

RQG – 198 – Tourist Traps

Content Warnings

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[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 198 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have

BEN

Ben Meredith

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

HELEN

And Helen Gould

Rusty Quill Gaming – 198 – Tourist Traps

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom

HELEN

And Azu

ALEX

One more time who are you playing Helen?

HELEN

I'm playing Pippin Took

ALEX

Yeah you are!

(laughing)

Fabulous! So, I believe the last thing that happened is completely blameless drums in the deep right.

HELEN

Yes

ALEX

Good. So you are still in the main hallway which is lit by the lightwells. You have taken out the waddy menace and are now in a hallway that's populated only by plants that are semi aware, semi alive, half corpse, half interjected into planer entity.

HELEN

Gross. Did everyone else feel that just then?

BEN

Feel what?

BRYN

Feel what?

LYDIA

You'll have to be a bit specific about that, like for the instance I feel concern...

HELEN

No, not an emotion...

LYDIA

Oh ok.

HELEN

...just a nasty, nasty rumbling thud type of thing below us that seems to be...

BEN

Right, ok well we can't go back so we should probably get a move on and hope that whatever that was don't find us.

HELEN

Ok, right.

BRYN

Skraak will probably say that it looks like it's safe beyond the next door.

ALEX

So Skraak's there, he's just like – yeah it's still got light and it's a long tunnel.

BEN

Does it look clear?

ALEX

Yes but I don't know why they're out here but not in there.

HELEN

Oh!

BEN

We'll have to find out. We can't stay here.

ALEX

Agreed.

BRYN

Nods.

HELEN

Also nods

BRYN

We proceed.

BEN

Offski bosski

(laughing)

LYDIA

The moment that we're not in initiative order Cel will reload their repeater crossbow which probably means that they're bringing up the rear of the...

BEN

As soon as we're out of initiative take that full round action. Yeah! I'm going to do this narratively.

LYDIA

Zap, zap, zap. Done.

BRYN

As we go further in Hamid is also going to cast heroism on Skraak just to help him survive when he's two levels lower than everyone else.

ALEX

Not gonna lie...not gonna lie Bryn, there's a pretty significant chance if Skraak does anything stupid, Skraak won't leave this place. It's getting real difficult to not make everything immediately fatal to your follower.

BRYN

He is not too far off the rest of us in most ways. The biggest risk is fort saves to be honest.

HELEN

Mm

ALEX

I repeat.

BRYN

Yep

ALEX

There's a big risk to Skraak. You are now in your new map in the corridor. Could you do me a favour, in that to be specific for the audience, you are now in a blank featureless void stood on a path because there's fog of war stuff going on. Could you please put yourself in a marching order.

HELEN

Azu and Zolf at the front is probably a good idea.

BEN

We are the beasters.

HELEN

We are. And Azu is now like if there's something big down here I should hit it first because I might've woken it up.

BEN

Also people can shoot over our shoulders so...

HELEN

That's true.

ALEX

So I am going to enter theatre of the mind a bit. Apologies. We have to abandon our lovely maps and they'll come back later. Entering into that corridor there is signs of more detritus, like a dropped backpack and things like that but there's no plants, there's no beasties, no bodies and the walls are emitting light. They have stained glass windows built into them and light is coming streaming in through those so presumably again you're looking at mechanical mirror based lightwells and things like that. It's quite pretty. It's very multi-hued, long straight corridor that you can see leads to a curve rather than a hard corner towards the right hand side at end of maybe 100 foot long and as it curves you can see it slopes down. So more like...imagine you had a very gentle circular stairway that was sloped rather than stairs, that's the impression it gives. There are bannisters on either side but no steps, it's a very gentle curve down to the right and away.

LYDIA

What a wonderfully accessible city. That's very considerate. They've probably actually obeyed all of their legal requirements rather than running ramshod over them as most highstreets do.

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(laughing)

Respect to Svalbard.

HELEN

Ok we move forward.

BEN

Yeah

ALEX

Can everyone give me a perception check please

HELEN

Yeah

LYDIA

Ooh

BEN

Natural 20 so 30 not including any critical bonuses.

LYDIA

20 total

HELEN

22

BRYN

20 total for both Hamid and Skraak.

ALEX

As you are heading down this corridor all of you notice that the stained glass windows are very large. Like huge, large. You're probably at maybe an official entrance or a state person or a tourist...basically it's a bit flash and it's a bit flash for "I'm delivering cabbages" so presumably you're in somewhere else. It looks like the pavestones themselves have been worked extra and things like that but you're definitely at an official entrance. Zolf, you think you hear birdsong from the end of the corridor and round the slope, out of sight.

BEN

Magical or in a way where I think they might have built a bloomin' garden under the ground or something.

ALEX

Impossible to tell but they do sound like birds. It doesn't sound like tweet, tweet, tweet.

(laughing)

Everything's fine, tweet.

LYDIA

I am a bird. This is a bird impression.

BEN

It's Matt Berry and Peter Serafinowicz at the end going "tweet, tweet"

(laughing)

ALEX

But you can discern that right at the edge of your hearing.

BEN

[Whispers] got birdsong up front. Dunno what it means but...

LYDIA

Is that a code word?

BEN

Nope literally birdsong.

LYDIA

Ok

BEN

I dunno

BRYN

Skraak being super stealth will offer to scout ahead.

BEN

Makes sense.

ALEX

In fact you got a 30 something didn't you?

BEN

Well yes I got a 30 but with a natural 20 so any critical bonuses.

ALEX

Yeah I'm going to give you one extra bit of info as well because that's pretty good.

BEN

Well it's as good as I can do

ALEX

You think there is a very, very, very slight warm movement of air from that end to this end. Like the heat is trying to flow out through the door that you opened but it's super, super subtle.

BEN

And I'm getting like a – I'll hold my hand out in front of me – like a warm breeze as well. I dunno what they've done up there but it might be some sort of artificial garden or I dunno it could be feedback from Yerlik, you know, because of the space stuff so just...

LYDIA

Was there birds in Yerlik?

BEN

There was I think, right Alex? It was quite...

ALEX

There was until you got to the blight.

BEN

Yeah. I dunno it don't sound like the ones from Yerlik but just be aware something weird is up ahead and I dunno if that's Svalbard showing off or something bad.

HELEN

Is it a constant breeze or is it something breathing?

ALEX

Think constant breeze. It is, to your mind, it's like you've opened the door...

BEN

It's convection.

ALEX

...and because there is a pressure differential there is the slight movement. If the door was closed there wouldn't be any air movement at all.

BEN

And I know it's convection thanks to Bryn's quizzing on the science episodes of Stellar Firma.

(laughing)

Yeah, no, no it's like warm air moving to a cold place so pretty constant.

HELEN

Ok, ok, good. Alright good. Yes.

ALEX

Give me a perception check Azu.

HELEN

21

ALEX

Just to mess with you specifically, there it is again. Very distant [rumbling noise]

HELEN

Ooh I felt it again. I felt the rumbling, rumbling...

ALEX

You're feeling it in your toes.

HELEN

I feel it in my fingers and my toes

(laughing)

BRYN

Would you say it is all around you? Is the feeling growing?

(laughing)

HELEN

Yes!

(laughing)

BEN

No, no, no why are you laughing? That's really serious, I dunno what it could be.

(laughing)

BRYN

I specifically did not ask that question using my in character voice!

ALEX

I repeat you are in a corridor.

BEN

Let's get a move on. Good idea Skraak, you should probably...yeah. Makes sense.

BRYN

Yeah Skraak will head out about 25 foot ahead of the rest of the party just to be a kind of scout.

ALEX

Can you give me a perception check for Skraak

BRYN

16

ALEX

Ok. So as you all head down the corridor etc. as you're heading down the far end Skraak calls a sudden stop and sort of pulls out a pouch of soot or something and sort of blows it in front of one of the flagstones in front of you and you can see that it slightly disturbs and he points to it and just says very quietly – it's a trapped flagstone. I dunno what it does though.

BRYN

So Skraak does get bonuses versus traps because of the whole rogue thing. Like he has disable device as I think does Cel so they might be able to...

ALEX

He could now do the disable device to try and discern it yes. I'm gonna say give me a roll.

BRYN

I rolled a 2 so 17.

ALEX

He's stumped. Cel if they wanna give it a go.

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah, yep. Cel will give it a go. Let me just...28 disable device.

ALEX

Yes ok. Cool. It takes a little bit of work. It's pretty well made for what it's worth but it doesn't seem to be aimed at being undetected so much as just subtle.

LYDIA

Yeah my assumption is that this is something that's actually built into it being a tourist thing so you walk through and it makes a nice show or something.

ALEX

So as you are sort of tracing it out and having a look at the mechanism that holds up. You think that's something to do with the stain glass windows.

LYDIA

So they'll move to look at you or something.

ALEX

Basically you think that it is a non-lethal, something to do with the windows. Maybe it'll open them or reorientate them or something like that. It's a tourist thing probably.

LYDIA

It's just a...I mean it's good not to step on it but it's just a way to interact with the light show that's going on.

BEN

So it's like a "welcome to Svalbard" kind of thing.

LYDIA

Yeah quite possibly but if we're trying to be sneaky it's great not to start the like "Welcome to Svalbard"

BEN

Yeah

ALEX

You can see Skraak is a very sensible person but is looking beseechingly at the others – yeah you're right, we shouldn't.

BEN

You can come back when we've sorted this out.

LYDIA

Yeah if we get through and we actually wanna distract anything that's chasing us, very good to know about.

ALEX

We can push it right? Then we can push it?

LYDIA

Then we absolutely should push it. Because, you know, explosions. Light shows.

ALEX

You're right. We'd be fools not to push the button.

LYDIA

Exactly. In the long term we would be fools not to push it but – their hand hovers of it – but maybe not now.

ALEX

No, not now.

BEN

And look once we've sorted all of this out you can come back to Svalbard as a tourist.

LYDIA

Oh good I've always wanted to.

ALEX

Ah that would be amazing.

HELEN

Shall we continue...

LYDIA

Oh yes

BEN

Let's go.

ALEX

Yeah we should, yeah.

LYDIA

I mean have you read about the mechanisms that you can...I think they're called rollercoasters.

BEN

Cel, Cel, Zu's right we should concentrate.

HELEN

We can move and talk

ALEX

So I am going to progress time to you start heading down this slope. It's a very gradual slope down and is accompanied still by these stain glass windows all the way down. As you start heading further and further down all of you start to feel it is getting ambiently warmer and all of you eventually start to hear birdsong. It sounds natural and it isn't a cacophony. It is just sort of standard. I don't know how else to put it. It's normal to non naturalist ears.

LYDIA

Can I roll a knowledge nature, it's only a 18.

ALEX

Again they seem natural to your ear. They don't seem necessarily compatible as birdsongs.

LYDIA

Ah. Ok that's useful to know.

BEN

Getting kind of zoo vibes.

ALEX

Yeah that's a good way of putting it. It's like I wouldn't normally expect to hear an ostrich and an cockatiel having a conversation but ok. It has a slightly aviary vibe maybe.

LYDIA

So in that wonderfully succinct summary of what it is, imagine Cel does that for like 30 seconds and gets the same amount of information.

ALEX

That maybe buys you enough time to start making it towards the bottom. As you do it starts getting clear that there is a bright source of light at the base of the...I'm going to call it a stairway even though it's not stairs and there is an elaborate stone arch covered in leaves and such.

BRYN

Normal leaves or freaky scary leaves?

HELEN

Yeah exactly.

ALEX

Mithril leaves.

BRYN

Ah

HELEN

Is mithril a thing in Pathfinder?

BRYN

Yeah

LYDIA

Oh yeah. I'm wearing a mithril chainmail shirt right now.

HELEN

Gosh. I'll save you from a troll, ok, alright, let's go

(laughing)

ALEX

Heading through I am now going to do a bit of a mind break for the players which is you might think that you're in a corridor using this map but no, I have merely fog of warred the next map layer. Ha, ha.

HELEN

Very exciting.

ALEX

As you head out through the archway you find yourself looking at a very large, excavated area, whether it's a retrofitted volcano is debatable. I don't know whether it's the geography for that but it certainly appears to have been a manufactured space. It has been...it's too perfect. It's too exactly hemispherical with a large opening at the top which is meshed over multiple times but letting in huge amounts of light and you seem to be in a, effectively a large park full of full grown trees and to all of your eyes, can everyone give me a perception check please.

BEN

15

HELEN

Oh 19

LYDIA

28

BRYN

18 for Hamid and 20 for Skraak.

ALEX

Ok in which case then there are some slight oddities to it. There is a low lying mist running throughout the entire part as far as you can see and your feet feel tangibly warmer than the rest of you. Looking around the outside of this large

ball you can see these big vents seem to be pouring in some kind of gas, maybe a steam or something that is rolling down the sides, lingering on the base and then it slowly dissipates as it raises up. The trees themselves, this is just for free for anyone who's ever look at nature, this is not a naturally occurring in any way. The collections of species appear to be random. They don't appear to be incompatible. It's not like someone's tried to plant something that needs water in the middle of a sand patch or things like that but there is no credence paid to areas where it's this is for this area or that area. It's just rampant. Same when it comes to the birds. There are birds from all four corners of the globe flying around in here. The park itself appears to be slightly overgrown. Like once it was perfectly manicured where now it is a slightly little bit overgrown, little bit dodge. And up the walls you can see that they have inlaid mithril up the walls continuing that plant based design up towards the ceiling. It's...you're nearing like wonder of the world type territory here. It's an engineering marvel and there are, slightly further along from the park. So this is a couple of acres maybe, it's big. And then at the far end of it you can see there are a large number of more complex buildings built into the side of the wall. They, unlike the area you were in before, seem to have slightly more mechanics inbuilt by which I mean you can see, ok there's a steamer ray over there. There's some more machinery regulation happening built in there. It's kind of disguised and shrouded by shrubs but think like theme park once you look beyond the surface skim level, there's a lot of industry in those buildings.

HELEN

Mm

BRYN

I mean we're looking for the central, most secure location aren't we so I guess we just head in and keep looking for a way down.

ALEX

There is a deep, deep boom that all of you can hear this time emanating from inside that complex.

BEN

Oh of course.

BRYN

Definitely something there.

BEN

Yep

HELEN

That's the thing

LYDIA

Yep. You know what, as a bonus they probably won't be expecting that we run towards the...

BEN

The danger, yeah.

ALEX

And on that I'll take a note and then we can come back and run straight towards the danger.

And welcome back. So am I right in presuming we amble through the park directly through the danger.

BEN

Cautiously stride.

ALEX

Sorry perceived danger. Cautiously stride, right.

BRYN

It seems like maybe we don't need to check for traps but do we need to detect for automatic welcoming systems.

BEN

Yeah

ALEX

Could you do me two things. One, Cel could you please give me a knowledge alchemy and could Skraak please give me a perception check for traps.

BRYN

Ok I also realised I forgot two different bonuses to Skraak's previous one so this is going to be much better.

ALEX

You're going to go from like oh he rolled an 18. What do you get now? 46

BRYN

We'll see. 29.

LYDIA

37.

ALEX

This gas that's all over the place, it definitely is a steam base. It feels like, to your eye, they've probably been...maybe not, it might even be an artificially created hot spring where like if you drill deep enough and you funnel it you can just do it. Like geothermal power style. So it's reminisce of Shoin's I suppose in that way however this gas itself is...there's more to it than just steam. To your eye they might have...they might be utilising some kind of aerosolised fertiliser or something. The fact that it's out like this in this amount might actually be a good thing because it means that the mechanics have held up

surprisingly well for something that hasn't been maintained for a year...well a year plus. So as a result it's a good sign as opposed to a bad sign. It means that it's more likely that you're going to encounter things like working doors. There's going to be light, things like that. Skraak does detect a few more "traps". However it's really clear, it takes no skill from Skraak at all that this is someone who designed this, taking advantage to the fact there's going to be loads of low lying fog no matter what we do. Yeah. Ok why don't we put the triggers in for the information about these things to pop up when people approach it without seeing it. It's just a base of information on the trees. He literally just goes over, just goes through it and can pull the mechanism up and if you step on a certain bit a plaque detailing information on that tree just pops up and then drops back down again.

HELEN

Aw

ALEX

For how flashy it is, the information itself is very taxonomic. It's not very like of this emits a nice smell blah, blah, blah. It's like family blah, blah, blah.

Heading through you eventually make it to what is clearly a front entrance. This has a Jurassic Park vibe which is look at the science that we're doing.

(laughing)

Look! Over here we have a big door and it literally has like in Svalbardian dwarven runes botanicals done in gilded archway over the top of the doorway

which has a slope up to and so on. It's very like, look we are doing good science here. But it isn't...it sounds stupid, it isn't necessarily ostentatious. It's just...it isn't emotionless.

LYDIA

It's tourist science. Cel is doing the Wallace and Gromit, it's cheeeese

(laughing)

She's like – this is exactly... - and talking to Skraak of course – this is exactly as I imagined. I got hold of a visitor book and everything...this is so exciting. Look – and starts talking through the mechanisms expecting Skraak will be just as excited.

ALEX

Skraak is. Skraak is. Skraak's a bit more interested in who goes to the effort of automating a plaque over oh look, a big fancy sign of precious metals but yeah you're definitely on the same page.

BEN

Worth mentioning, you may have already factored this in but obviously I speak dwarven. I dunno if anyone else does so if there's any additional information I can probably pick up on it.

ALEX

No, the plaques themselves were both in Svalbardian dwarvish which is, yeah you would be able to ken from the writing but it also has translations into other languages and the main sign over the top is a dwarven runic alphabet for botanicals. That's the only bit that's in dwarven only but even to your eye you're like that someone who thought that the word botanicals looks real cool when it's inlaid with mithril.

BRYN

Let's head in. Let's head in.

BEN

Yes let us find Terrence.

ALEX

I'm going to check the front door for...

LYDIA

Terrifying Terrence.

ALEX

Give me a perception check please for Skraak

BRYN

For traps specifically?

ALEX

No

BRYN

Ok. Oh god I'm rolling like garbage. 14.

ALEX

That'll be enough. So Skraak goes up, checks the slope and so on, checks for no other triggers to make a big [fanfare noise] or anything like that. Hesitates in front of the doors, places his hand to the doors then recoils and comes back.

Yeah there's something banging the inside of that door. I don't... - to all of you can see there are door handles. There are actual handles there.

Something's bashing up against it. Not very hard but there's something on the other side.

BEN

Right well let's see if we can find another way in then. There must be service hatches, vents. You know there's a lot of stuff – kind of gesturing vaguely at the mechanisms – going on. Right – I'll kind of look at Cel and Skraak being like – machines?

LYDIA

Cel grins – yeah machines.

ALEX

Right can you give me a knowledge engineering. Does Skraak have knowledge engineering?

BRYN

Yep

ALEX

Can I get a knowledge engineering from both Skraak and Cel please.

BRYN

20 total

LYDIA

27

ALEX

Ok so Skraak immediately starts heading over and looking at the pipework and so on and then comes back and I'll report what Skraak says in a sec. Cel, to your eye, this building seems to be characterised by a series of domes quite high up. So not fully glass but like significant amounts of glass domes and so on up on the roofs which, the building looks comparatively scalable. You might have some luck trying to look in from there and see for entrances and so on. You could probably smash one of them if there isn't an open window but the likelihood of there being an open window is quite high. With this much

moisture in the air you would have to leave windows open otherwise the interior becomes a mess and that's not what they're going for so you reckon a window based approach if you can get up high is probably gonna work and there's certainly enough space between the tops of these buildings which are staggered, built into the wall and the roof of this cavern easily. And Skraak comes back going – I reckon if we were to tear off one of those vents, if we pick one of the ones that's cold not hot we could probably head in from there but we'll be coming in at an engine bit, not a fun tourist bit.

LYDIA

Yeah or, I mean, we could also climb up and see in through the glass roof and also perhaps see a nice vista of all the machines.

ALEX

There is another small [thudding noise] inside the building.

BEN

Right do you want me to take a quick look? I can get up no problem.

LYDIA

Yeah that sounds like a good plan.

BEN

I'll take a rope. If it's good I can drop one and everyone else can get up. Is that alright? Does that sound good?

LYDIA

Good plan Mr Smith, yes.

ALEX

Yeah I like that.

BEN

Alright, go go boots go.

(laughing)

That's canonically the activation phrase.

HELEN

It is. I love it.

ALEX

I love it so much. So I'm going to have to describe rooftops, because of the nature of the map I can't show you the rooftops which just revealing all the interiors.

BEN

Yeah basically activate the levitation and then just hand myself up.

ALEX

Yeah it's dead easy. I'm going to assume that you're going up the nearest dome.

BEN

Yeah I'm going up the...ooh that's a good point. Cel should I go up the lobby or one of the...where should I go up?

LYDIA

Well where there's...

ALEX

Here is the nearest dome.

BEN

Is it there?

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

It's here.

LYDIA

Up there – pointing.

ALEX

So Cel is basically up against it. To be clear it's a more cylindrical building than has a dome atop it, not a hemisphere.

BEN

Sure, yes.

ALEX

So you do have to go up a bit, it's not just...

BEN

A domed structure.

ALEX

Yeah I don't know how else to put it. It's like a cylinder with a dome on top, whatever you want to call it. It looks very easy to ascend using levitation and there's enough bits on the side, there's even some side windows but unfortunately they're all heavily coloured and so on so you can't really discern what's going on inside.

BEN

Ok so yeah, scooch up, I'll grab all the...enough rope and go up.

ALEX

In which case then I'm going to reveal for you some more map.

LYDIA

Ooh

ALEX

I love this.

BEN

You looked so happy when you get the chance to do it.

ALEX

I love it. You see inside and see this.

BEN

Ok. Looks like a fountain room.

ALEX

Er no sorry, there's one extra element here which is missing because it's on the wrong layer because I was going...

BEN

Is it the horrible grumbler?

ALEX

It's the horrible grumbler I was going to ambush you with but you've done it in a sensible way so I'm going to do that.

LYDIA

Show us the grumbler! Show us the grumbler.

ALEX

There's your grumbler

(cheers and moans)

BEN

That is a grumbler. I don't like the grumbler at all. That's a big boy. That's a gigan...no, that's a huge boy!

LYDIA

That's a Huge Hugo.

ALEX

It's a Huge Hugo that should not be in that room. I'll say that right now. So I'll describe the room first and then the Huge Hugo. So inside the room you can see that there is a water source at the base that is leading...it is open to the air and to touch and whatever and it is surrounded on all sides by what looks like an overgrown plant nursery so you're looking at maybe a hydroponics set up or something similar. However again, even to your eye, it looks a little bit like it's

half done for practicality, half done for show in keeping with look at the science we're doing here. It doesn't appear to have been ransacked however you can see a literally huge, horrendous structure creature that seems to be like a huge shambling bone worked structure. It's like if you took a creature and turned it inside out so all the bones are on the outside as armour instead of the inside as structure.

HELEN

Urgh

ALEX

It has a pair of spines for hands. Long and whip like. Its eyes are glowing a deep, deep blue and it is accoutrement of humanoid bone parts atop it as well. So the image that you are seeing is exactly what it looks like.

LYDIA

Yeah I just assumed that was a horrible villainy but that was...that is...

ALEX

Shoulder pads made of skulls. It is a bad for anyone. You also notice that of...well would you notice from here? Give me a perception check.

BEN

ALEX

Bit of a stretch, do you have anything to do with mining or whatever mechanically that I can give a bonus for?

BEN

I don't think so because I am specifically bad at that because I didn't want to do it.

BRYN

Knowledge of horrible undead creatures comes from religion normally.

BEN

That's true. I've got religion and planes.

ALEX

Yeah you know what, give me a knowledge region. That might cover it.

BEN

14

ALEX

No, it would not.

BEN

It's just an horrible thing.

ALEX

It's a properly horrible thing. A bunch of the bones in it, to be clear, are not humanoid. So it's other creatures as well. There is a set of open windows. From here you can even look out over a couple of the other domes. The other domes seem to be sealed, this one seems to have a pair of windows open on either side for venting. You can see that it might be that a couple of the other domes might have windows open but they don't look big enough to your eye but you could possibly explore the complex more but you're going to have to head further up and further in.

BEN

Fine. This thing is moving around right?

ALEX

As you are watching as a last thing it sort of gives a stare around at something and then thuds the wall hard giving another [thudding noise] moving through the structure.

BEN

Right so it is the source of the thumping. I will creep back, lean over, do like a shush motion and give like a really serious face.

(laughing)

LYDIA

That's different from Zolf's usual face.

BEN

Well yeah but I will tie the rope and let it drop but miming do this and be quiet and if you need me to make a knot tying check or...

ALEX

That's fine. That's fine. You already have the sailor profession anyway so we've established that's that...

BEN

Oh yeah, I'm really good at tying knots.

ALEX

You're really good at knots anyway.

BEN

It's just whether you wanted me to roll a natural 1 and muck it up.

ALEX

No you're fine.

BEN

Oh has everyone climbed up now?

ALEX

Oh right ok sorry I thought you'd came down. So you gestured for them to come up.

BEN

Yeah, yeah. Actually no you're right, I will wait ten seconds and go – that's a stupid idea.

(laughing)

And will climb back down and go – right, ok found the source of the thumps.

ALEX

Skraak gives a bit toothy grin and a thumbs up.

BEN

Yeah it's a horrible mass of bones and like just really...it's huge. It's huge.

ALEX

Gives a bigger grin and a double thumbs up.

LYDIA

Does it look like a kill switch?

BEN

Yeah like gonna be a problem, I have a plan for it though. I think I can probably deal with it quickly however, and there's a couple of open windows there so if can get rid of it without it noticing, brilliant. If not, let's all get up there and you can back me up if it goes wrong.

HELEN

How sure are you...

LYDIA

Could we not just walk around it and go into another building?

BEN

Maybe but look I can go and try and take it out. If we take that out that feels like the biggest threat here. I mean like literally vibrating...

LYDIA

We haven't looked around much but yeah.

BEN

Yeah I mean the other windows look like they're closed. We could maybe climb around and find another way in but this looks like the best one.

LYDIA

Sure

BEN

I'm pretty sure I can get in and deal with it. If I can't, well it's up to you guys if you wanna jump in and help me. This is my...

HELEN

Of course we would.

LYDIA

Obviously we're gonna help you Zolf.

BEN

Fine but...

ALEX

When you say "deal with it" do you mean like make it go away or like explode it into a thousand pieces taking out the building at the same time?

BEN

Unfortunately, because I know where you're going, no I'm going to shift it to the plane of fire and it won't be able to get back and it'll burn up and die.

ALEX

Oh!

LYDIA

That sounds very interesting. I would love to see that.

HELEN

That's a very good idea.

BEN

So I'm gonna give that go. If not, I'm a cleric, it looks undead, I'm going to blast it as well.

BRYN

Sounds like a good plan to me. Let's get up on top.

LYDIA

Can I just quickly...the other creatures did seem to be phasing in and out...I'm not that familiar with planes but did seem to have some kind of planer dimension so there is of course the possibility that this one won't go as planned but it sounds like a good plan.

ALEX

Give me knowledge planes.

BEN

12. So I can go off what I reckon if that's ok.

ALEX

I'm going to give you one piece of advice.

BEN

Yeah

ALEX

You don't think it has any planer elements to it that you can discern.

BEN

Yeah. Alright yeah so from looking at it, it don't look like it's doing that shifting thing so it might be a different thing. The other thing is the main plane that we found that's mashing into our one is the ethereal plan so that's why I put it in the plane of fire so unless it can plane shift back...also a plane shift is massively inaccurate so even if it does come back, it might come back 100 miles to the north.

LYDIA

Do you mean...or even to the south where there's quite a lot of people...oh I suppose most of them have blue veins.

BEN

Yeah or like up or down. So like it's basically...

LYDIA

A small innocent village.

BEN

No it will deal with the problem here at least and you know...alright so if we all get up there so you can see whether it works or not and help if I need to.

ALEX

So if it doesn't work are we all like rar or we're all like argh.

BEN

Oh yeah I mean just beat the hell out of it probably.

HELEN

Ok I can do that.

LYDIA

Everyone stay back and I'll bomb it.

HELEN

Yeah we could try the bombs...

BEN

Although honestly it's so big that we can be stabbing one side and you can be bombing the other and we're probably not going to interact with each other. This thing is huge.

LYDIA

Cool! I mean, terrible.

BEN

Yeah but we've got a plan so that's good - and then I'll float back up.

HELEN

Do the rest of us have to climb checks to go back up the rope?

BRYN

Yeah remember if you took those boots you get a +2 and potentially a reroll on it.

BEN

And if you're using a rope you get big bonuses. I can't remember what the numbers are but I think it's like a +5 or 10 or something. It's quite good.

HELEN

Ok. I got a 17.

ALEX

Yeah you're fine.

BRYN

Skraak's got the idea that he might need a rope to climb this.

(laughing)

And rolls a 35 on a natural 20.

ALEX

Oh you know what it is. The stonework isn't even close enough for Skraak not just put his claws in the cracks and be like [singing] bo, do, be, do, climbing like a ladder.

BRYN

13 for Hamid but plus the rope.

ALEX

I'm kind of looking for you to roll garbage otherwise you're fine. Cel?

LYDIA

20 total.

ALEX

Yeah you're all fine. Gosh I wish climbing a rope in real life was only DC 5.

BEN

Yeah but then we don't have adventurer levels Alex.

ALEX

I do!

BEN

That's the thing. We're civilians. We're commoners. We're all like level one commoners.

ALEX

No we're not! We're wildly unoptimized bards.

(laughing)

We're all bards that dumped all of the important stats

LYDIA

That's too true and I...yeah.

ALEX

Right, ok you make it up to the dome easily enough and everyone can look down and see this beastie.

BEN

See what I mean!

LYDIA

That is big.

BRYN

Oh my god it's so hideous.

ALEX

Can I please get knowledges that might help.

BEN

I love knowledges that might help.

BRYN

What knowledges might help? So as I recall knowledge dungeoneering is a general, I know what weaknesses and strengths random monster has.

ALEX

Did you say Skraak has knowledge dungeoneering?

BRYN

Yeah

ALEX

Can I get a knowledge dungeoneering from Skraak? Can I get a knowledge arcana from anyone who has it? I would allow a knowledge nature but you will need to roll through the roof.

BEN

I got to roll a knowledge religion so would Azu get to roll that as well.

ALEX

Yes, yes.

LYDIA

My arcana is 19. Can I assist Bryn.

BRYN

Just roll it.

ALEX

Just roll. If it's that high, just roll it. Yeah.

HELEN

Alright. What else did Azu not learn in seminary?

ALEX

So what did Azu get from her seminary studies?

HELEN

Natural 1!

(laughing)

BEN

Oh you were practicing kissing again!

ALEX

I love it! I love it! No, this is fine. There's a reason for this one. You know what that's covered in? Bones! Yeah I may have skipped most of the lessons that were in the crypt because I just didn't like the guy who was there. He was just...he was just really boring and also the training ground was right out...it was right there. Bones. Bones can sometimes...bones are often bad.

HELEN

Bones if you can see them it's often not a good idea. Yeah.

ALEX

Yeah you know what, you would be able to with your heal be like well that's a femur, that's another femur. Ooh.

(laughing)

Ooh a tibia, that's exciting.

What other knowledges have I got kicking around?

LYDIA

I mean Cel rolled a 28 on knowledge arcana but I do think that they will have done a long ramble about the process of carcinization – in which really inevitably we will all become crabs.

(laughing)

ALEX

So can I also get the score from Hamid please?

BRYN

33 knowledge arcana from Hamid

LYDIA

Ooh

ALEX

And knowledge religion I already got from Ben. So in terms of the knowledge
arcana...

BRYN

Dungeoneering...

ALEX

Oh yeah dungeoneering.

BRYN

...from Skraak was 27.

ALEX

Dungeoneering. Skraak looks at that and goes – I think I've seen something
like before back in Japan. Hamid and Cel, you think you're able to identify
what this thing is. It is a naturally occurring, incredibly rare fossil construct. So
they can be made by very dedicated crafts of teams and so on, however in
particularly rare situations they can naturally arise in areas where there's lots
of magic and there is significant amounts of material to work from or maybe
complicating odd factors. This bodes very ill for Zolf's plan because this type of
a creature is very resistant to magics. Very resistant to magics.

HELEN

Oh

BRYN

To all magics?

ALEX

Just to magics full stop. You also know that unfortunately it can petrify. Not on sight. It is a touch based petrification combat beast.

HELEN

Oh no.

BEN

I hate you Alex. I...one of these days I will plane shift a problem away.

(laughing)

ALEX

I promise you Ben you can plane shift some problems from this...this area away but not this way.

BEN

Good. Alright, fine.

ALEX

These...the general consensus from anyone who has ever encountered these very, very rare is, don't.

BRYN

So I think it's a fossil construct and it might be resistant to all forms of magic and I...

BEN

Oh balls.

BRYN

...it's probably to avoid it completely. They're known to be very dangerous.

BEN

Right fair enough then. That plan's probably out the window.

ALEX

I'm sorry Zolf that sounded like a brilliant plan and you were just unlucky.

BEN

No it's fine.

LYDIA

I was really looking forward to that.

ALEX

We should save that for another one. I bet there's another one it's going to be really good on.

BEN

Look if I don't use it here I can it later. Great, fine. So another window then?

ALEX

Yeah I think it might have to be another window then.

BEN

Right let's go.

ALEX

So as you sort of tracking around the ceilings and so on you do see another one further up and further in which is another dome that has these side windows open and heading over and looking down inside you see that it is almost a carbon copy of the other one, unlike the first one which seemed to be at the end of a long corridor or something, this one seems to be maybe a crossroads. Like it's right in the middle of the complex. However it seems to be a clear drop down. There doesn't seem to be any other beasties in there and it looks like, basically, a better option though it probably does connect in with the other dome that you came via because you can just see the structures to a degree and it's likely but it's certainly out of sight and it's still a good...oh I can use my rulers! It's still a good 80 feet or so away with multiple walls in between so you'll probably be fine.

BEN

Yeah I've also got stone shape if I need to block off an exit.

ALEX

Yeah exactly so I think that's going to be your best bet from what I can see. I can say there is another dome which you can't enter which is going to be revealed to the right hand side. So we've got three domes that you are aware of but you couldn't get into. There is a fourth very, very, very large dome to the far right hand side however that one does not have glasswork inside it. That is a sealed unit almost. So I'm going to reveal the other dome that you can see down into. There are, to be clear, other domes kicking around here however most of those are sealed. It's only these three core ones that appear to be fully glassed and open.

So as you start traversing across these rooftops looking for a few entrances you come to the conclusion that there are six domes dotted around the complex. Five of those are of a similar design to what you have seen previously and two of those are absolutely chock full of watcher plants. You couldn't move for them. They've flourished in there. Maybe some people tried to hole up in those spaces and it went bad, I don't know. The two middle ones appear to have nothing in there at all. The one on the far right is an enormous dome but is not glass and seems to be a sealed unit of some kind and of the two that are accessible, that you can see in and have nothing in there; one of them has windows open. The other one looks like it may have meant to have windows open and maybe has had a minor mechanical failure or something similar. So

there is one way in which is decent enough distance from any other beasties that you should be ok to climb down.

BEN

Sure

HELEN

Ok

BEN

Right, got a plan then yeah.

LYDIA

In there, then over there, hope the thing there.

BEN

I'm going to wall up the corridor so that the thing can't get us because I don't want to deal with that.

BRYN

Very wise.

HELEN

That's fair.

LYDIA

I like that. I like that.

ALEX

Right. Sounds like a plan.

And on that I am going to end the episode. Ooh look at you, you're playing so sensibly.

LYDIA

I wanted to blow it up!

ALEX

I was slightly sad to deny you a plane shift. Of all of the...I didn't expect you to pick it on that one. You just came at it in a slightly...

BEN

It's the biggest one! I've only got one of them a day. I've got to choose a good target.

ALEX

Ben, Ben, Ben. It's the biggest one that you can see.

(laughing)

BEN

I was always a bit worried about ooh the first one I see I'll plane shift away and you'd be like ah but here's an even...a giganticer...

(laughing)

ALEX

Assemble **meca** fossil construct

BEN

Ah this was my ablative goon.

(laughing)

ALEX

You may have discovered my success plan that has so far already started to serve me well. Right, anyway, we've got beasties to climb down and fight so until then, bye everyone.

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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