort of?

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Why is this happening?

BRYN

It's based on your dex.

HELEN

(whispers) I've got bad dex.

ALEX

You never thought you'd need it. You were wrong! Hamid, you're up.

BRYN

Er...

ALEX

Basically, the fight is unfolding. You have managed to sort of help Grizzop up.

BRYN

Yep. Grizzop seems fine. Can I see Sasha or Azu?

ALEX

Sasha, you cannot see. Azu, you cannot see. Grizzop's currently the only one that you can see. But you do have a clear memory of basically the carriage being overwhelmed and you have a solid guess that Azu is somewhere amongst the enemy rather than friends.

HELEN

Please help me!

BRYN

Um... Is the carriage still surrounded?

ALEX

So, the carriage is where the sort of pitched battle is happening.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

But it's definitely, the carriage has sort of fallen to the Aphrodite lot. Fallen, is it? Has been *gained* by the Aphrodite lot?

BRYN

I would like to scamper through the crowd and try and climb back up on the carriage for a better vantage point?

ALEX

OK. Rather than having to deal with all this other nonsense, because no-one's really paying attention to you...

BRYN

Yes.

ALEX

Can I get a single reflex save to just sum up making it without incident?

BRYN

Er, 15.

ALEX

Yeah! You manage to make it to the carriage and climb upon it without anyone particularly targeting you. It's very clear that the second that you were knocked out everyone basically has just discounted you entirely.

BRYN

Yep. Seems fair! Yeah, so I'm just going to get up on top of the carriage and start looking around, trying to spot Sasha and Azu, but I'm going to assume that's going to take me the rest of the turn.

ALEX

Give me a perception check and then I will say what you see at the start of the next turn.

BRYN

15 again.

ALEX

15? OK, great. In which case, then, Grizzop, you're up. You, for free, you see Hamid climb up on top of the carriage, like, he's there and having a peer around.

BEN

Cool. Yeah, so I know where Ham is, so I go off looking for Azu and Sasha by sort of, like, trying to thread my way through the fight and I also lay on hands myself.

ALEX

OK.

BEN

Because I'm beat up.

ALEX

Roll me the lay on hands first?

BEN

Cool. I can't spend multiple in a single turn, can I?

ALEX

No.

BEN

No, that's fifth, isn't it?

ALEX

Yep. It's madness, is what it is. True madness!

BEN

Cool. If I was fatigued, I'm not, and I gain 4 hit points.

ALEX

OK.

BEN

But I'm also going to try and move through the crowd so I will try, because I know I'm very low on hit points, to move defensively. I don't know if I can like move and take a, like, acrobatics check or...?

BRYN

If you sacrifice your standard action you can, there's something called defensive stance, which gives you +2 to AC.

BEN

Mm...

ALEX

I...

BRYN

And then still you'd still have a move action, but I don't know if your lay on hands will take enough...

ALEX

Here's the thing, I'm playing very loose and fast with this because the, like, pitched battle rules get a bit...

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

...wonky in Pathfinder?

BEN

I would like to move through the crowd and not get punched in the face and knocked out again.

ALEX

That's fine. Tell me, yeah, tell me what you want. You want to not get knocked out?

BEN

That's great.

ALEX

OK, I can factor that into my calculations. Can you do me a favour, tell me where you're heading, like what your intent is? Is it just go around randomly in the hopes of finding?

BEN

Sort of. Like, can I see any holes in the battlefield where people are moving around a body?

ALEX

You can see two clumps, one heavy in enemy and another heavy in friends.

BEN

I'll go for the heavy enemy clump because people, that's has to be more in danger.

ALEX

OK, give me a reflex save?

LYDIA

Save them.

BEN

Oh dear. 12.

ALEX

12? INSUFFICIENT!

BEN

Oh dear. Well, they've still got to hit my AC.

ALEX

OK, let me check something else. Yeah, that's fine. Unfortunately...

BEN

It didn't hit a 21 there, did we?

ALEX

You managed to basically attract the attention of a bunch of people who then proceeded to just fail to attack you. So you now have a following, in the bad way, of a *bad* followers.

(Group laughter)

But yeah, you find yourself basically catching up and right beside Azu, unconscious as yet more blokes and lads are...

BEN

Oh!

ALEX

Basically like taking her weapons, trying to take her amour and just effectively stripping her down until they find the Heart of Aphrodite.

BEN

OK, cool! Well, that's my action!

ALEX

Yep. Sasha!

BEN

Oh dear!

HELEN

(laughs)

ALEX

You're up, surrounded by Aphrodite lot.

LYDIA

I'm not. Down.

ALEX

Oh sorry, yes, you are currently face up...

LYDIA

Did we cover whether I am on 1 hit point?

ALEX

You're on... 1 hit point.

LYDIA

Right, OK. Er... (calls) All right!

Awkwardly.

(Group laughter)

And obviously they want me to stay down.

ALEX

So it's, you basically, your turn of just looking up, seeing people going, "Arrgh!"
I'm going to have to do Hamid's turn again?

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

So Hamid, you can see Azu is swamped by enemies, with Grizzop running to help, and you also see Sasha is surrounded by... friends, question mark?

BEN?

(chuckles) Well, yeah. Well if they're priests of Aphrodite, they're certainly friends!

ALEX

The battle seems to be very much turning in favour of the Aphrodite – Team Aphro!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Yes!

ALEX

But, um, nonetheless, currently you have a decision to make.

BRYN

I run over to Sasha. And I go (shrill voice) Azu needs help over there! Why are you standing round Sasha!

ALEX

“They brought an undead creature to the fight!”

BRYN

Sasha is our friend, go and help Azu!

ALEX

Give me a persuade check.

BRYN

You mean diplomacy, I assume?

ALEX

Ah, yes I do, it's been a very Fifth Ed kind of month.

BRYN

Um, 31?

HELEN

Oooh!

ALEX

Yeah, they all leg it over towards...

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

My word!

BEN

Sorry boss, yes boss!

(Group laughter)

BRYN

I'm very persuasive!

ALEX

Well, also, I mean, you guys do sort of have a reputation. It doesn't come up positively that often because you tend to associate with terrible people? But yeah, they leg it off to help out Azu.

LYDIA

And anyway, I assume you're getting bonuses for being famous in Cairo!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Yep. So Hamid, there is, I'm going to, you have a single speech turn each. Hamid and Sasha, you've managed to see each other!

BRYN

You all right?

LYDIA

No.

ALEX

OK, cool.

(Group laughter)

Grizzop.

BEN

OK, cool.

ALEX

There are three people still surrounding Azu and you see that basically everyone else at this stage is legging it away.

BEN

Mm-hm?

ALEX

Apart from one person. Give me a perception check? I've asked for a lot this turn.

BEN

Er, that is a 23.

ALEX

You see there's a single figure who is stood amongst the sort of routing cowled figures – by the way, like, as they're routing some of their cowls have fallen off, yeah, it's mostly lads and blokes!

(Group laughter)

But there's a single cowled figure who is stood perfectly still, watching at a slight distance and isn't retreating but neither advancing, just kind of there...

BEN

Mm-hm.

ALEX

Amidst the retreat.

BEN

Sure. Um.... While that's good but the priority right now is making sure Azu doesn't have the Heart of Aphrodite stolen.

ALEX

Sure.

BEN

So! I am going to just sort of sneak my hand between the lads.

ALEX

Lads.

BEN

And lay on hands!

ALEX

Lads? Bloke!

BEN

Yeah. And just lay on hands Azu, surreptitiously.

ALEX

Can I have a, hm, can I have a stealth rather than sleight of hand check.

BEN

That's a natural 20.

ALEX

Yeah, OK, cool.

(Group laughter)

Then lay on hands.

LYDIA

It's been all extremes this...

BEN

It really has, yeah! (rolls) Azu, you are no longer fatigued, if you are, and you get 6 hit points back.

HELEN

Cool. I am now on 7 hit points! (giggles)

ALEX

Nope!

LYDIA

Nope, 6.

ALEX

You're on 6 hit points.

BRYN

Because you went back down to zero, because...

ALEX

They knocked you out again!

HELEN

Oh what?

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Well, you woke up surrounded by enemies and went, I'll get you – bang!

(Group laughter)

And I'll tell you what, if the first thing that you do is yell, I'll get you, I might do it to you again!

BEN

Though she might survive this time.

ALEX

Yeah, I know.

(Group laughter)

BEN

Ha-ha! A d6's worth of damage!

HELEN

Fine.

ALEX

That leads us flawlessly on to... Sasha. You're up. By which I mean, it is your turn.

LYDIA

Yeah, I suppose it should put horizontal.

ALEX

Yeah, you're still very much, lay on the ground feeling terrible.

LYDIA

Are they still pointing spears at her.

ALEX

Very much no.

LYDIA

Oh!

ALEX

Hamid is quite the force of personality, when he wants to be.

LYDIA

So it's, OK, well she pulls...

BRYN

I'll offer you a hand, if you want to stand up.

LYDIA

She crawls to her feet.

BRYN

OK.

LYDIA

Let's – ugh, can't even heal, can I, just going to feel this awful forever! All right.

Let's go stab some things!

ALEX

Do you take any action?

LYDIA

Stumbles towards the fight.

ALEX

Towards the fight, yep. Azu?

LYDIA

But slowly.

ALEX

You find yourself awake again, with the last memory being waking up and then immediately sent back to sleep.

HELEN

(laughs)

BEN

But there is a little hand clutching your ankle.

(Group laughter)

Attached to Grizzop.

(Group laughter)

Yeah, not...

BRYN

It's a bit clammy.

BEN

What? It is not clammy, thank you!

Rusty Quill Gaming – 100 – Disappearing Acts

HELEN

Um...

LYDIA

Scaly.

BEN

No!

LYDIA

No?

BEN

They just have... skin!

BRYN

Yeah.

LYDIA

Oh, cool!

BRYN

I think. Well, yeah.

LYDIA

Goblins are scaly.

HELEN

OK.

BEN

Er, they don't look like the art?

HELEN

Oh, OK.

ALEX

A discussion...

LYDIA

Depends how much you moisturise, I guess!

BEN

Yes! Depends on the lifestyle of the goblin!

ALEX

For another time when Azu might not be getting knocked out again.

HELEN

(laughs) OK. So, what can I see?

ALEX

You can see three people who are currently still trying to search you, your axe has been kicked away from you and a small Grizzop who's basically...

BRYN

Presumably loosened some of the strapping on your armour and stuff.

ALEX

Yeah, they've maybe gotten, like, one of your straps has come undone on your armour, and they've, like, torn one of your sleeves off and stuff. They are just looking randomly.

HELEN

Sss...

BEN?

I really, sorry, I really like the fact that the last time this happened to an armoured person in this campaign it was because of a horny duchess!

LYDIA

Oh yeah!

ALEX

The times they are a changing! So, what are you doing?

HELEN

Just *really* annoyed.

ALEX

I get that!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

She wants... I want to climb to my feet and sort of roar at them, to be like,
Rawwwwr!

BRYN

Intimidate them again!

HELEN

Yeah, basically! And sort of go, *HOARRRRRRGH!*

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Woah! Empowered! Yeah!

ALEX

OK. OK, so, you rise to your feet, full, *Rawwwr!* OK. Two of them start to try and hit you and just like, “Bugger this,” and just leg it, they just run.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Good.

ALEX

The last one gets a full jaw smack on you, bare-fisted, dealing 5 damage.

EVERYONE

(load groans)

BRYN

Yes!

HELEN

What do you mean, yes?

BRYN

Because I healed you for 6 hit points.

HELEN

Oh.

ALEX

However. Guess who's now stood up and capable of cleaving, should they wish.

LYDIA

Oooh, is it Azu?

BRYN

You're not holding a weapon, though?

HELEN

Yeah. They kicked my axe away?

ALEX

Can you cleave with fists?

EVERYONE

No...

ALEX

I don't think you can, can you? Awww.

HELEN

That's a shame.

ALEX

I'm afraid you would have to go get your weapon, or you could just try and beat someone.

HELEN

I'm only on one hit point.

ALEX

Yes you are. You can get knocked down again...

LYDIA

But you're standing next to a healer.

ALEX

And again...

BRYN

You *are* a healer.

LYDIA

Ahhh!

BRYN

Physician!

HELEN

I am thinking...

ALEX

Paladin, heal thyself!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

I think I'm going to have to do that.

ALEX

Great!

HELEN

Because I am not... stupid.

ALEX

So in the middle of the crowded fight, you lay hands on yourself.

HELEN

Yes. How do I do that?

(Group laughter)

Um...

BRYN

Oh, so it's +2D6 healing, you do it automatically and you probably have a mercy effect?

ALEX

Yeah, you will.

HELEN

Yeah. OK that's that, thank you.

ALEX

Not at all!

HELEN

(rolls) Oh, that's 10!

BEN

Rolled better than me.

ALEX

Yes. Yes it is!

HELEN

Yay.

ALEX

You immediately heal yourself for 10.

HELEN

Fantastic.

ALEX

OK, at this stage, I'm probably going to just drop us all out of initiative order because it's mostly NPCs fighting one another and it's, you're just all going to be sat there watching.

BRYN

I want to burn the hooded figure's face off.

ALEX

You will do no such thing! Because they are too busy fleeing from you! So what happens is, yeah, the morale of the, of the blokes and/or lads (god, I can't believe that stuck)...

Rusty Quill Gaming – 100 – Disappearing Acts

(Group laughter)

Begins – basically breaks.

BRYN

Is Figgis there?

ALEX

Figgis? You don't know. Because they're all wearing cowls.

EVERYONE

Urgh.

ALEX

So they all flee and...

LYDIA

It's just all Simon Cowells.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

All of the Church of Aphrodite are in hot pursuit. Not a single one of them stays on the street.

BRYN

Hot pink pursuit.

EVERYONE

Woo!

ALEX

They are all heading off, chasing them. Grizzop, you have that sinister figure who stood amongst the retreat. There's that gloriously wonderful moment where all of the cowled figures run and in a brief moment of one running between you and the figure, **(magic whoosh SFX)** the figure's *gone...*

EVERYONE

(gasps)

BEN

I'm really glad that magic exists in this world otherwise that'd be a really confusing trump!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

And all that's left is the four of you on the street, surrounded by a significant number of bloke and/or lad bodies and a few Aphrodite bodies.

BEN

Oh no!

HELEN

Aw.

ALEX

And you just look at one another in the middle of this effectively deserted street and look terrible. Just the worst.

BEN

Shall we go to the temple?

BRYN

Yeah. But best to just walk from here, I think.

BEN

Yeah.

HELEN

Yes, please.

ALEX

Sasha?

LYDIA

Give it a shot.

ALEX

And we'll take a depressing break there!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Yay!

BRYN

Hurray.

ALEX

Episode 100! Woo!

EVERYONE

Woo! (laughter)

[AD BREAK]

ALEX

And welcome back. So, you all head to the Temple of Aphrodite.

LYDIA

Do we make it?

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Everyone give me a force – no. Er, you do make it. You do make it. You are sort of picking your way across all of the just battered remains of, of both sides and, like...

LYDIA

Can I just ask...

HELEN

Do...

LYDIA

So, were the blokes and – do they look evil? Or do they look like townsfolk that got mind-controlled?

ALEX

Are you taking the time to look?

LYDIA

I mean, Sasha's dragging her feet and staring at the floor so... Yes?

BRYN

(laughs)

ALEX

You see a bunch of people in cowls, unless you want to search further?

LYDIA

No, I guess maybe she should focus on getting made alive.

BRYN

We'll probably check in, if there are Aphrodite people around, we might check to see if they're still alive and what we can do to help them?

LYDIA

Yeah!

ALEX

OK.

HELEN

Do I still have the Heart of Aphrodite?

ALEX

You do.

HELEN

Oh, OK! I just realised I hadn't checked.

ALEX

It hangs, it hangs around your neck where it was placed, covered by the half-removed, lightly dented but already repairing itself armour. Because magic's the best, sometimes.

HELEN

And then I think, as we go, I'm going to start, like, strapping myself back up again, because I do not like to be indecent. (laughs)

ALEX

In terms of...

BEN

I mean, I hope you're wearing clothes under your armour!

(Group laughter)

Different strokes for different folks.

ALEX

Extremely cold, metallic strokes sometimes! So...

LYDIA

Hell, yeah!

ALEX

When it comes to the Aphrodite lot...

(Group laughter)

Basically every single one appears to be just unconscious rather than killed. It looks like every single one was, at a guess, to the rest of you, knocked out and the second they were knocked out, immediately they moved on to knocking out other people.

LYDIA

So these cowled... the blokes and lads, were only capable of non-lethal damage?

BRYN

(laughs)

LYDIA

I mean, that's kind of sweet.

BRYN

They were just using their fists, then they only deal non-lethal damage technically.

LYDIA

Pound, pound, pound, pound.

HELEN

They probably didn't have any training or anything.

BEN

How many Aphrodite people are down?

ALEX

There's about... ten total who are down.

BEN

Um, I get five of them up.

BRYN

Well no, we can do a pyramid scheme. If they're Aphrodite, they'll be healers, so you get one up, that person gets two up, and then those two get..

BEN

Actually no, I check the lad/blokes. Are they *dead*?

ALEX

Some of them are, some of them are “uuuurrrgh” but basically unconscious as well. There's about 40 of them, just laying around the place.

BEN

Cool. I'm going to do a quick sweep.

ALEX

Mm-hm?

BEN

And finish off any of the groaning um....

EVERYONE

Woah, hey!

BEN

What?

LYDIA

Mind-controlled townspeople.

HELEN

We get murdered.

BEN

We know that. You've made an assumption out of character!

HELEN

Why are you – you don't need to kill them, they're down, they're down already.

BEN

Yeah but, they attacked us so, you know...

HELEN

Yes, but they're not posing a threat right now, we need to get into the temple.

BEN

OK, I was going to get everyone up with a wave of healing energy and I didn't want these guys to get up as well. So I mean, you could drag them away if you want to but this is much quicker!

HELEN

There's, well, there, I – no, please do not murder them while they're unconscious.

BEN

They tried to – yeah!

LYDIA

Sasha says to Hamid, Aw, these paladins are brutal-er than I thought!

BEN

I mean, fine, OK, all right!

LYDIA

They're all like goody two-shoes!

BEN

I'll just, er – all right, fine. I'll get five of them up with individual lay on hands.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

How fractionally less efficient.

BEN

(big groan)

ALEX

Yeah, you immediately...

BEN

It's a *lot* less efficient!

(Group laughter)

All of them with two! That's a more than one hundred percent increase in efficiency!

ALEX

Yeah, well...

BRYN

Pyramid scheme! Pyramid scheme!

ALEX

You manage to – yes, successfully and easily get, was it five did you say, individually?

BEN

Yeah, I got five up.

ALEX

Yeah, they immediately set about reviving the rest of the Aphrodite lot and very quickly they're basically typing up and collecting up the remains of the blokes and/or lads **(magical spell SFX)**.

HELEN

That's what you do.

LYDIA

(laughs)

HELEN

You take them into custody.

BEN

Take?

HELEN

You were going to execute them! They hadn't even stood a trial or anything!

BEN

They tried to murder us! It was a fight – they lost, they suffer the consequences.

HELEN

But things are complicated here!

BEN

What?

HELEN

Well, there was some mind control going on with the thieves? They weren't very...

BEN

All right, no...

HELEN

They weren't very efficient.

BEN

That's a good point, fine. Fine, yeah, all right, maybe...

ALEX

(laughing) In the middle of an open, like, post-battle sprawl...

HELEN

A discussion of morality is what paladins do.

BEN

It's more about fighting and philosophy.

BRYN

Hamid is very pointedly not getting involved in the discussion.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Remind me not to anger you, Grizzop.

BEN

What? What? As long as you don't try and murder me! Like, but, no, fine, you can't go pointing about the mind control...

ALEX

One of the Aphrodite lot that has been revived by one of the other Aphrodite lot runs over wearing clerical regalia that's of the highest station than most of the paladins and so on. She runs over and is stood kind of slightly battle-weary in front of you all going, "Do you have the Heart? Is it with you?"

HELEN

Yes. It's, it's...

ALEX

"Why are you on the street? Get in the temple!"

HELEN

We were on a – OK.

ALEX

“Get in the temple now!”

(Group laughter)

BEN

What? Yeah, no, sorry for healing you, oohh...

HELEN

(laughs)

BEN

And I'll stomp off to the temple.

HELEN

Azu hustles away in the way that, you know, a private would when there's...

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Do you make your way to the temple or are we taking any other diversions?

There's still time. Get a quick, quick frozen yoghurt or something?

(Group laughter)

BRYN

Oh my god, they have froyo?

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

See now, in the time between the last episode we recorded and now, I have watched all of The Good Place.

(Group laughter)

So I get that!

HELEN

Why would you bring up frozen yoghurt in such a hot room though?

ALEX

Oh, just...

BRYN

And we're in Cairo in the desert, like it's going to be hot there too.

LYDIA

That would actually be amazing.

BRYN

Froyo would be amazing.

ALEX

You make it to the temple of Aphrodite!

HELEN

Hurray!

BRYN

Froyo for everyone!

BEN

Yeah, is there froyo there?

(Group laughter)

Has whassiface, you know, the elf?

HELEN

Eren.

BEN

Has Eren got froyo?

ALEX

I want you to know...

BRYN

Froyo fo sho, mofo!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

God's sake!

LYDIA

I think you might, you might have broken him.

HELEN

Never do that again!

(Group laughter - lengthy)

BEN

You're the one who put us in this hot room and then mentioned cold comestibles.

LYDIA

This isn't helping *my* headache. And Alex looks like he has a worse one.

ALEX

(laughs) Prep. I had plans!

BEN

Anyway, we get to the temple. What's happening, Alex, come on pick up the pace, come on.

(Group laughter)

BEN

No time to waste. We've got a story to tell!

LYDIA

Mm!

ALEX

Just let me write a quick note.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

Helen, you can read the note, is it kill Bryn...?

BEN

No, he's written kill Ben, not kill Grizzop, so I am just scared, I see you...

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So.

LYDIA

Just be careful about the froyo.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So. You all make it into the temple of Aphrodite.

LYDIA

Woo!

ALEX

And the first thing that becomes apparent is basically anyone with any magical ability is out on the streets right now in that fight. You are left with sort of clerical staff of the boring admin kind.

BRYN

(laughs) Administrative staff.

ALEX

Administrative staff. Better.

BRYN

Clerical staff is a terrible term in this world.

ALEX

Administrative staff.

BEN

But what if there was a clerical cleric – I'll stop.

ALEX

They see you come in and immediately like usher you in to like the equivalent of an A&E, like a side room, and start ministering to you. Unfortunately...

BRYN

Do you have any healing potions?

ALEX

I was about to say, unfortunately, it's potion only, but that'll be good enough. However, what's that? All of you get a scar? I think you do! In this game, if you

get hit to zero hit points, you get a scar. What's that, Azu? You did it *twice* in one round?!

HELEN

Two scars!

LYDIA

Ooh! They can be matching!

ALEX

What do we think?

BEN

I've got a broken nose. They punched us.

ALEX

Oh, your gobliny nose has gone crooked!

LYDIA

Noooooooo!

BEN

I mean, I might be able to reset it but...

ALEX

Ohhhh.

BEN

Oh wait, no, mechanically I'm not allowed to. Yeah, I've got a broken nose.

ALEX

Oh, broken goblin nose. Hamid?

BRYN

Probably some small scars on my back from where I was thrown through the shop window.

ALEX

Ohhhh.

BRYN

But clearly not visible in any outfit Hamid ever wears.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

How important.

BEN

I feel like that's power gaming.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Sasha?

BRYN

Oh, go and lose a leg.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

I'm trying to work out what she hasn't already got.

ALEX

Where've you got left to add a scar to?

LYDIA

Because, I mean, she can't lose any more fingers, her *face* already has burns on, er, she's...

ALEX

How about some good *leg* damage? I don't think you've had any leg damage yet?

LYDIA

I mean, we could? I don't think that she'd work mechanically if she'd got a limp. Maybe she loses a tooth?

ALEX

Awww! Yeah, I'll allow that!

BRYN

Non-mechanical but obvious.

ALEX

And Azu? You've got two. Two to deal with.

HELEN

Ooh. Going to make myself look bad-ass then. I have got a broken tusk.

ALEX

Noooooooooooo!

EVERYONE

Awwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww!

HELEN

And, you know how when, like, I've got like, someone kicked me in the temple so now I have a scar near my eyebrow.

ALEX

Yes.

HELEN

Through my eyebrow.

BRYN?

Ahh!

HELEN

Like in a boy band.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

Oh my god that's... Lollo and G would be such a good boy band!

BEN

Do you turn from the lovely one to the rebellious one?

HELEN

Yeah, the one I always had a crush on, yeah.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So, yes, you are all ministered to with healing potions. However, they all very delicately point out that you are only all going to be getting one each until they know just how bad the situation is.

HELEN

What?

LYDIA

So Sasha gives her healing potion to Hamid, I guess, since he's smallest?

ALEX

Er, they, again they literally just give you some potions, go, we'll give you some more healing in a second, we've got stuff available.

BEN

You don't happen to have some potions that inflict wounds do you? You know, hanging about?

ALEX

So, they sort of look at one another.

BEN

In a cupboard?

ALEX

“We could have a look? I mean...”

BEN

Yeah. Do that.

ALEX

“OK?”

BEN

Thanks. Very much.

ALEX

“Yes.”

BEN

Appreciate it.

ALEX

“Sir?”

BEN

Cool.

ALEX

(Group laughter)

They head off and in (rolls) three minutes, because why not?

(Group laughter)

They come back with a potion of inflict wounds and kind of tentatively hand it to.

BEN

Thanks! That'll do it.

LYDIA

Will it?

BEN

Yep.

LYDIA

Are you sure?

BEN

Ninety percent sure.

LYDIA

Well, then I might not do it then, because...

(Group laughter)

If I get damaged by it, we don't what would... help.

BEN

OK, well, it's there just in case, for an emergency, you know.

LYDIA

It's just a bit more complicated when a necromancers... did it. I don't think I've had a potion and helped me since. I think the last time I got...

ALEX

You haven't, it's always been clerics.

BRYN

Yeah. We've *assumed* they would, but we don't actually know for sure.

BEN

It would make sense that negative energy would heal you if positive energy doesn't?

LYDIA

Hmmm.

BRYN

I mean, that's probably what the necromancers use. Is the potion the same as that?

BEN

Yeah! I think it's, it's just negative energy as opposed to positive energy, right?

LYDIA

Look, we're here now, I don't think anything else is going to hurt us.

BEN

OK. Well, in which case, sit back and just relax.

LYDIA

How much of a lich does she look? Because apparently she's obviously an undead monster to Aphrodite people that have never seen her before. Like how...

ALEX

Well, at the risk of metagaming...

BRYN

They might have been doing just detect undead.

ALEX

All of them can detect undead.

LYDIA

Ah, right.

ALEX

All of them.

BRYN

So it may not be a visual thing, it might just be a spell thing.

LYDIA

Maybe she shouldn't lose a tooth because now (puts on lisp) I'll have to talk with a lisp!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Depends which tooth you lose.

HELEN

Yeah!

BEN

Aw, lost a molar (shudders).

ALEX

I mean, I've lost *four* teeth and I don't talk weird at all!

LYDIA

Got banged in the side of the head, yeah, it's quite, it's obvious when she smiles, but it's not a front tooth.

BEN

Did you lose them from a punch party?

LYDIA

Yeah.

BEN

Or surgery?

ALEX

You don't know!

BRYN

It's wisdom teeth, isn't it?

ALEX

Yeah, it is.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

I had loads. Anyway.

LYDIA

(laughs) So many spare teeth crawling out of my face!

ALEX

So, I am going...

BRYN

I drink some potions. I'm fine.

ALEX

I am, unless anyone says otherwise, going to accelerate time. Because a lot of stuff has to happen and none of you are in any fit state to really... do much.

LYDIA

Yeah... Sasha falls asleep

HELEN

So I don't know how much I heal?

BRYN

Well, it's only if we actually spend the entire night and wake up in the morning. I mean...

ALEX

Yeah, allow me to accelerate and it will become readily apparent.

HELEN

Sure.

BEN

Yep. So we won't need the potion healing actually. OK.

ALEX

So, accelerating time. Eventually, Aphrodite clerics and paladins starting filtering in through the front doors. Sometimes they have people in custody and they lead them deeper in. Azu, you know that they have some basic, like, padded cells and so on but mostly for, like, restraining temporarily, not like dungeons or anything like that. But yeah, they, some of them are bringing in restrained, some of them are coming in sort of just swapping jovially, kind of, “Oh I really did good there, didn't I? Oh yes, urr.” But for the most part it's people just sort of filtering in, healing up and getting back to hospitalling, just with an even busier day! Eventually, also Eren Fairhands asks to see all of you in his office as he did previously.

HELEN

Ah, thank god! OK! We go, I guess!

BRYN

Yep.

LYDIA

Trudge over, yep.

ALEX

So, heading in, Eren Fairhands is just signing a document and a paladin heads out. He looks like he actually got his hands dirty for once, like you know scuffed and got in a bit of a tussle, so he doesn't look he just sat it out.

HELEN

I've never seen him like this before. Wow.

ALEX

No-one has!

LYDIA

Is his perfect fringe slightly off centre?

ALEX

Yep. Yeah, his big quaffed hair is kind of flat on his head and...

EVERYONE

(gasps)

ALEX

He's having to brush it out and he's, he's covered in dirt – he doesn't appear to be wounded but, you know, best healer in the world doesn't – it's not a great shock, necessarily.

BRYN

How embarrassing for him. Hamid looks immaculate.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So Eren sees you all enter, closes – gestures for you to close the door, sorry.

“So, Azu. Quite the day. Please tell me that you have the Heart of Aphrodite!”

HELEN

I do! And she presents it.

ALEX

(gasps)

LYDIA

This is the point where it turns out he was evil all along.

ALEX

(evil laughter)

(Group laughter)

Phenomenal cosmic power! No.

LYDIA

Oh. I was sort of expecting that.

HELEN

Eren Evilhands, yeah!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Like, the little bit of tape that's covered the nametag on the door falls off.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

He takes his gloves off to remove sharp pointed fingers.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So Eren holds the Heart of Aphrodite and holds it up to the light and it sort of spins around and it fills the room with a sort of pinkish glow.

BEN

Oh that's nice.

HELEN

Like a lava lamp.

ALEX

It's kind of like it's...

(Group laughter)

Yeah, you know what, yeah. And he holds it up, examines it and then sort of stands there and takes a moment, he's concentrating on it, it gives a faint pinkish glow for a moment and then...

BRYN

Wom... wom... wom...

ALEX

Yeah, yeah. And then it sort of recedes and returns to as it was.

(sighs) "I really didn't think we'd get the chance of doing this. Right." Turns to Sasha. "Are you ready to be healed, child of the light?"

(pause)

BEN

I'm just going to sort of like nonchalantly walk to the back of the room where the door is.

(Group laughter)

Sasha has been saying some really like *aarghh* things, so I'm like just, sort of just wander over nonchalantly.

LYDIA

Wait, what's a child of the... what? Child of what?

BRYN

I'm pretty sure it's just a turn of phrase.

LYDIA

Right. OK.

BRYN

Er, we're all children of the light.

BEN

Shh, he was being like all Aphrodite-y-y.

LYDIA

More a shadowy person, really. Generally.

ALEX

Oh, I disagree. If that was the case, we wouldn't be about to do this procedure, if you'd like to proceed.

LYDIA

Er, well, I mean, like, I meant literally not metaphorically.

BEN

Yeah, just get on with it.

LYDIA

OK, right...

BEN

Not you, him – sorry.

LYDIA

Right, fine, OK. So I just, I just stand here? She, um...

ALEX

Please.

LYDIA

Oh but, OK. And she shuts her eyes.

ALEX

He then takes...

LYDIA

Holds her daggers for comfort.

ALEX

He takes the Heart of Aphrodite and *says*:

BRYN

Someone pass guidance on him first! Just, for that extra +!

ALEX

I am going to be placing this over your neck. Is that OK?

LYDIA

Er... Flinches, but still allows him to do it.

ALEX

He then places the Heart of Aphrodite over your neck, rather than over his own or anything like that. “Now, this will take a couple of moments. Please, none of you interfere.” He briefly turns away from Sasha. “This is an incredibly delicate procedure.” And as Sasha disappears (**wooshing SFX**).

HELEN

Woah!

BRYN

Wait, what?

BEN

Ahhh...

ALEX

Like, *bonk*, gone.

BEN

Has he got his...

ALEX

Fairhand has no idea and is continuing talking.

No, please, do not...

BEN

Eren! She's gone, she's gone! Look, turn around!

HELEN?

Sir!

BRYN

I just cast, I just cast detect magic.

ALEX

OK. There is the residual lingering effects of what looks to be a teleport, a *baleful* teleport, maybe?

HELEN

What?

BEN

She's gone. She's gone. Turn around, she's disappeared!

ALEX

Eren turns around.

HELEN?

Sir!

ALEX

Oh.

BEN

What did you do?!

ALEX

Um...

HELEN

Was that meant to happen?

BRYN

Someone's cast teleport on Sasha. I don't...

BEN

What?

BRYN

But there's only us here!

BEN

How?

ALEX

“Oh, no.” I'm going to cut to Sasha.

LYDIA

Oh dear.

(Group laughter)

BEN

See, we knew nothing nice can happen!

LYDIA

She's got her eyes shut and she's holding her daggers. She hasn't realised.

BRYN

She hasn't realised!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Sasha. Give me a perception check.

LYDIA

She's got her eyes shut. She's holding her daggers.

ALEX

Yeah, give me a perception check!

HELEN

(laughs)

LYDIA

OK. (rolls) That is 18.

ALEX

OK. It's gone very quiet.

LYDIA

Well, they would be respectful, wouldn't they? They are caring friends.

ALEX

And now that you're concentrating, it sounds like it's going, like you're outside or something, like a wind's picking up. It might be part of the ritual, you don't know.

LYDIA

It's probably part of the ritual.

ALEX

And you feel yourself getting really cold.

LYDIA

And that...

ALEX

Really, really cold.

LYDIA

Right, this is probably part of the process.

ALEX

And you feel some dampness on your, on your cheeks.

LYDIA

It's a weird process but... it's part of the process.

ALEX

And then you hear the cry of some distant... eagles?

BEN

Oh, no, no!

LYDIA

OK, this is getting weird. But I'm sure that's part of the spell.

ALEX

How long are you willing to stand in the cold?

LYDIA

Like... a good minute or two?

ALEX

A minute or two passes.

LYDIA

Right. Opening one eye...

ALEX

Other things: there's the faint smell of... pine?

LYDIA

OK, right, this is getting very strange...

BEN

I was so convinced she'd been teleported like hundreds of feet into the air!

ALEX

Nope!

(Group laughter)

BEN

Because it was moist because of the clouds, cold and windy, and like...

ALEX

No, that'd be madness, that'd be madness.

HELEN

So when you pointed up, I was like, if she's in *heaven*, that's not so bad!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

I genuinely was there like, that'd be madness, and there was such a, just a twitch of like, that would've been *better*.

(Group laughter)

Anyway, opens one eye very carefully.

ALEX

You find yourself on top of a mountain.

LYDIA

Oh, for goodness sake.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

You have...

LYDIA

Wait, that was obviously in Sasha's voice.

Oh, for goodness sake.

ALEX

You have *no* idea where you are. And by a mountain I don't mean, sort of like, you know, kind of stuck, we're talking like, maybe, top of the Alps or something. There is blisteringly cold wind, there is snow, you can see there's a tree line way below you.

LYDIA

As an undead, does the cold hurt?

ALEX

No.

LYDIA

Yay!

ALEX

It doesn't seem to be bothering you. Like, you sense that it is cold, but you're not like, "...and my fingers are falling off."

LYDIA

Could get used to this.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

It's refreshingly quiet.

LYDIA

Ahhhh, that's nice.

ALEX

And, looking down over this massive splayed out vista, it's both *beautiful...*

LYDIA

Mmm.

ALEX

Like, with the sun is, just sort of reaching its peak, and it's spring, like God rays all over the landscape and...

LYDIA

Aw, that's nice. I'm probably dead.

ALEX

It's quiet for the first time that you've had in... like actual quiet.

LYDIA

Definitely dead.

BRYN

(laughs)

ALEX

Give me another perception check.

LYDIA

Pretty sure I'm dead. (rolls) That is 24.

ALEX

So. You're having a look at this landscape.

LYDIA

Oh, that's nice.

ALEX

And then you turn and realise you're not actually at the very, very top.

LYDIA

I don't believe that. I'm in purgatory.

ALEX

There is another peak that's only like a short walk above you and it seems to have a very easily mountable path.

LYDIA

Definitely dead.

ALEX

And you see a pair of figures stood up on the mountain top, looking down upon you.

LYDIA

Ah.

ALEX

They are very familiar. And *kind* of gnomish-looking. For stature.

LYDIA

I thought, well I mean, so, I suppose gnomes do welcome people into flaming poo dimensions so why wouldn't they welcome me into heaven?

BRYN

(can't stop laughing)

LYDIA

As well? I...

ALEX

Do you head up?

LYDIA

I just... it's quite nice, being dead. Got maybe, yeah, oh this is nice. I'll just look at the sunset, I think. And then slowly walk over.

ALEX

So gently ambling over.

LYDIA

I mean, it is Sasha. So she walks out with daggers drawn.

ALEX

Of course, of course.

(Group laughter)

Drawing near it becomes...

LYDIA

You don't want to get surprised!

BRYN

No, no, it's just fair.

LYDIA

Even in death.

ALEX

Heaven. If you were going to mount a surprise attack on someone, it's the *last* place they'd expect!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

It might be one of the challenges, you know? It's one of those things Sasha's always sort of believed that, you know, there's, maybe an afterlife but like she hasn't pictured specifically...

BRYN

You'd have to fight your way in.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

She hasn't pictured specific gods, you know?

BRYN

It's like gladiators.

LYDIA

Yeah!

(Group laughter)

That makes...

BEN

Get on a travelator, that'd be great.

HELEN

Mm.

LYDIA

Makes total sense.

ALEX

As you approach, it becomes immediately apparent to you that they are Bertie's lawyers.

LYDIA

Whaaaaaat?

BRYN

(laughs)

LYDIA

Right. OK. Well, that I'm sure makes sense.

Hi! Er, so, how, is this heaven? Or...

ALEX

Greetings, Sasha. thank you for joining us.

LYDIA

Purgatory? I probably didn't really, I mean I did a lot of things, some of them were good though, so...

ALEX

For the first time you've ever seen it, they look a little bit awkward.

?

(sniggers)

LYDIA

Am I....?

ALEX

“We're not quite sure what you mean, Sasha.”

LYDIA

So obviously I'm dead, right? The ritual went wrong, or it was all...?

ALEX

The gnomes look at one another, another thing you've never seen them do before, then look back.

LYDIA

It was all like, it was a all a hoax?

ALEX

There may have been a miscommunication.

LYDIA

What, oh, right, am I being sent to the wrong – I mean, if you want to send me to heaven, that's fine.

ALEX

You requested to be present at the final execution of Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham's Will?

LYDIA

I...

BEN

Alex...

HELEN

Is she back in time?

ALEX

So they pull out the full-sized, Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham bastard from their inner pocket. sword

LYDIA

Look, if this is some kind of final challenge before I get accepted into whatever afterlife, I'd rather do it with short blades than a long one. I know...

ALEX

We apologise for the inconvenience. If you would just bear with us.

LYDIA

I know... Look, no, I know that you're trying to be generous, giving me a good blade for it but honestly....

ALEX

Please step forward.

LYDIA

I'm better with two short blades than I am a larger one.

ALEX

From the side of this peak a figure starts to approach. There was no way you could have seen them, they were on the other side of the peak. And they start walking up. The sun is glowing behind them and they are outlined in light. You're not entirely sure who it is.

LYDIA

Is it Bertie, though?

ALEX

I mean, it looks Bertie-esque. They have a *rippling* physique, humanoid.

LYDIA

Oh.

ALEX

And they're stepping forward and you see a glint of gold on their forehead. Sort of shining from the light.

LYDIA

Oh wait, no, no, no! If I, look, I did some bad things but I cannot be in the same afterlife as Bertie MacGuffingham!

(Group laughter)

That is not right.

ALEX

They step forward.

LYDIA

All right, I want a re-reading.

ALEX

It's almost certainly Bertie.

LYDIA

Right, this is not fair and...

ALEX

Wait.

LYDIA

Look.

ALEX

Wait, no it's not. Oh no. Not it's not Bertie.

LYDIA

Is it the spirit of the sword?

ALEX

You know what it looks like?

LYDIA

Is it, is it Brutor in a suit?

ALEX

Maaaaybe!

BRYN

Aww, you monster!

BEN

He Pugmir'ed him. He already Pugmire'd my Brutor!

LYDIA

Aahhh!

ALEX

The figure steps forward.

BRYN

Why are you like this?

ALEX

And they step out from the outshining light and you can see, the weirdest moment you've ever had of, is Brutor's face! On basically like a slightly furry version of Bertie's body!

BEN

Is this why you leant Blacksad to Lydia?

ALEX

Wearing a golden sort of wreath around his head. "Um. Hello Sasha."

HELEN

(giggles)

LYDIA

All right, this is not what I expected.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

"I'm really sorry. This is a bit awkward."

LYDIA

I, yeah. It is. Like, is there like endless lobster, because I always thought that maybe if I did good in the world I'd get, like, a good snack? But I mean, you're better than Bertie, I guess, as a, like...

ALEX

Presumably, Brutor looks a little bit confused and looks to the lawyers who look back and they all look at you. "What do you think's happening here?"

LYDIA

Pretty sure I'm dead, that's been what's kind of happening for quite a while. In fact, I've been dead a while, but this is just a...

ALEX

The lawyers step forward. "Pursuant to the final execution of the..."

LYDIA

I'm being executed?

ALEX

"The Will of Sir Bertrand MacGuffingham..."

LYDIA

Oh.

ALEX

“Please kneel.”

LYDIA

What, me?

ALEX

Brutor kneels.

LYDIA

Sasha kneels as well.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

“We dub thee Sir Brutor MacGuffingham with all of the legal ramifications therein.”

LYDIA

Aww.

ALEX

And they dub Brutor in front of you.

LYDIA

Errrr!

ALEX

And then hand the sword over.

LYDIA

Right. Well, OK. There we go. So, but, so wait, wait, wait, wait.

ALEX

Brutor stands there, thrusts the sword into the air, gives a big cry that echoes over the mountains.

LYDIA

Is it, a really loud...

EVERYONE

(various loud howls)

(howl SFX)

BRYN

In the distance you hear, *Brutor....!*

(Group laughter)

ALEX

The lawyers then turn to you. “Thank you for your cooperation.”

LYDIA

Oh. No, that...

ALEX

You immediately disappear (wooshing sound).

LYDIA

Er...

ALEX

And... Sasha returns.

BEN

Where did you go?

HELEN

What's...

BEN

She's back! She's back! She's back!

ALEX

Eren turns round. “Er, what did you see, child. What happened?”

BEN

What happened, where did you go?

ALEX

What has happened?

BEN

Did Aphrodite abduct you?

ALEX

“Did you see Aphrodite?”

LYDIA

OK, unless Aphrodite is a dog with a sword...

(Group laughter)

Then no.

ALEX

I'm going to be ever so...

BEN

OK...

HELEN

(laughs)

BRYN

(laughs)

HELEN

Wonderful!

ALEX

Right. It's the special little treat for all of you there!

BEN

Fair enough. You are...

BRYN

You are the worst.

BEN

Yep.

BRYN

Just the worst.

BEN

Impressed and angry.

BRYN

I no longer respect your craft.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Happy episode 100.

EVERYONE

Wooh!

ALEX

Bye, guys!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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[OUTTAKES]

ALEX

You mean podcast one zero zero.

LYDIA

Say what?!

BEN

We've been doing this for so long, release us.

ALEX

You could've become a master at a new skill in the amount of time it's taken us to record these. Think about that.

LYDIA

So many things I could've done. I want to build a boat. Could've built a boat.

BRYN

I mean, I've mastered several new skills quietly in the corner.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So, I'm Alex Newell and with me today I have...

LYDIA

Why can I only think of filthy options today?

HELEN

Because of the way he looked at everyone.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

I did what?!

BEN

That's something you need to know about Bryn: innocent voice, filthy eyes.

LYDIA

It was a sneaky...

BRYN

I just haven't cleaned my glasses in a while, guys.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

It's good to know that 100 episodes in I still can't make anything go...

-

LYDIA

I have no memory of the fact I said... OK.

ALEX

Good, keep going.

BRYN

(Laughing, high pitched) It just transports you to where the dog is so the dog can get the sword!

BEN

Ohhh, Alex!

ALEX

Ready?

LYDIA

Yep.

BRYN

Oh, you are a horrible, horrible genius.

[END]