

RQG – 117 – Orcward

Content Warnings

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ALEX

Hi everyone, Alex here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of our patrons. Shane Douglas Stewart, Bitacape, Ashley Tuggal, Mystic Sybil, Pearl Krandle, Christopher Nelson, Alicia Hall, Jens Greem, Caitlin Perry, Eric Wood. 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 117 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have

BEN

A hundred tens, sevens and ones

(laughing)

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

HELEN

Helen Gould

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

A badly said number.

(laughing)

ALEX

Oh Ben's all sassy now

BEN

It's built up. It's Grizzop. Hello

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Er...Sasha

HELEN

And Azu

ALEX

Now you maybe notice it's been a few months. So you know we're all...

HELEN

They won't have noticed.

BEN

It's been a week for them

ALEX

Oh yeah, yeah

BEN

You're horrible and we hate you. We have to wait so long.

ALEX

So continuity we'll...

BEN

Stupid Jesus. Having his birthday. Urgh

ALEX

So we'll see if we can get the continuity working. As a recap, which I think we all need, you were in Damascus. You were all sorting out a water shortage and also machinery problems and oh look, someone's building Simulacrums and so on and then...

BEN

We're saving the world again

ALEX

Yes. Yes, that's the simplest way of putting it. However whilst you were in the factory there was a brief fight with a Medusa that you just annihilated again

BEN

Classic...

ALEX

Just really annihilated

LYDIA

They got quite a bit of damage in before...

ALEX

Oh sure but I mean three of the party aren't statues so that's a big failing on my part. That's on me. That's on me. I've learnt my lessons, I won't be doing that again. Always use more than one Medusa. That's a hot take. Always use more than one Medusa.

BRYN

What if they accidentally look at each other?

ALEX

Also use two Medusas with one eye each

LYDIA

Blinkers on

ALEX

Blinkers! Better. **Wimples.**

HELEN

Also Medusas are immune to each other because the gorgons they were all sisters so they must've lived with each other.

ALEX

Or maybe they were just really passive aggressive, they just left notes but never actually met face to face. So you did manage to take out that and then you got a rather distressing message and...

BRYN

Oooh

ALEX

And that one was basically – we have your people and they're hostages. And there was a mirror, wasn't there?

LYDIA

Ah see everyone, you all feel like fools now for having people you care about.

ALEX

Everyone knows pro players have no ties

BEN

I'm a lone wolf. An orphan

ALEX

Also each of my parents was a lone wolf, orphan

LYDIA

Hey!

BEN

You're not a lone wolf, it's just everyone you like died.

BRYN

It's good Bertie wasn't around, who would they have taken for Bertie. He didn't even care about Brutor anymore.

ALEX

It's fine, they'd clone Bertie and then take Bertie

(laughing)

That's the only valid...I'd already considered what would have been the solution to that

LYDIA

It would've just been a pile of money

BEN

Steal his armour

HELEN

Ah!

ALEX

So having taken that out there was a little bit of strife...little bit of strife with Grizzop wanting to stay and finish the job even though there were things afoot and Azu being like we have to rescue people because, gods and also people are nice we should rescue them

BEN

Ah but we should have to stay here because gods

ALEX

Yeah

HELEN

Yeah well

ALEX

So that happened, you briefly shot Einstein...

LYDIA

Who's right?

HELEN

Me

ALEX

...that happened

BRYN

Oh yes

ALEX

Someone appears, I shoot them. Argh, why?

BEN

Well you shouldn't teleport into rooms

(laughing)

HELEN

Ever!

BRYN

Well it's kind of his shtick though

ALEX

But you did manage to get teleported to Rome where things are...

HELEN

Bad

ALEX

...terrible

LYDIA

Things went from bad to worse

ALEX

Everyone apart from Grizzop to be specific

LYDIA

Then worse

ALEX

So we have the issue of the sun's weird. It's incredibly hot when you're in the sun and it's incredibly cold when you're in the shade and there's teleport-y wolf things that were just...

BRYN

Those were nasty

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ALEX

...just destroying you

HELEN

Yeah

ALEX

Specifically Einstein

HELEN

You're smiling so much Alex and I don't like it

ALEX

It's because there's a solid chance I could strand the entire party in the one part of the world where I can't get back them out again

BEN

Entire party?

ALEX

Er...I'm going to stand by that statement.

LYDIA

The world eventually ends up just populated by Bens and...

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(laughing)

BRYN

It's like the final scene of Matrix 3

BEN

Being Ben **Valcovich**

(laughing)

ALEX

You all come out of the wasteland and ever character is Ben. That is a tempting result

BRYN

In the grim darkness of the far future there is only Ben

LYDIA

There is only Ben

BEN

And he speaks in pig Latin

(laughing)

War is having-us against-us Ben-us

ALEX

So as it stands you are all sheltering at the bottom of a taverna...is that the right word?

BRYN

We're in a basement

ALEX

Well it's Rome so it wouldn't be a taverna

BRYN

Nice, secure basement

ALEX

By which you mean the windows and doors are basically open.

HELEN

There's lots of jars

BRYN

There's one entrance

ALEX

Is there?

BEN

What windows?

LYDIA

No there's a...

BEN

It's underground.

LYDIA

There's a coal chute, there is definitely a way out.

HELEN

The wall

LYDIA

Yes there would definitely be a way for the barrels to be rolled down into...

ALEX

Correct, that's how you got in

LYDIA

What? No there should be two of them because there would be the one for the barrels and the one for the people

ALEX

Yeah there's the stairs. The blocked stairs

LYDIA

So there are...oh god. Great guys you just canonically locked us in. Cheers

ALEX

Meanwhile we have Grizzop who has singlehandedly flooded the entire factory at this stage, briefly spent some time finding out where the water was going which was down the mine and just went, no I won't go down there. There was a solid consideration of that but no. Attempted and failed, not through lack of effort, to destroy a funnel but then got caught in his pants by a load of orcs at the top of a mountain

BRYN

Doing the diet coke ads. I remember the diet coke ads

ALEX

He was specifically in a diet coke ad, yes. And on top of all of that he was forced to admit that there were two options here. You could either leave me alone...

BEN

It was killing you or asking for help

ALEX

That was it. So we're going to give everyone what they want, which is we're going to start with Grizzop in his pants.

LYDIA

Yeah that's what the fans want!

ALEX

None of those high stake nonsense...

LYDIA

And by the fans I mean everyone except Ben

(laughing)

ALEX

So starting with Grizzop in his pants. The last thing that has been yelled is that needing help thing. So you are by the funnel trying to take it out whilst the river's still heading down into the funnel. It's still hidden behind that angled illusion thing and all of the orcs have managed to circle around the hole where the water's going in. So you've got...you're counting at least 40 orcish heads all looking down a bit confused. They all step away from the hole and even from where you are with the rushing water you hear the [mumbling noise]. The original orc pokes his head over, then all the rest. You ok? One sec. Then all the heads go away again

BEN

What...er... I will go back to hacking at a support with an adamantine arrow.

ALEX

Ok, you hear the sounds of major activity up top. It sounds like lots of people and whatever they're doing, they're having a lot more success than you are down there. Like major landscaping type things. Eventually the original orc pokes its head back over – alright don't move.

BEN

What? Ok

ALEX

All will be good

BEN

Fine. Alright I'll put the arrow back in my quiver and climb back up

ALEX

So you go up the stairs and eventually you make it to the same place where you would be able to hop out onto the ledge. I'm assuming you do so

BEN

Yes

ALEX

Ok you hop out. There's a brief fuzz of the illusion and now you're looking down at a completely perfectly fine thing where the river is not there etc. blah, blah, blah. You also see...give me a perception check actually. First one of the year. Make it bad

BEN

It was averagely rubbish. 14

ALEX

14. Welcome to 2019, it's mediocre. So you look around and what you see...maybe 60 orcs, maybe more, hard to tell. They're all moving around...

BEN

A lot of orcs

ALEX

You realise that a lot of them seem to be disappearing up the river through the illusion. So you have the weird thing of there's probably 60 but every time they walk about 20 feet up the hole, they disappear. But that's where all of the activity seems to be happening and you're face to face with a strapping young buck of an orc.

LYDIA

Ooh!

(laughing)

Hamid is like swipe right

BEN

You have been playing too much Dream Daddy

HELEN

This is like seduce. Aubergines.

BEN

Does the strong orc have a small child that they are caring for?

ALEX

Oh yes but it's in their papoose, they're not carrying it in their arms. The orc does not...

LYDIA

Press B to flirt

ALEX

What the orc does have is, rather like long and lustrous hair for an orc.
Normally they tend to go more bald

LYDIA

Helen literally melted.

BEN

Is his shirt cut down to the navel and is he standing in front of a fan

ALEX

He's not wearing a shirt!

HELEN

Does he have piercings and tattoos Alex?

ALEX

He does. It's really weird

HELEN

Yes!

ALEX

And he's there with...

BEN

Helen's going to need a moment

ALEX

You see strapped across his back is a huge...it looks like a sledgehammer. It doesn't look like a war weapon, it looks like a massive sledgehammer and you notice around his belt, he's got tools and karabiners.

LYDIA

See now I'm into him

(laughing)

ALEX

You can't punch all your problems

LYDIA

How practical is he?

ALEX

He has one pocket that's empty just in case he finds something that needs to go into that pocket

LYDIA

With strong hands

ALEX

And he's just looking down at you. He doesn't seem particularly disapproving, mostly just a bit suspicious because you're where all of the water's been going and he's just like – so I feel like I should ask you what's...a bit more detail

BEN

About the situation that's going on with the river going down the hole and me being there in my pants trying to destroy it. Yeah, yeah. Right, that.

ALEX

Go on then

(laughing)

BEN

Right so...

ALEX

I'm going to cut back to Rome. So in Rome we have forgotten one awkward fact to do with the weather. You may have taken shelter in this taverna basement, I'm going to keep saying taverna because that's stuck in my mind now. Whether that's right or not, I don't think it is. It's going to be cold down there. Like real, real cold. So even though the sun hasn't actually apparently set, it seems a bit overdue, it is properly cold down in the basement. You are seeing your breath frosting in front of you.

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LYDIA

Start a fire. Little fire on the floor

BRYN

Endure elements lasts 24 hours and I cast it about 4 hours ago.

ALEX

But only on yourself because then things started exploded and you were like, note, don't explode the party

LYDIA

I'm going to start a fire, I've got survival-y stuff

ALEX

Ok. Can you give me a...

LYDIA

Survival check?

ALEX

...survival check

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

For what it's worth you can light a fire. This is more telling like whether you manage to hide the smoke and blah, blah, blah.

LYDIA

So it's just a wisdom modifier because it's an untrained skill. Fortunately Sasha is surprisingly wise but she did roll a 3 so that's only 5.

ALEX

So you are able to light a fire. Again I don't...to clarify actually, rules with Rusty Quill. It's the New Year. One of the things that really annoy me is in the survival check it's like if you get a 5 you just can't light a fire. It's like great, so I just do it again

LYDIA

Yeah I take 10

ALEX

Yeah it's a very, very...

LYDIA

In fact I take 20

ALEX

...silly thing but what I use instead as an alternate is it tells me the quality of what you've done. In terms of if you were a 15 it'd be great, this is a sunken fire, no one can see it, you've got enough fuel. Whereas at the lower end it's like you've had to scrape stuff together blah, blah, blah. So you have a fire lit. It is a bit of a meagre thing mostly because there's not actually that much stuff to burn down here.

BRYN

That's ok we don't want to create a lot of smoke

ALEX

It's a lot of ceramics rather than anything else. So you're not generating a lot of smoke. You're also frankly not generating a lot of heat. It's mostly throwing the place into weird, like flickering shapes

LYDIA

Can I hug my fire dagger as well?

ALEX

Fire daggers don't give off warmth unless they're stabbing

LYDIA

I stab...

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ALEX

Stab myself repeatedly

(laughing)

LYDIA

...a sack of some kind and then hold it for fire damage warmth

HELEN

But surely we need to huddle together for warmth

LYDIA

Anyone wanna get stabbed?

BRYN

No thank you

HELEN

Alright never mind

ALEX

Einstein is currently huddled up in a broken amphorae shivering a little bit

BRYN

I could try casting endure elements again but we know that it's a bit risky if anyone really needs it

ALEX

There is another howl in the distance

HELEN

Oh no

LYDIA

I wonder if they're attracted to magic or something

BRYN

I've been wondering that as well

ALEX

What do you want?

BRYN

Are you ok?

ALEX

I'm good, I'm good. Yeah

BRYN

Yeah I think maybe huddling together for warmth is a good idea. I've got a big cloak

HELEN

Can I pick Einstein out of the amphora and cuddle him

ALEX

Yes you can

HELEN

Yes. Do I need to roll for cuddles

ALEX

Your armour is very cold. Please stop. Please stop. This is horrible

HELEN

Ok

ALEX

10 out of 10 for sentiment

(laughing)

HELEN

Thank you

ALEX

3 out of 10 for execution

LYDIA

I'll take my leather jacket off and...actually no my cloak of elven kind. Wrap him in a cloak of elven kind

ALEX

Oh this is good, this is good

LYDIA

It's also sneakier

ALEX

This is a good, solid 8.

LYDIA

Out of...?

ALEX

Let's say 10.

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LYDIA

Oh ok, alright, good. And wait 10 is high

ALEX

Yes

LYDIA

Alright

ALEX

Not one for formal education. Me too

LYDIA

Right, like what's the point in thinking the same way everyone else does

ALEX

I know right.

LYDIA

That way you don't even end up...those are the people that go through doors

ALEX

Everyone give me a sense motive

HELEN

31

ALEX

What?! What did you roll?

BEN

Also was that a natural 20?

HELEN

That's a natural 20 and my sense motive is 11.

ALEX

Good grief

BEN

You'll be shocked to know that Azu is extremely empathetic

ALEX

So...

LYDIA

I got 9

ALEX

So no one else is twigging this. Azu, obviously Einstein is one teleport short of a party, I dunno but there is...you're realising that even for him he's a little bit out of it. He's clearly the worse for wear and it's coming out in prattling. And I realise that he normally prattles but you are like, hmm, this is a little disjointed even for you because he's just started being like – now the thing about a number 2 pencil you see is underrated

LYDIA

How about you go to sleep mate?

ALEX

I would if I could

BEN

OC point of memory, did anybody heal Einstein or...

ALEX

Yes

LYDIA

Yes

ALEX

He was healed enough to be stabilised but to be clear he's at like 6 points

BEN

That's fine. It means he's mechanically absolutely fine

ALEX

Yeah. In any other game. But yeah he's just there and he's like, ok no that's fine. He starts mumbling and he crawls back into his amphora and you hear the occasional – eh, uh, Potter.

(laughing)

HELEN

I'm probably just going to guard the amphora since I can't help with heat or anything.

ALEX

There is another strong howl that's taken up in a different location and then a second one which overlaps with it so it's not just one bouncing between locations and howling

HELEN

Do we need to move soon or do we hide?

BRYN

I think we have to try and rest. The professor definitely needs it, I could really use it. I'm sure you guys could as well.

LYDIA

I'll take a watch...

BRYN

We definitely need to set watches though.

LYDIA

...if folks nap

ALEX

Can everyone please give me, apart from Hamid sorry, an endure elements

BRYN

That's just a con

ALEX

That is not a thing in this system

BEN

It's been a while since we played Pathfinder

ALEX

Yeah, can everyone give me a fort save please

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LYDIA

That's a 20, non natural

ALEX

Ok

HELEN

Oh no

LYDIA

You've got a really high...

BRYN

You'll be fine

HELEN

That was an 11

ALEX

That was an 11. So Sasha you're handling it alright

LYDIA

Yeah!

ALEX

It's almost like growing up in cold, dark, underground spaces makes one more used to cold, dark, underground spaces. Meanwhile Azu, yeah your armour, you know how it picks up the heat? Also radiates it as well. You cold. You real cold. You're not taking damage yet but you will not get any rest. If you were to stay here another...until everyone had a full rest you will not be rested.

HELEN

I'm going to take the armour off.

ALEX

Ok Einstein is also sort of shivering despite the cloak but I don't know if there's much you can do for him

BEN

One thing about that, in Pathfinder, I think it takes you about 10 minutes to put your armour back on

HELEN

What?!

BEN

So if you suddenly get beset...well it's straps

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ALEX

It's big armour

BEN

That's the problem with heavy armour

ALEX

You can't just throw it on and go.

BRYN

Yeah I think it'll be...I think it's minutes equal to the armour check penalty

LYDIA

But you're on full health actually...

ALEX

That sounds about right actually, yeah

LYDIA

...oh no, not full but you're...

HELEN

I'm doing well is what you're trying to say

LYDIA

You are as healthy as I could possibly be and I am not that healthy

BRYN

I mean survival skills that Hamid definitely doesn't have but literally the best way to warm Einstein up would be body warmth. Once you've taken your armour off you should snuggle him

ALEX

Oh categorically

BRYN

You will probably know that in character

ALEX

Actually give me a heal check

HELEN

What...ok

ALEX

You have heal. You have all the heal. You're from Aphrodite

HELEN

I do have heal. That is only a 14

ALEX

Only a 14?

HELEN

Yeah

ALEX

Yeah huddling together will conserve a lot of body warmth. The fire's giving out more light than it is heat. Doesn't mean you should necessarily stop it but huddling is totally the thing that you should do and regardless of whether it takes you a long time to put the armour on or take it off you reckon it's probably a better idea to take the armour off and stop your party freezing but again, it is a sort of flip a coin

LYDIA

So Sasha is going to stick her head out of the hole which means that you can focus on keeping everyone inside the thing warm. Huddling with the little 'uns

ALEX

For what it's worth, there's a reason that you're finding it easy then, you're basically on a boundary between baking hot desert and ice cold midnight desert so you can just kind of, bit hot, step out, bit cold...

LYDIA

Just use a fan a bit to move the air around

HELEN

Ok in which case I do take the armour off and then I look at Hamid

ALEX

Ok

HELEN

And I say – we should do like penguins and...

BRYN

What are penguins?

BRYN

They're small birds that huddle together for warmth in the cold

BRYN

Oh you're saying we should huddle together?

HELEN

Yes

BRYN

Ok

LYDIA

Hamid went to university!

ALEX

Hamid doesn't need to know everything

BEN

Zoology

BRYN

He's decided he doesn't what a penguin was. That amused me. I was like, yep, I'm gonna roll with it.

ALEX

It's not used as a component in any of the major spells

HELEN

Although I liked Helen's face which was, wait, a penguin's not a thing in this world

(laughing)

ALEX

It's fine...

HELEN

There are dragons but no penguins?!

(laughing)

LYDIA

What kind of nightmare plane is this

ALEX

So we're going to take a break whilst I list all of the animals in this world in alphabetical order, ok.

Last but not least aardvark. That is all the animals in this existent world

BRYN

I'd expect nothing less of Alex

ALEX

So with that in mind back to Grizzop

BEN

Hello and that is basically everything. Ok. So I'm a bit tired. Can we just get this river sorted out so Damascus doesn't die

ALEX

Yeah great. Step back. A lot. He starts walking back away from the hole.

BEN

Fine. I'll hop away, like putting a shoe on

ALEX

There's a low rumble. Like a really, really low rumble. The rumble builds and you hear the distinct sounds of shifting rock and then suddenly...

BRYN

That's a very distinctive sound

ALEX

...breaking through the illusion comes just...it appears to be some kind of landslide or something. You're talking boulders the size of cars, all of this starts pouring down into the hole and you see the distinct clang of car sized boulders hitting the funnel

BEN

Protect that funnel

ALEX

Really, really messing it. Huge amount of earth and rock and stuff starts smacking down into it until eventually it starts to subside and there's the odd

dropping pieces and things. There is dust everywhere. Thankfully it's been dealt with quite quickly. The river still appears to be pouring into the hole from where you can see and the illusion is still there showing that there's nothing there. You have this weird narrow window of loads and loads and loads of rocks and now it's finished. There's loads of dust, a river that's still not there because of the illusion and a hole that isn't there because of the illusion

BEN

I'm going to excitedly grab a small rock that I can carry, run up to the side of the pit, throw it in and go – suck it hole

(laughing)

ALEX

You hear, despite all of the roar of the water you hear a splash.

HELEN

Suck your water

BEN

Helen! I don't know what you mean

HELEN

I'm so sorry

LYDIA

Sink hole

ALEX

You wouldn't happen to be able to dispel or get rid of magic would you?

BEN

Not that...no. Sorry. Oh no hang on, wait. Thanks by the way.

ALEX

Yep. Trumps over, sticks his head in the hole, brings it up, turns it around and there's moisture across all of his face. So, yeah that's probably gonna be fine

BEN

Ok – very quickly Ben question. Can I get rid of it using spell craft or do I need a special arcane disenchant

ALEX

You could not get rid of it. Spell craft would know what it is. You would need a dispel or something similar

BEN

Fine, so I'm aware that that's not something that...

ALEX

No, for what it's worth, dispelling it is easier than making the thing but you're still gonna need someone quite good because there are checks

BEN

And I'd need to be an arcane caster

ALEX

Yeah exactly

BEN

Yeah dine.

ALEX

I don't think Hamid could. I don't think he has dispel yet

BRYN

No it's a feat you have to take

BEN

We'd need Wilde basically

ALEX

Yeah, yeah, effectively yeah

BEN

Oh wait actually, if we could find Oscar Wilde he'll be able to do it. In Damascus

ALEX

Ok. You know what come with me. Come with me. He starts walking and then just disappears up the illusion that leads up river.

BEN

I'll run after

ALEX

Second that you're up river, there's everybody. Turns out they weren't using magic to shift stuff but in the sort of gorge valley that's up at the top where they've basically been lining it all along the sign, you can see they've drive iron stakes in along the whole length and let the river...

BRYN

How long would that take them?

ALEX

Good question. But you're not there are you

BRYN

I mean I'm just saying if they knew about this already why there they complaining about the river situation down in Damascus if they've been working at this for a while

ALEX

So the orc stands there, sort of hands his hand out to. Bronc

BEN

Sorry was that Bronc or Brock?

ALEX

Bronc

BEN

Bronc. Ok nice to meet you Bronc. Grizzop

ALEX

What kind of name's Brock. Weird. Hey Grizzop. So we're kind of in the middle of a thing. You can join us if...Artemis right?

BEN

Yes

ALEX

Yeah great. So we...we seem to have found a river that's coming out in our settlement. We've managed to clear all of the children and so on but there's been a decent landslide and we're trying to find out what's happening. You seem to have a lot of info

BEN

Right your settlement is where...not Damascus...

ALEX

Well it's above Damascus. It's downriver though.

BEN

Right

ALEX

So we're trying to find out what's happening. Apparently someone's redirected the river. You've given me a lot to think on.

BEN

Are you miners?

ALEX

He's kind of thinking. No.

BEN

Do you live by a mine?

ALEX

No. Someone better not be mining under us. That's our land

BEN

Oh well I mean the kind of person who built an evil factory underneath and stole Damascus' river is probably the kind of person who's gonna mine under your land without telling you so it's possible that that's the case because lots of water went down a mine and it might be that it came out at your settlement

ALEX

He cups his hand around his mouth and goes – oi. Huddle. At which point about 50 orcs all start...

BEN

Am I huddling or are you huddling?

ALEX

Yeah ok you can huddle too

LYDIA

Aw! Grizzop by their knees

ALEX

Grizzop is surrounded by big burly thighs as far as his eyes can see

LYDIA

Helen needs a moment

(laughing)

BEN

So many knees to shoot off if I have to.

ALEX

Right so we know that it's been going down the mine apparently and we know that it's swept our things. Someone's been under our land.

There's a big kind of furore and everyone's not happy with that. One of them yells – it's probably the goblins.

He's like – look, we've no reason to suspect it's the goblins.

BEN

Just quick, I know, hello a goblin obviously but as far as we know it's humans. Some sort of horrible cult although they probably got goblins to build it but I didn't think goblins were involved with the running of it.

ALEX

I don't think there's much more we can do here. I think we have to go back down and start dealing with this in Damascus. All in favour?

There's a...about three quarters of them put their hands up. The ones who don't are like – eh, goblins. They're not really doing much, they're just there being naysayers.

Alright fine, you've got ten minutes.

Everyone starts scurrying about. Activity.

Turns to you – who's this Wilde then?

BEN

Oh he's a member of the meritocracy. Someone we know. Powerful illusionist so could probably get rid of the illusion I'm assuming or would know somebody who could

ALEX

Do you reckon he'll be at the meritocratic office thing?

BEN

Probably he's got an office there

ALEX

Perfect. Are you ok to come with us?

BEN

Yes

ALEX

Great.

I'm going to jump to Rome

LYDIA

No I was hoping that things would not happen there for a bit longer.

ALEX

Nope. So Rome, the howls continue and then there's a distinct third so you hear the occasional howl in the distance, howl in the distance completely different direction, howl in the distance etc. Then at some point there is a howl that turns into a yelped scream

HELEN

Good

ALEX

And then the howling stops

BRYN

I mean you're the one on watch and you have excellent perception skills. I would suggest...

ALEX

Give me a perception check

BRYN

...you try and work out which direction that came from

HELEN

Yeah me and Hamid are spooning

LYDIA

23

BRYN

With Einstein between us

ALEX

23. so there are two things that I am going to give you with that. Number one, is that there has been a decent amount of the howls have clearly been in mid-air. That's one of the things. And the cry that came from a yelp was comparatively close and was also at ground level. You wouldn't be able to pin

it down, you're in a city. I could say over there I guess. It's broadly back the way you came but apart from that.

LYDIA

There's something out there. I'm going to check it out. Pulls her cloak of elven kind off, that I assume has been over the top of them and heads out.

BRYN

Are you going to be ok alone?

LYDIA

Well you guys need to rest

BRYN

Is it not better to wait until morning? I mean "morning" but still

LYDIA

I don't want it to just sneak up on us.

BRYN

The best way to stop that is to stay where we are, not to go out seeking something

HELEN

Yeah we shouldn't split up alone

BRYN

I'm sorry Sasha but we'll go as soon as we're ready

LYDIA

Fine I guess but...

BRYN

You should rest too at some point

LYDIA

We should go soon. It's going to find us whatever it is

ALEX

You hear, I'm basing this off your earlier perception by the way, I can't be othered to check after check after check. There's definite movement approaching your location however it's something that's trying to be quiet and you didn't see any visual evidence when you were looking

LYDIA

Just nabs the cloak of elven kind and sneaks up. It's coming and I'm going to flank it. You prepare, guard that entrance. So she's gonna head out and try and get around the thing so that if it's heading towards them.

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ALEX

Give me a stealth check first

LYDIA

Ooh ok, so that's 17 + 20 so 37

ALEX

37

(laughing)

BEN

3, 7. It's stealth check 3, 7

ALEX

Oh 3, 7. Cheers Ben, I was so lost there. So Sasha's gone and you're not sure she was ever there to begin with

(laughing)

LYDIA

It's a retroactive sneak check. You just imagined her this whole time

ALEX

Give me another perception check for this one because this is looking with something in mind

LYDIA

Oh that's only 19

ALEX

19?

LYDIA

Yep

ALEX

Take this description how you will

LYDIA

Ok

ALEX

You hear the sound of something definitely not making a noise and you see something that definitely can't be seen. There is definitely something around and you have no idea where.

LYDIA

Well...

ALEX

It's basically, you are basing this almost entirely on that little prickly bit at the back of your neck when someone's looking at you

LYDIA

Ok so let's say the layout...so essentially there's a basement which has a hole that you get out of the basement onto the main street. As you do in a pub when you're trying to roll barrels down. So Sasha's going to very intensely, sneakily, sneak out of that along that street a little way and then cross the street so that she's huddled in the shadow of a building that's diagonally facing it. So essentially if anything comes towards that hole she will be able to throw a dagger or plunge something into the back of its head.

ALEX

Ok.

LYDIA

That is in fact more relaxing for her than sitting in the basement so like yeah. Like just gets a blossom of wellbeing

ALEX

Alex isn't happy.

HELEN

That means that we are very happy

(laughing)

BEN

[Evil laugh]

ALEX

Alex rolled a natural 1 on the only roll that the character that he's about to describe had to make

BEN

Stealthy character lets out a little fart

(laughing)

ALEX

A piece of rock...a piece of disturbed rock...

LYDIA

It's crazy

ALEX

...tips off the roof above you and lands at your feet

LYDIA

I didn't take that...

ALEX

Everyone apart from Grizzop please give me an initiative. That just cost me a surprise round! Do you have any idea how annoyed I am?!

BEN

Is this another mechanically complex and very powerful enemy that they will immediately kill very easily

ALEX

They can't.

BRYN

I mean we didn't get to rest so I have very few spells

ALEX

Correct

HELEN

Well that's a 2. Also I did say that I put my armour back on

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ALEX

So is that 2 on the roll or 2 for the initiative

HELEN

Oh well isn't my initiative,...isn't my initiative -1

ALEX

Yes

BRYN

It might be.

ALEX

So is your initiative 1?

HELEN

1

ALEX

Ok.

HELEN

Yep

ALEX

Sasha?

LYDIA

27

BRYN

25

ALEX

Sasha you are certain there is something on the roof above you. It's your turn.

LYDIA

I am going to essentially climb up in the speediest acrobatic way possible.

ALEX

The building is 15 foot tall, the front of it.

LYDIA

I think I could probably jump that.

ALEX

I would allow you to climb or acrobatics it. It's so ruinous that could do either.
You could do bouncing or climbing

LYDIA

I'm going to acrobatics it because I've got 6 more points in that.

ALEX

That's how that works

BRYN

It won't be stealthy at all probably

LYDIA

That's fine

ALEX

Yeah

BEN

I mean she's gonna be fighting it right so it's gonna notice.

LYDIA

Yeah I am not gonna sneak up on this thing I assume

ALEX

Ok let's...

LYDIA

Well actually, can't I get to the top and push it off the building?

ALEX

Yes that's a valid action but you would have to go up and reveal yourself to do that

LYDIA

Yeah I'm gonna do that. If I get this acrobatics check can I do the fact that I'm flipping through its space so that's flat footed.

ALEX

I would allow that yes

LYDIA

[laughing]

HELEN

Roll first

(laughing)

BRYN

Nah that's fine.

ALEX

Hear that? That's the subtle pitch of despair

LYDIA

Right that's 24

ALEX

24?

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

So you manage to flip up onto the top. There's no one there. You land perfectly placed...

BRYN

There's no one visible

ALEX

...to shove someone off the wall

LYDIA

I stab the air in a slashing motion all around me

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ALEX

Ok give me an attack roll

BRYN

Classic Zelda spin attack

LYDIA

Oh that wasn't good. So that's 19

ALEX

19

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

I have to make an additional roll

LYDIA

Oh ok

BRYN

This will be the miss chance based on concealment

LYDIA

Oh right

ALEX

Nothing there presumably

LYDIA

Ok she is going to grip...this woman is not getting pushed off. If there's no wall there and she has to crouch because she's on a roof, that's fine but you ain't pushing this lady off the roof

ALEX

Understood. Hamid you're up. Sasha has stealthed away

BRYN

Is Azu's armour fully on yet? I assist

ALEX

Ok good to know

BRYN

Which I believe halves the amount of time

ALEX

It does. It does. It will take you, if I remember...what's your armour penalty?
So what's the minus you're getting from your armour?

HELEN

Where on earth is it

BRYN

I'm pretty sure it's 4

BEN

Flip over

ALEX

It should be near the armour. It'll...

BEN

Mine's -3. Ok you haven't written it down. Are you wearing a breastplate?

HELEN

Yes

BEN

Yeah it's -3

ALEX

Ok. Great. So there's a fun little rule in Pathfinder, I can't remember if it's core or not but it's still good which is that your armour check penalty which is the negative for wearing big, bulky armour is how long it takes to put on. Great so -3 means it takes 3 minutes, with assistance it'll take 1 and a half minutes

BRYN

And we started before we rolled initiative so we'll have made some progress.

ALEX

So you're looking at six rounds before all your armour's on

HELEN

Really?

BRYN

Yeah

BEN

Rounds are very quick

LYDIA

Rounds are like 15 seconds

BRYN

6

BEN

The time lensing is really extreme

HELEN

I'm just gonna to do this half armoured. I'll only have my legs.

LYDIA

Half armed.

ALEX

Sasha what's your AC? Hypothetically

LYDIA

20

BRYN

She'll be flat footed if she doesn't know there's an assailant there

LYDIA

I do know there's an assailant, it's just where

BRYN

I think that's Alex's call.

ALEX

She does.

BRYN

Ok, fair.

ALEX

Irritatingly she does. Infuriatingly she does.

BEN

He respects the critical fail

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

So...

BEN

That's never good. Roll some dice and then laugh

(laughing)

ALEX

So Sasha, stood braced ready for someone, potentially invisible who knows, to push her off.

LYDIA

Or attack

ALEX

The first blow comes from immediately overhead, from a place where no one could possibly have been stood. It is brutal and slams into the side of her head with amazing force. Before she can catch her breath and even see what's happening the second blow comes in on the opposite side on the left midriff. It doesn't throw her prone but it is brutally hard and deals 27 damage

LYDIA

Ah ok. I'm...

BEN

Frick

HELEN

Oh my god!

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LYDIA

3 hit points

HELEN

No!

BEN

Some sort of swear word!

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

Einstein...

LYDIA

She shouts.

ALEX

Oh there we go

BEN

What?

LYDIA

In pain

(laughing)

ALEX

Einstein freezes, then comes over and starts helping with Azu's armour. Azu I'm assuming you're putting on your armour or are you bailing? You heard the scream, what's happening?

HELEN

Ehhhh

ALEX

What's happening? What's happening Azu?

BEN

You've got six seconds to decide!

ALEX

Well no you've only got one second to decide and then five seconds to do it

HELEN

I am going to hurry up putting on my armour

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ALEX

Oh dear. Ok.

HELEN

I don't know who badly you're hurt

ALEX

Sasha, you're up

LYDIA

Going to flip to the other side of the roof and throw a bomb to where I just was.

BRYN

Has the person become visible?

LYDIA

Yeah because they attacked

ALEX

No

BRYN

Oh Jesus they've got greater invisibility, not just invisibility

LYDIA

Ok so...

HELEN

You don't tell us these things Bryn!

BRYN

So it only lasts a certain number of rounds

BEN

It could be a spell like ability. We don't know it's a spell

LYDIA

Ok so she's gonna flip to the other side of the roof and throw a bomb to where she just was.

ALEX

Give me the acrobatics roll

LYDIA

Ok that's 18 + 15. 33

ALEX

You know what's nice about your acrobatics roll, I never need to look up what it would take to stop you

(laughing)

And it makes the game go so much faster

BRYN

There's a counter acrobatics roll

ALEX

True but I happen to know...I don't think they could get that, whatever they are

LYDIA

Basically if I roll above 10

ALEX

I'm safe. I'm safe as houses. Don't bother looking it up, what's the point. Why roll it. Why bother

LYDIA

Yeah I mean it's just a bomb though, it doesn't do a huge amount of damage

ALEX

So you flip and you throw the bomb, I need you to be specific on the map

LYDIA

Precisely...if she was here and something hit her above she essentially rolls and flips over here and throws the bomb to exactly where she was

ALEX

Ok give me your attack roll

LYDIA

Come on Sasha. Die well

HELEN

Don't die at all!

LYDIA

That's only 17

ALEX

Ooh.

BRYN

There'll still be missed chance

BEN

But splash

ALEX

What's the splash damage?

BRYN

Er 4?

LYDIA

The splash damage is 3

ALEX

The bomb explodes apparently doing nothing but in the air above it you see a brief, peculiar shimmer to the air

LYDIA

That's what I was hoping for

ALEX

And there's a moment where you think you see, like, purple...you know oil slick on water, like that if that was something skin but then the...

LYDIA

The shape of what?

ALEX

We'll never know. And I think I will end the episode though

LYDIA

Got 3 hit points everyone. 3...

ALEX

Everything's fine

BRYN

Something perfectly invisible by yourself...

ALEX

That's the way it should go

BRYN

Let's make the audience wait a week shall we?

HELEN

Yeah

ALEX

You know what yeah wait a week, we waited months. Deal with it.

(laughing)

BEN

All of you practice your eulogies for Sasha and we'll see you next week

LYDIA

Genuinely she might...she's going to shout again as she flips. It'll be loud

ALEX

Bye guys.

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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