

RQG – [166] – [Smooth Sailing]

Content Warnings

- X
- X

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 166 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.

ALEX

And who are you playing?

(Laughter)

BEN

Zoooolf Smiiiiith.

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al Tahan, er, do you need me to spell that?! H. A. M...

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom. That is Cel slowed down, actually, just... it's relative to how they usually speak!

(Laughter)

HELEN

And Azu, because I can't make her name take any longer!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Well, there goes my momentum – dunno about you guys, but I’m done for the day!

BRYN

Yep.

HELEN

Your fault!

BEN

Time to sleep!

LYDIA

You’re the one that gave yourself 18 or so characters to manage inside your own head!

ALEX

It’s fine. I’m going to simplify things very quickly.

HELEN

Noooo!

ALEX

So, where it stands – we are all in an airship. We are all in the clouds above a giant, not elephant, graveyard as the aurora borealis draws inevitably nearer, and everyone is currently on deck ready for things to go wrong, and that's where we'll pick up, if that's okay?

LYDIA

Ja!

BRYN

Mmm hmm.

ALEX

You continue rising through the clouds and eventually break through the cloud cover unto atop the clouds. You can see in the comparatively far distance what looks like a couple more of these things peek out above cloud cover at a couple of points further in the distance.

LYDIA

Wait, wait, wait. Are you saying the bear skeletons go above cloud cover?

ALEX

Looks to be at this stage.

LYDIA

So they are not 30 storeys high, they are more like 300?

ALEX

Or there's factors that you don't know about.

HELEN

They're floating!

LYDIA

Ahhh!

ALEX

Flying undead colossal bears!

HELEN

Oh no!

ALEX

With guns for teeth!

(Laughter)

LYDIA

I love it!

HELEN

Getting very Grant Howitt, there!

ALEX

And bigger bears for blood!

BEN

At which point, we haven't found Jesus weirdly attractive yet, so it's not a true Grant Howitt game!

(Bryn and Helen laugh)

HELEN

I mean, this is the Love Boat, so...

LYDIA

Yeah!

ALEX

It is not! This is The Vengeance, and I love the fact that I called it The Vengeance for this narrative!

(Laughter)

BRYN

Yes, we are getting our revenge on you for the lack of down time and romantic opportunities during this campaign!

(Helen laughs)

Congrats, Alex, you played yourself!

LYDIA

Yeah! We're pursuing romance with a vengeance!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

So, as you continue to sail along the clouds, obviously, it's brutally cold, however, you are all well equipped to the point where I am not going to require any kind of Fortitude Saves because if it reaches the point, you should probably go below deck for a bit.

BRYN

Hamid made, literally, everyone on board some cold weather gear.

LYDIA

Yeah!

ALEX

Yeah, it's fine. You're all equipped up to your eyeballs, and then the rest of your head as well, so don't worry.

BRYN

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In fact, if anyone looks like they're struggling I may well cast Endure Elements as well.

BEN

I can also do that because I've got Endure Elements Communal!

ALL

Ooohhhhhh!

BRYN

Very nice!

ALEX

[Sighs]

(Bryn laughs)

So, as you continue along, you know that tension that comes from, I'm ready for something to happen?

[Mmm hmm]

[Mmm]

It starts to wear a bit thing as what continues to happen is corpses continue to be corpses...

BRYN

Sure.

ALEX

And then, suddenly, there's still corpses. Eventually, the finely honed edge of combat-readiness starts to wear quite thin and people start to, sort of, mill around until Wilde eventually, a little louder than he probably should with Earhart on deck, goes, 'Well, this was fun!' and then heads back to his "office", in inverted commas! All the rest of the crew are kind of still at ready positions, but starting to look more and more at Zolf, like, do we do anything or...?

BEN/ZOLF

'Continue to stay sharp, we don't know what could happen. Sure, it didn't happen immediately, but that doesn't mean we should let it get the better of us. You've all done guard duty, right? You're guarding this ship from whatever might happen.'

ALEX

They all continue to stand in readiness. Does anyone have anything they want to do apart from stand in readiness?

BEN

Nope.

HELEN

Are the Kobolds still hanging off the ship?

ALEX

Nah, they're doing their jobs, but they're doing their jobs in a, sort of, casual way. Like, they're doing exactly what they need to, but they're not keen so much as, like, ohhh... looking over the side of it, having a bit of a wander, getting back to the point. I would say that, at the rate you are going, you think that, I mean all of you more or less have this gauged, you're not really going to be making it to the borealis or anything like that for, like, a few hours. It was on the horizon when all this started and you are moving towards it, but it's not imminent, let's put it that way. Unless anyone has anything they actively want to pursue, I'm probably going to accelerate time.

[Helen and Lydia both talking at once]

HELEN

I was just going to go and find Kiko. But also, what were you going to do, Lydia?

LYDIA/CEL

No, I was just going to say that once it gets to an hour or so, Cel would say to Zolf, like, 'I understand the need to guard the ship, but also sentient creatures have a limit of exhaustion and concentration, and maybe people should rest while we do shift guards, and be prepared to jump into action if necessary? Otherwise, they're just gonna, you know, break.'

BEN/ZOLF

‘If you need to take a break, take a break. You’re not sleeping. If you get tired, let me know and I can sort it out.’

ALEX

Good. Azu takes a break.

HELEN/AZU

Specifically, Azu goes over to Kiko and says, ‘Do you want to take a break together?’

ALEX (also as Kiko)

Kiko looks around, ‘Yeah, alright, let’s take a break.’

BRYN

Hamid smiles widely and then makes eye contact with Cel.

(Helen laughs)

LYDIA

Cel’s eyebrows are so high! Their grin is so wide!

BRYN

Hamid is, like, slow, cautious thumbs up towards Cel.

LYDIA

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Cel, triple thumbs up!

ALEX

Kiko sees all of this and is just, like, what? Okay!

BRYN

Hamid pretends he was doing something else very quickly.

HELEN

Azu did not see any of this because she is too nervous.

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘Why don’t we take a break not here?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yes, it would be silly to try and take a break where, you know, everything would be happening, so, maybe we could... you said something about below decks before, and I don’t know if you meant, like, just in the kitchen or maybe in your cabin or in my cabin, or, like, in the communal area?’

ALEX

Kiko takes Azu’s hand and leads her below decks.

[Someone makes a miaowing sound, prrrrowwwrrr!]

I’m going to follow this a little bit longer.

(Helen laughs)

Kiko leads Azu to the cargo bay, and then leads her to, not the cubby hole that Zolf has seen made, but a different cubby hole. The cubby hole has the following – some candles that definitely shouldn't be there, they're a fire risk.

(Helen laughs)

It has a couple of bed rolls and some pillows and stuff. It's not set up as a bed, it's set up a bit more like a couch, if I'm honest.

[Miaowing sound]

BRYN

Or the back of a van!

(Group laughter)

ALEX (also as Kiko)

It has a few, like, bottles of, basically, booze. Not great stuff, but, it's fine, it's not grog, and a few books, and so on. She immediately starts to tidy a bit going, 'Yeah, I wasn't expecting this' and there's a used pair of socks that are quickly shoved underneath the bed roll things.

(Helen roars with laughter)

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This is not a prepared snuggle corner, so much as a hidey-hole that you now get to partake in.

LYDIA

Oh, really? Because it sounds like someone's got, like, a den for where they take the peeps! Mmm mmm! Artfully strewn with supposed clothes that it's totally caszh!

ALEX

Oh, yeah, there's a pair of Dwarvish boxer shorts there, but pay no attention to that!

(Laughter)

HELEN

Are there really?

ALEX

No!

(Lydia laughs)

They're Elvish!

(Helen laughs)

No, no, you're fine. And, basically, Kiko just sits down and offers you a drink.

HELEN/AZU

'Oh, maybe we shouldn't drink because, um, we might suddenly need to not die, but um, this is nice, this little...'

ALEX (as Kiko)

'That's fine. I mean, I'll be honest, I'm going to drink because if we're going to die, I don't want to die sober!'

HELEN/AZU

'I can respect that!'

ALEX

She pours herself a glass and gives you a little waggle of...

BRYN

Can Azu still Cure Poison with a touch?

HELEN

Erm... yes! That's one of her mercies!

ALEX

Cure poison? 'Bing' Oh no, you're booze doesn't appear to be working, Cure Poison! 'Bing' Oh, now... This never normally happens!

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(Helen laughs)

BRYN

I'm just saying, if you're drunk you can just be, like, Cure Poison – sober!

(Helen laughs)

HELEN/AZU

'Okay.' Azu sits there and doesn't know what to do with any part of her whatsoever.'

ALEX

Kiko's very comfortable.

HELEN/AZU

And then she says, 'So, do you hang out here when you're off shift, and things?'

LYDIA [laughing]

Do you come here often?!

(Laughter)

ALEX (as Kiko)

'Er, mostly, yeah. As fun as sleeping in the hammocks are, it does get old and I feel like I might get brigged if I was to actually throttle Carter!

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh! I know! Ugh, one time I put my foot in his mouth to shut him up and it was one of the most... I was so glad that he wasn’t talking.’

ALEX (also as Kiko)

She looks at you and just goes, ‘Did it hurt? Him, I mean?’

HELEN/AZU

‘I mean, I didn’t intend to, but...’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘Yeah, but it did, though, didn’t it?!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Probably, I don’t... I have quite big feet!’

ALEX (also as Kiko)

She just kind of gives a big, ‘Yeah!’ You share a nice moment discussing how you hurt Carter.

HELEN/AZU [laughing]

Just mildly! ‘It’s a funny story, actually, we were in quarantine and it was all of us, and there were, we were... I was quite scared because we heard people in

the trapdoor and I was trying to see who was out there and it turned out to be the Kobolds, and that's how we became friends, and they became...'

ALEX (as Kiko)

'Okay, so you were quarantined? Take a few steps back here.'

HELEN/AZU

'Oh, yes.'

ALEX (as Kiko)

'Thank you. Here's what I know about you. Tall. Look good in armour...'

HELEN/AZU

'Oh, thank you!'

ALEX (as Kiko)

'I think stuff to do with Aphrodite, but we haven't really dived into that, that much, and not a fan of chewing tobacco, so why don't we start a little bit earlier and talk. Just talk.'

HELEN/AZU

'Oh. Okay. Erm, er...'

(Alex laughs)

'... Yes, I am a Paladin of Aphrodite – she's great.'

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘What’s a Paladin of Aphrodite doing going to Svalbard via the most dangerous route in the world?’

HELEN/AZU

‘To save... to save the world.’ Oh, infosec, what is infosec? Ohhh... !

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘So, let’s... what?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh! I mean! Um... nothing.’

(Group laughter)

BEN

Incredible! Incredible!

[Lydia is convulsed with laughter]

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Okay, I’m gonna stick with this rather than let it end!

HELEN [shrieks]

Oh, no, Alex!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Yep! You wanted this!

(Helen laughing hysterically)

BEN

This is so good, I'm not going to ever forget this.

BRYN

Yep, this is brilliant!

ALEX

So...

BEN

Helen, you're the cutest!

ALEX

... she moves a bit closer, but in an interested way, not in a making a move way.

HELEN

Aww...

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘So, so right. Paladin of Aphrodite?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yes.’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘Saving the world? Sort of mercenary pirate type, I’m guessing, given that you’re here?’ I mean, what do you do in your down time?

HELEN/AZU

‘This, I suppose. As in, I...’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘But, like, what is this? What is this? What are we, like... I know why I’m going to Svalbard, okay. I’m going to Svalbard because I am getting to sail with the captain of my adoptive father, and that’s a bid deal, you know? Like, you don’t get to do that often and I’d go anywhere to have that chance, you know?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh, who was your...’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘I owe her a lot and it’s good to be here to repay her.’

HELEN/AZU

‘That’s very touching. Who is your adoptive father?’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘I was actually adopted into an Amish family. Unfortunately, my adoptive mother died fairly young, so I ended up being raised by Elbert.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Elbert.’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘I stayed with my nan most of the time, and then Elbert would, you know, go and do tours with Earhart and then he’s come back and we’d have some time, because they’d make good money and we’d spend the time off together for a while and then he’d go away again. And then one day he didn’t come back but, you know, it goes with the job. How about you, though? Why are you here? I know why I’m here, but... you must know Earhart or something, right?’

HELEN/AZU

Azu’s thinks for a couple of seconds and then seems to remember something, and she’s, like, ‘Erm, so, I want to be High Priestess of Aphrodite one day, and...’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘Okay.’

HELEN/AZU

‘... to do that, you have to try and do lots and lots of really good things...’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘Like, what kind of good things?’

HELEN/AZU

‘You know, heal people and...’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘So you can heal people, things like that?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh yes. I mean, if you got too drunk, I could make you not drunk and also, if you got cut in half, I could... well, maybe not cut in half, but...’

ALEX (as Kiko)

‘Actually, I’ll tell you what, I’ve had this awful crick in my shoulder for ages, like, would you be able to help with that?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Oh, erm, sure. Erm, do you, erm... er...’

(Group laughter)

(Helen laughs)

Ben, your eyebrows!

ALEX

The benefit of a video call is that everyone can stare straight down the camera and talk exclusively with eyebrows!

(Helen laughs)

HELEN

Azu shifts across to where, because I’m assuming they’d be sitting opposite?

ALEX

Yes.

HELEN

So, she moves to sit...

ALEX

She did you the courtesy of, because it's a cubby hole with obviously only one way in and one way out, she made a point of being the first one in so that you could sit closer to the exit.

HELEN/AZU

That was very considerate. Okay, so Azu is, like, 'You can turn around and I'll have a look.'

ALEX (as Kiko)

'Oh, thanks. Yeah! It's just there...' And now I'm going to allow you a brief respite from punishing you with all of the things you wanted to happen!

(Helen laughs)

BEN

Helen: I really want to go on a date. Alex: Okay, we're on a date. Helen: Oh no!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

I need to know one thing, Helen.

HELEN

Yeah?

ALEX

Is Azu the kind of girl Ork that kisses on the first date?

HELEN

Yes, but a very little one.

ALEX

Understood.

LYDIA

Aww...

HELEN

A little... a nice little gentle kiss.

ALEX

In which case, then, I will skip to it goes well, it's pleasant. There are no complications, and I am not sure why I'm doing this, but nothing explodes!

HELEN

Hurray!

LYDIA

So it's not a successful date!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

What I will say, though, is that both Hamid and Cel notice pointedly Azu coming above decks with Kiko still below decks a little longer.

BRYN

Hamid definitely makes eye contact with Azu and just, like...

LYDIA/CEL

‘Hey, buddy!’

BRYN

... flickers his eyebrows.

HELEN/AZU

‘Hello. Hi.

BRYN/HAMID

‘How are you doing, Azu?!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘Yeah!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Uh, well, I had a kiss!’

BRYN

Hamid literally claps in a small, excited way!

LYDIA

Cel squeals! I'm not gonna do the squeal!

BEN

Helen, just one quick question. How, like, under your... like, how quiet was that? For potential of overhearing?

HELEN

Not that quiet – she wasn't whispering it! She just says it!

BEN

Fine. For potential overhearing purposes, I'm not part of this conversation, but just wanted to know!

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

And on that with a nice tonal jar, the ship lurches slightly upwards in elevation in order to avoid another towering corpse that is poking above the clouds.

BEN/ZOLF

'On the bright side, at least they're creating landmarks!'

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘It’s interesting, it seems that... I don’t really know much about animals, it looks like they were making a point of climbing to the top of actual mountains to die. I mean, that’s a... I dunno!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Behemoths’ gonna do what behemoths’ gonna do, right? I dunno!’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘Right, I’m going to ask the question that I don’t want to ask, which is, what do we think? Do we need to worry about the bigger fish or...?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘We’ve got to worry about whatever presents a danger to us. I don’t care what size it is. Like, these things are dead so, great, they’re not gonna...’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘Let me put it another way, Mr Smith, you have a bit more experience in terms of bodies and things, like, does this look like it’s a... do I have to worry about an enormous predator that could, like, make these things look like children sweeping down on us?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘I dunno! You’re the one who’s been to the Northern Wastes, I haven’t. Are things bigger than this? Do these things have predators? I dunno! But, one

thing, if it's big enough to take one of these out then we'll see it coming from a damn long way off so we'll be able to prepare for it!

ALEX (as Earhart)

'Yeah, that's fair.' For what it's worth, above the first cloud cover, it isn't, like, huge towering, it is comparatively clear so, year, you have a good point. Unless it came up from underneath, I suppose, but mountains... 'Fair. I'll be honest, please don't tell the crew I'm actually more concerned about the borealis than I am about the bodies.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Right. Is that what causes the... ?' and I'll gesture at Friedrich.

ALEX (as Earhart)

'Pretty much.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Right.'

ALEX (as Earhart)

'So an airship is what happens when you take three or more, or less, big angry elementals...'

BEN/ZOLF

'Yeah, I know. I put them there!'

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘... and then force them to basically have a never-ending argument, and then use that argument as propulsion, basically.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yup.’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘We all know that the way you keep that argument going, and you keep things ticking along is with magic, so what I’m concerned about is how this is going to interact with our systems, and I can’t get higher than the borealis.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Go round it?’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘It doesn’t really work like that, not on this kind of scale. We’d be talking a detour of, basically, not going via the Northern Wastes.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right.’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘Listen, I am warning you that...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘That sounds like the kind of thing you’d put to a vote. ‘Cos you’re right – that’s really bad and I’d rather not do that, but if we’re going to be flying through one of these things that can do what it did to Friedrich or worse, the crew needs a say. That’s a group decision.’

ALEX

Give me a Diplomacy Check, please.

BEN

[Rolls dice]

God, I’m so good at diplomacy! I’m not, but I rolled a 19, so it’s fine. 22!

(Laughter)

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘Okay, fair enough. If you assemble them, explain the situation to them – they’ll listen to you more than they’ll listen to me anyway!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right. Wait, no, hang on a minute. Why don’t you try explaining the situation – you’ve got to have some practise!’

ALEX (as Earhart)

She raises an eyebrow. 'Fine, Mr Smith. I didn't realise you enjoyed fielding people's complaints so much!'

BEN/ZOLF

'Okay. I'm fine to do that, but, well, you remember our conversation, okay? I can't have you just hiding away from this kind of stuff.'

ALEX (as Earhart)

'You set 'em up and I'll knock 'em down.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Right, and I'll put them back again.'

ALEX (as Earhart)

'And I'll knock 'em down again.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Yeah, and then I'll... anyway... Right. Alright everyone – gather up!' And I'll go around the ship and gather people up. This is not an, oh no bell situation...

ALEX

You ring the 'everything's okay' alarm!

BEN

Yeah, which is me walking around, shouting!

ALEX

Right. Everyone, I'm assuming gets assembled on deck. Kiko eventually comes up and gives a bit of a sly wink to Azu.

HELEN/AZU

Like, the least subtle, and I love it!

BEN

Ooh, yes – I've just remembered as well. While I'm walking away, when I go past Azu, I'll give her a – I mean, as high as I can get – pat on the arm and say, 'Nice one!' and then keep going.

HELEN/AZU

'I don't know what you mean!'

(Laughter)

BEN

I will not react to that, just, yeah. That's just a very fleeting... and I'm off.

HELEN

I mean, she says that half-jokingly. She's not trying to be, like, 'Oh, how dare!' she's just means, haha...

ALEX

And you know what, that seems like a natural break point to me. Why don't we take a break there and then we'll be back in a couple of minutes.

And welcome back. So...

ALEX (as Earhart)

'Okay, Mr Smith thinks it's a good idea we have a little chat-ette, so that's what we're doing. A little vote. How this works is pretty simple – I am not worried about the enormous dead bodies that are littering the landscape all around us. Most things that would be a problem to do with that can't fly. I would be very surprised if something that big can fly. As long as we stay high, I'm not too worried, not too concerned. What does concern me is that...' she points, and there's a briefly, particularly bright flurry – it's very beautiful – of the borealis above the cloud line ahead. It is, at this point, becoming clear that it pretty much is stretching the horizon, you know, the borealis isn't small. 'So here's the situation. That, as some of you know...' Friedrich looks positively concerned, '... is an indicator that we are going to be going through a high-magic zone. Wild magic will be a problem, and we are in a magically powered vessel. We can't go over it. We can't under it. We can either go through it or we take a detour, and when I say a detour, I mean we add a month or more to our journey, at least. I am not provisioned for that detour, but we can probably provision along the way, but Mr Smith, in his wisdom, thinks it's a good idea to open the floor for discussion of this fact. So...' she kind of gestures. No NPCs move or say anything.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Alright. Well, I’ll go first, then. Look, basically, I prefer to go through this thing because detouring puts us over airspace that could potentially be controlled by the enemy, and I would rather take my chances with something which is undirected and wild, than something that is extremely directed and we know is definitely, well, dangerous, if not deadly. But that’s me. Anyone else?’

HELEN/AZU

‘How much do we know about the aurora borealis stuff, like, is it a thing where it’s like a contact, or is it just random?’

BEN

I will just point at Friedrich.

ALEX (as Friedrich)

‘Uh oh, me? Right! Er, so it is a... ooh, it’s... first it’s quite tingly, and then it sort of depends so, for me, it was quite tingly, and then it was quite burny, then it was quite stretchy, and then... and then it was just tingly again. It’s... er... I don’t know.’

HELEN/AZU

‘But, were you outside or inside, or...?’

ALEX (as Friedrich)

‘Oh, well, we... I think it’s worse if you’re outside, so we took it in turns to steer the ship because you had to steer the ship from the top, not from the bottom, and then on my turn, the ship got easier to turn – let’s put it that way.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘So, my understanding of the theoretical principles behind it...’

[Rolls dice]

I just rolled 28 on an Arcana Check, Alex, but I’m going to vamp a bit, if that’s cool?

ALEX

That’s fine. And you’re at the frontiers of knowledge so I’m gonna take anything you say with a 50% accuracy rating, which is better than most!

BRYN/HAMID

‘You know, there’s magic in the world all the time, but there are places in the world where the level of magic is a lot higher and, you know, basically, the higher the level of magic, the more likely these wild magic effects are likely to happen. And the borealis is, essentially, it’s more an indication of the presence of the high levels of magic, but it doesn’t necessarily... it’s not the borealis itself which is causing the effect, it’s just one of the effects, and nothing is guaranteed. It’s not like if you go through an area where the borealis is active it’s instantly going to have an effect on you, it just means that, suddenly, your chances are much higher in that area and it’s... but it’s still not a clear barrier.

The places where the magic is much higher are indicated by the borealis, but it's not a barrier, or something.'

ALEX (as Friedrich)

'So what you're saying is there's always a chance that you could go all wonky and end up like big arms, but when you're in the borealis, you're more likely to go wonky and get big arms?'

BRYN/HAMID

'Yes, essentially.'

LYDIA/CEL

Cel puts their hand up and, because they're very tall that's very up! 'I just... I just wonder if the kind of material that was used to make the anti-magic cell that you kept us in for quarantine, would that protect...? Like, I would assume that that would provide some protective effect, so I just, I don't have a huge amount of that material with us – I think that there's some in the supplies because I thought it would come in handy, but not, like, an enormous amount...'

BRYN/HAMID

'But it's not just the material, it's an enchantment on the material that causes the anti-magical area.'

LYDIA/CEL

‘It’s just such a shame that I didn’t know there would be a borealis here because I would have constructed a safe room that people could wait in, you know...’

ALEX

You would know that the difficulty of obtaining that much would be a major limiting factor. Even with unlimited funds, it’s not a case of just, it would be expensive, like, you’d need to be sourcing it from a huge area.

LYDIA/CEL

‘Like, I mean, it’s just such a shame. We could have popped back to the inn and then, like, maybe installed basically the anti-magic thing in the safe room, and...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Not dealing with what ifs, but one thing that we do have right here is we got a cleric, we got a Paladin, we got an arcanist, and we got a transformation alchemist, right? That’s pretty good for a crew, so we are probably better prepared for this kind of effect than any other crew would be. I’m not saying it’s not gonna be a problem, I’m not saying we’re safe, but what I am saying is that, with us four, you’re in reasonably, sort of, good okay hands, I guess!’

LYDIA/CEL

‘With our powers combined!’

ALEX (also as Kiko)

Kiko pipes up at this point, 'Is using magic going to make it worse, or not a problem? Does that matter?'

BEN/ZOLF

'I meant dealing with the after-effects once we get through, assuming we survive.'

ALEX (also as Kiko)

'Oh, okay.'

LYDIA

Oh, no one else knows that Zolf can take a person apart and put them back together again!

ALEX (also as Kiko)

I mean, Kiko puts her hand up, 'Where she goes, I go,' pointing to Earhart.

BRYN

Does Hamid know if, and it's going to be a really important thing, especially given his experiences in Rome, does Hamid know what a wild magic zone will do to his ability or anyone's ability, in fact, to cast spells?

ALEX

At this stage, there's not much info to go on, your educated guess is that it is unlikely... the number of things that can affect your ability to cast spell is very limited, very, very limited. Rome is basically a huge outlier. It's unlikely that...

BRYN

Yeah, and Rome is not a wild magic zone. Rome is, like, a corrupted magic zone.

ALEX

Absolutely, they are very different.

BRYN

Okay, cool.

ALEX

What is more likely to be a thing is that your spells will work fine. It might be that it potentially increases the possibility of things going wrong with the wild magic, but at the same point it's like if there's a 75% chance of it going wrong, a 75.5% chance of it going wrong, who cares, you know? You kind of get the impression that the scales involved aren't really interacting with one another. The magic that you do is pulling at a strand of the weave, which makes up the magic of everything. What the borealis is, it's more like you have tapestry and it's waving in the wind, like...

BEN

... it's a magical storm.

ALEX

... yeah, they don't really interact in that way. You know, however, that there could be a thing where, you know, how a butterfly flaps its wings but that's the truth of just magic in general.

BRYN/HAMID

'So, at least in my experience, you know, which is not direct experience of wild magic, but I have been to a place where the magical background was corrupted, and that did affect spell-casting in a big way, but my understanding is that wild magic wouldn't really affect our ability to cast spells and any reaction to any of us casting spells or making potions, or calling upon other powers, as it were, would be very unlikely in the same way that, you know, any kind of activity is unlikely to have a reaction in the wild magic field. It's not impossible, but I think that we would still be able to, more or less, do all the same things we could normally do without too much of a problem.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Right. So, probably fine. Great! That's one in the good column. How do the Kobolds feel about this? I dunno how much of this they're getting?'

ALEX (also as Skraak and other *Kobolds*)

Skraak listens, takes a moment, has a muttered conversation. I mean, Cel, for your benefit, and Hamid, obviously as well, the conversation pretty much goes

along the way of Skraak points at the borealis going, 'That's gonna be really dangerous,' and they all went, *'Well, yeah, obviously! Are we going in it?'* 'Yeah, it looks like we're probably gonna be going in it.' *'Oh, right. Can we kill it?'* 'Don't think so.' *'Has anyone tried? You should ask!'* 'I'm not gonna ask!' *'You should ask! Ask if you can kill it. How would you kill it?'* 'I don't know you'd kill it.' *'Why don't you ask how you'd kill it?'* 'Fine! I'll ask how you kill it!' Skraak turns around, 'Can we kill it?'

BEN/ZOLF

'Probably not.'

LYDIA/CEL

'I think it's more like a cloud, Skraak.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Or a storm. It's sort of a semi-natural phenomena. It's not the kind of thing you can kill, really.'

ALEX (also as Skraak)

'Can we just make a lightning rod if it's a storm?'

LYDIA

Okay, with a roll of 34 on Knowledge Arcana, can we make a lightning rod?

(Helen chuckles)

ALEX

Yes!

[Lydia whoops]

With a couple of caveats. One, is what you reckon you can do is, one of the principles of a lightning rod is relying on, like...

LYDIA

... grounding...

ALEX

... yeah, grounding...

LYDIA

... where on earth do you ground it when it's a ship?

ALEX

... it's still the same principle, however, you reckon you could probably employ some semblance of the Faraday idea where it's, like, you reckon you might be able to rig this thing to protect people who are below decks, but you also know fundamentally, unless you can ground the ship, rebuild the ship and then take off again, one person's gonna need to be above decks, because it just needs someone to see where you're going. Steer the thing. Check rigging, things like that. It stops being an airship and starts being an air submarine otherwise.

LYDIA

No, no, no, I get that. So basically, it is possible to make a Faraday cage, but not one that encompasses, say, the rigging...

ALEX

No.

LYDIA

... because the obvious thing would be if you could magic the strings somehow, you could make a Faraday cage around the whole place.

ALEX

Probably not. You reckon you might be able to protect a room. However, it's also on the caveat that you cannot guarantee that nothing will happen, but you might be able to reduce it from, like, everyone's head explodes to everyone gets a migraine!

LYDIA/CEL

That's amazing. So basically, when I was saying can you make a safe room, the answer, it turns out, is yes. So we... well... Cel says with a, 'Ahhhhh, I've been thinking since he said that, and I think yes, but not for the whole ship.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Can you do it before we get there?'

LYDIA

Shall I roll again? Can I do it before?

ALEX

You can do it before you get there at current pace, but it is coming with a complication. The anti-magic thing would have just been, you're safe in this room. What you're sort of doing here is you're making this chunk of space that you're protecting sort of someone else's problem, by which I mean it's like, cool, I've reduced the probability of something going wrong in this space, it's gonna want to balance itself out somewhere else.

BRYN/HAMID

'So you're not cancelling the magic this time, you're more, sort of, channelling it...'

LYDIA/CEL

'Yeah!'

BRYN/HAMID

'... so drawing it away from some areas and sending it towards others?'

LYDIA/CEL

'Yeah. And then I would... I'm gonna make a dangly thing so that the magic basically shoots out the bottom, hopefully not in too much of a propulsion type way because that would upset the...'

BRYN/HAMID

Rusty Quill Gaming – [166] – [Smooth Sailing]

‘You’d almost want to channel it into spell-casting ability, and that’s how you’re going to release the magical effect, wouldn't you say?’

LYDIA/CEL

‘I mean, I suppose! I wonder if I could connect it up to the elementals...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Hey, right... sorry, just... just quickly, before we start speaking about theoreticals – this sounds great. Earhart, do you mind?’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘Go for it.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right. It sounds like we’ve got a lot of information. It looks like we might be able to do something. We should probably slow the ship down to give you lot more time to, you know, prep, but if we can reduce the effect of it and we reckon our spell-casting ability ain’t gonna be massively affected, I think at this point, unless anyone has anything cogent to this particular decision, before we start prepping for it, we should go to a vote. Agreed?’

HELEN/AZU and LYDIA/CEL

Yes. Sure, yep.

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right, fly through that thing saving ourselves time, aye...’ and I’ll raise my hand.

HELEN/AZU

‘Aye.’

ALEX

The aye’s sort of have it, however, all of the Kobolds just look to Hamid and wait for his call.

HELEN

Aww...

BRYN

Hamid will glance at Skraak for a second and then, sort of, with a half-shrug, vote.

ALEX

Skraak’s just like, meh!

BRYN

Given he heard the Kobold’s conversation earlier, as well, he feels okay.

ALEX

In which case, the ayes have it. Your nays are Sigith, Friedrich, Earhart...

BEN

Oh wow!

ALEX

... and Barnes abstains.

LYDIA/CEL

‘Wait, the Captain? Captain Earhart? What would you prefer that we do?’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘I might have just realised something. A detour might take us near a place I wouldn't mind eventually ending up.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right, great. But we put it to a vote so that sounds like we’re going that place. So, shall we just... Right, let’s just get on with and start prepping, right? I recommend, Earhart, that we start to slow this ship down and then Hamid and Cel and the Kobolds can probably get started building on an anti-magic room and we’re all good to go, right? Captain?’

ALEX (as Earhart)

‘Sure, Mr Smith. Cel, please make sure it’s in the bow of the ship, I don’t want to have to move engines – that would be a bad call.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right. And also, at this point, one person... you’re saying somebody has to stay up here and drive the thing – I am obviously volunteering for that. I’ve got the most experience and I’m probably the most resistant to magical effects, unless anybody really objects, I feel like that conversation is done.’

ALEX (also as Wilde)

‘Mr Smith?’ Wilde puts his hand up, ‘I’d like a word regarding that fact...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Right.’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘... but we can do that later.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Okay.’

LYDIA

It’s so frustrating that Cel doesn’t know about his anti-magic legs because that... grrr! The whole time, I’ve been, like, Wilde should be on deck, Wilde should be on deck, Wilde should be on deck, Wilde should sacrifice himself! Wilde should be on deck!

(Laughter)

It's tragic!

ALEX (also as Earhart)

In which case, Earhart's, like, 'Right, you've all got your jobs. Off you go, I guess!' Wilde heads over.

BEN/ZOLF

'Yeah, cool. I'll step aside with Wilde. What?'

ALEX (as Wilde)

'It makes little sense for someone who is likely to be comparatively immune to what's going on not to be the person up top.'

BEN/ZOLF

'You can't drive the ship. You don't know what you're doing!'

ALEX (as Wilde)

'Here are the options as I see them. I'm just trying to make a... option number one, I wear the anklets, I fly the ship. The likelihood of something happening to me is low. Can you teach me to fly a ship in the time we have? Option number two, you take the anklets, you fly the ship, and we hope that the wild magic interferes with the nonsense. Last option, which I think is a terrible idea, is that someone else flies the ship wearing the anklets.'

BEN/ZOLF

‘Alright. Here are my thoughts on that. Number one, I could probably teach you to navigate in calm weather when you’re not in the Northern Wastes fighting against a magical storm, so you’re probably absolutely fine if you just needed to hold on to the wheel – if anything goes wrong you’ll probably kill us all. Number two, you take those anklets off, they could find us, we all die. Number three, I do it. I think I’m pretty safe and only I die if it all goes wrong.’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Then I guess I’m your second. You should probably teach me anyway.’

BEN/ZOLF

[Sighs]

‘Fine. But we need you alive, alright? None of this... we’re not playing silly buggers, alright?’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘I’m not trying to die, I’m trying to live, Zolf.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Good. I’m telling you how to live best. Anyway, right, I’ll teach you.’

(Helen laughs)

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Yes, Zolf, teach me how to live my best life!’

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Miaaoooooowwww!

BEN

Do as I say, not as I do!

ALEX

Yeah, a little bit. Can I get a Knowledge Engineering and a Knowledge Arcana. I’ll allow assistance on the Knowledge Arcana, but I need to know who’s taking the lead.

BRYN

Cel will be taking the lead on both of these.

LYDIA

My Engineering is 12 and Arcana is 17. Is that...?

BRYN

Potentially, Skraak can assist with Engineering and Hamid can assist with Arcana?

ALEX

Yeah, I'd like that. Can you roll for Skraak, please, Bryn.

BRYN

Yep.

[Rolls dice]

LYDIA

Oh nooooo! So, I rolled a two, which means that we've got 19.

BRYN

[Rolls dice]

Ha, Skraak rolled a three, which means he only gets ten to assist.

ALEX

So you get no assistance. Was that rolling for Engineering or Arcana?

LYDIA

That was Arcana.

ALEX

Okay.

Rusty Quill Gaming – [166] – [Smooth Sailing]

BRYN

Oh, sorry, that was me rolling Skraak's Engineering...

ALEX

Yeah, you need to... we'll keep the Skraak Engineering roll. Can you roll a separate one for Hamid to aid.

BRYN

Yeah.

[Rolls dice]

On the Arcana, a natural one!

LYDIA

Oh my word, we gonna die!

ALEX

And on the Engineering? Can I get an Engineering roll please?

LYDIA

Oh, we're gonna die so hard...

HELEN

Oh no...

[Sound of dice being rolled]

LYDIA

I've got 15 on the Engineering. That is literally, in both cases, almost as low as Cel can possibly...

ALEX

I'm very happy, I'm very happy!

LYDIA

... I rolled a two and a three.

BEN

Oof.

BRYN

I rolled a three and a one so... good teamwork there.

HELEN

Oh my god.

LYDIA

We are actu... like, we would probably be better if just about anyone else rolled.

ALEX

Yeah!

BRYN

So Skraak failed to assist on the Knowledge Engineering, and Hamid actively hampered your efforts on Knowledge Arcana!

ALEX

Cel, you've done the best you can.

LYDIA

Yep. Mmm hmm.

ALEX

You have neither the time nor the materials, and even if you had the time you still wouldn't have the materials. You have a conundrum in front of you which is that Hamid thinks that you've managed it. Skraak also thinks that, as a group, you've managed it. The only person who knows that it's a bit sketchy is you. It *might* still work, but this isn't a dead cert. anymore, this is a 'might be fine'.

LYDIA [singing]

'Everyone's gonna die and it's gonna be their fault, and they're gonna be traumatised forever', is what they're thinking!

ALEX

Ah, but what are they saying, this is important?! The crew have been helping as much as they can and are looking at you expectantly to know what's happening.

LYDIA/CEL

Uh, oh this is actually... this is, like, bad for Cel. Cel freezes and says, 'It's not a perfect solution, right, but we all knew it was gonna be...'

ALEX (as Friedrich)

'It's gonna work, so, like, if we go in it will work. That's the important thing, right?'

LYDIA/CEL

'What it is, is it's better than if we'd done nothing, right? I don't want anyone to go in thinking this is definitely gonna be okay, but it's gonna take a bit of the edge of the risk off, right?'

ALEX (as Friedrich)

'Ohh, this is what people said last time. I've heard this before. It is gonna work, isn't it? Isn't it, Cel? It's gonna work, I mean, obviously it's gonna work 'cos... 'cos you're really smart. You're *really* smart, Cel, so it'll definitely work.'

ALEX (as Kiko)

Kiko's like, 'Er, look. Does it really matter at this point? It's either going to work or we all die.'

HELEN

Oh no!!

BRYN/HAMID

‘What was the location Earhart wanted to visit? Let me just check that these maps...’

ALEX

Give me a Sense Motive.

BRYN

[Rolls dice]

Ten.

ALEX

And didn't I give you a profession of Navigator?

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

Can you give me a Navigator check as well.

BRYN

[Rolls dice]

Also ten.

ALEX

Because of the route that you're taking, you're looking at a lot, lot, lot more west without much more north, so effectively you'll be dog-legging around the Northern Asian part of it. So, as a result, you're going to end up coming a lot closer to occupied land. You basically think that Earhart's wanting to aim due dragon.

BRYN/HAMID

'I mean, if the dragon's still in Paris, there is no route that goes anywhere near Svalbard that takes us anywhere near Paris. Like, there just...'

ALEX

True.

BRYN/HAMID

'We'd have to go far too far south and far too far west.'

ALEX

True.

BRYN/HAMID

'Okay.'

BEN/ZOLF

‘I mean, one would assume that a [0:40:16] is not sticking in Paris...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘No, that’s true...’

BEN/ZOLF

‘... around being a massive, horrendous weapon.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah, yeah.’

ALEX

Basically, the only thing that would make sense is that Earhart wants to head towards enemy territory...

BEN and BRYN

Yeah...

Okay...

ALEX

... and that that is a lot closer to enemy territory. That’s the answer that I can give you. There are other factors that you don’t know...

BRYN

Yes. Yeah, yeah.

ALEX

... the best...

BEN/ZOLF

‘It might be that she’s heading back to the place they were first attacked?’

HELEN

Ooohhhh...

BEN/ZOLF

‘We don’t know where that it, only Earhart knows where that is.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah.’

LYDIA/CEL

‘If we’re back to, like, look... it’s as good a job as we could do. I’ve done the best that we can, but I don’t...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘... and the only alternative is travelling over areas which we know are directly hostile. We still don’t know, as Zolf said, this area is random and dangerous, but it’s not technically, actively hostile to us. You know, both choices are terrible, but it still feels like the best one.’

ALEX (also as Skraak and *Sassraa*)

There is a minor argument between Skraak and one of the Kobolds, specifically Sassraa. It's very rapid and hurried, and hushed in a way that you really can't make out what is happening, but it is an active argument until, eventually, you hear in Draconic Skraak saying, 'Hmm, go. You say it, then. Fine, fine.' At which point, Sassraa, in very broken English, super-broken English, basically says, *'This or you'd all try and do better. Otherwise, shut up!'*

HELEN [laughing]

'Good for them!'

ALEX (also as Sassraa)

'This. You do better or shut up!' Everyone's, like, 'Oh... hmm...'

LYDIA/CEL

'I have no idea what they mean, but...'

BRYN/HAMID

'They're supporting you, Cel. They're saying that if no one else can offer a better alternative then we go with what you've got.'

ALEX

Sassraa goes over and grabs Cel's hand.

LYDIA

Rusty Quill Gaming – [166] – [Smooth Sailing]

Yeah. Cel is very frozen by all of this.

ALEX

Sassraa tries to lead Cel into the safe room...

LYDIA

Yep.

ALEX

... heads in, do you get led in?

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ALEX (also as Sassraa and others)

Turns around, gives a rude gesture to everyone who's not inside...

(Helen laughs)

... closes the door and then, in more broken English, goes, 'You want inside or outside?' Everyone, kind of, gives a look. '*Yeah, it's a fair point, alright, yeah*' and they all start heading inside.

LYDIA

Cel gives Sassraa the fang.

ALEX

Oh, Sassraa... give me a Sense Motive because I'm going to assume that it's gone... it has not gone beneath your notice, you're just always distracted.

LYDIA

Sure.

[Rolls dice]

Sense Motive. Oh, of course, because I've got incredibly high Sense Motive because of that feat... oh, wait, they don't. They don't because Sense Motive is wisdom, not diplomacy! So they got six.

ALEX

Six?

LYDIA

Yep.

HELEN

Awww...

ALEX

Azu, are you there?

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

I'll give you a Sense Motive as well.

(Lydia laughs)

HELEN

Sure. Ah! That is 30!

ALEX

Yeah. Sassraa looks at Cel with something approaching adoration, and Cel has not clocked this.

BRYN

Aaahhh...

ALEX

Sassraa looks at Cel, to be specific, with far more respect and reverence and so on than they look at Hamid, to be specific as well.

LYDIA

What kind of adoration are we looking at here? Like, no, wait, Cel wouldn't know.

HELEN

I'm assuming, like, teacher/student?

ALEX

You've got the Sense Motive, yeah.

LYDIA

Oh, that's cool. Useful!

HELEN

Okay.

LYDIA

Useful to know.

ALEX

Sassraa wants to be Cel. Sassraa does not want to be with Cel.

HELEN

And you know what, Azu can empathise with looking up to a mentor, so...

LYDIA

Yes! A mentor that then does not understand!

HELEN/AZU

So, Azu's going to go over to Cel and put her hand on their back and say, 'We trust you.'

LYDIA

Oh no, you couldn't... you thought... you couldn't have made it worse!

(Laughter)

Helen, oh my word. That is like...

HELEN

I know, but that is what Azu would say!

LYDIA/CEL

Yeah, that's absolutely right, it's just, like... I honestly think it's the sort of thing you would need a Sense Motive for because they will be trying to hide it so much, but, like, Cel swallows something, basically, and is just, like... something comes over in their eyes and it's like, 'Yeah, you know, it's like... er... it's gonna be fine.'

ALEX

I am going to, therefore, push ahead, too. Stuff is as prepared as it's going to get and I am not going to bother getting a roll from you as to how well you teach Wilde – I am just going to do a roll to see how well Wilde learns, and I am aware that he is your back up, not actually your leader, yep?

BEN

Yeah, fine.

ALEX

[Rolls dice]

Okay, fine. With that in mind, does anyone have anything further they want to do as you draw nearer and nearer to the borealis?

HELEN

So the situation is that we're all gonna be in this little room?

ALEX

To be clear, it is a modification of the living quarters which are closer to the bow. There is enough space for people, although it feels more crowded than it has previously because the Kobolds are actually in there for a change.

HELEN

Mmm.

BEN/ZOLF

Actually, there is one last thing before we all take our positions as it is – erm, I'm gonna pop my head into that room, which I assume everyone's in, give Earhart a look, because she's not captaining, and be, like, 'Right, so I'll see you

Rusty Quill Gaming – [166] – [Smooth Sailing]

all on the other side. Good luck. It's gonna be okay. We'll get through this, right?'

HELEN/AZU

'Good luck, Zolf.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Thank you.'

ALEX (also as Earhart)

'Zolf?' This is Earhart.

BEN/ZOLF

'Yeah?'

ALEX (as Earhart)

'It's only worth you being alone on deck as long as we're amongst the borealis. Don't pull anything stupid and try and stay up there and do the entire rest of the journey on your own.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Well, I think you'd probably notice, wouldn't you?!'

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Rusty Quill Gaming – [166] – [Smooth Sailing]

Yeah, it'll be, like, this has taken six months longer than the half hour we expected! I mean, it's within the margin of error, but... !

(Helen laughs)

BRYN/HAMID

So, Hamid would like to cast a spell on Zolf, if he'll let him. He'll probably just take him aside and say, 'Erm, I've got a spell that might help.'

BEN/ZOLF

'What is it?'

BRYN/HAMID

'Heroism.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Right, I mean, it sounds helpful!'

BRYN/HAMID

'Well, if that's okay?' and he casts it on you. I haven't worked out how Hamid casts this spell yet, but the effect...

ALEX

He pulls out, maybe, a six to ten-foot Helms Hammer Deep Horn and just blows it in his face, how about that?!

(Group laughter)

BRYN

The effect of the spell is that for 90 minutes you get plus two to all attacks, all saves and all skills.

HELEN

Nice.

LYDIA

Goodness me!

BEN

Grand!

BRYN

I feel like, you know, it's almost like knighting someone...

(Laughter)

HELEN

Ahhh...

BRYN

... but the casting time is not, you know, excessive or anything. It's just, like, a quick kind of, say some words, hand on one shoulder, say some words, hand

Rusty Quill Gaming – [166] – [Smooth Sailing]

on the other shoulder, and then pushes his forehead and, kind of, asks you to touch forehead to forehead, which is a bit awkward, but...

BEN

We're not too dissimilar in heights.

ALEX

Verbal components, who's a chonky boy? You're a chonky boy!

(Group laughter)

Yes you are!

BEN

I'm a big boy-man!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Oh no, Zolf is also big boy-man!

ALEX

In which case, then, I'm assuming Zolf takes the helm?

BEN

Yes.

ALEX

Okay. With the safe room ready... I mean, it could be safe!

LYDIA/CEL

Cel has completely changed attitude and is, like, tinkering with some things and is just, like, 'It's... you know what, I just wanted to make sure that you were all aware that there's, you know, there's always some element of risk, but really it's, you know, it's gonna be fine.' And they're super cheery!

BEN

Even if it's not a safe room, it's definitely a safer room.

ALEX [through gritted teeth]

Is it?

(Group laughter)

BEN

Well, as you said, it's not actively harmful, right? Probably?

ALEX

And on that cheery, cheery note, with Zolf stood astride a helm again, because he has to apparently sail every vessel alone into danger...

(Laughter)

BEN

The comparisons were not lost on me!

ALEX

Do you want to give us your song as you sail on, or shall we leave without that?
Is it too early for the song?

BEN

It is too early for the song and it is too late in the day.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

In that case, then, we will fade out as you sail into the borealis and
everything's probably gonna be fine for 18 characters!

HELEN

Ohh, noooooooo...

LYDIA

We gave him too much power!

BEN

You guys are gonna have so much fun in there! People are gonna start
growing, like, octopus faces and you'll be, like, oh no, what do we do?!

(Laughter)

It'll be brilliant!

ALEX

And Zolf'll just be gone!

HELEN

Yep.

LYDIA [shrieking]

NOOOOOO...

BEN

Yeah, maybe!

BRYN

Just a couple of smoking legs!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

No, no, no – worse! There's three smoking legs!

(Laughter)

BEN

There's some smoking legs, but they're made of flesh!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Terrible. Awful.

BRYN

Oh god!

ALEX

Well, I think I've set the tone sufficiently well, in which case, then, we'll see you all next week!

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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