

RQG – Episode 206 – It's Inside

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 206 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today, I have:

BEN

Ben Meredith.

BRYN

Bryn Monroe.

LYDIA

Lydia Nicholas.

HELEN

And Helen Gould.

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BEN

Zolf Smith.

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan.

LYDIA

Cel Sidebottom.

HELEN

And Azu.

ALEX

And Tesla’s dead, yes.

HELEN ?

Aaaaaaaaaarrrrrrrr !

ALEX

Tesla is face down, on a bed, in front of Azu and Wilde, very very dead.

HELEN

Alright.

ALEX

Very, very quick recap. You all returned back to the one that got away in London, and you were all having a lovely grand old time and Tesla’s dead. So I’m going to pick up exactly where we left off, which is Wilde and Azu have

discovered a very evidently dead Tesla. And by very evidently dead, I mean that he is face down in his bed, his back is awash with blood, and you can see enough of the inside of Tesla to know that that’s not someone whose alive.

BRYN ?

Oooooohhhhhh !

HELEN

Okay.

LYDIA

Sticky.

HELEN

Azu turns to Wilde and says, “You need to, we need to go and get the, we need to tell the, go the others, the others, the others now, I’m going to see how long he’s been dead. Yes.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

HELEN

Okay?

ALEX

Wilde just runs off and starts fetching people.

HELEN

Okay. I would like to roll a heal check.

ALEX

I think that’s a really good idea.

HELEN

Yes, thank you. Alright, here we go. If I roll badly then just like, “Well he’s dead” I’m going to be very upset.

(dice rolling)

HELEN

I did in fact roll quite badly, but I upped my heal, so that is actually a 21.

ALEX

21, okay. You’ve hit a DC so, thank you.

HELEN

Ha ha ha. Thanks. He he he.

ALEX

Information that you now know. He’s dead.

(laughter)

HELEN

Ugh ! Two.

ALEX

He's been dead for probably a few hours, less than a day.

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

More than instant, his body is cool.

HELEN

Oof.

ALEX

And in terms of the method of killing – this is someone who was attacked from behind while they were in bed...

HELEN

Aaaawww !

ALEX

...and it's a very odd wound pattern. It seems to be like an animal attack but with some stabs as well.

HELEN

Do I know what kind of animal? Because like, the attack of a, of like a dog is very different to the attack of like a horse.

LYDIA

A squid.

ALEX

It would be something with a significant body mass, much larger than a dog.

BRYN

Like a bear?

HELEN

Like a bear?

ALEX

It looks like there was a kill bite on the back of the skull, which was the point of kill.

HELEN

Okay, I think that’s a bear thing.

ALEX

And it appears that there are also though stab wounds in the back, not just animal wounds.

HELEN

Oooohhhhhhhh! Different, oh no ! Oh no ! What if it was Sumutnyerl?

BRYN

What if it was Barret pretending that is was Sumutnyerl?

HELEN

Oh God ! Oh no, and he’s perceptive enough to be able to figure out that – but we saw Sumutnyerl and she was fine – or at least, no you did. Some of us did. We have seen Sumutnyerl.

ALEX

Oh Sumet – Sumutnyerl you spoke to like five minutes ago.

BRYN

Yeah.

ALEX

You, you knocked on Sumutnyerl’s door prior to Tesla’s and just got a, “Hello.”

BEN

I mean also, Barret might have been a werewolf all along.

(Group laughter)

BEN

No one checked him for like amprophy. Like...

(laughter)

LYDIA

Is he a druid? Does he have powers from the Squizzards?

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Maybe Barret was actually originally a bear that got bit by a human and caught human.

BEN

Maybe. Beara?

HELEN

Or he just used a beast shaped potion?

BEN

Or that?

ALEX

Welcome to a world where there’s a million answers to every question, and none of them are helpful.

BEN

Much less complicated.

HELEN

Alright.

ALEX

I am going to cut to – probably Zolf and Cel would be the first people that Wilde had run into – where Wilde immediately just points to Tesla’s door. Tesla’s been murdered. Azu’s in there right now. I’m, I’m getting everyone else... and then Wilde just runs off towards the lab.

HELEN

Aaahhh.

BEN

Quickly and silently power walk over to Tesla’s room.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Yea, you see a similar situation. I would say it doesn’t look like there was a struggle. So you’re not looking at like sprays of blood up the wall, disturbances all over the room. It’s, the room’s not been trashed. Some, it, the takeaway is it looks like a crime of passion upon someone who was asleep. So you’re looking at tousled covers but that’s about it.

BEN

I’m, I’m also going to do a heal check, and like Zolf is proper silent. I mean, I guess quite rude, I guess nobody’s going to care in this sort of situation, but like hyper focused. And is like, right you know.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah.

HELEN

So a question; focused scrutiny is a spell that gives heightened sensitivity to the managed reaction and body language of one creature that you can perceive. Does not specify that the creature, the type of creature is alive.

(laughter)

ALEX

Yes it does. In Pathfinder it’s got a wonderful thing where if you’re alive you’re a creature, if you’re dead you’re an object.

HELEN

Aaawww, okay.

BEN ?

Oooohhhh !

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

But your spirit – obviously like for, for spirit magic – you still count as a creature. But your, like your mortal remains are an object.

HELEN

I see, okay. That, that’s a shame. Could have perceived so much.

ALEX

Apologies. Yeah, you can’t – you, you, I mean I’d have – I’d let you use it to read the body language of the corpse as that of a corpse, but that’s as far as I’ll let you go.

(laughter)

HELEN

Right, cool. Well I could potentially read whether he was able to defend himself. Don’t open up these doors.

ALEX

I’ll tell you what, give me the heal check Ben, and then I’ll, and then I’ll return to you...

BEN

Oh I already rolled. It was rubbish and I get no new information. He’s dead.

ALEX

Okay alright, okay yeah. Yeah, focus scrutiny is not the, is not the friend you want it to be in this situation.

HELEN

Ow, ow !

ALEX

But speaking of friends in the situation, Wilde is banging on the lab door.

BRYN

Well I think you've forgotten Alex, that Hamid and Skraak were dealing with their own entirely separate crisis. So they will have been doing something in the meantime.

ALEX

You know what, I will cut to Hamid and Skraak in fact, with the knowledge that Wilde is going to be banging on the door real soon.

BRYN

Oh erm Skraak, you stay here. Watch, make sure no one, I'm going to go and get everyone else, they need to know about this. But first...

ALEX

Yeah, yeah.

BRYN

I’m going to very quickly cast heroism on Skraak, just for the daily you know, upping of his survivability, which takes three seconds. And then I’m going to start running up the stairs out of the lab, and probably barrel into Wilde coming down.

ALEX

Aida is still with Skraak at this point, basically going, “How did you know there was a door there?” whatever. You run past, you basically run into the lab door, throw open the big metal door to a Wilde looking panicked going, “There’s something important I’ve got to tell you!”

BRYN

Oscar, there’s an entrance to, to...

ALEX

There’s a corpse !

BRYN

What? Whose dead?

ALEX

Tesla !

BRYN

Oh my god ! Oh my god ! What?

ALEX

Okay. Leave someone to guard the door and then, and then we need to reconvene at the bedroom...

BRYN

Okay. Skraak’s... yeah, okay.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah.

BRYN

We’ll come back...

ALEX

Wilde leads you back towards Tesla’s bedroom.

(laughter)

LYDIA

Okay, okay. In the bedroom, Alex let’s pass on focus scrutiny. I suggest I roll knowledge nature to check what animal it was?

ALEX

Yeah perfect. Sounds good to me.

LYDIA

Cool. I rolled a nine, so that’s only 31.

(laughter)

ALEX

Aaaah! Very large bite pattern.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

It appears to have no natural form that leaps to mind, of yours.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

It’s not like clearly a bear or clearly a wolf.

LYDIA

Mmm.

ALEX

You think that it was probably bear sized, but there is a morphic pattern to the bite so the shape of the teeth were changing as they bit.

LYDIA

Ooh, ooooooh !

BRYN ?

It is a werewolf !

LYDIA

I tell everyone this, or Cel does in a very Cel...

ALEX

For free though, you do also confirm that those possible stab wounds are definitely stab wounds, not animal attack wounds.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

Animals don’t have claws that are perfectly straight, and/or serrated. It doesn’t work like that.

LYDIA

No. Well I mean, some of them do, but let’s just assume that, that we can tell the difference here.

ALEX

I’m, I’m tempted to erase all of those animals from this campaign world so I’m right.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Yeah, there will be no scavengers here. Cel explains all of this. I would like you to imagine this with the, the now improved goggles, like zooming in and out...

ALEX

Yeah, yeah.

LYDIA

...so it's very much one of those remakes of Sherlock Holmes, in a sort of steampunk magic universe, of which there are dozens.

HELEN

In my mind they kind of look like those glasses where you've got like a spring in each lens, and they're popping, they're sort of boinging !

LYDIA

No ! No levity here Helen...

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

This is a serious remake.

HELEN

Sorry !

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

This is...

HELEN

I’m so sorry.

LYDIA

This is one that has like...

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

...this is not a bonydak combi bomp one.

HELEN

I know.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

This is like.

HELEN

I know it’s not, no.

LYDIA

You know?

HELEN

Like I said, I’m sorry.

LYDIA

...a serious actor.

(laughter)

LYDIA

And, and like it’s, it’s noir and dark and ...

ALEX

I’m so upset, Helen, I now can’t delete the image of Cel going around with bouncy eyes.

(laughter)

ALEX

I’m going to work real hard to, but you’ve inserted that. You’ve totally incepted that image.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Oh I can’t believe... We’re in end game now and the two of you are joking.
How could you...

(Group laughter)

ALEX

I know. I am so sorry.

LYDIA

At a time like this!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

I am so sorry.

BRYN ?

A man has died.

ALEX

A man is dead.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

A man has died.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

And I’m laughing.

ALEX

Okay. So, I am going to go ahead and say that the party excluding Skraak – because Skraak’s doing guard duty at the tunnel – convene at Tesla’s bedroom.

LYDIA

Cool.

HELEN

Okay. Well, Barret is missing and we have a dead body, so I think probably Barret did this.

LYDIA

Cel relates all the details that they gained from the check. The creature was bear sized and was transforming at the point it was biting.

BEN

Me, me and, me and Skraak we, we found a secret tunnel in the lab but Ada didn’t know about it.

LYDIA ?

Oh.

BEN

Maybe he, he did, and that's how he... Is everyone else okay? Do we know where everyone else is?

ALEX

Ha, good point. Wilde runs off to go and says, "I'm going to go and find the others."

BEN

Augusta and, and the professor.

LYDIA

And Sumutnyerl?

ALEX

So Sumutnyerl's door is directly opposite from Tesla's.

BEN

Right.

ALEX

Like right next to it.

LYDIA

Have they come in?

ALEX

Sumutnyerl is sort of opening the door slowing and looking quite confused at everyone.

LYDIA

Oh.

BEN

Tesla’s dead.

ALEX

What?

BEN

And I’m going to watch their face very hard.

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah.

ALEX

Everyone give me a sense motive.

HELEN

Yes.

(rolling dice)

BRYN ?

19.

(rolling dice)

HELEN

Oooohh. 29.

BEN ?

22.

LYDIA

17.

ALEX

For everyone apart from Azu, that’s a very blank face. That’s a very blank face. Sumutnyerl’s quite good at being blank. I’d say that for Azu...

HELEN

Mmmm?

ALEX

...there’s an ambivalence there, but a very strong one, and it’s being controlled. You don’t know whether it’s a, a happy sad, an angry sh.... but there is a big old mix of emotions that’s being put behind a wall right now.

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

Alright?

LYDIA

Cel slowly says, “It, it appears that he was killed by a bite wound.”

ALEX

That does seem to clock a shock reaction. I, I, so...

LYDIA

And also...

ALEX

...an, an unnatural death.

LYDIA

Yes, yes. Not, not in his, well in his sleep, yes.

BEN

He was murdered.

LYDIA ?

Unnaturally in his sleep. Stabbed and bitten and...

HELEN

Well, Azu gestures to the bed.

ALEX

Sumutnyerl looks, and then collapses.

LYDIA ?

Oooohh !

ALEX

She doesn’t completely faint, but she does just drop. Just slumps down against the doorframe.

HELEN

Can I make a reflex save to try and catch them?

BEN

Yes.

ALEX

Yes, you can.

HELEN

Okay. It’s not going to – I hope I don’t – I hope I don’t do badly on this because I would like to catch them.

(rolling dice)

HELEN

That’s a 21.

ALEX

21. Yeah you, you, you can catch them as they just slump against the doorway.

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

You don’t need a sense motive. You just pointed to someone who was viciously murdered to someone who has an extended history with this person, and has very conflicted emotions, and was struggling with being back in proximity to them. Like...

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Your, your for free, your sense motive is, this is either and exceptional act, or I may have – that may have been a mistake to point them out there. That might have...

HELEN

That, that’s absolutely what Azu, Azu’s thinking, “Oh right, yes okay, woops.”

BEN

Right, looks like it was Barret then. Okay, let’s go to the secret entrance. We need to catch up with them as soon as we can.

HELEN

Yes.

BRYN ?

We need to make sure that, that Ada’s protected. If, if, it he took out Nicola then maybe he’ll go after her next too?

HELEN

Mmmm.

BEN

Alright, you stay here, we’ll go.

ALEX

Wilde sort of comes running back round the corridor with Augusta in tow. Augusta is decked with weaponry and armour.

HELEN ?

Ooooh.

ALEX

Like proper, fully decked in very, very impressive like medium armour. A pair of different broadswords strapped across her back and she, she’s ready for a fight. Wilde looks panicked next to her. We, we can’t find Einstein.

HELEN ?

(gasps) Oh!

LYDIA

He, he was heading to the, the, the toilets.

ALEX

Well we checked. There’s, there’s no sign of him.

BEN

But Einstein can teleport.

ALEX

Not here.

HELEN

But he can’t teleport out of here.

BEN

Okay. I know, look Einstein is not important right now. We need to find Barret, we need to find...

LYDIA

What if Barret was hiding in the toilets and used Einstein to teleport somewhere? And he knew something about teleporting out of here that we don’t know.

BEN

Then we need to find Barret.

ALEX

Zolf’s right. Zolf’s right, we need to, we need to at least get this place in, in shutdown and we have a, we have an open door right now.

BEN

Right. Augusta, make sure the non-combatants don’t die. We’re all going and we’re following Barret down that hole.

LYDIA

Yes.

ALEX

Okay. Okay. At which point all of the lights start to dim within the building.

BEN

Oh **sidence neeth** what is happening?

ALEX

So. In terms of the lighting, this has been a sort of magitech lighting situation. I’m basically kind of fudging gas lamps combined with sort of magic crystals as a kind of look.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

They all start to dim and dim and then very quickly – we’re talking in a matter of say like six, less than six seconds – drop the entire place into pitch black.

HELEN

Azu swears really loudly.

BRYN

Hamid uses his – six seconds is one combat round – Hamid uses his...

ALEX

That is correct.

BRYN

...smooth action to put on the night goggles that you gave us before the spellgard mission and uses his standard action to cause mage armour on himself.

HELEN

Nice.

LYDIA

Due knows the rules.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Yes, he does.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

What a power.

(laughter)

LYDIA

I’m going to count, I think that Cel is always wearing the goggles because there’s just always like as goggles going on.

HELEN

Headbands and goggles, altogether.

BEN ?

Is anything happening?

ALEX

The lights have just died.

LYDIA

We should go, we should go – Ada and Skraak are down there and they are the most vulnerable.

BEN

Right.

HELEN ?

Yes. Let’s go now.

BEN

I go.

ALEX

Augusta pipes up the lab has a separate power supply to the rest of the, the complex, so it...

HELEN

Still.

ALEX

...it should still be fine.

HELEN

Azu strides away.

ALEX

Cool. Yeah you, you don’t have any objections as that’s happening. So, you all start heading down – obviously it’s a little bit slower – I’m going to assume as well that people are moving cautiously?

BRYN

No, I have dark vision.

HELEN

Yeah we’ve all got dark vision.

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

I meant more caution. Okay fine. You are, so you are all bombing it through the complex.

BEN

Yes...

LYDIA

Yeah.

BEN

...because if Ada’s being actively murdered, I don’t care if somebody tries to stab me by surprise.

LYDIA

We have more influence than she does. We do.

ALEX

Understood. Please everyone give me a perception check.

(rolling dice)

BEN

28.

HELEN

16.

LYDIA

19.

BEN

24.

ALEX

Hamid, you can hear – as everyone’s cluttering by, cluttering by, cluttering by – you stop just for a second, think you see something, but as you stop and just

fall ever so slightly behind, you hear a faint sound – seems to be permeating the complex. You can’t place what it is. It’s like a, its like a, like a static or a hiss or something. You are able to run and catch up with the rest of the group very easily. It’s just you, you had a moment’s reprieve to hear a very low sort of, sssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssss – just underlying, seemingly everywhere.

BEN

Mmmmmm, don’t like that. Don’t like that at all. Are we all going to struggle to breathe soon?

BRYN

Hamid is trying to get his wings to come out again, but he hasn’t quite mastered it yet. So they’re not, it’s not really happening. But he’s at the back now so no one else will notice.

HELEN ?

Aaahh.

ALEX

So he’s just running down with one wing now going “Aaargh!”

(laughter)

BRYN

No the, they’re sort of, they sort of grow and retract and he can’t quite get them to – but by the time anyone notices – they’re gone again. Because he didn’t...

HELEN ?

Aah.

BRYN

...he didn’t accomplish it properly.

ALEX

I was going to say, teething problems, more like winging problems.

(laughter)

ALEX

You all make it to the front door of the lab to find it locked. Like close, the big metal door is closed locked and apparently sealed.

BEN

Skraak!, Skraak it’s us.

HELEN

I bang on the door. Ada!

ALEX

You hear Zolf, movement from the other side and then you hear a, “Hello. Is that, is that, who, what’s going on?”

BEN

It’s everyone, open a bloody door.

HELEN

Open the door, open the door right now.

ALEX

And Tesla made me swear I wouldn’t if something like this happened.

HELEN

Tesla’s dead.

BEN

Do you want to get murdered in that lab or do you want us to protect you?

BRYN ?

There’s another entrance now Ada. We found it remember?

ALEX

Can I get a fort save from everyone please?

HELEN

Yeah.

(rolling dice)

LYDIA

11.

(rolling dice)

HELEN

21.

BRYN

16.

BEN

22.

ALEX

Wilde gets aargh what a champ – what a champ.

BEN

Well that means he did badly.

HELEN

See that could mean anything.

BEN

No, it means he did badly.

HELEN

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

That's just like, Aaah that is the death I needed.

BEN

Yeah.

HELEN

Or...

LYDIA

Ooer he gets to live another day. How can we have been doing this for six years and not know what the reactions are?

ALEX ?

Aaar, aar, love it.

ALEX

Everyone, apart from Azu and Zolf, collapse.

LYDIA

Cool.

ALEX

...seemingly unconscious.

LYDIA

Aah, nap time, yeah.

HELEN

Azu swears again, extremely loudly.

ALEX

Just, stumble and then, da da da dam dam bumpf.

HELEN

Right, what’s that?

LYDIA

I’m going to, whoever’s closest to me I’m going to do a heal check just to make sure they’re not dead.

ALEX

Yeah, that’s fine.

LYDIA

Okay.

(rolling dice)

LYDIA

I got a 22 on my heal check on I don’t, whoever was closest.

ALEX

It seems that they’ve been poisoned.

LYDIA

Balls!

(laughter)

BRYN

Isn’t Cel immune to poison?

LYDIA

I’m immune to poison.

BEN

Oh and also, I should have got plus 2.

BRYN ?

Ooh, ooh.

ALEX

Oh Zolf, you’re like, you’re fine. Your, your, you’ve not class. But the interesting thing here is, ooh Cel’s immune to poison. You levelled, and you’re immune to poison.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

I forgot. You’re fine.

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

You’re hunky dory.

LYDIA

Okay.

ALEX

The, the universe glitches momentarily, shudders. And then Cel momentarily tea poses and then reappears.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

...completely tied.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Okay, Cel will do a – in the same immediate reaction – let’s assume that Azu says, “Oh, they’ve been poisoned”...

HELEN

I do.

LYDIA

Cel will do a craft alchemy.

ALEX

Yeah, that’s fine.

LYDIA

Cool.

ALEX

Give me a, give me a craft alchemy then, see where that goes.

LYDIA

Ah, 31.

ALEX

There is an inhalation poison in the air. You, you recognise the slight tingling in the nostrils that accompanies that. Someone seems to have released an inhalation poison into the atmosphere and it’s been hitting people very hard. What was the exact score again?

LYDIA

31.

ALEX

31.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

You believe – actually you just know. There’s an obscure drug which is used in the Americas quite a lot. It can be purchased in Europe and so on but it is an illicit substance that is normally not allowed. It’s called Sweet Dream. How Sweet Dream works is very simple. It will send you to sleep, if you are a fairly robust type it will send you to sleep for a minute or two. If you’re not it can knock you out for hours and hours, during the time of which you will have the most blissful and wonderful dreams. The reason it’s an illicit substance is not because it is a physically addictive substance...

HELEN

Mm hmm.

ALEX

But people have a tendency to basically reshape their lives around it, because it’s so wonderful an experience.

HELEN

Right.

ALEX

You know that when the people are asleep they can be woken, but if they’re not taken away from the source of it they’re just going to fall straight back asleep again.

HELEN

Okay.

LYDIA

Cel explains this and, and essentially explains that it’s, so the effects seem to be you sleep for one minute and forget events of one D4 rounds prior. That is not enough time even if we get up to four for them to forget the murder.

ALEX

You are correct.

LYDIA

And sleep for one D4 hours. But it doesn’t say it’s a magical sleep, so they should be able to wake up, if we just shake them.

ALEX

But, they will immediately then still be subject to the thing that’s making them sleep. Unless you remove them from the situation, or change the situation.

LYDIA

True.

BEN

Can you stop it?

LYDIA

I, I, I can, it’s in the air. Their continuing to breathe it in.

BEN

Can you get the door open?

LYDIA

Yeah. If we can get them away from the source.

BEN

No I mean, we just need access...

ALEX

What’s, what’s going on? What’s going on?

HELEN

You need to let us in. The, the air here has...

BEN

No, no. Stop. Because that will let the air in. Actually if Ada's still fine. Is Skraak in there with you?

ALEX

Yeah, yeah. He's, he's keeping an eye on the tunnel. He says that there's a locked gate a little bit further down.

BEN

Right.

HELEN

Right.

LYDIA

We, we just get them in and then we lock the door behind us. It'll dissipate in the air.

BEN

How confident are you?

HELEN

So it won't be enough if we, if we're quick, it won't be enough to contaminate it?

LYDIA

I am rolling a knowledge alchemy check.

ALEX

You won’t need it. I’ll, I’ll give it you from the last one.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

Can you state what your assertion was again, and I can just tell you whether that’s accurate or tweak it?

LYDIA

That if we got in quickly and brought a tiny bit of air with us, it would be dissipated enough not to affect people.

ALEX

You know that it’s a very, very potent one. Ada and Skraak would need to retreat to the tunnel. But in principle, yes. If you can drag everyone in and then close the door and wait say 60 seconds it will, it will be dissipated if it has a separate air supply.

LYDIA

Right, yeah. Explains that, stressing the extra air supply bit.

BRYN

How many bodies are there here, Alex?

ALEX

So, currently unconscious is Augusta, Wilde and Hamid.

BRYN

Fine. We can move them in and around...

HELEN

That’s alright.

BRYN

Yeah. Because you can carry two...

HELEN

Yeah, we can take them.

BRYN

...I can carry one.

BRYN

Right.

LYDIA

But you – go as far into the tunnel as you can and like breathe as far in there as possible, and we’ll get them in and we’ll shut the door super quick and the new

air supply would, will you know. Cel goes into too many details when Cel is agitated. I do not need to role play for ever. I just need to explain it.

BEN

Cel, get the door open. Because Zolf was having none of the over-explaining, he’s just, “Do it, do it, do it.”

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

So Ada’s like, “I mean I can, I can open the door on my side so that you can, I can unlock the door on my side, and then if I go to the other end of the...”

BEN

Do it. Go. Now.

HELEN

Yes, do that. Do that, do that.

ALEX

Okay, okay, okay.

LYDIA

Unlock it, we’ll be in in two seconds.

BEN

Right Azu, Hamid and Wilde.

HELEN

Yeah.

BEN

And I’ll grab Augusta.

ALEX

So Ada unlocks the door from the other side, and you can hear the retreating footsteps to the far side of the...

LYDIA

I’ll deal with the door.

ALEX

Everyone ready?

HELEN

Thank you.

ALEX

Everyone give me a reflex save.

LYDIA

Oookay.

HELEN

Aah roll well Azu, roll well.

(rolling dice)

HELEN

Not bad, 17.

BEN

22.

LYDIA

27.

ALEX

Hamid obviously is an auto fail.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

He’s being dragged.

(laughter)

BRYN

That’s how that works.

ALEX

Wilde is an auto fail.

LYDIA ?

Mmm.

ALEX

Oh, we counted the wrong number of bodies. Sumutnyerl is also unconscious.

BEN

Oh Christ.

ALEX

Oooh, ooh.

BEN

Ah no I can, I can probably still do two actually.

ALEX

Your, your, you are a very strengthly lot. It will be trivial.

HELEN ?

Yeah.

BRYN

Hamid is very like...

BEN

Plus 4 and plus 5 is fine.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Sumut, I’m, I think Sumutnyerl has, like as frail as their physical form is, combined with Hamid, still doesn’t constitute like a hefty medium-sized creature you find.

BRYN

Don’t worry about it.

LYDIA

Yeah, and just pick Hamid up by the scruff of his neck like a cat.

ALEX

So, as a result, as the door opens – you know with a ‘kitizzzzzzzz’ and starts pulling, pulling a sign you all grab people and start dragging in. I’m going to say, Azu – you take a quick look over your shoulder as you do so – and see a large humanoid figure, briefly outlined in silhouette from the lights coming through the door. And then everything goes white for everyone. We’ll be back in a couple of minutes.

LYDIA

Nnnnnnnnnnnnnn !

ALEX

Okay so, looking back down the corridor that you’ve come from, there’s that creepy figure before everything went white, yes?

LYDIA

Mmmmmmm.

HELEN

Yeah.

(rolling dice)

ALEX

Cool. In that case then, do do...

LYDIA

That sounds like so many dice.

HELEN

That sounds like a lot of damage.

ALEX

It is a lot of dice – you’re assuming damage – maybe it’s...

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

...maybe it’s how many MPC’s die?

LYDIA

No !

BEN

It might be non-lethal, and Alex is trying to knock us all out by hook or by crook?

HELEN

Ah, yeah.

(laughter)

ALEX

It could just be summoning a load of corgi’s. Like that could just be how many corgi’s I’m summoning?

BEN

10 times something corgi’s?

LYDIA

Yeah.

HELEN

Ah that would be nice.

BRYN

Yeah.

LYDIA

A swarm of corgis.

ALEX

Okay, okay. I am checking one thing very quickly.

LYDIA

I mean how many health potions we’ll get?

(rolling dice)

ALEX

Azu?

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

Ooh ho ho ho. Sh*t, I shouldn’t swear.

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Alex !

(laughter)

BRYN

Alex !

(laughter)

HELEN

No ! No !

BRYN

Helen has finally got loads of hit points.

HELEN

I know but he’s laughing so much.

(laughter)

HELEN

Alex !

BEN ?

Okay. It’s more of a mischievous giggle.

ALEX

Helen – sorry Azu – you take 10, 20, 31, 42, 44 lightning damage.

BEN

Nice.

HELEN

Aw, and Zolf's frikken resistant to it, isn't he?

ALEX

Everyone else, did not hit the DC of 19, also takes the same damage. Zolf, you take 22 damage.

BEN

Cool.

ALEX

Hamid takes 44 damage.

HELEN

Ooooh.

ALEX

Cel takes 22 damage.

LYDIA

Yay !

ALEX

Azu takes the full 44. Wilde takes the full 44. Sumutnyerl takes the full 44.

BEN

Oh yeah

ALEX

And Augusta takes the full 44.

HELEN

Oh God.

BEN

That’s why he had so much fun saying they also failed. I understand now.

LYDIA

Naaaaarrrrr.

BEN

Alex, Alex.

ALEX

Yes.

BEN

Alex.

ALEX

Yeah, and it was all by legitimate rolls. I’m so happy.

HELEN

Really?

ALEX

I’m so happy right now.

HELEN

Bryn, how many hit points do you have?

BRYN

L e f t?

(Group laughter)

HELEN

How many hit points do you have to start with? That’s more useful for me to know.

BRYN

62.

HELEN

Okay, you’re still alive, it’s fine.

(laughter)

ALEX

Okay. So, everything goes white as lightning damage just s l a m s into Azu, crackling through your bones and between your teeth, then leaps to everyone else in the group. At which point the shadowy figure leaps forward incredibly quickly and powers towards the group. Zolf, you have dark vision, correct?

BEN

Yes, I also have a tactical opportunity and a 10 foot reach.

ALEX

Yeah, that’s fine. Azu?

HELEN

Yes, I also have dark vision.

ALEX

You have dark vision. And Cel, you have dark vision currently, don’t you?

LYDIA

Yip.

ALEX

Perfect. Cool. So the creature charges forward and it is very difficult to make out what they actually look like. They seem mostly to be defined by how they’re distorting the shape of the corridor around them.

HELEN

Oh God !

ALEX

And as they draw nearer though, they definitely seem to have some kind of humanoid form.

HELEN

Mmm.

ALEX

However, the head is larger than it should be. The arms appear to be six foot blades. And the creature stops 10 foot short of Zolf specifically. At which point two weird sort of – have you ever seen like a straightened slinky?

BEN

I mean it’s a, what that’s a wife, Alex.

LYDIA

That’s a bit of wire.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

No, no, no, no, no. A badly straightened slinky.

BEN

Oh right.

HELEN

Oooohhhhhhhh.

ALEX

So it’s still got the weird twists and kinks.

HELEN

Do you mean a stretched out slinky?

ALEX

Yeah.

BEN

Okay.

ALEX

Yeah, yeah.

BEN

So, like a coil kind of thing?

ALEX

Two coils. So yeah, that’s the word I was looking for. Stretched out slinky is a very elongated way of saying ‘coil’, thank you. Two coils of matter extricate themselves from the shoulders of this creature...

LYDIA

Urgh!

ALEX

...hover in the air, then dash forward, both of which for Zolf – they do not trigger attacks of opportunity.

BEN

Okay. Is that written in their sheet?

ALEX

Yes, explicitly.

BEN

Fair enough.

ALEX

At which point, they then sort of distorting wildly, stab outwards towards Zolf’s face.

BEN

Okay. Are they evil?

ALEX

Zolf does not know, but I would say you could make an educated guess of yes.
What’s your AC?

BEN

22.

ALEX

I believe it’s 22.

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Because that’s all the number you’ve given me all day, is 22 and I don’t know why or how.

(Group laughter)

(rolling dice)

ALEX

Okay. They are evil, you are taking damage reduction.

BEN

Cool.

ALEX

Because of the way it pans out, one of them manages to stab through to your face, dealing a 8 damage. Specifically it is slashing.

BEN

Okay, is that before or after the damage reduction?

ALEX

That is before damage reduction.

BEN

Grand.

ALEX

And they then hover in front of your face, spiking wildly. It's sort of like looking at – you know like audio visualises in a circle?

BEN

Mm hmm.

ALEX

That.

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

At which point, I think everyone should probably roll me initiative.

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

Probably.

BEN

Oh that’s a natural one.

LYDIA

Oh.

BRYN

I assume I don’t need to, Alex?

ALEX

Anyone who is unconscious will be taking a zero.

BRYN

Yeah.

(rolling dice)

LYDIA

Natural 20.

HELEN

21.

BEN

Six.

LYDIA

Well it was a natural 20, that’s 24 in total.

ALEX

Yup. Can you roll for Skraak, Bryn please?

(rolling dice)

BRYN

12.

ALEX

Excellent. And I’ve rolled everyone else’s up for them. Fabulous. In which case then, ba da da da. Cel, you are up. To describe the scene, you are in the – ugh – technically you’re going to be in the mini workshop because the mini workshop leads into the lab, yeah.

LYDIA

Mmm.

ALEX

Cel, you are in the – well everyone – is in the sort of mini workshop. You’re at the entrance to the main like lab with the big metal door, etc. That door is now ajar...

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

At the entrance to the mini lab, stood silhouetted in the corridor by the light of the now open door, that creature was stood there and then moved forward.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

The big creature is now 10 foot from you.

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

And the small creatures are like basically sharing a square with Zolf.

LYDIA

Oh that's annoying because a bomb would then hit him, wouldn't it?

ALEX

A bomb's going to hit everyone. Unless you throw to the far side...

LYDIA

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ALEX

You could try to place it behind big, big boy.

LYDIA

Yeah, but if it hits big boy, they only have five foot splash. So, it...

ALEX

Oh, then everyone will be alright.

LYDIA

Yeah. So, I will, Cel will be unloading bombs into large lads.

ALEX

Understood. Go for it.

LYDIA

Okay. Let's, let's do some rolling. Okay.

(rolling dice)

LYDIA

26.

ALEX

That is a miss.

LYDIA

Oh, oh no.

BEN

Does it, it still take splash damage?

ALEX

So you’ve raised a good question regarding what happens when you miss and still want to use a splash damage. So I’ve looked it up. And I’m going to come out and say, “That’s a stupid rule.” That is a – I don’t often say this – that is a bad rule. So I am not doing that rule. I refuse. That is ludicrous. So what I’m going to be doing instead is, if you miss by a certain factor of the AC...

LYDIA

Mm hmm.

ALEX

...I will call for basically, I’ll just make a roll that’s effectively just determining whether it’s likely to hit anyone or not. Or if you completely fumble, I will

automatically assume that the fumble is going to be hurting someone that you don’t want it to hurt. By a fumble I mean in that one.

LYDIA

Okay. Cool.

ALEX

To be clear, on this situation, you’ve missed and you’ve missed in such a way that it just flies over, it doesn’t splash the creature or anyone that you care about.

LYDIA

Okay. If that is a big miss, there’s no way that Cel can hit this creature. Because that was Cel rolling high, with the highest attack bonus.

ALEX

Can I give you a description by the way?

LYDIA

Yeah.

ALEX

You threw it – you seemed to throw ever so slightly wide – but the thing moved ludicrously quickly. Just sort of think bullet dodging in the Matrix. Just sort of turned a shoulder and it flew over. It didn’t really even seem particularly phased.

LYDIA

Yeah, okay. So that's, that is not worth wasting bombs on, on. There is a negligible chance of rolling higher than that. So, that is the first of four attacks. You know what, let's do one more. Let's do one more and then...

ALEX

Okay.

LYDIA

Bert, no? They rolled a three, so...

(rolling dice)

ALEX

No that, that's wildly off unfortunately.

LYDIA

No. Having seen those two things happen Cel is going to save their bombs and that having been their main action, I assume they do not have time to grab at the nearest unconscious person and begin to drag them away? But if they do have that time, then they will begin doing that.

ALEX

I'll be generous and allow you to grab the nearest unconscious person. But I wouldn't allow you to then drag them away. You're using your movement to grab them. I'm, I'm kind of fudging it a bit but that, that, that seems okay to me.

LYDIA

Okay. I mean it's yeah, it's like using a standard **act** rather than a full round thing. I think they would get the two attacks anyway, because they're not like, them using their bonus things?

ALEX

It's, it, it's fine. You've grabbed a person but you've not been able to run through the door.

LYDIA

Yeah. Cool.

ALEX

Who did you grab? Everyone's within reach so it's **[unclear 33:38]**...

LYDIA

Everyone's within reach, Hamid is the lightest and the one that Cel knows the most. I will grab Hamid off the ground.

ALEX

Cool.

LYDIA ?

I can't hit that.

ALEX

In which case then, due to weird shenanigans, it is now slinky number one. Slinky number one takes another stab for Zolf’s face. Succeeds but I think is only going to be doing... Basically goes, “aaaarr!” Stabs at your face and your face says, “No.”

BEN

Yeah.

(laughter)

HELEN

You got a sturdy face.

LYDIA

It’s that beard defence.

ALEX

And then it’s moving through the group, and then through the doorway to the other side, without provoking any attacks of opportunity. At which point, Azu you’re up.

HELEN

Right. I detect evil automatically I think, don’t I?

ALEX

Yeah, you can detect evil at will, as a you. And, would you like to know whether it’s evil and how evil?

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

Aargh ! This might be the most evil thing. I mean this, this is, this is right up there.

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

Like, this is, this is p r o p e r ludicrous evil.

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

This is nonsense levels of evil. This thing is as if you tried to concentrate evil and then removed the bits so it’s just the pure squeezed fresh evil.

(laughter)

ALEX

It’s nonsense evil.

HELEN

It’s the vantablack of evil.

ALEX

Absolutely. 100% yes.

HELEN

Are the two little things still in front of me or have they gone past me?

ALEX

They are – one of them is past you – the other one is still up in Zolf’s face.

HELEN

I would like to use holy whisper...

ALEX

Ooooh, cheeky.

HELEN

That is a range of 30 foot. Is that going to hit the, the big thing and the little thing?

BEN

Helen, I have an offer.

HELEN

Oh?

BEN

Because we, we’re, we’re – given the numbers that are occurring – we’re going to have to be very – we’re going to have to tactically work together in a sort of gamey way instead of a narrative way, I think?

HELEN

Yes.

BEN

You’ve got the thing where you...

ALEX

That’s fair, and I will allow you to do so. You are a well-oiled fighting machine.

BEN

You’ve got the thing where you can like give everybody, including yourself smite evil, right?

HELEN

I do have that.

ALEX

To answer your question by the way, the small one – everything would be, is within 30 feet – the small little one that went through the door, is actually like the 30 foot square away, if you see what I mean? You, you’d hit everything with anything that’s got a range of 30 foot. So everyone knows.

HELEN

I mean it’s a cone, so I might not.

ALEX

Ah. Okay. So, holy whispers. Walk me through it Helen.

HELEN

I’ll read you what it says. You whisper a single word in the primordial language of good, that is a [unclear 36:18]...

(Group laughter)

ALEX ?

The minions of evil.

HELEN

...and strengthens the resolve of good creatures. Evil creatures within the burst – it is a 30 foot cone-shaped burst...

ALEX

Yeah.

HELEN

...they must make a fortitude saving throw – which in my case is a DC16 – of, they become sickened for one round per level – which in my case is 11 rounds. Evil outsiders with the evil sub-type, evil eyed dragons and undead, also take two D8 points of damage if they fail the DC16. Good aligned creatures will gain plus 2 sacred bonus on attack and damage rolls for one round.

BEN

I think that might your – because you said you were hammering on the door right – when this fight kicked off?

BRYN

Yeah.

HELEN

Yeah.

BEN

Which means that I'm probably standing between you and the creature. Which means you'd probably hit me in that cone, right?

HELEN

That's what I thought.

BEN

Hell yeah.

ALEX

You will.

BRYN

I think you will hit everything except the one tiny enemy that already made it through the door.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

That is correct. That’s correct. It’s a very, very optimal play. I normally wouldn’t let you do this kind of like high level, but I’ve thrown something s u p e r, super interesting, so that’s okay.

BEN

You opened with a surprise round chain lightning, so...

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

Exactly, right.

(Group laughter)

ALEX

I open with surprise round chain lighting in the dark with poison whilst also summoning minions. So yeah, I’m going to allow you to, I’m going to allow you to confer.

(laughter)

HELEN

Thank you.

ALEX

Cool. Yeah, so. In that case then I will first give a fort save.

HELEN

Please be bad, please be bad.

ALEX

That’s a real bad roll. Okay, remind me of the effect...

HELEN

Um.

ALEX

...on the enemy.

HELEN

On the enemy it’s...

LYDIA

Is it an outsider?

HELEN

It, it is automatically now sickened for 11 rounds.

ALEX

11 rounds?

HELEN

If it’s an outsider with the evil sub-type it also takes two D8 points of damage.

ALEX

11 rounds!

HELEN ?

That’s a lot of sick.

ALEX

Yikes ! Wow ! Okay, yeah. So, this thing clearly hits the big scary like a ton of bricks.

HELEN

Good.

ALEX

Just, it actively reacts. It’s, it’s almost been impassive, it’s moved and then stopped. And then moved and then stopped. But that one gives a “uuurgh”, and it re-sets itself. The thing that’s up in Zolf’s grille appears completely unaffected.

HELEN

Okay.

BEN

Does it take damage?

ALEX

So. In terms of the damage, it was that it deals damage and extra if they’re an evil outsider, correct?

HELEN

Only if they’re an evil outsider, or a dragon or undead.

ALEX

So, you want the interesting stuff?

HELEN

Oh dear.

ALEX

This stuff is really going to throw you.

HELEN

It’s not an outsider?

ALEX

No.

LYDIA

Ooooooh.

BEN

Ah, it’s because it’s a transformed Barret, and he’s not an outsider. That’s well, that is my thought. I don’t know but that would explain the, the visceral horrible attacks as well.

ALEX

So nonetheless, you’ve, you’ve done an enormous...

BEN

Yeah.

ALEX

...you’ve done an enormous against me and I will say this because I think you need a little bit of comfort, Helen.

HELEN

What?

ALEX ?

Real well played. That was very, very well played. You were...

HELEN

I’m really glad because that was, that was teamwork.

(laughter)

ALEX

You pulled...

HELEN

Which has probably been edited out.

ALEX

...you’ve pulled a bit of blinder there.

HELEN

But that was teamwork.

BEN

Yeah it turns out that Reggie Kray is apparently really pleased with you.

“That’s really well played, yeah thank you very much Helen.”

(Group laughter)

BEN

No, you've got a good tactical mind there.

ALEX

Do you know what? On that, I am going to end the episode there. Like you say, in a tactical mindset ready for whatever comes.

BEN

Oh it will be a terrible shame if something were to happen to this monster, wouldn't it hey?

BRYN

A terrible shame.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Are we in EastEnders? Are we literally underneath, like...

BEN

Well we've basically been mugged by this monster at this point.

LYDIA

...Albert Square, yeah?

BRYN

I mean I’m pretty sure the monster gets to act next so, I might well be saying goodbye for the final time here you guys?

ALL

No. Noooooo !

BRYN

So, bye !

ALL

Bye !

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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