

## **RQG – 208 – Threshold**

### **Content Warnings**

- X
- X

**[Show Theme - Intro]**

**ALEX**

Hello and welcome to episode 190 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 still managing to play despite everything I do?

**HELEN**

Oh my God!

**BEN**

Zolf Smith

**BRYN**

Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan, somehow!

**LYDIA**

Cel Sidebottom.

**HELEN**

And an angry Azu!

**ALEX**

So, we have to pick up exactly where left off. We are in the middle of combat. You are fighting something that wants everyone dead. You are stood in the doorway to, in a lot of way, the world's last best hope and it wants to kill everyone near it. You are beneath London and with that, I would like to pick up. It's Wilde's turn I believe.

**LYDIA**

Oh!

**ALEX**

Unless I'm mistaken. I might be. Let me double check. I am mistaken. I'm going to keep the soft tone of voice but move him down the initiative order. There we go. wasn't that nice? Lovely. Now, with that in mind, Hamid, you're up.

**BRYN**

Is Hamid conscious? He's now in the slightly more breathable air but I think he stays asleep for one D4 hours.

**ALEX**

Oh gosh! Of course. You got knocked. I'm so sorry. I'm going to have to skip past you to Cel.

**BRYN**

Yeah, thanks for rubbing that in, again!

**ALEX**

I'm sorry. That wasn't even intentional that time. I saw a positive number on there and was like 'oh, hello'.

**LYDIA**

Cel breaths dragon ... well, it's not technically dragon fire, it's dragon electricity on the thing.

**ALEX**

Walk us through what that looks like and does.

**LYDIA**

This is because last episode, maybe even the episode before that, these episodes have been long! Cel necked a chemical allocation which is an ability that allows them to drink an expensive potion and spit it back out again and the one that Cel bought all the way back in Japan, was dragon's breath because they had seen Hamid do a dragon fire thing and thought that was cool. So did that. And so, yes, Cel turns to the creature and [roars] and what comes out is a jagged 30 foot line of lightning. It does...

**ALEX**

I believe an horrendous amount of damage, is if I remember correctly.

**LYDIA**

Well, yes. It should. It should. But, who knows. Creatures in the affected area and in this case because its lightning it is a 30 foot line, so it is not a cone, it just goes straight up through this thing. Successful reflex save results in half damage.

**ALEX**

I can roll the reflex save first then, because they're just going to take damage either way.

**LYDIA**

Yeah, they are.

**ALEX**

What is the reflex save DC?

**LYDIA**

10 plus intelligence modifier is 8, so 18. Plus the level of the spell. So it's 22.

**HELEN**

Oh God, I hope it misses because it's got really good reflexes though. It seems to be agile.

**LYDIA**

Ok.

**ALEX**

I'm afraid it rolled phenomenally high on its reflex and so has made the reflex save for half.

**HELEN**

Ah.

**ALEX**

What's the damage?

**LYDIA**

I accidentally on the dice roll put D20's rather than D6.

[Group laughter]

**LYDIA**

Roll it, roll it!

**ALEX**

Ok, so what is the damage? There is a crazy high reflex save though.

**LYDIA**

That was 28 then plus 11. So 39.

**ALEX**

So that's 39 damage halved.

**BRYN**

Yeah, 19 damage.

**LYDIA**

That is not as high as I thought.

**BEN**

What is remember is a hit instead of 'I throw a bomb'.

**LYDIA**

Yeah, yeah.

**BEN**

Unless something happens, so you know.

**ALEX**

Yeah.

**LYDIA**

Yep.

**ALEX**

I will ... will tip my hand a little bit here and go ... I will tip my hair ...

**BRYN**

Tip your hairy hand.

**ALEX**

...and say getting the hit in is half the battle. Don't under estimate that.

**LYDIA**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

You ... so you have used that. Is there anything else you'd like to do? Move through the door? Flank it? Run away?

**BRYN**

Close the door?

**ALEX**

Trigger loads of attacks of opportunity. They're all perfectly valid options.

**LYDIA**

Cel thinks that there are enough people on the other side of the door that can do the mission, so Cel is going to shut the door. Cel is standing in front of the door.

**ALEX**

Yep. You can do that. You can do that. Bearing in mind that Ada is on the other side. Ada's readied action goes off as she assists whoever it was that was going to close the door, to close the door.

**BRYN**

Yep, yep.

**LYDIA**

Yep.

**BRYN**

Cool.

**ALEX**

The door is closed. The party is split.

**LYDIA**

The ironic thing right, is that, like last episode we thought Hamid might die and we'd have to carry on without him. It's more like Hamid might be the one...

**BRYN**

Hamid is the only one who survived!

**BEN**

Anyway, speaking of, let's move on and see what happens.

**ALEX**

Azu, you are up.

**HELEN**

I really hope I don't die without ever managing to summon Topaz to do her real glory. Ok. I'm going to have to try and hit it. Because...

**BEN**

Will it be a vital strike again?

**HELEN**

Yes, it will be vital strike again. I'm not sure what, if there's stuff that's worn off since.

**BRYN**

The only thing that's worn off is the holy whisper.

**HELEN**

Ok. So then it will be 15 plus 3 plus whatever I roll to hit it.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**HELEN**

Ok. So whatever I roll is plus 18. Please be good again. Please. I beg you dice. Please, please, please. No, that's a 4. So that's only 22.

**ALEX**

No, that's not a hit I'm afraid. Ok, is there anything else you're doing?

**BRYN**

Do you still have damage Helen? Lay on hands yourself again. There's just no harm in being ... having as many hit points as you possibly can.

**HELEN**

Oh right, I'll do that. I'll do that. I'll lay on hands myself again. Ok, five D6. Here we go. God, imagine if I'm the last one standing...

**BRYN**

It's quite likely at this point.

**ALEX**

I can imagine that. That would be quite fun.

**BRYN**

Yep.

**LYDIA**

No it wouldn't! Because it would mean everyone else is dead Alex! Oh, that's a better role than last time. 17. Back.

**HELEN**

Nice.

**BEN**

That's a hit with this thing.

**LYDIA**

Yeah. A better world could have saved us.

**HELEN**

I don't think there's anything else I can do because I ... yeah ... mmhmm.

**ALEX**

Understood. In that case then, I am going to move onto the Squiggler who is still kicking on the side of the door with the rest of you. The Squiggler would go for Skraak. Squiggler would go for Skraak.

**HELEN**

Oh, I forgot about Skraak.

**ALEX**

Without the triggering of tax opportunities its Squiggles over to Skraak. What's Skraak's current AC?

**BRYN**

24.

**ALEX**

Doesn't hit. Squiggles is in his face but doesn't hit on either. Also, fair play. Yep, that was a good AC. Ok, in which case then [hah!] I need to check something but I think something rather amusing happens.

**HELEN**

It better not be Einstein suddenly appearing because I can't take having to defend someone else who is squiggly.

[Laughter]

**ALEX**

Everybody having a party here!

**LYDIA**

Ah, I'm already feeling the like. Anything that will complicate things so I don't feel so direct as in Cel has like quiet condemned the party to like a fatal doomed last stand.

**BEN**

You made the decision that Zolf would have made.

**HELEN**

It was Zolf who did it in my opinion!

**LYDIA**

Cel would not have done that if they weren't pretty sure that that was the decision that everyone on that side would have made. Like, as if Zolf screamed to do that. Skraak decided to come through the door and has definitely put his life on the line for these things before. Azu is just the kind of person that would.

**HELEN**

Yeah, Azu's really mad now as well because she just saw Hamid and Wilde die and have to get brought back.

**ALEX**

Would you like to hear the good news?

**HELEN**

Yeah.

**LYDIA**

Ok.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Hamid, you awake from a wonderful dream. I'm going to say a continuation of the last dream. Looking up into Wilde's face.

Are you with me Hamid, are you with me?

**BRYN**

What happened?

**ALEX**

Apparently we've been attacked by something. You were poisoned. We were all poisoned. Half of the group are still on the other side of the door, it's bad. It's really bad.

**BRYN**

Oh no! Back to six seconds.

**ALEX**

Big beastie. Big beastie.

**HELEN**

Ben! He has been bringing it! It's not going well for us. It is not going well.

**LYDIA**

Yeah, you with your load of hit points. I think it could one shot Cel.

**BEN**

But that's why I'm saying bring it. Bring it to me.

**HELEN**

Oh, I see.

**LYDIA**

Savage Ben!

**HELEN**

That is not it's MO.

**BEN**

No, it's not.

**ALEX**

Beastie goes for Cel.

**HELEN**

Oh God Cel. Oh God. You're on 50 something. I don't think it can one-shot you.

**BEN**

Yeah, they're not going one-shot you.

**ALEX**

What's your current AC?

**LYDIA**

24.

**ALEX**

Ooh, you might be lucky here.

**HELEN**

Remember the minus 2.

**LYDIA**

I still have the plus 3 from the smart evil thing right?

**BEN**

Yeah, that goes until it's dead.

**ALEX**

24 with ... and it's still got the minus 2? Jammy, jammy, jammy.

**BRYN**

Come on. Guys we've turned the tide. We've turned the tides.

**BRYN**

Alright. Skraak, let's go!

**ALEX**

No, wait, wait, wait.

**HELEN**

I don't know if it's jammy for Alex or for us.

**ALEX**

One of the attacks hits. It swings for you with both of the broad swords its got for arms and tries to slice into you. One of them you manage to dodge through skill, not through incompetence on its part. The second one is a hit. 25 damage.

**HELEN**

Yeah, ok. You're alive. That's good.

**LYDIA**

That's cool.

**ALEX**

And, everyone please give me a perception check now that there's less people for you to worry about. Well, you know what I mean.

**BEN**

22.

**HELEN**

Have you noticed that has Barret's face on it.

**BEN**

Yeah.

**HELEN**

That's a 24.

**BRYN**

25 for Skraak.

**LYDIA**

24.

**ALEX**

So Skraak, I'm going to take command for a second, yells out something along the lines of...

Watch out! It's healing.

**LYDIA**

Ooh, I dislike this.

**BRYN**

Boo!

**HELEN**

We're going to die here.

**BRYN**

Boo!

**HELEN**

We're going to die here.

**ALEX**

Skraak, it's Skraak's turn.

**BRYN**

Skraak drops his spear, whips the stalking dagger of it's belt and slashes from where it's kidneys might be.

**ALEX**

Sure.

**BRYN**

I assume I'm still flanking with Azu.

**HELEN**

Yeah, I've not moved.

**ALEX**

I'm going to give you a little bit of a helper here. This thing has not been behaving like something that is flanked. You know how we make the joke of like Pathfinder, we all have eye stalks, we all see in this different direction, this thing is fighting perfectly flawlessly on all sides. It's clear it's immune to flanking. It is just flawlessly, it's as if it's prescient almost.

**BRYN**

Ok. That is a 30 to hit.

**ALEX**

It's a hit.

**HELEN**

Ok.

**BRYN**

Well, we know it's AC now everyone.

**HELEN**

Yes.

**BEN**

Yep.

**ALEX**

Actually, I'm going to say yes, that's a hit.

**BRYN**

Oh actually anyway, it's a 32 to hit, so ... [laughter]. Ok, so 32 is a hit. That's good news. If it's not flanked, presumably I'm not getting sneak attack damage?

**ALEX**

You're not. Unless you have something incredibly powerful I don't know about.

**BRYN**

Skraak does four damage.

**LYDIA**

Oh!

**BEN**

It's all damage.

**ALEX**

Ben is not wrong. Anything else?

**BRYN**

No. Move action to change weapons. Attack action to take a swipe.

**ALEX**

Ok. From your perspective Hamid, you see Ava is blocking up the vault. Like Ava is triggering the like vault lock mechanism effectively and that is Ava's turn. Zolf, you are up.

**BEN**

Right. Finally do the thing.

**HELEN**

Yes, please do the thing.

**LYDIA**

Please roll well.

**BEN**

Ok, so he takes a five foot step backwards away from the thing.

**ALEX**

Yep, yep, yep, yep.

**BEN**

Then he takes his blade in two hands and slams it on the floor in front of him, you know, blunt end down. As he does that, out of the moisture in the air, 11 sort of like javelins of ice fall...

**ALEX**

Whoa!

**BEN**

...all pointed at it, the creature. And just skewer it.

**ALEX**

Is their smite still active at this point? Yes or no?

**BEN**

Yes, it's until it dies.

**HELEN**

Yeah.

**BEN**

So I am making 11 range to touched attacks on this thing. Each attack does one D6 damage plus one cold damage, plus one holy water damage. Which I assume with it being evil, it will hurt?

**ALEX**

It will hurt, but it's not going to get bonus.

**BEN**

Yeah, yeah, fine.

**ALEX**

I'll tell you now for the sake of the maths, it's going to get very complicated if I try and hide that.

**BEN**

It's fundamentally one D6 plus two per attack. However, because I'm smiting evil, all of my attacks get plus 11 damage. So I'm making 11 one D6 plus 13 attacks. Do it.

**HELEN**

Destroy it.

**LYDIA**

Can I just tell all of you that I love you very much.

[Laughter]

**HELEN**

We love you too.

**BEN**

Yeah, and my attack roll is my base attack bonus plus my wisdom modifier so that comes to 13.

**BRYN**

Plus the smite evil bonus of plus 3.

**BEN**

Oh, so, 16.

[Dice roll]

So 20.

**ALEX**

Is this against touch AC?

**BEN**

This is against touch AC so...

**ALEX**

I'm going to tell you now for the sake of simplicity...

**BEN**

Yep.

**ALEX**

...anything that ... it has a touch AC of 18.

**BEN**

Fine, so hit, one hit, two hit, three hit, four hit...

[Dice roll]

**HELEN**

Genuinely thought that we were going to die in that corridor...

**BEN**

...five hit...

**LYDIA**

I still think we are.

**BEN**

...six hit...

**LYDIA**

Ah, fair.

**BEN**

19, seven hit...

[Dice roll]

...eight hit, nine hit...

**LYDIA**

Oh my God!

**BEN**

...10 hit...11 hit. No Crits though!

**ALEX**

I'd like to congratulate you on ... this thing is phenomenal. About everything. Apart from one thing. Touch AC is actually pretty manageable.

**BEN**

Yeah, and also if it's got high AC, just roll the dice as many times as possible.

[Laughter]

**ALEX**

Roll the damage. You are going to hurt this.

**BEN**

So, immediately take 143 damage.

**ALEX**

[Laughter]. Sorry. Sorry. Just give me a second. Just give me a second.

**BRYN**

We just need to state that very clearly for the record. Ben has just inflicted 11 D6, plus 143 damage on this thing.

**BEN**

So and now just to be clear though Alex, you know for the purposes of any damage reductions or resistances, times it whatever by 11 and apply that.

**BRYN**

Yeah, yeah.

**BEN**

It will be doing it as one big calculation. It gets 11 times it's resistance to this thing.

**ALEX**

Ok. In that case then, I do actually need you to roll.

**BEN**

Right. Ok. I've got 10 D6 here so I can roll that, yeah. Ok, so that is ... so we're on 143. 153. 163. 173. 174. 179. A nice round 180!

**ALEX**

Oh that might do it you know. Let me check.

**BRYN**

Zolf! Zolf! Zolf! Zolf!

**BEN**

No, no, no to be honest, The Team! The Team! The Team! The Team.

**ALEX**

Congratulations. I'm legitimately impressed.

**LYDIA**

Alex!

**ALEX**

I am legitimately impressed...

**BEN**

That's the cover we got excited about.

**ALEX**

You slammed the glade in, and you pour ... you pour damage into this thing. It's very difficult to heal something when every single inch of your body is being annihilated. There is shredded and then the shreds are shredded. It is obliterated in front of everyone. Like, that's a proper turn.

**BEN**

Top 10!

**ALEX**

Absolutely. And on that, we'll take a couple of minutes and formally, I'd like to congratulate you all on just the best ... just the best.

**HELEN**

Good Lord.

**LYDIA**

You such!

**[Group laughter]**

**ALEX**

And welcome back. You are still technically in initiative order. there is a squiggle loose. Hamid. You hear what's effectively an explosion from the other side of that door.

**BRYN**

You can't just lock them. We have to help them. Open it back up!

**ALEX**

I shouldn't have opened it in the first place.

**BRYN**

Hamid casts knock.

**HELEN**

Love it.

**BRYN**

Do you want me to make a cast level check?

**ALEX**

You will need to make a cast level check, because there's extra stuff at play here.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Make a good one. It is possible. Well, it's built not to be opened.

**BRYN**

36.

**ALEX**

Door opens. That was a good roll wasn't it?

**BRYN**

That's a 15. So knock is just very good at opening locks. It's your cast level plus 10. So I'm getting plus 21 to the roll because I have...

**ALEX**

It takes a while but it does unlock and start to open as Ada is literally bracing her leg against the frame going 'no!, no, you'll ruin, you'll kill everyone'.

Cel.

**BRYN**

I've got to help them!

**ALEX**

Oh, sorry, you can move as well if you want, but the door is not open, it's opening.

**BRYN**

Hamid just lifts into the air slightly as his wings flap.

**ALEX**

Cel, you are up. The door is opening to be clear with her yelling that.

**LYDIA**

Yep. Cel yells ...

It's ok! It's almost over.

And the squiggly thing is on top of Skraak right, so a bomb is a bad idea.

**ALEX**

Its in his face. It's literally like [raar, raar, raar]. Visualise the music Skraak!  
Visualise it!

**LYDIA**

Ah, literally nothing that Cel has is appropriate. I suppose we'll just shoot with the arrows because got to act fast. It's absolutely pointless. It will do almost nothing, but yeah...

**HELEN**

Nothing is pointless if it hits.

**LYDIA**

That's I suppose true. The arrows are at attack bonus of 13, 13, 7. So that is ...  
8 plus 13 is 21.

**ALEX**

I think that's a hit.

**BRYN**

Minus 4 for firing into Mele I'm afraid.

**ALEX**

But that still might be a hit! 24 to hit minus 4. That's a hit.

**LYDIA**

Ok. The next one is 18 minus 4.

**ALEX**

That's a miss.

**LYDIA**

Yeah. And the next one I rolled 20. So...

**ALEX**

Two hits. One miss.

**LYDIA**

Ok. So that's 25 damage.

**ALEX**

Yeah, it's still kicking, but it's a similar situation to when Skraak like just massacred the last one. It's ... chunks of it have come off as part but it is still squiggling up in Skraak's face.

**LYDIA**

Ok. Moving wise, Cel wants to open up a bit of space. So people can attack and Cel is going to push open the door which I assume is like a crack open?

**ALEX**

Yeah, you can do that. That's fine.

**LYDIA**

Cool.

**ALEX**

Azu, you are up then.

**HELEN**

Well the only enemy left is this thing in front of Skraak right?

**ALEX**

Yep.

**HELEN**

I hit it with my axe!

**ALEX**

You try to it with your axe.

**HELEN**

Ok. I attempt to hit it with my axe but my attack bonus is 15. So...

**BRYN**

Are you going to vital strike or not?

**HELEN**

Yeah, a bit of vital strike. Absolutely.

**ALEX**

Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. This is really important. Your attack bonus is 15.

**HELEN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Congratulations. For the first time, you just hit.

**[Laughter]**

**ALEX**

You just hit it! You have transcended dice into mechanic! Just skip to the hurting. I don't think it can survive.

**BEN**

Right transcend the dice except for the 3 D12 but that gets rolled.

**HELEN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Technically ... wait, wait, wait ... 3 D12 plus what?

**HELEN**

8.

**ALEX**

Ah, yeah. You still got a roll. You haven't quite transcended all dice. But very nearly.

[Dice roll]

**HELEN**

Doh! Ok, that is 19 plus 8 which is 27.

**ALEX**

You swipe it from existence. The bits of powder that puff off disintegrate as they do so.

**HELEN**

Ok.

**BEN**

Now we're good!

**ALEX**

You are now out of initiative.

**LYDIA**

If Cel is going to collapse through the door, it will be like...

Zolf is terrifying.

**BRYN**

Cel, Cel, are you ok? Is everyone ... what happened?

**LYDIA**

That dwarf is terrifying.

**ALEX**

What happened?

**BEN**

I will walk up to Azu and like do a proper sort of predator bicep like handshake.

**ALEX**

Yes!

**BEN**

We grab each other's forearms and go 'yeah, you saved us, thanks'.

**HELEN**

Well, we both saved.

**LYDIA**

We knew Azu was terrifying.

**ALEX**

Ada yells 'get inside. What if there's more, get inside, get inside'.

**HELEN**

We should go inside. We should go inside.

**ALEX**

Get inside please.

**BRYN**

What happened to Sumutnyerl?

**BEN**

Lets take the bodies.

**HELEN**

Yes.

**BRYN**

What bodies?

**HELEN**

I'll pick up Sumutnyerl.

**BEN**

I'll pick up Augusta.

**BRYN**

Oh no!

**HELEN**

Skraak, are you alright?

**ALEX**

I'm angry, that's about it.

**HELEN**

Yes. Yes. Good.

**ALEX**

Ada is right. We need to get inside and close the door. We don't know what happened...

**BRYN**

Yep.

**ALEX**

Come up.

**HELEN**

Yes, alright.

**ALEX**

With everyone's consent, are people ok to move inside and close and lock the vault door behind them.

**ALL**

Yes.

**ALEX**

Cool. You will notice that I have been skipping the odd fort save here and there. I feel like the poison moving into and out of it. Simple reason. With that kind of a door frame, you could just keep dragging and pulling people and

it would just be a Benny Hill back and forth as people drop and pick up and drop. I can't be bothered. So we'll just say that people held their breath. That's a legitimate thing you can do. Everyone is inside, the door is closed.

**LYDIA**

Do we think that that thing was Barret?

**BEN**

I don't know.

**HELEN**

I wouldn't be surprised.

**LYDIA**

We're not sure. No one saw like his face on it or anything.

**BRYN**

We still don't know where...

**LYDIA**

No.

**BRYN**

...the professor is?

**BEN**

Yep.

**LYDIA**

Anyone do any healing?

**HELEN**

Oh yes. And stabbed in the chest.

**BEN**

Sorry. Yes.

**LYDIA**

I'm going to channel positive energy.

**BEN**

As will I.

**ALEX**

I'm afraid I'm going to have to interrupt one second. Ada panicking a little bit. Is just pointing the wand at everyone going show me your eyes ... show me ... I don't know who is and who isn't. Show me your eyes. Everyone right now, show me your eyes.

**BEN**

I will look at Ada and pull down my bottom eyelids to...

**ALEX**

Basically everyone I'm in control of obviously they'll be doing the same and Ada is like...

Ok. Ok. Ok.

Ada sort of just backs away and starts compulsively checking the equipment. Like literally like, check it's number 37 and just starts going back through and checking everything.

**BRYN**

Ada. Ada. Is positive energy going to do anything in this room bad?

**ALEX**

It should be fine. It should be fine.

**HELEN**

Ok, great.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

[Dice roll]

**ALEX**

66. And she's just going through and checking all the machinery again.

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**HELEN**

Ok, everyone gets 20 back.

**BEN**

And 23 from me.

**HELEN**

Ok, that's me at full health.

**BEN**

Oh, that is me exactly at full health.

**LYDIA**

Ooh, it is not me at full health. That's fine.

**BRYN**

What attacked us? I don't remember anything.

**ALEX**

I'm the same. I don't know what that was.

**BEN**

Some sort of goo assassin. I don't know. Evil.

**LYDIA**

It had lightning and it killed you.

**HELEN**

Yes, you died again.

**BRYN**

Oh that's a good point actually. I kind of resolve being knocked of a stupor, he'll go over and hug Wilde and be like almost lost you.

**ALEX**

I need to hit the gym or something. Like, I need to be less of a liability. Thank you so much.

**BRYN**

Well done and thank you. Thank you so much.

**LYDIA**

To be fair, Oscar, the two times that I've seen you go down, you've been kind of impaled multiple times while unconscious. I don't know what exercises there are for that. Like, but, yeah, I wouldn't blame yourself.

**HELEN**

Yeah, the solution there might be armour rather than...

**ALEX**

I need to start practising casting with armour any way. So I'm guessing ... I'm guessing we lost Sumutnyerl and Augusta then?

**BEN**

Yeah, Einstein's missing. Barret's missing and we don't know if that was Barret or Barret made it happen or what. Ada, what situation are we in for getting this thing up there, because as much as I want to hunt down that little snake and ring his neck myself, we should focus on solving the big problem rather than revenge.

**ALEX**

Can anyone who wants to, give me a sense motive for Ada?

**LYDIA**

Yeah.

**BRYN**

Of course.

[Dice roll].

**LYDIA**

God I never roll well on sense motive.

**BRYN**

Does Lovelace even know yet that Tesla is dead?

**HELEN**

I yelled it through the door.

**LYDIA**

Just because it's low enough that ... if you want to play it for an incorrect read, Cel rolled a 2.

**HELEN**

I get 20 on my sense motive on Lovelace.

**BEN**

21 on Lovelace.

**ALEX**

Yeah, both of those are high enough. She is retreating into work and is not engaging what people are saying. This is a sort of a shock response. She is ... she is rely... basically, what's happened is, she's gone into full blown shock and is right now training is kicking in. Like this is you know where you start relying on procedures and you just sort of mentally turn off, that.

**HELEN**

Ok.

**BEN**

So, does she ignore my question?

**ALEX**

Yeah, she's just like ok. 67. 67. Clear. Right, we go to 86 but we skip 44 because 44 interacts with 57. Ok right.

**HELEN**

Lovelace, are you ... Azu is going to attempt to interrupt.

**ALEX**

She ... she panics a little bit and is like...

No, no. I've got it. I've got to check. Please just. I've got to check, got to check the machine.

**HELEN**

Azu looks to the rest of them...

**ALEX**

Can't be the machine! Can't lose the machine. We can't lose the machine!  
We can't lose the machine.

**BEN**

Yes, Lovelace, how long will that take?

**ALEX**

Give me a persuasion.

**BRYN**

Do you mean diplomacy?

**ALEX**

Sorry. Long time. Yep. Diplomacy. It's been a long time since I asked for anything other than damage!

**BRYN**

10.

**ALEX**

Nah. That kind of a direct approach it's just not working.

**LYDIA**

Cel's going to walk over and basically begin working alongside and Cel kind of being gradually in Lovelace's space and then introducing gently some questions.

Where is the machine? The machine? And is it ready?

**ALEX**

So Lovelace initially resists, but it does start to work because you are actively just working through the checklist. And when she hears that, she's just talking about this little bit. I'm going to skip ahead a little bit because as a tactic that will work. It's just that you're not going to get it immediately. It's going to take a couple of moments for her to sort of come back down from that place.

**LYDIA**

Yep. I mean frankly, it will take Cel a while having watched two of their friends die and be ...

**ALEX**

Yeah.

**LYDIA**

...you know, we've seen a lot of people die in the last ... like half of them came back, but half of them... like four people died!

**HELEN**

Yeah.

**LYDIA**

And then two resurrections!

**ALEX**

Ada eventually is like ...

We've got the mobile set up towards the back of the lab. That's the last thing you check, but you have to make sure that the static set up is ... is communicating properly. Babbage is now in the mobile set up.

**LYDIA**

Right.

**ALEX**

Someone is going to have to tell Babbage what's happened.

**LYDIA**

Ok.

**ALEX**

And then once that's done, we'll be ok, but we can't ...we can't go into lockdown now.

**LYDIA**

We can't go what? We can't go into lock...

**ALEX**

Wait, we shouldn't open the door again. I shouldn't have opened it then.

**LYDIA**

No, you did the right thing. You did absolutely the right thing. Because otherwise you would be alone in here and everyone else would be dead. There would be no way to actually use the machine. Right? You did exactly the right thing. Thank you for doing that. Now how to we talk to Babbage?

**ALEX**

Babbage, right yeah, yeah. If you come with me, I'll get that going.

Lovelace finishes the check list and then sort of starts heading over to the mobile set up at the back.

**LYDIA**

I'm going to assume that Cel could probably roll enough to work out how one talks to Babbage without needing Ada's help.

**ALEX**

Oh, he's easily...

**LYDIA**

This is about keeping her conscious isn't it.

**ALEX**

Sure.

**HELEN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Lovelace heads over to the counter at the very, very back and there is what seems to be set up on there, think Ghostbuster-esk backpack, in so far it's a very techy backpack that is now housing Babbage in there...

**LYDIA**

Hah! It's a brain in a backpack?

**ALEX**

In addition to that, there is a sort of large unwieldy apparatus which is connected to that. It appears that they've added and bolted on a bunch of stuff to that kill switch. So it's sort of ... the kill switch has been modified and connected into a mobile set up for Babbage. To your eye, without even a check, it looks to be exactly what they said it would be. But it is going to require the machinery here to continue to function. That is in a case where it is now all just compressed into a backpack. The stuff here has to keep going to talk with the backpack which is interacting with the kill switch. If you see what I mean. But, yeah, she heads over and she's like ok, cool.

We can set Babbage to hear the whole room or just a person? What do you think is better?

**LYDIA**

Cel turns to Azu and Zolf.

You're better people than me, Azu and you seem to know more about what you expected ... I think this might be a one on one conversation where a small one. Does anyone have strong opinions on taking over it or I'm willing to...

**BEN**

Whatever gets it going. We need to move.

**BRYN**

I would definitely like to talk to Babbage.

So while ... we've skipped through a little bit of time while Cel and Lovelace were working on stuff.

**ALEX**

Sure. It will have been a few minutes, but it is a few minutes, yeah.

**BRYN**

Hamid will probably have asked Wilde to help him with the bodies and like put them in the corner and grab some material from his...

**ALEX**

Absolutely.

**BRYN**

...tailoring supplies in his bag of holdings, like covered them. And like maybe even asked what ... if there is anything else we should do beyond that. But just...

**ALEX**

Skraak will have been assisting.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

And once they're sort of laid out with a sheet or whatever, Skraak would then be ... probably would sit in attendance I think.

**BRYN**

Yeah...

**BEN**

Also there is no reason that Zolf wouldn't help given that...

**BRYN**

Yeah, yeah.

**BEN**

...it became obvious that the direct approach.

**BRYN**

I didn't want to ask because the people who actually live, you know, were conscious through the battles, seemed a lot more stressed. But if you're helping then he'll happily include...

**HELEN**

I feel like probably all of us are helping.

**BEN**

Because obviously he's always stressed so...

**BRYN**

I guess we should try and get some of these bodies back to their people.

**HELEN**

Yes. As soon as we can.

**BRYN**

But yeah, once the topic of talking to Babbage comes up, Hamid is definitely going to volunteer to be part of that conversation.

**ALEX**

Sure. So Ada heads over to the equipment. Turns a lever. Tweaks some things and then picks up what's effectively a built in microphone into the back of the thing and she goes ... puts on a set of ... basically headphones again, like we're in magitech territory here and she's just like...

Hi Babbage. I'm fine. Thank you. I'm going to introduce someone who needs to talk to you. Thanks.

And then she puts the microphone down and takes the headphones off and just holds them both out to Hamid.

**BRYN**

Does anyone else want to ... or shall I just ...

**LYDIA**

If you're ... I mean obviously, I want to talk to the brain and... but appropriate. You should have this conversation I think.

**BRYN**

Ok.

**ALEX**

Ok. In that case then, you put the headphones on and the first thing that you hear is a ... like a low hiss. At the risk of being an audio nerd, the hiss of audio

things that are turning on, that sort of phantom power sound and then that settles down...

**BRYN**

I honestly don't what you're talking about. My hearing is not good enough to hear that kind of thing. But, Hamid's probably is. So...

**ALEX**

[Laughter]...well regardless. There's a couple of moments then you have a 'hello'

**BRYN**

Hello. Babbage or Charles? May I call you Charles?

**ALEX**

Yes. Can I ask with whom I have the pleasure of speaking?

**BRYN**

Of course. Hamid Saleh Haroun al-Tahan.

**ALEX**

Well, it's lovely to meet you Mr Tahan.

**BRYN**

Pleased to meet you.

**ALEX**

To what do I owe the...

**BRYN**

Hamid, please.

**ALEX**

Hamid. Hamid, of course.

**BRYN**

Well, I'm afraid I have some rather bad news.

**ALEX**

Ah, I see.

**BRYN**

My friends and I have been here helping and, well, it's about Nikola. There was an attack and I'm afraid he was ... he was killed.

**ALEX**

Forgive my curtness. This is obviously very upsetting but, the stakes are very high. Is there ... is the device itself still intact?

**BRYN**

Oh yes, it seems to be all ... Ada has informed us everything seems to still be looking like it works and everything is ok.

**ALEX**

And she's well as well?

**BRYN**

Oh yes, yes. Ada is ok. She sealed herself in the lab and that's where we all now.

**ALEX**

Ah, thank goodness.

**BRYN**

I'm afraid Augusta also didn't make it in the conflict as well as our friend Sumutnyerl but I don't know if you've heard about them. And we don't know where Professor Einstein is either. So we're not sure what's happened to him. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news.

**ALEX**

Well, I ... I appreciate your forthrightness and we all knew the risks, so ... thank you for telling me. I might need a few moments with Ada I think after...

**BRYN**

Oh of course, of course. Yes. I mean Ada of course is a ... well she's thrown herself into her work. She's shaken. She seems to be coping very well.

**ALEX**

Oh, she will. She's always been the best of us.

**BRYN**

We had obviously hoped to ask all three of you about ... well the next stages in the process, since that's what we're all here to do. I do I'm afraid, have one other thing to talk to you about first. My friend Cel, well they're just endlessly impressive, extremely intelligent and capable and they were examining Nikola's...

**LYDIA**

Cel's in the background like ... duh, duh, duh, they do not ... no, no ...

**ALEX**

No context compliments are the worst!

**LYDIA**

Com... yeah exactly. No context whatsoever. Like for all I know like it could be deciding which one of us lives and dies.

[Laughter]

**BEN**

Oh no!

**BRYN**

Oh well, they were examining the device and it does seem we found a fault ... a small flaw in I think with the feedback prevention mechanism.

**ALEX**

Oh. Oh, do we believe the device will still function?

**BRYN**

Yes, it should do. My understanding of the process is you extend your consciousness into the network and then release control and then withdraw it again.

**ALEX**

Essentially, yes. I would ask ... I would ask if you're able to assist Ada in the repair of that. I would greatly appreciate it.

**BRYN**

Well, I think Cel definitely would be. Cel has shown a real aptitude for mechanical engineering problems. I understand some of the theory, I've been studying it for a while, but not on their level. But yes, I think we would be able to repair that. So that's good.

**ALEX**

And I should offer you my ... my thanks for catching that if it comes at a sad time.

**BRYN**

Yes, very. It's ... nothing but difficult times unfortunately. But we're all a team and, yes, if you and Ada are able to tell us everything else that needs to be done, we'll definitely help you do it.

**ALEX**

I appreciate your time. If you would be so good as to pass me across to Ada I believe...

**BRYN**

Oh yes. Of course, yes.

**ALEX**

...we should have a short conversation I think.

**BRYN**

Of course. Excellent yes. Thank you for talking to me. I'll hand you over to Ada then.

Hamid takes off the headset and calls out to Lovelace.

**ALEX**

Yes, Lovelace will already be there ready to take it off you, because obviously it's not a very loud room right now.

**BRYN**

Yes. Fair.

**LYDIA**

I like the idea of you going and taking them off. They're quite clunky so you can't see all around you. You turn and you yell and you know, is on the other side.

**HELEN**

No, I'm here! Give me the headphones.

**ALEX**

And so on that note, I think we'll end it there. Heavy.

**BRYN**

That was a stressful old time.

**LYDIA**

Emotions.

**BEN**

We certainly got away with it.

**BRYN**

Yeah.

**BEN**

It wasn't without cost. But it could have been a lot worse.

**HELEN**

It could've been a lot worse.

**ALEX**

Well, if nothing else, pressing on next week I think. But until then, thank you all. It's been, if not a pleasure, then a wild ride and we'll see you all next week.

**HELEN**

It's been an absolute rollercoaster.

**BRYN**

Indeed.

**ALEX**

Bye all.

**EVERYONE**

Bye!

**[Show Theme - Outro]**

**ALEX**

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