

RQG – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

Content Warnings

- Kidnapping (adults & child, off screen)
- Unreality
- Mild body horror (body distortion)
- Mental deterioration/ memory loss
- Mild secondhand embarrassment
- SFX: persistent droning

ALEX

Hi everyone, Alex here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of our patrons; littlebluehouse, Wendy Hewitt, Jake Ellis, Hannah Capricious, Bunnywithaswitchblade, Jennifer Hartshorn, Lucifer Morningstar, Dānayuttā SuYen Tan-Okotie. 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 123 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today I have...

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

BEN

Ben Meredith.

BRYN

Bryn Monroe.

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas.

HELEN

And Helen Gould.

ALEX

And who are you playing?

HELEN

Azu.

LYDIA

Sasha.

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al Tahan.

BEN

Grizzop drik acht Amsterdam.

ALEX

You're very good at this, I'm so happy!

LYDIA

Yeah, we even know our names!

ALEX

So! Er, let's take a moment and have a quick recap. The party made it to Rome. You managed to fight off people...?

LYDIA

They ran away!

ALEX

... Creatures? Who knows!

BEN

Definitely Squizzards.

LYDIA

Squizzards!

BRYN

Yeah, I was promised a boss fight and they ran, they fled, because they know how [0:02:30 (Helen laughs)] and now I'm, like, I'm all pent up with no release. It's very frustrating!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

It's okay though...

LYDIA

Hamid's got spell blue balls!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

... there's a big...

HELEN

Blue spells!

LYDIA

Mmm.

(Ben laughs)

ALEX

... wibbly wobbly thing surrounded by smaller wibbly wobbly things. Basically, there's a hole in the world that someone made and it made other holes and it's all a bit wrong and, apparently, all of your hostages are in that hole, but if you go in that hole you might also get stuck in a hole. I mean, that's a pretty accurate summation, isn't it?

BRYN

Yeah.

LYDIA

That's a holistic...

BRYN

Basically, yeah. yeah.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Meanwhile, Grizzop made a load of friends!

BEN

I'm in a spy film!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

A really, really bad one!

BEN

Oh god, they're so amazingly brilliant!

ALEX [laughing]

Grizzop's got stuck with nowhere to go!

(Helen laughs)

BRYN

Absolutely fantastic.

BEN

But I met a woman.

ALEX

A woman!

HELEN

A beautiful woman.

LYDIA

Oooooohhhh...!

BEN

A beautiful woman.

ALEX

I'm going to start...

BRYN

But she wasn't someone we already recognised. She wasn't, like, curious or something.

BEN

No, well, not someone I recognised.

ALEX

Grizzop has never seen this person.

BEN

I didn't meet Amelia Earhart **[quietly]** which is my suspicion.

BRYN

She was a Gnome.

LYDIA

Mmm..

BEN

Still a woman!

ALEX

So, I am going to immediately pick up with Grizzop, if I may? So you both share that moment of perfect, shining eye-contact moment of ‘How did this happen?’ ‘What are we doing here?’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Are you getting me to Rome?’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘Grizzop, right?’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Who are you?’

ALEX (also as the stranger)

‘Yes, I’m probably thinking so.’ I’m now going to give you a proper description rather than a quick episode ender. They are a quite-tall-for-an-Elf Elf. Full Elf. Not a half Elf...

BRYN

Ooooh...

LYDIA

Ohhhh...

BEN

What's their accent?

ALEX

Their accent... they are speaking to you in flawless received pronunciation.

BEN [muttering under his breath]

Oh, god. Elves!

ALEX

They are dressed up to the nines. Very elegantly, but there's far too much jewellery for someone who is just going around the place. Like, they're very, very well put together in a way that you, yeah...

BEN

Immediately ingratiated themselves...

ALEX (also as the stranger)

Yeah, I know, right?! They look so out of place in here, like, they're clearly from somewhere that they had to pull all kinds of strings to get her down here. 'I could get you to Rome, if you'd be willing to answer me a couple of questions.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Depends on the questions, get on with it.’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘Is Sasha there?’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Who wants to know?’

LYDIA

Ehhh, that’s my boy!

[players all convulsed in laughter]

Sasha doesn’t know why but her heart...

(Group laughter)

... just swells... she feels loved.

ALEX

You know what, some things transcend even Rome!

LYDIA

Yep!

HELEN

Ahhhh...

ALEX (as the stranger)

'I used to be her tutor a very long time ago, and I've been looking for her a very, very long time.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'What's your name?'

ALEX (as the stranger)

'Are you Grizzop?'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'What's your name? You seem to know!'

ALEX (as the stranger)

'I need to know if you're Grizzop or not. I can leave and you can just wait for Rome yourself. It's not going to come to you.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'This Grizzop character, what do you know of him? Is he in fact a goblin Paladin of Artemis?'

(Group laughter)

‘... because either this is a ridiculous coincidence or YES, obviously, because when I walked in the door you said, ‘Ooh, Grizzop?’ Yes, I’m Grizzop, now who are you?’

(Group laughter)

ALEX (also as the stranger)

She takes a moment. Tell me something about Sasha that only someone that actually knows Sasha would know.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Well, when was the last time you met her because I can tell you a lot of things have happened in the last X months. Or maybe I’m making it up?’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘Tell me something you actually know about her.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘What is your name?’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘I will give you all of the help that you want if you just answer my question.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘What is your name?’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘Final chance.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘If I actually knew Sasha, I’d know that she wouldn’t want me to take help from somebody who won’t tell me her name and then claims a connection with Sasha. So, what is your name? Or... I will leave and maybe shoot your eyeballs off, because you are very annoying.’

(Group laughter)

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘I understand why you’re upset.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘What’s your name? Wait. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait... I think she mentioned one. If I know her, which I might not. Is your name Bi Ming Gusset?’

ALEX

Her eyebrows raise.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Oooh, ooh, you knew that one!’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘Okay.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Oooh, ooh, ooh, ooh, also I looked Barret up and almost executed him. It was great!’

ALEX

You get another raised eyebrow.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Do you want me to do the same to you?’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘I can get you to Rome...’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Good. Do it!’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘... but I need one last check from you. Forgive me for this.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘What’s your name?’

ALEX (as the stranger)

‘Are you able to prove to me that you’re a Paladin in any way? I will tell you everything...’

(Group laughter)

‘... that you want to know.’

BEN

The [0:07:13 Knox] Bow, I light it with a holy fire and shoot it between her feet.

ALEX

Okay.

LYDIA

Nice!

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘What’s your name?’

ALEX

She takes a moment...

BEN

I move the bow higher.

ALEX

You see something that you can recognise is a spell that Hamid's cast before.

BEN/GRIZZOP

'What's your name?'

ALEX

She casts Detect Magic on hit.

BEN/GRIZZOP

'What's your name?'

ALEX (as the stranger)

'Very good.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Three...'

ALEX (as the stranger)

'My name is Eldarion.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Yep, no idea. Don’t care. Fine. Get me to Rome.’ I put my bow away.

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Where in Rome are they?’

(Group laughter)

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘You really expect me to know? The worst bit!’

HELEN

Good! Yes!

LYDIA

Yeaaaaahhh!!

(Laughter)

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘I understand you’re frustrated. I am only trying to help you.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘I understand you’re annoying and talk slow. Now, send me to the worst bit of Rome, pleeeeeeeaaasse...’

ALEX (also as Eldarion and the *woman*)

‘Very well.’ She turns to the old woman who’s there just, like, **[through gritted teeth]** ‘Oh, this is sooo awkward!’

(Helen laughs)

She just leans down to her and says something to her in Arabic. The woman’s like, **[whispers]** ‘*Okay, yeah. Yeah, yeah. Okay, okay*’ and then she gestures for you to head out the corridor and starts walking herself.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Oh, wait, before I go...’ pointing at the old lady, ‘Er, you. You are just terrible spies. That was awful!’

(Laughter)

‘... It was really obvious you were all doing conspiratorial things, so maybe just buck your ideas up and stop being so obvious, because if I did want to put down this cell, you would all have been dead about 15 times over. Okay? Bye!’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

As she’s walking out of the corridor, Eldarion’s just, like, ‘You would be amazed...’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘I don’t like you. Shut up.’

(Group laughter)

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

‘You would be amazed at the resources that we’ve had to spend to keep them out of trouble.’ Keeps walking. Goes up to the back garden. ‘Right. The worst bit you said.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Yes. You remind me of a man that I work with.’

[The group bursts into gales of laughter]

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘That’d be Wilde, is my guess?’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Ooh, you remind me so much of him. Get me away from you, please!’

(Helen laughs)

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Okay. Please bear with me, this isn’t exactly a simple spell.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Really? Oh, I expect you could do it with two rocks and one word. Of course it’s not a simple spell!’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

‘It’s harder when you keep talking!’ She just goes quiet.

BEN

Stare daggers, obviously!

(Lydia laughs)

ALEX

I’m going to jump to the rest of the party.

HELEN

Okay.

LYDIA

Whoop, whoop! Sneakin’ around!

ALEX

I’m going to give you one extra piece of information.

LYDIA and HELEN

Mm hmm...

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Einstein has given you nothing useful the whole time. He just keeps looking at different angles and is just, like, 'Yeah, that makes sense. Mmm. Yeah. Eh, you know what wouldn't work here, a teleport, I'll tell you that!'

(Helen laughs)

'Or prestidigitation. Good spell! Hmm!'

BRYN

I will try the mobile stone.

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Einstein, kind of, looks at you a bit weird. He's like, 'Right here?' as it's *[echo-y indecipherable babble]*.

BRYN/HAMID

I hang up again. 'So Sasha said that when she first looked through the ceiling, the four of them were around this portal...'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Ah!'

BRYN/HAMID

'... in the middle of some sort of ritual...'

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, okay.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘... and then she dropped a bomb in...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Ohhh, okay – that’s bad!’

(Lydia laughs)

‘Oh, yeah, that could be bad!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Could that have been the cause of it going wrong?’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

He takes a moment and looks, ‘What’s the bomb made of?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Erm, alchemical ingredients of some kind?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay, so we’re not talking bomb like, you know, a planar detonation the likes of which the universe has rarely seen?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘No, no, no, no.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘No, probably not then, you know?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Okay, but what if they were in the middle of the... the ritual to create this, but got... the ritual got interrupted. Could that be the cause?’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Again, he kind of looks around, ‘I mean, if they did on their own, that’s super bad, ‘cos they could totally do that anyway, you know? It may have just already been here, you know?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Oh. Okay. Well, um...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘I mean, did you capture one of them because that would be super useful, we could interrogate them, you know?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘We would have told you if we did, we... we would have liked to.’

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, okay.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah.’

LYDIA/SASHA

‘I mean, that is what we...’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘You should totally try finding one!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Well, that’s what the other two are doing.’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

‘Oh, cool!’ Smash to them.

HELEN

Okay.

[Lydia and Helen hum a tune]

ALEX

How wide ranging are you?

LYDIA

Pretty wide.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Okay.

LYDIA

I'm going to sneakily, because obviously they can disappear.

ALEX

Can you both please give me a Perception Check?

HELEN

Mm hmm.

ALEX

This is the kind of thing I would take a ten on, but you can't for this specific thing, if you know what I mean.

HELEN

Okay.

[Rolls dice]

Oh, ten.

LYDIA

27.

(Helen and Bryn laugh)

ALEX

Sasha, eventually, you like... you've covered the entire complex...

LYDIA

Good timing!

ALEX

... there was a moment where you saw like, another of those wolf things that never caught the scent of you two, and you're like 'nah'. And then you sort of take a moment and you're, like, 'we're going about this the wrong way. For them to be here, either they can come and go as they please, or they'll... you've got to store something. So where would you store stuff?' Since Sasha starts going around, like, 'Okay, if I was going to be hiding supplies, where

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

would I hide supplies?’ And eventually you start heading down into the basements...

LYDIA

Basements...

ALEX

... yeah, you start heading down into the basements.

LYDIA [singing]

Spooky basements...

ALEX

Mostly... at first, it’s got a bit of spook, but it kind of wears out when it’s... there’s nothing here. There’s not the scuttle of rats, or spiders... there is nothing alive within miles.

LYDIA

Mmm...

ALEX

... so, it’s just like ‘okay’ and then eventually you see one place and it’s like ‘oh, come on, that’s got—that’s got secret door all over it’.

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

... lo and behold, it's just... people have piled bricks instead of there being a wall there? And you find some crates of supplies.

LYDIA

Oooh! What sort of supplies?

ALEX

They are all mundane supplies. You're talking like...

LYDIA

Is that...

ALEX

... climbing equipment, blah blah blah blah blah, and then right towards the back...

LYDIA

Any potions?

ALEX

... you find a large collection of what you guess are... magic-y stuff, as in, it isn't magic, it's not glowing or anything but, you know, when you see... in this kind of world, when you see lots of pots of incense, glittery dust, you know, pieces of paper, that kind of thing, it's not exactly a huge leap of logic.

LYDIA

It's not arts and crafts!

HELEN

No.

(Laughter)

ALEX

You know what I mean. You know, it could be, but it's probably not.

HELEN/AZU

'We should take this back to Hamid.'

LYDIA

Chucking it... already chucking it in a Bag of Holding.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

But worth noting, there are clothes for humans there. There are foods that, you know, humans can eat. There are unmarked boxes...

LYDIA

Are there clothes for Halflings and Gnomes?

ALEX

No.

LYDIA

Ahh.

ALEX

But in terms of it, there's nothing especially valuable apart from the magic-y box of magic-y stuff. You know?

BRYN

Bring the rations, let's have lunch!

LYDIA

Yeah.

HELEN

Yeah, that's a good idea.

ALEX

For what it's worth, the food, to be perfectly clear, it hasn't gone weird, it hasn't spoiled, it's not, you know, rancid and...

LYDIA/SASHA

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

‘Wait a second. We’re in a thing of Hades and there’s food. We shouldn’t eat it.’

BRYN [laughing]

Come on, Sasha doesn’t know her classical mythology!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Sasha does not.

HELEN

Yeah, it’ll be fine.

LYDIA

That’s true. Very true.

ALEX

So, presumably you collect some stuff and take it up, what do you take?

BRYN

Bit of pomegranate in there?!

LYDIA

Yeah...

(Alex laughs)

... collect it all up and go trouncing back up.

ALEX

I'll say that you collect as much as you realistically can, because, you know, it's...

LYDIA

I've got Bags of Holding coming out of my ears!

ALEX

True, I suppose! Do you want to load the whole lot up?

LYDIA

All the magic stuff, yes.

ALEX

Absolutely, yes. Easy.

LYDIA

I don't necessarily move all the crates.

ALEX

'Cos that's what I'm talking about. It's like with a Bag of Holding you could, but you are looking at, like, a room about as big as the one that we are recording in right now, full of crates...

LYDIA

Yep. Cool.

ALEX

... of stuff.

LYDIA

Well, then I just put the... a bit of extra rope, 'cos you can never have enough rope.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

So, essentials.

LYDIA

Essentials...

ALEX

Okay, yeah, sure. Yeah, you stock up and then head back to where Hamid is and Einstein.

LYDIA

... and daggers...

(Laughter)

LYDIA

Are there any daggers there?

ALEX

There are... what's it called? Tool knives, so not, like, combat knives, not fancy, they're just, like, you know, this is good for cutting rope kind of knives, you know?

LYDIA

Oh, I might...

ALEX

They're *very* boring compared to the stuff that you're currently...

LYDIA

I leave them.

ALEX

... toting around.

(Helen laughs)

LYDIA

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

This is a sign of character growth!

(Bryn laughs)

BEN

Yeah.

HELEN

Aww.

BRYN

Knives that Sasha didn't take.

LYDIA

Mmm...

HELEN

Mmm...

ALEX

But yeah, you all reconvene back in the atrium.

BRYN

It's what you can dream about when you're old – all the knives not taken!

LYDIA

Yeah.

(Helen laughs)

ALEX (also as Einstein)

You reconvene back at the atrium, as soon as Einstein's, like, 'I mean, so, the problem is the hostages, you know? 'Cos without the hostages I reckon we could blow it all up, you know? Like, that solves most things.'

BRYN/HAMID

'But definitely not with people trapped in there.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'No.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Is there any way to tell how long it's lasted? You thought... you think it might have been there...'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Oh, okay.'

BRYN/HAMID

'... before they were and, like, the gate spell normally doesn't last more than a minute or so...'

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, yeah, that’s a super short spell, yeah. Curie is big fan of the gate spell, she never really talks about it, but she’s *big* fan of the gate spell, you know?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘So, how would we go about telling how long it’s been in this state, you think?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Hmm...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Any tests we could do?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘I mean, on the fly’s a little difficult.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘And I’ve got a lot of stuff in these Bags of Holding.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘No, it’s okay, like we can go through the basic stuff, you know, okay?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘So, step one, has any event of significance happened at this site?’

(Sasha giggles)

BRYN/HAMID

‘Well, not since the fall of Rome two thousand years ago, probably.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay, cool. So, possibly, could be from the fall of Rome two thousand years ago.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘That’s... so that’s one end of our window.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘So that’s one end, yeah, sure.’

(Group laughter)

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘So, what’s the most recent event of significance?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘The bomb that fell in it just now.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Yeah, okay, so. So, unless Sasha is...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘But we know it was there before the bomb went in...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, right, okay. So, it’s not the bomb then. I mean, okay.’

(Sasha laughs quietly)

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Has anyone important been at this space ever?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I... I don’t think we know, do we?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, um, I’m running short on the list, Hamid, you know? Um... do you know anyone... that did this?’

(Group laughter)

BRYN

I cast Detect Magic?

BEN

Uh oh...

ALEX

Down Hamid falls!

[Helen gasps]

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

[Bommppphhh]...

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Yeah, I wouldn't do that!'

(Lydia laughs)

ALEX (as Einstein)

'The headache's a killer!'

BRYN/HAMID

'Owwwww!'

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Yep.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Well, it was worth a shot.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Take a moment.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘I know that I’m the stupid one here, but...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I’m okay...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘... you just cast Detect Magic on a spell that’s been here like, what, ages?’

Yeah, that’s probably why it hurts!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Well, it’s a clue that it’s been here... I’m just going to rest my eyes for a minute, if that’s okay Professor?’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

‘Yeah, maybe rest your brain too, okay?’

(Helen laughs)

I’m going to jump to Grizzop. So, the woman’s been there, stood very, very calmly, very still for ages, to the point where it’s really clear she’s not casting magic of any kind, because that’s not how magic works.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Ahem.’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

She holds up a finger... and returns to being really still and quiet for a moment.

(Helen laughs softly)

ALEX (also as Eldarion) [breathes in]

‘Okay. we’re going to give this a go. So, I know that you’re annoyed and I know that you’re impatient, but you have to listen to me. Do not lose sight of me. I will not be able to find you again when this is done. Do you understand me?’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Oh, it’s fine, we’ve got Einstein.’

ALEX

She takes a moment.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Yeah, see? We’re doing things which you also don’t understand, so just get me to Rome so I can go do the important things instead of standing here...’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Please tell me Einstein hasn’t been teleporting Sasha around.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘I don’t know.’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Fair point.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Would you mind just sending me to Rome, please, now? Like you said you would...’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Oh, I’m going to.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘... without giving me sage life advice. ‘Cos I don’t want it, thank you!’

(Lydia laughs)

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘And if I die, it’s my god that’ll sort me out, not you. So, can it and get casting.’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Where we’re going through, your god won’t be able to find you.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Blah, blah, blah, can we get on with it?’

(Laughter)

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

‘Very well.’ So she takes a moment, and then she begins casting a spell. Something flashy and not unnecessarily flashy. Like, it starts quite small, you know, talking, gestures and things. As it goes on, it becomes clear this is big! Like, it’s taking ages and is being done very carefully and slowly and you start noticing the sign that big stuff’s going on, which tends to be less pops and whistles than things like, everything’s gone quiet.

HELEN

Mmm.

ALEX

All of the wind is blowing towards you from all directions. At which point, she's casting and casting and casting, she stops and she holds her hand out for you to take.

BEN

I take it.

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

'Don't let go.' And she steps forward. Do you step with her?

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

You step out of the world.

BEN

Okay.

ALEX

Okay. This is not Teleporting. Teleporting is the whole world pushes in on you a bit and then, *[pop]*, oh, you're somewhere else. It's a bit uncomfortable, but it's not bad. This is you heading into somewhere completely new and different.

BRYN

Planar Shift?

BEN

Yeah, are we planes-walking?

BRYN

Yeah, basically.

BEN [speaking in Grizzop's voice]

I am Jace Beleren.

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

The first thing that happens is... give me a Fort Save.

LYDIA

Then tap some land.

HELEN

Ooh, you're gonna be sick.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

BEN

Probably. 12.

ALEX

You immediately lose your footing...

[Helen gasps]

[Sound of dice being rolled]

... like, immediately lose your footing, as does Eldarion. Like, you both immediately sort of stumble. Give me a Reflex Save.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

20.

ALEX

Okay. You both manage to hold on to one another. The reason that you stumble is *up* is shifting constantly. You haven't even had a chance to sort of open your eyes and process what's happening, it's just like *up*'s there... no, wait, it's down, okay, what is this? You finally manage to open your eyes and you feel like you're in the same place, but every single movement that you make warps the entire landscape around you. And the further away something is, the more warped that it gets. So, like, you know, when you try and stand up, yeah, the trees near you are swaying a little bit. The mountains,

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

you know, 70, 80 miles away, are swinging up and down and wrapping around, like, kaleidoscopically. It is...

BRYN

You've been incepted!

BEN

Mmm.

HELEN

Yeah!

ALEX

... it is *hell* in terms of balance, navigation, etc. You notice that Eldarion's eyes are closed.

BEN

Okay.

ALEX (as Eldarion)

'You'll find it a lot easier if you just close your eyes and go with it.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Yeah, but this is really cool!'

(Group laughter)

ALEX (as Eldarion)

'It tends to be, right up until it's not.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Okay. Oh, we did something like this in the bank in Cairo.'

ALEX (as Eldarion)

'Step with me.'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Alright.'

ALEX

She takes a step forward, presumably you do so?

BEN

Yes.

ALEX

The world rolls... by which I mean, it feels, for a very small moment, like you're inside a sphere, with the sky as the top and the ground as the bottom. And you stepping isn't you moving along, the world is rolling in a very weird way.

BEN

Mm hmm.

ALEX

It feels like you're walking uphill, even though you're on the flat, and you seem to have covered a *vast*, like a *grossly vast* distance. And you are just not in Damascus anymore. You have no idea where you are...

BRYN

Kansas, probably!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

At some point, a bird flies through you. However, it stops being a bird when it's flying through you, and becomes a collection of shapes and colours, and then reconstitutes itself and flies on its way. Give me another Fort Save.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

28.

ALEX

28. You are managing to keep it together, but you are feeling parts of you going strange. By which I mean, you know you're seeing the landscape warp?

There's the little moment of, maybe you... if you have your eyes open or closed, it doesn't really matter... you're looking at your fingers and then they're all warping one way and then warping back a little bit. Eldarion seems to be kind of a fixed point in a world that has gone *very* strange and very, very weird.

BEN

Keep my eyes open, but I shuffle a little closer to her?

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

Yeah. 'You're still with me?'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Yeah.'

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

'Okay. One, two, three...' She takes another step. The world completely shifts again. Please give me a, uh, Fort Save.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

22.

ALEX

22. You feel both of your legs are starting to give way on you. You don't lose your footing, but there's a very horrible moment where your knees are not

there anymore. That was fun! Then they came back, but... there were... there were two on each leg, that was strange, but it seems to be settling itself up. It's *really* unpleasant! It's clear why no one ever would choose to travel this way, ever. But you still manage to keep hold of like a tight rein on her hand. You take a moment to, sort of, look around with you... you appear to be on a sea bed...

BEN

Ah!

ALEX

... however, it's rather disturbing, because when you look down you realise that's the sky and there doesn't appear to be a ground at all!

BEN

Oh!

ALEX

She's still with you, she takes another step. Give me another Fort Save.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

Natural one.

ALEX

Natural one.

LYDIA

Ooooooooooh...

ALEX

This one gets ya! Please give me a Reflex Save.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

19.

ALEX

Okay. This step, you were slightly out of time with her. *Just* enough for there to be a couple of thousand miles between your fingertips and your toes...

LYDIA

Euuww...

ALEX

... and you can feel the stretch!

[Helen groans loudly]

ALEX

I don't mean that things break, or anything like that, but humans, goblins, sentient races in general, shouldn't really feel themselves stretched over a thousand-mile space.

BEN

That sounds fair!

(Helen laughs)

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

It hurts a lot, and you are really struggling to process it, because you realised that the back of your head is still catching up with you. She reaches down, sort of manages to pick you up. Your hand is sort of locked on, she manages to pluck you up again. 'How are you doing?'

[Grizzop moans softly]

'Okay.'

(Group laughter)

'It's going to get worse before it gets better.'

[Grizzop moans again, a bit louder]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

I'm going to jump back to the rest of the party at this stage. Azu and Sasha have turned up with all of the equipment and the magic stuff.

LYDIA/SASHA

'Alright. Barbecue time, guys!'

BRYN/HAMID

'Yeah, let's have some lunch.'

HELEN/AZU

'Yeah.'

ALEX

What's with...? You know what, actually, yeah, let's do that. Let's take a break, let's all have some food, have a chill, let our knees catch up with us.

LYDIA

Fluff time!

ALEX [laughing]

We'll be back in a couple of minutes.

LYDIA [singing]

Having some food and some hugs!

[Fades out]

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Okay, we've come back in from the break. Einstein has started poring over the magical stuff that you've got, he's like, 'Okay. Right, okay. Mmm. So, you know, like...'

BRYN

When Hamid's done eating, he'll join him.

ALEX (also as Einstein)

'Is it me, or is this complete nonsense?' And he holds it out to you.

BRYN

I study it.

ALEX

Seems to be. You can try Read Magic on it, I suppose.

BRYN

Yeah, I will.

HELEN

I have Spellcraft with a modifier of six.

ALEX

Yeah, you can... you can start helping out.

HELEN

I'm going to have a look at the magical items.

BEN

God, we're all [0:26:24] being like, 'well obviously it's this, you fool!'

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Give me a Spellcraft check, actually, on all the magical MacGuffingary.

HELEN

Okay. Magical MacGuffingary roll...

[Rolls dice]

ALEX

I will deal with Hamid in a sec.

HELEN

Oh, it's only a 17.

ALEX

17? It's nonsense!

(Lydia laughs)

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

You do notice, however, that it's nonsense because it's magical script and magical script is nonsense unless you use Read Magic. Which Hamid does!

BRYN

Yep.

ALEX

You aren't familiar with the spell. It very much appears to be an attempt to close the gate, rather than open the gate. But there's a lot of a) improvisation happening here.

LYDIA

Written down improv...

ALEX

B...

LYDIA

... that is secretly how we do it!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

B) They're making use of a bunch of things that you've been told 'Don't do that'...

ALEX

Yep.

ALEX

... 'Cos it's more likely to go wrong than right, and then the last thing that you know is, Einstein should definitely be able to... be able to deduce what you can. Like, anyone with Read Magic would be able to deduce what you have. Maybe not execute on it, but know it, yeah.

BRYN

But we know Einstein's a bit strange.

ALEX

So, all of that info you get, even a basic wizard would be able to give a good chunk of the info that you just did. Like, low-level wizard would be able to.

BRYN

This is a very interesting hint you're giving me, Alex!

LYDIA

Mmm.

HELEN

Same.

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Yeah, no, that’s totally...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I mean, yeah, it... it looks like complete nonsense to me, Professor. I mean, it’s obvious what they’re trying to do...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Of course, yeah!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘But they’ve... they’ve...’ I start techno-babbling him. So I'm going to use... I'm going to use my Knowledge Arcana to say non... to say a different sort of nonsense than is in the note.

ALEX

Go for it. Technobabble me. Give me a Knowledge Arc... no...

BRYN

Arcana or Bluff?

ALEX

No, give me Bluff, give me Bluff, actually. Give me Bluff.

HELEN

When this is done I want a Sense Motive on Einstein.

ALEX

Yeah, please do.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

BRYN

My Bluff check is...

[Rolls dice]

27?

ALEX

You start techno babbling and, at first, Einstein seems a little bit thrown, and then he just seems to crank it to 11, via some things that you know are legitimate, until eventually he's just, like, talking at you in things that you're pretty certain might be world changing levels of, like, uh, magical insight and skill. That is not relevant to the situation and it's become clear to you that, yeah, he's just techno babbling you, but better than you are him.

HELEN

I'm going to do a Sense Mo...

ALEX

Please...

HELEN

I'm watching this going...

ALEX

Please do. Please do.

HELEN

... what is happening. Sense Motive on Einstein. Hope I'm going to do well on that!

[Rolls dice]

[She sounds dejected]

Oh.

(Bryn laughs)

That's only a 15.

ALEX

You definitely know that something's up. However, what that is... too difficult to place.

HELEN

Mmm.

ALEX

There's something Einstein isn't saying, let's put it that way. Like, you know that.

HELEN

Right.

ALEX (as Einstein)

'So, yeah, I mean, give me a couple of... you know, spells take ages to cast sometimes, you know, so just give me a little bit of time.'

HELEN/AZU

'Einstein, what's going on?'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'I mean, you know, so in Rome and... and this guy, Ed – cool guy – he's actually in the... in the thing.'

HELEN/AZU

‘Yes, we know... we know that...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool. Glad I could get you up to speed.’

HELEN/AZU

‘You’re being strange. Please stop being strange.’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

‘Why would you be hurtful to me? You know, I have been nothing but helpful to you, okay? You know, your family were lovely, you know, the apple is clearly falling very far from... do you have apples where you grew up? Actually, I didn’t see any apples. Where do you grow in your...?’ And, just, off we go, chatting about Azu’s home...

HELEN/AZU

‘Please stop.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Hamid, can I speak to you for a moment?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Uh, yeah, okay.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool. I’ll be here!’

LYDIA/SASHA

‘Pancakes are up.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Nice!’

(Helen laughs)

‘This is cool!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Alright. Einstein is not being of any use and I don't know why.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I don't know! Same. He’s... he understands so much, but he doesn’t understand very much of the same time and I can’t work out which bit is wrong. He... ’cos he’s one of the most accomplished wizards ever, and yet he doesn’t seem to know the things he should know, but then he knows some stuff that I can’t even get my head around. And it’s weird.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Hmm. Maybe he’s been cursed by something or...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Well, he’s been a bit weird ever since we’ve met him and I don’t... I don’t... I can’t tell if this is different or new or the same. But something feels a bit off.’

HELEN/AZU

Yes.

ALEX

I'm going to jump to Grizzop. To speed things along, could you please just start with a Fort Save this time.

(Alex laughs)

[Sound of dice being rolled]

(Bryn laughs)

HELEN and LYDIA

Ohhh...

BEN

11.

ALEX

11? Okay. Give me a Reflex Save.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

Oh, that's fine – 24.

ALEX

Okay. I've done enough checks here to have made this an arduous journey that you are making. I'm not going to do this again and again and again and again. I'm going to skip ahead to, it's horrific. It's awful and you manage to keep yourself together for a while and then it came, 'oh, this isn't going to be a like, we'll do this a couple of times and be there, this is... this is going to... okay'. And it becomes intolerable, as in, it is agony, it is fundamentally disturbing and it is... you're already *well*, well beyond what a normal person would be able to withstand.

BEN

So...

LYDIA

My hangovers.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Just! I mean, it's like one of Lydia's hangovers. If, you know, you'd had an easy night the night before!

(Group laughter)

BEN

So, I cope with this by like, I give up... I squeeze my eyes tightly shut, I just let my mind wander away from like, my body?

ALEX

Mm hmm.

BEN

I just respond to, uh, Darian's, whatever her name is...

HELEN

Eldarion.

BEN

... Eldarion's commands, like, robotically, and I'm concentrating on Artemis, my friends who I'm coming to save, and Vesseek.

ALEX

Okay. Give me a final Check.

BEN

Of?

ALEX

Please give me a final Fort Save check.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

19.

ALEX

The journey finally ends. It turns out, it takes a long time for you to even come to and to realise that the things that you're thinking out, like, separating out thought from reality takes a little bit of a while. Oh, the people that you're thinking about aren't here, because here isn't there. Yes. Yes! Yes. Eldarion puts you down gently, having been holding you most of this way at this point...

HELEN

Awww...

ALEX

... and then collapses onto the floor, which is *baking* hot and you appear to be in, skip to description of Rome as I've given it to these guys earlier.

BEN

Uh, well I start by casting Endure Elements...

ALEX

Mm hmm.

BEN

... from a divine source.

ALEX

I feel I might be repeating myself a little bit.

BEN

Never ever have this experience before.

HELEN

Oh, Grizzop!

BEN

It's not Arcane, so.

ALEX

It's true! You reach out *[in a strained voice]* for a god that isn't there, and for help that isn't coming.

BEN/GRIZZOP

'No!'

BEN

I'll go get one of my symbols of Artemis and concentrate harder. Not saying no to this, is the spell expended?

ALEX

Yes.

BEN

Okay. Well, I'll do it the one more time that I'm allowed to do it.

[Rolls dice]

ALEX

At first, there's nothing there. But this is Grizzop, so he forces it...

(Laughter)

HELEN

Aww.

ALEX

He's like, *[really strained]* 'Come on. Come on! I've done so much for you.'
that kinda like...

(Helen and Lydia laugh)

ALEX

... really trying it! Finally, something seems to come through. You believe it may have worked, partially. I don't mean like, you've only got one arm, but more like...

(Laughter)

... limited effects, maybe it's not going to last as long, maybe it's not going to be as beneficial as it should be, but it's clear that it really took it out of you as well. Like, gasping for breath. Wow. Okay. And it took the spell slot as well, obviously.

BEN/GRIZZOP

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Of course. 'Oh, alright. Knew I could do with a knee at my back! Right. Let's go!'

LYDIA

Aww.

ALEX

Eldarion's still face down...

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Okay.'

ALEX

... like, spread out. Splayed in the dust...

BEN/GRIZZOP

I'll give her a poke with my foot. 'You alright?'

ALEX (as Eldarion)

'Yeah...'

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Okay.'

ALEX (as Eldarion)

Just, [she exhales, then breathes deeply], give me a moment...

BEN/GRIZZOP

'Yep.' I'm going to go and have a look around.

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘How are you doing?’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Yeah, fine.’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

‘Good.’ Having a look around?

BEN

I mean, you can have him make a Bluff Check if you want to, ‘cos that was a bald-faced lie.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

You know what, actually, give me a Bluff Check. Give me a Bluff Check.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

Bear in mind, she’s getting *enormous* modifiers ‘cos she knows the reality of the situation quite well.

BEN

16.

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

Okay. 'Very well.' And she starts getting herself up. You start looking around?

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

You're at the outskirts of a massive apparently ruined city. Mostly appears to be blasted, like, you see a couple of foundations poking out the ground.

Maybe off in the distance, there might be a few standing buildings. I'm... again, I'm trying not to repeat myself too much. Something's fixed in the sky, bizarre purple haze. The...

LYDIA

Yada, yada, yada...

ALEX

Yada, yada, yada...

(Bryn laughs)

... shadows will freeze your blood, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah...

(Lydia laughs)

... the sun... blah, blah, blah. Occasional massive flying creatures of a type that you would have to do checks...

BRYN

Eerie howls.

ALEX

... you know, eerie howls occasionally, you know.

BEN

We've heard this all before!

ALEX

All the good stuff!

LYDIA

Spooky, bad, etc.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Mmm hmm.

HELEN

Big blob, somewhere.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Right. So...’

ALEX

Eldarion stands up.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘You wanna go for the...’

ALEX

Dusts herself down.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘... biggest, baddest looking building, I guess?’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

She just gestures around. ‘Rome.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Yeah, okay. Cool.’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘I hope you like it.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘No, it’s awful, obviously!’

(Helen laughs)

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Should we go?’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Where?’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Into the city. Or I assume whatever’s happened isn’t on the outskirts and there’s a city over there, so let’s go into that.’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Very well.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Can you creep?’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

‘Shouldn’t need to. Bear with me.’ She places a hand on herself and then begins casting with her other hand.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Oh, that went bad for me.’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

‘Okay.’ She kind of stops before the... before the, uh, juices get flowing in a magical sense.

(Lydia laughs)

‘Right, um, walking then, I guess.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Yeah. Well, basically I had to really force Artemis to hear me, so there’s some kind of block. I’m assuming it’s gotta be some horrible Hades things. I don't know how it works for you but, you know, just take it under advisement.’

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘After you.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Alright!’

[Sound of dice being rolled]

BEN

I'm going to sneak away.

ALEX

Eldarion tries to do the same. Please give me a Sneak Check.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

28.

ALEX

28. If only you could sneak for both of you!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Oh, no.

ALEX

Eldarion is not a complete failure, but what Eldarion is, is a very tall, pale Elf, wearing large amounts of glinting jewellery, and possibly heels.

(Laughter)

In this wasteland...

[he laughs]

HELEN

Aww.

ALEX

She's doing the best that she can.

BEN

Could have taken the shoes off.

ALEX

Yeah.

(Helen laughs)

BEN

She knew she was coming with me.

ALEX

Mmm! Coulda.

BEN

Prat!

(Group laughter)

ALEX (also as Einstein)

I'm going to jump back to the rest of the party. Einstein's just looking at the wibbly-wobbly again, going, 'Hmm. Yes. Okay.'

BRYN

So, I'm going to... after my little chat with Azu, going to take the pieces of paper with the magical writing and go back to Einstein, and this time I'm... I'm not going to try and techno babble again, I'm going to go for a different tactic. I'm going to ask him to explain some of the bits to me and pretend less knowledge than I actually have.

ALEX

Okay. Can you give me another Deception Check, please?

BRYN

[Rolls dice]

16.

ALEX

Could you also give me a Sense Motive, please?

BRYN

[Rolls dice]

Only 11.

ALEX

Are you taking Einstein aside, or Azu are you there too?

BRYN

No, I'm just doing it in the middle.

ALEX

Azu, could you give me a Sense Motive as well, please?

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

You're getting lots of things, but you are actually trying different tactics each time...

BRYN

Yeah, yeah.

ALEX

... I wouldn't just let you keep rolling if you were saying the same stuff.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

HELEN

Goddamnit!

(Alex laughs)

BRYN

Oh, dear, the dice have deserted us!

HELEN

Yeah. 14.

ALEX

14. So...

LYDIA

I mean, I could begin to pay attention...

ALEX

Yeah, go on, give me a Sense Motive.

LYDIA

[Rolls dice]

13 plus seven is 20.

ALEX

Okay. So...

LYDIA

If it's Sasha that works it out, you guys should reconsider your life choices!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Sasha specifically immediately gets an insight.

LYDIA

Ohh...

ALEX

Which I will... which is... Einstein... Einstein begins explaining stuff to Hamid and then you're like '*cool, yeah, oh no, I'm... I really struggle with this*'. You know, like, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, playing yourself a little bit dumber.

BRYN

Yeah. And I'm trying to adopt the teacher-student relationship...

ALEX

Yeah, of course.

BRYN

... to... yeah.

ALEX

He gets into that in a real big way. But he seems to be really bad at teaching.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX (also as Einstein)

And the issue is, he keeps coming in at like, real high tier stuff and you're like '*Cool, but why don't we start at the beginning?*' 'No, yeah, of course, yeah, yeah, okay, cool.' Right back into the, like, real high tier stuff. Sasha, you very much get the sense that this isn't just... accidental?

LYDIA

Mmm.

ALEX

You know when someone is... not saying stuff.

LYDIA

Just from the body language [0:38:59]

ALEX (also as Einstein) [talking over Lydia]

You don't read it as hostile. You don't read it as he's trying necessarily, like, get you all... and Azu, you're kind of getting a similar vibe, like, both you and

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

Sasha are going *'okay, I see that he's... he's not just, you know, a bad teacher'*. He's *openly avoiding* certain aspects of the topic and keeps saying, 'I mean, we can take this one as read, of course.' You're like, *'no, can we go into this?'*

ALEX (as Einstein)

'I mean... sure.'

BRYN/HAMID

Yeah.

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Okay. So, you know...'

BRYN

And you said there's a couple of things in the instructions, which are things I've been specifically told to avoid. So, I'm going to literally point to one of them on the paper and say 'I was always taught that you should really avoid this, but I don't understand why. If they're using it, is there a reason for that?' without saying which bit it is, as well.

ALEX

Sure. He's really, really struggling when you do that. A lot. Like, a lot, a lot. This plays out.

LYDIA/SASHA

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

‘I’m going to go look for more gaps to see if I can find out more about what’s going on, on the other side.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘That’s a good idea.’

LYDIA/SASHA

‘Maybe one or two of you could help me?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Sure.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘I’ll stay here, you know, lots of... work to do.’

LYDIA/SASHA

‘Yeah. Maybe someone should stay with him, to make sure he stays safe.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘That’s a good call. **[he chuckles]** I’m rubbish in a fight!’

LYDIA/SASHA

As we head off, she’s like, ‘Right. I... I don’t understand spell stuff, but I got... I know when someone is, like, avoiding answering questions, ‘cos that’s what we practice doing, it’s a game we do, so that if you’re caught by the police, like, they ask you stuff and you say lots of things without saying anything, right? So,

I know when someone's doing that. Do you think that maybe he left part of his brain behind when he teleported around? So, we don't know...'

HELEN/AZU

'I'm not sure if he would know. I think that partial brainage...'

(Bryn laughs)

'... would have had a worse effect.'

(Alex laughs)

LYDIA/SASHA

'I'm the same, people say that, like, the teleporting messes with you in some way. I'm not meaning that, like, literally half of his, like, jelly brain is powering Mr. Ceiling or something, but like...'

HELEN/AZU

'Maybe he's old.'

LYDIA/SASHA

'Maybe he is just old.'

HELEN/AZU

'Maybe he can't remember. Maybe... maybe he never...'

LYDIA/SASHA

‘Maybe it’s not really Einstein!’

HELEN/AZU

‘No, I’m pretty sure this must be Einstein.’

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

I’m going to jump back to Grizzop. Eldarion at some point asks for you to stop.
‘I would really appreciate if you can offer any kind of help or insight, I am quite out of my element here.’

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Uh... I mean... no.’

(Helen laughs)

ALEX (as Eldarion)

‘Fair enough.’

(Lydia laughs)

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘I mean, I don't know what you want. What do you want? I could shoot you something!’

(Lydia giggles)

‘Rome is bad ‘cos they did a ritual? What do you want? You came here with me!’

ALEX (as Eldarion) [taking a deep breath]

‘You know what? Fine!’

(Bryn laughs)

HELEN

Aww.

ALEX (also as Eldarion)

‘Fine.’ She starts walking.

HELEN

Oh, man.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘If you want help, be specific.’

HELEN

That was such a swallowing of pride and you just threw it back at her!

ALEX

She starts walking.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Look, if you want help, just be specific. I don't know what generic help... Look, I can't give you sneakier shoes, or make you shorter!’

(Laughter)

ALEX

She just... she's... she's just walking.

BEN/GRIZZOP

‘Maybe take your jewellery off and put it in a bag?’

ALEX

Give me another Stealth Check, please.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

These are long termers, not like...

BEN

Yeah. 28.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

ALEX

She does take her jewellery off and puts it in a bag. She does fractionally better as a result.

(Helen laughs)

BEN/GRIZZOP

'See, that helped, you're jingling less!'

(Group laughter)

ALEX (also as Einstein)

I'm going to jump back to the party. Eventually, like a bunch more time is passing with Einstein going, 'Oh, definitely working!'

BRYN

So... so, it seems clear that he can't read the paper. Have I successfully deduced that from these interactions?

ALEX

It'd be a very logical assumption, yeah.

BRYN

Okay.

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Einstein, actually specifically goes, 'Azu, um, I could really do with your help in this corner actually, you know?'

[Ben snorts with laughter]

'Lots of... god... -ing happening. I think.'

HELEN/AZU

'Alright. I have Knowledge Religion, I can help you with that.'

(Lydia laughs)

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Sort of goes into a corner. 'Azu?'

HELEN/AZU

'Hello.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'I can trust you with a secret, right?'

(Lydia laughs)

HELEN/AZU

'I'm a Paladin.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘You see, that’s not what I asked.’

[everyone shrieks with laughter!]

‘I’ve played this game before, you know?’

[laughter continues]

‘You thought that was it for a moment there, didn’t you? You did.’

[still laughing]

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh, Ed!’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘It’s fine, he’s not dead, he’s just trapped forever.’

(Lydia laughs)

HELEN/AZU

‘You can trust me with... a secret, if... by keeping it, I won’t be harming the rest of my friends.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

'I mean sure, okay. You have to promise not to tell them. Before I tell you. Cross your heart and all that stuff?'

HELEN/AZU

'I am a Paladin of Aphrodite, hearts are what I do. Yes.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'That's a good line.'

HELEN/AZU

'I know.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'You should totally use that one.'

LYDIA

Yeah!

HELEN

She takes out the necklace of the Heart of Aphrodite that Eren Fairhands gave her, which I've had written down on my sheet for ages.

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, you didn’t have to, thank you so much.’

HELEN

No, no, no, no. No! It’s still attached to her.

ALEX

Oh.

HELEN/AZU

She’s like, ‘I promise on this.’

LYDIA

Ooh.

ALEX (also as Einstein)

‘Cool. Okay.’ He has no idea what that is, at all.

HELEN/AZU

‘This is very important.’

(Lydia laughs)

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay, I’ll take your word for that, I guess.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Also, it’s a literal heart, so...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay. Um... this is kind of hard for me. Um... you know, ever since Newton’s study, you know way back when? I’m really, really good at, um, you know, Teleporting I’m *super good*, you know, it’s Einstein! Eh, Einstein! you know?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yes, we appreciate that a lot.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘And you know what, Prestidigitation’s super, you know, it’ll clean your clothes [0:44:33] but... um... I may have lost... quite a lot... back when I tried to... to get into Newton’s stuff. Um, that’s all I got.’

HELEN/AZU

‘You’ve forgotten?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Forget’s a strong word.’

HELEN/AZU

‘What word would you use?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

'I teleported really skilfully...'

(Bryn laughs)

'... all of the knowledge and skills I had accrued through a lifetime of study...
somewhere I am not.'

LYDIA [laughing]

I was right!

(Bryn laughs)

HELEN

You were right. He's lost part of his brain!

LYDIA

Yeah, he's teleported off his brain.

ALEX (as Einstein)

'But you can't tell Hamid, it would destroy him, you know. He looks up to me
so much.'

[Helen and Lydia shriek with laughter]

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Sasha too, but not in the same way, you know?’

BRYN

I do look up to him.

HELEN

Aww.

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Like, I’m everything the little guy aspires to, you know? I couldn’t do that to him.’

HELEN/AZU

‘What can I tell them?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Um... you’re the people person, you know. I just sort of *‘Pow! Yeah! Let’s go to Bermuda! Or Spain! Pow! Einstein is so cool!’*’

(Lydia laughs)

HELEN/AZU

‘Right. Thank you.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘This is way over my paygrade now. Um, I'm still probably fine to get us out, you know, that's cool. That's also, sort of, all I can kind of do.’

HELEN/AZU

‘That's alright, Einstein. We'll work it out somehow.’

LYDIA

It's not alright!

ALEX

Einstein... beat me to my own line... Einstein sort of starts to cry a little bit.

[Helen and Lydia gasp]

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘This is not alright, though, is it?’

LYDIA

Sorry.

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘I'm meant to be a teacher, you know? And then they're all asking these questions and I don't know, so I just tell them things about teleporting and then they made me a head of faculty. I mean, for teleporting, thank god!’

(Group laughter)

ALEX (as Einstein)

'But you know, like, this is... this is...'

HELEN

That's how academia works!

ALEX (as Einstein)

'So they're like *'Oh, you know! I really struggle with... with... with, you know, Detect Magic'* and I'm like *'It's fine, just don't do it!'*.'

HELEN

Okay. Azu...

ALEX

He's really, really upset now. Really, really upset.

HELEN

Oh, no, roll to comfort.

(Lydia and Helen laugh)

ALEX

Oh, you don't have to perform it, you can take 10.

(Helen laughs)

LYDIA

Take 20 and fail spectacularly!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Just once you're like, 'Uh, bang!' right in the eye!

HELEN

No, I'm going to like, put an arm around Einstein.

ALEX (as Einstein)

'You gotta help me, they mustn't ever find out, okay?'

HELEN/AZU

'Alright.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Okay.'

ALEX

I'm going to jump back to Grizzop. Give me a Survival Check, please.

HELEN

Ooh.

ALEX [laughing]

Eldarion doesn't even get this one.

HELEN

Oh, no.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

LYDIA

She does not survive.

BEN

Poo.

HELEN

Oh, no!

LYDIA

Oh, dear.

BEN

Good thing I've got Endure Elements.

LYDIA

Partial.

ALEX

Now, I need you to give me... there's been a lot of these, but it is on the cards...

BEN

Perception Check?

ALEX

A Fort Save, please.

BEN

Oh, right.

[Rolls dice]

Uh, 20.

ALEX

Good.

(Laughter)

[Sound of dice being rolled]

Not good! So, you start heading towards the city. It... again, it's easy at this point, 'cos everything's kind of crushed, but the closer you get the higher things start getting, etc. Then you hear the first of the howls that are approaching.

LYDIA

Oh, no.

HELEN

Oh, no.

ALEX

And you recognise this. And you make one miscalculation, which is that you spend more time hiding your tracks and your scent, and not maybe making sure that flying dogs can see you. You made all of the right decisions for the wrong type of creature, basically. They get a bead on you. You immediately recognise that you can't take them. And I am going to jump to, you are currently running... what you now do is up to you... but you are currently running and Eldarion is really struggling to keep up with you at the same time, pursued.

BEN

Okay. Yeah, we run for the, like, best cover we can find, which I'm assuming is this great big palatial building on top of the hill.

ALEX

I mean, you go past what's left of this like, pub that maybe had a cellar, but it seems to have had a lot of, like, fighting near there, so...

(Group laughter)

... I wouldn't pick that one of the places.

LYDIA

Is there still like the gross stuff from [0:48:32 talking over one another]

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Yeah, give that a wide berth. I wouldn't get into that one!

LYDIA

It's stinky!

BRYN

Can we hear this?

ALEX

You're... you're...

BRYN

... 'Cos if you're under hot pursuit, you're no longer trying to be quiet...

ALEX

It's so interesting that you ask that. Yes. I'm not even going to get a Perception Check, because the thing is, it's weird, it's getting closer.

LYDIA

Oh.

HELEN

Okay.

BRYN/HAMID

'Er, Sasha, do you want to see what's outside? And call us if... if we need to come and help?'

LYDIA/SASHA

'I think... pretty sure that I'm going to need you. It's the dogs.' Like, we can hear them howling, surely?

ALEX

For once, they all seem to be in the same place, which is helpful.

HELEN

Oh, no.

BRYN/HAMID

‘Okay, let’s go see what’s up.’

LYDIA

Heads out. Yeah, heads out the front.

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah.’ I get me axe out.

LYDIA

Gets me daggers out.

ALEX

Everyone give me a Perception Check.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

LYDIA

Oh, no.

HELEN

To see our friend.

BRYN

27.

HELEN

17.

LYDIA

30.

ALEX

Sasha and Hamid...

LYDIA

I see through time!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

You see all of the bad decisions that you made to get to this place and you just change them.

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

No! So, you see... first you see a couple of, you know, dogs teleporting around up in the sky, down in the ground and so on. And then you *just* are able to

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make out the two of you, what looks to be Grizzop... *booking* it towards where you are right now, with someone else in tow.

LYDIA

Mmm.

BRYN

How close behind them are the dogs?

ALEX

It's going to be close.

BRYN

How far away are they? In terms of feet.

(Alex laughs)

HELEN

Ohh!

(Laughter)

ALEX

About 150.

BRYN [laughing excitedly]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

150? I cast Fireball!

ALEX [laughing]

I'm going to end the episode there.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Okay, please don't blow Grizzop.

(Lydia giggles)

BRYN [laughing]

It's fine. It's fine.

HELEN

It's not.

BRYN

I can aim it perfectly!

ALEX

What I love is, *'It's fine, it's fine. I Fireballed myself, it barely hurts, guys. It's fine.'*

(Laughter)

So yeah, I may... I may manage to reconstitute what's left into a party?

LYDIA

Urrgghh...

BRYN

The range on Fireball, by the way, 680 foot.

ALEX

That is unnecessarily large.

BRYN [laughing]

I know, right?!

HELEN

That's amazing.

ALEX

Right. We will rejoin next week and Bryn will manage to take out the new NPC and his friend, I'm sure. And everything will go terribly, that's the plan.

HELEN

Hooray.

BRYN

Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

That's why I asked what the gap between them is, the radius of Fireball is 20 foot, it's going to be fine.

BEN

All we've got to do is make sure if that happens that Sasha doesn't see the corpse.

(Laughter)

BRYN

What a lovely note to end on!

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALL

Bye!

ALEX

Oh, god!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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Rusty Quill Gaming – [123] – [Plane and Simple]

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LYDIA

Maybe she had a spell, like Appropriate Shoewear.

HELEN

Mmm.

BEN [laughing]

Yeah, that's what she was going to cast.

LYDIA [laughing]

Yeah!

ALEX

I cast the spell Casual Flats!

(Laughter)

LYDIA

Doesn't basically Hamid have that spell?

ALEX

Yes.

BRYN

Yeah, basically, yeah.

(Alex laughs)