

RQG – [128] – [Tadaima]

Content Warnings

- Nonconsensual drugging
- Alcohol consumption
- Imprisonment
- Someone asked to strip
- Discussions of in-world pandemic
- Discussions of time-skips
- Flatulence
- Implied malnutrition
- Grief/loss

JOHNNY

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SASHA

And I'm Sasha, I play Georgie Barker on the Magnus Archive, and I write What the Ghost.

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And enjoy the show!

ALEX

Hi everyone. Alex here. I'd just like to take a moment to thank some of our patrons; Michael, Erinn Triplett, Kaii's Creations, Hayley R, TheAceAce, Fennic Anteres, Lemmke, Evan, Hal, William Brandes Stoddard, Elle, Aaron Everett, Andy Williams, Zach Smith, Amber Armstrong, Millie Bailey, A Hargreaves, Molly, Kaslan and Plot Twisted. Thank you all. We really appreciate your support. If you'd like to join them, go to www.patreon.com/rustyquill and take a look at our rewards.

[Show Theme - Intro]

ALEX

Hello and welcome to episode 128 of the Rusty Quill Gaming podcast. I'm your host and GM Alex Newall and with me today I have...

BRYN

Bryn Monroe.

HELEN

And Helen Gould.

ALEX

And who are you playing?

BRYN

Hamid Saleh Haroun al Tahan

HELEN

Azu.

ALEX

And everything is different! Again, it's a good time to jump on board, I suppose!

HELEN

No! It's terrible, this is a very bad - we're ALL having a very bad time!

ALEX

Well, so, yeah, everything is basically fine.

BRYN

We got trapped on another plane for 18 months, we came back and the *entire world was a mess*.

HELEN

Yep, the last episode...

BRYN

And we don't know what's going on!

ALEX

And your families are okay, apparently. So far. Someone told you that. So it must be true.

HELEN

Auuuggghhh... Well, it's going to have to be true.

BRYN

Yeah, someone we trust, Alex! Don't abuse that trust!

HELEN

If it's not true, if it's not true, Azu is not going to... there's going to be a little...

ALEX

... ah, Azu the anti-Paladin – I could get on board with that!

HELEN

No, just a rampage!

ALEX

Azu the Vengeance Paladin!

HELEN

Yeah!

BRYN

Whhooaaarrrr...!

HELEN

Absolutely! I mean, I'm edging there right now!

ALEX [laughing]

Okay, so, as a very, very...

BRYN

Yes, we come in – Hamid knows you're having a big hug!

ALEX

... so much...

HELEN

Well, you're very little so, like, her hand is on your head, just patting gently!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

So, the whole world went wrong. There are signs that it might be tied to the Simulacrum stuff, and Curie has requested if you would be willing to go help Wilde with his investigations that he has been continuing. However, it is worth bearing in mind that everyone doesn't trust everyone, and it's all a bit sneaky, etc. So, I'm gonna, if it's okay with both of you, accelerate time from where we left off, just a little bit.

BRYN

So, before we go see Wilde, Hamid, at least, is going to insist on taking his brother to wherever his family are.

ALEX

So...

HELEN

Yeah, I think that's fair.

BRYN

You probably assumed that.

ALEX

So, that's where I'm, sort of leading into. Everyone's brought out from the guard house that Einstein has been allowed to use as a sort of Teleport point. It becomes apparent that it's sort of a way for them to control entrance and exits in terms of it being a Teleporting spot. They are brought into the main house. However, a guard is assigned – well, more than one guard – a few guards are assigned and they are led through to what was the wine cellar. The wine cellar has been fitted up. It has cots. It has toilet facilities marked up, like, they've done a good job, actually, of converting it, kind of, dorm-style, but then everyone is explicitly stated that with the exception of you two, they are going to be expected to be monitored for the next seven days because then they will know whether they can be trusted because the last thing they want to do – and they're quite candid about it, in fact, you get a chance to chat with, yeah, the two servants who were looking after you way back when, they're sort of explaining this to you; very happy to see you, I'm not going to RP it – but it comes down to they are explicitly saying that they will not let you, even if you knew where the family were, take the little brother. Because even if you're okay, the little brother might not be. You might not be. No one gets to move from this location with the exception of you two because you're just going to be under guard at the other end...

(Helen laughs wryly)

... without passing that seven-day quarantine. Just, no one. At all.

BRYN

Okay, I'll ask if we can come back in seven days at the end of quarantine, then.

ALEX

The servant's like, it's above my paygrade, but I don't see why not, like, yeah. And the new employee, if you remember back when, doesn't, but the older one who'd been there a while keeps falling back into 'Sir' and so on. They ask you explicitly, do you want us to send on your brother to the rest of the family when the seven days are up so he doesn't have to wait here longer, in case you're delayed again.

BRYN

Yes. That's probably for the best.

(Helen chuckles)

ALEX

Then it is worth mentioning, whilst this has been going on you all get a night's rest, like, you just do. I'm just... I'm hard-ruling that even if you try and run on, no one will let you.

BRYN

That's probably for the best. Yeah.

ALEX

Word spreads about who you are, to a degree, insofar as, you know, it's a bit cagey, but generally speaking, you see a few more of the old staff who have stayed on. They'll swing by and say hi to Hamid. Azu, you recognise, basically,

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a couple of people who used to work at the Temple of Aphrodite, but civilians, not clerics or Paladins...

HELEN

Oh, okay...

ALEX

... basically administrative staff of...

HELEN

No sign of Eren Fairhands?

ALEX

No sign of Eren Fairhands at all.

BRYN

Can we ask about them?

ALEX

Everyone is very clear that they're, like, really good to see you, but everyone is clearly cagey and waiting for you all to turn out to be *another* traitor, *another* saboteur or whatever.

BRYN

Yeah.

HELEN

I'm going to ask the people from the Temple of Aphrodite what happened to Eren Fairhands.

ALEX

They refuse to tell you.

HELEN

Oh no!

ALEX

They're like, if you get vouched for, that's fine, but they're not going to tell you until your quarantine has passed.

[Helen sighs]

They refuse to give you that information, but it's clear that they, kind of, want to, but also some of them actually refused to, like... one or two of them refused to talk to you two...

HELEN

Oh my gosh...

ALEX

... but it's just under the assumption that they're just going to be let down. Like, it's clear the others are, like, that, you know, they're mother came back and then...

HELEN

Oh no, they're all so broken!

ALEX

... so they're all just, like, they're just assuming...

BRYN

Everyone is traumatised.

ALEX

... they are just working under the assumption that you are going to turn and try and kill everyone.

BRYN

Look, loo-look, Alex has created a world where it's not just the PCs who feel miserably. It's literally everybody.

HELEN

Everyone's had a winter soldier pulled on them.

BRYN

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Literally everyone.

[Helen gasps]

ALEX

The whoooooole world!

HELEN

Oh no, that's so sad!

ALEX

Cool. So, the night passes easily, like... you know what, give me... give me Will Saves.

BRYN

What? [0:08:04]

HELEN

What? Why? Oh!

[Sound of dice being rolled]

ALEX

Because sometimes, you know, this stuff matters.

BRYN [sighing]

21.

HELEN

26.

ALEX

I would like to congratulate you both on sleeping, despite all of the horrendous things that have happened to you that should have left more scars than they have, apparently. You all get to sleep.

HELEN

We're all very tired.

ALEX [laughing]

Yes! Yes, you are. With that in mind, the next day Einstein, sort of, comes knocking at the cellar. The guards let him in...

HELEN

Mm hmm...

ALEX (as Einstein)

... 'So! We're going on a trip?'

BRYN/HAMID

'Apparently so, Professor.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool. Do you know where we travel from? And don’t kill me when we’re on our own, I’ll be really sad!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Professor!’

HELEN/AZU

‘We won’t.’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

‘And you’ve gotta cope somehow!’ He’s got a slightly manic gleam in his eye.

BRYN/HAMID [quietly]

‘But Professor, do the others know about the mobile stones you gave everyone?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘No.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Okay. That’s what I thought. I just wanted to check.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, you think I should tell them?’

BRYN/HAMID and HELEN/AZU

‘NO!!’

[Sound of dice being rolled]

ALEX (also as Einstein)

He kind of looks at you, and then his face darkens, ‘I’m going to tell them.’ He backs out and closes the door.

HELEN [laughing]

Damnit!

ALEX (also as Einstein)

About 20 minutes passes. Einstein comes back in. ‘So, apparently you’re allowed the stones, but I’m not allowed to talk to you unless I’m supervised.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Er, okay.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘I’m sorry.’

HELEN/AZU

‘It’s alright, Einstein. You’re doing your best.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘You know what?! I kinda am! So...’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘... journey? Yes?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Sure! Let’s do it.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool!’

HELEN/AZU

‘I need to talk to my brother.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay, cool. I’ll wait outside.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Okay.’

ALEX

Your brother's not allowed to leave the cellar where everyone else is. There's not much privacy down here.

HELEN

That's fine, I'm just going to take him into a corner.

ALEX

That's fine, that's fine.

BRYN

I've told my brother I will be back in a week.

ALEX

Yeah, of course you did.

HELEN

Yeah...

ALEX

He's... he's good. He seems to be handling this quite well. He was sad that the family isn't there. Kind of, a little bit let down, but there's enough exciting and interesting people happening that he's, kind of, more on board with it.

HELEN

Okay, 'Essentially...', I want Azu to just sit down with Emeka and just be, like, 'I'm going off again!'

[she laughs]

ALEX

You know what, let's RP it. Why not!

HELEN/AZU

'Okay. So, I'm leaving.'

ALEX (as Emeka)

'Yep, I thought that would be the case.'

HELEN/AZU

'I know you don't, you probably don't approve.'

ALEX (as Emeka)

'I mean, it all feels a bit small now, doesn't it? I mean, I don't know everything that's going on, but...'

HELEN/AZU

‘It’s something I have to do, so, things have moved on... I have to try to help and I’m sorry that I can’t stay and help you, but there are larger things happening and I just wanted to let you know, no hard feelings, ever.’

ALEX (also as Emeka)

‘You always make stuff more complicated than it needs to be. It’s really simple. Come back when you can.’ And then he holds his hand out, kinda like, [0:10:53] creditor, kind of like, rrrraarrgggghhh-style.

HELEN [laughing]

Absolutely!

ALEX

This is not a hug, this is a *[Hmmmrrrrggghh]...*

HELEN

This is a forehand pass!

ALEX

[Hmmmrrrrggghh]...

BRYN

Like, they’re doing it in real life.

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ALEX

Yeah, of course!

BRYN

You know they can't see that!

ALEX

Oh, no, you know what it is? It's a forearm... *[HMMMMRRRRGGGH!]*

(Helen laughs)

... so yeah...

HELEN [laughing]

This Orcish grunting!

ALEX

Yeah, he pulls you close and then, this is Orcish thing, and then puts his forehead against yours for a moment...

HELEN

Mm hmm...

ALEX

... and then you grip each other *SUPER* hard, like, there's the gentle creak of metal in the armour...

(Helen laughs)

... then he lets go.

HELEN/AZU

‘Okay. Take care of the family.’

ALEX (as Emeka)

‘When do I not?!’

HELEN/AZU [laughing wryly]

‘Good point! See you later!’

ALEX (also as Emeka)

As you’re leaving, ‘I’ll be so annoyed if you don’t come back!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Me too!’

ALEX (also as Emeka)

‘If you die, I’ll kill ya!’

HELEN/AZU [laughing]

‘Same!’ Okay, just had to do that because, like, that needed to be resolved between me and him.

ALEX

Ahh, give me...

BRYN

I'm disappointed in you Alex. You didn't use the opportunity of Azu interacting with her family to inflict *massive emotional pain upon her!*

HELEN

Yeah, he could have been, like..

BRYN

What happened to you?

HELEN [laughing]

... I told you not to leave...!

ALEX

It can't be all misery.

BRYN

Ohhhhh...

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ALEX

You can't... you can't...

BRYN

Favouritism. It's favouritism.

ALEX

You can't make a cake with just chocolate. Sometimes you gotta put chocolate chips in for variation.

(Helen laughs)

It only counts as misery *if he now dies!*

(Group laughter)

HELEN

Don't threaten me like that!

(Bryn in gales of laughter)

That is absolutely a threat!

ALEX

See? Like, it's so easy to demonstrate where I'm going with stuff!

HELEN

I got the news... what you've done is, you've made a cake a poo and now there are chocolate chips in the poo!

ALEX

Yep!

HELEN [laughing]

Anyway...

(Laughter)

... let's go Teleport!

ALEX

Give me a Perception Check, Hamid.

BRYN

[Rolls dice]

Ooh, that's not very good!

HELEN

Oh dear!

BRYN

17.

ALEX

You know what, I don't know why I asked for the Perception Check, it's not that big a deal! Your brother seems to be, like, from the time, has been getting along with Vesseek...

HELEN

Aww...

ALEX

Vesseek seems to be, like, I don't want to say taking him under the wing, that's not quite it, but Vesseek seems to be keeping an eye out for the youngest member of the new family, as it were.

BRYN

Cool.

ALEX

Make of that what you will.

BRYN

That sounds good to me.

HELEN

I'm just imagining a parallel party going on, like...

(Bryn laughs)

... would they go off on their own little adventure!

ALEX

So much content! Too much content!

(Group laughter)

Cool. Einstein leads you, accompanied by guards, to his Teleporting outhouse, basically.

(Helen laughs)

You get the impression, by the way, that the guards are not approving of Einstein – it becomes easily apparent that he really shouldn't have brought you back here without letting people know ahead of time he was going to be bringing you back here. He's probably got in trouble for that one!

HELEN [laughing]

Oh, bless him!

BRYN

He's the best!

ALEX (also as Einstein)

But he leads you back down into your thing. What you didn't notice before – you have the storm doors and so on, but there appears to be a trapped metal grate which would have dropped down if he hadn't have turned it off. You know, so if someone happens to be turning up. Again, you had way too much on, but he immediately is like, 'Ya, watch out for that.' Cool, so he takes a moment, 'Okay. So I sort of know where we're going, but we're going to have to do a *leetle* bit of talking! Apparently, I'm not allowed to stay with you, though. I kinda gotta drop you off, but you've got your stones, right?

BRYN/HAMID

'Yep.'

HELEN/AZU

'Yeah.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Cool.'

BRYN

What's Ed doing?

ALEX

So, Ed...

BRYN

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You forgot him again, didn't you?!

ALEX

No, no, no, I didn't... I did, I did...

BRYN

You forgot him!

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

No, I genuinely didn't! So Ed, at first, is kind of wanting to come along, but it's readily apparent, and I can just skip ahead with the RP of this, he's not allowed.

HELEN [laughing]

Yeah, that's fair!

ALEX

Like, he's *hard* not allowed! Curie is... I mean, Curie probably won't turn up again. You get word down the grapevine that there are plenty of things that Ed can do to help...

BRYN

Sure.

ALEX

... but going around unsupervised is not one of them.

HELEN

Mmm...

BRYN

He needs the quarantine.

HELEN

And he's so, like, straightforward – that in itself is going to seem suspicious.

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Yeah, like, he's a whole thing!

(Helen laughs)

He's a whole thing! So, Einstein brings you in. He goes, 'Okay, cool. So as far as I'm aware, it's probably going to be stormy again.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Whereabouts are we going? Just roughly, if you don't want to tell us precisely?'

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool. No, it’s okay! So, I am going to take you to the last place that we had contact with Wilde. He knows that you’re going to be coming – we managed to get word there – but, you know, he kind of does his own thing so I can, kind of, take you there and then we hope...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Okay.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘... ‘cos if he doesn’t get in contact, I can’t make him. It’s not really how it goes. He’s kinda cagey these days, so...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Sure.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘... be nice. Oh, oh, oh-oh... if he tries to make you embarrassed, go with it, okay?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘What?’

HELEN/AZU

‘What does that mean?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘What?!’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘We’re going to be going quite near... I mean, how well do you know Japan?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Not at all. Not even slightly.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Zero.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay. So, there’s, like, a big part of it’s called Honshu...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Okay.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘... and then near the coast there’s another place...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘So we’re going to Japan?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Ya!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Great. That’s probably as much specificity [sic] as we need.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Okay, cool.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘What’s the weather going to be like?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Terrible!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘In what way, specifically?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Raining? Hurricanes?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Ya, ya-ya!’

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HELEN/AZU

‘Both?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Ya, ya, pretty much!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Right.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Should we cast Endure Elements first?’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, cool! Yes, we’re not in Rome anymore, I keep forgetting! Last time I saw you guys you couldn't cast anything, you know!’

HELEN/AZU

‘We’re *not* in Rome anymore!’

BRYN

I cast Endure Elements on me and Azu.

HELEN

Okay, sure!

ALEX

Do as you will.

BRYN

And I offer it to the Professor as well.

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Einstein's like, 'I'm basically going to be there five minutes. Like, I'm dropping you off and apparently if I don't come back straight away don't come back at all, but they say that all the time, you know, so...!'

(Helen laughs)

BRYN/HAMID

Just before we go I'm going to take Azu by the hand and say, 'Whatever happens, let's stick together.'

HELEN/AZU

'We're all that we've got, at the moment.'

BRYN

We hug again!

HELEN

Yeah!

ALEX (as Einstein)

'I'm right here!'

(Helen laughs)

'Wow! You've got a cellar full of people that like you! Also Ed, who I think loves you!'

BRYN/HAMID

'What?'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Come on! Oh, he loves everyone. He's like a golden retriever. A glorious, six-foot retriever!'

BRYN/HAMID

'It's not quite...'

HELEN/AZU

'We meant in this situation, going on...'

BRYN/HAMID

'Yeah. We've got to stick together and have each other's backs 'cos we're going somewhere new and dangerous.'

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HELEN/AZU

‘... could die again!’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, cool. Ya!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘We’re the only people we care about, or that care about us. Obviously, we care...’

[0:17:04 talking over one another]

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Ya, ya, no, of course...!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘... friends...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘... of course. ‘Course that’s a thing!’

HELEN/AZU

Azu looks at him very sincerely and says, ‘We care about you a lot, Einstein.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Yeah, cool.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘You’ve been amazing, Professor. We can’t express how grateful we are that you were there, waiting for us...’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Oh, stop!’ he says, gesturing for more.

(Helen laughs uproariously)

‘Nooooo!’

BRYN

I offer Einstein a hug.

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Yaaaaaa, Hamid, bring it! Okay, ya! Oh, don’t tell anyone I did that! Totally not meant to be doing that!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Is hugging illegal?’

BRYN

‘Okay.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Well, now, it’s just, you know, you could, I don’t know, explode or something. Things got weird. Anyway... shall we go?!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Hmm, well, hopefully you’re not...’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

‘Go! Three, two one...!’

[Teleporting noise]

Einstein Teleports.

HELEN [laughing]

Mid-sentence!

ALEX

I’ll tell you what – Teleport, way more comfortable now that you’ve done the planar shifting. You’re like, this...

(Helen laughs)

... this is lovely!

HELEN

... this is fine!

ALEX

It's basically getting on a bus!

HELEN

Yeah! My insides are all remaining where I want them to be!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

Where are my knees? Oh, they're with me! Wicked!

HELEN [laughing]

They're there!

ALEX

Not stretched across the multiverse! Everyone give me a Perception Check, please!

HELEN

Okay!

[Sound of dice being rolled]

BRYN

26.

HELEN

20.

[background sci-fi spiralling sound getting louder]

ALEX

Cool. You both appear...

[Teleporting noise]

[sound of torrential rain]

... in the middle of a torrential downpour of rain. It is warm here, but not the kind of heat you've been used to while you've been in Damascus and Egypt, and so on. It is... I don't want to say tropical, but it's that kind of vibe.

HELEN

Like humid?

ALEX

Yeah, it's humid even with the rain, if that's, like...

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

... I'm trying to...

BRYN

Tropical storm, like?

ALEX (also as Einstein)

Yeah, that's kind of what I'm going for. It's not like trees are being uprooted and so on – you're not in danger of being blown away, but you can see your hand in front of your face – but the other side of the street is kind of this or that. You seem to be in some kind of rural community of some kind. You notice that you're on what counts for a street – it seems to be a track rather than a road, as such, and there are a few buildings clustered around you. You notice that there is what appears to your eyes to be an inn of some kind, or something similar. Obviously, architecturally it's weird compared to the stuff you've been used to but, yeah, it appears to be some kind of inn... of some kind is lit. Of the eight buildings that you can just about make out along the street, the inn is lit and one other one down the street is lit. It is comparatively woody insofar as there's quite a lot of trees towards the edge of the route, and it is quite steep. This is where Alex's geography might break down a little bit, so I apologise in advance if my research is incorrect for the location I am in, but it's my world, so I can't be! ***[Mwhahahahaha!]***

(Helen laughs)

That's the situation as it stands. Einstein, sort of, Teleports in with you, and he's having to be a little bit loud with everything, going 'Okay! Go to the inn! He said he'd meet you at the Inn.'

HELEN/AZU

'Okay.'

BRYN

'Okay.'

HELEN/AZU

'Thank you.'

BRYN

'It's been an honour, Professor.'

ALEX (as Einstein)

'Oh, oh, oh, before I forget – he also said to apologise for the cliché...'

HELEN/AZU

'Oh no...'

BRYN/HAMID

'Sure. That will...'

HELEN/AZU

‘This could be anything!’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool. Cool! Look after yourselves!’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Stay safe, Professor.’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Ya!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Don’t die!’

ALEX (as Einstein)

‘Cool.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘You’re the best!’

ALEX (also as Einstein)

‘Yaaaaaaaahh...’

[Teleporting noise]

(Helen laughs)

He's gone. You are now alone in the middle of this rural street with no one there, in the rain.

HELEN/AZU

'Well, let's get this over with.'

BRYN/HAMID

'Alright!'

HELEN/AZU

'Mmm...'

BRYN

I cast Comprehend Languages.

HELEN

Ooooooh!

ALEX [in a singsong voice]

This is a good call, look at you! Bonus points!

HELEN

You're so clever!

BRYN

Unfortunately it has target self. I can't cast it on other people, even if I want to.

HELEN

That's fine. I'll believe you!

BRYN

It also doesn't give me the ability to speak any language, just to understand it when it's spoken to me.

ALEX

Fair enough.

BRYN/HAMID

'Let's go!'

ALEX

So, you presumably head towards the "inn", in inverted commas!

BRYN

Yep.

HELEN

Yes.

ALEX

So... I'm going to skip a bunch of the descriptions for the simple reason that, like, this is going to be patently obvious to everyone who wasn't in this world. Some of the walls, right, made of paper. What's with that?! This is proper rural as well. It's not, sort of, made up, well, it is a little bit run down. So, yeah, heading in...

[the latch lifts]

It is a little busier than you would have expected, given how empty all of it is, but by a little busier I mean, like, there's six people!

BRYN

Sure.

HELEN

Oooh!

ALEX

There's an innkeeper behind what, effectively, is a bar, and you see a bunch of people are sat on these rush mats spread out around the room having quiet, sort of, conversations over sake or something similar. There is a side set of rooms as well, and so on, and there's a central fire. Basically, to your right, there is a fire pit in the middle of the room which is keeping it warm. It's very smoky. The innkeeper, sort of, sees you and then you have... have you ever seen American Werewolf in Paris, thing?

BRYN

No.

HELEN

Mmm...

ALEX

Basically it's, again, the cliché of everyone... innkeeper stops cleaning...

(Helen laughs)

... everyone just looks at you two walking in.

HELEN

So it's a Western!

ALEX

Yeah!

BRYN

I wave.

HELEN

I do not wave.

ALEX

They all just, kind of, look *suuuuper*-tense.

BRYN/HAMID

I go up to the bar and go, 'Drink?' probably in English. No, what's the most likely... what's the most common trading language in this world?

HELEN

Mmm...

ALEX

Realistically, it's going to be French.

BRYN

I'll do it in French, then.

ALEX

English might work, but it's not the lingua Franca

[0:22:25 talking over one another]

(Helen laughs)

BRYN

I think we've mentioned before that French is the lingua Franca because it's just better that way.

ALEX

Yeah, so French... how do I put it? French is the language of money...

BRYN

I'll, I'll...

ALEX

... in this world, like, it just tends to be.

BRYN/HAMID

I'll probably open in French, then, and ask for a 'Drink?'

ALEX

The barman, kind of, takes a moment...

BRYN

I'll do a gesture...

ALEX

Takes a moment, gives you a hesitant thing and then...

BRYN

I'll get out some copper pieces...

ALEX

... runs off round a side thing. Everyone is still just staring at you.

HELEN

Mmm.

BRYN

I smile at them.

ALEX

So, in terms of the clientele...

BRYN

I scan them, I mean, I assume they're all...

ALEX

You know what, give me a Perception Check both of you.

HELEN

Yeah.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

Oh no!

BRYN

23.

HELEN

11.

ALEX

They all could do with some care, like...

HELEN

Aww...

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

... one of them, when they get up to, like, have a move around is clearly lame. Another one, you notice, has an eye-patch. A couple of them are looking a little bit underfed compared to what they should be. Hamid. These are fishermen and one, sort of, fisherman's family, so you've got a...

BRYN

Sure.

ALEX

... literally a, presumably, wife and daughter, and they are there. You notice as well they are a little bit more malnourished than they should be. Not terribly so, but this is not a community that is doing well...

BRYN

Yep.

ALEX

... and you notice that, again, because you have a bit of time, they're nursing their drinks longer than they should. They're clearly here because there's a big old empty space outside and it's nicer to be in here with other people than not.

BRYN

Have a bit of community, yeah.

HELEN

Yeah...

ALEX

And their conversation does pick up eventually, but it's very clear that they're all waiting for you guys to be bad trouble.

BRYN

So we probably go and sit in the corner if nothing happens immediately?

ALEX

The innkeeper returns...

BRYN

Oh, okay.

ALEX

... seeing you starting to sit down is, like, 'Oh, er, er...' oh, of course, you've literally just cast a spell, I forgot. To be clear, any languages that are being translated magically, I don't do accents for and I'm dodging any accents that are horrendously problematic.

BRYN

Sure.

HELEN

Yes! Good!

ALEX (also as the innkeeper)

So the innkeeper just comes up and he's, like, 'Oh no, no, no, no-no, you don't have to... come here. Sorry, yes. Please come with me.' He starts shuffling off to, basically, one of the side rooms that has its...

BRYN

I'll give him the thumbs up and start following.

HELEN

Yeah. Azu clanks after them.

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

ALEX

He comes through, slides open the door and gestures for you to go inside.

HELEN

How big is this room?

BRYN/HAMID [simultaneously]

‘Merci.’

ALEX

It is a room where a cramped six people could sit.

HELEN [chuckling]

Okay, so I’m not going to be crouching or anything like that?

ALEX

It has a low-rising Japanese-style table with rush matting on the floor, and so on, and a cabinet to one side which appears to have some drinks on it, but there’s no furniture or chairs to speak of in that sense.

HELEN

Okay. That’s okay. I just wanted to know how uncomfortable I’m going to be!

[she laughs]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

ALEX

Pretty uncomfortable!

HELEN

Okay.

ALEX

He, kind of, looks at you. Give me a Sense Motive.

HELEN

Yeah!!

[Rolls dice]

Love a Sense Motive! Oh, rolled badly again!

BRYN

21.

HELEN

That's 13.

ALEX

You miss it, this once. Hamid, you get the impression that this bar-keep's terrified of you and hiding it, even though he's acting slightly nervous, he's mortally terrified of you, and then he closes the thing. And the last thing you

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

notice before the break is the distinct sounds of people in the inn seem to be starting to get up and leave. Something to consider.

HELEN

Hmmm...

BRYN/HAMID

'I think they might be scared of us. I don't know if that's 'cos we're unusual or just outsiders in general? I wish we'd asked how the war has affected Japan.'

ALEX

Aaaaannnd, there's the break!

And welcome back. I think it's time for you two to have a small amount of down time. Maybe 60 to 70 seconds...

HELEN

Oh, lovely!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

... so, you just do with that what you want, you know?! Call it a whole fluff episode.

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

HELEN

You said there were drinks in the cabinet?

ALEX

Mm hmm.

HELEN/AZU

‘Shall we have a drink while we’re here?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah, I suppose. We can leave some money or something.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah.’ She pours two out.

BRYN/HAMID

‘Currency’s reasonably universal!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Yeah!’ She does hers in one and takes another.

BRYN

Hamid sips.

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

Okay. It's not as strong as the stuff that you're used to, but it's also...

HELEN [laughing]

Nothing is!!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

... it's also stronger than most of the human swill that you've had.

HELEN

Ah.

ALEX

Hamid – it's pretty strong sake, although it's quite warm, what's with that?! So you neck one. Do you have any more?

BRYN

I sip. I probably only have a couple of sips.

ALEX

So, I am going to accelerate time a little bit.

BRYN

Yep.

HELEN

Mm hmm.

ALEX

Is there a point where it's like if ten minutes hit you're leaving or anything like that?

HELEN

Personally, I think we would stay longer than ten minutes.

BRYN

I think we would probably stay an hour...

HELEN

Yeah, at least an hour.

BRYN

... multiple hours.

ALEX

That's fine, that's fine.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

HELEN [laughing]

Is this how many hours we're sitting there?!

[Sound of dice being rolled]

Oh my god!

[Sound of dice being rolled]

Is this how many drinks we're having?!

[Sound of dice being rolled]

ALEX

Yes!

BRYN

I mean, Hamid probably won't have more than one, which he'll sip very slowly.

HELEN

I am going to meet Oscar Wilde while drunk.

ALEX

Both of you please roll a Perception Check.

HELEN

Okay.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

BRYN

15.

HELEN

19.

ALEX

Okay. That actually works out perfectly. Cool! Time rolls on. You guys are sipping and drinking, and so on. It's really warm in here. In a good way, like, it's very warm, very comfy in a way that you, basically, haven't been in weeks.

HELEN

Mmm...

ALEX

It's incredibly quiet, there's the gentle sound of rain on the roof and so on, and it's very lulling and, Hamid, you actually start to feel yourself dropping asleep. Azu, he does, just **[gentle snoring sound]**, he conks out on you, and you...

HELEN

She lets him.

ALEX

Yeah. You start to, sort of, nod off as well, etc. Are you going to let yourself? Are you going to try and wake yourself up?

HELEN

No, she's going to try and stay awake.

ALEX

How do you do so?

HELEN

She's going to fiddle with the Heart of Aphrodite necklace, to keep her fingers busy, keep herself focussed on it.

ALEX

As you're doing that, you find that you're being really clumsy with it, like...

HELEN

Oh no, it's poisoned!

ALEX

... you're feeling a little bit, like, ooh... hang on, hang on. You, maybe, try and stand up and it's, like, oh, oh ho! Ho... the room is spinning way more, like, the

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

stuff you have drunk must be *incredibly* strong, like, far stronger than any Orcish moonshine...

BRYN

Or they're pumping something into the air...

HELEN

Come on! Surely... I'm going to roll something for deciding it might be poisoned.

ALEX

Give me a Heal Check.

HELEN

Okay.

[Rolls dice]

BRYN

Punch through the wall, let some fresh air in!

HELEN

Oh...

(Bryn laughs)

Er, 12.

ALEX

12? It could just be really, really, really strong booze. It's not likely, but it's possible. You could have been drugged. You're not in pain, but you also immediately know that anything that must be affecting you this much must be playing merry havoc with the little Halfling over there!

HELEN

I'm going to try and wake Hamid up, absolutely.

ALEX

Yeah, go for it.

HELEN

I do a little shake.

ALEX

Nope. He's out of it!

HELEN

Do a little slap.

[sound of face being slapped gently]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

ALEX

Nothing.

HELEN

Pick him up, like... **[laughing]** like a baby!

ALEX

Nothing.

BRYN

Don't shake babies, Helen!

(Helen laughs)

HELEN

Oh, god! I just meant, like, under the armpits!

ALEX

Yeah, but it's the fact that you said pick him up like a baby, and the audience can't see it, but you're like... **[rarrrrggghhh]**...

(Helen shrieks with laughter)

It's like watching a muppet in a gravitron!

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

HELEN

Okay...

BRYN

Get us out into the rain.

HELEN [sighing]

I don't want to leave the room they said to stay in.

ALEX

It's very warm in there!

HELEN

Okay, she begins to pace.

ALEX

You try! You're very clumsy. You, like, knock into the table a little bit. Give me a Perception Check.

HELEN

Okay.

[Rolls dice]

Oh, thank god! That's 25.

ALEX

You notice that the table shunts slightly, like, when you hit it, obviously, it's just resting on the mat, but as you do, you notice a very strong hollow sound from underneath the matting and so on, and you notice that, like, the table shifts and the matting shifts, and you notice that there might be a door under the table or something.

HELEN

I lift the table up.

ALEX

Okay, cool. Give me a Reflex Save.

HELEN

Oh no – it's trapped! *SASHA*, no!!

[Rolls dice]

Ohhhhhh...!!

BRYN

And your Reflex Save is terrible!

HELEN

It's eight!

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

(Bryn chuckles)

[Sound of dice being rolled]

It makes sense though, because I'm drugged, clearly.

ALEX

Oh, that's unfair. Makes sense though. Okay...

HELEN

I'm going to get shot with so many arrows!

ALEX

The entire floor just drops away.

HELEN

Wooooaaaaahhhh!

[crashing sound]

ALEX

All of the mats drop, the table with it, just drop, and you all fall a decent distance, maybe like, 15 feet, something like that... **[whumph]**. As you drop, you both slam into the floor.

[smashing sound]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

HELEN

Does Hamid wake up?

ALEX

No.

BRYN

Hamid, luckily, will not have tensed up during the fall and so, actually, will be mostly okay!

ALEX

And yet the dice say otherwise!

HELEN

Oh no!

BRYN

It's a steal on D6, 15 foot?

ALEX

Yeah. Hamid took a grand total of five...

HELEN

Mm hmm.

ALEX

... and Azu took a grand total of three.

HELEN

Okay, no problem.

ALEX

You drop down *[brmmmp]* and notice that all of the walls here, they're stone. Apart from one. That one's got bars in it. That are locked.

HELEN

I go and yell.

ALEX

The floor that, kind of, gave way, you see is just one massive trapdoor, and then it starts to clank its way back up as the chains are pulled on it. It closes above you. You find yourself...

[sound of heavy chains clanking through mechanism]

HELEN

How long was that taking?

ALEX

It's not particularly quick. If you want to intervene in the meantime, please, go nuts!

HELEN

Nah, I'm terrible at acrobatics, I couldn't jump. You are taking all of the penalties.

BRYN

Smash it. Get your axe. Smash it before it closes on us.

ALEX

That'll work!

HELEN

Hmm... Okay, I'm going to do that.

BRYN

I'm unconscious! I can't contribute!

HELEN

Azu smashes...

ALEX

So you try to smash one of the doors as it's coming up?

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

HELEN

No, you said there were, like, chains or something.

ALEX

Chains? Yeah.

HELEN

Yeah, so I'm going to, like, try and cut one of the chains.

ALEX

Okay, cool. Give me an Attack Roll.

HELEN

Okay.

[Rolls dice]

18.

ALEX

Yeah, you manage.

BRYN

Well, with your bonuses...

HELEN

Oh!

ALEX

Yeah, you manage. I know that you manage already, you're fine, but you are taking more penalties than you think, it's just it's not particularly hard to hit a fairly stationary object!

(Helen laughs)

Even when drugged!

HELEN [laughing]

Thanks!

ALEX

Roll damage.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

HELEN

11 and a nine.

BRYN

Plus...

HELEN

That's 26.

[she laughs]

ALEX

Honestly, it's all good. I'm being incredibly cruel.

BRYN

What did you say [0:33:12 Helen laughing over Bryn]

ALEX

I'm being incredibly cruel. Didn't matter. You swing the axe as hard as you can and it sparks off it. It apparently had done no damage, and bright sparks come off it from the axe.

HELEN

Oh my gosh, it must be magical.

ALEX

You see the chain has been blackened with soot or something, but the part that you have marked has been scraped away. There's an exotic metal under there – it's not just normal metal. You would have cut through with the amount of force you put behind it.

HELEN

Right.

ALEX

The doors are closing still. It is not quick. It is clunk... clunk... clunk...

HELEN

Okay, I am gonna try and jump onto one of the doors and, like, bring it down. 'Cos I'm a heavy, I'm a heavy shed-built Orc person. What do I roll to jump?

ALEX

Huh...

HELEN

Is it acrobatics?!

BRYN

Acrobatics?

ALEX

Correct!

HELEN

Woo, hoo-hoo! Not getting that!

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

[Rolls dice]

Hahaha! That is...

BRYN

So you rolled a six. You've got minus one in Acrobatics, but your armour check health is also minus four, so a total of minus five...

HELEN

Wow!

ALEX

Plus drugged!

HELEN

So minus 50 or something!

ALEX

You try. You slip flat on your back. Your armour manages to catch in a dink in the floor so you're actually struggling to unpin yourself from the floor.

BRYN

You've totalled yourself!

(Helen shrieks with laughter)

ALEX (also as the voice)

As the doors close upwards, you manage to free yourself, but the doors are pretty much closing.

[sound of heavy doors clanging shut]

However, a voice that you recognise from the shadows on the other side of the bars just pipes up, 'I really wouldn't trouble yourself.'

HELEN/AZU

'Wilde?'

ALEX (as the voice)

'Who's asking?'

HELEN/AZU

'It's Azu, clearly.'

ALEX (as Wilde)

Wilde steps out. Yeah, it's Wilde. He is currently dressed in a passable, sort of, peasant's garb in terms of, like, tattered clothing, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah... For what it's worth, he's actually done a pretty good job. This isn't the spies that Grizzop was running into...

(Helen laughs)

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

... where they wore a single blanket and like, 'I'm disguised!'

HELEN [laughing]

That was so good!

ALEX

No, this is done properly. He's got, like, a rubbishy looking hat and so on, and he steps forward into the light and his face is stern. Stern as.

HELEN

Mmm.

ALEX

And he's just looking at both of you.

HELEN/AZU

I'm carrying Hamid, and I, sort of, totter over to the bars. 'Why did you...? Did you drug us?'

ALEX (as Wilde)

'Come on, Azu. If you're Azu, you're always quite good at reading people. What do you think?'

HELEN

I'll Sense Motive I guess on him.

ALEX

Sure.

(Alex and Helen snort with laughter)

HELEN

I mean, the answer's obviously yes, but I'm going to do it anyway!

[Rolls dice]

[they all scream and start laughing]

[Helen shrieks something unintelligible]

ALEX

What was that for the benefit of the listeners?

HELEN

That was a natural one!

ALEX

You know what, now you think about it, that bar-keep was shady as anything.

Could be he captured Wilde as well!

HELEN [sighing heavily]

Well, I mean, technically it's a 12...

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

ALEX

Yes, like, you're not being an idiot.

BRYN

Yeah, but that's not how a natural ones work.

HELEN [laughing]

I don't care!

ALEX

Honestly, here's how it actually goes down. You are completely thrown by him because all of the tales that you've learned to recognise aren't there.

HELEN

Mmm.

ALEX

You're getting nothing from him. He is stonewalling you.

HELEN/AZU

Okay. 'Well, I'm pretty sure I am drugged, so...'

ALEX (as Wilde)

'Good.'

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

HELEN/AZU

‘Are you going to let us out?’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘Eventually.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Are you going to keep us here for seven days like they were going to do before?’

ALEX (as Wilde)

‘I might do.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Why? Okay, how do I prove us to you?’

ALEX

He just leaves.

HELEN/AZU

‘Wilde, get back here!’

ALEX

You hear the distinct sound of a heavy door closing.

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

HELEN

I'm going to start trying to pull the bars out of the floor.

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

Give me a Strength Check.

[Sound of dice being rolled]

HELEN [laughing]

What is happening?!

BRYN

Switch to a different die!

HELEN

Yeah!

ALEX

No! Keep the drugged die!!

(Bryn laughs)

HELEN

Well that was a two! I don't... I can't remember what else...

ALEX

You hurt yourself attempting it, and exhaust yourself before eventually you slump down to the ground.

BRYN

I mean, you have strength bonus, so...

HELEN

That makes it five!

BRYN

Yeah, it's still basically nothing.

HELEN

Yeah.

ALEX

You honestly manage to hurt yourself going and going and going, and eventually you slump to the ground, exhausted, having failed to do anything to the incredibly strong bars. In fact, I'm not going to get a Perception Check, they've also been sooted up. You recognise the metal underneath.

HELEN

Is it Adamantine?

ALEX

It is.

HELEN

Ugh. She rests her forehead against the bars.

ALEX

At which point, you hear a voice from the other side of the bars, right in the corner in the shadows...

BEN/ZOLF

'I wouldn't bother if I, er, if I were you. That's Adamantine, that is. You won't get through. Just relax and try and get some sleep.'

BRYN

It's Zolf! *Ahhhhh!* I know I'm unconscious! I'm still excited! Zolf's back everybody!

(Laughter)

Oh my god!

HELEN

Hamid twitches.

(Laughter)

BEN

Bryn's got such little chill!

HELEN/AZU

Azu says, 'Who are you?'

BEN/ZOLF

'Just get some rest.'

HELEN/AZU

'Why should I trust you? I've been... I'm drugged, I'm in a cell.'

BEN/ZOLF

'I'm not asking you to trust me. I just thought you probably wouldn't want to bother. That's Adamantine, you'll just hurt yourself.'

HELEN/AZU

'I may be tired. But I am very angry right now.'

BEN/ZOLF

'...That's fine, um, you're still in a cell?'

(Laughter)

BRYN

Everyone's wanted this meeting for so long, and it's just not... this is not what anyone imagined, Alex.

(Laughter)

Once again, every time you think you're providing what fans want, you're just finding new ways to torture them!

ALEX

I'm enjoying it!

BRYN

Ugh!

HELEN/AZU

'Are you working with Wilde?'

BEN/ZOLF

'Yeah.'

HELEN/AZU

'Well, I suppose that's good.'

BEN/ZOLF

'Yeah. And I guess you know why we can't trust you right now, so just...'

HELEN/AZU

‘You think we’re infected with the thing?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘You can draw your own conclusions, but you know, there’s a reason you’re in there and you might as well just chill out and get some rest. There’s no point in, well, trying to cut through Adamantine.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Right. Well, thanks for your help.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘I’m not giving you any. Well, I suppose I told you... alright, yeah... no, fine. Appreciate it!’

(Laughter)

ALEX [quietly]

This is everything I wanted it to be!

HELEN [laughing]

Azu turns around and puts her back to the bars, and just continues to hold Hamid.

ALEX

I am happy to accelerate time at this point.

BRYN

I'm so... I'm mostly upset you didn't give us a chance to Save against the poison. I mean...

ALEX

I did. I rolled for you!

BRYN

Ohhhhh...

ALEX

... before I mentioned that there was a poison. That was what those six rolls were for! Because you kept drinking it!

(Helen laughs)

BRYN

I sipped gradually on one cup!

ALEX

You sipped a cup... no, sorry, you sipped an imbibe poison on one cup and it turns out at the high end of the potions/poisons that you drink, oh, they get fun! They get real fun!

HELEN

Hmm... Okay.

ALEX

Look do you have any idea how difficult it is to work poisons effectively into any campaign?!

(Laughter)

They just don't work in this system!

BRYN

Fair, fair.

HELEN

Right, well... Azu's going to try to stay awake, but is ignoring whoever this is in the shadows because she does not like them.

ALEX

Give me a Will Save. Don't flub it and you'll be alright!

HELEN

Well, who knows what will happen!

[Rolls dice]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

ALEX

Do you want to use my natural one dice?!

HELEN

No. Errr... Oh! That's 20!

ALEX

That is the exact noise that you make over the hours...

(Laughter)

[Bryn groans]

... you don't drop off. I'm assuming, Ben, that you aren't going to be piping up?

BEN

No!

ALEX

That's fine. You should probably introduce yourself for any listeners who jumped on in season four!

BEN

Oh, yes. So, I'm Ben Meredith. Nice to meet you! You actually do mean that because...

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

ALEX

I'm not joking!

BEN

No, they've listened to the roam prologue...

ALEX

Not necessarily – people skip!

BEN

Okay, well, you've just randomly decided that this episode is the one you want to join, then...

BRYN

It's also our last episode at the beginning of season four, it's a perfectly logical place to join!

ALEX

I agree! I agree!

BRYN

This might be the first time they've ever met you, Ben.

ALEX

And they are getting such an accurate impression!

(Laughter)

BEN

Yeah, I know, I know! I am nothing if not me! Why have you started this episode? Go back and listed to the recap, that's the whole point of it! Come on!

HELEN

Ohhh, [0:40:52] shaming – there we go!

ALEX

And that is Ben! Okay, cool!

BEN

Anyway, I'm playing Zolf Smith...

BRYN

Sad to see that's back.

HELEN

Mmm...

ALEX

Time passes, and by time I mean more than an hour. Hamid, you recognise his breathing goes from that of an unconscious sack of meat, basically...

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

[everyone laughs and sniggers]

BRYN [indignantly]

Charming!

(Laughter)

ALEX

... to someone who is clearly asleep, and then his tiny little snores start.

HELEN

Ahhhh...

ALEX

You reckon, if you wanted, you could probably wake him at this point.

HELEN

Absolutely, wake him up! Tiny little slaps on the face!

BRYN/HAMID

‘Wha... wha? Where are we? What happened?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Well, we fell through a trapdoor and Oscar Wilde, I think, was here...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘What?!’

HELEN/AZU

‘... but he doesn’t think that we are who we say we are, and there’s someone in the shadows who might still be watching, I don’t know.’

BRYN

I cast Dancing Lights.

ALEX

Okay. It doesn’t work.

HELEN

Oooh!

BRYN/HAMID

‘Oh dear!’

[everyone screams with laughter]

‘Are we in an anti-magic field?’

HELEN/AZU

‘Possibly. There’s Adamantine everywhere. They don’t think we are who we say we are and I think we might be stuck here for a week... unless we can convince them otherwise.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Where are we? What’s...?’

HELEN/AZU

‘We’re just through the floor.’

BRYN

I mean, how much light is there? Can I see anything?

ALEX

The only light that is coming in...

BRYN

Bear in mind that Azu had Dark Vision and I don’t...

HELEN

Oh, yeah, yeah!

ALEX

Yeah, so the only light that’s coming in is a tiny amount from where the well-made, sort of, ceiling trapdoor meets.

BRYN

Yep.

ALEX

Dim. Very, very dim light. But, again, also, you have been unconscious for hours so you're probably, your eyes are adjusted to darkness to a degree but, yeah, it's... think every single classic dungeon shot of [0:42:39 Movie Dark].

BRYN

It's very blue.

ALEX

Lots of... lots of... yeah, it's actually the middle of the day, but we just put a blue filter over it!

(Laughter)

It's fine, no one will know!

BRYN

I'm going to try casting some other cantrip level spells.

ALEX

Cool.

BRYN

None of them...

ALEX

Dud, dud, dud, dud.

BRYN/HAMID

‘Yeah, I think we’re in an anti-magic field of some kind.’ I go up to the bars and just... how wide apart are they?

ALEX

They are quite narrow!

BRYN

Yeah, yeah...

ALEX

In fact, now that you’re looking at it closely, and Azu you would have noticed but I just didn’t add the detail, there appears to be a fine mesh running between the main bars. The mesh isn’t Adamantine. There are Adamantine bars and then a small, sort of, chickenwire-esque thing!

HELEN/AZU

‘I already tried the bars. I can’t move them.’

BEN

You hear the sound of a book being put down in the darkness.

(Helen laughs)

BRYN

Jennifer! No!

(Laughter)

ALEX

You don't know that!

BRYN [laughing]

No, I don't. I know!

BEN

We'll, I'm not reading that one – I'm reading the sequel!

BRYN

Obviously! Well, probably several sequels down the line! You've had 18 months!

ALEX

He's been prolific and it's been a long time!

HELEN

Jennifer, yes!

BEN

Yeah! I did take a break from writing though after that traumatic experience on an airship!

(Bryn laughs)

ALEX

But, if anything, it just made his work pop more!

BEN

Yeah! It did!

ALEX

When he came to terms with it!

HELEN

Okay.

BEN/ZOLF

Never been better. Better than ever! 'Yeah, I wouldn't try that, Hamid, I think, uh...'

BRYN/HAMID [shrieks]

'What???!'

HELEN/AZU

‘What?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Ow?’

BRYN/HAMID [shrieking]

‘Zolf, is that you?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yes.’

HELEN/AZU

‘You know him?’

BRYN/HAMID

‘What are you doing here?! Why are we trapped?! What is going on?!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘You mean you've been with this person so long and you haven't even spoken about me? Very offended, Hamid.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I told you about *Zolf*.’

HELEN/AZU

‘Well, I...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘He used to be part of the mercenary group.’

HELEN/AZU

‘A lot has happened.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yes, it’s me! And, um...’

HELEN/AZU

‘And how would I know this was Zolf anyway? I’ve never seen him.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘That’s true. Good instincts.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘I mean, I can’t even see you now, it’s so dark in here. Can we have some light? We’re in a sort of cage!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Yes, alright. I will turn on some torches.’

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

ALEX

Yep, as long as it's 'turn on'!

(Laughter)

BRYN

Or light?!

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

Light some torches!

BEN

Alright! I've got some... *[clicks his tongue twice]*... yeah!

BRYN

You used to be able to cast Spark!

[0:44:38 talking over one another]

ALEX

I turn on the...

BEN

I can still cast Spark! Of course I didn't get... [0:44:41]...

BRYN

I don't know how much you've changed!

ALEX

You can't cast Spark in here!

BEN

Oh yeah, of course!

ALEX

You can light the torches easily enough.

BEN

Yeah, I'll light some torches... so you can see Zolf now...

BRYN [gasps]

Sooo...

(Helen laughs)

ALEX

He's a beholder!

(Group laughter)

BEN

Bear with! No, so his hair is much shorter. He's still got the beard...

BRYN

He's gone for a, kind of, Thor 2 to Thor 3 sort of vibe!

HELEN

Ohhhh, so much trauma must have happened!

BEN

Yeah, I'll take it!

(Group laughter)

Er, he's got a... he's still got his beard, it's in a big single plait down the middle now...

BRYN

Ohhhh...

BEN

... and it's bound together by a golden circlet with an emerald set in it.

HELEN

Ooooh!

BEN

His hair is now completely white...

HELEN

Woah!!

BEN

... er, yeah! Apart from that, he hasn't really changed much!

BRYN

Well, what's going on beneath the waist, as it were?!

(Group laughter)

BEN

Oh, er... oh, well if you will insist. Yeah, he's wearing some trousers and some boots. That's it! He's not going to show you a cheeky bit of shin or anything like that.

(Helen laughs)

That's what he's got!

HELEN

Other clothing worth mentioning?

BEN

Er, okay, so he's still wearing his ratty old, sort of, leather raincoat...

(Bryn laughs)

... but underneath he's actually got armour, which is a change from last time...

BRYN

Sure.

BEN

... erm, just a breastplate, but in the light you can see, sort of slightly shimmering engravings that aren't bright – they don't glow – but they look like they're slightly different gloss, so you kind of see them in the reflections every so often.

BRYN

So I'm guessing iconography of Poseidon...

BEN

No.

BRYN and HELEN

Oooh...

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

BEN

No, so the driftwood dolphin is gone.

BRYN

Ahh...

HELEN

Is there any iconography that we would recognise?

BEN

No.

HELEN [surprised]

Oooohh!

BEN

So, instead of a trident, he's got a glaive, which is propped up on the chair next to him...

ALEX

Can you describe a glaive for people so they know what it is.

BEN

A glaive is a sword on a pole.

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

(Group laughter)

BRYN

Yeah, basically a spear with a slightly longer blade.

ALEX [talking over Bryn]

It's an over-ambitious spear in a way that I just love!

BRYN

Yeah.

BEN

Yeah.

BRYN/HAMID

'Zolf, what... what is going on?'

BEN/ZOLF

'What, has no one told you?'

BRYN/HAMID

'I mean, they've told me a lot, but it doesn't explain *you* being *here*!'

BEN/ZOLF

'Well, I'm working with Wilde again.'

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

BRYN/HAMID [sarcastically]

‘Great! Wonderful!’

(Group laughter)

[slightly hysterically] ‘How did that happen?! Why am I in a cage?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Well, you know why you’re in a cage.’

BRYN/HAMID [getting slightly more hysterical]

‘But am I going to have to stay here for seven days?’

BEN/ZOLF [with a calm detachment]

‘Maybe!’

BRYN/HAMID [exasperated]

‘Bah!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Is there literally nothing that... is there nothing he can say, because you don’t know me, but...?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Alright. Both of you – look into my eyes, right? Look deeply, look carefully.’

Zolf concentrates and then lets rip the wettest, loudest fart that you’ve ever heard.

[really, truly disgusting fart sound!]

HELEN

What?!

ALEX

Real, real... echoing around the room.

BEN

Just real grim, and then I’m going to do a Sense Motive check on both of them.

ALEX

Absolutely.

BRYN/HAMID

Hamid reacts viscerally, ‘Uggggghhhhhhhh...’ reeling backwards and being quite, eeeuw, basically.

ALEX

Give me a Sense Motive.

BEN

Er, so this is for Hamid.

[Rolls dice]

That's a 17.

ALEX

Uh huh.

HELEN

Azu was already glaring at you and now she's glaring even harder.

(Laughter)

ALEX

To answer the info that you know and other people in the room don't, you're getting an okay read from Hamid.

BEN

Yeah. Bad read from Azu.

ALEX

You're not really getting anything from Azu and also, you're probably not going to be able to override the protocol anyway, but it's the difference between, you know, prepping the tar-pits and not... for Hamid, at least.

BEN

Yeah.

HELEN [sarcastically]

Oh, great! Looking forward to tar-pits for me in my future.

BRYN/HAMID

‘What... what?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Well, that was a test. I guess you sort of passed. Azu, not so much...’

BRYN/HAMID

‘Great!’

BEN/ZOLF

‘... sorry.’

HELEN/AZU

‘I’m a Paladin.’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Okay.’

BRYN/HAMID [incredulously]

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

‘The test was *farting*! What sort of a test is *that*?!’

(Helen laughs)

BEN/ZOLF

‘It’s a good one!’

HELEN/AZU

‘Surely you can tell that if I’m a Paladin I am to be trusted?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Nope.’

HELEN/AZU

‘What do you mean, no?’

BEN/ZOLF

‘Well, I mean that is not how it has worked. Come on, they’ve told you what’s been going on.’

BRYN/HAMID

‘So we're stuck in this cage for a week?!’

HELEN/AZU

‘The churches can’t be trusted.’

BRYN/HAMID

'Fine! Bring me some food, some drink, a cushion, a comb, a mirror...'

(Laughter)

'... and start telling me what happened to you!'

ALEX [laughing]

And I'm going to end the episode there.

(Helen laughs)

This is the weirdest intro I could have possibly hoped for! I *love* it! I love it so much!

HELEN

We started [0:48:59 talking over one another]... I was hoping we could be friends!

(Bryn laughs)

BEN

Well, you're the one being aggressive!

BRYN

Ohhhhh...

HELEN [hysterical]

You've locked us in a cage!

BRYN

Victim blaming!

ALEX

All Zolf did... all Zolf did was say hello and then soil himself!

(Group laughter)

BEN [indignantly]

I did not soil myself!

(Group laughter)

BRYN

I dunno, you're pretty old! There's bound to be a bit of follow-through!

BEN

How *dare* you! I'm, like, 51 which is...

HELEN

Positively spritely!

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

BEN

That's like, early 30s!

ALEX [laughing]

That's our age, Bryn!!

(Group laughter)

I'm going to end on this note. Bye guys!

EVERYONE [still laughing]

Bye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

ALEX

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BRYN

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

I finally saw someone on Tumblr the other day shipping Grizzop and Hamid,
and I'm like, oh buddy!

[0:50:28 talking over one another]

BEN

Hazzop!

(Helen laughs)

Or Grimid!

BRYN

AmsterHam...

HELEN [laughing]

That's so good!!

[0:50:38 talking over one another]

BEN

That's very, very clever.

ALEX

That's very clever.



BEN

You were in Japan recently, weren't you?

ALEX

Yes.

BRYN

Have you used some of your, er, experiences there as research...

ALEX

I would have liked to...

BRYN

... and written off the trip as expenses for the company?!

(Group laughter)

Just saying, Alex! If it was research...!

ALEX

Unfortunately, I did something really foolish, which is because of all the trips shaken out... shaken out? shook out... I've taken you to the one bit I didn't see on a trip!

Rusty Quill Gaming – [128] – [Tadaima]

BRYN [laughing]

Ahhhhhh...!

(Group laughter)

ALEX

Tell you what, though, if you all just randomly go off piste and start picking a random direct, I've got you covered!

BRYN

Awesome, let's do it!

ALEX

But the one bit here is, kinda, *[rggrrlll]*...!

(Bryn laughs)