

## **RQG 209 - Shades of Red**

### **Content Warnings**

- Underground tunnels & claustrophobia.
- Discussions of: death & murder (inc. character deaths), classism.
- Mentions of: memory loss, loss of consciousness, poison & drugging, blades, human remains, bombs, innuendo.
- SFX: bubbling & tinkling, clanking, crashing, humming, occasional bleeping.

### **[Show Theme - Intro]**

#### **ALEX**

Hello and welcome to episode 209 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 we've had a little longer than the audience to get over stuff, so how are we all feeling at this end of the room, how's everyone doing?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, whatever it's fine.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Oh great, yeah, yeah, easy.

**(laughter)**

**HELEN AS AZU**

Confused.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Nothing traumatic happened recently did it?

**HELEN AS AZU**

No idea, no idea what's coming.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Grand and joyous.

**ALEX**

So, to do our increasingly redundant recaps we are in London currently in an ever so slightly compromised bunker, and there's been an attack where we lost a lot of people but, technically you can still save the world, so there's that. With that in mind, I'd quite like to pick up pretty much exactly where we left off, if that's okay?

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Which is at the moment, Lovelace is having a sort of quiet murmured conversation with Babbage in one corner of the room. I am going to go ahead and say that people have been polite enough to give a little bit of space there. As a result, you all have moments breathing space with Wilde, Skraak and I believe that is everyone in the room.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah, that's the survivors Alex!

**(laughter)**

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Cool. Sorry, I'm used to a lot longer list.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Oooph!

**ALEX**

So, a lot of my tables have gotten a bit shorter but yeah, you all have a few moments of rest bite while that side conversation's going on between NPCs,

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which no I will not RP because you are affording them privacy, so let them have the privacy.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

What now?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Well, I guess we wait for the technical people to sort out. You've got to fix that whatever and then we'll go.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yes, yes that is a thing I can the thing, thank you. Purpose, yes, good, glorious, love it! Going.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Do we still need to search for the Professor?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

No.

**ALEX**

As a piece of context I will give, at no point during the fight did that hiss of gas stop, that room was still full of gas when you came inside.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

He can teleport. He could literally be anywhere.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Well, you can't teleport in and out of this building allegedly.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, well apparently it was safe as well.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

True.

**HELEN AS AZU**

I trust Einstein enough to have made the right decision and gotten himself out.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Before all this kicked off, we basically scoured the facility alright. So, I don't know if he's out or doing something or whatever, but...

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Okay.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, we're not gonna do anything and to be quite honest and quite brutal, that is a waste of time.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Okay.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Also, you know we'll probably just pass out again if we go out there so we can't.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Ah, well, yeah. Sorry, my memory is all...

**HELEN AS AZU**

Oh, I just... you don't...

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Cel is tinkering but will nod up and be like "I don't actually think that I would, if you want me to go alone?"

**HELEN AS AZU**

I don't think we should split up. I do not want to split us up. I think we need to go into the hole in the wall.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Okay, yes, sorry, my memory is all scrambled, everything that happened before I woke up again is a bit hazy.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, to my mind it's, fix a machine, make the machine portable, take the machine, finish this. Once we save the world I will hunt down and destroy Barrett, but he's not important at the moment, he's done what he's done, he's played his hand, he's made his gambit and he failed.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Did he fail? I don't know what he went off to do.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Well, the machine's fine, he ain't stolen anything.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

That seems important yes.

I remember...

**HELEN AS AZU**

Hamid you passed out.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yes.

**HELEN AS AZU**

We were in the corridors and it all went dark and then some of us passed out and some of us didn't, some kind of poisonous gas I suppose; and then we

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were attacked by something very awful and horrible made of knives and weird goo, and people got murdered by it.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yes, I remember Tesla's body it... was that Barret or was that this creature?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Probably this creature.

**HELEN AS AZU**

It's the same puncture wounds, same as stabbing.

**ALEX**

For free Azu, yeah, you are the one who did the heal check, given how you saw this thing had certain like morphing capabilities and so on, that whole bite to the back of the neck thing, it's far, far, far more likely that whatever attacked you, attacked Tesla than that it ever was something new or anything like that.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

So, it's like did Barret let it in? Was that Barret? We don't know.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Okay, okay.

**HELEN AS AZU**

And Zolf's right, it doesn't matter. We need to end this before it gets any worse.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

That makes sense, yeah. The original plan was that there'd be two teams, one in the location and one would remain here and do something simultaneously, but maybe we have to change that up a bit given this is no longer safe.

**ALEX**

There is a gentle ding ling ling ling within the room in a corner.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

What is that?

**ALEX**

Again, a ding ling ling ling ling.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Ada? Ada?

**ALEX**

Lovelace cannot hear. Lovelace has headphones on and has no idea of that.

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**LYDIA AS CEL**

Cel goes over and taps Ada on the shoulder.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Yes, what's?

**LYDIA AS CEL**

There's a ring, it seems like a signal like a doorbell, what's that?

**ALEX**

There's another ding ling ling ling ling.

She looks quite confused.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

It's not your doorbell?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Is everyone still inside?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

With that reaction I am gonna go and look at whatever is doing it.

**HELEN AS AZU**

I am also going to look for it, yeah.

**ALEX**

In the corner there's a basically a series of bells that are labelled, there's only three.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

That would have been simpler, I'm sorry for interrupting you Ada, continue.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

In fairness they're in an innocuous place and they're kind of obscured by stuff and everything. One of them literally just says "main door", one of them says "internal poll" and then the other one says basically like "alarm" or whatever, and yeah, the main door one just again ding ling ling ling ling.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

How do you work this thing?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Well, it has a magical component but there someone's at the front door.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, probably, shall I answer it?

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Can we answer it without going through the building? Does it have like message?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

There was that sending thing that they spoke to us with.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Ah! There you go, I didn't remember that. I am going to go back to tinkering over here.

**ALEX**

Lovelace looks really, really concerned.

"Who is..."

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Einstein for goodness sake, please let me... tell me how to talk to this person.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

"Oh sorry, yes okay"

Lovelace sort of runs over to that corner and starts pulling away basically what's effectively science trash.

**(laughter)**

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Before I do so, I will just address Cel's thing for a moment, which is I am not going to require a roll to fix up that feedback mechanism. The hard roll was to find that there was the problem, where in Pathfinder you can just take ten your scores are that high, I don't need a roll.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Cool, okay. The taking of ten will mean that Cel is fiddling and is of course double checking, that is where they are that is where their attention is until emergency hit.

**ALEX**

That's fine.

Again, Lovelace opens a sort of hatch in the door, it's sort of like you know those hatches you get for like fire hoses and so on?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Mm hmm.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

And pulls out what looks like a fire hose with effectively a funnel on the end instead of anything else, and then, "Hello? Hello" the bell rings again ding ling ling ling ling.

She just kind of looks really nervously at everyone else.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Is there any way to see out there?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

We can't see them from in here. We can do this sort of communication but...

**BEN AS ZOLF**

So, that they can talk to us?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Yes, but they're not.

**HELEN AS AZU**

That does not sound good!

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Alright, hang up then!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Yeah, she kind of shocked she's like ah! Hangs up and then closes the door a little bit of like ah, go away.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

If it were someone we wanted to talk to, they'd probably bloody talk to us, wouldn't they?!

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

It just means that...

**BEN AS ZOLF**

That we're compromised and they know where we are?! Yes, exactly!

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Sorry, it's ju- I've been down here a long time where that's...

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Sorry, yes no, sorry, I imagine we're more used to these kind of situations, yes.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Okay.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

It's probable that we have been completely compromised and that is a trick to try and get in or something like that. If it were Einstein or anyone we cared about, they would have talked to us if they haven't...

**ALEX**

It rings again ding ling ling ling ling.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Right, I am gonna rip the bell off the wall.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

It's fine, I don't need a strength check it just goes, but before you do, as you are reaching for it, it just starts to ring like almost off the hook just like, as you are reaching out ding ling ling ling ling, ding ling ling ling ling, ding ling ling ling ling ding ling ling ling ling CRUNCH!

**HELEN AS AZU**

Absolutely ripped that out! I also stamp on it for good measure.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

By the way Alex, if this is you making it our fault that Einstein dies, very rude words at you, very rude words indeed.

**LYDIA AS CEL AND HELEN AS AZU**

Yes!

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah, I was thinking that.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Well, okay the likelihood of anyone penetrating this vault is very low. They will have a rude awakening if they try.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

“Okay, that’s good, but what that means is we need to make sure that we are ready to move as quickly as possible. We have a way out via that” and I point at the secret hatch that Hamid found.

**ALEX**

Ah, the ominous tunnel, yes.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yes, well the only way out of this room. So, we need to make sure that Babbage is good to move, that all the stuff is fixed, although and I look over to Cel, like they’re dealing with that. We need to be prepared. We haven’t got infinite time. We need to be prepared.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

“Uh, yes, yes okay, right I’ll need about five minutes”.

Lovelace runs over to the sort of Babbage set up and starts both connecting and disconnecting various elements to the main rig as it were, and just seems kind of a little bit more focused than earlier, a little bit more and has the headphones on and is talking with Babbage as she does so. It seems like they’re sort of working the problem together simultaneously, even if you can only hear her side of it.

In terms of the Cel stuff it takes all of two minutes for the fix. It really was just a there are one million moving parts, statistically one of them is just going to be oh that should be a one not a zero.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

It takes that long to fix, but then you know a life is dependent on this and potentially, all life is dependent on this as well as secondary thing so, there is some double checking going on.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Naturally.

You are 100% certain you have dealt with it, it really wasn't actually that difficult thing, this is an admission based on just how much is going on. I can't be more explicit of how certain you are. You have checked it about 13 times.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

It's all good, it's all good.

**HELEN**

Just stepping out of character for a second, we all healed up, didn't we?

**LYDIA**

Um a couple of hit points down from full.

**HELEN**

Okay.

**ALEX**

You did do a triage session after the fight.

**BEN**

Yeah, we blasted some healing, got ourselves good.

**LYDIA**

We did some healing, but it just wasn't quite enough, but that like literally three points down from full.

**HELEN**

Okay cool.

**LYDIA**

It was kind of decided it wasn't worth a heal at that point.

**BEN**

Definitely a waste of a spell, I think.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA**

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If I die by one hit point Ben, I will haunt you.

**(laughter)**

**BEN**

I mean hey, that's how the dice roll.

**ALEX**

It's fine you've got loads of hit points.

**BEN**

Should have had more hit points.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA**

Should have fundamentally changed your character build.

**BEN**

Absolutely, shouldn't have played the cards you're playing.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

I hate it, alright okay.

At which point I would say after a few moments, Lovelace sort of comes over and is just like...

“E-e-everything’s set, we’ll need to make sure that this... the main device is going to be dormant now until the moment. The thing to protect right now is the Babbage array. So, obviously that needs to go with you but in terms of the rest of this, we’re still technically secure, we’d know if anyone had breached the main door, my concerns aside, I think we’re ready”.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Okay, this place as well needs to be kept clear, right or can we ignore it, is it done now?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Lovelace looks really, really, awkward for a moment.  
Can I get a sense motive from everyone?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Oh dice!

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yes.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Ooh natural 20, 28.

**ALEX**

He hey! Start as you mean to go on.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I bloody hope so!

**HELEN AS AZU**

17.

**ALEX**

Okie doke.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

21.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

**(laughter)**

I rolled a 16 but, sense motive is flat plus two and that's only because of the extra special thing on Cel's head, the new goody so... 18.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Congratulations, Ben I would like to afford you an insight that rarely, rarely makes it through but here we are. It's as simple as, clearly she feels a little bit unsure of herself by virtue of the unfindable place has been found, the unbreachable building has been breached. That said, there's something extra there, she looks a little bit sheepish, not like she's done an enormous sin, but like she's reticent to share something that you think is definitely relevant.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Lovelace, what's wrong?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Well, nothing's wro-

I may have taken it upon myself to add a few extra protections without the other's knowledge, they really were quite focused on the work, but I thought it best to...

If anyone enters there and then I would want them to be alive, I can make that happen, at least once.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Okay, remotely or?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

From in here, yes.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Okay, and this place is important, we need to keep it up.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Yes, I just... I didn't realise I was quite so good at killing things.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, well hopefully it's a skill you're not gonna have to use for much longer, but right now it's probably the best skill you can have.

Right, we need to leave somebody here.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

I wouldn't be able to go with you anyway. I have to stay and monitor the equipment.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Okay.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Just for the record, it's a good thing that you did the extra protection things, don't feel bad about that, because now we need them.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Zolf just like waves his arms around in sort of a like yeah!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Oh, don't go back into the main area without telling me, that would be a very bad thing to do now.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

"We're going out that way" pointing towards the secret hole.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

"Oh yes, speaking of..." as she kind of look...

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Speaking of the dark secret hole.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

...she looks at the ominous tunnel again as if like she hasn't noticed it because there's been that much going on.

"Yes, I am afraid I have nothing useful for you in terms of what's down there. I swear to you I didn't know it was there. I don't even think Babbage didn't know about it".

**BRYN AS HAMID**

I guess we should try and seal it up behind us when we leave.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

Um, that shouldn't be too difficult, there's an adamantite gate a little further down. I did a little bit of a poke around. It should be easy enough to pick, expensive gate, cheap lock, but um, yeah, we can close it behind us at least.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Oh.

Ah.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

I mean if it's simple enough to just pick the lock then what stops someone doing the same from the other side?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I am gonna pull the walls in.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

That'll do it.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

That seems like a good idea.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Okay.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Can you break the lock with metal? I mean I could probably break the...

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I am gonna surround the gate with stone jamming up the lock, and also creating effectively a reinforced stone wall.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

That's a good building material.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

That's a proper good solution.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

I like that, yes.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

I feel it worth asking, could you potentially do that for huge chunks of London, because that would make our job much easier.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

How many adamantine gates have you got?

**LYDIA AS CEL**

One.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

Oh, I just meant more like if you could do it for like the entirety of the like the city.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

No, no it's because it's a small passage. It's fine, we have a plan, we are going to do the plan. We have discussed the plan, now let's move on.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Ada once we're out there, will we have any way to communicate with you?  
How will we know to coordinate our activities with yours?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Oh, basically we've piggybacked a communication system into the connection between the Babbage array and the main array so you will have to be speaking through Babbage...

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Great.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

...but we've already sort of planned for that, just don't... to be blunt if you lose Babbage, that's going to be the least of your problems.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Fantastic.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Alright.

Azu is going to go and look at the hole. She is looking at it to try and estimate how big it is and whether it is going to be scary for her or not.

**ALEX**

You are going to need to stoop slightly...

**HELEN AS AZU**

Oooh.

**ALEX**

...but you are going to need to stoop slightly because Azu is big...

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

...and this is built for humanoid creatures.

I tell you what give me a perception check and I'll see how much extra stuff I can give you, because I know the kind of thing you're looking at.

**HELEN AS AZU**

24 in perception.

**ALEX**

24, cool.

The evil part of me wants to go yeah it's a modified badge that you hold...

**(laughter)**

No, so it's effectively it's slightly crudely worked given that it fronts into a major lab, and as you sort of stand in the doorway and look around you see there is a certain element of mechanism on the back of the door the naturally like it being a secret door and it also looks like it's got some kind of sealant, it's not your thing. Fancy door, but slightly further down the tunnel you can see that it's not heavily worked stone and it's definitely built with humanoids in mind, but you get the impression it's built for like you know a tall human in mind, not a tall Azu in mind, which means that you're gonna have a little bit of a stoop.

The gate is just visible at the edge of your dark vision down the tunnel.

The tunnel is leading comparatively steeply down, we're not talking like you are in danger of falling or anything, but it has got a very clear downwards slant.

It's a little bit windy but you can see down to the edge of your dark vision, it's

too difficult to see whether it will suddenly get smaller, but from a logic perspective why would you make it like this here to then go like an inch wide later if you see what I mean so that's as much as I can give you.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Okay. Azu is not entirely reassured but knows what to expect now and will return to the group.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Should someone stay here to help Ada?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah Ada, do you need extra protection? You said you can do this once, what if they try again?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

She takes a moment and gives it some proper thought.

“I don't think it would make a difference.

If something makes it through that door, I am suspecting a lot of things will make it through that door, more than... you're all capable, but I don't think if... if London comes through that door, I don't think you're going to be able to keep it away and you literally couldn't stand on the other side of the door to defend it without comprising the systems I put in place.

I know it feels a bit all or nothing, but...”

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**BEN AS ZOLF**

Because it is.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

...it's sort of an all or nothing at this end, I think.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Right.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Even if we were here the chance that we could defend it without any damage to everything.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

This is my point.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

In which case it sounds like the best thing we can do is give you as much time as possible, which means we need to get moving.

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

I agree.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Okay.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Right.

Wilde, are you coming?

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

So, Wilde's been sort of deliberately a little bit back from all of this, he seems slightly more preoccupied with the bodies that are sort of laid to rest in the corner, you know you sheeted them etc. he's been a little bit preoccupied there.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah.

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

Tell you what you can get a free one, Zolf can I get an insight check, I mean sense motive?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

It's 20 unnatural.

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

I mean it's almost an arbitrary check at that point, it's a... seems very close at home for someone who has been dead recently...

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yep.

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

...and then was told “I just brought you back, again” he doesn’t seem fully compromised, but he’s certainly a little distracted by them.

“Ah, yes, of course, um...we should go. The sooner we start the sooner it’s done, the sooner it’s done the sooner we can deal with what happens next”.

**HELEN AS AZU**

And have a nice drink.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

Actually, I am going to... Lovelace?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Hm?

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

If I was to put a large allusion between the array and the door, is that going to interfere with anything?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Uh, no.

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

“Fantastic”.

So that you all know I am basically going to do an illusion of the machine is already dead, and I am gonna set it to blast basically, in the hopes that it might buy at least a little bit of time if someone opens the door you know they see ah, etc.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Sensible.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Good idea.

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

“I’ll just be a moment”.

He starts sort of humming under his breath and then starts to basically his casting. At which point you start to see an illusion take shape across the width of the room, a few feet beyond the door. Obviously, these things get warped a little bit from your side of things, but it appears to be an illusion of the room has been destroyed, like something has come in and like destroyed the array. There’s a few unfortunately accurate bodies strewn around the place as detail as well.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Oh dear!

**HELEN AS AZU**

Aw.

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

He finishes up and turns around and goes, “well, for all the good it will do we’ll see if it’s relevant, it might even expire before they come in but...”

**BEN AS ZOLF**

It’s something.

Anyway, Babbage is it rucksack, cart, what are we having to use?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Lovelace again, “oh, it’s all backpacked, I’d say you should have free movement, just don’t jump off anything high”.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, alright.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Can I ask, would the backpack interfere with wings?

**ALEX AS ADA LOVELACE**

Yes.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I will take it.

**HELEN AS AZU**

I will take the ring to Mordor...

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Cel looks like you know it's the right decision, but like Cel wants the science brain backpack...

**(laughter)**

...but like it is the right decision. There's not even like a twinge of, it doesn't look like they're gonna disagree it just looks like something inside them.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Maybe it would be better for Oscar to carry it? He could stay further away from any danger that we encounter.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I'm better at carrying heavy loads.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Okay.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

“It won’t get in the way”.

Out of character - because I’m a dwarf, they can’t become encumbered.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah, yeah.

**ALEX**

Yeah, from a mechanical standpoint, we could basically balance a building on your shoulders and you’re just gonna plod on anyway.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

No, I think the GM at that point can make a ruling, but yes, if you ever wanted to...

**ALEX**

I rule that we can balance a building on your shoulders, and you can plod on regardless because it’s convenient for me.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

You can’t be medium or heavy encumbered, you can still be over encumbered.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Ah, there you go.

**ALEX**

You're fine, you'll have free movement, you'll be fine.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I can also levitate which is important for like falling down.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

I'll tell you for the sake of your own knowledge, mechanically there is one thing that would be obvious to your character which is you will be taking a penalty to acrobatics check specifically.

**BEN AS ZOLF AND LYDIA AS CEL**

Oh no!

**(laughter)**

**HELEN AS AZU**

That's because Zolf does all the time.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Exactly.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Not my bonus of one.

**(laughter)**

**BRYN AS HAMID**

The alternative being Wilde is just because non mela character can stay far back, whereas Zolf is a mela character who won't.

**ALEX AS OSCAR WILDE**

I will give you the slight nod of "It will be easier if it's Zolf".

And I don't even mean that from a like, evil GM'ing side, it's just Wilde has many things, but a strength score, he does not!

**BRYN AS HAMID**

No, that's fair, it's totally fair.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I also have a reach weapon.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yes, true.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah, yeah.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

And like yeah, like Azu is stronger but Azu needs deep in fights.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah, and also much more likely to fall over.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Aw.

**ALEX**

I'm seeing my timer running here and I am thinking that what we'd all benefit from is an extended discussion of backpack logistics.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

You know like what are we putting in what pockets, where you put your heavy loader etc so I think I might take a break to just really dig into our inventory management, and then just come back in a couple of minutes, yeah?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, yeah I think we should.

Okay.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yes.

**ALEX**

**[mid show break 21:54]**

And so that is why it's really essential that you put the weight actually in the centre of the pack, not at the very, very bottom because it leads to a balance issue.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Right.

Yeah, no, no fair enough.

**ALEX**

So that's...

**BRYN AS HAMID**

It's lever principle.

**ALEX**

Exactly, exactly, cool.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

I mean all the algebra you've gone through in a lot of detail and I think I am beginning to understand it.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Trigonometry's useful in your day to day, it just is.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

I mean the Coursera course felt like a bit much, but we're all up to speed now.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

No one ever suffered from knowing how a carabiner works, okay.

It's all important stuff.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

We go down the hole.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Thank you.

Enter the hole!

Can I please get what I am going to treat as your default marching orders? So, I need to know basically if you were in single file what that line looks like, that's all.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Azu is going to want to go in front of Zolf because like she knows that Zolf can protect himself, she wants an extra layer of defence because Babbage is on Zolf.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Also, I can poke passed you with my reach weapon so we can both threaten the same space.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah, just like under me arm.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, I mean that's a battle line.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

I figure Skraak is at the front because of the whole scouting thing.

**ALEX**

Yep, that was my assumption. So, I've got Skraak, Azu and then after that point Zolf is allowed but I'll leave it up to other people.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah, I was gonna think that it makes sense for Cel to go behind Zolf, because can throw bombs passed but, obviously a lot of their distance spells and stuff have issues that are longer range, whereas Hamid's don't.

**ALEX**

Cool, that makes sense. I've so far got a Skraak, Azu, Zolf, Cel which leaves me a Wilde and a Hamid.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Hamid will be at the back.

**HELEN AS AZU**

We're so far apart.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

I know I was thinking the same thing.

**(laughter)**

I don't like it, but it's necessary.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Does like Hamid cast a sneaky message before they go out so they can like keep chatting.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

I quite like the idea that he does fall blown travel misses, even though they are only five people away. “Dearest Azu, I find myself at the back of the group...

**(laughter)**

...and considering my life as I do so...”

**HELEN AS AZU**

Hamid and Azu in a magical WhatsApp group chat.

**ALEX**

Dearest Azu, did you see that left turn, I haven’t seen anything like that in at least ten minutes.

Occasionally they just giggle together everyone else was like not in the loop.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

What are you laughing at?! Was it one of your bloody in jokes isn’t it?! With your stupid chat!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Okay, so you approach the gate, and can I get a perception check from everyone please, because I'm assuming that you are actually gonna take a time to have a quick look, so it's not like it's stood ajar or anything.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

31.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

18 for Hamid, 21 for Skraak.

**HELEN AS AZU**

15 on perception.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Ooo I got a four. Ooo natural one.

**ALEX**

Oooh. Okay, cool.

Zolf then.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

It's an adamantine gate, it's been well fitted to the tunnel you reckon it's like properly anchored deep, tearing the gate out, you're basically just gonna tear the entire tunnel down anyway.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Good stuff.

**ALEX**

Although you do also notice that there is a small comparatively unobtrusive like panel up top, it's not an elaborate gate so you know like so far, you've had these big elaborate things. This is a thing that is designed to stop people getting passed and nothing more, but you can still see through it, that's the only difference between that and the vault, but there is a panel up top middle you know normally where you would have like a name tag or an identifier or something and it looks like you could pull it across to reveal something on the other side.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I will point it out to Skraak.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

"Yeah, on it".

Skraak climbs up easily and starts poking around... "nah, it's just a thing".

**BEN AS ZOLF**

What is the thing?

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

He pulls it open, “uh, one sec”.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Transport for London.

**(laughter)**

Staff only beyond this point.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

So Skraak just pulls out what looks like a strip of parchment or something that’s been put in there and just reads, “Ah, apologies for the deception...”

**BEN AS ZOLF**

You [BLEEP]

**BRYN AS HAMID**

No!

**BEN AS ZOLF**

You bell[BLEEP]

**LYDIA AS CEL**

URGHHHHHHHHHH!

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

...it was necessary, Nicola.

**(laughter)**

That's it.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Do you think it was actually dead, or was that an illusion, is that what that's talking about?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

We can't go back and check.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Was Nicola like the lightning?

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Well, presumably it just means he was aware of this whole tunnel, and didn't tell anyone else about it?

**HELEN AS AZU**

That seems strange.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Well, it looks like they're all at it, we got you know...

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

Skraak goes, "Oh, wait!" he turns over the parchment..."no, no, it's just that".

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

I am writing this from Rome!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Find me at the castle bleurghhhh.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Looks like everyone had their own little extra bits of this plan, but it doesn't matter now.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

Give me two seconds with this lock, it's...

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah.

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

...you know when someone's trying too hard, and they end up making it easy?

**LYDIA AS CEL**

"Yes!"

While Skraak's going at it, Cel will tell a story of how they were creating a bank vault door.

**ALEX**

And it's unlocked now, that entire section was in real time, it's unlocked now.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

...and, and in the end. Oh, everyone's gone... wait, I'm supposed to be...for... coming.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I'm gonna hang back, because obviously we can freely move through each other's spaces because I am gonna close it off behind us.

**(laughter)**

When I am on my own, I close the gate and I cast one use of stone shape. How wide is this corridor, I'm assuming five foot?

**ALEX**

Funnily enough it is five foot wide, because that makes life easy.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

And how tall it is it? About six foot?

**ALEX**

Now here's the thing, mechanically it's five foot tall because vertical space in D and D is weird. What it's actually, is closer to six because we all make this weird fudge, and no one acknowledges it.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, okay so I can do 21 cubic feet which means with the gate in the middle of this I can go ten-foot one way and ten foot the other way, I can make a 20 foot wall with an adamantine gate in the middle.

**ALEX**

To make life nice and straightforward, you have mechanically thwomped the gate. The tunnel has thwomped.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Uh, Bryn shook his head, Bryn how much am I actually creating?

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Assuming that the volume of the gate accounts for some of it, you can essentially create a five foot by five foot by one foot, that's 25 cubic feet.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Oh, yes.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

You can fill the available space to a thickness of one foot.

**ALEX**

[stone filling a hole sound effect] You have encased the gate in stone.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

That is sufficient for your needs, if you have something that can punch through, it's adamantite gate in a foot of stone, I wouldn't try and do more.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah.

And I make sure that I mash some stone [stones smashing sound effects] as much as I can, you can't do it like fine manipulation, but as much into the lock as possible to make sure that that mechanism is truly, truly mucked up.

**ALEX**

Oh, it's never gonna open again, don't worry about that.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Cool.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Azu is visibly a bit more uncomfortable now that the only way out is blocked.

**ALEX**

For what it's worth, unfortunately, the second it closes the air goes very still. There was an airflow of type and it just sort of whoomph goes very, very still.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Cel's continuing the story "...so the way that the sparks actually ended up cancelling out the..."

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Cel, sorry we're gonna have to be quiet.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

[whispers] Right, sorry.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Just because of you know, stealth and that.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

[whispers] but basically, all the gold was gone.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX AS SKRAAK**

Skraak sets off.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Hamid walks up to Azu and just gives a couple of squeezes of her hand and then drops back to his marching position.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Azu reciprocates.

**ALEX**

I'm assuming someone's casting something for light for the people that can't see in the dark.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

We've all got night vision goggles, or night vision, because you equipped us.

**ALEX**

Oh good! Good!

I knew I'd equipped you and I was sat there going why have I not...

**(laughter)**

You haven't all got dark vision, why have I done this, that's a thing- OH, it's fine, cool.

So, I'm going to, for the sake of stylistics say that your goggles of the night don't offer true colour. They offer shades of red...

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Creepy.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Oh! Ominous, love it.

**ALEX**

Because that's creepier, yeah. We're going for shades of red and that slightly flat quality, so that when one of the creatures have signs or something walks across a tunnel, it kind of pops you know?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Just so you know obviously I think same for Azu I think, we have natural dark vision which means it's actually black and white and we do get depth perception.

**ALEX**

Oh, yeah, yeah don't worry about it, this is for the night goggle gang.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

It's cool, Cel's actually tweaked there's on an aesthetic level so it looks more spooky.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

It is like a pointless heart and like a heartbeat monitor that doesn't hook up to anything?

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

But it keeps accelerating!

**(laughter)**

It's one of those like waves where it feels like it's increasing but it's not.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

It's because Cel is so excited by the display.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Cel has an incredible career in immersive theatre, when this...

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah, oh absolutely!

**ALEX**

So, you all start down the tunnel, it starts to shift down even more precipitously temporarily. Then very suddenly levels out like the tunnel has almost a kink to it, it's not very well made.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Don't kink shame the tunnel.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Someone has done a bodge job, and it becomes clear why because as it levels you enter into what might once have been worked stone. However, it is in disrepair, it's not like some of these flags or anything like that but you are looking at like a very crudely, it's been eaten away by time and by a slight amount of damp that's down there and so on, an arch stone you know a sort of buttress stone arch time type deal.

It feels like someone realised that London's built on London then tried to sort of punch a way through into a bit, what I would say is it doesn't have another London vibe, this is not a lived in space, it's mostly dust there aren't even dusty footprints or anything in the ground ahead of you it appears to be undisturbed for a very long time.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Does it open up a bit more at least?

**ALEX**

Yeah, it does, you start being able to sort of, I'd say comfortably stand sort of two abreast, that said occasionally I am going to say that you are heading down this tunnel because you've got nowhere else to go.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

One quick detail is that I will also try and have somebody in front of me even though we can spread out a bit.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Oh yeah.

**ALEX**

That's fine yeah, I'm not gonna punish you for that that's common sense, and yeah occasionally you'll get to one where it's like one of the arches is like imploded and there's a little bit of a scree that's built up and things like. For the most part though you just seem to be walking along a regularly vaulted stone causeway or something similar. There's the occasional gap in the wall where it appears to be naturally occurring where like earth has shifted or whatever and it's opened up. It seems like you're just in a very, very old tunnel that no one's done anything with in a very long time.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

But there are no alternate paths so we're not choosing a route, we are following the one tunnel?

**ALEX**

It looked like once upon a time it ran in both directions, but there's just been a heavy cave in at the direction that isn't the one you're heading down.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

I just mean that we are, because otherwise it will be like, are we going the right way?!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

There are no branching paths.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Was this tunnel originally built for Tesla's lightening rail, is that how he knew about them?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

The lightening rail I think was... I thought was supposed to be like a suspended rail, but maybe not.

**ALEX**

Things that I will take from people, I'll allow a knowledge history, I'll allow a knowledge nobility and I'll allow a knowledge engineering for different insights.

Rusty Quill Gaming – RQG 209 - Shades of Red

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Oooo a knowledge engineering that is me! That is me, yes!

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Azu are you on nobility?

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah okay, I'll do history because they're equal for me as a bonus so...

**ALEX**

I love that you've said that in character "Azu, you're taking an ability check right so I'll..."

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I didn't say that no! That was my accent, not bloody West Country.

**(laughter)**

That's why we've got these voices.

**ALEX**

You're only allowed to know one thing at once we need to dolly this out carefully, dolly? Divvy this out sorry.

**HELEN AS AZU**

A natural 20 on knowledge ability, which I think is like...

**(laughter)**

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Nice.

**ALEX**

We'll finish with you then.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

24 on engineering for Skraak.

**ALEX**

Okay.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

And a 17 on history for me.

**ALEX**

And Cel?

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Oh, it was 19 total.

**ALEX**

Okay, cool so starting with the knowledge history, the lightening rail thing isn't a bad call, a lot of the lightening rail had to go underground at parts, so it means that if there was ever someone who would have had a survey made of all of the underground spaces in order to chart that, that would have been the case, so it makes sense that there's a logical leap of yeah this is someone who would know about that.

You are not walking on a lightening rail though, the reason being from a knowledge engineering no this is way older, you're talking you're heading down some medieval tunnels and I realise that it is 18nuph nuph nuph nurr but yeah medieval tunnels, these are old, old tunnels. They could have been maybe retrofitted after the fact, but you are not seeing any signs of that, this is proper old; and in terms of knowledge nobility...

So, we're back in secondary school and it turns out there was one topic which really caught your eye, which was the paranoia of the British nobility and once royals.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah! I'm gonna say that it probably caught Azu's eye because she didn't really have a concept of nobility and royals, having come from just a small village where everybody knows your name.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

I'm including lords in this and so on.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Okay.

**ALEX**

It was widely believed though never proven, that there were a number of tunnels laid very early in the foundations of London to enable secrete passage for various people throughout the city, people of means, people for you know the odd illicit tryst, the odd shady deal made over a large floridly furnished dining table that kind of thing. You're looking around and going this is someone who had an enormous amount of money a long time ago and wanted to make sure that they wouldn't be disturbed as they move around London. You reckon that you're on that and you also reckon, because you did get a natural 20 you know that the closer to Westminster that you get, the more dense these are believed to be, this might actually be a really useful little highway if you can navigate it properly to cover a good chunk of distance in a

way that might not have been disturbed in hundreds of years. It's a fluke, and it's odd but it's a thing.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

So, Alex, a question for you, you may remember that six and a half years ago I wrote a formal backstory document for Hamid.

**ALEX**

Ah, yes it was a Tuesday I read it at 4pm, it was raining outside.

**(laughter)**

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Do you however remember which school he went to?

**ALEX**

Why don't you enlighten us... he says with a small grin because dots have connected.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

For some reason people assume you went to Eaton but that was Bertie. Hamid went to Westminster school, which I think anyone who's familiar with London geography will know is attached to Westminster Abbey and is across Parliament's Square from the Houses of Parliament, and we all know that schoolboys love to explore any hidden areas, now I don't have formal points...

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

I was waiting for the euphemism to stop and it just got worse!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Oh dear.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

I don't have formal points of knowledge local, but I am going to strongly argue that at the very least the immediate area around Westminster School, Westminster Abbey and indeed the real-life secret tunnel that exists for the choir boys from Westminster School to get into Westminster Abbey would be stuff that Hamid knows about, and therefore I am gonna claim justification that Hamid may already know in that sense.

**ALEX**

The second that Azu points this out you have a little lightbulb moment and like "oh! Oh, this was... and then the... ah, good!" yes you are totally correct you have pinged straight into a piece of research which is there are tunnels that connect you know Westminster School to Abbey. There are tunnels connecting all of the major building built a crazy long time ago.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Can I give a slight anecdote story that goes with this?

My dad did a lot of community activism in building that meant that eventually a lot of plans for redevelopment stuff was sometimes given to him to give feedback on, different stages and one of the things was when they were building the jubilee line, there were a couple of things they wanted his comment on because he was known to be linked to a lot of different volunteer and housing activist groups, and one of the things was that because there are so many secret tunnels under Westminster, that they didn't tell TFL about as they are trying to lay down the plans, that they had to submit dozens and dozens of alternate routes and MI5 or whoever it was like that had to sign off, would basically just deny different plans and routes...

**(laughter)**

...and wouldn't tell them why, because there's a map of a lot of the secret tunnels and stuff under parliament and they just had to come up with loads and loads of different alternate plans for the station and the route for the trains so that it just yeah.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

That's so good!

**ALEX**

So, what you've just described here is congratulations, using both real world knowledge and roles you've dug up my research proven to me that it all lines up, thank god!

**(laughter)**

And even the TFL angle which I have my own in on which is the lightning rail. I'm so proud of you all.

**(laughter)**

You just picked up a like paragraph entry I wrote like six years ago and just went boom, boom, boom, boom, what a lovely feeling.

I am going to say that you are continuing to move down the tunnel because there's not really many alternate options. At one point you do notice what used to have been a side route and that also seems to have sort of imploded from age.

As you are moving again though it is very, very still, there's no air movements or anything like that and the tunnel seems to be levelling out, can I get a survival check from everyone please?

**ALL**

Ooooo.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Cel isn't really built to survive... Oh thank goodness for this extra like headband thing.

**(laughter)**

Oh no and I rolled a natural one with a bonus of five, so it's all really bad.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

You failed to survive, let's see if everyone else survives.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Rip 18.

**ALEX**

18.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

11 for Hamid, 15 for Skraak.

**HELEN AS AZU**

I rolled a two, so that's a five total.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

How? My bonus is three.

**(laughter)**

I mean I rolled a 15 that's how.

**ALEX**

18 was it?

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, thank goodness.

**ALEX**

If you had to guess you think you're broadly heading in the correct direction for Westminster.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Oh thank goodness, Helen, Helen, it's a direction check not a "are you breathing check".

**(laughter)**

**HELEN AS AZU**

Oh.

**ALEX**

But, you're already all of you just because there was odd angles and so on you're already like... "we technically could be going in the wrong direction" but Zolf you're like, "I think we're still on the right direction".

**BRYN AS HAMID**

This is the one skill that not a single person in the party has any points in.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Really relying on Sasha being here huh, when you planned this.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Well, or Grizzop.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Awww.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Yeah, I was yeah.

Okay, cool so heading along the tunnel, you final encounter a Y junction of sorts where you know it peels off in two directions that genuinely do seem comparatively equal in layout.

What languages do people speak?

**HELEN AS AZU**

Orcish, Arabic, English.

**BEN AZ ZOLF**

English, dwarven, ancient Greek.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Japanese, north American, Elvish, Asiatic, gnomish, Spanish, Portuguese, English, Draconic.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Arabic, Halfling, English, French, Czech, Draconic.

**ALEX**

Can't believe I'm saying this, there is sort of chipped into the stone it looks very, very old some ancient Greek between the two avenues of the thing.

**HELEN AS AZU**

It is gonna be a puzzle?

**ALEX**

Genuinely ancient Greek.

I am going to warn you now, it doesn't translate at all, but it looks to be a poorly assembled joke which says effectively "To the toffs" with an arrow sort of one way...

**HELEN AS AZU**

Oh no.

**ALEX**

...and then “To the weaklings” to the other, it looks like...

**HELEN AS AZU**

Judgemental.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, well that was definitely written by one of the toffs ay.

**ALEX**

It basically, that’s the way it broadly translates, there is a pun in there that is incredibly laboured and not worth the effort. Someone thought they were quite smart but...

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah, see now that you’ve said it’s not worth the effort, Alex, the fans are gonna reconstruct it.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Mm.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Pour over historical references for what you might be talking about, it's gonna come out of some old, is it Aristophanes' The Frogs? Is that where it is?

**ALEX**

I will tell you now, I don't speak ancient Greek okay?! So, please don't message me going "I think your grammar's wrong here" I don't know!

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Right.

**HELEN AS AZU**

We have several classists among the fans, they will come up with their own.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Yeah, awesome.

I look forward to seeing the alternatives they come up with.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Right, two things, we go right and people in charge have always been wankers.  
I know we knew that, but this is confirmation.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Yeah, good, alright.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

I've actually worked out that statistically, in order to get in charge, you are  
more likely to..."

Cel starts talking about the maths of power.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

Skraak starts, not in a rude way, but Skraak has learned the dynamic of this  
group and starts down the right tunnel as that conversation happens, because  
Cel's very good at walking and talking.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Yeah, after a minute I will turn around and go “Cel, please shhhhhh, sorry”.

**(laughter)**

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Maybe I’m actually more nervous than I realise, okay, okay.

**ALEX**

So, this tunnel dips even lower and angles even further downwards. It appears to be in a worst condition than the tunnel you were in before.

Again, you are not looking like oh if we sneeze it’s gonna collapse or anything like that, but I am just saying that the ravages of time have been a bit heavier here, it’s gone a little bit more crooked, more flagstones have blown up things like that. Blown up is where you make a perfectly level flag and then something happens which causes it to lever itself out. Can everyone please give me a perception check?

**LYDIA AS CEL**

19.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

20.

**LYDIA AS CEL**

Oh no 21, sorry maths!

**HELEN AS AZU**

25.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

23 for Skraak but a natural 20 for Hamid so, a total of 36.

**ALEX**

Hamid, you're the only one.

**HELEN AS AZU**

Uh.

**ALEX**

You fall behind... no I am not going to punish you for don't worry. You fall behind temporarily just for a moment just as everyone's moving along, I am going to say you were checking your six as people are meant to do etc...

**(laughter)**

...and then just for a moment on the edge of your hearing, back towards the Y junction that you've now left behind, you hear ever so slightly a sort of [breathing noise, similar to that of Darth Vader sound effect] sort of on the wind and for just a brief moment...

**BRYN AS HAMID**

And then a red lightsabre ignites in the darkness.

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

I'm gonna have to leave it there. I'm gonna have to now.

**(laughter)**

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Well, that occurred.

**(laughter)**

**HELEN AS AZU**

Very good.

**ALEX**

Well on that then.

**BEN AS ZOLF**

Bye!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

I'll leave it there, yeah bye all.

**BRYN AS HAMID**

Bye.

**EVERYONE**

Bye!

**(laughter)**

**[Show Theme - Outro]**

**ALEX**

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**HELEN**

Also, Lyd theoretically, one could figure out by the plans that were denied where the supersecret base is!

**LYDIA**

So that is something that I think I raised at the time but it's like I don't know how many different like you just keep sending, giving them a thing and they're like "oh no, just a meet-" like they wouldn't tell them, but yeah I suppose if you could get all the different...

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

Are you really expecting them to say well we actually know in my research that a supersecret base is BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP.

**(laughter)**

**BRYN**

Guys, we can discuss official state secrets on this podcast, or this episode will get censored by MI5, and people won't know how the plot ends!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

The queen does personally check every podcast just in case.

**(laughter)**

That is her job. Right...

**HELEN**

All British podcasts have to go through this process.

**(laughter)**

Oh my, the queen listening to Stellar Firma!

**(laughter)**

**ALEX**

C'mon guys we're getting out of...

**BEN**

She's not going to like the [laughter/unclear 45:43] with knives on their heads.

**(laughter)**