

RQG – 157 – The Big Picture

Content Warnings

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[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 157 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

Rusty Quill Gaming – 157 – The Big Picture

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom.

HELEN

And Azu

ALEX

And I believe I've given you all the answers you deserve.

BEN

Let us talk to the borb!

ALEX

You are currently interrogating a brain in an orb.

BEN

Welcome to borb chat.

(laughing)

ALEX

Welcome to...oh god yeah, that would such an ASMR.

BEN

A podcast within a podcast.

ALEX

Hello, we're going to be talking about the nature of self and self-entities...

BEN

I'm really clever.

ALEX

Whilst a gentle scratching in your ear.

HELEN

That's not ASMR

BEN

No I know but Shoin's idea of it. I'm so clever.

ALEX

Shoin's ASMR is - this is how ASMR works. Really loud.

LYDIA

But instead of like tapping things he just punches a wall.

BEN

This is ASMR, I've just invented it. It was my idea and this is how it works.

ALEX

Wa Luigi! So we are going to pick up where we left off which is I believe I just drew basically a magnet...

BRYN

Really disturbing pictures, yeah.

ALEX

So I am going to go a little bit abstract in terms of describing stuff and then come back in and out and so on. So Shoin locks in on the kraken stuff. The more that Shoin is engaged in the conversation that isn't to do with useful questioning and is more to do with showing off, the easier the drawings come. The more that it becomes focused, it starts to break down a little bit and starts to slow down and be a bit more choppy but obviously the second that Cel starts speaking he's like and away we go.

LYDIA

Cel does not make that connection. Cel's just genuinely very interested in what was happening.

ALEX

But it would become apparent to any of you immediately. In terms of the kraken info that he is letting you know, he genuinely just gives you this info. It can't come through the drawings and all that other nonsense that I insist on imposing upon all of you. So what it actually...

LYDIA

You test us.

ALEX

What it actually is, is he made a point of trying, semi successfully, to generate a network using these krakens throughout the globe. He lost track of how many he made.

BRYN

Urgh.

ALEX

However he also didn't do a great job. He wasn't copying and pasting himself everywhere. He was mostly giving it a play but what you might just have is a bunch of vaguely obnoxious krakens kicking around the place but he wasn't

truly everything that he thought he was gonna manage. He wasn't some omniscient god. He wasn't making true copies.

LYDIA

So it's like there was someone trained a neural net on your Twitter output and it managed to talk in ways that sound vaguely like you but don't quite make sense.

ALEX

Absolutely. Exactly what I was going for.

LYDIA

Cool.

ALEX

And as a result...

LYDIA

Rather than actually copying your consciousness.

BRYN

Are we able to confirm we've shut down that network.

ALEX

So one of the other things that he implies is that certainly the network has been done in. Like you took out the lightning rods and you took out all of the underground. It takes so much to salvage it. Technically you could but it's not going to happen. What you also know is he starts getting into the limitations of the system and, you know, all material forms are transient.

LYDIA

Absolutely.

ALEX

And if anything, if we could just...if we can just find a way to become pure arcana then that's going to be the easiest way of dealing with this.

LYDIA

I couldn't agree more.

ALEX

The krakens will wear themselves out.

LYDIA

Although there are genuinely good sides of being in physical form. It depends on the context and this is a public...

ALEX

Clearly not. But in terms of the krakens, they are going to wear themselves out because krakens were ancient creatures. Very, very strong. Capable of basic biological healing and were smart. These, as a result of the changes that he has made so that he can spread himself nice and wide, if left to their own devices they'll eventually wear down but we don't know. The last detail he gives you is that what he used, is he used their organic forms as effectively a blueprint and then what he started to do was clone...sort of grey matter. Krakens are halfway between a squid and a person.

LYDIA

So these are essentially...

BRYN

He Jurassic Parked kraken.

LYDIA

No he dalek-ed them.

ALEX

Yes he did.

BRYN

Ah!

ALEX

So what he did is he was like ha, what a large amount of grey matter. That solves the compression issue. Great!

LYDIA

Split the brain.

ALEX

So all he did is he kept making more and more brains as effectively a blank template giving them mostly robot bodies that have a little bit of bio in there because there has to be.

LYDIA

So I've invented this word cyborg...

ALEX

Yeah off he goes. Eventually he kind of bores of the topic but when he bores of the topic it mostly is because he's explained how wonderful he is and it deteriorates back into the [non-descript word sounds]. Nonverbal.

BRYN

Basically the kraken's used to operate as a semi cohesive group of stuff and now they're going to be individual, random, not very good sea monsters. Is that what we're able to gather from that part of the conversation.

ALEX

That is a very Hamid simplification. Yes.

BRYN

Sure

ALEX

What has happened is they've gone from an organised network with which he could've held the world to ransom.

LYDIA

Cel does ask why.

ALEX

To hold the world to ransom!

LYDIA

But you didn't give anyone a ransom note.

ALEX

Hmm.

(laughing)

Ah. I'm sure I did.

LYDIA

No, nobody knew. Nobody knew.

ALEX

I did because that's why people were coming to investigate because of the ransom.

LYDIA

No!

ALEX

You know because of the trembling fear for my kraken. I wrote it down. I did

BRYN

We came because we realised that a lot of unaccounted for adamantium was being shipped out here.

BEN

Yeah no one's really heard of you mate.

ALEX

No. No...shut...shut. No. No! Everyone has heard of me. Everyone has heard of me.

BEN

Everyone has heard of Eddison and Tesla. And Newton

BRYN

And Francois Henri.

ALEX

Oh come on! Shut up! Francois Henri had many, many skills. All of them were useless.

BRYN

Well I mean he did operate his invention supposedly for the benefit of people and so he became famous for helping...

ALEX

Oh please Henri operates for the benefit of Henri.

BRYN

Well yes I agree fundamentally

ALEX

It's the only thing I respected about the man.

BRYN

Ok. I mean you've done some other impressive work Mr Shoin. You encountered this infection and you found a way to beat it. I mean no one else has managed that.

ALEX

What? No, what?

BRYN

Well I mean, sorry correct me if I'm wrong but in the diary he talks about a way...

ALEX

Absolutely.

BRYN

Yeah so I'm trying to feed him a way to continue boasting but onto that topic.

HELEN

I think there's something stopping him from talking.

ALEX

He's like, ok, well...what...no. So...as he starts struggling a little bit, the pictures start becoming a completely different thing. What it becomes is an excellent technical diagram of the human brain and how you would go about severing

the corpus callosum. And he starts drawing root structures around the edges of it.

HELEN

Root. R-o-o...

ALEX

R-o-o-t.

HELEN

Ok

ALEX

So he's like ok...hu, hu, no all I did was I just drew a line in the sand, you know and...and...and...

LYDIA

That was in your brain?

ALEX

And the painting is just going off on one. He has given you what is effectively an excellent surgical diagram, Azu you get this for free, of hm, if you wanted to separate out the two hemispheres. Oh no. Fair point, fair point. For some reason I reverted to, it's Grizzop again. I think I heard the name and went Zolf's gone now.

BEN

Whatcha!

(laughing)

ALEX

So yeah for both of you, it is an excellent diagram of a human brain. It is an excellent explanation of how you would get through to the corpus callosum and sever it and it is also, basically a description of not just doing that but also building what's effectively almost like a tinfoil wall between the two.

HELEN

Oh my god.

ALEX

In such a way that it becomes immediately apparent that he's basically built a wall in his brain to quarantine an area and let it go to heck.

LYDIA

Ok so what do we – Cel takes people into the other room – so what do we need to know to act.

BEN

We need to know...

LYDIA

Where the centre is or...

BEN

No. So two things; first of all reckon it's London because...well I'll show you the painting.

LYDIA

Is that London?

BEN

Yeah.

LYDIA

Oh I always wanted to go.

BEN

Well you might be.

ALEX

Are you doing this near Wilde or completely separate?

BEN

Yeah we can go back up to like with the rest of them. The thing we really need to know is it looks like from – I'm pointing at the brain thing – that he's warned

himself off from it but if we know how they infect people and then we build these defences designed to stop it then that means that we can actually fight back without just, you know...

ALEX

This isn't a viable solution.

BEN

Why not?

ALEX

You're suggesting deep brain surgery on every single person in the world.

BEN

No, no, no, no, I mean externally. Because the problem with him is it was already in him.

LYDIA

Yeah so if we covered ourselves in tinfoil.

BEN

I'm looking for maybe something a little less lippy

LYDIA

I'll make into a kind of slick suit. I could probably turn it...there could be joints at the...but the problem with that is that it seems like he may not know that. Not on a conscious level so we need to find a way to just keep him...ok, so let's...

BEN

And you're good at keeping him talking.

ALEX

Ask him the questions. Keep him talking and let's see what comes out the other side of things.

BEN

Right well take these – I'll give him the paper – and you can have a look at them and see if you can get anything out of it.

BRYN

Can we review the diary quickly because, you know, it was only a few episodes ago and it's, what, a week ago in game time and longer than that in real time. Like what did he actually say about the infection because I thought he said that he had a method to stop the infection progressing in his own brain but I almost thought it was a Fermat's Last Theorem thing where he's also said I have an actual cure which I can no longer use on myself but I've sent off to my other brains but I may be misremembering.

ALEX

So what he said is he thinks he might have a way to end it. As in end it but he needs...he only hopes that he can implement it before that takes effect.

LYDIA

Right ok. Well then we need to ask about that.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

But to be clear in the diary it was very much implied that that was separate to.

BRYN

Yes exactly. There's something...there was two things. There was...

ALEX

He found a way to hold...

BRYN

...treating the symptoms and halting it versus ending it and he did mention he thought he had an idea.

ALEX

He has found a way to halt the symptoms that is utterly unworkable.

BRYN

Yeah

ALEX

He also though claimed that he thinks he'd found a way to...

BRYN

But this margin is too small to contain it.

ALEX

Yes.

BRYN

Because that's the worst thing. Just write it down when you say it.

ALEX

That's exactly the kind of thing I want to leave to hang for me and it's not actually a solution to anything. It's just to be that person.

LYDIA

When we start talking to him again Cel will just be so impressed. She'll be like, I've been wondering personally. I think only the greatest genius possibly that I've ever met would be able to come up with a solution of how to end this kind

of infection. I don't know if anyone is really intelligent enough to be able to do that.

ALEX

What...what...what...

LYDIA

It's such a shame. I would be so impressed by anyone that had a solution.

ALEX

Wait, what? A solution to what sorry?

LYDIA

To end the infection.

ALEX

What infection?

LYDIA

The blue veins.

ALEX

What?

LYDIA

What's coming out of his little hand. Remember how tiny it is.

ALEX

So his hand's getting quite erratic. It's struggling a little bit. Any time you have mentioned the infection he immediately seems to come apart a little bit. All of the stuff prior to the infection he will go on and on about but the second that...because you've done it before, any time that you bring up the infection he's like, ah...what...hmmm.

BRYN

Does he refer to it as the infection in his own notes?

ALEX

Yes

BEN

Can I make a heal check to try and work out exactly where the line is. From the reactions we're getting from the hand, because this is basically an automatic response.

ALEX

Sure. Can I suggest from both of Azu and Zolf, you both give a heal check. I think that's very sensible.

HELEN

Yeah.

BEN

Oh that's a critical failure so no.

LYDIA

The brain explodes.

ALEX

I can bring you back from life, don't know a lot about brains.

HELEN

I got 29.

BRYN

It looked like a 7 from here and I was like oh!

ALEX

So for a 29, here's things that you are able to discern medically speaking especially given he gave you this big helpful diagram of what he did to himself. Great!

HELEN

Azu's like that's very good surgical work.

ALEX

The short...so what it is, is it's excellent ideas for surgical work but you can see the brain. The implementation...

LYDIA

I mean he was doing it on himself.

ALEX

He had it...

HELEN

You said the picture was good.

ALEX

Oh the picture. Excellent. He had the theory down pat. His hands, not necessarily built for healing. Let's leave it at that. Literally. In terms of the insights that you're getting just from having the time to speak with the patient, let's say, you reckon that there is some form of like an aphasia at play here.

HELEN

What's an aphasia?

ALEX

An aphasia is where you have issues to do with communication. There are different types. There are some where you understand perfectly but you cannot speak properly. There are some where you can speak fluently but you can't understand...

HELEN

Oh! A-p-h-a-s-i-a

ALEX

Yeah. There are many different types of aphasia. You reckon there's some kind of aphasia at work here. It's not unheard of for patients where a side of the brain is damaged, the other half to try and pick up the slack but if they can't communicate it comes out very odd and the other things to be aware of is given the amount of brain trauma, it's highly likely that he has memory loss. Generally speaking it's more likely to be worse the more recent you get and it would explain a lot for his behaviour towards the end in that he was probably resetting almost memory wise a week at the most. So you might have more luck aiming earlier in timelines but if he's not talking about infection, it might be he just doesn't remember it. It's hard to say. Certainly the way things are interacting though it's odd and you've never seen it before. Like you shouldn't be able to get perfectly formed here's a picture, here's another picture given what he's done to himself.

HELEN

I think he's forgotten.

LYDIA

I meant to ask earlier, how does the Simulacrum recreate versions of itself.

ALEX

The Simulacrum is a waste of time. Let me tell you why – so as he starts going into that, he continues to draw based on the last question that you asked. Can you repeat the last question so I can make sure I'm giving you the right drawing.

LYDIA

Only the most intelligent person in the world could've come up with a way to end the infection completely.

ALEX

Right. So fab. What starts to happen is he starts to sketch something that is a technical drawing. You think it is a mechanism of some kind but while he is drawing that he is talking to you and going, and the thing is right, everyone was so interested. Oh they can make more of themselves. Yes, in the most ludicrously extrapolated way possible. Yes they could make more of themselves. So can people. Who cares? There's no real advantage to that. It takes ages. It's inefficient and what's the point in making something to replace us, we can make ourselves something better. Carrying on. The drawing unfortunately doesn't seem to be the perfect technical manual that you expect. Can all of you please give me a sense motive. It's a weird one to pick but bear with me.

BEN

That's about right.

HELEN

26

BEN

25

BRYN

20

LYDIA

14

ALEX

Azu and Zolf you both come to a sudden realisation at the same time. It's like one of those magic eye pictures where yes, he is trying to draw something technical and then as it's completed and you're rotating it and you suddenly realise what he's done is he's drawn a landscape, a physical scene but using technical notation for mechanisms and things like that. The best that you can tell is it appears to be a kind of barren mine or something. Like a fisher in the rock kind of deal-y.

BEN

Being a dwarf and having some idea of culture, is it Svalbard?

ALEX

Yes

BEN

Ok cool.

ALEX

But what he's done is he's drawn the entrance to Svalbard with like...the entrance to Svalbard that little bolt isn't a bolt, it's a resistance symbol. That kind of thing. But Cel, for free, the thing that he seems to be doing is, although it's a very odd shape he has drawn a coherent diagram. Like it is a coherent circuit. It does loop, that makes sense. But it's like if you took a simple square circuit and then you made it super wiggly to look like another thing.

BEN

Has he etch a sketched it?

ALEX

Effectively.

LYDIA

I would like to do a knowledge engineering to work out if it looks like...the circuit itself might be some kind of kill switch.

ALEX

I am going to have to carry on with the Simulacrum stuff for now. And then return to that.

LYDIA

Ok.

ALEX

In terms of the Simulacrum stuff, he is very much poo pooing the entire endeavour. Not because it's easy but because it's pointless. Why try and make something to emulate what is already frankly a meaty, fleshy waste of time. What you want to do is make the next thing. You don't want to make a copy of something that's already rubbish.

LYDIA

Cel agrees with everything to kind of...it's such an intelligent viewpoint. I really wasn't aware of that kind of...

ALEX

He respects Henri for at least...at least understanding that. But you've got to aim for more than as opposed to...like he gets a little bit annoyed at...he does bring up, of his volition, Newton's work. And he explains the guy can make

tools but he's not all that. Not really. Now you can give me your check for the thing. I'm mostly checking that I haven't missed info here.

LYDIA

There is so much info! Oh no. 28.

ALEX

Not high enough but you know that it's really difficult to do because he's completely warped the layout of it. It looks like something that would play well with the kind of equipment that you were seeing at the Shoin Institute in terms of transmitting stuff. Beyond the mechanics of it, you know that it needs an organic component.

LYDIA

Right, like I can barely roll higher than that so if Cel can't work that out...

BEN

Yeah well you'll need a team and time. Time to Simulacrum.

LYDIA

Dig for engineering knowledge.

ALEX

Shoin eventually then starts going on and on and he gets himself caught in a loop, just moaning about having to pay the bills. And he's just like, uh and

you've got some work you have to take on because you need the work, not because you want the world.

LYDIA

What work was that?

ALEX

And then he starts going on to how he was basically refining and shipping out fluidic systems for the Simulacrums that were being assembled in Damascus.

BEN

While he's talking I will still be feeding paper.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah, in terms of that he then carries on basically with a couple of versions of the Svalbard thing. However as you start comparing them you notice that the fisher in the rock is larger as he makes repetition of the drawing. And larger again on the next repetition of the drawing and larger again on the next repetition of the drawing. And he stops looking like a fisher and starts taking on a more generic...I'm going to give the reference, it's not accurate.

LYDIA

Are you getting closer to it or is the fisher getting bigger?

ALEX

It's literally just obscuring more of...you're not getting closer, it's just obscuring more of the image and it is looking more and more regular shaped in terms of like...like a pointy egg. Something like that. Like it starts having a regular shape.

BEN

So yonic then

(laughing)

HELEN

Like a vagina.

BEN

Vagina shaped.

ALEX

No. That's what I'm trying to steer away from.

BEN

Ok but a pointy egg is super yonic.

BRYN

Is it the same shape as the weird metal seed thing we've got?

ALEX

More what I was going for yes. And with each of the drawings it starts to obscure more and more of the image.

BRYN

Ok so I'm going to ask Shoin about the vector of infection. How did he catch the infection from the cleric, knowing that I will not get good answers because we've come up against this but the best tactic we've got seems to be to ask the question we want, let him...

ALEX

Go off on one.

BRYN

Well no, let him...ask the question we want answered, let him stumble for a while. Then ask on a topic he can go off on for a while.

ALEX

Sure. What's the...here's how we're going to structure this now. You're going to provide me an actual question and then you're going to give me a decoy question every time.

BRYN

So the actual question is how did you catch the infection from the cleric?

ALEX

And again naturally – inf...what...what? No the cleric was a fool.

BRYN

The decoy question and Hamid is not the right person to ask this but he's going to feed it out and hope someone else runs with it, is about Harrison Campbell. We know he was reading a Harrison Campbell book and I want a topic that will get him talking and potentially has a lot of conversational area available that will just keep him busy for a while.

ALEX

He ploughs in that. However in a way that for everyone else isn't quite as pleasant which is like – finally a man of culture! For goodness sake. Why? Why do people ask me all these inane questions. If you just had a manual you could find the answers to your questions but not questions of the heart.

(laughing)

And off he goes.

HELEN

That's a famous book!

BEN

Questions of the Heart. Love it.

ALEX

And off he goes. In terms of the drawings that start emerging, it's more difficult as it's a little bit more removed. This isn't a drawing of a thing. It's a lot more conceptual. It has what is effectively an image of a person. Think, if any of you know the artist LS Lowry. Those sort of like almost charcoaled stick figures.

HELEN

Yeah the ones where it looks like it's raining.

ALEX

All of the stuff is about the industrialisation of man blah, blah, blah. Like that's his writing style for what it's worth. That's where I'm going in terms of his art style. And so you have one of those figures and then it is...you have another figure who is huge, like dominating the page huge. And then he starts by drawing and just having a single line going from the small figure to the huge and then another, then another and then another and another and it just starts to overwhelm the big figure from the small figure. This is what you got. In terms of the Harrison Campbell stuff he starts going on and on and then massive drop, he then starts talking about – and the thing is everyone, everyone, everyone has been looking for the proofs. Who do you think got the proofs? I got the proofs! And they're right there and they're mine and they're no one else's. Did you know – and then he starts going into minor discrepancies between the original proofs which he somehow got hold of and the published editions in more and more obscure ways where it's like – there's a typo on page 13 and 57 and 47 and 58 – etc. etc. etc. until eventually he kind

of starts to wind down because he starts getting confused as to the narratives and he starts to come apart a little bit as he's talking too long.

HELEN

They're very complex stories.

ALEX

There's a lot of them. That's almost the same thing.

BRYN

I'm going to suggest another time out upstairs to review and discuss the case.

BEN

Right yeah.

BRYN

I mean it seems like we have to go to Svalbard but I don't really understand why. I don't know what more we can get out of him.

BEN

Something to do with the seed. Like we'll find it when we get to Svalbard. It's isolated. It's unlikely that the stuff...

BRYN

The infection's got there.

ALEX

He was being paid. He was being paid to generate parts for the Simulacrum.
By who?

BEN

Alright we'll ask that question. Probably Eddison or Tesla but yeah.

LYDIA

You told me that there was someone that owned the factory.

BRYN

Yeah that's true.

LYDIA

That was angry that they broke the factory.

BEN

Oh the Cult of Hades. I'd forgot about that.

BRYN

Wellington maybe but we don't know for sure. It's just speculation.

BEN

Right well go ask him the question.

BRYN

Maybe he will know that answer. That's good. That's why it's written on the wall!

ALEX

Wilde just kind of raises an eyebrow and gestures for you to carry on the potentially world saving interrogation.

BRYN

Do you think, before we go back down there, do you think there's anything else worth asking about in terms of, you know...I know you were hoping to get...we were hoping to find a way to protect ourselves from the infection from him.

BEN

That's at Svalbard. That's the point. That was what that was in response to.

BRYN

Ok yeah I guess we're not going to find anything else out, no.

BEN

And also my knees are getting tired from leaning into that blooming cell.

LYDIA

Really need another name.

BEN

Anti-magic room.

LYDIA

No it's not a criticism Mr Smith. I'm not trying to criticise you. It's just a...

ALEX

Naughty box says Carter from the corner.

BEN

No

HELEN

That's not what I...no, no that's a...

BEN

Never say those words together again.

HELEN

...different euphemism.

LYDIA

No absolutely not. I'm going to go and talk to someone more pleasant than you Mr Carter

(laughing)

And goes downstairs. Quickly asking, who was it that paid you for that incredible work on the Simulacrums and then begins to struggle asking...

ALEX

No, he immediately can press into that one straight away. He's like – well here's the thing. The thing about Tesla, right, the thing about Tesla is he's all about the theory. He's all about the theory but he doesn't follow through. And the thing about theory is it doesn't pay does it. No. No one's interested in the theory. Either make the thing, buy the thing. What is the point in theory? You don't have a thing. You don't have half an idea. You either make the thing or...

BRYN

Well then Eddison came along and actually made it and...

ALEX

Well here's the thing right, Eddison yes, that might be the case. Eddison may have built the thing but you've got to follow the powers that be. You've got to follow the powers that be because where's Eddison getting all that money from?

LYDIA

Where was he getting the money from?

ALEX

I mean, yeah the lightning rail might help a little bit but I mean he's only really investing in that as a hidden stop. The interesting thing...the interesting thing is what happens if you start chatting with a certain Mr Henri because all of his systems are desperately insecure.

LYDIA

Ah

HELEN

Was he stealing from the banking system.

ALEX

Here's the thing about Henri right. Here's the thing that not many people realise...

LYDIA

Did he build those back doors in?

ALEX

Ha, ha no. Building in a back door takes skill and effort. It's way easier to just build a wall with a hole in it but you can learn some very interesting things if you start poking around.

LYDIA

Like?

ALEX

What do you know about religion?

LYDIA

It's a very interesting mechanisms.

ALEX

More importantly lucrative. Very, very lucrative. Especially if you have a large, underground organisation. You know they approached me, the Hades lot did. They were like oh here, work for us. Make their fluidic system, joke's on them it would never work.

BRYN

What would never work? What were they trying to do?

ALEX

Oh you know, they were trying to make those dam Simulacrum things. But joke's on them, all of the systems that I gave them they weren't going to work anyway [laughing].

HELEN

Why not?

ALEX

Oh because I just made it deliberately not work because I thought it would be hilarious. Because the only person they could come back to, to fix it is me!

BEN

So what did you make it do instead? Just not work or do something else?

ALEX

Nothing at all. Basically a...what are they called? A...like a lamp with two fluids in it and they don't mix so it goes up and down, up and down.

LYDIA

You make those for children, yeah.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah!

BRYN

So you're saying that if they had a whole legion of chassis ready for the system to put in...

ALEX

Please tell me they made...

BRYN

...they would be completely pointless.

ALEX

Let me put it this way, if you're going to hold the world to ransom you don't want someone else to hold the world to ransom too. [laughing]

LYDIA

Well he does have a point though.

BRYN

How much interaction with the Cult of Hades did you have?

ALEX

Oh well you know...

BRYN

Was it a specific contract person?

ALEX

Well here's the thing...here's the thing with that Hades lot, right, is that everyone ooh scary cloaks. Ooh scary cloaks. When you own an island and an army, it gets very difficult to mess around especially when they don't know about the underwater bit. Yeah, no I spent a lot with time with what's his face...posh geezer, obnoxious, always with a pair of outsiders

LYDIA

Wilde?

ALEX

No, no, no.

BRYN

Chessington?

HELEN

Wellington?

ALEX

Erm no it was....Wellington was his thing. It's Wellesley isn't it. Yeah it's Wellesley.

BRYN

Well Wellesley became the Duke of Wellington. That was his name before he was given the estates of...yeah it's the same person.

HELEN

Mr Wellesley the Duke of Wellington.

ALEX

Fun fact, if you really want to have some fun, you know those two – he seems to be losing track of who he's talking to – you know those two cloaked ones who were always with him, always going around, what? Vinegar. It is hilarious. I cannot recommend it enough. Just vinegar. It is the funniest thing you will see.

LYDIA

Is this the squizards?

BRYN

Yeah I believe so.

BEN

I mean I'm nodding. Zolf doesn't but yeah...

HELEN

You get to pickle them?

BRYN

I mean would any acid work or specifically acetic acid?

ALEX

Well here's the thing with your acids – he then immediately dives into what, to everyone apart from Cel, is utter nonsense. I mean true nonsense. Cel he has gone such a deep dive in a way that's completely inappropriate because his actual point was yeah but vinegar's funnier because you can buy it at a restaurant. That was his point but [explosion noise]

BEN

What is the printer doing? If anything relevant, it might just not be relevant.

ALEX

What he has begun drawing is, it's slow and it's unnecessarily detailed. Shocker. He starts drawing a Mercator projection. Very good. Very good at doing it for whatever reason and then he starts doing it almost etch a sketch style like you were talking about. Then he returns back to London and he starts doing this little dot. And he keeps drawing this little dot. And he keeps drawing this little dot and it gets a little bit bigger but he keeps drawing the same dot. By this point he's gone through the paper and as he's talking it's just getting bigger and it's getting bigger and it's getting bigger and he's just destroying the paper underneath. If you put other paper in he'll just carry on doing that circle as he's talking.

HELEN

Right.

LYDIA

We get the – Cel addresses the little hand – we get the point. More information.

BEN

I think we've got what we need.

LYDIA

Oh ok.

ALEX

Are you saying that our time is at an end?

LYDIA

I think your time might be at an end.

ALEX

I'm so sorry for you my...my unwitting victims. Truly it has been an honour but nonetheless I must cast you aside. I'm sure you'll enjoy being connected. It's quite a fun experience I'm told before it gets fatal.

BEN

Oh no, please don't.

(laughing)

ALEX

I love you guys! He starts speling in a way that I can't do for an extended period of time. He will just keep speling unless you start a conversation.

LYDIA

Cel unplugs the...Cel unplugs the speaker and then unplugs the microphone.

ALEX

Ha, ha!

BEN

Can you put him back into status or whatever it was? Make him unconscious

LYDIA

I...I'll actually turn the power down gradually so it feels like falling asleep.

ALEX

What you aren't able to do is put him in a timeless kind of status. Insofar as what you can do is induce what's effectively like a stupor almost.

LYDIA

If they're taking out the power one assumes he goes back to the sort of form he was while we were carrying him around which is eating fluid but not having enough energy to actually think.

ALEX

Think of it more like a dream state.

BEN

Sure.

ALEX

There is an awareness of the passage of time but a lack of conscious control regarding its perception.

BEN

Right, well quite honestly we've got what we need and that – pointing at the brain – is...there's too much trauma to...

ALEX

And I need to take a break there. So before we dive down this rabbit hole, we'll come back in a couple of minutes.

And welcome back. So I believe we were about to discuss the Henri solution

LYDIA

Well Cel has gradually turned the power down and just sort of said – he and they, like whatever combination of people that are in there, they're dreaming now and what I'm thinking...I could just whirl it around and scramble them and he'd essentially be unconscious and then when the nutrients run out, dead. So he'd be dreaming, then dreaming fragmentedly and then would wind down.

ALEX

You also know, both Zolf and Azu would know that realistically there wouldn't be any pain because that's not how brains work.

BEN

Yeah. He's given us all the relevant information and leaving somebody in that state is...

ALEX

Barnes pipes up from the corner going, he's the only insight we've ever had in terms of, you know.

HELEN

I don't think there's anything more he can give us.

BRYN

The longer we keep the borb around the greater the chance of infection risk. There's still veins inside it.

ALEX

Exactly. It's a...this is...as I've always said we are dealing with existential risks. That means that our margin for error has become zero, even if it's not a mercy you should still kill it and we need to dispose of it or at least seal it in such a way that whatever's left can't do anything.

BEN

Seal it. Don't know how to dispose of it in a way that means that it can't infect...

ALEX

Not yet.

BRYN

Do you have a spare bag of holding? Extra spaces?

ALEX

None.

BEN

Do you have any spare bags of holding? [Whispers] We definitely do. We've got tonnes. We left half of them with Grizzop and Sasha.

BRYN

I mean I had two and I gave one to Cel.

ALEX

I am loathe to...

LYDIA

I only have one.

ALEX

I am loathe to have us leave it somewhere that it would be unsupervised.

BEN

Alright, what's your idea then?

LYDIA

You could keep it as a pet.

HELEN

You could bury it.

BEN

Give it a kobold.

ALEX

It needs a guard of some kind.

BEN

Give it to a kobold.

LYDIA

Don't give it to the kobolds. It caused the kobolds a lot of pain...

HELEN

They shouldn't have to.

LYDIA

...and asking them to be responsible for it is cruelty to both them and it.

HELEN

Unless they want it as proof that...

BEN

I mean destroy it and then just give the lifeless orb to the kobolds not actually Shoin.

LYDIA

It's still an infection risk as has been discussed.

BEN

Yeah but they reckon they're immune to it so...

LYDIA

So you believe that now?

BEN

No, not at all but if we've got an actual reasonable way to...

LYDIA

Scramble it and then the nutrient broth will fade out, it will wither and die.
Wilde, are you staying in this inn for the foreseeable future?

ALEX

I probably am not. However it will remain a harlequin safehouse with or without me.

LYDIA

I would say keep it in the anti-magic field.

ALEX

I agree.

BEN

Alright, do that then

LYDIA

While it gradually withers.

ALEX

We can seal it in a box if we need. It doesn't matter. We can just leave it in there.

LYDIA

Put it in a bag of holding and then put the bag of holding in the anti-magic field and then you can't open the bag of holding.

ALEX

That's a very good idea.

BEN

Alright do that then.

HELEN

Very smart.

LYDIA

And also if you cover that then with a bunch of really innocuous looking boring stuff then no one will want to...in fact put it under the pooping system because I think what we all learned under the last...

ALEX

We can work out the details later.

LYDIA

Oh ok. Sorry I do get carried away.

BEN

Right so Svalbard next.

ALEX

Apparently. This is going to take some effort from my part. I'm going to need to make some contact. We have to presume that Einstein isn't on the cards. He hasn't been for a while. I don't see why he would be suddenly.

BEN

You can use your thing can't you.

BRYN

Well if we think it's safe we can.

HELEN

He seems to be really busy.

BEN

Yeah well this is like the one...this is the thing so this is going to be priority zero.

ALEX

If you were going to get a teleportation it wouldn't be via official channels and if there's one thing that we need to be careful of, it's generating too much suspicion using unofficial channels.

BEN

Right well get to work then. You're the fixer, fix it.

ALEX

Fair point.

LYDIA

Who fancies a trek through Siberia? I've heard so many interesting things.

ALEX

Wilde basically heads off to his office and starts "working"

(laughing)

I do that because...

HELEN

He starts moving paper around.

ALEX

I do that because secretly what Alex knows is that the first half hour is going to be Wilde sat at a desk going – pfft, right. Because thinking is an important part.

BEN

Yeah so that's not working, that's just working.

ALEX

No. No. Working is only in the product you generate.

BEN

Oh god.

HELEN

Ah you catalyst.

ALEX

So that just leaves the remainder, Barnes and Carter just kind of there.

HELEN

Are you going to come with us?

ALEX

I mean I don't know. I don't necessarily pick where I'm stationed.

LYDIA

I think a trek through Siberia sounds like a...

BRYN

It's not known to be very safe.

LYDIA

Where is?

HELEN

Is Svalbard in Siberia?

BRYN

No.

HELEN

Then why are we...

LYDIA

Because that means that we would avoid the populated bits.

BEN

Cel is suggesting that, I don't know, that we trek through basically the entirety of Russia

HELEN

That sounds very cold.

BEN

Which is thousands of miles walking.

LYDIA

Cel shrugs.

ALEX

Carter pipes up – and it's full of giant, monsters! Argh!

LYDIA

Exactly!

BEN

I'm sure it is.

ALEX

Dinosaurs the size of...dinosaurs! Grrrr.

LYDIA

That sounds extremely tempting.

BEN

Yeah well spooky monsters or not it's still really cold and hard to eat.

ALEX

And just the worst idea. Just the worst idea.

BRYN

I mean if we can't get teleported what are our other options to get to Svalbard.

BEN

Boat.

HELEN

Yes I was going to say Svalbard's an island.

ALEX

Sail I suppose....

LYDIA

You would sail to...

HELEN

You can sail.

LYDIA

...to America and then trek across America.

BEN

No, no, no. We go round India, up the Suez...

LYDIA

That sounds like a very populated route.

BRYN

Across the Mediterranean?

BEN

Yeah

HELEN

We'd be on the boat.

BEN

Through the middle of the Med and up round.

BRYN

Is that safe?

BEN

No! Course not.

HELEN

I don't think we have any safe options.

BEN

It's quicker than walking.

BRYN

What time of year is it? Would the north of Russia be ice free? Could we sail along the north coast of...

BEN

You want us to sail along...

BRYN

I don't know Zolf, I'm asking you. You're the expert. If it's impossible then just say no.

BEN

No ship has ever made that.

BRYN

Then let's not do that.

BEN

Many people have died trying.

BRYN

Ok, let's not do that then.

LYDIA

I mean it seems like you've been quite keen for us not to end up going through Europe.

BRYN

What...what if we just crossed the pole?

BEN

Hamid really?! That's...

LYDIA

I could become a polar bear.

BEN

So you want us to...

BRYN

No, look I know it sounds stupid. I admit that. But it is technically the shortest route and...

LYDIA

And we all have the ability to endure elements. It's actually perfectly warm.

BRYN

It's completely uninhabited. There's no chance of the giant monsters at the pole as far as we know. There's risks involved.

ALEX

You ever been to the Artic Hamid?

BRYN

No.

ALEX

It shows!

HELEN

Tell us more.

LYDIA

Have you? Or were you just being ominous?

ALEX

I know that at least you wouldn't make it Hamid.

BRYN

Why?

ALEX

Your stature, you wouldn't be able to cover ground fast enough. Even if you're taking dogs.

LYDIA

He can fly!

HELEN

I can carry him.

BEN

It's not that.

ALEX

It doesn't work like that. You're talking...

BRYN

I can't fly for long enough.

ALEX

You're talking the limits of endurance.

BEN

Crevasses, storms.

ALEX

Let's assume that you could. Let's assume that you could carry Hamid. Let's assume that Zolf, no offence, was able to cover the ground at the same speed as everyone else. Let's assume that everything...

BEN

My legs could malfunction.

ALEX

Exactly. There's wild magic up there. They could explode. Let's assume you make all of that weight, it's months of journeying on foot and you can't sail it. There's no passage.

LYDIA

So you're saying that our options are only sail through the middle of...

BRYN

The warzone.

LYDIA

The warzone.

BEN

We could go around Africa.

ALEX

They're not options. None of them are. Not really.

BEN

Well they have to be.

LYDIA

That's failing...

BEN

And to be fair Barnes we have just named all methods of traversal from this part of the world to that part of the world.

HELEN

Yeah they're all bad options but they're still options.

ALEX

Well then Wilde has to make Einstein work.

BEN

Yeah we're talking about if it don't. Because we don't want to say is whoopsie daisy, let's not bother. We've got to try something. And it's either through the Med, around Africa, over the north pole...

LYDIA

I could take you across America.

ALEX

Through the Med is feasible but ill advised. You'd be picking between left and right at this point.

BEN

So I don't....look...

LYDIA

You're not just talking about through the Med though, you're thinking about going down, round, in the...

BRYN

What about Earhart?

ALEX

What?

HELEN

Who?

BEN

You mean fly?

BRYN

Well I mean she had a flying ship and...

HELEN

Oh her!

BRYN

She got us...

BEN

Amelia Earhart.

BRYN

She was working for the Harlequins.

ALEX

The one that got you to Paris?

BRYN

Yeah. Well no she got us from Paris to Prague.

ALEX

Oh right.

BRYN

I mean she....that gives you a straight line but it's a faster method of travel than any other. It's potentially safer.

ALEX

Yeah I mean Wilde's never mentioned that he's in contact but when does he.

BEN

I'll go talk to him.

HELEN

Is she still alive?

ALEX

I think you're assuming a level of...

BRYN

She was a member of the Harlequins when we met her

ALEX

...communication with the mainland.

BEN

I'll mention it so he can raise it with the right channels. Maybe she is. Maybe she's not but it's a good suggestion.

ALEX

It's a good idea that.

HELEN

It was.

BEN

I will go and be like – hey Wilde. Earhart. I know you hated her...

ALEX

Wilde looks up from his work.

BEN

Ay, Amelia Earhart. You're going to have to swallow your pride.

ALEX

Close the door.

BEN

I'll close the door.

ALEX

We both know it's the only option if Einstein's not available.

BEN

Well we're talking about going across the pole.

ALEX

[Laughs] Sure.

BEN

Yeah. Or well...up the Suez and all around Africa.

ALEX

Which one suggested it? Hamid or Cel?

LYDIA

No one wants to go across America!

HELEN

It's really wide

BRYN

I mean that is the long way around as well.

BEN

It's also because culturally it's a complete unknown to everyone but you.

LYDIA

Yeah, all these other ones...

ALEX

More people have crossed the pole than crossed America.

BEN

As far as...

BRYN

I mean have people crossed the pole by this point in this world, I don't even know.

HELEN

It sounds like no!

BRYN

Hamid was about to be like, well when I was in London there were people discussing potential expeditions but I don't know what happened to them.

ALEX

People have tried.

BRYN

Yeah

HELEN

Oh dear.

ALEX

Some died. Some made it back. None have made it through. Mostly a lot of them were...what has just happened is that the north, I think it's called the north eastern passage, I think if I've got it right...at this point the north eastern passage has just been disproved. Which was the myth that if you just sail north enough it actually warms up again and then there's a route that you can sail.

BEN

Around Canada?

ALEX

I forget the route.

BRYN

Yeah it was a proposed way to get to the other side of America.

ALEX

That has just been disproved.

BRYN

Right, fair enough.

ALEX

So you're looking at people who have potentially made it to the pole and back.

BRYN

I still think crossing the pole would've been a really fricking cool storyline, for us to be the first people to do that in the cause of saving the world.

ALEX

But jumping back to this.

BRYN

Yeah

HELEN

And also terrifying.

ALEX

So, yes if...don't mention it to the others but that's my prime option.

BEN

What Earhart?

ALEX

Yes.

BEN

Right.

ALEX

I don't know how. I don't want to.

BEN

Cel was going on about America but...

ALEX

What?!

BEN

Well it's a land mass we can cross. Not heard anything about it and I guess they're an elf...or sort of.

ALEX

Here are our options. We have option one, Einstein and we get there instantly. Option two, we somehow get Earhart on board and we take weeks. We use basically any other method and you're looking at months if not a year.

BEN

Ok yeah fine so we just don't bother.

(laughing)

Get Einstein or Earhart or we're taking months. That's it.

ALEX

Hm

BEN

Even if America does work, we've got to go across Pacific, then across America, then across...

ALEX

It's fine, I'll get Einstein. I'll get Einstein. It'll be fine. I'll get Einstein. Go on. Go keep morale or whatever it was. I've got work to do.

BEN

Alright.

ALEX

Don't let people leave. I don't know who I'm going to need.

BEN

Sure, right.

LYDIA

So did we ever establish whether you can actually ride inside the krakens because those are just swimming around, like long distance submarines.

BRYN

I mean it sounded like they were not...there wasn't passenger space in them.

ALEX

Carter pipes up – but you could if you just scooped all of the brains out. They've probably got loads of brains and we could probably each take one or something.

HELEN

Urgh.

LYDIA

So it's not...we're not thinking...it's not like...it doesn't have passage that we could be swum around the world.

HELEN

No I don't...I doubt it.

ALEX

I'd be up for it! I think it'd work!

BRYN

Ok so you built, in like four days, you built that sub...semi-submersible craft.

LYDIA

Yeah I could totally build you an air ship. Just give me like a month.

ALEX

Could you build an air kraken because that's like best of both.

LYDIA

That might take longer.

BRYN

So you guys know how ice floats in water right?

HELEN

Yeah

LYDIA

I've thought often about how if you mix sawdust...

BRYN

There's no land at the north pole.

LYDIA

...you can make a material that is very strong.

BRYN

The other way across the north pole is under the water. That's probably even crazier. That's probably a terrible idea so forget I said that one.

HELEN

I think let's think about the...

BRYN

Russian subs genuinely exist under Artic ice.

ALEX

I know. All of this is accurate. What Alex is doing is going why? Why...

BRYN

I'm just throwing potential even more...

BEN

You better get us Einstein then!

ALEX

Welcome to the season...

BRYN

Wild ideas for the next plot!

ALEX

Welcome to the next leg of the journey, six months of recordings in a box.

Urgh.

BEN

Azu would love that!

ALEX

Yep.

HELEN

Ahh submarines.

LYDIA

I mean that's why you should let us trek across either the north pole or Siberia

ALEX

So while we do official investigations into the options that are available, what are people wanting to do other than sit and wait.

BEN

Quarantine's over, I'm going to the coast.

ALEX

That's fine!

LYDIA

I'm going to go say hi to Jasper and the team. Don't worry, I'll be contactable.

BRYN

That sounds like a good idea. Should I try Einstein as well. I know Einstein...I know Wilde's going through official channels but we have this other thing.

BEN

Liaise with Wilde. Go talk to him.

HELEN

Yes maybe it's best for Wilde to try first and then...

BRYN

Ok well let's you and me going to go and talk to Wilde.

BEN

Just remember we're a team so go talk to him.

BRYN

Yeah. Ok yeah. I hope Jasper's ok. Say hi from us.

BEN

I give Azu a nod. I just did that in like...physically it was like, it's a podcast.

HELEN

Yeah I was smiling really proudly at Ben. Like yeah we're a team. We're a...

BEN

Nods at Azu before leaving.

ALEX

I don't like it when I give time to heal. Even just temporarily. It leads to bad coordination.

HELEN

What do you mean temporarily?

BRYN

Before both Zolf and Cel leave I would like to offer them both a hug. They may or may not take that up.

LYDIA

Cel crouches and gives you a great hug.

BRYN

Yeah!

ALEX

It's mostly elbows but in a good way.

BRYN

I give Cel a big old hug.

LYDIA

Being crouched down, Cel can put their head on your shoulder.

BRYN

Aw!

BEN

Zolf hesitates, pats you on the shoulder and leaves.

BRYN

Hamid doesn't...actually is quite successful at not making that super awkward. He's got high enough charisma that he can just about manage that situation.

BEN

Cool. Zolf doesn't.

(laughing)

BRYN

Hamid's going to talk to Skraak.

HELEN

Ooh yes I completely forgot about Skraak!

LYDIA

Is my village dead?

ALEX

So I'm going to deal with Skraak and then return to your village if that's ok. So Skraak's there. Uh huh?

BRYN

So Skraak we're going to be leaving soon.

ALEX

Where are we going?

BRYN

Well I and the rest of the people I've been travelling with, we're heading to Svalbard.

ALEX

I have no idea where that is.

BRYN

Which is the...it's the extreme north of Europe. It's a...

ALEX

That sounds really cold.

BRYN

It is extremely cold.

ALEX

Right.

BRYN

I know that you and your team are going to want to come with us and I don't...it's going to be very dangerous.

ALEX

Then we'll all have to be very careful won't we.

BRYN

Well I don't know...we don't know how...we don't know exactly what method we're going to use to get there yet. We don't know how many people we can take and I...I really worry about taking you and the others into danger. You know I've been doing this a long time and...

ALEX

If you leave without them, they'll follow. This is how kobolds work. We've been over this.

BRYN

What if it's just you then. Would they trust you to take care of it? The others they had a great time working with Cel, they were really productive. Now Cel had an assistant Jasper and he's doing the same sort of work and they could have...they could do a lot of good and be really productive and do some good stuff if they stayed here with Jasper maybe and they wouldn't be far from home.

ALEX

It's possible. I'll need...I'd need to send someone back to the island. It'll take at least a day to get there.

BRYN

We've got...we should have enough time to do that.

ALEX

Fine. Let me sort it.

BRYN

What can I do to help? Anything else?

ALEX

No, we're here to help you.

BRYN

I'm not...I know how the others have come to see me and I'm...it's a relief to me you don't see me the same way Skraak and...

ALEX

It shouldn't be.

BRYN

It's hard. I haven't...

ALEX

It should be.

BRYN

Yes. I agree. I'm just trying to work out what's best for everyone.

ALEX

Skraak just literally just starts to leave. Being in charge doesn't mean that life gets easier because you have more people to help you. It means that life gets harder because you've got more people you need to help.

BRYN

I know.

ALEX

And Skraak heads off. So Cel, heading back to the village.

LYDIA

Every time we do this I expect you to just be like there's smoke rising from smashed houses.

ALEX

So can you give me a perception check please

LYDIA

Ok that's 24.

ALEX

So, the road is the best quality it has been in pushing a year. In terms of the rain actually stopped finally meaning that you actually make decent time. As you start approaching you do notice a large plume of smoke that isn't normally there from a large fire of some kind.

LYDIA

Cel can tell the difference between smoke that is from buildings on fire and...

ALEX

It looks like a controlled burn.

LYDIA

Ok, ok. Alright. This is going to be fine. What has Jasper done?

BEN

I want it to be real, like full Lord of the Flies. No one's dead but they've just gone completely feral. Jasper's their king now!

LYDIA

The thing is it's a gnome village so most of them are going to be like...they're old. They're mature...this is not like a bunch of...Jasper is a kid but a kid that is probably older than all the rest of you. Jasper may well be like...45 years old or so.

BEN

I don't know how long gnomes live

LYDIA

They live hundreds of years.

ALEX

So as you approach the borders of the village you see an encouraging sight, there is a tank parked across the road aimed at the road you're coming down with someone sat in it to a degree. It's not Jasper. You recognise it as one of the local boys. He's not really paying attention to his guard duty but he is there which is something. All the barricades and stuff still seem in place. You get distressingly close before he notices you and calls out – oh. Cel?

LYDIA

Hey!

ALEX

Oh hey!

LYDIA

Is everyone alive?

ALEX

I mean, yeah. They're all in the...oh have you come for the...one sec. I've got this. He disappears into the "tank". It starts to move and then pulls just aside a little bit so you can get past.

LYDIA

Cheers.

ALEX

Yep, yep

LYDIA

Anything exciting happen while I'm away?

ALEX

He points up at the sky.

LYDIA

Fire is not exciting in and of itself.

ALEX

No. It's not raining!

LYDIA

Oh yes. No, you're right that is absolutely a bonus.

ALEX

Was that you?

LYDIA

Yes it was actually.

ALEX

Course it was. You should tell everyone. They'll be well happy.

LYDIA

Ok yeah. Let's...let's have a nice time.

ALEX

Do you head into the village?

LYDIA

Yes

ALEX

There is a fete happening.

HELEN

Aw!

ALEX

There is a large bonfire in the middle of the village.

BRYN

Let's say the village has met its fate.

ALEX

Yes it has!

(laughing)

And it's lovely!

BRYN

Is the title of this episode now going to be "the *fete* of Cel's village"

EVERYONE

Yes!

ALEX

And I'm going to spell it wrong! So yeah there is a fete set up and you can see that most of the square which has been reduced to a quagmire, so people haven't really been able to do public gatherings, has started to at least be salvageable. People have bothered to put wood down again and there is a large bonfire in the middle and it seems that they have, you know the sort of street party deal-y where you have sort of tables and everyone is sat together,

that is happening. As one person sees Cel enter, and then another and they all go hey!

LYDIA

Hey! You enjoying the sunshine?

ALEX

Was that you?

LYDIA

Yeah. And my new friends!

ALEX

Ah! Jasper is not there but all of the people who are there are immediately gushing at of course, of course you managed to fix the sky. They've learnt one important lesson with Cel which is you don't ask how.

(laughing)

It's not that the answers are inaccurate, they're just unhelpful. So mostly everyone's just saying thanks for fixing the sky.

LYDIA

No, that's cool. How's...can I have some cake?

ALEX

They immediately pull you into the festivities. A short while later you see Jasper coming out of the eldermans house with them and he's just there and he's looking very official looking in a way he hasn't before. He's wearing his good...I was going to say good clothing, his good overalls.

LYDIA

Hey buddy. You did it! You kept everyone safe.

ALEX

You fixed the sky didn't you?

LYDIA

Yeah but what's more important is that you kept everyone safe while I was gone.

ALEX

It's...it's...the trick is that you make sure that everyone's occupied.

LYDIA

Yeah. You know what, yeah. That's it. You've got it. You've got...Cel starts welling up. You're going to be ok buddy!

ALEX

I mean yeah, I've always been ok.

LYDIA

Yeah but I...I sometimes...I need to learn things. I know that sounds bizarre but sometimes I need to learn things. Do you want some cake?

ALEX

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Cool, cool. Jasper starts – so you're here to stay again? You're remaining...

LYDIA

For a little while. For a little while and then I might go off on some more adventures but I'll be back after.

ALEX

Oh yeah? I mean are you going to have to fix all the other skies?

LYDIA

No I think we fixed all the skies.

ALEX

Well then job done.

LYDIA

There's...it turns out, I was trying to forget for a long time that there's places other than this and that sometimes they have problems but before that we

may be enlisted to make an air ship which is much more fun and exciting so I'll keep you in the loop. I've also got a bunch of new friends that I think you would find extremely interesting to talk to!

ALEX

Great! And I'm going to end the episode there as the festivities carry on and as night begins to fall on a large, happy scene.

LYDIA

Oh yeah!

BEN

Don't believe you!

ALEX

Where everyone is alive from when you left them.

BEN

Nah

LYDIA

That's crazy.

ALEX

This. Personal growth.

LYDIA

Yeah

BEN

We'll be right back there next time.

(laughing)

Wait till we get to Europe.

ALEX

So yeah...oh that reminds me, I need to plan a large polar expedition. Anyone know anything about frost bite?

BEN

Yes.

ALEX

Good, great, fab.

HELEN

It's terrible!

ALEX

Bye!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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