

RQG – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

Content Warnings

- X
- X

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 155 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have...

BEN

Ben Meredith.

BRYN

Bryn Monroe.

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas.

HELEN

And Helen Gould.

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ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith.

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al Tahan.

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom.

HELEN

And Azu.

ALEX

And I'm really proud of you! We've had a weird energy and it didn't bleed over into the intro!

LYDIA

Ohhh...

[0:00:32 everyone talking over one another]

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ALEX

Consummate professionals...

BEN

We are professionals, Alex, please...

ALEX

Consummate professionals!

BEN

... you wouldn't condescend to us like that, but really appreciated!

ALEX

(Laughs)

So, we are all currently still locked in a cellar...

LYDIA/CEL

'I really need a new one!'

(Group laughter)

BEN

No, we're, we're...

[0:00:47 everyone talking over one another]

BRYN

We're locked in a jail... with Cel! We've gotta go inside Cel!

HELEN

(Laughs)

Oh, Fantastic Journey style!

[Yeah, yeah!]

LYDIA/CEL

'It's been... definitely, it has been said and, you know, I wasn't averse. It depends on the context though, Mr Smith, and this is really quite public!'

(Group laughter)

ALEX

And there is someone outside with claws. That was where we left off, so I'm going to pick up immediately where we left off.

BEN/ZOLF

'Skraak, is that you?'

ALEX

A cowed and hooded snout

HELEN

Aww...

ALEX

... pokes out into the corridor looking left and right. The only thing you can see are the glowing red eyes.

LYDIA/CEL

'I wonder who that could be!'

BEN/ZOLF

'It's the bloody Kobolds, get them to...'

HELEN/AZU

'I think it might be the Kobolds.'

BEN/ZOLF

'... get them to sod off!'

ALEX (as Skraak)

'What?'

BEN/ZOLF

'We're doing something.'

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘What, just sitting?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yes! Literally, that is what we’re doing!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘I mean, one Kobold...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Also appreciate if they weren’t taking our innkeepers and attacking Wilde, eh?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Skraak, is everyone out there okay?’

ALEX

The cowled figure looks around and is casting around. Does not know where the voice is coming from at all.

BRYN/HAMID

‘Skraak, there’s a trapdoor. It’s locked, and it needs to stay locked. I’m down here.’

ALEX

The cowed figure, which is almost certainly a Kobold, steps around the corner with a syringe spear in hand...

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh no...’

ALEX

... and is basically homing in towards the doorway, but still not saying anything.

BRYN/HAMID

‘Over here, Skraak, over here, here... here!’

ALEX

Okay. They make it, and then they are at the trapdoor and break out a set of thieves’ tools and immediately starts working on the door.

BRYN/HAMID

‘No, Skraak, no, no, no... the trapdoor needs to stay locked. It needs to stay locked, Skraak.’

ALEX

The trapdoor continues to be hacked at...

BEN/ZOLF

‘If this Kobold opens it, we’re dragging him in here and they are staying in here.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Skraak was actually in the room with the person that exploded.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘You’re right.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Skraak is just as likely to have infected all of the Kobolds as a...’

ALEX

The second of the three locks undoes, so Carter undid one from the inside...

HELEN

Ah!

ALEX

... and the creature has done one from the outside.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Oh, it’s already gone wrong!’

LYDIA/CEL

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‘Yeah, I’m afraid that our entire quarantine system here was kinda pointless!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘He won’t stop!’

ALEX

The final lock is undone and then the spear is levelled at the door and it is opened.

LYDIA/CEL

‘Hey, little buddy!’

ALEX

To describe them now properly, now that you’re not looking through a keyhole, they are wearing leathers, they have a cowl pulled up. They have what appears to be a semi-metal mask that’s disguising a lot of the fact, but there is a big old snout that’s clearly dragon-y poking out. Obviously, the colouring is red, and they appear to be wearing armour and stuff that fits, as opposed to being, like, arbitrary, and they are holding the spear and then they see you.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Skraak? That’s you, right?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Yeah.’

BEN/ZOLF

'Are you okay?'

ALEX (as Skraak)

'Are *you* okay?'

BEN/ZOLF

'Yes. Yeah, get in here!'

BRYN/HAMID

'You're going to need to join us, I'm afraid.'

BEN

Sorry, what language are they speaking? Is it draconic? It doesn't matter if it's draconic...

ALEX [talking over Ben]

Actually, probably... probably at first, yeah, it would have been...

HELEN

I think you would probably still say, 'get in here' regardless!

[She laughs]

BEN/ZOLF

‘Get him in here!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘What’s the point when he’s been spending time with hundreds of Kobolds?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Because... right. One infection vector, fine, but we’ve got a bunch of them in here which means that the probability of infecting people... again, we do not know the method of infection! Okay? You’re being really flippant about this. This is serious!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘You don’t know if they’ll be able to be turned back.’

ALEX (also as Skraak)

From Skraak, Skraak starts gesturing for you to get out it’s, like, ‘Time to go!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘No, I’m being logical!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘No, no, no...’

HELEN/AZU

‘We can’t get out, Skraak.’

BEN/ZOLF

'The door is open. Let's get out.'

HELEN/AZU

'No, I mean morally we can't...'

BRYN/HAMID

'We locked ourselves in here intentionally, Skraak. There's a magical disease.'

BEN

Does Skraak have horns?

ALEX

Little ones, but you know that Skraak did – they are not visible under the cowl.

BEN

Basically, I walk up, grab him and pull him in. I will make a Combat Manoeuvre Check.

ALEX

Yeah, you'll need to.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

They're going to have a good Combat Defence Check because I think Kobolds are quite dextrous.

ALEX

Wily!

BEN

Yep. 18.

BRYN

That beats it!

BEN

Does it?

BRYN

His combat move is a defensive 17.

BEN

Oh, great! Wwwwrrrooaarr!

ALEX

You successfully grab, and I'm giving you this for free because it makes more sense, drag Skraak in through the doorway.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Close the door.’

[sound of a heavy metal door clanging shut]

I close the door, and then I turn back to Skraak and I start trying to explain the situation as best I can. I’m going to try and keep him calm. I’m going to explain why we’re doing this and why we’re stuck in here.

ALEX

Skraak looks ready to murder Zolf!

HELEN

Oooh, Azu steps between Skraak and Zolf.

BEN

Good luck, I’ve got loads of hit points!

(Laughter)

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘You don’t touch me!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘You don’t just bust into... you...’ Wait, is he speaking English? ‘Oh brilliant! You can speak! Right, I do if you’re being an idiot and ruining everything. You

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ain't got the context but we are not in a situation where get to be nice to each other, alright, so sit down, shut up, and listen.'

LYDIA/CEL

'I'd like to point out he *was* able to speak in two other languages and that still counts as speaking!'

BEN/ZOLF

'I don't speak Japanese or Draconic!'

LYDIA/CEL

'That doesn't mean that he wasn't able to speak before.'

ALEX (also as Skraak)

Skraak just ignores this and goes over to Hamid. 'Why you here?'

BRYN/HAMID

I start explaining, I say, 'There's a magical disease. We're locked in here to try and stop... we might have it, we don't know. We have to be locked in here for a few days to try and make sure we don't spread it.'

ALEX (as Skraak)

'Why didn't you tell us?'

BRYN/HAMID

'I... because we forgot. That's the truth, we forgot. We were tired, we almost died, and we forgot.'

ALEX (also as Skraak)

'Fine.' Skraak moves to leave through the door that...

BRYN

I apologise to... I do apologise to Skraak.

ALEX

... Skraak was brought in through. Skraak is going to actively try and leave through the door that you dragged him through.

BEN/ZOLF

'You ain't going nowhere.'

HELEN/AZU

'We can't let you go. I'm very sorry.'

BEN/ZOLF

'And this is more important than that, so if you try and fight us, sorry!'

ALEX

I think Skraak's just going to press on and try and make it through the door anyway. What I am going to do is skip ahead to... there are more people per

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square foot than it's really feasible for Skraak to deal with and I think it might just slow things down.

BEN

The intent is to restrain Skraak, not kill him, obviously.

ALEX

Yeah, I think I'm probably gonna have to skip ahead past combat because otherwise I'm just running the numbers for no real reasons...

BEN

Yeah, it's a pointless combat.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

... to Skraak will continue trying to leave and will start getting quite vicious with people if anyone tries to restrain him.

BEN

Yep. I'll take the damage!

ALEX

However, I also think that you're just going to be able to overwhelm, like, there's not really a chance for him.

HELEN

Yeah, because Azu's gonna help, like, not in nasty way, but just in a holding...

BEN

... and the way I'm dealing with this, feel free to just give me some hit point damage!

ALEX

That's fine.

BEN

What I suggest what ends up happening is we re-enable the use of the cell, the actual cell that is in this basement room, and lock Skraak in it, probably with me.

Skraak will need to be locked in because of the space with at least two other people or you're not going to have enough space to fit people in this room.

BRYN

I am suggesting I go in the actual cell with Skraak...

BEN

Sure.

BRYN

... I will stay with Skraak to keep him. To reassure him...

BEN/ZOLF

'No, I'm not putting him in a cage again, right. I am very well aware of the situation in which we found him. He's in here with us because he's one of us.'

ALEX

I need to know, have you bound and gagged Skraak? Bound, I'm assuming yes.

BEN

Yeah, bound if he's gonna just keep trying to get out.

ALEX

He will just keep trying. Bound, he'll have to be otherwise this is... Skraak is leaving.

BEN

So yes.

ALEX

But I'm assuming you're not gagging?

HELEN

No.

BEN

No.

ALEX

Okay, cool. That's fine. Skraak was fine, fine, fine, fine, fine... saw which way the wind was going and then was just dead high staring Hamid whilst the ropes were being finished...

HELEN

Awww...

BRYN

Yeah, I probably didn't help...

HELEN

Ohh...

BRYN

... Hamid looks really distraught...

HELEN

... so does Azu!

BRYN/HAMID

... but he understands that it needs to happen, like, and he will just keep trying to apologise to Skraak, basically, and I will sit next to Skraak and say, 'I'm really sorry that this has happened.'

ALEX (as Skraak)

'This is pointless. The rest will just try and get me.'

HELEN/AZU

'The rest?'

BRYN/HAMID

'Did... you came with... ?'

HELEN/AZU

'How many?'

ALEX (as Skraak)

'I can wait.'

BEN/ZOLF

'So can we. That's the point.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Why did you come here, Skraak?'

HELEN/AZU

‘Did you think we’d been kidnapped?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘We’re not foolish enough to let you all leave without a little bit of monitoring.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Monitoring?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Monitoring.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Have you been following us?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘No.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Wha... what do you mean?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘One of the others was.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘What do you mean, monitoring?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Watching, obviously.’

‘

BRYN/HAMID

‘I mean, but for what reason?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘How much do you actually know about how Kobolds work?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Not enough.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Absolutely nothing.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, obviously nothing!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Yeah.’

HELEN/AZU

‘You’re the first Kobold I’ve met, I don’t know about the others...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, likewise.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Yep, never really...’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah, and Cel’s been around for ages!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Mmmm.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Hierarchy’s important.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yes.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

(Sighs)

‘And it was considered a good idea that...’ and this is dripping, withering in the face, ‘it was considered it was a good idea to keep track of the saviours.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Oh, what? No, none of that!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Ohhh... Oh no.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘We didn’t save you Skraak, you saved yourself.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘No, you didn’t.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘We’re right there with you! If your friends are being idiots then that’s their problem, not ours!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Yeah!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘I’d go tell them that they’re being idiots. I’d happily do it!’

HELEN/AZU

‘After we complete the quarantine!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘If there’s a lot of other Kobolds here, how are we going to deal that, Zolf? We can’t fit more people in this room.’

HELEN/AZU

‘There were thousands of them, what if they keep coming?’

LYDIA/CEL

‘I think if we need to, we need to, like, quarantine the whole inn, because now if we’re worried about the infection vector of Skraak and the other Kobolds, they definitely touched Wilde, I mean, there was some kind of attack going on up there...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘He’s fine.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘... so now... yeah, but this is not about injuries. It’s about infection so that’s just as likely and we can’t fit another, like, we can’t fit the innkeeper and Wilde in here so, like, maybe we should barricade the edges of the inn and then have the whole place? So then it would be less cramped and awful!’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Yeah. I’m going to need to let them out at some point otherwise they might just starve to death up there.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Let them out?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Let them out.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Context, Skraak!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Did you put Wilde in a cupboard?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘More or less! It was surprisingly easy!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘No it’s not, he’s an illusionist. You’ve got a spear! Anyway, look, first of all how many of you lot are there, total?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Six plus me.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Nope, there were more than that in the cells. How many of you lot, Kobolds...

?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Do you think he means back on the other island?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah. How many of your clan, tribe, brood, whatever you use to... ?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Hundreds?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Tens of thousands, maybe.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Brilliant!’

HELEN/AZU

[sighs]

BEN/ZOLF

‘Where else have you been... ? Because, quite honestly, yes, you’re right, and at that point your village is lost, Jasper’s probably lost, everyone in this place is lost. Japan’s gone bye. That’s it!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Well, it’s... the idea then is that you have to proceed as if that wasn’t... as if the infection didn’t happen, like, we’re either all dead already or we’re not... and you could either lay down and die...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘No, because at this point, if everyone *else* is infected and we’re not, we quarantine ourselves and then we fight ‘em because that is now it.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘All of the rest of the world?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yes! That’s what being a resistance is about.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Mmm hmm.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Like...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘... that’s what we’re already doing.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘... but if everyone you say is then dead...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, you might be right. You might well be right and there might be a way to bring them all back, but we don’t know right now so we need to keep trying because right now they’re functionally dead, because if we go down as well, then...’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Why are you so angry and the idea of quarantine in the inn rather than this room?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘No, what I’m saying is if you’re right, right, and the Kobalds have been infected, well there are Kobolds everywhere. Tens of thousands of them. We can’t quarantine them. It’s outside the inn.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘That’s what I said! Then what, wha... Okay...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘No, no, you’re right. It is pointless now. So what we can do is quarantine ourselves because if we are still not infected, even if everyone else has done, if Skraak was an infection vector we might as well re-set the quarantine now.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh no.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘All of the Kobolds are sick.’

HELEN/AZU

‘It takes a while to show up.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘It’s what happened to Shoin. Did you see the brain in that hall?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Do you know what happened to Shoin?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Yeah, he went mad.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Did he turn...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘No he didn’t. Half of his brain was possessed by something...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Yeah, after he ate the cleric.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah. Are you aware of what Europe is?’

HELEN/AZU

‘He *ate* a cleric?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Well, you saw. He ate the cleric.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Well, he sort of hooked him up into the...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘... yeah, same difference.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, weird alchemy.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh, okay.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘But, look... do you know what Europe is? Have you heard of Europe?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Yes.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right. You know... you’re aware of, yeah, people live there, that kind of thing?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Yes.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, that thing that got Shoin after he ate the cleric has basically wiped out the entirety of Europe.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘How?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, that’s the question!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘It’s some sort of infection. It doesn’t make people sick, it takes over their bodies and their brains, and it changes their personality and all of them are working together...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘How do you catch it?’

‘...we don’t know, but we know that if you have caught it, after seven days blue veins show up.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘So why didn’t we all catch it from the cleric?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Well, we might have, we don’t know yet.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘But you said it takes a week?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘The cleric’s been there months.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘I mean, that’s a good point. It certainly explains...’

LYDIA/CEL

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‘You haven’t exploded, six months before.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Had you been near the cleric’s body?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘So people get infected then they explode and if they explode we...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘No. Shoin did the explosion. We don’t know how people get infected, whether its proximity, whether it’s talking to people, whether it’s magical, whether it’s spores, whether it’s a disease... we have literally no idea!’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Well loads of us ran into that party. That was the last of the proper adventurers.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Okay. And they have blue veins at the time?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘We saw the other bodies – it was just the cleric.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Just asking the question for the people who were there.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Well, yeah. You said that the cleric was infected. Loads of Kobolds were...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘But did the cleric have blue veins? Do you remember?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘I dunno.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right, well we don’t know then. We don’t know what happened. We don’t know when it manifested itself...’

[0:14:48 talking over one another]

‘... it could be that it’s infectious before it manifests.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘It could be at the time that the cleric came the cleric wasn’t infectious and no one except Shoin got infected, but then, what we did, you know, when we fought Shoin and when the cleric was exploded because of what Shoin did, that might have made the infection live again and... the five of us were all there when that body exploded. That means that if...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘There’s seven people plus me here.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah, but those two weren’t there, though, when the body...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘So why are they in here with you?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Because they’ve been interacting with us. Again, we don’t know anything about this thing. We have no idea!’

HELEN/AZU

‘And the reason we’re worried about all the Kobolds is because if we were infected by the time we left that and then we walked through the room where everyone was, and then maybe they all... so that’s why we’re in a mess.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘I wouldn’t worry about the mainland, it’s not had any traffic there for a long time.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘That’s good news.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘So just this island, then.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Well, the only people who have been coming and going here have been them.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Shoin’s employees.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Mmm...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘The corpses. Yes.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right, so you haven’t interacted with anyone else?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘It wasn’t hard finding you all.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Is that a yes or a no?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘We just came the same route that you did.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘So, no?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘It sounds like luck’s on our side then and the best plan from now is to quarantine the inn as a whole and...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘There’s an ugly fat man upstairs and a very, very skinny...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, we’re well aware of the innkeeper and Wilde.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘We definitely can’t fit those two and all the others...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yes!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘... so we just quarantine the whole inn. Yes, that’s what I’ve been saying!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘We quarantine... yes.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Fine, yes. Yes, we quarantine the inn. You go back and, basically, you’ve got to go back to your group, right? Keep all of them under tabs. Wait at least a week, and if any of them develop blue veins, you kill ‘em.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘No, the ones that are here can stay here with us, Zolf, in the inn.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘I would, but...

[0:16:39 Zolf talking over everyone]

BEN/ZOLF

‘Okay, but then the rest of the Kobolds are running amok because seven of them have left and never came back, so more come looking. They’re not telepathic! [To Skraak] Are you telepathic? Yeah, didn’t think so.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘So how are they going to know how to react?’

HELEN/AZU [to Skraak]

‘Do you have magic? So, could you send a message to the others?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘I don’t know. What did you do to them?’ Skraak says, looking at all of you.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Oh, Hamid did something!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I just scared them. I thought the inn was under attack. I didn’t know it was you.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Was it, like, magical scaring?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘They’ll be back. Soon.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘It’ll wear off pretty quickly, it’ll probably have worn off already.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Also, Hamid, the inn was under attack. They attacked.’

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ALEX

Everyone, give me a Perception Check, please.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

BRYN

I have consistently rolled three for perception all day.

(Laughter)

ALEX

All is well with the world!

BRYN

17.

BEN

22.

HELEN

20.

LYDIA

26.

ALEX

Cel will be the only one to hear this. There is renewed movement upstairs of people entering a building quietly once more.

LYDIA/CEL

‘They’re back...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Oh!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Alright.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘We should expand the quarantine to the whole inn, we should explain...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘We have to...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘... to the rest of them. I’m really sorry we did this, Skraak, but this infection is dangerous and deadly, and it’s taken so many people’s lives...’

HELEN/AZU

‘It’s an apocalypse.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘... and we’re just trying to save what’s left of the world.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘This went exactly as badly as I feared it might.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Well, great – you get to be right.’

HELEN/AZU

‘We didn’t ask you to come!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘But we’re glad that you did...’

(Group laughter)

‘... because otherwise the Kobolds wouldn’t know they might be an infection vector everywhere else and so there would be no chance of containing that, and also it’s really nice to see you again, little buddy!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah, I’m really glad you’re okay, Skraak. Hopefully, we’ll stay okay. I guess we go upstairs now?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘I guess so.’

HELEN/AZU

‘I’m going to go and open the...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘I mean, it’s not locked!’

(Laughter)

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah!’

BRYN

I’ll let Skraak out of the ropes he was tied with.

ALEX

Who opens the door first?

HELEN

I will.

ALEX

So you open the trapdoor...

[clunking sound as the door opens]

... which is slightly disguised as, like, a shelving unit thing, so no one would expect to look there. What you open the door to is, sort of, the main hall of the inn which is awash with silent Kobolds. Have you ever seen... there's a famous painting, I forget what it's called now, where it's like a magician and his demons, or something?

HELEN

Is he lying down?

ALEX

I can't remember, I think it might be, but it's like a room full of them, effectively...

HELEN

I know it.

ALEX

... and they're all deliberately angled and...

HELEN

Yeah, yeah, yeah...

ALEX

... so, yeah, what you're looking at is, like, there's at least two that are upon ceiling rafters, perfectly still. There's a couple on the bar, there's a couple here... and they're all just frozen in mid-thing and turn to see you.

HELEN/AZU

Okay. 'Hello!'

ALEX

I need to know where Hamid is.

BRYN

I'm taking off Skraak's ropes.

ALEX

Astonishingly quickly, they all drop and form what can best be described as a phalanx, all with their spears pointed at you.

HELEN/AZU

'I thought you were here to rescue me?'

BEN

While Azu says that I'm just going to try and walk through them and get to the innkeeper.

ALEX

Everyone roll Initiative.

(Lydia laughs)

BRYN

You're doing this, Alex, you're doing it!

ALEX

I know, I know!

[Sound of dice being rolled]

BRYN

You don't get to be unhappy.

BEN

19.

HELEN

11.

BRYN

15.

LYDIA

23.

ALEX

Cel, technically, you're up first.

LYDIA

Cel isn't going out. Cel knows that there are Kobolds out there and that they're here for Hamid, so, like, what the... I'm waiting.

ALEX

What is... what is, this is going to sound like a weird one, given what they are, what's your Combat Manoeuvre Defence?

BEN

20.

ALEX

(Laughs)

This is going to be such a mess!

[Sound of dice being rolled]

ALEX

So, all of them try and grapple you. All of them fail, bar one who manages to successfully grapple you on their own.

BEN

Okay, good.

HELEN

Aww....

BEN

When's my turn?!

ALEX

Yeah, I know! I can see which way this is going! Ham..., er, you now, actually.

BEN

Right. Five strength checks...

ALEX

Yep, that's fine.

BEN

... unless they don't have very high strength – I just want to throw him off, or throw them off.

ALEX

It's fine, yeah, go for it.

BEN

[Sound of dice being rolled]

20 on an Oppose Strength.

[sound of a Kobold being yeeted through the air]

Yeah, I'm not trying to slam them against the wall or break them, just get them off and I'm going to the innkeeper and doing a Heal Check.

HELEN

He's shaking your leg!

ALEX

That's... that's fine. In which case, then, Hamid, you are up. You can hear the sounds of what can loosely be described as combat upstairs.

BRYN

(Laughing)

Is Skraak out of his ropes?

ALEX

I'm going to say yes for the sake of...

BRYN

Okay...

ALEX

... just my own sanity at this point!

BRYN

I run upstairs.

ALEX

The second that your head crests the thing, every single one of them kneels, claws on their chest and then bows their heads with their spears up.

BRYN/HAMID

'Ooh, oh... oh dear!'

BEN/ZOLF [sarcastically]

'Oh brilliant, you're their messiah!'

ALEX

We can drop out of Initiative.

BEN

While healing...

ALEX

So, the innkeeper is fine. The innkeeper has been bound really well with very, very thin cord, not rope. Probably something from Shoin's thing, I dunno, but he's fine, he's absolutely fine. He doesn't even seem particularly shocked by you at this point.

BEN

Good. Can I untie him?

ALEX

Yes, yep, that's fine.

BEN

Then I do! And then I go and find Wilde.

ALEX

Okay, that's fine.

HELEN

I'll come with you for that, just in case...

ALEX

Wilde is all of five steps further down the corridor...

HELEN

Ah, lovely!

ALEX

... also bound, with a face that can just be best described as, er, this is going to have to be bleeped, but to benefit the players, the **[BEEP]**.

HELEN

Ha!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Wilde has no idea what's happening, but has been bound so has realised, 'well I'm not being killed, so, what?!'

BEN/ZOLF

As I'm untying Wilde, I'm like, 'Yeah, no, Hamid's a Kobold messiah now and, er, the inn's under quarantine.'

ALEX (as Wilde)

'What?!'

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘I’m going to go and make some food.’ And I angrily go to the kitchen.

HELEN

Haha, clattering the pans about like you’ve...

BEN

Yes! I am angrily cooking!

ALEX

Barnes immediately comes up the stairs and starts debriefing Wilde on the new situation.

(Helen chuckles)

LYDIA

Cel’s gonna lock the front door.

ALEX

Skraak comes up the stairs and stands next to Hamid.

BRYN

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

Hamid looks really flustered and embarrassed.

(Laughter)

ALEX (as Skraak)

You're right to feel awkward. 'This is just the way that Kobold works, okay.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Oooh, okay. Okay!'

ALEX (as Skraak)

'The biggest dragon here, it's you.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Oh, well. Erm, in a way, I guess, um, er... Well, we should probably explain the whole infection thing to everyone.'

LYDIA/CEL

'Also, you could introduce the concept of democracy!' Cel shouts...

(Laughter)

BRYN/HAMID

'Well, I mean, let's just... what's everyone's name? I'm Hamid!'

HELEN/LYDIA

Awww... ice breaker!

(Laughter)

LYDIA

Tell me an interesting thing about you!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Christ!

LYDIA

Two truths and a lie!

BEN

Hamid, the polite tyrant!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Ohhh, oh my gosh, that's his dark time, right?!

ALEX (also as Skraak)

'Isn't he nice?!'

... oh, you know what, I've got to take a break there on the polite tyrant! We'll be back in a couple of minutes!

(Group laughter)

And welcome back! I'm gonna have accelerated us to a large dinner. A large...

BRYN

Well, remember that all this happened in the middle of the night!

BEN

Oh, alright, sorry...

LYDIA

A large breakfast!

ALEX

... angry...

BEN/ZOLF [shouts angrily]

'I am making a Kraft cooking roll to see how good it is!'

ALEX

Yes, you are! You are taking a penalty for being angry!

BEN

[Rolls dice]

[Everyone roars!]

A natural 20!

(Group laughter)

[cheering and whooping]

LYDIA

Oh my gosh, he's angry soup!

(Laughter)

HELEN

It's Gordon Ramsey in here!

(Group laughter)

BEN/ZOLF

'Finally, some good **[BEEP]** food!'

(Group laughter)

[hysterical laughter]

HELEN

Pretty much!

BRYN

Zolf's Kitchen Nightmares!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So, the inn is full of people and I'm just going to skip ahead to the way that these things can sometimes work is that you can open sliding doors and turn, like, two small rooms into one big one, blah blah. It's effectively turned into...

LYDIA

... a conference centre!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

... it's effectively turned into one big room with a...

LYDIA

... even with a prison below...

ALEX

... really big layout for food...

LYDIA

... where they keep the techies!

(Group laughter)

... well, the projector room down here is dank!

ALEX

Everyone is there...

HELEN

Yeah!

ALEX

... basically for food, shocker! Wilde has already been debriefed at this point. Barnes has already been debriefed, and all of the Kobolds have been made aware of the stuff that you want to have made them aware of. In terms of the Kobolds, for the sake of speed, does anyone apart from Hamid speak Draconic?

BEN

Nope.

LYDIA

Er, I do!

ALEX

They all have... oh, do you actually speak Draconic?

HELEN

You've gained it, yeah.

LYDIA

Oh yeah, you get one, every level...

ALEX

Oh, so you've gained it?

LYDIA

... and I said a bit of Draconic and it's now been quite a while and I would expect that during that week, Cel would have been practising with...

ALEX

That's fine.

BRYN

... and Hamid will happily start teaching her.

ALEX

That's fine. So, Zolf and Azu, you have tried. You cannot distinguish a difference in their names. They are all basically things that you cannot pronounce. You are literally not capable of pronouncing. They are visually

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

distinct – you know who they are, but you genuinely are struggling to pronounce names. It's a thing.

BRYN/HAMID

Can I not give them translations of the names? I've prepared six separate names for these individual Kobolds, Alex!

(Laughter)

ALEX

I am fine with you basically saying, like, these are name translations...

LYDIA

What are their backstories?!

(Laughter)

ALEX

... but this is a case where it's, like, 'Cool, what's your name?' *'You cannot pronounce it in your tongue.'* 'Try!' *'Wrrrrkrrrswkrrrr...'*

(Laughter)

... It's not a name, it's a noise as far as you're concerned.

LYDIA

It's tonal in a way that you weren't brought up on those different syllables, so your ears genuinely cannot...

ALEX

... there's a biological limitation at play here. Cel, you're doing better, but they don't seem especially interested, if I'm honest, in talking with any of you. They have all insisted and keep maintaining a guard phalanx around Hamid at all times.

(Helen laughs)

Skraak is not interested in this whatsoever...

HELEN

You asked for this, Bryn! You literally asked for this!

BRYN

Hamid is so embarrassed talking about this...

ALEX

So in terms of...

BRYN

And Bryn is loving every second!!

ALEX

... I need to know one thing to determine whether an awkward situation happened. Did Hamid try to sit at anywhere other than the head of the table?

[Helen gasps]

(Laughter)

BRYN

Probably, yes!

ALEX

Because they will have actively, like, started to steer you to the head of the table and move things around so that you sat at the head of the table, and will then be sat behind you, basically, ready as guards.

(Laughter)

BRYN

Hamid does not know where to look. Hamid is, like, red in the face.

HELEN

(Laughing)

Azu is quite amused!

BEN

Zolf is not amused.

(Group laughter)

ALEX (also as Skraak)

Again, so Skraak just, sort of, leans over just before the dinner starts and goes, 'It'll pass eventually.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Thank you.' What language?

ALEX

That one will have probably been in English.

BRYN/HAMID

'Good.'

HELEN/AZU

[Giggling]

'I think it's quite fun!'

BEN/ZOLF [incredulously]

'Really?'

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘What, Dragon King Hamid? Yeah, great!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Ha ha, but look, he’s so embarrassed!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah. Good!’

ALEX

So, we are now all at dinner. I’m just going to pick up on the RP from here. Dinner is ready, but the room is now full of all this enormous cast of characters and I now outnumber the party by, like, two to one, which is gonna be fun!

(Laughter)

LYDIA

Cel asks Skraak in Draconic what traditional Kobold dishes are like. I’m trying to build bridges.

ALEX

Skraak takes a moment and he’s actually struggling to remember. It’s been a while.

HELEN and LYDIA

Awww...

ALEX

And then he takes a moment, and then he kind of brightens up for, possibly, the first time since you've seen him...

LYDIA

Yeah!!

ALEX (also as Skraak)

And then he's, like, 'Okay, there's this sort of like a mealworm burger thing...'

LYDIA/CEL

'That sounds incredible!'

ALEX (as Skraak)

'... where what you do is you basically split...' and he just starts describing what can best be described as, like, mealworm patties that are then served with a special type of fungus. It's basically a burger!

LYDIA/CEL

'Oh, cool!'

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

ALEX

But with completely, like, non-edible to human ingredients.

LYDIA

Edible to elf?

ALEX

No.

LYDIA

Oh...

ALEX

In fact, I think you would recognise... gimme a Knowledge Nature.

LYDIA

Just trying to build bridges, people.

[Rolls dice]

ALEX

Nah, it's all good!

LYDIA

Oh, I mean, that's only a 17.

ALEX

You're fairly certain it would be actively poisonous.

LYDIA/CEL

Oh. 'Does it have any psychoactive effects for you folks, because I'm pretty sure that it would have psychoactive effects for me, which I'm not always against...

(Bryn laughs)

... it depends on the context. This, for instance, is too public!

(Bryn roars with laughter)

ALEX (also as Skraak)

So, I'm going to answer that one question and then I am going to go a bit wider, which is, 'Yeah – there's a reason that they all like it!'

(Group laughter)

It's a simple answer!

HELEN

It's your burger!

ALEX

Everyone starts eating. All of the Kobolds will wait until Hamid starts eating...

(Helen laughs)

... and then obviously do the same. Skraak does not. Skraak's just doing his own thing.

BEN

So, just throughout this Zolf is eating thunderously...

(Group laughter)

... yeah, until the meal is done.

HELEN

(Laughs)

Eating thunderously!

LYDIA

Like, *ggrrrrr...*, but the meat is so beautifully tender...

BEN

Yeah, I know.

[0:29:11 talking over one another]

BEN/ZOLF [through gritted teeth]

‘This is great – the marinade really came off. I love it!’ Oh, no, no, no – I’m the cook so I’ll be, like, [humbly] ‘Yeah, it’s okay!’

LYDIA

As you, like, try to tug it apart it just beautifully unfolds...

(Laughter)

... it’s sort of like, pulled jackfruit, like, *arrgh*, oh, it’s all unfurling!

(Laughter)

ALEX (also as Wilde)

Eventually, Wilde pipes up going, ‘So, as nice as this is...’

HELEN/AZU

‘It is nice.’

ALEX (also as Wilde)

‘... so the inn’s lost at this point.’

HELEN/AZU

‘It’s not lost. We might not be...’

ALEX (also as Wilde)

‘Have we confirmed any contact outside of the Institute? It sounds like there’s been almost none, actually.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Almost or actual?’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘As it stands, as far as I’m aware, the only contact that Shoin Institute has been making has been with this island.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Mmm hmm.’

ALEX (also as Skraak)

Skraak, ‘Sounds about right.’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘So, at least we have a controlled situation, and Shoin has been infected for months and none of his employees showed any sign, so it doesn’t look like it’s spread any further.’

HELEN/AZU

‘He was in a vat, though.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Well, exactly.’

ALEX (also as Wilde)

Skraak takes a moment, asks to be excused and then heads out with one of the Kobold guards. They just head out, literally, the other side of the screen door for the moment. So Wilde’s there going, ‘Right. The island’s not highly populated and there haven’t been any cases that we are aware of..’

BEN/ZOLF

‘If we get through the seven days, fine.’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Effectively, yes. There are limits to what we can achieve here. We have no infrastructure, we have no people, and we are working off the seat of our pants. If we can see out the seven days from your perspective, as the only people have left the island, we’ve effectively returned to our default state, which is, I guess it’s fine until someone dies.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah.’

HELEN/AZU

‘That’s default state.’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Am I wrong?’

LYDIA/CEL

‘That’s kind of how things work, yeah.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Logical, yeah.’

ALEX (also as Skraak)

Skraak then comes back in with this person. ‘Rrrrrtnnnn has a piece of information that might be pertinent. We think we might be immune.’

HELEN/AZU

‘What do you mean?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘A lot of us were engaging directly with...’

LYDIA/CEL

[Sighs]

‘Someone that had to hook up the cleric to the system, right?’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘... before Shoin went very wrong, he was just mostly wrong. While he was mostly wrong, he was a big fan of sending monsters against the adventurers, in waves...’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh no. Oh, I’m sorry.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘... but that doesn’t mean they were all killed. This was more than a year ago. There have been no cases. We haven’t even been aware of this as a thing. Direct contact with this person, handling them, moving them, plugging them into stuff – I think we’re immune.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘You don’t know that. Talking to ‘em, spending significant amount of time taking to them. Saying specific keywords or trigger phrases? We don’t know. So, no, that is a very dangerous assumption to make.’

ALEX (also as Wilde)

Wilde pipes up, ‘I agree with Zolf. At best, it’s a minor curiosity.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I mean, I think it’s a reason to hope. I mean, I know we can’t rely on it, but...’

ALEX

(Laughs)

Is that look actively in character?!

BEN

Oh, sorry, yeah!

ALEX

In which case it's immediately shared with Wilde and Barnes.

BEN/ZOLF

'Hamid, I am literally a cleric of, basically, hope and that's stupid, okay?'

(Laughter)

HELEN/AZU

'Don't call Hamid stupid!'

BEN/ZOLF

'It is a stupid thing to say!'

HELEN/AZU

'Don't call him that!'

BEN/ZOLF

‘It is careless, and it is how these things go wrong. You need to be careful and strict otherwise things blow up in your face.’

HELEN/AZU

‘He’s just making a suggestion!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Zolf, I’m not arguing we should change our procedure, I’m just trying to find a reason to be optimistic about what might happen next! This is exactly what I was talking about two days ago. You jump down my throat at the slightest provocation!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah, stop taking things out on him!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I haven’t actually acted and said, well, everything’s fine then, have I? I’m just trying to say, we should stay positive. Gods!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Mr Smith, I’m aware that you have suffered and that you have seen some horrors, but sometimes keeping morale up or having some kind of discussion about possibilities is... is... one needs to be able to find the energy to continue.’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘They’re not wrong!’

HELEN/AZU

‘This is potentially the first good news that you’ve had.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right, fine.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘No one’s saying to change our plans or rely on it, Zolf...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘No. Fine. Fine. Look, you keep having the discussion, I’m going to go to the coast, right, I’m not being here for the moment.’

HELEN/AZU

‘To the coast?’

BEN

I’m assuming the tavern is by the coast...

[0:33:49 Hamid, Azu and Cel all talking over one another]

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, well, I’m gonna go on my own and the island is basically lost because of the quarantine anyway, so I’m going to the coast because what does it matter?!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘That logic doesn’t... okay. That logic doesn’t make sense based, even on what you were saying five minutes ago!’

BRYN/HAMID

I am going to try and physically stop you. ‘As far as I’m concerned, the inn is now the quarantine.’

ALEX (also as Wilde)

‘Zolf!’ Wilde calls you back, ‘Zolf?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘What?’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘What I was leading to is that none of us are going to sleep tonight, but what we do currently have is Shoin in an orb right now. The ship has sailed in terms of information and control. The ship has sailed in terms of infecting this entire island, but I really, really want to talk to it.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Great. Well, what I need is some time at all not thinking about this.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Okay, so, like, how about going upstairs because we now have lots of different rooms, so you’re within the quarantine zone...?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, fine. I will go away from all of you.’ And I leave.

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh dear.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘I don’t wanna say that that’s a little of a relief, but I think it is more psychologically healthy for all of us to have a little bit of a break from one another.’

HELEN/AZU

‘I was hoping...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘It’s the problem when you try and quarantine people like this and I’ve told you this before, Wilde...’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Yes, I know you have.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘If you put everyone in a small box it makes things worse, not better. Even if it is a necessary box.’

HELEN/AZU

‘I thought we could make friends.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘He seems quite opposed to that, you know. Like...’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh, I feel like he’d be a really good friend, but he’s not very friendly, if you know what I mean?’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Well, no, I know. I mean, he hasn’t been at all friendly.’

HELEN/AZU

‘You’re friendly!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Oh, thank you! I do try.’

HELEN/AZU

‘I think you’re my friend.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘I... I’m so honoured. Thank you so much, Azu, that’s delightful!’

ALEX (also as Carter)

From the corner, Carter’s just, like, ‘yeah, you’re the only friendly one!’

(Helen laughs)

LYDIA/CEL

‘Oh no, Azu’s friendly. What?’

ALEX (as Carter)

‘She keeps stamping on me and then shutting me up! And then, like, pushing me down the stairs!’

HELEN/AZU

‘That was because you were... there were good reasons for that!’

ALEX (as Carter)

‘And you drank all the good stuff!’

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

Got you bang to rights!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Yeah, I'm going to say that Azu does what I do, which is just, like, chuckle to herself, like, 'Yeah, I did!'

(Group laughter)

LYDIA/CEL

'Sometimes drinking all the good stuff is what friends do!'

(Helen laughs)

ALEX (also as Barnes)

Barnes just pipes up, 'What I would suggest is that we finish the food, as long as we don't leave the inn things aren't getting worse, like, this situation has gone beyond our control, to a degree...'

HELEN/AZU

'Mmm...'

ALEX (as Barnes)

‘... and we try and deal with all this in a fresh head tomorrow afternoon, and maybe we spend just a small amount of time not going to the toilet in front of one another, and forced to be in front of each other’s face for all the time.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘That’s a very good idea, probably.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yes, I’d like that.’

ALEX (also as Wilde)

Wilde’s, ‘Fine.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘I apologise again about all the experiments – I am trying to improve the toilet situation downstairs... !

(Laughter)

[0:36:54 Azu and Cel talking over one another]

It was not necessary for your health... I mean, yeah, maybe...’

BRYN/HAMID

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

‘We all found things to keep us busy. I mean, I started writing on the walls! I mean, I understand your need to keep active!’

(Group laughter)

LYDIA/CEL

‘It’s... I ran out of... I didn’t think this would ever happen, but I ran out animals that I was interested in being!’

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Are we happy to accelerate to the end of the dinner?

ALL

Yeah.

Oh yeah.

ALEX

In which case, then, Skraak asks to take Hamid aside for a moment.

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘Look, they’re going to be like this for a while because the default assumption is the King is dead, long live the King. When you spend all of your time around a tyrant, you learn to expect tyrants.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I’m not gonna...’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘But you need to know this. *Listen to me.* Even if they know you’re not a tyrant, neither they nor me are going to be abandoning you because that’s how Kobold’s work. You don’t need to run the entire show, but you do...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I couldn't even if I wanted to.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘... no, you couldn't, but you do need to understand that your behaviour is going to determine a *lot*. Do you *understand* me?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yes. I think so, but, Skraak, I just want you all to be okay. If it was up to me, you would have that entire island all to yourselves and you’d run it the way you wanted, and if I can help any of you achieve that, then that’s my only goal. I’ve got to do my best to keep you all safe.’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘The best way that you can help me and everyone else is behaving like you have 10,000 people watching your every move because, guess what...’

(Helen laughs)

LYDIA/CEL

‘Oh my god!’

ALEX (as Skraak)

‘... you do.’

HELEN/AZU

‘What does *that* mean?!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Okaaaay...’

LYDIA/CEL

‘I will work really hard at improving the toilet situation!’

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Er, this was a very private conversation...

BRYN/HAMID

Yeah, yeah, yeah...

ALEX (also as Skraak)

... which Skraak then leaves. Stops. Turns around and goes, 'You haven't screwed it up yet.' And then leaves.

HELEN/AZU

'Oh my god!'

(Laughter)

BRYN

Hamid literally, kind of, sits down heavily and just stares for a little while.

HELEN

Awww, King Hamid!

BEN

So what made Skraak the only Zolf amongst the Kobolds?!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Why don't we examine that over the following episodes? What I will say is this – if you ask me for a leadership feed, I'll give you a leadership feed!

(Group laughter)

I'll give you all the leadership you want!

(Group laughter)

BRYN

Once again, everything I do, Alex finds a way to torture me!

ALEX

You can have everything you want. You just won't want it when you get it!

(Laughter)

BEN

Bolivian monkey's paw!

HELEN

Oh, listeners, I wish you could have seen the look in Alex's eyes!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

So, revenge... **[laughs]**... I am going to jump ahead to, basically, just past lunchtime. The innkeeper, by the way, has taken to all of this really well. It

turns out there's a reason this innkeeper is the one who's been looking after the place. He takes everything in his stride!

HELEN

Aww... I like him a lot.

ALEX

Honestly, he's just like, okey-doke, that's fine! I guess we're meeting more meat, that's fine! I am going to jump ahead unless anyone has anything that they want to do in the meantime to, basically, another sit-down meal where everyone can have a talk about stuff.

LYDIA

With Shoin in one of the chairs!

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

So here's the thing – this is where I would then say what are we going to do, but I need to know if anyone wants to do anything between going to be and now. Especially, I'm looking at Ben a lot because if Zolf was going to go off on one, now would be the time!

BEN

As far as other people are concerned, I am not doing anything.

ALEX

Understood! In which case, then...

BEN

I am also not being seen!

ALEX

I understand.

HELEN

Ohh...

ALEX

... in which case, I am going to jump ahead to that meal.

BRYN

Guys, he's infected! Alex has told him secretly and now he's behaving weird!

Alex [0:40:45] I'm sorry!

(Laughter)

[Indecipherable babble from all parties]

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Great! This is kind of now!

(Group laughter)

BEN

I mean, did you guys notice on the Discord how individual people started adding blue veins to their little avatars?

HELEN

Yeah.

BEN

... because it spreads slowly through the channel...

LYDIA

Oh, I didn't! You stunners!

BEN

Yeahhh...!! It was really good!

LYDIA

Oh, you absolute stunners!

BEN

It was as well, like, no one talked about it until someone went, hang on, it's like 12 of them!

(Laughter)

LYDIA

Ohhhh! You stunners. I love it! I love it so much!

BRYN

The RQ AIG!

ALEX

I have to finish this episode, but I love it!

BEN

Alex, they really respect your craft! That's all I'm saying!

ALEX

Oh, I love that soooo much! Right, got it – I've got to press on, but I love it!

BRYN

That's the greatest fan work that Alex can ever ask for!

(Group laughter)

ALEX (also as Wilde)

No, I'm all over that kind of stuff – that's so into my wheelhouse!

(Laughter)

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

Brilliant! In which case, then, at the meal everyone is sat down. The guards for Hamid are slightly less all up in his business, by half a foot or so!

(Helen chuckles)

Wilde sits down. 'Right. How are we all feeling?'

LYDIA/CEL

'Much better after that sleep. Would you like me to try and find a way to plug that brain into something?'

BRYN/HAMID

'How are you feeling, Wilde?'

LYDIA/CEL

'Oh, yes, think people!'

ALEX

'Fine. Thank you for asking.'

(Group laughter)

HELEN/AZU

'Well, you said that before.'

BRYN

Hashtag, Wilde's fine! Hashtag, Thank you for asking!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Let me...

HELEN

That's gross!

ALEX (also as Wilde)

... let me finish, let me finish! 'From now on, why don't we just assume that Wilde is fine until I say otherwise?'

(Bryn roars with laughter)

(Laughter)

HELEN/AZU

'That's quite a dangerous thing to assume, but, alright. Generally...'

LYDIA/CEL

'Until you're dead, right?! Ha ha!'

ALEX (as Wilde)

'No, no, until blue veins appear as well, in which case Zolf kills me. That's the agreement.'

LYDIA/CEL

‘Ah.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Ohhh...’

LYDIA/CEL

‘What if he gets blue veins as well?’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Well, that’s what Barnes is for!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Oh, I see. What about him getting the blue veins?’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Carter.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Ah, I don’t think you should rely on that!’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘That’s why I haul help!’

(Laughter)

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

‘Carter sort of solves himself. He’s probably not going to make it through the end of a day, every day.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘He’s probably pickled enough that...’

ALEX (as Carter)

‘Heyyyy... !’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘So, shall we meet Shoin and see what we can do with this?’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Sure!’ Do I need to roll a Knowledge Engineering or is it important for the plan that this succeeds?!’

ALEX

Here’s what’s going to happen... because of the way this works...

BRYN

Take ten.

ALEX

... your *broab* is amazingly plucked from a bag that the opening is too small for it, let’s not forget.

ALL

Oh yeah...

[thud...]

ALEX

... and it's on the table. What's that? That's only ever going to happen for Alex's narrative efficiency, we do not examine this.

(Helen laughs)

Oh great! Fab! There is now a *broab* on the table. All of the Kobolds start snarling a little bit, but they don't move, and everyone else is just, sort of, staring at it.

BRYN/HAMID

'Yes, so you said you might be able to build some sort of apparatus to let us speak to it and let it speak to us back when we were... ?'

LYDIA/CEL

'Yeah, I mean, I do need some kind of materials.'

ALEX (as Wilde)

'What do you need?'

LYDIA/CEL

'Well, looking at the *broab*... well, I need...' lists the things that...

ALEX [forcefully]

No! You will list all these fictional components that you definitely need!

[sniggering in background]

LYDIA/CEL

Okay! 'I'm gonna need...'

ALEX [talking over Lydia]

Oh my god, I'm stopping, no, please, stop... ! Anything else! You have all of the equipment required...

LYDIA

There's eight things that Cel needs...

(Group laughter)

... inverter coil...

[everyone whoops and cheers]

... with neon fibre-tubes...

[more whooping and cheering]

(Group laughter)

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

... er, elemental fluff...

[laughter and cheering]

... then, triple-distilled and pushed through an extruder...

ALL [keeping count and shouting along]

Four!

LYDIA

... Adamantine, er, springs...?

ALL

Five!

LYDIA

... Adamantine, erm, wires...

ALL

Six!

LYDIA

... a HDMI port – it's weird, it doesn't stand for the same thing...

(Group laughter)

ALL

Seven!

LYDIA

... a male to female adaptor which, like, Cel calls something complete different...

(Group laughter)

ALL

Eight!

[clapping and cheering]

BEN

And also it's a hyper-dimensional mytosis integer!

(Laughter)

LYDIA

That's good!

BEN

Interface!

ALEX

Funnily enough, funnily enough they don't have all these things here. However, you are brought things that they think will do the job and you're like, it'll take an extra ten minutes.

(Lydia bursts out laughing)

HELEN

We've been putting stuff in our bags and holding for aaaaages!

ALEX

Between all of you...

BEN

The junk!

(Group laughter)

There's probably still some dirt from Newton...

HELEN

Yeah! Bits of Adamantine!

LYDIA

I feel like some will be, like, the arms of the...

BRYN

I've got, like, half a tonne of Adamantine ore in mine!

LYDIA

Got some of those old limbs from the...

BEN

Oh yeah, from the factory!

LYDIA

Mmm!

ALEX

You have so much stuff! I am basically going to say that, between all of you, yes. You haven't got the stuff you asked for, but you have stuff that's as good if not better, but weird.

HELEN

What, better but weird!

BRYN

Time for some mad science!

LYDIA

Yeahhhh!

HELEN

A montage!

ALEX

You manage to rig it up in such a way... I need to know what your goal is here. Are you trying to basically just give it a speaker? Are you... what are you trying to do?

LYDIA

I'm giving it a microphone so it can hear, a speaker so it can speak and a button I can press to wobble the *brorb* in a way that shouldn't be, like, maybe not painful, like, I don't want to create an electric zap, but could punish it...

HELEN

... a threatening...

LYDIA

... could be, but just something that would make the brain go *bllbllbbbllllbll...*

ALEX

Uncomfortably, understood.

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

May I suggest, in a way I normally wouldn't, the ability to cut off communications when you want?

LYDIA

I mean, you just unplug...

ALEX

Ha, ha, ha! Good! In which case, then...

BRYN

Can we assume that this takes a few days so that we're getting closer to the end of the quarantine period as well?

LYDIA

Oh, now you see that's really sensible!

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

I don't like that at all! Yes!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

That's fine. We'll jump to the end of the quarantine period and that's the time it takes Cel to make all of this set up in such a way that Shoin can't take over it all. Fine! Carter is infected and Barnes is infected. So...

HELEN

What?! No!

ALEX

I'm kidding, I'm kidding!

(Group laughter)

HELEN [shrieking]

No, you can't say things like that, Alexander!

(Laughter)

BRYN

Look, I normally just cast Fireball in this room on you, Alex!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

I mean, nuke it from orbit, but...

BEN

My previous statements about Zolf remain true.

ALEX

That's absolutely fine.

HELEN

As Zolf has been missing, then Azu's gone to look for him at some point.

BEN

Right.

BRYN

Okay.

ALEX

So I can't accelerate.

BEN

Yes.

BRYN

Hamid and the Kobolds will be assisting Cel.

ALEX

So, here's what is going to happen...

HELEN [laughing]

It sounds like a band!

LYDIA/CEL

Cel whispers to Azu when you go, 'Make sure that you fart in front of him a lot!'

(Helen laughs)

BEN

Hamid and the angry lizards...

(Laughter)

... it doesn't quite work.

ALEX

So, what we are going to do then, we are going to say that the presentation of Shoin is there, as in, like, dumping him on a table or something...

HELEN

Ahhh...

ALEX (also as Wilde)

... and with the orb on the table, Wilde then addresses the missing elephant in the room, 'Where's Zolf?'

BRYN/HAMID

'I think he's still upstairs somewhere.'

LYDIA/CEL

'Sulking?'

ALEX (also as Wilde)

'Barnes?' At which point Barnes looks up and is, like, noooo...!

HELEN/AZU

'I'll go, I'll, go, 'I'll go.'

LYDIA/CEL

'Remember to fart in front of him!'

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

Let us cut to Zolf's room.

HELEN

What's happening in Zolf's room?

ALEX

You are at his door.

HELEN

I knock.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yeah, come in.’

HELEN

Azu comes in.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Hey, I am literally just looking out of the window.’

LYDIA

Ohhh, you’re so tragic!!!

HELEN

Okay, alright, fine!

LYDIA

[0:47:56]

(Group laughter)

ALEX

You know what, actually, I'm going to end the episode there.

(Group laughter)

It's a nice tableau, and we can come in nice and happy and, and perky with...

LYDIA

... sad Seadog!

ALEX

... sad Seadog extraordinaire!

[0:48:08 talking over one another]

LYDIA [talking over Bryn]

The only sad thing is, well, the extra sad thing, is that the prophetic fallacy isn't working because we stopped the storm!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Yeah, lovely.

LYDIA

Rusty Quill Gaming – [155] – [Dinner With Dragons]

He's not looking out on a wonderful, like, stormy scene that reflects his emotions, it's just nice and soft now!

BEN

I'm looking at nice. It's a nice day!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

It's so annoying!

ALEX

Well, as we all take a moment to enjoy what's about to happen...

HELEN

... oh no...

ALEX

... we'll meet... all the listeners have to wait a week, so until then, bye, everyone!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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LYDIA

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah – he's not a singer. He's a snarky...

BEN

... Grim Skraak...

ALEX

He's not Skraak-y, he's Grim Skraak!

(Helen laughs)

BEN

Lots of things you can do with that name!

BRYN

In the Grim Skraak-ness of the far future!

BEN [talking over Lydia]

There are other Kobolds!

LYDIA

There is only...

ALEX

I think you'll find in the grim darkness of the far future, there is only Skraak...

HELEN

Ah!

LYDIA

In the grim Skraak-ness of the Skraak...

ALEX

... and he pulls his way across the world...

LYDIA

... Skraak-cher, there is Skraak-y-skraak, Skraaaaaaak...

(Group laughter)

ALL [repeating over and over]

Skraak, Skraak, SKRAAAK!

[everyone dissolves in laughter]

ALEX [laughing]

Okay, okay, I'm going to do a silence marker before this gets any weirder!

BRYN

A silence Skraak-er!

(Group laughter, fading out)

ALEX

Hi everyone, Alex here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of our patrons; Elena Royce, Shane Kelly, Greckles, Anonymous Sky, Lainey J, Jays MD, Oatmeal Addiction, Deidre Pitts, Andreas Evans, Disaster, Loverow, Sardia, Megan Linger, Billy, Rowan de Lacey, Gill, Zitalis, Woodspurge, Red, Erin Sellas, James Curry, TJ Hoffer, KP Wilson, Zoe Schroeder, Charlie Wall, Shannon McHugh, Taylor Ashmore, Lou, Mitch Parveo, Sageybug, Josephine Howare, Azaria Serpens, Bonnie Phillips, Dwarven Bread Spores, Becs, Qualish, Jacks Wells, Twisted Site, Elizabeth Lagante, Anyshka Zwowcza, Ben Ens, Libby Broome, Alise Walker, Faith Gillespie, Kathleen Parham, Pansy Thoughts, E Herself, Talitha Jedrell. 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.