

RQG – 202 – Nom Nom Nom

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[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 202 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have

BEN

Ben Meredith

BRYN

Bryn Monroe

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas

HELEN

And Helen Gould

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ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith

BRYN

Um, er, Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

HELEN

Aww.

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom. Oh, wait, wait: (lisps) Cel Sidebottom, with fangs

ALEX

And, Azu. How are we doing? I've got half the party currently feeling all lackadaisical, I've got one of you starting to trip over your words...

BRYN

I'm doing all right, thanks.

ALEX

Yeah, you got a load of hit points, let's ignore you.

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LYDIA

So what's Hamid's charisma score now?

BRYN

15.

LYDIA

Yeah, so, so, Cel's is 6.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

But it expresses itself differently for different characters.

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

HELEN

That's true. That's true.

LYDIA

Cel is currently a beastie.

ALEX

So. We are currently in the very bowels of Svalbard and we're making friends!

HELEN

No.

ALEX

By literally scooping chunks of your personality and putting it into them! Thus friends are made.

LYDIA

That's how you make friends, yeah!

ALEX

However, this friend may have tactically miss-stepped a little bit, by placing himself in the middle of all of you and running out of move because Alex forgot he's playing Pathfinder instead of 5th Ed. So, if this turns into a comp stomp, you know, fair play, that's my fault.

HELEN

I don't think it will be.

ALEX

We are currently fighting, basically, the colour purple, I think is your description of it so far!

HELEN

(laughs) Colour outer space, no!

ALEX

With that in mind, then, can I please pass the turn, we're still initiative, to you, Cel. You are in a wide stairway corridor, facing off against the colour purple.

LYDIA

Mm, it seems to be a magically thing. I think Cel might know about as much as I do, in that magically things are probably immune to lots of stuff. But maybe magical frost bombs might actually do some damage?

ALEX

OK. Now, a couple of things I should make you aware of so...

LYDIA

Yep.

ALEX

This thing is deliberately up in everyone's grill

LYDIA

Yep.

ALEX

Most range attacks can trigger an attack of opportunity if you're trying to use a ranged attack up close.

LYDIA

Mm-hm.

ALEX

Also, if you want to move away from the creature in this system, you're going to want to take a five foot step...

LYDIA

Yeah, a five foot *flap*, Cel is flying.

ALEX

My mistake, you are correct, a five foot flap.

LYDIA

Yep.

ALEX

Otherwise you will be triggering attacks of opportunity as well.

LYDIA

That's cool. So, Cel is going to take a five foot flap. Can they five foot flap diagonally?

BRYN?

Yep.

ALEX

Yep.

LYDIA

Cool. There.

ALEX

Yep. So you're now next to Zolf. Zolf-loadsa-hit-points-Smith.

LYDIA

Yeah. And going to throw frost bombs into the middle of it. I can make the decision to throw one in, see what happens, and then decide whether to throw the next, can't I?

ALEX

Correct, yeah, that's absolutely correct.

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LYDIA

So. Going to throw first bomb.

ALEX

Understood. You will need an attack roll.

LYDIA

Yes, I, yes, I'm getting there.

ALEX

Ideally a terrible one.

LYDIA

No. That's 17.

ALEX

17?

LYDIA

Mm-hm.

ALEX

You miss. It goes waa-laa-laa and kind of warps around it. It's incredibly difficult to get a bead on it because it doesn't really have a shape.

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LYDIA

OK. That's -1 bomb.

ALEX

You didn't roll poor enough to hit your allies, though, I'll say for that.

BRYN

Do you have splash damage and do you apply that on a miss?

LYDIA

Yes.

ALEX

I would allow you to apply splash damage because this thing's big enough. It is, for listeners' benefit, about 15 feet by 15 feet across so...

BRYN

Yeah, so if you're throwing something into the middle of it...

LYDIA

In which case, it's 12 splash cold damage.

ALEX

Booooooo! Nothing happens.

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LYDIA

Nothing happens?

ALEX

Oh dear, nothing happens.

LYDIA

OK. Well, that's good. That tells me a lot.

BRYN

Mm.

LYDIA

Er, I don't have any other bombs that might do the...

BRYN

Then leave.

CEL

Yes, Cel flies off.

BRYN

You can't. You took a five foot step.

LYDIA

Cool. In which case, Cel isn't going to waste more bombs.

ALEX

Let's be honest, OK. Hamid's the delicious one here. You're probably fine. In which case, then, Zolf, you are up.

BEN

I cast shield of faith on Cel.

LYDIA

Mmm.

BEN

Which gives them a +2 deflection bonus to AC.

BRYN

Nice.

LYDIA

Oooh!

BEN

Yep.

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ALEX

Ooh, good shout, good shout.

BEN

With an additional +1 to the bonus for every 6 levels you have. OK, so you get +3 AC, +3, and you have that for ten minutes so, like, the fight, really.

ALEX

Yep. Yeah, yeah.

BEN

And then I will move, because I should take my own advice. Five, ten...

ALEX

No, not away, don't move away!

BEN

Twenty.

ALEX

Ah, this is going terribly! By which I mean it's actually going pretty much to plan. Azu, you are up.

HELEN

Right.

ALEX

Can I recommend holding your action again?

HELEN

No!

ALEX

And again and again!

HELEN

Azu is probably – see, Helen is thinking, you could try to hit the thing. But Azu is frightened and tired.

LYDIA

Mm.

HELEN

And I think is going to run instead. Especially because she said out loud, I agree with Zolf. Zolf is also running away. On the other hand, Azu is next to Hamid, so may instinctively attempt to protect Hamid. On the other other hand...

LYDIA

Toss the Hobbit!

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(Group laughter)

HELEN

Isn't he flying?

LYDIA

Ah. Mm.

ALEX

Yes, so that means you could throw him even further!

BEN

Throw him like a paper aeroplane.

HELEN

Hamid, are you injured? I mean, Bryn, are you injured?

BRYN

Only a tiny bit.

HELEN

OK.

ALEX

Visibly, Hamid seems fine.

BRYN

But I do have fewer hit points than normal because my con has been drained.

HELEN

OK.

ALEX

Nom nom nom nom nom nom nom.

HELEN

There's nothing I can do to help with that right now.

BRYN

Yeah.

HELEN

I think I'm going to do what Azu would do, which is, does not want to fight the thing, she does not know what it is, the last time she was in the void it was not great, she's going to say, Hamid come on! And move, might double move – one, two, three, four...

ALEX

Yep.

HELEN

Because she can't go the other... So she is moving away from the void for audience but the in the opposite direction to Zolf, because the void is between her and Zolf.

BEN

Yaaaas! Yaaaas!

BRYN

The void has split the party.

LYDIA

Oh dear!

ALEX

I'll have an attack of opportunity please.

HELEN

What? No!

BRYN

OK, if we knew it had reach, which you can presumably tell from the way its tendrils snake, you could instead of double moving take a withdraw action.

ALEX

Yeah. I'll allow you to make the withdraw action, but you will trigger an attack of opportunity. I misread its reach.

HELEN

Right.

BRYN

So the withdraw action means you only get to single move, instead of double move, you have to move in a straight line, but you do not trigger attacks of opportunity while withdrawing.

ALEX

It's an explicit thing, though.

BRYN

If you're moving away from enemies, in general.

ALEX

You can see that this thing has reach. What you can't tell is how much reach it has, because it has blaa-la-la-la-la shape.

LYDIA

It's tangly.

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ALEX

It is tangly. It's proper tangly.

HELEN

I am still going to move. Because it sounds like I'm going to get attack of opportunity anyway!

ALEX

Understood. So when you moved, you triggered an attack of opportunity. I sort of pre-rolled it before I blah-blah-blah, I haven't looked at the score....

HELEN

That's fine, I'm got to go here.

ALEX

What's your AC?

HELEN

My touch AC is only 9.

ALEX

OK, in which case then, give me a fort save?

HELEN

That's a 28.

ALEX

Boo. (laughs)

HELEN

(laughs)

ALEX

You take 11 damage. Are you carrying any mundane equipment like a backpack or something similar on your torso?

HELEN

Actually, yeah. I'm carrying mundane axes.

ALEX

Cool.

HELEN

And a morning star.

ALEX

As this thing sweeps out and basically stretches out to grab you as you go past, they disintegrate.

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HELEN

That's fine, I never use them anyway.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

They just...

HELEN

They're ornamental morning stars!

ALEX

They disintegrate, I don't feel so good Mr Stark-style.

HELEN

Oh no! (laughs)

BEN

Alex, I have realised, this is another way that you can yet again get Zolf to have a fight in the nude.

(Group laughter)

Because it is a running theme of the campaign, so...

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ALEX

You may be ahead of me again.

BEN

Excellent. Good stuff. I don't – I really need to get some magical underpants.

ALEX

Nope!

(Group laughter)

Nude Zolf for the win!

HELEN

There go the morning star, the two throwing axes and the adamantine axe that Azu picked up in Damascus, none of which I have used at any point during this campaign, I don't think!

ALEX

And they too have passed, like dust in the wind.

HELEN

Aww.

ALEX

Literally like dust in the wind. In which case, though, you do get your move off.

HELEN

OK, I'm just going to, just, I still yell at Hamid to hurry up and run away with me!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Elope, Hamid! Elope!

LYDIA

Slightly different vibe!

HELEN

Sod this dungeon, let's live together! (laughs)

ALEX

Skraak is up.

BEN

I was just going to say, I think you've only moved once, Helen, you can move again. Because you took attack of opportunity.

ALEX

Oh yeah!

HELEN

Oh, OK! In which case, I want to just have a little geography check with you. Is this, like, high up?

ALEX

So, by this you're talking about on the far side of the double doors there are a pair of thrones? Yes, there is about 30 feet in stepped seating between the sort of thrones, that's looking down into the dead plant monster, and a lit brazier between the throne and the plants.

Give me a knowledge arcana, actually. For free.

HELEN

I don't have any.

ALEX

OK. Give me just a roll, a D20.

HELEN

OK.

LYDIA

We've established what was going on in the magic lessons.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

The ever-burning brazier probably won't burn you, like ever-burning torches tend to be for light and warmth but not like actual, like, pain.

HELEN

OK.

ALEX

So, you've had your first move action, second move action?

HELEN

Right, so because there's a plant in this direction, that is where the thrones are, I'm going to continue on my trajectory and end up next to Skraak here.

ALEX

Yep, that's scans. In which case, then, Skraak is now up.

BRYN

Skraak is going to continue to retreat from the creature, still going the long way round this big circular corridor.

ALEX

I can't believe I've managed to get you retreating. It's been so many years, I'm so happy.

BRYN

I think they're going to double move!

LYDIA

Oooh, speedy!

BRYN

So they've still just...

ALEX

Ahhh! None of you has panicked and triggered a plant yet.

BRYN

They've still got just about line of sight back to the creature, but they've gone quite far round, which means they can see the whole rest of the corridor which you've already revealed for us.

ALEX

Yep.

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BRYN

Yep.

ALEX

Hey. Hey, Hamid.

BRYN

Yep.

ALEX

You're up.

BRYN

Withdraw action...

ALEX

Boo! The worst action!

BRYN

Two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. Straight line.

Flying.

ALEX

The worst action.

BRYN

Flying triples my movement speed and I love it so much!

ALEX

Excellent. At which point, the creature's turn. It doesn't move. It just seems to hover there, quite chill.

BRYN

Oh. Now that Cel threw a bomb at it, can I get another knowledge arcana check to try and work out why the frost didn't affect it? Or do I not have the time to do that in...

ALEX

Yeeeeeah, that's very cheeky but I'll allow it, because I'm hitting you with very weird stuff.

LYDIA

He's thinking while he runs.

(Group laughter)

BRYN

I rolled a 4, so it's probably irrelevant.

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ALEX

Nothing! You learn nothing!

BRYN

21 total, yeah.

ALEX

You learn nothing!

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

Nothing! Good. That pleases me. In which case, then, let me check something quickly, just going to do a cheeky little range find.

LYDIA

I think if the creature drains charisma from Cel, I mean, can you die of lack of charisma?

BRYN

So every stat has a specific effect when you get to zero. And I think the only one that kills you outright is if con gets to zero.

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LYDIA

Right.

ALEX

Charisma knocks you into a coma, if it drops to zero.

BRYN

Is that the effect? Sure, yeah.

ALEX

Mental stats put you into a coma.

LYDIA

Mm-hm.

ALEX

Physical stats put you into a permanent paralysis, apart from constitution, which is literally like your life force. So that's the one that'll kill you.

BRYN

Yeah.

LYDIA

Mm.

ALEX

You may be ahead of me, though. Can I have a will save, please, as this migraine just starts to, just seems to use up your entire world.

LYDIA

Yep.

(Group groans)

This is not going to go well. 7.

ALEX

Oh, no! Cel takes 3 charisma drain and 1 constitution drain.

LYDIA

OK.

ALEX

So your core charisma stat has gone down by 3 points...

LYDIA

To 3.

ALEX

And your core constitution has gone down by 1 point. And not the bonus has gone done, the core stat itself has.

LYDIA

OK, cool. So they are still oddly at a higher total hit points than they would have if they weren't a beast?

ALEX

Yeah, that scans.

LYDIA

But they're pushing near the ceiling of what they would be.

ALEX

Can everyone please give me, apart from Cel, a perception check.

BEN

15.

BRYN

21.

ALEX

For?

BRYN

Hamid. I don't think Skraak has line of sight to Cel, from the map?

ALEX

Mm, I still need a perception check from Skraak.

BRYN

OK.

ALEX

And from Azu as well, please.

HELEN

24.

ALEX

Oh, perfect.

HELEN

That makes me think the cut-off is 25!

BRYN

31 for Skraak!

ALEX

OK. Enough for basically everyone, even Azu.

HELEN

Yay!

ALEX

It wasn't clear on the first sort of drain, but certainly on the second one, as it's drained it seems to have gotten denser and it seems to glow brighter with a purple light, whereas before it was sort of a dim light, now it's a bright light that's coming out from it.

HELEN

Hmm.

ALEX

Definitely seeming to be powering up or something as it's feeding on people.

BRYN

Oh boy.

HELEN

Oh dear.

ALEX

In which case, then, it doesn't move. Cel, you're up. I will remind you, you know this creature has reach, you just don't know how far the reach is.

LYDIA

They're going to withdraw.

ALEX

Yeah, very sensible.

LYDIA

So they've moved 30 feet.

ALEX

Understood. In which case, then, Zolf, you are up.

BEN

Cool! How beat-up is Cel looking?

LYDIA

So, physically, they're not particularly wounded, but they are like nearly like slathering bestial. Like (beast sounds). I don't know what, how charisma, they seem very unlikeable, suddenly?

(Group laughter)

BEN

To be clear, you haven't taken much hit point damage then?

LYDIA

No, not a huge amount.

ALEX

Cel just looks like the kind of person who'd suddenly be really pro-banker and you're not sure why.

(Group laughter)

BEN

Goodness me.

LYDIA

At the moment, Cel really looks like they might vote Tory.

(Group laughter)

Which feels wrong, you know? You look at that and this feels deeply wrong.

But it's....

BEN

In which case I am going to cast sanctuary on them.

ALEX

Mm-hm.

BEN

Shout, don't attack, just run! And then move.

ALEX

Do you still have an extant sanctuary upon yourself as well, Zolf?

BEN

Mm-hm.

ALEX

Cool, cool, cool.

BRYN?

Yes, so basically, Lyd, if the creature attacks you it has to pass a DC 16 will save or it cannot. If you attack it, the effect ends.

LYDIA

OK.

BRYN?

Also, if it attacks you successfully, the effect also ends. So if anybody attacks anybody, the effect ends, but it will prevent you from being attacked, hopefully, for a bit.

LYDIA

Mm-hm. Cool.

ALEX

Azu, you're up.

HELEN

Keeps pegging it.

ALEX

Understood.

HELEN

So a double move would be 40 feet so, five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, slams into the wall a bit, I think that was thirty. Thirty-five, slams back into the wall a bit, and then that's...

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Clang bang, clang bang, argh, clang bang, bang bang bang, run, argh, clang bang bang!

In which case then Skraak is up.

BRYN

Continues to move.

ALEX

Understood. So for the listeners' benefit, everyone is now running down either side of this circular curve in a desperate attempt to sort of flee around it.

Hamid, you're up.

BRYN

I mean, Hamid is very tempted to cast a parting scorching ray before he flees.

ALEX

You do you do, you do you.

BRYN

How loudly did Zolf yell, don't attack it?

ALEX

You heard. This was a purely silent room and nothing that you are fighting has made a single sound. The only noises have been from yourselves.

BRYN

Hamid does not cast a spell on it. Right, so, that means I get to double move, which is 120 foot, so...

HELEN

Wow.

LYDIA

(aeroplane sound)

BRYN

Flying!

ALEX

Zoom!

BRYN

Five.

ALEX

Actually. Thinking about that, that's a really scary – if you actually visualise this encounter, this is just, you hear the cries of 'aah, urgh, aah, urgh' – no sound of the monster, no movement, no real combat, just...

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

Urgh, that's *weird*, I didn't really conceptualise that.

BRYN

Very spooky.

BEN

That's what happens when you're attacked by a colour!

(Group laughter)

BRYN

I've made it all the way round the curve, because flying is great!

ALEX

Ziiip!

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HELEN

Congrats to you. I'm going to be taking another two turns, has to run.

ALEX

Give me a will save?

HELEN

Who?

ALEX

You.

HELEN

Me?

ALEX

Azu. Give me a will save.

HELEN

Oh god, OK.

ALEX

Roll good.

HELEN

I don't, I don't like the sound of that, like at all, at all. Well, here we go. That's 21.

ALEX

Cool. You take 3 charisma drain and 1 constitution drain.

HELEN

What? But it hasn't touched me! That's not fair!

ALEX

Nope!

HELEN

That's not fair.

ALEX

It somehow doesn't move but starts to fill your vision, very migraine-style. You lose 3 charisma and 1 constitution. You are right, that's not fair, this is what happens, if you keep making me up my game, this is what it looks like! More maths for everyone!

So on that lovely, lovely, delicious nom nom nom, I'm going to take a break and come back in then nom nom nom some more and eat up all of your stats! Your delicious stats!

LYDIA

I mean, if it's actually eating the charisma, I think we're all just charmed by the void and can chuck in all the rest.

(Group laughter)

So I for one welcome our new very cool void overlord.

ALEX

Nom nom nom, nom nom, delicious player character stats, nom nom, Zolf, you're up, nom nom.

BRYN

Nooooo!

LYDIA

Stop nomming!

HELEN

Argh, OK.

LYDIA

Coincidentally, Cel at 3 charisma is making about that much sense.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Zolf, you are up.

BEN

Cool. I move twice. I'm just down the end of the corridor, I can now see back into the great hall or the grand chamber or council rooms.

BRYN

Hamid and Zolf have almost simultaneously come round those corners and seen each other across the huge dead plant.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Their eyes met, across a planty room.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

Azu, you are up.

HELEN

She's going to keep running, but she does want to hit it, but she's going to keep running. So she's going to go, er, the run action is just double my move speed, right?

BRYN

No, that's double move. Run is a specific thing. Don't do run, just double move.

BEN

Although, I mean, if you want to run in a straight line, you could do that. It's still a straight line.

BRYN

Yeah?

ALEX

I'd allow it.

BRYN

That's not an accurate representation of what 80 feet is, though.

BEN

No, no, it's not 80 feet but you can draw that line and, oh no, hang on a minute, you've got to get to at least like here to run past the blooming watcher plant.

BRYN

Yeah, so the fact that we also have to skirt round the watcher plants, I think the double move is better than...

ALEX

You are correct that this is built to stop you from just immediately going, Bye!!!!

HELEN

Right! Double move it is.

ALEX

Clang clang clang, bang clang clang, bang bang. Skraak is up.

BRYN

Skraak is going to move past the plant, but he's not going to move back into the main room, because he's going to keep an eye on Azu.

HELEN

Aah, thank you.

ALEX

Understood. Hamid, you're up, nippy boy.

BRYN

So, Hamid, I assume this is quite a big chamber with quite a high roof?

ALEX

Very high, yes.

BRYN

Hamid is going to fly forward a bit, back into the chamber and then up and try and get, because he needs to work around the watch plants and he's going to have a perspective from quite high up into this chamber, yeah.

ALEX

That's very easy to do, yeah, that's very very easy.

BRYN

And does looking down on the dead plant give him any extra information about what's there?

ALEX

Yeah, give me a perception check.

BRYN

Let's get a good roll, for the first time in a while, shall we?

HELEN

(laughs)

BRYN

That's a good roll. Aw, hells yeah, 33!

HELEN

Yay!

ALEX

33! OK, yeah, I can give you some more info with your top-down perspective. It looks like people were mid-experiment when this stuff went off.

BRYN

Oh dear.

ALEX

You're only really able to see it from the top down, because there's a big sort of wreath of tendrils and dead plant all around it which is kind of blocking a lot of the view.

BRYN

Hmm.

ALEX

But from the top down you can see that there's a large amount of sort of connected apparatus which more or less seems to be connected and, yeah, you get the distinct impression that someone was attempting to do something with this plant as it went off. There is a large amount of scientific equipment in the middle.

BRYN

Some sort of mechanism that might be designed to harm it, is what you're saying?

ALEX

I didn't say those words. Those are your words, but...

BRYN

No? OK.

ALEX

Definitely, there is a large amount of equipment in the very midst of it that you wouldn't have seen from the sides looking in.

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BRYN

It is dead, it is dead, isn't it?

ALEX

Still hasn't move. Smells *very* dead.

HELEN

Oh no.

BRYN

OK, earlier you also mentioned the emanation of purple light from it?

ALEX

So. The emanation of the purple light still seems to sort of faintly illuminate it.

BRYN

OK.

ALEX

You could get, mm, is detect action a standard action?

BRYN

Detect magic would be a standard action, yeah, so I...

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ALEX

You did detect magic earlier.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

You didn't detect magic on that plant. As far as you can tell, it might be an ambient effect similar to that...

BRYN

Oh weird, OK.

ALEX

Thing that was affecting – yeah, it's odd. To be clear, this isn't a mistake at my end, it's really odd. It's very odd behaviour.

BRYN

OK. OK. But I mean, that's my turn, move and observe.

ALEX

Understood. My new very charismatic friend, who I've decided now sounds like silky butter even though they're completely silent, is going to pass straight through the wall and fly into the main chamber.

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HELEN

No!

LYDIA

Oh, thank goodness!

BRYN

Yeah. I thought it might do that.

HELEN

Don't like it.

LYDIA

Very glad of that. Because otherwise Cel would probably be unconscious.

ALEX

So the first thing it does is it...

HELEN

Attacks Cel through the wall?

LYDIA

No!

ALEX

It flies straight through the wall into the main chamber, but as it does so – let me check something. Can everyone who can see into the main chamber give me a perception check?

BEN

Yep. 24.

BRYN

17 for Hamid and 21 for Skraak.

ALEX

Zolf, you're the only one that seems to notice this. It seems to have almost a drag effect towards the plant. So it flies in fine and then it's almost like, it's like there's a drain sucking it in towards the plant and it seems to be circumnavigating that. It's trying to cut Zolf off, it looks like, from the plant itself, but it seems to be struggling to navigate space around the plant. It seems to be getting drawn towards it somehow.

BEN

OK.

ALEX

It's a very subtle effect and you're the only one to notice it.

BEN

Sure. I will shout about it when it's my turn.

ALEX

Cel, you're up.

LYDIA

I think it's worth flagging here that playing – I'm thinking about playing a character who has 3 charisma – we've talked about migraines quite a bit and I at least, when I get migraine with aura, lose the ability to speak. And I'm just very aware that playing a stat that has dropped so low where some of the, like, reading up on what Pathfinder, how Pathfinder does it, I'm not all that comfortable with the way that it describes...

ALEX

That's fine, I understand what you're saying.

LYDIA

Like, social connections? So, just, yeah, flagging up for listeners, the way I am playing it is the sort of way that is something that happens to me quite a bit, which is losing ability to speak, and grab words, and...

ALEX

Sure.

LYDIA

And finding faces and social things very distressing and confusing. So that's just where I'm going with it, because I think it could go into an awkward direction if I wasn't conscious about being nearly unconscious.

ALEX

I get you, yeah, it scans, it follows.

BEN

Yeah.

BRYN

Yep.

LYDIA

If that makes sense. Yep, cool. I just wanted to flag that. And with all of that deep thinking around, Cel's just going to run, run – aaargh! – while probably making that noise – waaaaaah! But quietly. I think it's going to be a double move action so that they can steer around that watcher.

ALEX

Yep. So you're nippy and all. All right, Zolf, you're up.

BEN

It looks like it's being dragged towards the plant. If we can chuck it in, maybe it'll go away, I don't know.

LYDIA

Cel just winces at this, weirdly blank look at you.

BEN

Yeah, and to be clear, I am yelling that at, like, the room.

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah.

ALEX

I think you can hear him, I'll put it that way.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

BEN

And then I'll move past it, towards the plant? And maybe see if I can drag it along with me? I don't know.

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HELEN

Oh, Zolf!

ALEX

You will trigger an attack of opportunity.

BEN

Yep. It needs to make a will save.

ALEX

What's the DC of will save?

BEN

16.

ALEX

16.

BEN

Yep.

ALEX

25 to hit?

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BEN

Oh? Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, fine.

ALEX

Fort save?

BEN

25.

ALEX

25 – boo!

BRYN

(chuckles)

BEN

I'm not that concerned.

ALEX

It's only 11 damage; however, could you please describe to me what mundane equipment you are carrying?

(Group laughter)

Time for Zolf to lose his trousers again.

BEN

What area?

ALEX

Oh, that's a good – no, no, he's right, I need to pick an area.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Don't pick the trousers.

LYDIA

Oh! You're gunning for a *shirtless* Zolf! Interesting! Interesting!

ALEX

Torso.

BEN

My coat disintegrates.

ALEX

Awwwww! I liked that coat, you've had it ages.

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BEN

Yep. I'm still wearing, I do have a magical breastplate so that is...

ALEX

Sure, sure. But your coat's just (disintegrating sound) into dust.

BEN

Yeah. The trench coat.

HELEN

Poor old coat.

ALEX

Azu, you are up.

HELEN

All right. Keeps runnin'! One, two, three, crash into the wall, crash into the wall again...

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Clang bang clang bang clang bang etc.

LYDIA

Six. I think it's worth saying, because I just wasn't looking at the map the first time you said that, so I thought you were running into either side of the corridor! And I just think it's worth...

ALEX

Pinballing around!

LYDIA

Now I'm actually watching how Helen is moving the character, like, she's just hugging the edge of the wall, she's not banging into either side of the corridor.

BEN?

Like a bowling ball when the bumpers are up.

LYDIA

Yes, yes, exactly, like that's genuinely what I thought was happening! So just in case any of the listeners have as poor a spatial awareness imagination as I do – no.

HELEN

Right. Ends up there!

ALEX

Understood. Skraak is up.

BRYN

Skraak does nothing.

ALEX

Understood.

BRYN

Keeping an eye on Azu, keeping an eye over the room, maybe move a single step just to have a better vantage point.

ALEX

Yeah, that's fine. Hamid, can you give me a perception check please?

BRYN

(rolls) 30 total.

ALEX

As the...

BRYN

Oh no, sorry, I misread my dice. 28 total.

ALEX

It's still enough. As the colour purple moved into the main chamber, you're able to discern from your perspective a specific component within all of that morass of equipment. Still seems to be live and seems to have sort of activated by its presence, and seems to be eliciting a sort of faint purple glow as it is there and it definitely seems to have reacted to this thing's presence. The rest of the equipment seems dead.

HELEN

Ooh.

BRYN

Hamid uses his 60 foot of fly to land in the middle of the plant...

HELEN

(gasps)

BRYN

Next to all the equipment.

ALEX

Oh, Hamid. Ohhh, Hamid. Oh no!

HELEN

Aaaaaaaah!

ALEX

Oh, Hamid – you're fine.

HELEN

Oh my god! He's so switchy!

LYDIA

I always, whenever he does that, like the pitying voice, everything's going to be OK. It's like the weird reverse...

BRYN

Yep.

LYDIA

Like, oh no!

BRYN

I feel like he's signalling we have to use the mechanism to get rid of this thing?

HELEN

Mm...

BRYN

But if he's not signalling that, then fair enough, you know. He's being a good GM, he's not laying it out, but I feel like he is at least hinting at a potential out for this situation.

LYDIA

It's like, there's a hint in the room but I'm not sure where it is.

ALEX

What I'm enjoying doing is – the audience can't see the map, which is, the plant in the middle of the room is, what, five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, forty, forty-five, fifty...

HELEN

The plant is massive.

ALEX

Fifty-five, sixty, sixty-five – it's about, you know, sixty, seventy feet across on each side. I love putting the biggest, baddest monster in the middle of the room and then hitting you with something that you can't even see.

BRYN

I have asked like four different times whether it's definitely dead too, because I'm a bit scared!

ALEX

You landed in the middle of it. You notice that there seems to be a, purple glow seems to dance upon your skin. Almost like the spell fairy fire.

BRYN

Presumably Hamid recognises that spell. I can't remember what that does, off the top of my head. It sort of illuminates incorporeal stuff?

ALEX

It illuminates incorporeal stuff, it illuminates things that are invisible, it makes, it basically outlines stuff. It's basically like hitting something with a glitter bomb, really.

HELEN

(laughs)

BRYN

I guess I take my standard action to study whatever mechanisms are here, to work out what they're doing and how they're used?

ALEX

Give me a knowledge arcana.

BRYN

Yeah, this would be a really good time for a good roll. (rolls) Ah, 19! Get in!
That is a total of 36.

?

Yes!

ALEX

36? Congratulations on hitting the high [unclear 0:29:42] I didn't think people would necessarily hit.

BRYN

(laughs)

HELEN

Oooh!

ALEX

So. I'm not joking, it was 35.

BRYN

I'm not surprised, that sounds about right for a high level thing.

ALEX

So. Someone has been using magitech here.

BRYN

Mm.

ALEX

Specifically to force planar adjustments in a localised space. Now, what that actually means for this is, you are confident from that, you look at this and go *brainwave* moment, you look at this and just go, I, ah, I know what it is, I know what all this is! Basically, the glowing component appears to be a kill switch.

HELEN?

OK!

LYDIA

Booo!

ALEX

That appears to be a kill switch. All of this apparatus around it appears to have been an attempt at basically kicking it into life. It appears to have a power source that is derived from planar interactions themselves. So you know how a thermocouple takes energy from a hot place and a cold place?

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

Smash them together, you get energy? That, but with planes. This thing is fuelling itself using the planes. All of this apparatus seems to have been used to kick it into gear, now that it's extant, it's on there, you're pretty certain it is feeding on the energy of whatever that big thing is that's been attacking all of you, and you're all but certain that the one live component is the now viable kill switch and that what it's trying to do is kill the planar activity that is in the immediate area and you also see that there is an easy way to disconnect it. All of this other apparatus has been moved up in its creation. That's your boy.

BRYN

OK, that is probably my six seconds.

ALEX

Like I said, brainwave!

BRYN

Yeah, so, I don't know if I should ask more now or if I should wait until my next initiative turn, but obviously I want to grab this thing and fly off with it, which I can't do till next turn anyway, really, but I also want to know, is there like an obvious off switch and do I think pressing it would kill the weird planar entity in this room, or disconnect it from this plane?

ALEX

You rolled such an obscenely high...

BRYN

It was a really good roll, it wasn't an actual 20, but...

ALEX

Obscenely high. There is what seems to be an off switch. You think that the solution that you're looking for might be to bring this thing closer to it, rather than to try and turn it off. If you turn it off, you're more likely to make life easier for it. This thing is hunting...

BRYN

Cool.

ALEX

For planar energy to eat...

BRYN

Yep, yep.

ALEX

You are clearly fighting some kind of planar entity that has either been created by the plant or created by the device, you're not sure. But that's the interaction at play here.

BRYN

OK. If there's time, I will use a free action to shout:

I think this thing might stop it!

And that is definitely all I have time for.

ALEX

Understood. At which point, the creature is facing off against a tasty, tasty boy full of hit points.

HELEN

Noo!!

BEN

Yep.

ALEX

Rather distressingly, and I'm annoyed because this is Ben playing well, it makes no sense for it to attack anyone else. I really *want* it to, but it doesn't.

BEN

Yep.

HELEN

Aw.

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ALEX

So I would guess I'm going for beefy hit-points McGee...

(Group laughter)

What's your touch AC?

BEN

Yeah, go on, drain my hit points, see if I care!

(Group laughter)

Or my charisma. See if I care!

ALEX

What's your touch AC?

BEN

Oh, right, 15.

ALEX

OK. It hits, at least. Give me a fort save, that'll ruin my day?

BEN

Eurgh, it's a rubbish roll. Er, 17.

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ALEX

OK, finally! And then I roll rubbish. Fine. It's 19 damage.

BEN

Er... cool.

ALEX

Aaaand, do you have anything sort of upon your arms or basically upper half of the body that's mundane?

HELEN

But your trousers are fine!

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Equipment but not living flesh, and hair counts as living flesh.

BEN

Er....

LYDIA

Suspenders, so his trousers fall down!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

No, I said upper half, I rolled for it, I'm sorry, I want it to be the trousers, I really, really want to see it, but...

BEN

My shirt?

ALEX

If you haven't, if it's already gone, it's fine, but anything that you are wearing, basically, from the waist up that is non-magical is gone. It's just (disintegrating sound).

BEN

Oh right, yeah. So my shirt, I'm just wearing, I've just got a breast plate on at this point.

ALEX

Yeah. That's fine. In which case, then, I think that's all it does. I do hate it when you play correctly, Ben. It does harsh my buzz.

BEN

What can I say?

HELEN

Good.

ALEX

Cel, you're up.

LYDIA

Cel's going to fly in and then from, let's say they've done one move action, so they're at the, what's the word, threshold of the big circly thing?

ALEX

Yep, at the threshold of the main chamber.

LYDIA

But let's say, high up. I'm going to say, they don't need to fly upwards because they're just maintaining the height that they had in the corridor, which had stairs going down, so they're just high as, maybe five, ten, fifteen up...

ALEX

Yeah, that's scans.

LYDIA

In which case I'm just going to wonder if they can do a perception check and so begin to see what's going on with the mechanism-y stuff, because that's the sort of thing they might be useful in.

ALEX

Give me a perception check.

LYDIA

Ah, that's a 16. They get a 16.

ALEX

Definitely, someone was doing an experiment, but with that you're not...

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

You're not spotting high enough for the info that Hamid's managed to gain.

LYDIA

I mean, Cel is fatigued or whatever, magically sleepy and drained, they're not at, like...

ALEX

Cel's got a lot on. They have a *lot* on.

LYDIA

Cel's got a lot on right now! Cel, like, looks at the sort of experiment that often they literally dream about, like, but you are within a Cel daydream of magitech and biomechanical weirdness and they're just like, aaaah, I've got a headache!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

In which case, then, Zolf, you're up.

BEN

Cool. I will convert the level 4 spell divine power into a cure critical wounds on myself.

ALEX

Understood.

BRYN

Solid.

ALEX

That works.

BEN

4 D8 + 10. Oh, god, I don't have that many D8s!

(Group laughter)

D8s.

ALEX

4 D8? 4??? Why not just ask for a D12 and be done with it, god!

BEN

Er, 20, 34.

ALEX

I love the idea of Ben at, you know, his game shop: Can I interest you in this D8? No, I'll have 19 more D6s though!

(Group laughter)

BEN

I mean, in my dice bag, because I play World of Darkness and Exalted, I have, like, 40 D10s.

BRYN

Yep.

(Group laughter)

BEN

So many dice that you run on – but, yeah, so I'm back up to 60 hit points, and then I...

ALEX

I hate it, I hate it.

BEN

Don't do anything, because I'll provoke an attack of opportunity and that's it, yeah. Oh wait, no no no, no. I'll take a five foot step towards the plant closer, just to, you know, draw it on.

ALEX

I hate you, I hate you so much! Azu, you're up.

HELEN

Still runnin'!

ALEX

Clang bang, clang bang, clang bang, clang bang.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Bang. Bang...

ALEX

Azu is an artillery cannon, by which I mean, you don't move around quickly but you really hurt when you hit!

HELEN

So that's one of my moves, and then five...

ALEX

Azu, you see Hamid in the depths of the dead plant, lit with an eldritch purple glow..

HELEN

Yep.

ALEX

You see Zolf facing off against an admittedly also purple glow.

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

Cel is, is...

LYDIA

You see Cel, with a headache!

ALEX

Cel has a headache. What do you do?

HELEN

I yell, Hamid, get out of there!

ALEX

Fair play. Skraak is up.

BRYN

So Skraak has just, as Azu comes past him, will just check that you're OK, basically.

HELEN

Awww!

BRYN

And then run with you, and keep on running. And probably kind of head slightly back towards the north to get a better vantage point over the room while avoiding the watcher plants, quite close to, you know, the kind of, the edges of the big dead plant, but not, like diving into it.

ALEX

Understood. Hamid, you're up.

BRYN

Hamid grabs the power source, the planar power source thing.

ALEX

You are certain, by the way, because you've been careful, you can grab and yank...

BRYN

Yep.

ALEX

There's no, like, ten actions to uncouple it or anything.

BRYN

Yep. Yeah, Hamid does that. And then uses his fly move to move up and over the plant towards the creature, depending on exactly how, he's probably going to have to go up a bit and then along a bit, so can probably get to about there, I reckon, but higher up? So he's basically still over the plant but, like, higher up enough to be out of the plant in a literal sense.

ALEX

Argh, I hate both of you for a reason that I can't articulate! Understood. It is clear as you move closer this is warping up towards whatever it is, like it is being elongated out. And then it is its turn. The most damning blow. (sighs) It moves five foot closer to Hamid.

BRYN

Yaaaay!

ALEX

Because of how its behaviours work. (slurping, sucking sound) Think Ghostbusters when they're sucking it into the trap. There is a sudden bright blinding white arcing light that splits between the two, as whatever this thing is and whatever that device is interact with one another violently. It is a searing bright magnesium flare white. Everyone is temporarily blinded, just, there is nothing to see but whiteness. And as all of your vision returns, my new charismatic friend is missing.

BRYN

And for flavour, because it took a five foot step, I definitely try and take an attack of opportunity and it's schlorped away from my blade!

(Group laughter)

HELEN

You just shake your fist at it!

BRYN

Yep.

ALEX

OK. Fair play.

BRYN

I'm just glad I didn't have to fly inside it, suddenly.

HELEN

Yeah. Me too.

ALEX

I had considered it, but no. Yeah. Congratulations. Would you like to know...

BRYN

Eurgh.

LYDIA

Yay.

ALEX

A fact to do with this that will please you immensely, Helen?

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HELEN

Yeah?

ALEX

Would you like to know what that monster was called?

HELEN

What was it called, Alex?

ALEX

The colour out of space.

HELEN

Yeah! (laughs)

BRYN

Because Pathfinder and D&D are *nothing* if not derivative.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

OK, fairplay.

HELEN

Can I recommend the Nicholas Cage film, the Colour Out of Space, as something that's absolutely buck wild! (laughs)

ALEX

Fair play, I have to admit, you have engaged and managed to avoid the panic I hoped to ensure, you didn't trigger your watches, and you've got yourself a kill switch, so I...

LYDIA

Cel is pretty, I mean panicked isn't quite the right word, like, I mean, yeah like, oh, everyone's fine! Cel's over there, like, massaging their forehead and rocking slightly like, (groaning sounds).

HELEN

Well, we're alive and we can comfort each other afterwards. And then we need to run again. It'll be all right.

ALEX

Yes. But until then. Bye, everyone.

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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