

RQG – 187 – It Tolls for Tree

Content Warnings

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 187 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?

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BEN

Zolf Smith

BRYN

Hamid Sala Harun Al Saham

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom

HELEN

And Azu.

ALEX

Now we're all agreed. Now I want no more of this talking nonsense.

LYDIA

Never.

ALEX

No more of this questions or character development nonsense.

LYDIA

Absolutely not.

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ALEX

None of that guffle. That's all, that's right, ok.

LYDIA

Numbers!

ALEX

Numbers, dice, rules, pain, sadness, death. Yep? Cool.

HELEN

I did not sign up for this but ok.

(Group Laughter)

ALEX

But it is where you find yourself.

LYDIA

The message was delivered as morse codes stabs to the head.

HELEN

Ahhhh!

LYDIA

Just pain and numbers.

ALEX

So, as a little recap for anyone in case, yeah, you're forgetting, we are in the centre of the garden of Yerlick, we are in the centre of the blight in the centre of the garden of Yerlick by the buds in the centre of the blight in the centre of the garden of Yerlick and bad things are coming for you, specifically presumably bad trees are comin' for yer.

HELEN

You said these trees were blue not blighted.

ALEX

Now, this is where there'll be info, let it come.

HELEN

Ok, ok.

ALEX

For now I am also going to reveal to the audience a horrendous unforgiveable lapse which is I may have organised the initiative prior to starting because otherwise our poor editors just sit and listen to me maths and I'm not quick. Or put like I think players can confirm it's not good listening. You haven't missed anything apart from a clatter of a couple of dice.

HELEN

Him putting the initiative together gave me enough time to make tea and it go cold.

(Group Laughter)

ALEX

So, what I am going to do is at the end of last episode two things happened simultaneously. Basically Hamid yelled wait thus affording me the opportunity to be horrendous but to my eyes Zolf was already going ahead and there was a simultaneously act poking his head in. Ben, technically you get to make the call. I'm fine with it being either too late as Zolf's head's already in there or in time for Zolf to stop. I'll let you make the call.

BRYN

Oh no, in character Zolf ignores Hamid.

ALEX

Fabulous.

LYDIA

I really love the phrases, too late, Zolf's head is already in there. He's got ear pods in, can't see.

(Group Laughter)

ALEX

Well magic, your head converted to a balloon and floats away. No, so what I would say is I'm going to give you a little bit more info and let you make the call prior to me triggering initiative, ok. It isn't a case of like there's an overlap of an inch and if you just poke your head round it's ooh, hello. You will sort of have to step in to a degree. You can't get just your head in round a petal enough to see anything but you could step bodily in and then be able to do so.

BEN

Yeah, to be clear I'm not like walking through any portal I see, it's just as long as it looks like a big flower and I can get some information by looking into it then I will do so.

ALEX

Ok, then what I'll do is I'll follow you and then I'll trigger initiative because yeah, no spoilers there. You all know it's coming. So, stepping inside you take a couple of steps which is just enough to get past the overlap to then sort of poke your head around and then have a look in. Could you please give me first a perception check?

BEN

Twenty one.

ALEX

Could you then please give me a will save.

BEN

What kind of effect?

ALEX

This one again because I know what you've got, you're not going to be able to modify against.

BEN

Oooh, oooh 18.

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ALEX

Eighteen, ok.

BEN

We're on the three. That's not good.

ALEX

Could you also give me a reflex save?

BEN

Eighteen.

ALEX

Ok, and last but not least a thought save.

BEN

Oh, just all of them, ok, cool.

ALEX

Uh hmmm.

BEN

Oh, Jesus! Fourteen.

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ALEX

Rather two.

BRYN

Oh, you're in my corner now Ben.

ALEX

Thanks D-20 systems.

BRYN

Ben, look at all my hit points. Meredith, you're in maaaay town.

HELEN

Oh No. For the audience, Alex just like moved his shoulders as if he's limbering up to step into the boxing ring.

BEN

I've got 92 hit points - bring it on.

BRYN

The trick I have found with you Ben, is not to threaten you with mere hit point damage, there's more interesting ways to deal with you as a character now.

(Single person's chuckle}

HELEN

Oh no!

LYDIA

More grief, even more grief, Arrrgh!

ALEX

I am going to give you the perception check first. Congratulations on the first player in this campaign to trigger a full 2001 Space Odyssey, p-choooo, p-choooo-wah-wah. As you peer around the petal you expect to see the interiors of a plant, maybe a room, who knows, maybe a portal. What you see is time and space, stretching out for aeons ahead of you.

BEN

Uh huh.

ALEX

Genuinely you see Galaxies forming exploding and dying and on top of all of this you also get the distinct sense, you know you had that feeling that it was very pressed upon you as like the crowd of people as you were getting there?

BEN

Uh hmmm.

ALEX

Utterly overwhelming sense of just sheer density of people, just utterly, utterly overwhelming. It's like you were in a crowd that's somehow above and beneath you. It's a crushing feeling but this is all in a glimpse. You have enough experience to know this is your brain telling, this is me ripping off Terry Pratchett. This is your brain telling you stories about what you're seeing because it can't make sense of it, so in terms of the perception it is, you see the infinite and the infinite looks back.

(Single person's chuckle)

HELEN

Ohhhh dear!

BEN

Cool, cool, cool, cool!

ALEX

In terms of the will save...

BEN

Mmh hmm.

ALEX

You don't have any secondary effect but you are at your utter limit before just being properly swept away with this.

BEN

Oh no!

ALEX

In terms of the reflex save there feels like there is a physical draw towards you, an actual suction in towards the centre of this plant. Again, you just at the very, very sort of tip of your abilities manage to not get sucked in or whatever.

BEN

So that means I failed the fourth save then?

ALEX

It does indeed because it was DC15's across the board.

(Chuckle)

LYDIA

Ahhhhh.

BRYN

Well, you rolled 18's. It sounded to me like it was DC18's across the board.

ALEX

I may or may not be actually be with Bryn on this one and the DC18 is, you hitting two 18's in a row is a little bit ooh, you, pardon my language, feel free to bleep it, ooh, you little shit (bleep).

(Group laughter)

ALEX

So, in terms of the fort save you are now nauseated.

BEN

Oh right, ok, that's...

ALEX

Nauseated as you can only move a single move action per turn.

BEN

Fine, so can't be touched doesn't work. Yes, ok, fine.

ALEX

What I will say as well is for the sake of I have a bunch of maths coming up so I'm going to tell you this figure, normally I would keep it hidden. Assuming that you move away from the source that you are being nauseated from which should be pretty obvious to you, it will wear off within three rounds.

BEN

Ok, and the only thing I can do is move?

ADAM

You can take a single move action per turn.

BEN

So I can't use spell-like abilities?

ADAM

Depends on what the spell-like ability is.

BEN

You touch, oh, it's a stand up action so probably not.

ADAM

Dadnam, cool. However I know that there are party members who can help you with your current predicament. So, with that in mind I am now triggering initiative. I'm going to give a brief little description of what is triggering the initiative and then we'll go through the round. So in terms of the initiative, Hamid turned round going "what's that?" And yeah, there's movement amongst the trees and it's the trees themselves that are moving specifically the first thing that you notice though is that there is one tree significantly larger than the rest that suddenly alights as if from within with a bright blue glow. It is an electric blue. It is an almost fluorescent blue and as you look a crackle of lightening shoots from the trunk out to the tips of its branches and back. You see at this stage re other trees distributed around the clearing also start to move and by move think more animate. I don't mean charge, I mean where once they were still they are now moving and clearly actually like penti. Let's

leave it at that. That's all you're really going to be able to do unless you take a bunch of time for a perception check. However you are [sounds a tune] way out ahead in terms of initiative.

BEN

Can I get a reminder of what Summit and Neil said previously, like...?

ADAM

I'm going to over summarise. These trees are well within, there is a decent distance from the edge of the [unclear 08:32] where you are now because the clearing, there was a walk between the edge of the [unclear 08:37] and the wall and Summit and Summit and Neil was just like, you know, go slap happy. There's nothing here to worry about.

BEN

Sure, ok, so yeah, don't need to worry too much about like oh no, I killed nice trees. You said they were literally crackling with lightning?

ADAM

One of them was, the big one was.

BEN

Ok. Do you go offensive or defensive?

ADAM

These sound like mere player questions. I'm above such petty concerns Bryn.

BRYN

I can't resist anything on myself.

ALEX

Makes sense.

BRYN

Because I do not have loads of clip comments.

BEN

Which energy?

BRYN

Electricity.

BEN

Fire! Fire! Say fire, fire!

ALEX

Ben, between you and me I'm not vindictive but if I had to pick a player to start nauseated it would have to be Zolf Lightning Boy Smith. Have you been hit by like seven solid bolts of natural lightening by this point I think?

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BEN

No, it's like , there was two I think.

ALEX

I think it might have been more. I'll have to double check the old recording.

LYDIA

Oh, I can remember it being three.

HELEN

Hello, but Ben looks so offended at the idea of being called Lightening Boy given it was only two strikes of lightening. Like honestly. It's just two lightening strikes. That's something that happens all the time.

BRYN

There was only one store.

HELEN

Everyone knows lightning strikes multiple times and it's very common.

(Laughter)

BRYN

Also given that other people may not be ready yet I would like to place myself at the front of the group of Tender MPCs.

ALEX

Don't you worry mate, you are.

BRYN

Ok, I'm not super happy about that either but I still think it's the best choice.

ALEX

You are the spearhead of the vanguard. Next up is Wild who smashed his initiative role immediately while take stock of the situation starts humming under his breach and gesticulating wildly then casts his hand out and a mechanically huge fire elemental appears between you and the lightning tree ants things specifically.

BRYN

Cool.

ALEX

It is big, it is fiery and it is terrifying. You can basically almost feel the heat from it. It is to all intents and purposes a game. I'm going to give you this for free. You know it's wilds illusion thing. It's a good one. Like it's up there. It's a very good illusion and you can see the reaction of whatever the tree thing is has bought it. Like hook, line and sinker has bought that as an illusion. It's very obvious 'cos it sort of goes err, errrrrrrr. Redirect its face.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Hot, dangerous.

BEN

Hot!

ALEX

At that stage then Wild pulls close to you so that you're sort of shoulder to shoulder.

BRYN

Well, I mean, five different...

ALEX

Laterally on the lateral plain you are shot, from the top down map you are shoulder to shoulder and I won't hear anything else, at which point Cel, you are up.

LYDIA

Right, so firstly I should say I got it wrong. This small mutagen does not last two hours, it lasts 90 minutes but I could say that that, you said we were on the edge and so all that's happened so far as they've smelled pollution and I think we would have got Big Ben anyway so they land heavily on the ground.

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ALEX

Could you please give me a fly check?

LYDIA

Yoop!

ALEX

I'm going to assume that you have been lowering yourself down rather than plummeting. This is just to see how successful you are in that.

LYDIA

Cel's aware of these things, their controlled landing was somewhat confused by this new information, 16.

ALEX

Ok, yeah, you can land.

LYDIA

Ok. Yoo!

ALEX

Dammit.

LYDIA

So that means still now not loads of hit points, only small to medium hit points, not loads. How far away are the trees?

ALEX

Sixty feet from you.

LYDIA

Sixty feet.

ALEX

For the avoidance of doubt and for listeners benefit Azu and Zolf are 30 feet away from the rest of the group and the group are 60 feet away from the nearest sort of lightening tree meaning that there are, if you do your maths, 90 feet between say Zolf and the nearest lightening tree but bear in mind that all the trees aren't bunched together, they are dotted around so they come at it from different directions.

ALEX

Yeah, they are all coming at you from different directions but they are all still 60 feet away from the thing and one isn't coming through the big plan like obviously so as a result yeah, it all kind of comes out in the wash.

LYDIA

Irritating that they are lightening creatures given that I think all of the things that I have that could get 60 feet like the crossbow does electric damage which I'm going to guess.

ALEX

Oh, it does, doesn't it! Doooooh!

LYDIA

I mean you wouldn't design the thing around that because it is only 1D6 of lightening damage so not really that big.

ALEX

I never said I wasn't petty. I never said those words.

(Single laughter)

LYDIA

Cel's just going to cast shields on themselves.

ALEX

I think that's a very good idea.

LYDIA

Yep.

ALEX

Fabulous. In that case then, you've used your movement obviously to land and then you can shield. That's fine, in which case then Zolf, you are up. You are to be clear; I'm going to do complete information which is although you've been exposed to stuff you know that there is stuff going on outside. Like you just know it, you just do.

BRYN

Sure. Well I'll back out of the flower.

ALEX

You immediately feel that suction disappears, that pressure reduces and although you are still nauseated you very clearly feel that that is a residual effect, it is not perpetuated.

BRYN

Yeah, that's bad, I feel quite ill because of time and space. Anyway, stuff and I'll kind of hop down and then do like a 'haaaaaw-awww.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

For listeners benefit that is the hands on the knees, he's fine; "yes, I'm fine, I'm just really interested in this patch of ground here.

BRYN

I am extremely trying not to vomit, which is how I'm, obviously I think it's the intent of nauseated if I can only move.

ALEX

Yeah, not an accident. The distances involved, congratulations! You used your single move. That's how much a single move costs you, is to get next to Azu doing that because of the stuff of plague rate, bish, bash, bosh. In which case then Azu, you are up. Zolf is now out. You are aware of the situation and again we're doing path finder eye storks, tree, tree, tree, like you know where everyone is etc.

LYDIA

Ok, there is nauseated something that I need to specifically be able to dispel or can I do a healing.

ALEX

Yes.

LYDIA

Ok, well I can't help you with that. I'm very sorry. Azu is going to look between Zolf and then between the very squishy MPCs and then back to Zolf and then she's going to move towards the, they do a double move to get there?

ALEX

Yeah, you can.

LYDIA

Ok, that's what she'll do then to go and protect the small, fleshy people.

BRYN

Also, just for flavour with Zolf still bent over, does a thing like he's not looking but he waves his arm and goes "no, it's fine", he'll deal with that, I'm alright.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Azu might as well just go "feel better sooon".

(Group laughter)

BRYN

It should really be Helen; it should really be "thoughts and prayers".

(Group laughter)

ALEX

No, because that's a very, very, powerful incantation in this world. Massive material affect. Summit and he all bears it up and takes position effectively not on top of Wild and Hamid as two squishies but close because on top of

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would be causing problems but you have heavy melee support right next to you now, at which point then one of the trees starts loping forward. It is not one that has as of yet crackled with lightening or anything like that. It double moves.

HELEN

I wish listeners could see this mime.

(Group giggle)

ALEX

And then basically is on top of Summit Neil, Hamid and Wild but has used a double move to get there, so covers the entire 60 foot in one turn but is just like 'hello' at which point then your big lightening friend moves forward a mere 40 feet and then throws its branches out wide and a sound of crackling electricity moves between all of them.

LYDIA and HELEN

Oh no!

ALEX

At which point then all of the branches suddenly clap forward together as if like pair of clapping hands.

BRYN

Oh, we didn't do well.

ALEX

And a bolt of lightening shoots straight towards Hamid.

BRYN

Uhhhh.

ALEX

Reflex save. Hamid.

BRYN

Good luck small boy. Please do not explode. A roll of two, so that's 12. I do not take half damage from this spell attack.

ALEX

You do not, you do not. This is going to hurt, just be aware.

HELEN

So squishy.

BRYN

Oh, by the way everyone, I still had 10 damage left over from the previous fight.

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ALEX

Oh really?

BRYN

It's what's written on my character sheet.

ALEX

Oh dear.

BEN

Wait, how many hit points have you got? I need to know if this is existential.

ALEX

Forty-one.

BEN

Yeah it is.

LYDIA

We could just lose Hamid. He was just about to get wings.

ALEX

Yeah, it's physically possible for Hamid to just die here.

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LYDIA

Not the wings boy.

HELEN

Oh my God!

ALEX

I just have enough dice [sound of shaking dice].

HELEN

Oh God, that sounds like so many. [Sound of dice being thrown].

ALEX

You take the biggest lightening bolt you have ever seen straight to the chest for 38 damage, bearing in mind you have resist damage.

BRYN

I am very glad I cast protection from energy last term.

ALEX

I will say now protection from energy will probably have saved your life because the spell's not done.

BRYN

I take 18 damage.

ALEX

So, the first thing that happens is that massive bolt of lightening strikes you square in the chest for what should have been a near mortal amount of damage between everyone rolled quite low and I'm glad I did. I feel like one shot in you, one round in might be seen as disingenuous. However, every single party member now...

LYDIA

Oh my God!

ALEX

Please could you give me a reflex save.

HELEN

Ahhh, this is going to hit us all innit?

BEN

Does that include Hamid a second time?

ALEX

No, it does not.

BEN

Right.

ALEX

Hamid is currently serving me a very important function of being a distribution point for other people's pain.

BEN

Ahh, chain lightning.

ALEX

Don't you worry about it Hamid. You stand there with your resist energy. You've done your role fabulously. I'm very proud of you Bryn.

BRYN

Am I allowed to, with nauseated?

ALEX

Yes.

BRYN

Ok, fine.

ALEX

And weirdly enough you won't take penalties. It's an action economy penalty thing rather than a...

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BRYN

Twenty-two.

ALEX

Twenty-two, ok. Zolf has made the reflex save.

BEN

I bend over and it goes over my head.

(Group laughter)

BEN

Screw-up got 20.

ALEX

Has made the save.

HELEN

I rolled a natural one so that's nine.

ALEX

Have failed the save.

HELEN

Yes, I know, thank you.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Helen, just to be clear, that means you failed the save.

HELEN

So I've got 15.

ALEX

Have failed the save. Everyone who failed their save please take 38 lightning damage. People who saved take half.

BEN

Screw-up applies the effects of evasion and takes zero.

ALEX

Yep.

LYDIA

I wanna be screw-up.

BEN

No, that's why screw-up has [chuckle], this is a thing I was aware of, have been briefed on which is why I feel safe to have provided this attack knowing it's not an instant screw-up killer.

BRYN

Alright, I've only got 73 air points left.

BEN

If Hamid had made his save by the way, he would have halved 38 to 19 and then have applied a reduction of 20 and taken zero.

HELEN

Thank you. Thanks for letting us know what we could have won.

LYDIA

Yeah, cos like Cel started with fewer hit points than Zolf currently has.

HELEN

Yeah, you've just halved all of my hit points too.

LYDIA

Yeah, more than halved Cel's by quite a long way.

ALEX

While some and Newall both make strong dodges they still get clipped by it but they clearly have not been hit by the full brunt. So in terms of this glitter, it's blasted out towards Hamid, smashed into Hamid and leaped out to every other person in a single blow.

BEN

Alex?

ALEX

Yes.

BEN

Do you want to feel especially clever from nauseating me?

ALEX

Do you know what, I would.

BEN

I have protection from energy communal. That could have been my opener to protect everyone from electricity. But it's not because I'm going to be sick.

LYDIA

Silently clapping, silently clapping, yay. Silently clapping, silently clapping.

BEN

I thought that would make you pleased.

ALEX

I'm going to be honest, when I put in those four reflex and will saves I was under the assumption that Zolf would just pass them on because he always bloody does.

BEN

I rolled so badly. I rolled a two on that force A by the way.

ALEX

I'm happy now, that's ok, so, screw-up is now up. Having successfully stepped into rogue space temporarily and then returned out of it unscathed.

BEN

Screw-up five foot steps towards the tree that is next to, you said one approached Summit Yel and Wild so there's an electricity tree up like in front of us and then this tree on the side?

ALEX

Yes, and the one that's to the side is up in your grill and the electricity tree is a bit further back.

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BEN

Yeah, so screw up five foot steps towards it and takes a full attack.

ALEX

Go for it.

BEN

He's going to use the syringe spear for the first attack.

ALEX

Interesting. Time for Alex to remember the things he's given you. Twenty-one.

(Single chuckle)

BEN

Ok, it is not very much damage but if this thing is not immune to poison that might be a problem for it. Yeah, two damage.

ALEX

Takes two damage, yeah.

BRYN

Rainbow jelly fish toxin applies to the tree. Is the tree immune to poison?

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ALEX

I'm going to confirm but I think I might have bad news for you.

HELEN

Ahhh, I mean it is a tree. It is a tree.

ALEX

Immunity to poison - yeah.

BEN

It is also being threatened by Summit and Yel so I might get sneaker attack damage.

ALEX

You will get sneaker attack damage and it's not immune to sneaker attack damage.

BEN

That is much better. That's an additional 15 damage.

ALEX

There you go. That's a good start.

BEN

The second attack is with the tail weapon attached to Scark's tail.

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ALEX

Yep. It's the first time it's come up isn't it?

BEN

Natural 20. Oooh roles confirmed.

BRYN

Can you confirm? Role to confirm the crip.

BEN

Struck, MVP straight out of the gate. Arrrrgh. The roles to confirm on the crip is only 16.

ALEX

Doesn't confirm.

BEN

That is sadly only an additional four damage.

BRYN

Ah, shame.

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BEN

Not bad though. That's still 21 total, straight out of the gate. Ahhhh. The role to confirm on the crip is only 16.

ALEX

Doesn't confirm.

BEN

That is sadly only an additional four damage.

ALEX

Ah, shame.

BEN

Not bad though, that's still 21 total straight out of the gate.

BRYN

And if it wasn't immune to poison, the poison is like really good.

ALEX

Oh, the poison's fabulous, that's why I gave you that poison but unfortunately these guys are immune.

BRYN

It's not surprising but yeah.

ALEX

Ok, cool, in that case then good turn from Scar. Effectively these are separate turns. Two remaining trees stand their ground and begin behaving oddly. Specifically...

BRYN

Cool. Don't like that.

(Group chuckle)

HELEN

Not a fan.

(Laughter)

ALEX

Getting hit in the face, good, yeah, loads of hit points. The tree looks at you oddly, oooh. So what starts happening is they sort of dig their roots sort of pull up and then dig 'em extra deep down and it's hard to describe something that doesn't technically have full arms 'cos they are, you know, like triumph-type things but they start effectively sort of thrusting upwards like they're summoning something or whatever.

HELEN

I don't like it at all. Oh no!

ALEX

At which point you see a number of trees within their immediate vicinity start to jerk and move in a similar fashion. Think the horror movie one, you know where you like got missing frames and they're all bending awkwardly etc. They all start to move, at which point then the trees that were sort of for summoning the bigger ones then all move up at the same speed that the first big tree that is not lightening voided. There are now three trees all on top of Hamid while Summit and Neil with a bunch of jerking weirdness at the edge of the circle and they have had to double move in order to get there so as a result they are not going to be taking any further actions, ok. At which point then Hamid, you are up. There's a tree, there's a tree, there's a tree. There's a lightening tree. Oooh, there's weird trees at the edges. Hamid stands back up, his hair standing on end, cracks his neck and says "my turn".

(Group laughter)

HELEN

You've come for the king!

BRYN

Ooooooh, we've got a bad ass over here, oooooooh.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Ok, Hamid is going to cast.....

BEN

Ignoring his party's health he fireballs his own feet twice.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

I mean some of the people standing there would be fine but not all of them and therefore we will not be doing that. Ham is going to cast a fireball of; Hamid is specifically casting fireball on the lightening tree but given that fireball extends 20 foot I believe it will be possible to place the centre of the fireball to hit the lightening tree and one other tree without, if I've understood the position from the different trees properly.

ALEX

You are correct, like I could skip to the destination. You are correct. You can catch effectively, if you've got one tree on your left flank, one tree on your right flank and one tree ahead and then the lightening one beyond that you can catch the one that's dead ahead and the lightening tree is further back.

BRYN

And the one that's dead ahead is the one scark already hit?

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ALEX

That is correct, yes.

BRYN

Ok, so fireball hits those two trees.

ALEX

I was ready for this, even if I don't like this.

BEN

What's the DC I need to hit on the reflex? Doesn't matter.

ALEX

Eighteen.

BEN

Doesn't matter, doesn't matter. It's got to roll higher than three to get anything done in this system, I'll tell you that for free.

ALEX

Both trees take 55 fire damage.

(Heavy chuckle)

HELEN

Nice.

BRYN

That was a strong roll. That was a very strong roll. That was well above expectation.

LYDIA

Destroy them.

ALEX

Well, ok, so you know these trees, real scary trees. The trees that I described as terrifying, well trees, but also, you know, desiccated, devoid of moisture, blighted as it were, may or may not have vulnerabilities to fire.

BRYN

Oh, oh, would you like me to recalculate the damage for you Alex.

ALEX

I mean if you were to add...

BRYN

Twenty-seven, that's 50% of 55.

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ALEX

Yeah, if you could add 50% of the damage.

BRYN

So that's 82 damage total to those two trees.

HELEN

Oh my God!

ALEX

Eighty-two.

BRYN

Eighty-two each, yeah.

ALEX

Ok, bear with me. Bigly damaged.

HELEN

Very bigly damaged.

ALEX

Now, do you want the good news or do you want the bad news?

BRYN

No.

(Group laughter)

BEN

Just add all.

HELEN

If we don't hear the bad news then that isn't part of the world you've created so it doesn't exist.

ALEX

Well the good news is the tree in front of you ceases to exist.

BRYN

Awesome.

ALEX

It's boom [explosion sound]. It just shatters into non-damaging splinters exposing the lightning version behind. A fireball is specifically fire damage is it not?

BRYN

Yes.

ALEX

Which shrugs with a slight smouldering of the branches utterly untouched by the fireball you just launched.

HELEN

Ohhh, no.

BRYN

Helen, Helen, it's cool, you know what else trees hate?

HELEN

Axes.

BRYN

Yeah, take a break, take a break, take a break, take a break!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Welcome back. WE will delete any mention of the 'A' word. We don't like that word here. The 'F' word I can mitigate against but the 'A' word is quite bad.

BEN

Axe and fireball.

BRYN

Oh, just don't say the words. You'll upset all of my....

HELEN

We'll have to beat that out Bryn for the tree listeners.

BRYN

Wild is up. You know, what about the giant fire element to the illusion. Why isn't the lightning tree targeting that?

BEN

'Cos Alex forgot.

ALEX

No, what Alex will do is just say the lightning tree that's immune to fire recognised ooh, threat, so on Wild turn two things happen.

One, I'm going to be generous. Hamid you're right next to Wild. Give me your knowledge arcana. No, spell craft, sorry, spell craft.

BRYN

Natural one.

ALEX

Natural one. Wild does something you have no idea what he's doing, like at all.

BRYN

Wild, this is no time to compose more witty sayings.

(Group chuckle)

ALEX

The fire elemental disappears with Wild going "dammit, growling sound" and starts doing an extremely elaborate spell, something big, whatever it is. Then gives a big clap of the hands and calls out a final word and apparently nothing has happened. At which point though Cel, you are up.

LYDIA

I need to know a bit more about the layout before I can decide things because I need to work out whether I can bomb the lightening tree without hitting the....

ALEX

The lightening tree is 20 feet away from the rest of the party.

LYDIA

Ok, cool, Cel's going to throw bombs at the lightening tree.

ALEX

Understood. Can I request that you only use fire bombs?

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LYDIA

No, they gonna throw frost bombs so I get to do four of them.

ALEX

Yep.

LYDIA

The first one is 16. It's attack role.

ALEX

That's a miss.

BRYN

They'll still take splash won't they?

LYDIA

Yeah, 12 damage but that's the total. The next one is 20.

ALEX

That's a miss.

LYDIA

It's a big tree!.

ALEX

It doesn't technically, it missed doesn't just mean like you whiffed it. It means that it has like a thick ridiculous hide type situation.

BRYN

It's how Azu and I have high, like....

HELEN

Ok, so if they're missing, I've got this wrong, each bomb is actually 5B6 plus 7 and 12 splash so they should be taking 12 splash if they're missing. The next one is 9 which I know is....

ALEX

That's a miss.

HELEN

And I know that the next one will miss because there is no way that they can roll high enough because even if they get a 20, no, so the next one's an 11. So every single one misses.

BRYN

Still 48 damage which is a lot of damage.

BEN

Yeah, it might depend how much they miss by whether they still lose flash damage.

ALEX

So what I need to know is did you say it was 12 for each bomb?

HELEN

Yes.

BEN

Ok. So is it more like anti-aircraft fire where it's exploding high but not necessarily like in or anything like that. Like for three, you just know that should have done more damage. It did do some. Did not do what you would expect. It has clearly got extra things at play here.

HELEN

Ok, so they dictate the splash damage or not? Or they took some?

ALEX

The splash damage appeared to hit them but did not seem to do anywhere near as much damage as it should have. Are you going to take any movement?

HELEN

Since I have used all four bombs I cannot because I believe that is a full attack.

ALEX

In that case then am I ok to move on in the initiative order?

HELEN

Yep, oh, they shout "can we consider going through the time and space thing?
Is that possibly better than the tree thing?"

ALEX

Zolf, you are up. I am going to do a slight rules tweak because I think it just makes more sense which is although it explicitly says you can only take a single move action for the sake of easing and to head off anything that could be a problem I'm going to say you can also do stuff like object interaction including things like drawing weapons if you didn't have them or whatever. The last thing I want to do is have you have to then take a penalty at the end of your nauseation doing stuff like getting your glaive to hand or whatever. So I'm just going to explicitly state you can do object interactions as well.

BRYN

Yeah, I assumed I had my glaive out like using it like a crook anyway.

ALEX

Yeah, but I'm talking things like if you wanted to draw potions or anything like that like you can. I think it's silly that you can't when nauseated so I'm overruling that specific aspect of the rule.

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BRYN

Ok.

ALEX

You are a...

BRYN

Cool.

ALEX

As far as I am aware there will be one round after this where you're still nauseated and then you are clear.

BRYN

I'll erm, move out to people.

ALEX

That might be a good (vrooop) idea.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

It's really hard to be a bad ass action hero whilst you're also a little queezy innit?

BRYN

I'm not trying to be a bad ass action hero.

ALEX

I never said you were trying; I was just saying you were failing (chuckle). Ok, anything, I'm assuming nothing else.

BEN

I literally can't do anything else, don't know why you ask.

ALEX

I gave you object interactions. I just didn't know what you were going to use them for. Azu, you are up.

HELEN

How close am I to the nearest tree?

ALEX

You are basically all but facing off against the nearest tree because you already moved up last round. You used the double move. You're there.

HELEN

What I would like to do is move backwards and then channel positive energy in such a way that it heals my allies and not any injured trees. I don't know if that's possible. I don't know if we're sharing squares.

BRYN

Trees next to us right now are not currently injured.

ADAM

Yeah, that's a fact. If you want to just get your party in the area of effect that's not possible. But Bryn brings up a very good point which is they've taken no damage so if you're just trying to heal everyone all you're going to do is heal a tree that's already at full health which is the same as doing nothing bad.

HELEN

Ok, I wasn't sure how close the big...

BRYN

You're going to want to back off by ten foot because Alex said that it was 20 foot away from us and it's a 30 foot.

HELEN

That's what I needed to check.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah, that's fine but yeah, if you want to child pause, you've energy to like heal people up go for it.

HELEN

I'm going to do that. I know it's less efficient.

BRYN

No, no, I can't right now, there's no argument there, like it's more efficient than no.

ALEX

And because of the spacing you'll catch the entire party as well.

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

I'll tell you now, I don't normally do this Helen. While Zolf is nauseated it's not a bad idea. It's a pretty good idea. You're not going to get a better chance to use it I'll tell you that.

HELEN

Yeah. Well let's hope that I don't roll once in everything, aye. It's 3D6 by the eternal cost of energy. There's barely anything [bleep]. Sorry.

(Single laughter)

Everyone gets 8HP back.

BRYN

It could make the difference.

HELEN

And Azu's then going to yell "we're not going to win this. That's her assessment and my assessment, 'cos my assessment is we're not going to win this without people dying. We could win but people will die so.

ADAM

Summit Newall gives a big old roar.

HELEN

Oh no.

ALEX

Seemingly an affirmation and takes a couple of attacks at the nearest tree unsuccessfully on both counts and then holds her ground, at which point then that tree is already dead, get rid of that one. Don't know why I was bringing up that. Our big old lightening friend proceeds to give an enormous sore throat like throaty tree or sort of a [roaring sound] and proceeds to swing wildly, massive, vicious electrified attacks at nothing [roaring sound].

BRYN

Wild solution.

ALEX

Yeah, for free you can see Wilds giving a kind of, you can beep this, a shit-eating grin and a big old lightening boy is dying to beat the ever loving whatever out of thin air.

HELEN

Cool, good.

ALEX

At which point then Scrark is up.

BRYN

Scrark is going to use draconic breath.

BEN

Ohhhh, hoo hoo [Crosstalk].

BRYN

So he'll turn towards one of the two trees that's next to us. Draconic breath is a 15 foot cone so hopefully he can angle this so it doesn't hit any of the scarty.

ALEX

Yeah, that's fine.

BRYN

I don't know if it will catch any of the weirdly moving trees in the background.

ALEX

No, so the weirdly moving trees in the background are still like 60 feet away. They're currently just being weird. They've not actually done anything apart from just sort of give a little wiggle, woo hoo. They're just there.

HELEN

They're backing dancers.

ALEX

So yeah, they're well out of range I'm afraid.

BRYN

Ok, so DC17 reflex save.

BEN

Oh, they're probably not going to make that.

ALEX

No, they fail.

BRYN

Oh, that's not great. Ten damage so 15 with the vulnerability.

ALEX

Sure.

BRYN

He might have done more by just attacking normally.

ALEX

An unfortunate role but a good tactic.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

Is Scrark going to move then or do anything?

BRYN

The thing is we're all currently threatened by these trees.

ALEX

Yes, you're all threatened by both of them because you've got them flanked.

BYRN

Yeah, and, oh, and basically I think I was hoping that would do more so I don't think he can afford to withdraw and take their taxer off at this point.

ALEX

I can't tell you.

BRYN

Yeah, so no.

ALEX

Ok, understood. Sensible, in which case then the one that just got hit by Scrank tends to punch unsurprisingly strong.

BRYN

Sorry, I think that was the same one that Summit and Yel was attacking was it?

ALEX

It was the same one that Summit Yel failed to attack unfortunately. Summit Yel missed twice. I just whiffed the attacks unfortunately. Ok, in which case then.

HELEN

Oh, screw up.

ALEX

What screw ups AC again?

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BRYN

Twenty-two.

ALEX

A hit and another hit.

HELEN

Oh, Scark.

ALEX

Ooooh, hoo, hoo.

HELEN

Oh Scark.

ALEX

The first one is a horrendously heavy slam from a branch dealing 18 damage.

BRYN

Ok, ok.

ALEX

The second one comes in almost equally strong dealing a further 15. It's a proper [booming sound] and then as Stark is bouncing to one side gets caught by the branch in the other direction.

BRYN

Good thing is if I had moved away from the trees I would have taken two exactly equivalent attacks.

ALEX

Yes, you would, in which case then the trees at the distant edge start to move jerkily and unpleasantly forward like something from a horror movie. They only move 10 feet but more trees move closer by 10 feet than you can count in.

HELEN

Ok, we've got to run. We've got to run.

ALEX

Basically every single tree more or less surrounding this clearing has all just jerked and moved creepily forward by 10 feet and are all starting to give sort of tree-esque moans and cries. It is an unpleasant cacophony. The tree on the other side takes a double swing at Summit Newall, hit and a miss.

BRYN

Aww, graw!

ALEX

I tell you what, I'm not rolling great on the attacks but in terms of the damage, horrendous! Summit Newall takes a heavy blow to the face, another crunch on the big old branch. Summit Newall's looking worse for wear now.

HELEN

God!

ALEX

Summit Newall's taken a big old pile of punishment. We are now a few more of the trees at the edge of the clearing all move forward because it's staggered out a little bit. We're at the top of the round. Hamid, you're up. Trees to the left of you, trees to the right and some weird lightening horrible thing stuck in the middle with you.

BRYN

Hamid takes the withdraw action. He can only move 20 feet. No attacks or [unclear 39:57] triggered. Are the three flower bud things roughly equidistant or is one closest to us?

ALEX

Broadly speaking I would say that the dong, dong, dong, dong, dong, dong plant is slightly closer by virtue if that was the one that you were investigating at the time. You think though you have a clear run to any of the three because the trees that are moving at the edge are so slow. If your goal is to run to one of those three plants you basically have a straight shot at any of

them on condition that you stay ahead of these things that were just [Crosstalk].

BRYN

Yeah, so I get 20 foot of movement so I can't even make it to one specifically so I'm going to move to where I'm sort of equidistant between two of them anyway.

ALEX

That's sensible. You can more or less have a straight shot to any of them.

BRYN

Yeah, Hamid is not making a choice of which one to go towards. He is withdrawing from immediate threat and placing himself within easy access to any of them. Hopefully another 20 foot move could get me to any specific one.

ALEX

Sure. Wild basically does the same thing, like literally the withdrawal action ends up in the same situation. It's a sensible move and metagame allows Wild to maintain concentration which is a pretty useful thing that's happening right now.

HELEN

Yes.

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ALEX

At which point then Cel, you are up.

LYDIA

Same thing.

ALEX

You currently, based on where you are, would not need to withdraw.

LYDIA

Yeah, 'cos I'm right behind them.

ALEX

You weren't on top of them you were a little bit off set so you can move more freely.

LYDIA

Cel doesn't have a preference for which bud to go into but also doesn't want to be in like bomb range necessarily if we're all grouped together, having seen what Hamid can do, so will shout as they jog backwards to be nearer the, probably I would say standing between Wild and Hamid and the, let's just guess, the London bud and also any preference for a portal? Spell barred, Americas or pollution land.

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BRYN

Well that's your six seconds so...

LYDIA

Yep, Branon spoke.

ALEX

In which case then Zolf, you are up.

BEN

What ain't here but showing true London.

LYDIA

Sounds good.

BRYN

And I'll move towards the London one. Sod it. I'll make a bloody choice.

ALEX

That's your last nauseated move, correct?

BRYN

Yeah, that's it. From next round I'm not motivated any longer.

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ALEX

Understood. In which case then Azu you are up.

HELEN

Summit Newall goes after me, right?

ALEX

Yes.

HELEN

Ok, alright. I'm going to trust that he's going to follow us 'cos I will not feel good about leaving her behind.

ALEX

You do you.

HELEN

All this thinking. Just hit your problems or run away. Basically that's all [Crosstalk]. I don't know where I am in terms of between, 'cos I already moved back by 10 feet so Hamid is now 10 feet beyond me?

BRYN

Yeah.

HELEN

Ok, I move to be with Hamid and Wild and whoever is with us.

BRYN

I think it's just those three currently.

ALEX

Yeah, you can do that based on the spacing. Don't worry about that because you used your time to channel energy. You would have had to have withdrawn if you went in for a fist fight but you didn't.

HELEN

Ok, good. In which case.

BRYN

If we're not trying to kill these things if that's your move you might want to channel positive energy again.

ALEX

You could do that.

BRYN

Like, it will heal up, the trees, but we haven't done that much damage and we're probably at greater risk of dying than they are right now.

HELEN

Yes, I am going to do that, thank you. Ok, am I close enough to heal everybody?

ALEX

Yes.

BRYN

It will heal the tree too if the tree is a living creature but I think that's just an acceptable price to pay.

HELEN

It is. Maybe it will be on our side after that.

BEN

I've been thinking about all of these decisions I've made and I really re-evaluating my positions on this fight. There's no shame in changing your mind based on new information.

HELEN

It's true. [Bell ring]. That's another plus 8 hit points for everyone.

BRYN

I don't want to tell you how to do your job Helen but you should roll better.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Ah, the "listen you" of advice.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

Ok, Summit Newall, as much as Alex would like to play a high wisdom character as dumb as a plank and go no, you go, I'll stay and sacrifice myself arbitrarily doesn't. Summit Newall also takes the withdrawal action the same way other characters did, in which case then lightening tree continues to [roaring sound], something that's not there, Scark's turn. Scark takes the withdrawal action. Scark has a speed of 30 foot because despite being in the small category, [unclear 44:54] are fast.

ALEX

So I need to ask then at this stage, 'cos I can run the numbers and I have the map of it in my head, if all of you were to just simultaneously choose to B-line to a specific one of those three plants nothing, thanks to the lightening one being engaged, nothing can actually catch up with you if you all just B-line. So I'm actually happy to basically call this comeback out of initiative because Zolf is nauseated as well. The trees aren't as quick so it can just be if you pick one and you genuinely all just want to plough into one we can just do that without me having to go through initiative. Does anyone object to that?

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BRYN

No.

HELEN

No, I think that's what we have to do.

BRYN

Can Hamid make it in whilst casting a single path parting fireball at the two remaining trees?

ALEX

Yes, but I would like a consensus from everyone. As MPCs both Wild and Summit Newall abstain. Can I confirm with everyone which one you're collectively running to?

HELEN

So we'll follow Zolf.

BRYN

Same.

HELEN

Yeah, London.

BRYN

My party members are all cowards so I'm going to call London.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Cel's a lot less involved in a conspiracy.

BEN

I don't think Hamid is convinced it is London. Bryn suspects but yeah, I think Hamid was more sceptical than [Crosstalk].

BRYN

I haven't got a monkeys, but we've got to go through something.

HELEN

Azu is like that's the process one, in there.

ALEX

Ayyy, and then I shall, yeah, from a tactical perspective it categorically is the closest one so if nothing else that's as good a criteria as any, right? Ok, in that case then you all plough towards it.

BRYN

One thing I will do is while we're running, if we're dropping out of combat is go close your eyes when you go in. Thank you. Everyone hold on to each other really tight, please!

HELEN

Oooh, let's do that.

ALEX

So as all of the jerky crip horror trees close the circle net ever tighter as the lightening creature gives one last flurry against the enemy it was never fighting, realises its error and turns to see you all fleeing and starts trying to summon a final lightening bolt after you. As the two trees that you are facing off number closer trying to change but they are just not quick enough. You fall [Crosstalk].

BRYN

They take the fireball to the face. You've gotta leave them something to remember you by.

ALEX

You all dive through into the bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, bomb, plant. You will have to technically be in single file because the petals aren't wide enough but you effectively dive through just brazenly throwing yourselves in one after another. Too late for any of you to act and not in a way that is a mechanical punishment you see a flash of bright blue from the petals

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as each of you dives through. Hamid as the last one chucks a cursory fireball over your shoulder before diving in afterwards but I will grant you the satisfaction of just auto-killing the two remaining trees because fireball is a horrendously bad day for a desiccated horror tree.

Yeah, and on that as you all plummet into the unknown infinities beyond, it's been a good campaign. I'm sorry you take the instant death door. Two of them would have been life but you did pick the death door. I'm sorry. There we go.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

But there was a goat behind the other ones.

ALEX

Look, if you had just asked the middle plant what the other two plants would have said, you would have been ok but here we are. No, as you dive in towards the infinite we'll have to return next week to find out what the heck's happening. And a note of respect from me for you all having the stones to just go into the unknown, yep, off we go, this one.

HELEN

Well, it was that or death. It was plant or death. [Crosstalk].

BRYN

Also into the unknown is the entire campaign so far so we've got used to it.

BEN

I think we could have taken them.

LYDIA

No, no. We are all holding hands and going into space together. That's it. Bye.

ALEX

I will allow you all to also be holding hands. That's the truth as well. Right.

BRYN

[Sings] We'll all go together when we go.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

We'll have to find out what happens next week but if nothing else congratulations. You've made probably the biggest decision in a while that completely transforms the shape of the campaign around you so let's see where this goes.

LYDIA

Whooo, yay.

HELEN

I'm really looking forward to like next week starting umbrella academy season two. W all wake up in the 1960s.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Cribs notes, cribs notes, cribs notes. It's 1960, nerf, nerf.

HELEN

Bye.

ALEX

Bye all.

EVERYONE

Bye.

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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