

RQG – 205 – A Barret Problem

Content Warnings

- X
- X

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 205 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 – 205 – A Barret Problem

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom

HELEN

And Azu

ALEX

And who's the best GM? Who's the best GM who brings you all nice things?

Lets you rest, lets you stock up, you know...have a conversation. Who is that?

LYDIA

Wait, has the fluff side of AO3 taken over the GM slot?

(laughing)

BEN

Well I was gonna say I think I did some decent GM'ing recently so I think it might be me.

BRYN

Yeah I was gonna say Lydia. I'm really enjoying the game Lydia's running. The non recorded one.

BEN

Yeah

LYDIA

Oh no you can't tell the fans about that!

(laughing)

We have fun that's not recorded!

BRYN

Not everything is content!

ALEX

I'll have you know I do no such thing! How dare you? Every aspect of my life remains a commodity for other's benefit.

(laughing)

And I'll hear nothing against it.

So as we are all now back in The One That Got Away we've opened all of our pressies and have been doing that thing where you kind of faff around with them on Christmas Day, you know, have a look at it in the mirror, test it out a little bit, maybe if it's a go kart drive it around the table a few times. That kind of thing.

BRYN

Hamid's going to use his magical garment sleeves to create pop open panels in the back of his clothing so the wings won't ruin any actual material when they come out in future.

ALEX

Ah that's a good point because yes, let's not forget, in the standard Christmas way, large, scaled wings popped out of your back. You know the standard Christmas morning response.

BRYN

Happens to me all the time. Yeah, yeah.

HELEN

Azu is definitely wearing the armour. I mean you wear a Christmas jumper when you get it so just put that on.

(laughing)

ALEX

Just don't sneeze and activate it.

BRYN

Hamid just looks significantly more scaly and dragon-y now. This is more or less his final form.

HELEN

Oh

LYDIA

Oh dang

ALEX

So many memes have just been shut down.

LYDIA

You'll get through it.

HELEN

There are nine more levels.

LYDIA

Hamid's very likely to survive whatever is going to happen.

ALEX

You don't know the mathematical odds there. Don't throw words around like "likely"

BRYN

With Skraak's new con bonus, Hamid definitely has the fewest hit points in the party now.

ALEX

I will clue listeners in to, I have heard the party quietly discussing amongst themselves, they now have combos. Actual, goddamn combos so I am going to up my game something fierce against this...this bloody teamwork that's starting to rear its ugly head in our midst. None of that.

Anyway with the continued, I call it, "downtime", I'm going to get a little bit mucky with time in that I don't have a need to be like five minutes, ten minutes, five minutes, ten minutes. Anything like that. So I'm going to go a little bit mucky with it. To pick up where we left off though with a couple of bits of info there was a package left for Sumutnyerl but Sumutnyerl did not turn up to breakfast.

HELEN

Oh.

ALEX

Beyond that I would say that you, at some point during breakfast, will get an update. Ada will poke her head in and just say that things are going really well with the kill switch. They've already begun the deconstruction process. They've found out what was causing the issues at Svalbard and it's not going to be a problem here. By all accounts it seems to be going very, very well though she's asked everyone to be a bit nice to Tesla because he did a Tesla standard which is immediately pull an all nighter with no regards to the next morning so he is probably gonna end up resting for the majority of the day but all accounts they're very confident they're gonna crack it any moment now.

BRYN

Thank you for the update and thank you for the equipment as well.

HELEN

Yes!

ALEX

What equipment?

HELEN

Wha-?

ALEX

Oh the...it looks nice on you.

HELEN

Azu poses

(laughing)

ALEX

I like it. It's...

HELEN

New equipment!

ALEX

Oh yeah that was probably Augusta. It is her job, make sure that we don't lack anything.

HELEN

Hmm. Where's Sumutnyerl?

ALEX

I don't know.

BRYN

Should we check on her?

HELEN

Yeah

BEN

It's fine Lovelace, thank you. You...do what you need to do. We can deal with the other stuff.

ALEX

Cool, yeah, great. Ok, well I'm going to get back to it. I'd just ask everyone to keep the volume down a little bit because we don't want to...basically we don't want to disturb Tesla while he's having a rest. Nikola has been pushing himself a bit hard again. She just gives a double thumbs up and a rare, less nervous, grin being like – good news. Good news is good. I like good news – and then just kind of rushes back off down to the labs.

HELEN

Aw. She's nice.

BEN

Right, who's going to go find Sumutnyerl then?

BRYN

I'm happy to.

LYDIA

I mean I feel particularly...even more than usual, capable of noticing things so I am up for that challenge. Let's go find a bear.

HELEN

I'll come with you.

BEN

Maybe take the gift as well.

LYDIA

Oh yes. Yes.

ALEX

So yeah you know where Sumutnyerl's room is. You've all been here before.

LYDIA

I know so many things. More things than any creature that has ever lived.

(laughing)

ALEX

In that case then can I get a perception check please from Cel.

LYDIA

Bah, bah, bah...23.

ALEX

23. Ok cool. You think that Sumutnyerl is in their room. There is maybe the quiet sounds of movement, things like that. It...basically there's someone in that room, there's nothing particularly beyond that that's really worth discerning and you're not...you're not hearing mad they called me, mad or anything like that. It's just someone is in a room being quiet.

LYDIA

Not two people in the room?

ALEX

No. Actually you know what you would hear? They sound like they're writing.

LYDIA

Ooh ok. Knock on door.

HELEN

Yeah

ALEX

What?

LYDIA

Hey Sumutnyerl, just to say...so exciting news, we all got presents. I don't know if you celebrate any festivals or anniversaries which involve presents but I mean I hope you do because it is whatever day that is for you. You have a present. They've all been very good so far. Mine involves noticing things and somehow also my bombs.

HELEN

Also are you alright?

LYDIA

Yes. Oh yes, that.

ALEX

I'm fine. That's very kind.

You hear the sound of shuffling, someone putting a chair back and coming over and then the door opens a crack revealing Sumutnyerl. She looks like she hasn't slept particularly well.

HELEN

Oh

ALEX

She just looks a little bit like wearied. She sort of sees the package – thank you, that's very kind.

LYDIA

Well it wasn't us that got it but we...do you want to open it with us? We can tell you about our presents and it's...you can tell us about yours or would you not like that...

ALEX

You're all valued friends but solitude is not always a punishment.

LYDIA

No, no I get that. I understand a lot of things right now. It's actually a bit confusing and distracting knowing so many things but yes...

ALEX

I would ask your patience.

LYDIA

Sure

ALEX

For a while

HELEN

Alright

BRYN

Of course and we don't want to crowd you. We have a lot to talk about and we'll get on with the discussions...there's certainly points at which your expertise would be very much appreciated but there's no rush if you'd be able to join us at any time later today.

ALEX

I understand this, that's fine.

BRYN

Your perspective on some things would be really valuable so sorry to crowd you.

ALEX

That's fine.

Everyone who's there give me a sense motive.

BRYN

Oh natural 20.

ALEX

Nice

BRYN

25 total

LYDIA

18

HELEN

18

ALEX

Sumutnyerl says the following and I'll give you an additional for those insight checks. Sumutnyerl's just like – being here is merely a struggle. I will prevail but I ask only to be left until I am needed.

On sense motives I think Hamid's the one who probably would get the read on this one. Struggle seems to be an understatement. You don't think that there's a magical other worldly thing that's sapping the life out of her but anything but you think that Sumutnyerl being here in this place with this person etc. etc. it's probably taken Sumutnyerl beyond her limits and that she's been relying more on discipline than she has on actual strength, let's say. This is someone who has been pushed too far and is handling it very well but, basically they're not under an external influence, they just really probably need to be left alone because it is taking a psychological strain on them

HELEN

Well take care of yourself and we're here if you need anything.

ALEX

Of course.

LYDIA

We...you know, we care about and respect you Sumutnyerl and I really hope you're not blaming yourself for anything or feeling in any way...

ALEX

You are all amongst the greatest people I have ever known and I consider myself privileged to have spent this time with you.

LYDIA

Oh shucks

HELEN

Well you too.

ALEX

Though I do ask that I might retire for now.

HELEN

Yes of course. That's...

ALEX

Sumutnyerl just gently starts to close the door in a just leave me alone kind of way.

HELEN

Yeah. Azu backs off

ALEX

Eventually you hear the sounds of someone sitting down and starting to write back again.

BRYN

Yeah I head back to the parlour or...

LYDIA

Yeah that does actually remind me, I should get...we should...well I definitely have some things I should say to people that aren't here but I dunno who would take a message if we don't come back because if we don't come back what is there to come back to. I think I...

BRYN

I mean Einstein might be able to deliver them to somewhere...

LYDIA

That is true. Thank you Hamid. That is a great point. I am going to go and write some, you know, just in case because I'll be distracted by the celebrations when we all get safely and alive.

HELEN

Yes

BRYN

Good idea, yeah. I might have to write a letter at some point as well.

LYDIA

Cel slinks back – do you know where we can get some paper?

BRYN

Well there seem to be a lot around for the report writing so there's probably a stationary cupboard somewhere.

LYDIA

That is true. Under the printer...the...stack that's under there under all of the little stamps that you use to print things. Yes. The wad of paper, yes.

HELEN

Also, you know, sometimes it's helpful to write things down even if you don't send things.

LYDIA

Don't expect to die in a fight with a giant plant. No, I mean...whatever. Let's all be happy. Yes. Cel goes off to get some paper.

HELEN

Azu's going to look at Cel very seriously and just be like – I'm going to do my best to make sure that none of us die.

LYDIA

I appreciate that Azu. I really do and I think...I think that we all actually have a pretty good shot at this.

HELEN

So do I. I think we will prevail and if we don't then it was worth it anyway.

LYDIA

I agree. It has been wonderful getting to know you and I really look forward to all of the dinner parties and the holidays that we'll go on afterwards. I know that if things don't go great I don't wanna leave any threads.

BRYN

Of course, of course and yes as Azu said it's been such a pleasure getting to know you Cel and I'm so glad you decided to come with us. We couldn't have done this without you but even if not for that, it's just been really nice getting to work with you in any way.

LYDIA

I see you're...you know it's...I see you like the wing thing I had going on. Have I told you, I actually brewed a potion that I was...I was really loving the flame breath thing so I tried to whip up something that would do something similar but somehow it came out sparkly and electric. I haven't...

BRYN

Oh that's so cool.

LYDIA

I just so admire your work.

BRYN

I've actually been experimenting with new spells and I think I have one that plays with the electricity too.

LYDIA

Really?

BRYN

Because everything up to now it has been fire but it seems like electricity can be really great...

ALEX

This sounds like combo talk to me! Filthy, filthy teamwork. Less of that. I see what you're sneaking into my game!

BRYN

That little chat probably goes on for a while.

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah it does.

ALEX

There's a reason that I dive in at that point there.

BRYN

Hamid finds lots of ways to compliment Cel on how badass they are.

LYDIA

And Cel finds lots of ways to compliment Hamid.

ALEX

So did I hear that Cel wanted to go and write some letters for a little while.

LYDIA

Yes, yes

ALEX

Can I get a hint as to who these might be to.

LYDIA

They're addressed...like literally they same the names on the top. So there's **Ayko and Ena**, Cel's stepsons, Yukko's boys and one to James. James Barnes

HELEN

Oh!

LYDIA

Because they had a thing. They were actually getting on really well and they were going to make that boat...if I'm not here then I suppose you can make the boat. It's written very much in the way that Cel talks.

ALEX

Well given Cel's perfect recall it'll be something like we'll work on that boat/dock/cottage because you never really managed to pin it down

(laughing)

LYDIA

I mean it's not that Cel has a bad memory, it's that...I mean the way memory works is you're constantly...

ALEX

No I just mean that Barnes had no idea what he wanted to do.

LYDIA

Oh yeah, yeah. So it will be like an embellishment with lots of...and there might even be if I don't make it back, these are the measurements and the materials that you should use that I think would actually get you the affect and the functionality that you've been looking for.

ALEX

I've taken the liberty of providing schematics, an item list.

LYDIA

Yeah that is Cel's love language.

HELEN

Aw

ALEX

There is a small tap, tap at Cel's door.

LYDIA

Hello? Yes? It's not locked. I don't even think it has a lock.

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ALEX

Hi

LYDIA

Hi

ALEX

Hey. Do you have a moment?

LYDIA

Sure Skraak, come in. You wanna sit down? What's up? How can I help?

ALEX

Erm...I have a favour.

LYDIA

Sure, anything.

ALEX

It's a bit awkward.

LYDIA

I mean anything I can do, I'll try. I mean I...

ALEX

Skraak takes a moment and seems to be sort of like assembling a thought. Whatever happens next is going to be big. I want to make sure if I don't come out the other side, someone goes in and checks on the rest of the gang on The Vengeance where we left them.

LYDIA

I think that makes sense.

ALEX

Can I...can I ask that of you Cel please? I know it's a lot.

LYDIA

Skraak I will absolutely...if I get out and you don't, I mean firstly something's gone terribly wrong because I really hope that we all make it out but you never know how these things are gonna go so I'd like to say I wouldn't let myself get taken first but you never know, actually how these things work out. That might not be the optimal battle play and what matters is that we save the world, not that we come out feeling like we're perfect heroes. Anyway...

ALEX

I just mean that I know if you were trapped on a desert island with just a rock you'd use it to make an airship and still go find them and that...that's something I can trust in so can I ask that of you?

LYDIA

Cel's eyes are going...you know where people's eyes go off in the corner when they're doing a complicated maths problem.

(laughing)

Because Cel is distracted by the idea of how one would make an airship out of a rock but fortunately they swing back into focus as Skraak is continuing and ends the thought. Skraak, I care so much about the people that we left behind. This is...I'm not gonna promise you that I'm gonna go check on them because that is something that if I have the opportunity and if I am walking and breathing I am going to do for myself but I will also tell everyone there how much it was important to you to get back to them and I will talk about what you did in Svalbard and how brave you are being always the one to check through those doors and seeing...

ALEX

That's not bravery you know. Azu's amazing at hitting stuff but she does clank

(laughing)

LYDIA

I mean that is true. Yes. Yes.

ALEX

It's like picking a fight with a cutlery drawer, it just...

(laughing)

LYDIA

A very wonderful cutlery drawer. I will tell them what you did and I will tell them that you miss them and I will tell them how much you wish you could be there.

ALEX

Thanks

LYDIA

Will you do the same for me?

ALEX

Oh yeah. Obviously.

LYDIA

Cool. I have these letters. I'm gonna leave them here because I think the man that can teleport could possibly take them if things go very weird and wrong and none of us make it out I guess but I would like you to know where they are and take them if you go.

ALEX

Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah. No worries. Well I don't want to keep your time.

LYDIA

No, no Skraak...

ALEX

You do your letters and I'll...

LYDIA

Cel's going to bend down and hold their arms out for a hug.

ALEX

Skraak looks around to check that the door's closed.

(laughing)

The door is closed. Skraak gives a quick hug with Cel.

LYDIA

Once the quick hug has started, Cel will squeeze Skraak tight. Not holding them long because if Skraak only wants a quick hug then that's fine.

ALEX

You get a little pat, pat on the shoulder from a tail.

LYDIA

That's fine.

BRYN

Nice

LYDIA

I think Cel would hope it turns into a long hug but if Skraak shows any signs of wanting to go they're not going to hold them.

ALEX

I mean I like to think that Skraak uses track of time but nonetheless ends it as if it was a quick hug regardless of how long the hug was.

LYDIA

Oh god, that's heart breaking. Like squeeze, the moment, and then the like what...that...oh...yep...this is possibly too much detail about the hug

ALEX

I've got to go fix the maps because it's a mess down there. And Skraak closes the door and you hear the tap, tap of claws heading off down the corridor.

With that, I'm in a peculiar limbo because on the one hand there's enormous discussions to be had about Babbage and...why did I give two characters names that begin with Ba...

LYDIA

You didn't name Barret. I did.

ALEX

What a...

LYDIA

You shouldn't have allowed that.

ALEX

Well either way we've got a lot to talk about so I've got to hand the helm over to others and be like what do people want to talk about next? You've got time and I never know what to do when you've got time.

Ok we're gonna take a break...

HELEN

While we all sit here in silence.

ALEX

And have a think about what we're gonna do and then we'll come back.

LYDIA

Have a break and think about what you've done.

ALEX

I can't keep fuelling this story train with explosions. I have to use other fuels sometimes!

And welcome back. So unless someone has an idea for a scene they want to do there will be an explosion and I'm just gonna make it. Something or someone is just gonna explode. Tough.

LYDIA

Cel doesn't have a problem with that.

HELEN

In the interest of avoiding explosions, I think Azu's going to go down and...I'm so sorry for Cel...

LYDIA

No that's cool. I like the idea of like they've kind of secluded themselves away to have some deep think-y, oh you know woe is...well it's not really woe is me, it's more emotions, let's process them and it's just like ah but they're our friends. That's how life works.

ALEX

Hi Cel, I hear that you're carrying other people's baggage I just want to
[dropping noise]

HELEN

It's not Azu's baggage...

LYDIA

It's a sharing of baggage.

HELEN

Shared. Shared baggage.

LYDIA

We are all in a lovely baggage train together carrying each other's stuff and the burden feels less for...

ALEX

I am more familiar with circling the caravans. This is a new thing for me.

LYDIA

I see.

HELEN

Well Azu's gonna knock on the door anyway.

LYDIA

Cool, yes. Hi, hello. Yes?

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HELEN

Hello, it's me. Just me. Hello.

LYDIA

Oh hello friend.

HELEN

Can I come in?

LYDIA

Sure. Come on little buddy. I mean taller than me I suppose.

HELEN

I'm a big buddy. Alright. She comes in and then suddenly she looks like she doesn't really know...she suddenly looks uncertain.

LYDIA

Are you ok?

HELEN

Er...yes I'm ok

LYDIA

Oh. Good.

HELEN

I wanted to talk to you about Barret.

LYDIA

I mean I have had very few conversations with him.

HELEN

Oh. No. Like so Zolf's going to kill him.

LYDIA

Yes he says that.

HELEN

Yes he does.

LYDIA

I....that worries...I mean I'm not, if I'm honest, ok with that. I had thought that there might be some opportunity to change his perspective or maybe move him away from Barret.

HELEN

But I don't know if he's wrong...like...

LYDIA

Well what's his justification? Barret's evil?

HELEN

Essentially yes and will continue to be terrible.

LYDIA

Lots of people are evil and it's...I mean Barret doesn't seem to be more evil than a lot of other people who have messed up the world and that's not saying that Barret is ok, it's saying that what stops evil is not finding individual people and deciding that they're bad and getting rid of them, it's working together to create systems that makes it harder for evil people to triumph.

HELEN

Yes but he...I'm not disagreeing with you but I'm not really disagreeing with Zolf either. It's just...it's just...so I believe in Aphrodite and I follow Aphrodite and the first and most important rule is that love is very important and should come before everything else but also I think...I wonder if killing him would stop harm which is also part of what I should do but also he seems very weak and pathetic.

LYDIA

So I have to say I don't think that him being weak or pathetic is a reason not to hurt him. I think us not becoming executioners is a reason not to execute him. I mean I don't...I don't know if he is as weak as he might appear to be right now. It sounds like he was quite powerful in the past.

HELEN

Yes and that's the other thing.

LYDIA

And I wouldn't trust his appearance now although also probably I wouldn't have trusted his appearance when he was powerful. He may have acted like he was a lot more powerful than he actually was. That's always a thing that people do.

HELEN

But the thing is you're very good at thinking things through and I...

LYDIA

I worry, do you think that Zolf thinks that killing Barret will make him feel better about his friend that died or was trapped...I'm not that sure about the details. Do you think that Zolf thinks that?

HELEN

Maybe

LYDIA

Because I think...

HELEN

But I also think that even without that I think Zolf looks at Barret and sees part of what got us here. Which is true. Literally Barret's actions are part of what brought all this...

LYDIA

But so are Tesla's and so are Sumutnyerl's and...

HELEN

But they didn't mean it. Do you know what I mean?

LYDIA

I think a lot of people do very terrible things thinking that they're doing good.

HELEN

But Barret never thought he was doing good. He doesn't care.

LYDIA

I don't know if I...like arrogance is...and ideas of being pure and good, I think, can do just as much harm as being ha, ha, ha I'm so evil, fear me. It's...people that think that they're doing the right thing that can do the most harm. They're drive by righteous zeal, you know. Not that there's anything wrong with righteousness.

HELEN

No, no.

LYDIA

You're kind of righteousness is great because it's tempered by all of this thinking and worrying and wondering what's right and that's what makes it ok like you're like I wanna do what's right but by thinking about what would do the most good. I just...I don't...I kind of, I like Zolf and I don't want him to kill Barret and then stand there afterwards thinking, well nothing feels better and then be angry and regretful and...

HELEN

Yeah he doesn't need more of that.

LYDIA

Oh yeah he already has quite a lot...he has quite a lot of that. But I don't have a solution. I don't know. I can't see what Barret is going and I can't see the harm he's gonna do. I...when it comes to it I will not let Zolf execute Barret in front of me and I will try and stop him from doing that but Mr...Zolf is very powerful and I know that he probably could take me down in a fight.

HELEN

I don't think he would fight us. He said he wouldn't...he said it wouldn't be worth it.

LYDIA

Yeah I don't think anything would be fixed by fixing Barret, right. I think that you kill him, how many more people are there that are going to try and take control in the power vacuum that we're gonna create in what comes after. We just...we'd relax and let someone else even worse come along and fix things in the name of doing good. Maybe I'm not making any sense.

HELEN

No...

LYDIA

I feel like I've got more thoughts in my head since I put the lenses in and they don't all fit quite...

ALEX

Some of them aren't int based thoughts!

LYDIA

I know, I'm trying to play Cel with wisdom now. Like Cel is wise. Probably not as wise as Azu actually but actually I'm not zero! Cool.

ALEX

Not to brag

LYDIA

Not to brag but my charisma is +1 so...

(laughing)

HELEN

Well done. Welcome to the plus section of the charisma people.

(laughing)

ALEX

So I think that conversation with Cel and Azu has more or less run its course at that point.

HELEN

Yeah I think for a while...I think Azu is just going to sit there just kind of despondent.

LYDIA

It's part of Cel's character that they keep talking so I do want to also make sure that you have said everything that you want to and I would pause because there would be body language there so if there's things that you feel you want to add.

HELEN

I mean I'm happy to stop the roleplay there and just be like Azu is coming to the decision that if Zolf does try to kill Barret in front of her then she is probably gonna try and stop him and I think that...I think that the conclusion that Azu comes to is that while she thinks that Barret maybe deserves to die, is not sure that Zolf should be the one to do that or decide that.

LYDIA

A jury of his peers

HELEN

Yeah I think...yeah I think that's what she's gonna decide.

ALEX

So with that in mind then is anyone else wanting to fill their boots with some delicious roleplay before potentially plot related discussions happen. This is a rare opportunity I afford people.

BRYN

Yeah I think we should skip to the big group discussions because we still need some of those.

ALEX

Very well. In which case then I'd say that Wilde is probably the one to do the rounds and start trying to bring people into a room together. No Sumutnyerl still but there is a Skraak. Einstein has not been around by the way for chunks

of these. To be clear he is fine. He basically came in and then has been dealing with stuff off scene. He's not been deliberately absent but no one's had a particular burning desire to speak with him and he's a busy man. He's got lots on. So he won't be present either. It's primarily Wilde, yourselves and Skraak unless anyone wants others invited in which case Wilde will happily go and fetch them. Although he's struggling to make it through doors with that ruff. He's not quite got the hang of it yet.

(laughing)

It's unnecessarily large.

LYDIA

Oh my!

ALEX

So from what I hear another what 24 hours or so and we're gonna be good to go so I think we should probably talk a few things over.

BRYN

Will there be another briefing in exactly what the plan is if there's a device we have to use.

LYDIA

Ooh do we have a plan?

ALEX

I think that basically they're expecting to be finished tomorrow and then we'll be getting our briefing then but from what I gather it looks like we're going to be taking one last trip together to, irony of ironies, Westminster.

BRYN

Where exactly?

HELEN

Why is that ironic?

BEN

Big Ben where the plant is.

ALEX

When you're right Zolf, you're right.

BRYN

It's at the top of that tower is it?

BEN

Yeah did the bongs, remember when we came here.

BRYN

Oh yeah

ALEX

I'm not so much sure that it's at the top of the tower as now is the tower but the point stands.

HELEN

Oh. It's very tall. Right. Ok.

ALEX

So what that does mean is obviously we're going to have our proper briefing but as far as I'm aware this is it. Sort of last night in paradise as it were.

BRYN

Well there's still a few things we need to sort out really. So both Cel and I noticed when we were here previously that the small flaw in the design of the device that Nikola has been building, not that will stop it working but it's about what happens to Babbage afterwards and we both felt back then that it would be a good idea to ask Babbage himself what he might want to happen.

BEN

So why are you here?

BRYN

Once the plan's completed.

ALEX

Cel can you do that thing before where you...he gives a vague gesture that can best be described as vaguely technical.

LYDIA

Can Cel? I assume Cel can. Cel can do most things.

ALEX

Yeah in principle. You've done it once. God knows there's better tech here than there was at that Japanese inn.

LYDIA

In which case – yeah absolutely. You know what will be better is that we don't even have to put failsafes on in case he tries to kill us all. That was an issue in the designs there.

BEN

Sounds like you need to go and have a chat to Tesla and Lovelace and get that set up and done because we're running out of time.

BRYN

Well I mean that's one thing. The other things is there's an obviously single point of failure as well which is Babbage and it seems pretty clear to me that once we take...if we're delivering Babbage to the top of the tower then the Cult of Hades is going to try and take control of Babbage whether that's...

BEN

Get rid of Barret...

BRYN

...before or after...well not just Barret but the squizards too. We need to...

BEN

Get rid of them too.

ALEX

I'll be honest, I'm less worried about Barret than I am about the squizards.

BRYN

Well same.

BEN

We'll just get rid of them all then

LYDIA

Are they easy to kill the wiz...wiz...squid...squizards?

ALEX

If I remember correctly Sasha took one out comparatively easily.

BRYN

Well we fought them before when it was just one of them we did ok but I mean if there's more...

BEN

Their power is in controlling your mind. If they can't do that they are comparatively weak.

BRYN

Well one of the times we fought against them they brought a lot of help by controlling people's minds maybe.

BEN

Yeah well there's a bigger person in town with that so I don't...I think they're curtailed there.

BRYN

That's true

BEN

Which is one reason to deal with them before we deal with everything else before they become more dangerous once we've released the plant's control.

LYDIA

Maybe we could ask Barret to get all the squizards together for a conference about what comes next and then kill the squizards?

ALEX

That's not actually a terrible idea.

And we could tell them that the conference is happening in a cage full of knives.

HELEN

No the point is we wouldn't tell them that!

ALEX

We'd hold the conference in the knife cage.

BEN

Two issues with this. Number one squizards can't come in here and this is the only safe place. Number two this is the only safe place. If we have a big fight in the middle of London, terrible idea. The other thing is as well Barret said himself, the squizards are just henchmen. Whatever is controlling them from another blooming plane, dimension, world, whatever, wherever they've come from, through Hades domain I guess from what they were saying. Then we are going to have to deal with that after this. Once we've...once we've dealt with the plant they will make their move, that's it.

BRYN

When that happens I guess we deal with that but...

BEN

We need to sever any potential information they can have. That means disassociating ourselves off and severing and destroying their eyes on the ground right now.

BRYN

Which means...yeah, removing their ability to act on the situation which is Barret and the squizards.

BEN

Yes

ALEX

Wilde puts a finger up and goes – I tell you what give me a moment. Wilde leaves towards the bedrooms.

LYDIA

Er...I mean, do you think he...Cel turns to Azu – do you think he's going to kill Barret? Should we...

HELEN

I don't think that's something Wilde would do. Maybe he wants to bring Barret here and we can ask him to give us a reason not to kill him.

BEN

Yes great. Talk to the talker about why he shouldn't face consequences.

ALEX

Wilde comes back, brushing his hands off. Oh locked him in and silence spell. If we don't want him listening to things the last thing we want is for him to be able to hear things.

BRYN

Yes very sensible.

BEN

Good stuff

LYDIA

Oh actually that might've solved the issue.

ALEX

I mean he's still listening to that music so it's not like he was going to hear anything anyway but no harm, no foul.

LYDIA

Are we sure that's...

BEN

Is he in that room? Did you check?

ALEX

Well I mean I didn't – Wilde leaves again.

HELEN

Oh that's a good point.

LYDIA

I mean maybe there's been loads of squizards in that room having their own conference.

HELEN

Well this place seems pretty secure.

BRYN

I mean in theory this place is shielding from communication but I wouldn't trust Barret not to have found ways around that.

LYDIA

Do you have anything Azu that only kills evil things. I always find it very messy, what's it, the definitions of what becomes evil and what isn't.

HELEN

It's more of a gradient than a...

BRYN

Barret is...

HELEN

Barret is pretty evil.

ALEX

Wilde comes back and he is looking very unhappy.

BEN

He's not there.

HELEN

Is he not there?

ALEX

No

BEN

This is why we should've dealt with him before. This is...whatever, fine.

HELEN

Right, should we go and search his room and try and find wherever he's gone.

ALEX

I think so. Look, ok, I've been asking around there is one way in to this place and there is one way out of place and currently the only person I know who is able to let people in and out is Augusta so if we make sure that Augusta's fine we know that he's here somewhere at least.

BRYN

Let's find Augusta quickly then.

HELEN

Ok, right. Off we go.

ALEX

I can just skip to, Augusta's really easy to find. Augusta is currently in the equivalent of the pantry stocking things up and is just idly bored, flicking through stuff whilst putting cans on a shelf type deal and just looks up to see an entire room of you looking in the doorway and notices Zolf. Closes the book.

BEN

Yeah you can speak. Where's Barret?

ALEX

I dunno. I'm not his babysitter. Probably in his room.

HELEN

He's not in his room.

BEN

No he's not.

ALEX

Well he's not going to be able to make it into the labs. He doesn't have any of the keys so...

HELEN

Are there...

BRYN

Is he still in the building?

ALEX

I mean no one's been out. Augusta basically reaches, pats up near the collarbone. Yeah fine.

BRYN

Let's split up by twos and search...

ALEX

What am I missing here?

HELEN

Because if he can leave without us noticing he could be up to all kinds of nefarious nonsense.

BEN

He's aligned with the Cult of Hades Byron. Use your brain.

ALEX

Don't call me that.

BEN

I'm terribly sorry.

ALEX

Augusta pushes past and starts stomping around and is clearly beelining to Barret's room.

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HELEN

Shall we split up?

ALEX

So what is it that people intend to do?

LYDIA

Gonna go hunting for a Barret.

HELEN

Yeah and we probably should actually go into...wait, there's six of us.

BRYN

Yeah pairs I think

HELEN

So we can go into twos.

ALEX

Full Scooby Doo! Full Scooby Doo! Yes!

LYDIA

So will Azu go with Zolf or will Cel?

ALEX

I need a first pair, go. I don't care who.

BEN

I start leaving, who follows me?

LYDIA

If Azu doesn't then Cel will.

ALEX

Excellent. Zolf and Cel please give me a perception check. Well each of you give me a perception check please

BEN

28

LYDIA

My new thingamabob, 37

BEN

Nice

LYDIA

Oh it was a natural 20 as well, yeah

ALEX

Ok where were you intending to look or were you just casting about randomly?

BEN

I had no plan.

LYDIA

Wait I was wrong. 36 because that's...

ALEX

Basically 1. How shameful!

BEN

Yeah just starting to ransack the house bit.

LYDIA

Yeah

ALEX

Ok so this is just a general cast about. Cel, you as you're casting around the place start to look for fine detail elements. We're talking more like...you seem to be approaching it a bit more forensically rather than I'm going to look for his feet behind a curtain.

LYDIA

Ooh little like pipe and flat cap.

ALEX

So as you're near Barret's room you notice that all of the rooms have almost like a draught excluder on the interior of the room where it's like a metal plate that runs down to the base of the door so it, you know, it blocks off the gap between the bases of the door. Apart from Barret's room.

LYDIA

Mmm.

ALEX

Every other one has one. Barret's is missing and there is a gap between the door and the floor that is absent from everyone else's and you see notes of recent passage on the door, in the doorway. So by notes of recent passage I mean you got a crazy high score. Like ludicrously high. You're reaching the level of when I went past here there wasn't that dust...

LYDIA

Sherlock Holmes could never...

ALEX

You know what I mean. We're talking defamations of the carpet. You're like I'm pretty certain that's different to how it was when we first arrived, that kind

of thing. You think there has been passage past his door and you note the removal of that excluder as a thing.

LYDIA

So Zolf how...like can the squizards...like just because I know that squid can fit through any hole that is bigger than their beak, through experiment so...

BEN

I didn't check for a skeleton. No I don't know.

LYDIA

So I wonder if a squizard could somehow get in and out of that.

ALEX

Cut to my next pair. Who are they?

BRYN

Hamid will grab Skraak probably.

ALEX

Ok. Where are Hamid and Skraak going?

BRYN

Down to the labs maybe to look to see...

ALEX

Skraak really wants to go straight to the labs

BRYN

So the reason for that is that Hamid wants to be able to cast detect magic and he knows that Wilde and Zolf can both cast detect magic as well because that might give additional clues. He wants one of those in each team.

ALEX

Sensible. Can you please give me a perception check for Skraak and a perception check for Hamid. Skraak was very keen to go to the labs, just openly stating – mean the most important thing is that machine so we go there.

BRYN

24 and 22

ALEX

Heading down, you run into Einstein on the way. Einstein is in the lesser lab. He's in there working. Ada's working at the main machine but on the way down you don't encounter anyone or anything out of the ordinary.

BRYN

I mean I'll ask them both as we pass if they've seen Barret.

ALEX

So yeah you ask Einstein and Einstein's like – oh, hey, yeah no. He was there when we arrived. You know. And then we came in and he did his...he did the teenage boy thing.

BRYN

He's disappeared from his room and we don't know where he is and we're worried that he might be trying to interfere with things.

ALEX

Well I mean you know the lab's pretty secure and there's only one way in and out and this entire place is dimension locked which is a real...like you can't teleport...you can't even teleport within the lab to a different part of the lab. It's completely locked down.

BRYN

So the question is how did he get out his room without anyone noticing?

ALEX

I mean there's still a door right?

BRYN

Well we're still trying to find where he is in the building.

ALEX

Oh ok.

BRYN

He doesn't seem to have got out but the fact that he's missing at all.

ALEX

Have you checked the toilets?

BRYN

Well hopefully someone checks there. We're just going to continue looking around down here.

ALEX

Ok you do you. Do you need help?

BRYN

I mean yes if you wanna...

ALEX

I will check the toilets!

(laughing)

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Einstein runs off to check the toilets. For Ada it's just a – no the only people who've been in here have been me and Tesla. Nikola's actually sleeping now but...

BRYN

Oh that's good. I know that you're still in the final stages but just to check...

ALEX

Oh honestly we're done. We're just doing final checks. I think we've got it.

BRYN

That's brilliant.

ALEX

I really, really do.

BRYN

In your professional opinion are Barret's contributions still important from this point onwards?

ALEX

Oh is this...is this about...I'm not hugely comfortable with the killing. There's been so much death already.

BRYN

We just need to know...well...I don't wanna say...we haven't made a final decision but maybe just locking him up more securely.

ALEX

That might not be a bad idea. I know that Augusta has been deliberately oversupplying. We're fine here for months and months.

BRYN

Yeah well we'll keep looking. We'll just have a look around. We're not going to disturb anything.

ALEX

Oh ok.

Ada looks quite worried. Give me another perception check you pair and then I'll move on to the next one.

BRYN

Natural 20 for Hamid.

ALEX

And for Skraak?

BRYN

Just a 12 total.

ALEX

Ok you are heading around the lab, heading around the lab and yeah it all seems more or less as it was and then you notice something that you didn't notice before right at the back of the lab there's a counter and it's all the same. You can't see how to open it, you think there's another door there. It should be a sealed lab. You think that there is a hidden door there and the only reason that you've noticed it this time is because you are casting about really looking for stuff.

BRYN

I cast knock.

ALEX

Ohh!

BEN

Nice!

ALEX

You got use out of that spell! There's a counter, there's a counter built into the wall and effectively the front of it genuinely has a stocked cupboard or whatever but as you hit knock, the countertop slides into the wall mechanically speaking, the entire cupboard rotates out and then the door...the wall just

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clicks and there seems to be a counterweighted door built into the wall very flawless design. Really well designed but it sort of clicks aside. Ada comes running over.

What did you do? Why did you...what did you do? What...Why are you putting a hole in the lab?

BRYN

This was always there. I just opened it. Did you know about this?

ALEX

What do you mean it was already...the lab...close it. The lab's meant to be sealed. This is delicate equipment.

BRYN

Erm I need to get everyone here.

ALEX

I'm going to cut to the other pair.

BRYN

We need to work out what's down there.

ALEX

Who is my other pair?

HELEN

It's Azu and Wilde.

ALEX

Where does Azu want to head?

HELEN

Azu wants to double check, where possible, the actual doors to see if there's been anyone fiddling with the mechanisms or...

ALEX

Do you mean the main entrance?

HELEN

Yeah the main entrance.

ALEX

Ok. So heading through up with Wilde to the main entrance everything, broadly speaking, looks fine. Neither of you are technical experts but give me a perception check

HELEN

Yep. Oh it's the best I've rolled all day. That's 28.

ALEX

Ooh. Ooh.

HELEN

I know! Maybe I notice something!

ALEX

Wilde gets a natural 1 so I'm glad you're doing it.

(laughing)

Wilde rapidly comes to realise it's very difficult to examine anything below your chin when you're wearing ruff as wide as your shoulders.

(laughing)

Lots of, nerr, this was a terrible idea. I can't see anything. Oh no.

BEN

I told him it was ridiculous.

ALEX

You note that it seems locked up tight. There doesn't seem to be any signs of recent passage. There doesn't seem to be anything particularly unusual apart from, there seems to be a slight sticky residue on the base of the interior door. It is transparent. You don't know what it is. It's like someone's spat at it.

HELEN

Urgh.

LYDIA

Topaz has been here!

(laughing)

BEN

I always thought Barret was a slimeball but this is ridiculous

(laughing)

HELEN

Azu points it out and is then just like – I'm not good at substances. What do you think that might be?

ALEX

Wilde struggles to look past his ruff in order to see it, eventually manages. I don't know but I'm starting to get enough of a feeling that something's wrong that I think we should all reconvene.

HELEN

Yes I think he's gone.

ALEX

We should go fetch the others.

HELEN

Yes

ALEX

Wilde starts leading the way hurriedly to the bedrooms.

HELEN

Ok

ALEX

He immediately runs over and knocks on Sumutnyerl's door. You hear the – what, what is it?

You're fine. Has anything weird happened?

No, why do people keep...please just stop for a moment. Please.

No. Wilde then heads across to basically check all the other rooms and finds that Tesla's room is locked and then turns to Azu and gives a – I think you might want to open this door for me.

HELEN

Well Azu doesn't understand at first and is like – I don't do lockpicking.

ALEX

Wilde takes a deep breath in, takes a deep breath out and then gives the most cursory shin level kick at the door and then gestures with both hands.

HELEN

Oh right, yes. Azu throws herself at the door.

BRYN

Everyone knows the best lockpicking tool of all is a giant axe.

(laughing)

ALEX

The door is just deleted from existence. It's just been removed from the asset list. Give me a perception check.

HELEN

Ok. Please roll as well as you did last time! I did! 28 again

LYDIA

Yay!

ALEX

Cool. Tesla is face down, dead on his bed.

(gasps)

HELEN

Did you say dead?

ALEX

Oh yes. And I'll end the episode there.

BEN

Captain Hulk got gif. Captain *** Hulk got gif.

LYDIA

Argh

HELEN

Ok so now Azu is going to be completely on the side of killing Barret. Oh my god!

ALEX

No discussions, no teamwork. Goodbye everyone. Bye.

EVERYONE

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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