

RQG – 130 – Violent Reactions [V3.0]

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 - Peter Davis, Charlotte Dunn, Nikki, Jordan Bouchard, Jas Valin, Jess, Dave McGuire, Jessica Dao, Rebecca Hanson, Kip. 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 130 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have

BEN

Ben Meredith

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

ALEX

And ...

HELEN

Helen Gould

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

HELEN

And Azu.

ALEX

So, we are picking up, pretty much where we left off, insofar as ...

BRYN

Info dump, info dump ... give me an info dump!

ALEX

So, we have Hamid, we have Azu and we have Zolf - although it's probably less useful for Zolf, all in the reading room of the Inn, finally getting some actual specifics ... Wilde is sort of leaning against the desk

"Obviously, you've got a lot of questions? It's probably worth you, sort of letting you know the kind of things that you want to know because, I can go into detail, but at the same time I'd rather make this as useful for you as possible".

BRYN

Well, I still don't really understand what's going on, because no-one will tell us, or no-one knows! ...

ALEX

"Okay, okay, okay ..."

BRYN

Where are we, what are we doing here? Let's start there!

ALEX

"That I can answer. Obviously, you're in Japan ... Einstein brought you here, he's been quite useful in that kind of thing. Especially since all the storms cropped up. We are here because, I have a hunch, that everything that's gone down, has been as a direct result of the work that we were all doing together before ... before you were all absent for a while. We are ... to all intents and purposes we are our own self-contained unit because that's that I want it. We are working with the ... Harlequins to a degree, but then again everyone is. They are, for lack of a better word, sort of ... the defacto institution since the Meritocrats ... disappeared and all of their supporters started getting a bit edgy. We were right, the Meritocracy was infiltrated ... way back when we were doing the Simulacrum stuff and, as a result they were compromised from the go. They haven't really been able to salvage themselves ... they're still nominally in control, but any real decisions aren't passing through them anymore.

The reason that we stay self-contained is that, if my hunch is right, and that the things that we were doing prior to everything going wrong is, as a direct result,

we don't want the enemy knowing that we're still pursuing this. To be clear, Zolf knows this, you should know it as well.

In the event that I die or I am taken or something similar, there is a dead hand policy in place, the information will be pass on to Curi, but it's only gonna pass on if I die, or if I'm ... comprised in some way. Zolf knows how to spot some stuff ... we'll be covering all that with you as well. The reason that we're here, is that for reasons, beyond my understanding, the Temple of Offestus decided that all of the plans etc that Grizzop gave them ... don't exist and that we never gave it them, they don't know what we're talking about. They swear by their god Offestus ... they have no idea what we're talking about. Which says to me that there's something going on but then the cleric managed to disappear. I don't know whether it was related to the enemy or not, but that's the way we stand. We still have the paperwork, the cipher paperwork that you collected from Cairo ... there's a bit more at play here however, and some of this might be news to Zolf.

The reason that Zolf's been here, is these weather issues. Well, have you told them yet that you ..."

BEN

Did some investigating?

ALEX

"Yeah."

BEN

Yeah ... coastline, probably, actually directed action ... that's why we're here.

ALEX

"So, we have ... intel that it's possibly all been come from, a single point ... specifically where we are now there is a small, I don't want to say island, it's too small for that ... rock off of this island ... it's the Shoin Institute. We are currently on ... Okinoshima Island, we're just off South Honshu, the nearest city is Atsubi ... if that means anything to you but, we're well shot of there. It's a fairly ... rural area we believe that the weather issues have been coming, potentially from constructs or creatures created by this person who has

declared themselves ... let's say a **Fewdelord**. Obviously, there's not really much in the way of Meritocracy to interfere with him and they've got bigger fish to fry anyway. So it just so happens, that it would seem that Zolf's investigations into the weather and our own investigations into the Simulacrum may have converged. So, as it stands, I have a team put together to ... let's just say it's hard to get hold of ... Shoin ... he is not exactly welcome to visitors, he has been enforcing it mostly via proxies on this island and he's ... pretty much locked his place down into a fortress."

BRYN?

So, you want us ...

HELEN

Break in?

BRYN?

Go on to the island and ... find him? Find out what he's doing with the weather?

ALEX

"What I want to do ... is finally start to pick up where we left off."

HELEN

That's quite a long way back.

BEN

Simulacra ... we think Shoin made ... or is instrumental in making the Simulacrum.

HELEN

So we need to go and destroy them?

BEN

Maybe, I think you're right ... it kind of is a heist. You did get it ... it wasn't ...

ALEX

"You didn't tell them did you?"

BEN

No.

HELEN

No, but he said Howard Carter was involved.

ALEX

"Yes ..."

BRYN

Why is Howard Carter involved?

HELEN

That is a very good question.

ALEX

"It turns out that ... Sashas are hard to find ... let's put it that way and ..."

HELEN

You don't need to remind us.

ALEX

"Yeah I know, I'm sorry. He's the ... the best that was on offer. I wasn't going to take him, but the third time that he escaped and was recaptured, it seemed worth ... giving it a go. For what it's worth, he started behaving himself a bit better. I mean, there's only so much trouble he can get into ..."

BRYN

Are you sleeping with him?

ALEX

"I am not."

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Hamid ...

BRYN

You saw the way ... is this an in-character or out of character comment?

ALEX

Oh.

HELEN

I don't know ... is it?

BRYN

I'm not even sure anymore. That was an in-character comment.

?

Oh, really ... yeah.

HELEN

In which case, I do rebuke you like that.

BEN

"Hamid ... the way the two of you interacted ... I don't believe that your libido is the best way of deciding who should be on a team like this Oscar. "

BRYN

I think Zolf and Azu share a look ...

(laughter)

ALEX

Wilde sort of gestures to everyone to, calm down in a way he normally hasn't.

BRYN

Quite disappointed to find he's not in a jail somewhere.

ALEX

"I think that's a fair comment from about ... 18 months ago. And that's not me trying to get a dig in Hamid, it's just that times change."

BRYN

Fair enough.

ALEX

"You'd be amazed how, insignificant a lot of those things have become, especially in recent months ... nothing's happened and nothing's going to happen."

He ...

HELEN

Is very annoying.

(laughter)

ALEX

Yes, he is.

?

But he is useful.

ALEX

"Exactly. But this isn't the whole team ... obviously we have Barnes, I think I heard you mention him at one point?"

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

"He's been ... quite useful, first in investigating the weather side of things, but also, frankly he's a ... a useful in with the Meritocrats. Nominally, he's still working within the Meritocrats, obviously, he's not anymore cause no-one works for them really but, it's still a useful to contact to have. But there is one more reason that I'd actually quite like to approach ... who you all don't know."

HELEN

Alright, so ...

BEN

Yeah, well I didn't either ... so ...

ALEX

"Apologies ... I ..."

BEN

No, it's fine.

ALEX

"So you know that Shoin's people have been expanding and ... demanding more and going further to get it. It turns out there's a ... a village he's been avoiding and, at first I assumed it was maybe an inconvenience, maybe there

was nothing there ... I've heard there might be an apothecarist or something similar who might be ... worth talking to. The fact that we're about to take on an alchemist ... I don't think it seems like a shot in the dark, I've done my homework for what its worth, everyone seems to speak well of them, they seem to know their stuff."

BEN

Right, are you gonna send us to go ... talk to them?

BRYN

So, let me get this straight, I still don't quite understand what you want us to do? So, Shoin is ... is an alchemist of some kind?

ALEX

"Yes."

BRYN

And has been responsible for both receiving ... Simulacrum shipments from Damascus, and is in some way connected to the weather problems?

ALEX

"Correct."

BRYN

Have I got that right?

ALEX

"Yes."

BRYN

But you don't know exactly ... why he was receiving Simulacrum shipments or exactly how he was ... doing anything with the weather?

ALEX

"And that is why I need to get into the Institute. I have exhausted every, other lead."

BRYN

Right, okay.

HELEN

But before that, you know there's a place that he's been avoiding and you want us to go and investigate the person you think is ...

ALEX

"Let's put it this way, any place that Shoin is avoiding ... is a place that I would like to be ... intimately familiar with."

BEN

Right, and you want us to go and ... find that person and have a chat to them?

ALEX

"Ideally, yes."

BRYN

Do you think this person might have ... knowledge of the same sort of techniques that Shoin uses?

ALEX

"I'm not an expert in alchemy ... are you?"

BRYN

No.

BEN

What I was gonna say is ... do we know if they, speak anything other than Japanese because, otherwise we're gonna have a bit of a short conversation?

ALEX

Wilde gives a ... a little chuckle, reaches down to a ... drawer in the desk ... leans over, pulls it out, and chucks a potion vial to you and, pulls out another two ... hands one to Azu and hands one to ... Hamid.

HELEN

And these are?

ALEX

"Tongues. Specifically, it's gonna let you speak Japanese."

HELEN

Ah, okay, right ...

ALEX

And understand Japanese to be specific.

BRYN

I mean I can ... cast comprehend languages but it doesn't help me be understood.

ALEX

"Well, that's what this is for."

HELEN

How long does it last?

ALEX

"Not a huge amount of time, but it might be enough to ..."

HELEN

5 minutes, half an hour?

ALEX

"About an hour."

BEN

If all else fails, I can prep it ... the tongues I mean.

ALEX

Between the two of you ...

BEN

We'll manage.

ALEX

"Don't bring them back here immediately, you know the standard procedures."

BEN

Yeah, well, another week.

BRYN

Right, so not easy to do anything at speed in this new world then?

BEN

Not easy to involve new people at speed. Once we get going, we can get going quickly, but we just you know, take some time to prep.

ALEX

"What I would say is ... make the first openings ... say hello, etc. If it seems like they're worth our time Zolf, it might be time to have a chat with them at the end."

HELEN

Right, so where are they? Are we going today, now?

ALEX

"If you're willing?"

HELEN

Yes.

BRYN

Yes.

ALEX

"Perfect."
I'm gonna jump ahead.

BRYN

Sure.

ALEX

He basically provides you a ... map of the island that you're on ... I might be able to give you hard facts if you want, it's not huge ... it's wooded, it's quite warm, you're close to the ... equator at this point so, don't think like ... freezing cold. What I would say is the whole time that you've been in the Inn it has been raining and, as Wilde is sort of showing you this map he's like ...

"Okay, that track has washed out, that one's gone, that one's gone ... this village is empty now."

It's, its very rural. It's basically a fishing island at this point and the ... if the Shoin Institute is sort of ... off to the West Coast, the Inn is sort of ... more or

less central to the island and then if you head further and further east closer to the main land, the village is ... almost coastal on the far East.

Zolf obviously, you know this place inside and out, you've had the time ... obviously, although you haven't been interacting much with the local population ... who knows who could be compromised! I think its worth mentioning you haven't found any of the local population have been compromised like, the war's very far away from here.

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

The precautions are mainly for ... people arriving as opposed to people around here. You're probably still going to have to do protocol but at the same time ...

BEN

How, how far away is it ... in terms of just travelling distance?

ALEX

There's no horses, or carts or vehicles so you're ...

BEN

I am assuming we're walking there?

ALEX

Yeah, you're looking at a few hours ... like, about 4 hours from where you are.

BEN

Okay.

ALEX

Its early morning ... you could make it there, have a good long chat and make it back and it'd be a solid day. The only issue is the weather at which point Wilde goes ...

"It is worth mentioning don't expect it to get better than this".

I'm just gonna accelerate to ... are you okay to head out?

BEN

Yep.

ALEX

Wilde asks for a moment alone with Zolf but, politely ... he's not like (**imitates sound**) ... he is just like "if you'd be willing, if you wanna sit in, that's fine, but I'd rather have it ...

BRYN

Hamid's gonna put on a snazzy rain coat.

ALEX

That brings a smile to Wilde, but its that wonky smile again ... it's still a bit unfamiliar.

HELEN

A wonky Wilde smile.

ALEX

A wonky Wilde smile. Once he's alone with you Zolf ...

BEN

Yeah, what's up?

ALEX

"Just ... you've been nothing if not ... efficient and and dedicated since you came back. Don't get me wrong I trust them, but we still have a job to do, don't get carried away with them."

BEN

I knew you were gonna say that. No of course not! I wasn't ... actually, no hang on a minute ... what do you mean by carried away?

ALEX

"The mission's the most important thing. If you have to choose between the mission and them you're gonna have to choose the mission."

BEN

Yeah. I'd imagine they'd get that as well but, yes of course like, this is bigger than ... the single people so ...

ALEX

"I didn't think I had to say it".

BEN

Yep, well, anyway it doesn't mean I'm not gonna try but ...

ALEX

Look after yourself and look after them.

BEN

Well yeah!

(laughter)

BEN

Yes Wilde, fine.

ALEX

"Alright ..."

BEN

See you later.

(laughter)

ALEX

Heading out. It is wet, it is rainy, the walk is long and is miserable. The village that you're in ... there's a few people around but, for the most part they are ... not really engaging ... they're mostly keeping a distance from you. Like I said, there's a couple of people, they see you, one of them runs into the house and closes a door, and then you're just out ... into a track.

BEN

Yeah, we walk. So, once we are out of sight of ... civilisation ... so, Hamid and Azu, I should probably tell you some things ... you know, I used to spend a lot of time not talking and, I'm not doing that anymore so ... not interesting. Oh, thanks for being all sulky and secretive ... I know.

BRYN

That's good, I'm glad.

BEN

Yeah. Yeah, I've had a while to grow a bit. I think that whole Poseidon thing was maybe ... anyway ... so, three things ... number 1, that conversation with Wilde was a pretty classic, you know, "for the sake of the mission, don't get too close to them" ... you know the whole like thing "it's the mission or them" ... go with the mission ... obviously.

HELEN

Naturally.

BEN

Yeah, exactly. Not naturally but, given the situation and how important it is, then that's ... an occupational hazard of ... what we do. But I would expect the same from, you two. So ...

BRYN

No ...

HELEN

I can't promise that either. I understand him telling you but ...

BEN

Well, I meant me I didn't mean ... you two, I'm not gonna tell you how to ... I'm just ... I'm just making it; you know I'm just ... putting it out there.

BRYN

Okay.

BEN

The second thing is, obviously I'm not doing the Poseidon thing anymore so, how am I walking ... Yeah?

BRYN

I mean I did wonder, but I didn't want to ask.

BEN

Yeah, well. I'll lean down and like knock my shin (**imitates sound**) ... there's a metallic noise. Yeah, some of that Simulacrum tech can come in handy.

BRYN

Oh, that's good ... I'm glad ...

HELEN

You've got that in you?

BEN

No.

HELEN

Oh, they're detachable?

BEN

Yes. They're prosthetics but, magical ones so ... that's one thing is ... anti-magic field, they'll stop working so that's, something to know.

BRYN

Okay.

HELEN

Right. I can carry you if you need.

BEN

Thank you. Yeah, I just wanted to ... if we're in the middle of a fight or something like that ... then that could be important.

The third thing ...

ALEX

Sharing Zolf is so sharing ...

HELEN

Yeah.

BEN

Is ... so, I told you I'm, done with Poseidon and all that kind of stuff?

BRYN

Yeah, are you still ...

BEN

And I can still ...

BRYN

Spell caster ...

BEN

Do the thumb spark and light my pipe with it ... be like yeah.

(laughter)

BEN

Yeah, so as I said, I did a bit of soul searching and, basically told ... Poseidon to take a hike ... so he did ...

BRYN

Good.

BEN

And, then I spent a lot of time just kind of ... not knowing what to do but ... I don't know ... I ... the worlds all screwed up, right now and what, how people have been running it ... wasn't working. And ... Meritocrats, Harlequins, whatever. But it's not like ... it's not hope exactly, I don't think everything's gonna work out with **Cain** ... I'm not like, I'm not stupid, but ...

BRYN

It's not stupid to think things ... could work out Zolf.

BEN

Ah could, yes. But not expect ... anyway, what I mean is ... I don't really know how to describe it I; I can still do this kind of stuff ...

BRYN

But you're not calling on the power of a god?

BEN

No.

BRYN

That's interesting.

BEN

Yeah, I guess, right now, file me under ... you.

BRYN

What!

BEN

Can cast magic for, inexplicable reasons.

BRYN

Oh no, I know why.

BEN

Oh really!

BRYN

Yeah. I'm descended from **Apothis**.

HELEN

He's sort of a dragon.

(laughter)

BRYN

I mean, that's not ... exactly how I would phrase it but ...

BEN

I mean ...

HELEN

Ish.

BEN

Well I mean that sounds ... basically ... I mean that does have ... that's what it is right?

BRYN

How far, what? Oh, well let me ...

ALEX

I'm gonna accelerate time ...

(laughter)

ALEX

And ... Hamid catches Zolf up on the birds and the dragons ... I guess.

(laughter)

ALEX

Right, when a mummy dragon, maybe and a daddy ...

BRYN

No, **Apothis** can turn into a humanoid and that humanoid is DTF.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

That humanoid loves a bit of halfling! I was sure it'll be classy.

HELEN

Oh, oh dear.

ALEX

Okay, I am gonna jump ahead, if I may. Everyone give me a perception ... please.

BRYN

Rolls dice.

My first roll I think.

ALEX

Make it bad, make it bad, make it bad, make it bad.

BRYN

It was bad.

ALEX

Yeah.

HELEN

Oh, mine was bad too.

ALEX

Yeah.

BEN

So was mine.

ALEX

Yeah.

HELEN

But, but ... that is, 17.

ALEX

Okay.

BEN

12.

ALEX

Good.

BRYN

16.

ALEX

Arr.

BRYN

I rolled a 3 Helen.

BEN

I rolled a 4.

HELEN

I rolled a 9.

ALEX

Azu just finds a discarded set of Hawkeye goggles ... is like "ah, ah, ah!

(laughter)

ALEX

Okay. With those kinds of rolls ... yeah, you approach the village, just as you reach the outskirts, you see clear signs of some kind of ... fight has happened. Like, there's a couple of broken barrels on one side, muddy foot prints, little bit of dirt and then on the far side of a building you see, there are a pair of feet ... sticking out from the other end of the building ... whoever is there is currently ... face down, like a pair of boots. And you hear cries of alarm from, deep within the village but, to be clear you've pretty much made it to ... the outskirts before you've even noticed.

BRYN

Oh well, that's something good.

ALEX

Something's happened.

BEN

Yep, right.

BRYN

I'll ... start running.

BEN

Yep, my globe goes on fire.

HELEN

Ooo.

BRYN

I, as we're running, I cast a tech magic.

ALEX

Okay, cool.

HELEN

Yeah, I was gonna say.

ALEX

So, you all charge forward ... can everyone please, get in an issue order for me please?

Rolls dice.

BEN

I've got improved finish.

HELEN

14.

BEN

I've still got the 6.

BRYN

11.

ALEX

Azu, you are up first, you are 30 feet away from the building that has a pair of boots, as it were.

HELEN

I'm gonna go investigate the boots.

ALEX

Okay.

HELEN

They're not ... red slippers are they?

(Group laughter)

ALEX

They are not. I did wonder if you were gonna ask.

BRYN

We were all thinking.

BEN

Are they inside or under ... the house?

ALEX

I mean, you don't know. Are you gonna approach 30 feet and look you said?

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

You approach 30 feet they're not, they're not red boots curling underneath and something disappearing underneath the house. They are attached to ... a burly bloke, who is currently face down. He is alive, although bloodied and is currently face down in the dirt going (**imitates sound**). You also can now, see into the sort of village ... there are about four other people ... dotted around. So, there's a well in the centre, there's a ... a few smaller buildings. There appears to be what, looks like a couple of market stalls and maybe what could be a shop. Like, again, culturally its pretty far from what you're used to so, take everything with a pinch of salt but, there's about four people face down ... all of them are not dead, they're currently like, kind of wiggling around a little bit I suppose.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Imitates sound. In fact, yeah, one of them is (**imitates sound**) ...

HELEN

Oh really, like a seizure?

ALEX

Yep.

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

You have ...

BEN

Yeah that's the best ...

ALEX

You have ... you have run up 30 feet and seen that so you still have ... either another move action action, a standard action ...

HELEN

I guess I'm gonna lay my hands on the burly man.

ALEX

Okay.

HELEN

Rolls dice. 10.

ALEX

He ... comes too (**imitates sound**). "Hello". (**Imitates sound**).

HELEN

Oh.

ALEX

He starts, he starts ... backing away and starts kind of ... swinging wildly with some kind of club (**imitates sound**).

HELEN

What happened? Oh no, he doesn't speak ... I try again in **Orcish** and Arabic.

ALEX

He goes (**imitates sound**).

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Hamid, you're up.

BRYN

Oops ... sure.

(laughter)

ALEX

You saw Azu lay hands on someone ...

BRYN

Yeah. I'm just gonna ... I'm gonna run up and ... you had said there were cries from beyond the ... round the corner where we couldn't see. I'm gonna run up and take stock of the situation I think.

ALEX

You see all the same stuff including (**imitates sound**).

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

He sees you also (**imitates sound**).

BRYN

Oh dear, is there a fight going on that is what you were implying ... with your description just now ... is there ...

ALEX

It looks a fight has finished, although there are cries of ... more people at the far end of ... let's call it a market square. It's not square, its not a market ...

BRYN

Sure. I'm gonna keep running in that direction, I wanna work out what's going on and it feels like ... going towards the noise of fighting is the best way.

ALEX

So, you ...

BRYN

As you can handle us ...

ALEX

So, you ...

HELEN

I can ...

ALEX

You run past ...

HELEN

I just forgot that we didn't speak the same language.

ALEX

You get as far as the well, cause of your movement speed. You are next to the person who isn't (**imitates sound**) ... they appear to have some sort of ... thing stuck in their back.

HELEN/BRYN

Ooo.

ALEX

It looks, maybe an arrow, maybe not but ... (imitates sound).

BRYN

Sure.

ALEX

Zolf, you are up.

BEN

I chug my potion of tongues.

ALEX

Yeah. Zolf's so capable these days.

BEN

Hey.

(laughter)

BEN

And then I ... run up, and be like "It's alright, we're here to help, we're here to help ... don't worry. Azu drink your potion.

(laughter)

BEN

What happened here?

HELEN

I didn't want to say that until we meet, like the person there.

ALEX

It's fair.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

The bloke ...

BRYN

Rolls dice. Oh no, it's a bloke ... not again!

HELEN

No!

BEN

The lads are just round the corner.

(Group laughter)

BEN

Waiting to strike!

ALEX

The bloke (**imitates sound**), panicking ... takes a swing at Azu.

HELEN

Rolls dice.

ALEX

Missing ... like, just trivially.

HELEN

How? (laughter).

ALEX

Okay, if you want to know the miss ... technically it's (**imitates sound**).

BRYN

Yeah a miss just might mean hitting your amour.

HELEN

Alright.

ALEX

Yeah, he has a club, a rudimentary club ... like not even a, like well made weapon, its basically a ... it's a log that's thinner at one end.

HELEN

I just look at him disappointedly.

ALEX

He just turns and then just, runs. He just starts running away.

HELEN

Weirded out.

ALEX

Panicking.

HELEN

Well at least they can understand you now ... you're up.

BEN

Yes.

HELEN

Okay. I am now gonna go to the person that's having the seizure.

ALEX

They've stopped. In that time, they have stopped ... they're just (**imitates sound**).

HELEN

I pull the thing out of their back!

ALEX

It appears to be some kind of ... arrow, but modified weirdly, you've not seen this kind of thing before.

BRYN

And we've got Hawkeyes here.

(laughter)

HELEN

Azu thinks about Grizzop ... he would have really liked this.

ALEX

Maybe it is him!

(laughter)

HELEN

Don't do this.

BEN?

Grorkeye.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Maybe he, he fell through the plains and landed ... exactly here with no problems whatsoever.

BEN

Yeah maybe.

HELEN

No.

ALEX

No that'll be too easy when it's your fault.

HELEN

Will you ...

BRYN

Just stop!

HELEN

I'm going to have to ...

BRYN

Just stop.

HELEN

The guilt conversation at some point.

ALEX

Alright, alright.

HELEN

Aagh.

ALEX

Okay. Anything else that you're doing ...

BRYN

No Helen, stop everything and have it now! Because apparently that's what Alex wants!

ALEX

Is there anything else that you're doing, cause I'm ... like pulling that up is it trivial?

HELEN

I just wanna look around, there's no-one to fight at the minute.

ALEX

You can hear the yells same as Hamid on the far side of the square.

HELEN

Then I'm gonna go towards there.

ALEX

Okay. At which point then you are closest ... Hamid you're up.

BRYN

Again, running towards the noise to work out what's happening.

ALEX

So you make it to the ... the shop as it were, give me a perception check.

BRYN

Rolls dice. Oh, that's a bit better ... 32.

ALEX

32. You reckon this is where the fight started ...

BRYN

Okay.

ALEX

And it kind of ... has sprawled from there, like the way the tracks are looking ... even on the fly you're like ... "yeah, I think it started here". It also helps that there are two people lying on their back at the entrance going (**imitates sound**). As you are running up, someone is thrown sideways ... like, bodily thrown and lands in the dirt ... at the back of the shop that you are beside. You are able to continue running up to the corner if you want?

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

Okay. You turn around to the corner and then we take a break then and come back in a couple of minutes.

(Group laughter)

.....

ALEX

Okay, coming in from the break then ... you come round the corner and, yeah, the first thing that you see is obviously that person on their back going **(imitates sound)**, they're shaking a bit, and you see ...

LYDIA

Ha, ha, ha, ha ha, ha, ha, ha, ha ... I was here all along!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

I was here all along.

ALEX

You're such a gremlin when you want to be.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

I was here ...

BRYN

Hey guys, Lyd's back.

HELEN/LYDIA

Yeah, woo!

LYDIA

Yeah, ahh, you were all so sad, I assume.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

No definitely, we've been watching. **Unclear 0:26:13.**

LYDIA

Oh, I've been thinking about this for so long and I was like ... "Oh, got performance anxiety". Okay, stepping round a corner ... okay, your visual reference is ... Holtzman from Ghostbusters crossed with Gambit.

HELEN

Ooo.

LYDIA

All you can really see perhaps is that they are tall, the hair is quite vertical ... sort of blonde streaked with silver, which is strange because they look quite young otherwise. A long coat and a massive, adapted steampunk to goodness crossbow ...

ALEX

And by massive you mean ... like, oversized.

LYDIA

Yeah, like it's, it's mechanically heavy.

?

Like a video game.

LYDIA

They also have like, big glowy goggles on their heads with like ... and on their ...

BRYN

I've still got the tech magic up so, anything that's magic I can also see.

LYDIA

That, that is magic, the crossbow is magic ... quite possibly like, with a belt magic ... a lot of alchemist magic.

ALEX

You know what, like, I can happily jump in and say ... yeah loads ...

LYDIA

Just loads ...

ALEX

Like, far ...

LYDIA

Oh, there are lots ...

ALEX

Far, far too much for a small rural village.

LYDIA

Yeah, I turn around the corner, like line the crossbow up and ... shouts out in Japanese ...

ALEX

Some stuff that they can't speak.

LYDIA

Some stuff ...

ALEX

Ben would ... Zolf would be able to understand.

LYDIA

Having ... yeah, which would just be like "hello, what you're doing here" ... but seeing that you don't react then tries in several other languages.

BEN

Oh, that's good.

LYDIA

Or like a "mehow" ... and then eventually like "Ah, hi, hello, excuse me, why you're here".

BRYN

Are you the one that's been assaulting all these people?

ALEX

I'm gonna jump out of initiative order by the way.

LYDIA

I think ... like why exactly are you here in my town?

BRYN

We're looking for someone ... maybe you?

LYDIA

Well no-one's told me. Like aims the ...

BRYN

Woah, woah, woah, woah, woah, woah woah.

LYDIA

They step towards you ... it's probably, probably about 6 foot ish, but human (**imitates sound**) ... and like, are making direct eye contact and he's like "So what, what exactly is the reason that you have ... come to visit? **Unclear**
0:28:16 ...

ALEX

Azu and Zolf.

LYDIA

You are going to try and take anything more from these people, I will ... fortunately their accent is canonically from everywhere.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

You know, you can write your ...

BRYN

Look, we're not here to take anything. Why are you beating up all these people?

BEN

We're just here for a conversation.

LYDIA

Okay, a lot of the conversations I've had recently have been along the lines of ... give us the stuff.

BEN

Okay not ...

HELEN

Are you the ... Apothecarist, alchemisty person ... the defendy person?

LYDIA

I could be ... called that.

BEN

Why don't we got have a chat in your shop ... without the weapons.

LYDIA

I need to check ...

BRYN

Let's just establish ... why are all these people are lying around hurt, and whether it was you!

LYDIA

Oh yeah, of course it was me.

BEN

Are these thugs?

LYDIA

Oh yeah, oh yeah ... I call em blokes or lads.

(laughter)

BEN

I don't get it.

LYDIA

No ... they just turn up and demand stuff, right.

BEN

Are these ... who are they? Look, I think we might have a common enemy but, lets not have this conversation in front of all the ... blokes.

LYDIA

And/or lads.

BEN

And/or lads.

BRYN

But we don't know if this is nice or not! They've been beating everyone round here up. Maybe we should be taking this person down!

BEN

What, well this person?

LYDIA

Oh you can try, buddy.

BEN

Woah, hang on, like hang on Hamid.

LYDIA

Like, why you, rightfully saying that they start to grow and I think ... they may get to, they are now a large person.

ALEX

I don't thinks it's a thing that could pass unnoticed.

LYDIA

No, no, no. They would chug something quickly ... it takes a full round, but that's 6 seconds ... right?

ALEX

That'll count as a surprise round, cause I took everyone out of initiative.

LYDIA

Okay yeah.

ALEX

If people want to take this into ... a fighting place, I will require initiative.

BRYN

I ...

HELEN

I would cast ... detect evil.

BRYN

I was gonna cast a whole person ...

HELEN

In which case then ...

BRYN

As soon ... as soon as this person moves, who is looking threatening and beating and rounding up ... Hamid says this is to cast a whole person.

ALEX

Because of mechanics ...

BRYN

We're gonna have to get close to them.

ALEX

Yep. Because mechanics drinking potion goes first ... a new surprise round, everyone'll have initiative.

HELEN

Okay.

BEN

There we go.

HELEN

Rolls dice. Oh, that's more like it.

BEN

9, 2.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Back to normal ...

LYDIA

13.

BRYN?

19.

BEN?

21.

(laughter)

BEN

Well, Hamid's already started a fight.

ALEX

What was your Zolf?

BRYN

I'm not starting a fight; I'm ending a fight.

BEN

19.

ALEX

And what was yours Hamid?

BRYN

21.

ALEX

I tell you what I wrote Grizopp and then deleted it. Hamid, you're up first.

BRYN

I cast a whole person.

ALEX

Okay.

BRYN

Lyd, make a will save.

LYDIA

Oh dear. That is not one of the things that they are competent at ... 13.

BRYN

You are paralysed.

ALEX

Specifically, just frozen in place.

LYDIA

Yeah, the effects of the potion, I assume you're still ...

BRYN

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

ALEX

Yeah, absolutely ...

LYDIA

So they are growing ...

ALEX

It's fixed in place, she's going Ohhh ...

LYDIA

Larger and larger.

HELEN

Just like a tree.

ALEX

They kind a look like they're gonna pop.

LYDIA

I'll have to do a shrink trick.

ALEX

Zolf, you're up.

BRYN

Don't attack her, it's gonna break the spell ... just wanted to figure out the situation. I wanna dispel magic the whole person.

ALEX

Okay.

BRYN

You're cast level is 8.

BEN

Yes, right so ... that means I'm trying to be ... a 19 on a D20 plus 8. Rolls dice ... I do not.

ALEX

Okay.

BEN

That's my standard action ... I will then move between Hamid and, this individual.

Just stop ... stop it, both of you.

BRYN

I'm not trying to fight.

ALEX

This individual is currently held (**imitates sound**), moving on to Azu.

HELEN

I cast detect evil.

BRYN

You get to save each turn to try and break it again, but it's the same difficulty.

ALEX

Is it the end or start of their turn?

BRYN

On their turn, so you start ... but it's a full round action to break out of it.

ALEX

Ah, there we go ... you can give a ... a save to break out of it.

HELEN

What now?

BRYN

On your initiative points basically.

LYDIA

Yeah, but I assume it does background **play? unclear 0:32:01**.

ALEX

You first.

BRYN

You were ahead of Azu in the initiative order.

ALEX

I just forgot about the break on that.

LYDIA

On 14.

BRYN

It does not break it.

ALEX

Okay, Azu you are up.

HELEN

Detect evil please.

ALEX

Okay

HELEN

(imitates sound).

ALEX

So, the holy. The bloke on the ground ... detects as ... mundane evil. I don't mean like "the devil", you know I give the spectrum thing, but like, not good ...

LYDIA

All evil.

ALEX

A quick glance around, they detect as good, the rest of your party detect as good, oh, apart from Zolf he's super evil! ... no.

(Group laughter)

BEN?

I knew it!

ALEX

Everyone detects as good. Having a quick glance around, you notice that one of the people on the front step of the shop ... like just from your angle you can see them is, kind of neutral and the other one is ... neutral to bad.

HELEN

Alright Hamid, these are bad ... they were bad people and this is a ... good person.

BRYN

Okay I'll ... I don't know mechanically if I can stop the spell. It doesn't say concentration but in general, you can normal, like in principle you can stop ...

ALEX

I don't have an issue with that ...

BRYN

Any non-instantaneous spells ...

ALEX

I normally go on the assumption ...

BRYN

At will.

ALEX

That you don't have to forcibly maintain it unless it says so.

BRYN

Yeah, but I think I can also make it stop ... if I choose to?

ALEX

So, what I'm gonna do though, is that you can only stop it on your initiative. The reason I say that there's a good chance that this person might break whole person and then shoot you in the face so ... I'll have to get through to that. So, Hamid you are up now, but I'm not gonna drop out of initiative until everyone agrees to.

BRYN

Okay, okay .. I'm sorry, I'm gonna ... and I break the spell.

ALEX

(Imitates sound). Okay, are you doing anything else?

BRYN

No. I'm trying to be as unaggressive as possible.

ALEX

Unsurprisingly I'm gonna wait for the new person to decide whether initiative is broken ... Zolf.

BEN

So I'm gonna look straight at this new person and say "Look, I'm sorry, my colleague's on edge, we don't wanna start a fight. I know he shouldn't have done that ... let's just ... let's just go ... in, have a chat ... right?" And that's me.

ALEX

New person ... it is your turn on initiative.

LYDIA

Getting extremely sick of ya all ... coming to my home and beating up my friends ... alright.

BRYN

We haven't beaten up anyone.

LYDIA

Really, really? Cause I'm seeing a lot of beaten enough people and I'm seeing you here.

ALEX

So I'm gonna drop out of initiative then if there's gonna be that much talking.

BEN

Right, I'm gonna tell ... Hamid, stop it.

BYRN

Look ...

BEN

Stop, shh ...

BRYN

No, we walk into a fight, we don't know the situation, we don't know who's responsible ... I was trying, to take sensible precautions!

BEN

I'm very sorry about my colleague, we just need to ... let's have a chat, we ... I think ...

BRYN

I apologise if I've misunderstood the situation, I was trying to make sure everyone was safe.

ALEX

Okay.

BRYN

I'm just gonna give you a really non-plus look.

LYDIA

I don't need anyone coming in here and keeping this place safe. I've been doing a good job of that myself, and I would REALLY appreciate it, if you would leave me alone.

BEN

Okay, we are enemies of Shoin too.

LYDIA

That gives you a look.

BEN

Okay, can we ... go back to your shop, and have a chat. That's all we wanna do, just have a chat.

LYDIA

Alright, you can't get in when I'm still big though so, it'll have to be ... out here.

BEN

Okay. Shall we get rid of ... this lot? Pointing at the thugs (the lads and blokes).

LYDIA

The person that's neutral that's outside the shop ... is that my assistant?

ALEX

Yes it is.

LYDIA

Right, they run over and ... start shaking like ... Jasper, Jasper ... and I pour a ...

HELEN

Looks like a very long document there.

(laughter)

ALEX

You have ...

LYDIA/ALEX

No idea.

LYDIA

Queue a light wounds ...

ALEX

Sure ...

LYDIA

On.

HELEN

I can lay on hands if you ...

LYDIA

Little Jasper.

ALEX

Could you describe though ... because other people will be able to see how you're doing this. Are you literally like ... putting your hands on them?

LYDIA

No.

ALEX

Are you channelling the sun?

LYDIA

So that's ...

ALEX

What you doing?

LYDIA

No, that's the ... while they're crouched down. They are wearing a long, like leather jacket (let's say) ... but not studded in the way that it would be familiar to you all.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

And their ...

ALEX

It's more of a coat.

LYDIA

Its more of a coat ... long coat, yes a leather coat, that's the word. They open it up and, like take a couple of tiny vials and then, pour something ... some liquid down this. Little gnome, little gnome ...

ALEX

Little gnome (**imitates sound**).

LYDIA

Little gnome friends ... down their throat.

ALEX

Gnome friend wakes up (**imitates sound**). Who is currently ... Zolf is able to understand Japanese?

BEN

Yes.

ALEX

"I'm really sorry, I'm really sorry ... they, they, they, they, they, they, they, they ..."

LYDIA

It's alright buddies.

ALEX

They, they, they, they ... they just jumped us.

LYDIA

So ... talks to them in Japanese ... it's alright, it's alright, it's alright ...

ALEX

"I'm, I'm I'm, I'm, I'm really sorry ... I can just shift them all, that's f f f fine."

LYDIA

No you know what you ... you rest right.

ALEX

"Sure".

LYDIA

I'll deal with this. You could, go around and just check that there is nobody home ...

ALEX

"Okay, yep, yep."

LYDIA

And bring anyone to me right? You know the usual drill ...

ALEX

"The usual ..."

LYDIA

The usual drill ...

ALEX

"I'm on it, I'm on it, I am gonna be ... quick as a ... yep, yep.

LYDIA

Do you remember how to make your voice loud? I think I will have taught them a few things ... there's like a message one.

ALEX

"Yep, yep, it's all good".

LYDIA

Right. So, let me know if anyone so hurt they're kneeling, okay?

ALEX

"Yep, Yep ... that's fine".

They run off and then they're ... you start hearing them sort of ... calling out around going ... basically ... I'm not gonna RP it cause it'll take it a while. Effectively ... all clear, etc, etc.

BEN

While that's happening, I'm gonna turn to Hamid and be like, "Look, I'm sorry that is not how I wanted our first ... you know, thing to go. I know you've been; I know you're on edge and rearing to go but, we just need to be a bit ... calmer okay? Casting spells on people straightaway is a good way to start a fight. I know what you ..."

BRYN

They cast a spell first ...

BEN

Okay, Hamid ...

BRYN

That's literally what they did!

BEN

Hamid, Hamid ... just take a breather alright?

BRYN

Sure. Which ones are the bad ones?

HELEN

The ones that are knocked out.

ALEX

Alex goes over and slits their throats!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

No I know, I know, I know, it's just ...

BRYN

If Azu can point out which one's they are ...

ALEX

Easy ...

BRYN

I'm gonna start dragging them into a pile and tying them up.

ALEX

Yeah.

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

It's easy. At one point ... you, basically run into the assistant ... who has started doing the same by the well. So ...

LYDIA

But he's so little ...

ALEX

He's ...

LYDIA

Unclear 0:38:10 ...

ALEX

He is ...

LYDIA

Drag people.

ALEX

I need Bryn now.

HELEN

I will absolutely help him ... do that.

ALEX

Yeah ... they are tying them to the well so they're all sort of ... backed to it.

BRYN

That's what I started doing naturally anyway so, we, sort of end up doing it together I guess.

HELEN

Yeah, let's do that.

BRYN

Join in.

ALEX

So yeah ... for what its worth ... Jasper seems to be doing his job. Like, everything is happening, people start poking their heads out and stuff. Yeah, the village seems to be sort of ... getting going again. Unlike the place that you started at, this place has a lot more people in it and seems to be, less atrociously cautious of you all.

BRYN

Yeah. Everyone in that first village was sort of ... quiet and depressed as well.

ALEX

Pretty much ...

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Pretty much, pretty much.

BRYN

And this one seems more normal.

ALEX

Yeah. I wouldn't say that they're like (imitates sound) ... unclear 0:38:55
dance, its more ... you know, kind of ...

LYDIA

Yeah, one thing that you might notice as you meet more people there is that ...
none of the people there look anything like, this person.

ALEX

Yeah yeah, they are a ... a single entity.

LYDIA

Very much unclear 0:39:07.

ALEX

Tying up happens, the bad people start waking up ... Jasper does his job and
they're all gagged.

BEN

When do you start getting smaller unclear 0:39:16.

LYDIA

Like, it only takes 10 minutes.

BRYN

So I'm assuming by the time you've finished ... collecting the blokes ...

LYDIA

Normal size again but, while they're round the corner, you can see them, like
psyching themselves up.

HELEN

Azu will come and introduce herself to you.

LYDIA

Before we do that, I've got one more ... one more thing to do and then we can deal with ... whatever new disaster you are. Okay, you see them chug another potion ... this time they grow claws and teeth and, importantly they gain plus 2 to intimidate ...

(laughter)

LYDIA

And ...

HELEN

Do I have to roll to not be unclear 0:40:01 ...

LYDIA

No, no this is not ...

HELEN

Okay.

LYDIA

This is not you, like ...

ALEX

It's more a "don't mind me" (**imitates sound**).

LYDIA

Yeah, that thing. Yep, like terrifying creature now ... it'll be like ... gimme one sec through bed to like ... massive teeth ... runs off, and stars wailing at the blokes and/or lads in Japanese. They look like a terrifying ...

ALEX

Give me an intimidation check.

LYDIA

Yep.

BRYN

So, as this is happening, as she starts I cast comprehend languages (**imitates sound**) and detect thoughts.

ALEX

Okay.

LYDIA

Let me take that one.

BRYN

I'm helping you.

LYDIA

Oh right.

ALEX

Okay.

LYDIA

Rolls dice. Okay, that's a 19 plus ... oh this is tricky. So 19 ...

ALEX

Its fine, you don't even need the modifier, you've already crushed it. Like, none of them hit 19.

LYDIA

Okay, so through ...

BRYN

So you make will saves against my detect thought spells.

ALEX

Oh, what's the DC?

BRYN

A 16. Rolls dice.

HELEN

So many.

ALEX

A couple of them fail ... not all of them.

BRYN

So ... I have to be focussing on a person so I can switch back and forth?

ALEX

You can just be like ... no, no, no ...

BRYN

But obviously ...

ALEX

Oh yes.

BRYN

I'm mostly gonna focus on the ones whose thoughts I can hear.

LYDIA

Okay.

BRYN

And I'm very much not gonna target it at anyone else.

LYDIA

So, as well ...

ALEX

We'll do the need to know? unclear 0:41:28 first and then I'll give you the unclear 0:41:28.

LYDIA

So, essentially, they're going to just ... tell these people that, if they ever dare come back ... again, there's been a spell cast on them and, they will, explode ... and their guts will ... like, it won't be an easy one because the skin doesn't explode and, like so, you will explode through all your orifices in, a particular horrific ... and in fact Cel describes in ... exquisite detail the effects of the spell caustic blood ...

(laughter)

LYDIA

In which ... damage stacks each turn that one is covered in caustic blood.

ALEX

Could you do me a favour ... in addition to the intimidate could you roll a ...

LYDIA

Persuade or diplomacy to persuade?

ALEX

It depends, I need to ask ... is this a thing that you actually ... you haven't actually cast a curse on them or anything?

LYDIA

No. The point is that there are no resources left, to keep people prisoner.

ALEX

What I'll ask is ... can I get a deception check, but you are getting

BRYN

It's a bluff ...

ALEX

It's a bluff ... I'm gonna be modifying cause you've already successfully intimidated them so they're taking penalties and stuff.

LYDIA

And they get their INT bonus to, persuade others ... that the lie is true.

ALEX

Yep.

LYDIA

This is ... plus 10.

ALEX

Yep, that's fine.

LYDIA

Rolls dice. Which is good cause I only rolled a 12, so that's 22.

Rolls dice.

ALEX

One of them rolled double figures and still didn't pass.

LYDIA

Right. So, essentially ...

?

They are ... breaking heads here.

BRYN

So, they've bought it, they're not intending to come back.

ALEX

I'll let the new person finish ...

BRYN

Sorry.

ALEX

And then I will **unclear 0:43:02**.

LYDIA

Like, as you might have realised, there are quite a lot of different monsters ... guarding this place, including some monster wizards and all of them are going to come and ... get you. If you dare go back to (what was he called Shoin?)

ALEX

The Shoing Institute.

LYDIA

That if you dare to back to the Shoin Institute your blood will start leaking out of your eyeballs tomorrow night. Go to the main land, stop causing trouble and never come back!

ALEX

Do you release them at that point?

LYDIA

Then tears through the bonds with claws, which are ... terrifying, mechanically.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Then roars at them (**imitates sound**) until they run away.

ALEX

Now what's the re-thought side of things? I'm not gonna RP it, they're absolutely bricking it ... they're absolutely buying it and, basically it comes down as ... "Screw this, he's weird anyway, I'm not being paid enough ... I'm gone. Screw this whole situation, this is the worst." All it is, is some version of that ... like, for the three of them you can detect thoughts, its all basically the same.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

"No amount of money is worth this weirdness, I just ... I just wanted some easy fun and a bit of money."

LYDIA

Yep. Cel's gonna go round the back of the building, the monster nous will fade ... I think they can do that by choice before the thing is over.

ALEX

I believe you can.

LYDIA

Yeah, and then come round and then, in a very human voice ... "A ferry has been arranged to take you to the mainland - it will leave **unclear 0:44:29** at this time. It will not be going to any other stops".

ALEX

The blokes, once untied, just scatter ... they don't even scatter together ... they don't go to "the ferry" ... they just leg it.

LYDIA

Yep.

BRYN

That was very effective.

HELEN

That's impressive.

LYDIA

Let's have some tea.

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

I think we'll end the episode there. I think that's a good place.

HELEN

Yeah.

BRYN

We'll all go have a ...

LYDIA/BRYAN/HELEN

Nice cup of tea.

ALEX

It'll be lovely. Why don't we spend a week of downtime doing it? Everyone loves a week of downtime!

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Do you want a week of downtime Lyd?

LYDIA

It's great. Me not nice, **unclear 0:45:02** you so nice.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Well, how about we give the listeners a week of downtime and then we immediately ... press on, how about that?

(laughter)

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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