The Magpies – Transcript
Season 1 Wrap-Up and Q&A

Transcribed by Tyler (Twitter: @Tyler\_MoonSage)

NOTE – This is a very lighthearted, high-spirited, and especially giggly episode. For the sake of legibility, text that describes when the group is laughing, giggling, cooing, swooning, or otherwise making non-verbal sounds of approval or agreement will be kept to a minimum. It is safe for you the reader to assume all five participants are doing some form of these almost constantly. They will only be tagged as such if they are significant or do not interrupt thoughts and sentences.

Rhi: Hello listeners. For this episode, we’re not welcoming you to Duskwall, instead we’re taking a little bit of a breather between seasons and doing a Q&A episode. It’s the five of us chatting and answering some audience questions. We’ll be back with the Season 2 opener in two weeks.

Some quick announcements: I continue to be going to AcadeCon from November 9 through 11. If you’re going, let me know or track me down while we’re there and get a cool bookmark.

Minna and Madge will be on the soon to be released weird west Monster of the Week podcast, iron Hides. I will put a link to more information about that in the show notes.

Next, let me tell you about this month’s Featured Charity. Assata’s Daughters is a Chicago organization that supports, serves, and uplifts women identified young Black people. The group provides education to Black girls and women in radical Black feminism, political organization, and liberation. They offer educational programs and workshops, organize protests and resistance actions, and maintain a community garden for the neighborhood. If you can spare a few dollars consider donating.

Midterm elections in the United States are exactly one week from today. Please vote, and please continue to call your representatives, protest, donate… resist.

And now, your bonus episode.

## [0:01:28]

Rhi: Hi everybody! Welcome to our Season 1 Wrap-Up and Q&A episode. You guys are all probably still a little bit angry at me for how I ended the season finale.

[giggling]

Madge: I’m not!

Rhi: Let’s start off with introductions.

Kim: Hi. My name is Kim. I play Blaire Culhane, and you can find me on Twitter at @kimdianajones.

Rhi: What was one of your favorite moments from Season 1?

Kim: One of my favorite moments from Season 1 was when I critically succeeded Blaire’s Command roll to call all those ghosts to action, and she had that little speech.

Rhi: Yeah. That was very good. I just edited that a couple days ago and it was great.

Kim: It was just a very rewarding character moment for me.

Rhi: Yeah.

Josie: Hi, I am Josie Siino. You can find me on Twitter at @DragonGirlJosie, and a bunch of other places that I link to from there. My favorite moment…

Rhi: Oh! Say who you play. Heh.

Josie: Oh, right! I play Minx. Hi! My favorite moment from Season 1 probably would be the finale, honestly, just how everything came to a head and the pace we went through it at, and all the character moments. That whole episode left me feeling really good. Or rather, bad in a good way.

Rhi: Yeah. [laughs] Emotionally devastated is I think kind of a goal to aim for when telling a story.

Madge: Yeah. That sounds about right, especially for a season finale.

Rhi: Yep.

Minna: Hi, I’m Minna. I play Myra Keel. You can find me on Twitter at @mynaminnarr. I realize my Twitter handle is a nightmare, I don’t like it either. [laughs] Oh God, favorite moments… It’s really hard to pick a favorite moment, because I really like this show. [laughs]

Rhi: Well, you don’t have to pick—It doesn’t have to be the top favorite moment, it can just be one of your favorite moments.

Minna: [smiling] Listen. As we speak, we just published the Doskvorn episode, and anyone who knows me knows I’m a found family feels goblin, so I’m gonna have to go with that, especially Myra and Phin exchanging gifts because Phin and I cooked that up behind the scenes and I’m so happy it happened.

Madge: [giggles]

Rhi: [laughs] Yeah, it was a very good episode.

Minna: Did I say Phin and I cooked it up?

Madge: yeah!

Rhi: You did! Yeah!

[laughter]

Minna: Well, what I mean is I was looking at your name lighting up in the voice chat, and it says Phin, and it doesn’t have Madge in it.

Madge: Oh. [laughs] So hi, I’m Madge. I play Phin on The magpies, which is the podcast that you’re listening to right now… [nervous laughs]

Minna: [squirms, smiling]

Madge: You can find me on Twitter at @madgequips. You can also find me on pretty much any social media at that tag. My favorite moment from Season 1 was also the Doskvorn episode, just because I got to do a lot of character stuff with Phin that I didn’t usually get to do, especially with Phin getting the tattoo on her hand. I thought that was super cool, and gave another layer to her character about how much The Magpies mean to her…

Minna: Mm-hmm~!

Madge: …just in case that episode didn’t hit you hard enough with found family feels.

[laughter]

Rhi: And I am Rhi. I am the GM, so I play everybody else. I think one of my favorite moments—and this is one of, I have a lot of favorite moments—but I think one of my favorite moments is going way back to the very beginning of the show when I introduced Kay.

Kim: Hell yes.

Madge: Oh yeah!

Rhi: I did not have a name for her. I was just like, I needed a throwaway exposition dump character, and I described this…

Madge: And you gave us Gwendoline Christie?

Rhi: …tall, buff, tattooed Gondolier woman, and everybody in the game was like, oh my God we love her, and so I was like shit, now I’ve got to give her a name and have her come back.

Madge: Yup. [laughs]

Josie: Yeah, you just very casually, for this throwaway character, ruthlessly attacked all of us.

Rhi: [laughs]

Kim: You created someone that catered to all of our interests.

Madge: Yeah.

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: Yeah. I love those moments where I will come up with something very random and on the fly, and you guys just grab it and run, because that leads to some pretty cool stuff, because Kay has been a super cool character.

Madge: Yeah.

## [0:06:09]

Rhi: My next question that I have for everybody is: What is one of your most unexpected or surprising moments?

Josie: [laughs]

Rhi: We’ll go in reverse order this time.

Madge: Oh no~ [laughs]

Rhi: [smiling] So, Madge?

Madge: [smiling] Oh man… Uh… So, something that I wasn’t expecting but that I seriously love is honestly how Blaire and Phin just relate to each other…

Kim: Yeah.

Madge: …and how we got this weird mix of BuzzFeed Unsolved with these two. [laughs]

Kim: Buzzfeed Unsolved is big inspiration for us.

Madge: Yeah. Specifically just how, it’s not even like a Bergara-Shane split, because…

Kim: Right! I feel like we have a mix of both in both of us. I’m obviously reverent to the spirits, but also I’m not scared of them.

Madge: Yeah, you’re pissing them off on purpose.

Kim: It’s a mix of both of them.

Madge: And like, Phin believes, and fiercely so, but has the “we don’t touch them” mentality about it.

Kim: [laughs] yeah. We have this very fun comradery. I love antagonizing Phin.

[laughter]

Madge: We need to do it more in Season 2.

Rhi: Yeah. I will say that is absolutely one of my favorite things when I’m editing, where Blaire will just say something completely bonkers off the wall in relation to spirits, and then Madge is always the first one to be like “Nooo! What are you doooing?!”

[laughter]

Kim: “Hey, check out this cool glowing bug.” “Nooo.” [laughs]

Madge: Ahhh!

Rhi: “Nooo!” [laughs]

Madge: “Don’t do that!” [laughs]

Rhi: “I’m gonna put it in my mouth!”

[laughter]

Rhi: Yeah, Minna, what have you got?

Minna: [smiling] God! I don’t have good answers because I don’t remember. Guys, I have no memory! [laughter] I listen to the show, which means I remember surprises that happened months and months and months ago. I’m gonna go really terrible with this, [laughs] and say that in the finale Kim made a Jurassic Park reference and I understood it, and that was a huge surprise.

Kim: I remember that! Yeah!

Minna: And I still giggle about that.

Kim: Did we keep that in the episode, or do we have to explain that, Rhi?

Rhi: It’s in the bloopers.

Minna: It’s in the bloopers? Oh. I need to choose a good one anyway! I feel like I get really excited when random backstory stuff suddenly comes in, so I’m gonna say when Clave showed up at the auction.

Madge: Yeah! That was intense.

Rhi: Oh yeah. Yeah. That was really good.

Minna: Look, sometimes Rhi just occasionally caters to me, and I get really excited.

Rhi: I do my best to do that for everybody.

Minna: Yes.

Rhi: Josie?

Josie: I think my favorite surprise also comes from the finale when Blaire just up and summoned a fucking demon.

Rhi: [laughs] yeah!

Josie: That’s just a thing that happened! As a subset of that, just discovering what Setarra looked like, and you describing the shark toothed grin…

Kim: She is very hot. I should draw her sometime.

Josie: Yeah! I was just like, how dare you? How…? [stammers]

Kim: Oh yeah. No. She attacks me just as much.

Josie: You two are mean.

Rhi: I was just editing that scene earlier today, and I realized that I’m playing Setarra as the chaotic evil version of a character, basically of the sea witch, The Ludiaeg from the October Day books.

Kim: [gasps] Ohhh!

Rhi: I don't know if anybody else in our listening audience reads those books, but if there’s one person out there who does, I hope you appreciate that.

Minna: Did you attack every single one of us in that episode?

Madge: Yeah, at some point.

Josie: Yeah.

Minna: Yeah.

Rhi: That’s my goal.

Kim: That’s her job.

Rhi: [laughs] Kim, what have you got for surprises?

Kim: A lot of the good ones have already been said, so that’s why I’m struggling. One of my favorite surprises was revealing Blaire’s family history, that she has a twin sister that she’s very close to, and she actually comes from a fairly decent family in general. I feel like that’s where an RPG character is…

Rhi & Madge: Yeah.

Kim: Mine at least.

Minna: Especially in Blades.

Rhi & Madge: Yeah.

Kim: Blaire was fairly normal from a family perspective.

Rhi: I think my favorite surprise was Phin murdering Avrathi.

Madge: [cackles]

Minna: Yes!

Josie: Yeah!

Madge: I was gonna bring that up if no one else did!

Rhi: That was real good. I was not… It was a great moment, and it took me totally by surprise.

Minna: That was so badass.

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: Yeah. It was like, “I’m just gonna shoot her… to kill.” … Okay!

Madge: [giggles] yeah…

Rhi: Oh, yeah, that was extremely good.

Madge: We’re gonna be dealing with the repercussions of that for a really long time, but I’m really glad.

Rhi: Mm-hmm.

Kim: Oh yeah. It raises the stakes though.

Madge: Yeah!

## [0:11:16]

Rhi: Okay! Those are the questions that I had for folks. Now we’re gonna move into our audience questions. [cheering] We had a lot of people actually send in questions to us on Twitter. We’ll start with this question from… I just realized in doing this I have doomed myself to try to pronounce everybody’s Twitter handles, which is gonna be pretty fun.

From @JobotBobica: Is the game really on the rules-lighter side, or do you just cut those parts off in the edit? How long do you edit an episode on average?

Relative to a game like D&D, it is rules-lighter.

Madge: Yeah. It’s way less crunch than D&D, especially when it comes to combat.

Rhi: Yes. That said, I also do cut a LOT of the rules stuff, just because in my opinion, I don’t think it makes for good radio. A lot of the mechanics stuff I do end up cutting. For the second question, I end up cutting about 50% of the audio that we record, so if we have three hours of audio it ends up with an hour and a half of usable podcast episode ready audio, which works out pretty well for me because it tends to mean that I can get two episodes out of one recording session, which is nice.

Madge: Yeah. It just makes me think “Magpies Podcast, only 50% garbage!”

[laughter]

Kim: There is so much trash you guys don’t get to hear.

Madge: Oh my gosh. Yeah, like masses.

Rhi: The main thing that I cut is me saying “um,” and “uh,” and “okay, so…”

Kim: Another quarter of that is me meme-ing off.

Rhi: One thing that I cut a lot of is someone will go “What’s a Devil’s Bargain look like?” Thirty seconds of silence while I stare into the distance trying to think of a good Devil’s Bargain. [laughter] Yeah, it is a fairly rules-light game, but we are an even rules-lighter podcast.

## [0:13:36

Madge: Yeah. There’s another half of this question that I think is really cool for us, the question about a gaming go bag. I know that we record at home, but I still have a specific set of stuff that I bring with me every single time we go to record and I’m sort of wondering if anyone else does the same thing.

Kim: Yeah, let’s do that question, because I do.

Rhi: Yeah, sure. This was another question that @JobotBobica sent in.

For each of the players, what’s in your gaming go bag?

As Madge said, we record remotely. We are five people in five states and four time zones, so you should all be really impressed with the fact that we are able to get together to record, at all.

Madge: You thought it was hard to get your group together to play.

Rhi: Yeah. The scheduling is… I mean, we’ve got it pretty good now.

Kim: Yeah. We’ve done pretty okay, all things considered.

Madge: Yeah.

Rhi: If we’re not available to meet at the one time every two weeks when we’ve got it scheduled, it’s like “welp, that’s it.”

Madge: Sorry!

Josie: Yup!

Rhi: Madge, why don’t you go first on answering that question?

Madge: Yeah. In my gaming go bag I have a bullet journal that I’ve used and basically converted into a notes document and a character sheet for Phin. I have notes about her family in there. I have notes about significant events that have happened throughout gameplay that I can remember. I also keep a whole dice bag with me, even though we only play with d6s, because Rhi actually made me a dice bag and it’s really pretty, and I like having it on the desk with me. Then, I will usually have something to just fidget with, because I have ADHD and focusing is really hard.

Rhi: Anybody else have standard stuff that they have set out when we’re recording?

Kim: yes. Yes. In my gaming go bag, I have my character sheet up, obviously, in a PDF document. I always make sure I have water with me when we’re recording.

[mm-hmm-ing]

Madge: Oh yeah, that too. That’s big.

Kim: Water’s just super important, because we’re talking for like three to four hours on average when we record, and voice quality is something that’s very important to me, especially when I’m doing character voices, that’s why I’m always making sure that I stay hydrated. In addition to dice, I just keep d6s on my desk, it’s just a bunch of random d6s that I’ve gathered from my mess of a dice bag. I’m looking into getting character specific dice for Blaire soon.

Madge: Aw! That would be so good~!

Kim: Yes, I’m looking into doing that soon, but I’ve yet to make that purchase. The other thing in my gaming go bag, on sessions where I feel like I’m not going to be as focused, I have a little journal with these toned pages. It’s more like a sketch book. What I do is, I have a dip pen and a container of ink on my desk, and I like to take notes in character.

Minna: [grunts in approval]

Madge: Ah!

Josie: That’s amazing.

Minna: That’s so cool.

Kim: I like to take down notes as Blaire would imagine things, and I do little doodles in the margins…

Madge: Oh, that’s so awesome.

Kim: …I just do little sigils and stuff, and it’s super fun. It’s something that keeps me engaged, not only in character but also keeps me paying attention to what’s happening in the game as well.

Minna: I did not know you did that. That’s really fucking cool.

Rhi: I remember you telling me that you were gonna start doing that, because we had to test to see if it would be okay on the audio, but I don't think I’ve actually seen any of the stuff.

Kim: Right.

Rhi: So yes, definitely share that.

Kim: Yeah, my pen is a little loud. I have to give credit to Holly Conrad, @HollyConrad is her Twitter, but in her D&D campaign she takes in character notes sometimes and I remember seeing pictures of that on Twitter a long, long time ago.

Josie: Aww.

Madge: For Strix. Yeah.

Kim: I was just like, oh my God, that’s a great idea, so I just adapted that for Blaire.

Minna: I also have specific things.

Rhi: Yeah, go for it.

Minna: I do have character specific dice for Myra. I bring my whole dice bag, but I dig out these swirly green and white dice with gold pips, they’re the little Chessex 12m. Those are Myra’s dice. I just got a bunch of d6s for her. I also always have my physical Blades book on hand. I also usually have the PDF Blades book open in case I need to quickly find a section. I have a Notepad document for notes, and a second one for if I need to reference Myra backstory stuff… and I keep my character sheet in Google Sheets. If anybody follows me on Twitter I’ve definitely posted blank character sheets. That’s the one I use.

Rhi: And they’re so beautifully crafted.

Minna: I should find those, dig up the links on Twitter somewhere.

Madge: [laughs] Put them in the show notes. Does anyone have a dice jail?

Kim: I don’t personally have a dice jail, but during sessions if one die is particularly rolling bad I will set it aside on my desk, and I’m just like you’re banned for the rest of the night.

Rhi: [laughs]

Madge: Yeah. I have a tin that I use for dice jail. [laughing] And there are a lot of d6s in there, because people know that in the back half of sessions my dice will betray me.

Rhi: They’re doing it for the drama!

Madge: Neh!

## [0:18:40]

Rhi: This is one question that I definitely wanted to do, because Josie and I have talked about this a little bit. @Open\_Sketchbook sent in a question:

What is transitioning like medically/magically n your take on Blades? I always want to know this about every fantasy world.

Minna: I was curious about that.

Rhi: Yeah. It’s a really good question. I’ll give my very broad answer, and then Josie if you’ve got more details that maybe you’ve thought of for Minx and some of the other characters…

Josie: I do. I came prepared for this one.

Rhi: My thinking was that this is a setting with alchemy, so I have just been sort of thinking of it as there’s alchemical things, potions and the like, that are used. Again, this is a setting where you can turn ghosts into drugs and like drink ghosts’ dreams, so I feel like people can probably figure out a way.

Madge: Don’t do ghost drugs.

[laughter]

Rhi: Yeah. In this setting, if you’re able to do that I feel like you can probably also figure out a way to, you know, handle the physical transitioning if people want to do that through alchemy as well. Those are my kind of broader thoughts on it. Josie, I will pass this off to you.

Josie: Yeah. I put a lot of thought into this in every RPG I play, because just by default all of my characters are trans unless stated otherwise for whatever reason. The answer I keep coming back to is yeah, just alchemical bullshit, we have magic, but I’ve also looked into historically how it’s done, and there’s various herbs and diet changes that can result in minor changes. In an MtF direction, it’s pretty easy to get any given hormone into your system, it’s reducing ones you don’t want that is tricky. There are small concoctions and dietary changes that could have been made, and I imagine some of those happen in fantasy settings, and probably a little bit of Blades in the Dark, because medical practice is a lot more hearsay and less codified, an di imagine more things are willing to be tried.

Rhi: Yeah.

Josie: And like, the hormone pills we have now come from somewhere, so it shouldn’t be too hard to get the components and produce something similar alchemically. There’s also just surgery-wise, that’s historically been done, not in a totally reconstructive way. At least in an MtF direction there are certain removal processes you can do. I’m thinking Minx is not there with that, and is just kind of on alchemical potion hormones.

Rhi: Yeah. My goal with the way that I’m running Blades has been to have it be also sort of a more generally gender fluid society.

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: So, I feel like people being trans or non-binary or gender fluid… it’s only a big deal in that it’s “oh, okay, this is how I need to address you now, and I will respect that as part of your identity.”

Madge: It’s more accepted than it is in our current society, basically.

Rhi: Yeah. For that reason, I think that a lot of the medical stuff, transition things, alchemical potions, that is pretty well researched and readily available, because there are people who want to take advantage of it, so it is made available.

Madge: Yeah!

Rhi: I will also mention, it hasn’t come up specifically in game, but both Kay and Amancio are trans as well as Minx.

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Kim: I remember also we had a non-binary adversary at some combat.

Rhi: Oh, yeah! Arun, the alchemist that you all framed.

[laughter]

Madge: I also know that Phin, in her backstory, she learned a lot about how to fight back against oppressive people from Chael who is also non-binary.

Rhi: Yes. Yes.

Josie: Aw.

Rhi: Chael hasn’t really had a lot of screen time yet. We gotta…

Madge: We gotta fix that.

Rhi: Yeah. Season 2 goal. Yeah, thank you for asking that. That’s something that I’ve had in the back of my head but haven’t really had the chance to discuss too much.

Josie: Same here. Yeah, this setting is trans as shit.

Kim: That’s the beauty of Blades in general. It can be almost literally whatever you want. It is so light on the details in the rulebook that you can fill in the gaps however you’d like for almost anything.

Several: Mm-hmm.

Minna: One thing I like is that Rhi made the house rule that there’s no transphobia, misogyny, homophobia, all of those, asephobia. None of that, none of that shit, because that’s not fun.

Kim: Because those are all things that are important to all of us and us as a group, and something that we definitely want to convey in the show, so that’s just a house rule we decided on because that’s where our morals lie, if you can’t already tell by this point in the show.

Rhi: Yeah, if you hadn’t noticed. [laughs] I made that decision really deliberately even before I started recruiting players. That was just something I didn’t want. There’s a tendency, particularly in darker settings like Blades, to lean on those sort of –isms and –phobias and what not as a way of showing like…

Madge: [emphatically] It’s dark, it’s gritty, nothing is safe! And I’m SO sick of that. It’s tired.

Rhi: Yeah. It’s just like, you don’t have to do that. That’s not necessary. You can show the darkness and struggle of the setting without it being built upon the prejudices that we have in the real world.

Kim: Exactly.

Madge: Cough, cough, altered carbon, cough, cough.

Rhi & Josie: [laughs]

Rhi: The other thing is that, sort of pulling from the setting, the main religious, quote unquote “religious organization” in the setting is literally called the Church of the Ecstasy of the Flesh, which is premised on the idea that the body and the physical is sacred and that the pursuit of physical pleasure in whatever form, sex, good food, drugs, drink, comfortable clothes, whatever, is like…

Madge: Holy.

Rhi: …paramount. Yeah. That is a sacred thing to pursue. So yeah, nobody’s gonna be judging you for the body that you have, or the body that you want to have, or the people that you are touching bodies with. [laughter] Or not. You know? As long as you are doing things that are good for your physical body and other people’s bodies, sure. Go for it. It’s all good.

Kim: This is a tangent, but that springs from the fact that in this world of Blades that the afterlife and the supernatural is all viewed as very evil and chaotic and stuff, and that’s why I think it’s so interesting that the people of Duskwall really celebrate the physical world, because not only is it temporary but it’s so precious to them, because afterwards everybody knows that they’re probably gonna go to a horrible place when they die.

Rhi: Yeah. They’re gonna become a ghost and try to eat people’s faces.

Madge: Until they get disintegrated by The Spirit Wardens.

Rhi: Yeah.

Madge: Also on the topic of sexual and gender diversity, I think it’s also been great that on the show we’ve seen a huge variety in the types of people that The Magpies run into. We’ve had people who speak sign language, we’ve had people who obviously don’t fit into the standard straight, white male prototype that seems to really permeate, in steampunk especially. I like how we’re getting far further from that, and I like how we’re changing the typical stories that are told, or at least the leads in those stories. I think it’s super important. In the actual play podcast community in general it’s very white dudes saving the world a lot of the time. One of the things that drew me to the project especially once we got started was it felt like… You know the Sherlock Holmes movies?

Kim: The Robert Downey Jr. ones?

Madge: Yeah, those ones. It feels a lot like that tonally sometimes, but it’s not Robert Downey Jr. in the lead role. [laughs] It’s queer women!

Several: Yeah!

Madge: Which is amazing.

Kim: I think that’s a perfect metaphor for the setting. It very much looks like the RDJ Sherlock Holmes.

Minna: I’ve literally used that as my music for this.

Madge: So it’s like that, and then Six of Crows, and Crooked Kingdom all together, but with the diversity of those books, and then turned up a notch as well.

Rhi: Yeah. I will say, I talked about this when I was on I Am Here when I did an interview on that podcast, but in terms of the NPCs – I have it open right now. I literally have a spreadsheet of the main named NPCs that you all have run into, and I have occupation, residence, if I do anything particular with their voice, stuff like that, but I also have what is their gender, are they a person of color, what is their sexuality, do they have a disability? It’s a good way for me to kind of track patterns. I can say okay, I haven’t done as good a job as I would like on having trans and non-binary characters, and disabled characters as well, so that’s something I want to step up in Season 2 is to make sure that I am including more representation of those people. I think we’re all very consciously trying to make sure that – like Madge said – that this is not straight, white, cis dude territory.

Josie: I gotta say, I have enjoyed just finally being in an RPG where more than half the cast including the PCs is female or non-male.

Madge: Yeah, it’s been super refreshing.

Josie: I’m in so many other gaming spaces where that’s not the case.

Madge: Yeah. I’ve been in a lot of places where I’ve been in games with three other guys, and I’m the only girl, and those games…

Minna: Yeah. I don’t like being the only girl.

Madge: It’s really uncomfortable.

Rhi: Yeah, it’s not fun.

Madge: Being the only non-male identifying person in a group gets really stressful. One of the games I was in, my character started out as the genius character who was supposed to help out with stuff, and by the end she got turned into a side character for an NPC, a male NPC, as his love interest who’s only thing had to do with losing him, and it was not great by the end of it, and I’m glad that this is not that.

[groans and grumbles]

Minna: Ick.

Rhi: Yeah. I think we’ve all had pretty unpleasant experiences with that.

Minna: I’m like really new to doing RP in spaces like this that are heavily male. I’m using to heavily non-male, because I came from internet roleplay. I actually played a lot of dudes after a while, and I don’t play dudes almost at all anymore because I just want to make sure that I’m pushing more women characters into it.

Madge: Which I think is a really big difference just between written roleplay and actual tabletop, because that’s where I got my start too, on Fake Geek Girls a while ago. I don't know if they’re still doing it, but when it was going I was on the show and I talked about how that’s how I got my start too, was a lot of text RP and going with that. It’s way different.

Minna: Maybe that’s why we all so readily fic.

Madge: Yeah. It’s a huge difference, because that is a very female dominated space, a non-male dominated space. You get into tabletop and it’s like, why are all these guys here? [laughs] Like, no offense to guys, obviously, but like…

Kim: Yeah, there are some good eggs out there, and props to you if you are.

Madge: Yeah. The good eggs in my life know who they are because I tell them they’re good eggs constantly, but when you’re in a space for long enough you start seeing the patterns of the guys that you want to avoid, because they’re gonna turn into Those Guys, capital T, capital G.

Kim: Right.

Minna: [laughing] We got on a giant sidebar.

Madge: We did!

Rhi: That’s okay! It’s okay.

Kim: It did get away from us, but I’m liking this conversation.

Minna: It’s very important.

Rhi: Yeah, it’s a good, good conversation.

Josie: Digression is always great.

Madge: Remember when we said we weren’t gonna talk for more than an hour answering questions? [laughs]

Rhi: Yeah, I was gonna say—Just so we don’t end up with this being two hours…

## [0:32:37]

Another question that was sent in from our good friend Waffles, who we all love…

Kim: Hi Waffles! They make us fan art, and it’s great.

Madge: Yeah!

Kim: Show them some love.

Rhi: Yes. So, @Mahaffay asks: Who are all of the PC’s rivals, and how did they get to be frenemies?

Who wants to start with that?

Josie: I think the one that may have been most prominent so far is me and Bazso. This was gone over in one of the episodes, but Minx, Bazso, and Nyryx all grew up together, and were kind of like urchins together, and in their late teens-ish, or not too long before this, they were going their own separate ways a little bit, and then Bazso and Minx were on a job together, and Minx essentially had the choice of helping Bazso not get sent to prison and getting away with loot, which I think we established was the four-poster bed she still has, [laughter] and just having money to get started for herself, because that’s kind of her driving force. She went with the bed [laughs], and Bazso spent time in Iron Hook, so that wasn’t very cool of her.

Madge: Nooo. [chuckles]

Josie: This is probably 100% her fault, although Bazso is not the man I thought he was.

Rhi: Yeah. Bazso is definitely holding a grudge there. Minna, you wanna go next?

Minna: Yes. The rival on my sheet is Salia, which I think we touched on her a little bit in Season 1. Basically Myra was her apprentice – this is nothing that’s not in her bio on the website – Myra was her apprentice, learned a lot from her, but it wasn’t a great environment to be in. I think she eventually just wanted autonomy basically, so she struck out on her own, and Salia was not too happy about that. So yeah, she’s her rival. She can still draw on her, she just won’t enjoy drawing on that resource.

Rhi: Yeah, because it’s gonna come with a lot of hooks and caveats.

Minna: A lot of strings attached.

Rhi: Madge?

Madge: Yeah. On her playbook, one of the people that she doesn’t quite get along with is Mercy who is a stone cold killer, but I think canonically in terms of what’s going on currently in the campaign, her nemesis is more Lord Alistair Mora. Just a recap of what happened in the finale, when Phin first got into the life, basically, of going on the streets and beating people up she started doing that because Alistair Mora was paying for criminal gangs to terrorize The Docks and basically extort people for money, which goes against a lot of who Phin is as a person. She is very much a person who wants everyone to be taken care of and believes that no one should have to live in fear of a higher power coming and kicking in their door and demanding that they get paid money that they worked hard to earn, especially if said money gets spent later on for the projects that Alistair Mora is currently working on. The reason why they don’t get along so well is because Phin and Chael teamed up and pushed the gangs out of The Docks, which is also in her bio I think. So, that’s her nemesis, and he’s got the upper hand on her right now.

Rhi: Yeah. Yup. Blaire? Blaire’s nemesis?

Kim: On Blaire’s character sheet her rival is Flint the spirit trafficker, and I wouldn’t even go so far as to say they’re frenemies. I think they exclusively detest each other. I don’t think he’s come up as much in game.

Rhi: Yeah, he was in a couple episodes a while back.

Minna: We stole some shit from him, right?

Rhi: Yeah, yeah, and I think framed him for something.

Kim: That sounds right.

Madge: Yeah, we definitely framed him for something.

Kim: But yeah, they haven’t really interacted much because Blaire just hates him, and all spirit traffickers, so much, because she thinks that someone’s consciousness being ground up into drugs and being exploited and sold for someone else’s pleasure is just absolutely abhorrent.

## [0:37:14]

Rhi: I like this question because it makes all of you tell me which of my children you love best.

From @magicalgirlkyra: Who are your favorite NPCs to interact with?

Josie: Oof.

Minna: Ahh. Can we just collectively say, just right off the top, Rigney?

Madge: Yeah, Rigney, I was gonna say Rigney.

Kim: I was gonna say, Rigney’s my favorite.

Minna: Team dad.

Josie: Yeah. Yeah. I was about to say this is hard, but like, yeah it’s Rigney.

Rhi: [laughs]

Minna: I feel like we get Rigney out of the way and then we each have another favorite.

Rhi: Good. Everyone loves my good dad friend.

Minna: He’s so good.

Josie: He’s a good boy.

Rhi: Yeah, Rigney’s a good egg. But yeah, who else do you like? This also helps me so that I know who to bring back more. [laughs]

Kim: I don’t remember her name, but Blaire’s friend from college who dressed like the gothic Lolita girl. I loved her.

Minna: Aw! She’s the one who doesn’t want to be friends with us!

Rhi: Yeah. That’s Adelaide, who is nobility, who’s not gonna be around anymore unfortunately. Which is such a shame, because yeah, she was great. I really liked her. Unfortunately you two have gone in separate directions in that she is rich and you want to kill the rich, so it’s a little awkward.

Kim: I mean, I also like Ghost Sword. I’ll put that out there.

Madge: Oh, Sawtooth. I just personally think there could have been something with Phin and Sawtooth at some point that just never got touched on with them just bickering with each other so much. Also, I just love how put upon Sawtooth is all the time.

Minna: Also, isn’t he scruffy Tom Hardy?

Rhi: Yes.

Madge: [laughing] Yes! That doesn’t factor into this at all!

Kim: That’s right! We did face cast him as Tom Hardy. I forgot about that.

Rhi: Hey, I mean, he’s not gone. He can come back.

Madge: He can come back. Also, I really loved the police officers that I argued with while I was spying on The Red Sashes.

[laughter]

Rhi: Yeah, that as very good.

Josie: You’re horrible.

Madge: You’re horrible. [laughs]

Rhi: Josie?

Josie: I really enjoy Lani and Roxanne.

Madge: Oh, they’re good too.

Minna: Mm-hmm!

Rhi: Yeah, my girls.

Josie: I think they’re great. They’re good girls, and I want them to be okay.

Rhi: Yeah. They’re good. They’re gonna figure stuff out.

Madge: And Kay!

Rhi: Yes.

Josie: Yeah. Uh-huh. I mean, I’m too gay to not have her on the list.

Minna: Teehee. Oh, it’s hard to choose… I’m between—I mean, I have to say Jeren, because he’s like Myra’s other best friend, and also I really enjoy them. I think I kind of dropped him in your lap, didn’t I? Oh, no, he’s on my sheet, but then I made up a whole backstory with him and Myra. Also, Bazso Baz is really fun, and a direct attack on me at all points.

Rhi: [giggles] Not intentional, but here we are.

Minna: I know! He’s just… For some reason people play him as exactly the kind of character who’s a direct attack on me, and this has happened with multiple different GMs independently. As a note, super aro/ase, still really like Bazso Baz. Very good.

Rhi: In the season finale, I was just editing the part where—

Minna: Was it the part where he came in with a cut on his forehead, and I died?!

Rhi: Yeah. The cut on his forehead, and Minna makes this pained—

Minna: [laughing] Did I audibly die?

Rhi: Yeah. There was an audible, pained gurgling noise. It was pretty great.

Minna: No~! [laugh/whines] Look! He’s just very good~!

Kim: Any male NPC over the age of 40 is always definitely an attack on me, also.

Rhi: Yeah. I have to be careful about that.

Kim: Just due to who I am as a person.

## [41:02]

Rhi: So, also from @magicalgirlkyra: How have your characters changed since the start of the game?

Kim: I feel as though Blaire hasn’t really changed too much yet in Season 1. Season 2 should change that. We’re gonna get a little bit deeper into the character arc I have planned for her. Blaire has changed in the fact that throughout all of Season 1 I’ve mentally been developing her. Her personality has kind of been fluid in that I’ve kind of been figuring out who she is as I play her, and it’s very… She’s a very improvisational character. Visually as well, it took me all of Season 1, so almost a year, for me to figure out what she looked like visually for me to draw her for the character portraits on our website. There are lots of sketches on my computer and in my sketchbook of me just figuring out what the heck she looks like, which is very rare for me, because as an artist and a visual person the way characters look is usually one of the first things I figure out, because that usually helps me to inform what kind of person this is. That wasn’t the case for Blaire, and that was something that was unique for me. I wouldn’t say Blaire has changed so much as much as she’s kind of developed baseline who she is throughout Season 1. Now that I feel like she has a bit of a foundation, now we can go more into how she’s going to grow, and that’s exciting for me.

Josie: I feel like Minx is one of the very few characters I’ve played who didn’t change radically from conception to execution, which I guess is kind of the point because a very put-together façade is part of her. She’s still a very “me” character, and if you’ve played with me you know what that fucking means, but… [others laugh]. I think the biggest change was starting when she killed Winfield, because that was kind of a spur of the moment thing. I wasn’t expecting her to be so angry. I was originally intending her to be even more problematic with wanting to be rich and shit like that, but that put a more sympathetic edge to it I guess, and that just kind of happened spur of the moment.

Madge: Phin changed a little bit from how I first envisioned her. I play a lot of tanks, just in general in roleplaying games. She started out as a brute force tank who didn’t really have much driving her in this life besides the fact that she pushed out a gang once and doesn’t want it to happen to anyone ever again. A lot of me being quiet was also me figuring out who Phin was, because similarly I had an idea but I didn’t really know how to translate that, and that eventually transitioned into Phin’s actual character traits of her not speaking up unless she knows that she can trust a person, or knows that she can get along with them.

Minna: Augh.

Madge: Arc-wise, I think she’s gone from someone who cares about a neighborhood to someone who cares about an entire city.

Kim: Aw.

Madge: Specifically she cares about The Magpies, and the whole family that she’s built there. Obviously she has her own family, and it’s a big one, but The Magpies are close to her in her family and it’s a completely different relationship even though they don’t talk as much, which will also be changing in Season 2 because she’s gonna have to talk about the fact that she was in prison!

Minna: Mm-hmm!

Rhi: Yeah.

Kim: Please. We love you. Talk to us.

Minna: Please, please talk about it, instead of balling it up like the trauma.

Madge: [flatly] Yeah.

[laughter]

Minna: Myra definitely started out as a loner before The magpies, and we’ve kind of seen her warm up and start to really care about these people. I think a lot changed when we decided that Myra and Phin had started The Magpies together and that they’d known each other longest, because that friendship has really developed and I’m really happy that happened, because I didn’t know whether to expect that, and that’s been a really nice thing that’s come about throughout the course of the show.

Madge: Yeah. [giggles]

Minna: And then she’s starting to get closer to the others, and it’s very good.

Rhi: Yeah. I think that has been one of my favorite things through Season 1, watching the crew go from a group of people who get along and are working together to becoming this really tight-knit group that really cares about each other a lot. It’s been very good. Found family, man.

Minna: I get called out by Ammo about the found family trope. [laughter] Like, I should have known because you love it, but…

Rhi: It’s good! It’s good!

Kim: I think we’re all suckers for it in this group. It’s something that we all love in stories.

Minna: It’s very good, and it really fits with the story that we’re telling, I think.

## [0:45:59]

Rhi: Going from how The magpies came together to how the podcast came together, @BadWitchMills asks:

Josie: Hi Sarah!

Rhi: How did you all go about forming the RP group?

I guess I can talk about that a little. I had the idea for several months that I wanted to do a Blades in the Dark podcast, because I had the opportunity to run Blades a couple times online, a little bit for my in-person group of friends here in Chicago, and I had this big Google doc with plans of here’s what I need to do to get the show going, and these are all of the accounts I need to sign up for, and all of these very detailed plans… but Step 1 was you need to find people to actually play the game.

[giggling]

Minna: No, really?

Rhi: So, what I did was I put together a Google form that had a whole bunch of questions ranging from “When are you available?” to “What is your RPG style?” I think we’ve all been in gaming groups where you’ve had a few people who want to do really story driven stuff, you’ve had people who want to do the very mechanics focused stuff, you have people who just want to cause mayhem, and if you don’t get everybody on the same page it’s a problem. I wanted to make sure that everybody would kind of be in line with the kind of narrative that I wanted to do. God, what else? I think I asked about recording experience. I asked a lot of stuff. It was a long form. [laughs]

Madge: Yeah, you did. I remember that form.

Minna: Recording experience, RPG experience…

Madge: Systems that you’d played before…

Rhi: Yeah, it was a lot. I asked a lot of questions.

Minna: You mentioned prioritizing marginalized identities, I think.

Rhi: Yes, yeah, one of the questions – it was an optional one – Hey, if you fall into any of these more marginalized groups, and you feel comfortable with it, let me know, because I want to highlight that.

Josie: And we ended up with four queer girls, so that’s great.

Rhi: Yup. [laughs] So yeah, that’s how I ended up with this group. I made that form, I sent it out in a ton of places, I got a lot of responses. I got like over 30 responses, that I was then sitting there like oh God, I have to sort through this. What have I done?

Madge: I remember you contacting me really shortly after I had submitted my form and asking me about it.

Rhi: Yeah, I think yours came in a couple days before I closed it, and then I reviewed everything, and I made my choices, and I’m really happy with it.

Minna: I remember being so nervous.

Rhi: Aw!

Kim: Rhi and I personally have been friends for a very long time, an di feel as though I may have been among the first people you approached about interest in the game. I vaguely remember you talking to me about you planning a podcast before you even put that form out, and I was way into it.

Rhi: Yeah. I had been in another RP group at the time that was kind of like, the game at that point was sort of falling apart, but I shared it with that group first because well I know these people and I’ve played with them before, and Kim was the only person from that group who applied. But yeah, I also kind of went for people who I had gamed with before, because that also sort of helped where I knew what your gaming style was like.

Madge: Yeah, you knew how we would react.

Rhi: But yeah, that’s how the group came together. I basically recruited people, and I’m really happy with it. I’m very glad that this is the group we have and the characters that we have.

Minna: Mm-hmm.

Kim: I’m happy with this group too. I love you guys.

Minna: Also the friendships that have developed since then.

Madge: Yeah, it’s been really great.

Kim: Yeah. I definitely feel as though I’ve gotten closer to a lot of you since we’ve started.

Josie: Yeah.

Minna: Yeah, I don’t think I was like “friends” friends with maybe any of you before this started. I got closer to like all of you after.

Madge: Minna, remember how we didn’t even think that we could talk to each other about fan fiction before, until like half way through Season 1? [laughs]

Minna: Oh my God! Now we can just plot in the background and pull shit off. [laughs]

Madge: Yeah. Personally, when this whole thing was starting out I was really self-conscious about it, because I had been involved in another actual play podcast. It fell apart due to some difficulties between the GM and the players, and I was really nervous about getting involved with an actual play again, because I didn’t know what to expect, I didn’t know what it would be like going in from the start knowing that everything was going to be recorded, which is why I waited so long to actually submit anything. After Session 0 with everybody I sort of had the feeling that this was gonna be a good group, and I’m really glad that everything’s worked out how it has.

Minna: Mm-hmm!

Kim: Yeah. I’m really glad you took that leap of faith. You’re a great addition to the group.

Minna: Me too~

Josie: Yeah!

## 0:51:12]

Rhi: Another question we have from @Krysmphoenix asks: Are Minx and Kay (buff Gondolier lady) still seeing each other?

Josie: Yeah. It was my understanding that it was mostly just for fun. Neither of them have plans of making a relationship out of it, but booty calls are on the table.

Rhi: Yeah, and I think because with Minx and Nyryx—Josie, I don't know if we’ve ever formally talked about this, but my understanding has been that it’s an on-again off-again relationship, and even when they are on it’s still an open relationship.

Josie: Uh, yeah, that makes sense.

Rhi: At least in terms of sexual partners, simply by virtue of Nyryx’s job.

Josie: Well yeah.

Rhi: And yes, Kay was always kind of going into that with Minx with the understanding of this is fun, it’s casual, it’s not ever gonna turn into a relationship. So in the background they may still be seeing each other in the future as a casual thing, but particularly right now…

Madge: Yeah, it’s not a good time for lovers.

Josie: yeah.

Rhi: And also Minx and Nyryx are on again, so Minx’s attention is probably more in that direction at this point.

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Rhi: But yeah, that’s kind of the nature of their relationship with Minx and Kay. Yeah, Kay’s good, I like her.

Madge: Kay is a good egg. I love her so much.

## [0:52:52]

Rhi: All right. For our last audience question we are gonna go with…

@Hazel\_da\_Basil asks: Where did the name The Magpies come from?

We kind of have two answers, we’ve got the out of character and the in character answers. Out of character—

Madge: You asked us what our name was gonna be and that was gonna be the name of the podcast.

Rhi: [laughing] Yes! Yeah. I had been sitting here like, coming up with names for things—

Madge: It’s hard.

Rhi: --as you’ve probably gathered by this point, I have a really hard time with, so I explicitly told the group okay, we’ve built your characters, we’ve built the crew sheet, you guys need to come up with a name for the crew… by the way, the name of your crew is also probably gonna be the name of the podcast, and everyone was like uhh, okay thanks!

[laughter]

Madge: And we eventually got to The magpies, and it stuck, because we also thought about leaving the pins too.

Minna: Magpies steal shiny things.

Kim: Yeah. We were originally planning to start as a group of thieves.

Madge: And then we never stole anything ever.

Josie: Turns out we were very bad at that.

Rhi: [laughs] What I recall was there’s a special ability on the Shadow’s sheet that is like Pack Rats? You just have a ton of stuff in the lair, and you guys thought about taking that one, you decided not to take it initially and took a different special ability, but you were very enamored with the idea…

Madge: Yeah, of having it be Ghibli cozy.

Rhi: …of having it be oh we just steal a bunch of stuff and fill our hideout with it.

Minna: I mean, that is how we furnished it initially. That’s how we got our enemy at the beginning. [laughs]

Rhi: Yeah, and then you guys have turned out to be the worst thieves in the world.

Kim: The worst criminals in the world, really.

Madge: Yeah…

Kim: We’re very bad at being bad.

Josie: We’re too good of people for this.

Minna: We’re the worst criminals you’ve ever heard of, but you HAVE heard of us.

Madge: [simultaneously] You HAVE heard of us.

Minna: We really made sure of that.

[laughter]

Rhi: Yeah, flinging your pins around everywhere. Madge, you were gonna talk about where it came from.

Madge: Yeah. Part of the question is also about who formed The Magpies, and the answer to that is that Myra and Phin formed The Magpies after they worked together on a job and it went really well, and they decided to just see where it went. I think The Magpies, specifically them deciding to call themselves magpies came after they stole all that furniture from The Gray Cloaks.

Rhi: [laughs] yeah!

Madge: So, we stayed in The Gray Cloaks’ hotel thing that they have going on, and instead of just staying for the night and being on with their lives, they stole every single bit of furniture out of their hotel rooms and moved it over to their place, in The Nest, which wasn’t called The Nest at the time, but they moved all the furniture over there and just said it’s ours now.

[laughter]

Minna: I feel like one thing this crew excels at is branding.

Kim: Branding is consistency. That’s what I was taught in art school.

Madge: Yep. I think that’s when they officially became The Magpies, at that point, because I feel like up until then they were just playing around with different names and nothing stuck.

Minna: Who got/made the pins? Where did the pins come from?!

Madge: It definitely wasn’t from Phin, because she doesn’t have that kind of flair.

Josie: I feel like it’s Minx.

Kim: I was gonna say, it feels like a Minx thing.

Madge: Yeah, it had to have been Minx.

Josie (as Minx): We need to have some style about this, dears.

Minna: Yes!

Kim: We need to have a call sign.

Josie: Mm-hmm.

Minna: I love that.

--

Rhi: I think that’s pretty much gonna wrap it up for our Season 1 Q&A feelings episode. In two weeks, tune in for the start of Season 2.

Josie: Woo!

Rhi: Yes! And a very exciting announcement about how you will be able to support the show. For now, keep listening to hear some highlights from our Season 1 blooper reel. Thank you all so much for listening. We appreciate every comment and tweet and like that we get. It means the world to us.

## Bloopers [57:13

Rhi: For these pilot episodes—

Madge: Can we not die?

Rhi: Uh… Well, yeah. I’m not gonna kill you guys, this early.

Madge: [laughs]

Rhi: I mean, if you do something really catastrophically stupid I might not be able to help you, but…

Madge: Challenge accepted.

--

Rhi: One of you is gonna have to say something quickly, because ghosts typically are not friendly. Blaire thinks they’re friendly. They’re not friendly.

Kim (as Blaire): [sweetly] They’re friends.

Minna: [excited “so cute” noise]

Josie: Aww!

Rhi: No, they are hungry for your life essence.

--

Rhi (as Kay): If you’re trying to setup an ambush, that’s a good plan. The only problem is they don’t usually attack me.

Kim (as Blaire): Why not you?

Rhi: She looks at Blaire, which is looking down a significant amount, and she just kind of raises an eyebrow.

Josie: [laughs]

Rhi (as Kay): [dryly] I don't know. It must be my sparkling personality.

Minna: [laughs]

Josie (as Minx): Indeed.

Kim (as Blaire): [hesitantly] Okay…

Rhi: [laughs] The six foot tall, incredibly muscular woman who could easily bench press any of you, says. Well, maybe not easily with Phin, but…

Madge: [laughs]

--

Rhi: [laughing] It’s like 12 swords.

Josie: Oh, it’s like 12 swords? Okay.

Rhi: Yeah. It’s a lot.

Kim: That is… That is not a lot.

Josie: I’m not looking for a collection of swords.

Madge: It’s not enough!