



Blackengorge - The Road Eastwards - The Burial Site - Chapter #05, Scene #05

Mar 15

...continues from [Chapter #05, Scene #04](#)

Synopsis

The 18th Day of Ches in the Year of the Sudden Journey

With spirits high and adventure on the wind the group have set out eastwards on the old road towards the gate in the gorge wall, with their final destination being a burial site off to the east. Going had been fairly easy as they approached the ruins of the old road gate, but they were attacked by a giant wyrm. They managed to dispatch the creature, but as the rains and darkness fell they had to seek out shelter, spying an abandoned shack in some woods. It had appeared their luck had turned, but unfortunately that was not the case as a pack of wolves descended upon the party. The group managed to fend off the wolves, and their leaders slipped away into the forest - an uneasy night's rest followed and the party awake bleary eyed and tired in the morning. Travelling north through the forest they have eventually found their intended destination, but it looks as though someone else has already got their first!

- [Khâlin Grundokri](#) - 3rd Level Male Dwarven Warlord
- [Kireth Majere](#) - 3rd Level Male Half-Elven Wizard
- [Tradden Aversward](#) - 3rd Level Male Human Fighter
- [Zero Uhlit](#) - 3rd Level Male Human Rogue
- Rindall Blackstout - 3rd Level Male Dwarven Paladin of Moradin (NPC)

Scene Length

This scene starts on Tuesday 15 March 2011 and is expected to be completed by the end of Friday 1 April 2011. Players are expected to be able to post at least once a day.



Me and Random:

Apr 6

INITIATIVE BLOCK

Round #06

Combat Encounter Complete

- 01) [30] Spectral Apparition - **1d20+10: 30** - Dmg: 15+5+8+4+5+11+8=56 (Marked by Tradden) (**Bloodied**)
- 03) [22] Tradden - **1d20+3+2: 22** - HP 25/38 (Grabbed) (Ongoing 5)
- 04) [22] Khalin - **1d20+2+2: 22** - HP 20/36 (+2 to defences)
- 06) [19] Zero - **1d20+4+2: 19** - HP 20/35
- 08) [16] Kireth - **1d20+7+2: 16** - HP 19/31
- 09) [06] Spitting Drakes - **1d20+5: 6**
- Spitting Drake #01 - Dmg: 19+18=39 (**Bloodied**)
- Spitting Drake #02 - Dmg: 21+10+8=39 (**Bloodied**)
- 10) [06] Rindall - **1d20+1+2: 6** - HP 26/41 (8 temp hp)

Removed from Play

- 02) [24] Gnome Skulk - **1d20+10: 24** - Dmg: 9+36=47 (Marked by Tradden)
- 01) [Sp] Hobgoblin Rotter #01 - Dmg: 12=12
- 01) [Sp] Animated Rage Drake - Dmg: 13=13
- 05) [21] Rage Drake - **1d20+3: 21** - Dmg: 15+16+21+25=77 (**Bloodied**) (Marked by Tradden) (**Dazed**) (-2 to AC)
- 07) [18] Hobgoblins - **1d20+4: 18**
- Hobgoblin #01 - Dmg: 21=21
- Hobgoblin #02 - Dmg: 4=4
- Hobgoblin #03 - Dmg: 11=11
- Hobgoblin #04 - Dmg: 16=16

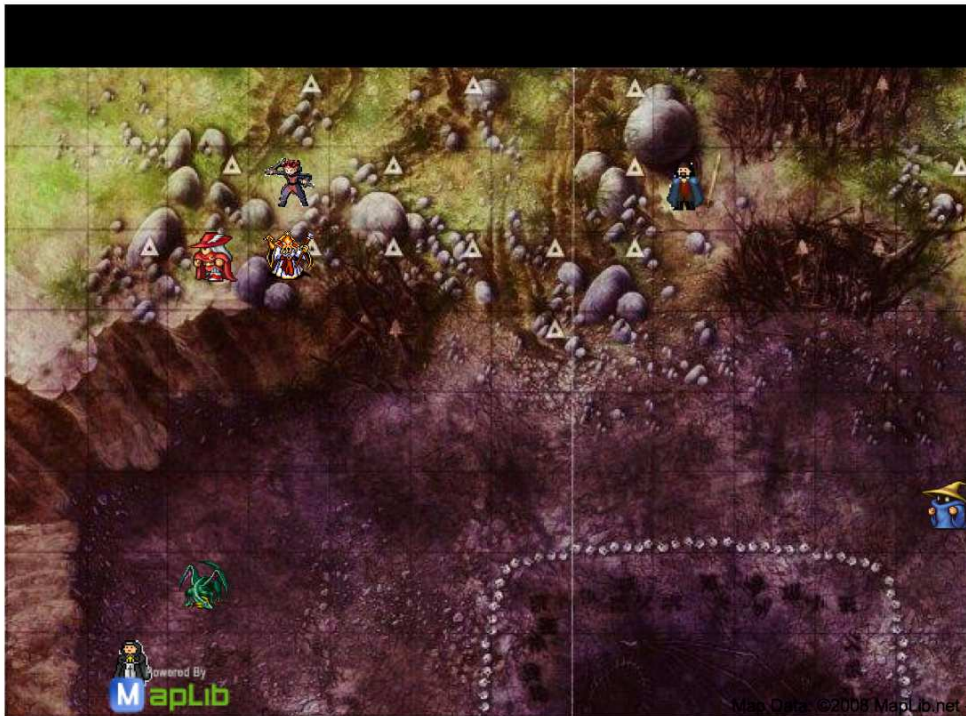


Me, Matt and 3 others:

Apr 4

BATTLE MAP





Me:

Mar 11

FEATURES OF THE AREA

All squares that contain a small triangle in the bottom left hand corner are marked as difficult terrain.

Illumination: Bright Light

Steep Slope: A steep slope surrounds the site indicating a difference between the higher and lower ground. A character can climb the slope with a DC15 Athletics check but moves at half speed.

Rocks: Rocks without the small triangle in the bottom left hand corner are obstacles and those squares cannot be moved through. Rocks can provide cover and concealment.

Trees: Trees can be moved through at normal speed as they are thinly spaced, and do not provide cover or concealment.



Matt, me and Random: Knowing that Khalin wanted him to be at the vanguard (which suited the young fighter just fine), Tradden jogged forward as quietly and stealthily as his armoured form would allow. Mar 16

He came to a stop at the otherside of a small rocky ridge which he hoped would conceal him for a short while longer. Either his companions were about to better their own positions or were to start unleashing hell - in either event he would be ready!

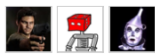
His hands tightened on the hilts of his swords in anticipation.

[Tradden Stealth Check: **1d20+2: 18**]



Mark and Random: Khalin followed Tradden's lead, right on the heels of the young fighter. Mar 16
"Remember, we need to get to the Drakes!" he cautioned, trying to keep his voice low. *"If Kireth takes out the hobgoblins we'll need to switch focus fast. Let's not give up the high ground too quickly,"* he added, wary of becoming sitting ducks if they were dragged down towards the centre of the crater, and scanning for the quickest route round the rim.

[Khalin Stealth Check: **1d20+2: 5**]



The.brainbuster@googlewave.com, me and Random: Zero kept low and forged ahead, hoping to get close enough to take a shot without being spotted.

Mar 17

[Zero Stealth Check: **1d20+12: 15**]



Neil and Random: Kireth moved as silently as possible behind the dwarf

Mar 18

[Kireth Stealth Check: **1d20+3: 23**]

With a silence that impressed even Zero, the feat was achieved effortlessly. "Well" he whispered in Khalin's ear "Just say when then"



Me and Random: Rindall moved up to the side of Kireth, trying his best to keep his armour from making a noise.

Mar 19

[Rindall Stealth Check: **1d20-3: 15**]

"I'm ready whenever you are," *the dwarven paladin offered.*



Me: Across the crater one drake continued to sniff the air, the other looking on indifferently. The gnome continued to bark orders as the hobgoblins pulled at the earth to retrieve what they had found.

Mar 19

For the moment, at least, it appeared the party still had the element of surprise!



Matt: They were effectively in position. "*I think.*", added the young fighter to himself. There was little else to be done other than wait for his companions with ranged abilities to open the battle. Tradden's time would come, but this was not it - not quite yet. Still, it never hurt to be prepared, he mused.

Mar 19

[Total Defence - +2 to all Defences until end of next turn]

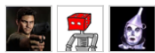


Mark: The dwarf spoke in hushed tones: "Kireth, Zero, get ready. Tradden, Rindall, when the first arrow flies, we strike."

Mar 20

He hesitated a breath, then glanced over his shoulder at the rogue and mage, "Fire!"

[Delays...]



The.brainbuster@googlewave.com, me and Random: Zero took aim at the first Hobgoblin, hoping to strike its wrist and turn it against its neighbour.

Mar 21

[Confounding Attack vs Hobgoblin #1: **1d20+8+2: 29**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **2d6+4+2d8: 21**]

The bolt zipped down into the crater into the midst of the digging hobgoblins. It caught one of them in the shoulder, spinning it around, it's rough spade catching another across the neck, chopping it's head clean away from its shoulders. Both hobgoblins dropped to the floor.

Confusion broke out across the crater. The other hobgoblins looked at their fallen comrades and then up to the northern rim to the small figure for guidance.

The gnome at the top of the crater looked equally confused, and shielded his eyes looking out for where the bolt had come from, urged on by the spectral apparition.

Both of the drakes' fanned ears perked up and they began to search out with eye and nose. The red mound behind them began to stir.



Neil, me and 2 others: Narrowing his eyes, Kireth was just about close enough to pierce those of the nearest hobgoblin "And what do you fear dark one?"

Mar 21

[Nightmare Eruption vs Hobgoblin#4's Will: **1d20+6+2: 10**] - *misses!*

"Not Kireth" seemed to be the creature's response as the spell had no effect.

Tradden's eyes had raised to the heavens when he had heard the mage start to utter the words of the now-familiar Nightmare Eruption spell. The young fighter's attention had already transferred to the other targets to see what they were doing, in anticipation of there still being three hobgoblins by the time Kireth's arcana had ceased. He was not disappointed, but the palpably rage-filled silence that emanated from behind him brought a wry smile to his lips.



Me and Random: *Rindall raised his war pick and shield and bolted forwards into the depression, a war cry starting to build on his lips as he charged.* [Run] Mar 21

He continued apace once he had got into the middle of the crater, ducking through the earthworks and charging at the nearest hobgoblin.

[Charge Attack vs Hobgoblin #04: **1d20+5+1+2-5: 18**] - misses!

Rindall's attack missed it's mark though, and he left himself exposed to the counter.



Mark, me and Random: *Khalin was a mere step behind his kinsmen, charging into the fray and striking at the other remaining hobgoblin.* Mar 22

[Charge attack vs Hobgoblin #3: **1d20+1: 3**] - misses!

The hobgoblin easily sidestepped the charge. With two dwarves in front of it the creature's confusion disappeared, replaced by a hatred as it hefted it's shovel in a menacing manner.



Me: *With the adventurers showing themselves the confusion amongst the enemy gave way to instructions being barked out. The shimmering apparition looked enraged and immediately thrust out his palm towards the crater, seemingly at first towards the dwarves.* Mar 22

[Animate Minion]

The hobgoblin that Zero had felled with his bolt slowly rose, its eyes rolled back in its sockets. Raising its bloody shovel it turned towards Khalin.



Me and Random: *The animated hobgoblin, Zero's bolt still sticking from it's shoulder, swept its shovel round in a great arc aiming for Khalin's head.* Mar 22

[Hobgoblin Rotter #01 Shovel: **1d20+8: 20** vs Khalin's AC(20)] - hits!
[Damage: **6**]

Catching the dwarf by surprise, the shovel glanced off the dwarf's shoulder plates, drawing a gasp.



Me: *The gnome at the northern edge of the crater rim pointed at the dwarves and barked some orders across to the drakes on the western edge. They looked keen and ready to do their master's bidding. As they started to move the red mound behind them unfurled and rose from it's sleeping condition - another drake, this time a red one, and twice as large!* Mar 22

The gnome then unclipped a small crossbow from its belt and loaded a bolt, scampering for cover.



Matt, me and Random: *Tradden, always thinking, considered his position.* Mar 22

Despite the whole, slightly worrying, hobgoblin-ressurrection thing, the two Dwarves were clearly in control of the centre of the battlefield. He was more than confident that he would not be needed there right away.

Thinking of his orders, glancing over to the three drakes he considered that they were unreachable right now. So, that being the case, what would be his next best move?

"*That little chap is next nearest*" he mused to himself, "*but it doesn't look like a magic user, and it doesn't have any kind of ranged weapo....Oh.*"

Right - that decided that! He was getting to really hate ranged attacks!

Bracing himself, he ran as fast as he could [Move action as Run (-5 to attack this round)] across the open ground at the bottom of the crater, aiming for the section of the north edge which he could see he would be able to run up.

On the other side of the crater, the little man scratched his head - he watched as the young human in heavy armour rushed towards him, waving his swords around and screaming what, bizarrely, sounded like a Dwarven warcry. The human was tall, but disappeared from view for a few seconds as he reached the bottom of the rocky incline up to his position. The Gnome, for that was indeed his race, chuckled to himself - no measly human had the endurance to run that far, in that armour, up a hill AND then attack over a rock into cover!

Gnomes are not known for admitting that they are wrong, but on this occasion, as an angry looking, sweaty head appeared in front of him and a frost covered blade swept through the air over the rock he had to allow that he may not have been completely right on this occasion...

[Charge Attack vs Gnome Skulk: **1d20+8+1-5: 5**] - *critical miss!*
[Marked]

The Gnome was more gratified to see the young human lose his footing at the top of the slope, which caused his swing to miss wildly. That said, the human, who looked even angrier now, was looming over him...



Mark, me and Random: "*Balderdash!*" cursed Khalin as the shambling hobgoblin zombie suddenly unevened the odds. It looked like what should have been run-of-the-mill opponents would now need to be 'killed' not once but twice. Suddenly having second thoughts about not skirting the crater edge, the dwarf shrugged away the indecision and swung first at the living hobgoblin before him. Mar 22

[Warhammer vs Hobgoblin #03: **1d20+6: 21**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d10+5: 11**]

Wasting no time with the drakes set to enter the fray any moment, Khalin swung to his right in a fluid motion to strike at the shambling 'zomgoblin'. If the warlord knew undead (and he knew a heck of a lot more about them than he did before he'd landed on this gods-forsaken land), if he let it bite him he'd get more than just a nasty rash.

[Action Point]
[Warhammer vs Hobgoblin Rotter #01: **1d20+6: 19**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d10+5: 12**]

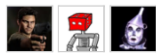
Both creatures fell under the massive blows of the dwarf's hammer.



Me and Random: *The largest drake followed its master's commands and hurtled across the rim of the crater with surprising speed for such a large beast. It almost caught Tradden by surprise as it charged at him with neck frills extended and its sharp-toothed jaw open for the kill. The beast looked accustomed to charging at its foes and was well prepared with two devastating rakes of its claws.* Mar 22

[Rage Drake Raking Charge]
[First Rake: **1d20+10+2: 31** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d6+4: 10**]
[Second Rake: **1d20+10+2: 17** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - *misses!*

Tradden took the first swipe of claws on his shoulder, but managed to roll with it to avoid the second thrust.



The.brainbuster@googlewave.com, me and Random: Zero crept forth into the crater, hugging the wall and keeping his cloak tight about him in an effort to vanish from sight. Gaining a glimpse of the remaining hobgoblin in the centre, between his two battling comrades, he loosed an opportunistic bolt. Mar 23

[Fleeting Spirit Strike]
[Shift 3 squares] and [Stealth Check: **1d20+12: 32**] - *critical success!*
[Hand Crossbow vs Hobgoblin #04: **1d20+8+2: 18**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **2d6+4+2d8: 16**]
[Shift 3 squares] and [Stealth Check: **1d20+12: 14**]

The bolt slammed into the remaining hobgoblin, who dropped its shovel and fell into the ground it had been digging, drawing an approving nod from Khalin.



Me and Random: Kireth moved swiftly forwards into the crater, a spell forming at his lips. With the hobgoblins gone, at least from the living realms for now, he could concentrate his energies upon the main protagonists. Mar 24

At the bottom of the slope into the crater the wizard stopped and pointed his staff towards the large red drake on the northern rim.

"Me'urra morgil!" he uttered, as a sphere of energy burst across the crater and exploded next to the drake, hitting the apparition and the gnome in the blast.

[Shock Sphere centered to left of Rage Drake]

[Shock Sphere vs Rage Drake's Reflex: **1d20+6: 21**] - hits!

[Damage: **2d6+5: 15**]

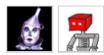
[Shock Sphere vs Spectral Apparition's Reflex: **1d20+6: 25**] - hits!

[Damage: **2d6+5: 15**]

[Shock Sphere vs Gnome Skulk's Reflex: **1d20+6: 17**] - hits!

[Damage: **2d6+5: 9**]

Tendrils of lightning struck out at the three enemies engulfed in the sphere, crackling against their skin in an electric embrace. As the explosion died down it appeared the gnome had disappeared. [Fade Away]



Me and Random: On the western rim of the crater, the two drakes screeched with their fanned ears opening up in a hostile manner. Going low on their forelegs they spat out a sticky substance towards the dwarves in the centre of the crater. Mar 24

[Spitting Drake #01 Caustic Spit: **1d20+8: 11** vs Khalin's Reflex(13)] - misses!

[Spitting Drake #02 Caustic Spit: **1d20+8+2: 25** vs Rindall's Reflex(14)] - hits!

[Damage: **2d6+4: 10**]

Rindall couldn't get out of the way quick enough, and the acidic globs hit him in the chest with searing pain.



Me and Random: Rindall rushed past Khalin, hefting his war pick. He took a circuitous route heading towards the spectral apparition and then arcing back in a charge towards the large red drake attacking Tradden. He crashed into the beast with a cry to Moradin! Mar 28

[Charge Attack vs Rage Drake: **1d20+5+1+2: 15**] - misses!

But the beast's hide was thick, and the dwarf bounced off.



Me and Random: The spectral apparition looked to be annoyed that whatever the gnome and hobgoblins were doing had been disturbed. The dwarves could be tied up with reanimated hobgoblins should he desire and be kept in check by the smaller drakes, the youth would be overcome in moments by the large drake. Now he had to search out those in the distance, particularly the one who had shown a minor amount of talent with the lightning show. Mar 28

[Animate Minion - Recharge: **1d6: 2**] - failure!

Let the drakes eat the dwarf first, and find that wizard. The apparition raised its arms and smoky tendrils began rising from the ground around Khalin.

[Shadow Claws: **1d20+9: 23** vs Khalin's Reflex(13)] - hits!

[Grabbed] and [Ongoing 5 necrotic damage]

The tendrils formed into shadowy claws, clutching and grasping as Khalin's body, holding him firm. A sitting duck for the drakes on the crater rim!

The apparition's burning eyes then turned towards Kireth at the far side of the crater, and it thrust out its palm with a jerk.

[Shadow Bolt: **1d20+10: 30** vs Kireth's Reflex(15)] - critical hit!

[Damage: **1d8+4: 12**]

A smoking bolt of shadow zipped across the crater and thudded into Kireth's chest, the power of it taking the half-elven wizard by surprise. The pain was intense and like no other magic he had felt before. It burned into his chest and almost stopped him breathing.



Me and Random: [...Invisible Gnome Skulk...] Mar 28



[Gnome Skulk Stealth Check: **1d20+13: 16**]

[Gnome Skulk Crossbow: **1d20+9-2: 20** vs Zero's AC(16)] - *hits!*

[Damage: **1d8+5: 6**]

No-one but Zero had noticed a couple of pebbles fall from the boulders to the north of the apparition. Suddenly, the gnome appeared as if from nowhere with it's crossbow aimed at the rogue. The bolt flew across the crater and caught him in the midriff.



Matt, me and Random: Tradden narrowed his eyes as his previous combatant suddenly appeared at the other side of the large dragon-y thing, and started shooting at Zero. Mar 28

Little bastard!" He thought, *You are not getting away THAT easily!"*

Crouching slightly to give himself momentum, Tradden sprang up, using one foot to boost himself up from one of the large rocks, the young fighter propelled himself up into the air. [Pass Forward as Move Action]. The other foot found purchase on the scaly hide of the Drake, giving him the opportunity to half-pike in the air, and he struck out whilst he was in mid flight, taking the creature by surprise.

[Surprise Stab vs Rage Drake s Reflex with Frost Sword: **1d20+9: 10**] - *critical miss!*

[Marked]

The Drake shimmered as Tradden passed over, and neither of his hits landed. The young fighter did land safely on the other side of the creature however, ready to carry on the flight.



Me: The shadowy tendrils firmly holding Khalin in place seeped into his flesh and stung viciously. Mar 28

[Ongoing 5 necrotic damage]



Mark, me and Random: "Out of the frying pan..." thought Khalin as he grit his teeth against the sting of the shadowy tendrils. The drakes would be on him in seconds and he was a sitting duck. He steeled himself and flexed his muscular limbs, honed from years of martial exercise, against the eldritch grip... Mar 30

[Athletics check: **1d20+9: 25**] - *success!*

Sure enough dwarven brawn beat gnomish magic (or wherever else the apparition had summoned the foul spell from), and the warlord shrugged free.

Khalin wasted no time getting back into the fray, charging across the crater towards the large drake that was harassing Tradden, and letting out a battle yell in an effort to distract the beast...

[Charge attack vs Rage Drake: **1d20+6+1: 12**] - *misses!*

"Gaargh!" cursed the dwarf as the drake rode the impact, the dwarf's hammer blow careening off its side with little effect.



Me and Random: *The drake whirled in fury as it found itself beset on a number of sides. The main antagonist in its lizard eyes was the brash youth with the two swords. The youth had cajoled the beast, taunting it and even daring to leap on its mighty back, although had yet to land a blow with his weapons. The drake would enjoy eating this one.* Mar 29

As it whirled around quickly the two dwarves had to leap out of the way to avoid being felled by its trunk-like tail.

Then the beasts jaws clamped down on Tradden.

[Bite: **1d20+10: 12** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - *misses!*

The youth dodged the razor-sharp teeth however, and bounded away taunting the beast once more and drawing a huge roar.



Me and Random: Zero knew that the enemy on the northern rim had seen him, hide as he might, but the drakes on the western rim of the crater had yet to spot him, his cloak furled around him against the wall of the crater giving him some disguise. There were plenty of blades attacking the larger drake (one which Zero didn't fancy Mar 30

getting too close to) so the rogue took aim at one of the smaller drakes. hoping to catch its legs, and let fly.

[Unbalancing Shot vs Spitting Drake #01: **1d20+8: 26**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **2d6+4+2d8: 19**] and [**Slowed**]

The bolt pierced the drake's leg drawing a howl and a long spurt of blood. [Bloodied]

Zero took the opportunity to move up towards the northern rim, putting his comrades between him and any enemies!



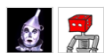
Neil, me and Random: Was the Gnome an irritant or was there more to him than that? Kireth Mar 30 suspected the latter and made the decision to make him the focus of his attention.

Channeling the familiar energies, he drew forth what he hoped would be an irritant of his own.

"Templa Koron"

[Force Orb vs Gnome Skulk's Reflex: **1d20+6: 7**] - *critical failure!*

At the last moment the gravel beneath the mage shifted, slipping backwards, the mage's spell flew high and wide.



Me and Random: *Up on the western rim of the crater the two smaller drakes still loomed over the battlefield. Although smaller than their huge brute of a cousin, they still appeared pretty menacing.* Mar 30

In tandem the pair scrambled down the side of the crater.

[Spitting Drake #01 Athletics Check: **1d20+3: 8**]
[Spitting Drake #02 Athletics Check: **1d20+3: 17**]

One of the drakes skittered down without much incident, landing on its feet and bounding forwards in one fluid motion. The other drake tumbled down and rolled over onto its side, spending much of its time getting back to its feet.

As the first drake shook off the fall, the second spat out at Khalin.

[Spitting Drake #02 Caustic Spit: **1d20+8: 27** vs Khalin's Reflex(13)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **2d6+4: 12**]

The acid ball struck Khalin's side and fizzed away! [Bloodied]



Me and Random: *With drakes arriving from the rear Rindall knew it was important to get rid of the huge brute in front of him. Being flanked between lizard hides was not an option! Moving his shield out of the way, he brought his holy symbol to bear and with words to Moradin ribbons of radiance cascaded down from the sky like rain.* Mar 30

[Radiant Delerium vs Rage Drake's Reflex: **1d20+4: 23**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **3d8+3: 16**] and [**Dazed**] and [-2 to AC (Save Ends)]

Rindall then nudged next to Khalin, offering him a prayer as he rested his arm on his shoulder.

[Lay on Hands: Khalin regains **9** hit points]



Me and Random: *The spectral apparition's annoyance seemed to be rising. The dwarves had somehow slipped past the hold of the hobgoblins and lesser drakes and were helping the youth fight the larger beast. His earlier assessment of the mage had been proven wrong, with the fool barely able to utter a simple spell, and yet another lurked out there in the shadows with a keen bow.* Mar 30

Time to change the flow of the battle.

[Animate Minion - Recharge: **1d6: 2**] - *failure!*

It would be useful for its gnome servant to finish off the youth, then let the drakes eat the dwarves. It could then spend its time dealing with the shadow lurker. The apparition raised its arms and smoky tendrils began rising from the ground around Tradden.

[Shadow Claws: **1d20+9: 11** vs Tradden's Reflex(14)] - *misses!*

The tendrils formed into shadowy claws, but failed to take hold of the lithe fighter.

The apparition's burning eyes then turned towards Zero, creeping around the northern rim, and it thrust out it's palm with a jerk.

[Shadow Bolt: **1d20+10: 22** vs Zero's Reflex(18)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d8+4: 9**]

A smoking bolt of shadow zipped through the crowd and thudded into Zero's shoulder.



Me and Random: *The gnome stood firm next to its master and fired a bolt into the back of Tradden.* Mar 30

[Hand Crossbow: **1d20+9: 29** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - *critical hit!*
[Damage: **1d8+5: 13**] plus [1d6: 1 critical damage]

The bolt pierced Tradden's armour and entered his lower back, almost spinning the fighter round. [Bloodied]

For now, the gnome remained where he was, and visible too.



Matt, me and Random: *Tears streamed down Tradden's face from the injury taken from the little man's crossbow - it felt serious. Bah - the tiny bastard was hardly going to miss from so few paces away!* Mar 30

With an anger that temporarily overrode the pain he felt in his lower back, the young fighter sprang - it was time to try and make a telling difference...

Using the dragon-y things seeming confusion to his advantage, he left close quarters combat and leapt onto the rocks behind him. [Standard move - no penalty for moving away from a dazed opponent].

In one fluid movement he then sprang back towards the thing, spinning in the air and striking out at the little man and ghost at the same time.

[Tempest Dance]

[Attack #01 vs Gnome Skulk: **1d20+9: 14**] - *misses!*
[Marked]

[Attack #02 vs Spectral Apparition: **1d20+9: 21**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d8+7: 11**] [Insubstantial so 5 damage] and [Marked]

[Shift]

[Attack #03 vs Rage Drake: **1d20+9+2: 29**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d8+7+2: 14**] plus [Frost Damage Daily: **1d8: 7**] and [Marked] [Bloodied]

[Action Point]

[Second Wind: Tradden regains 9 hit points and +2 to defences until end of next turn]

The first swipe went (perhaps predictably) over the Gnome's head, but Tradden landed two blows, one each on the Ghost and the large beast.

It suddenly dawned on the young fighter that he was now surrounded by enemies, all of which he seemed to have the attention of... They needed to reduce the odds against them.

"Concentrate our attacks!" he yelled aloud, gesticulating in the direction of the weakend, large beast.



Mark, me and Random: *Khalin followed up Tradden's attack as the fighter requested. The boy was learning fast - they couldn't afford to get flanked between the growing gaggle of attacking enemies. Raising his shield to protect himself and Rindall, the warlord swung his hammer in an almighty arc at the momentarily dazed beast before him...* Mar 30

[Daily Power: Flame Bracers: **1d6: 1** extra fire damage on next succesful attack before end of next round]

[Shielded Assault vs Rage Drake: **1d20+6+2: 14**] - *hits!*
 [Damage: **2d10+5: 24**]
 [+2 AC to self and Rindall while adjacent]

In its dazed state the drake couldn't protect itself and the warhammer slammed into the side of its head. Crushing its skull instantly the beast took a few moments to crumple and crash in a heap on the ground in front of the dwarves.



Me and Random: Zero needed to help the others get rid of the pesky gnome, and the strange apparition, now before the drakes arrived. It needed a good shot. The rogue levelled his crossbow and took aim - just enough to get the gnome off-balance. Mar 30

[Preparatory Shot vs Gnome Skulk: **1d20+8: 23**] - *hits!*
 [Damage: **4**] and [Gnome Skulk grants Combat Advantage to Zero]

With the gnome distracted by the first bolt, Zero quickly loaded another and let fly.

[Use Action Point, using Khalin's Bravura Presence]
 [Sly Flourish vs Gnome Skulk: **1d20+8+2: 30**] - *critical hit!*
 [Damage: **1d6+5+2d8: 27**] plus [1d6: **5** critical damage]

Zero's aim was to perfection, the bolt striking the gnome straight through the heart. As it fell to its knees and eventually to the floor it uttered a single sentence in Common, blood frothing at its mouth as it did so - "I have failed you, Skauril!"
 [Dead]

With Khalin issuing him onwards, Zero didn't end there though and unleashed another stinging bolt from his crossbow against the spectral apparition.

[Hand Crossbow vs Spectral Apparition: **1d20+8: 13**] - *misses!*

The bolt flew straight through the apparition without seeming to harm it, though.



Matt: Tradden watched as firstly Khalin smashed open the head of the large dragon-y thing, and then heard, but didn't see, one, two, three bolts fly past his head. The results of Zero's shooting were just as evident in the final analysis however, and suddenly two significant enemies lay dead at the young fighter's feet. Mar 31

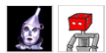
"Yay us." he murmured to himself, before turning to face the ghost. If the spectre was at all affected by the cold, steely look in the youth's eyes it didn't show.



Neil, me and Random: Moving closer, taking care of his footing on the uneven ground, Kireth prepared his next spell. The mage did not believe in luck, luck was something the unprepared "hoped" for. Still, it was about time something went his way. Mar 31

[Hellish Rebuke vs Spectral Apparition's Reflex: **1d20+3: 10**] - *misses!*

With a sigh, Kireth watched as his spell dissipated as the Apparition simply waved its hand. "Ah well, at least it was on target"

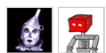


Me and Random: *The drakes held their ground, a little unsure it seemed as their cousin had fallen. They chattered to one another in a series of clicks and screeches and then spewed forth a volley of acidic globs at the two dwarves nearest them.* Mar 31

[Spitting Drake #01 Caustic Spit: **1d20+8: 15** vs Rindall's Reflex(14)] - *hits!*
 [Damage: **2d6+4: 15**]

[Spitting Drake #02 Caustic Spit: **1d20+8: 10** vs Khalin's Reflex(13)] - *misses!*

The glob struck Rindall, burning into his skin, but Khalin managed to dodge the caustic ball.



Me and Random: *Rindall shrugged off the effects of the acid and charged across to the nearest drake. As he moved across the battlefield he uttered a short prayer to Moradin, his war pick taking on a pearly luminescence. As he reached the drake he drove the pick down in a short, sharp motion.* Mar 31

[Radiant Smite vs Spitting Drake #01: **1d20+5: 13**] - *misses!*

The drake seemed prepared for his attack, though, and dodged under the blow.

Rindall then took a moment to compose himself and clear his head from the pain of his wounds.

[Dwarven Resilience: Rindall regains **10** hit points]



Me and Random: *The spectral apparition looked furious - its beast slain, gnome servant butchered, and its plans laid to waste. There was still a chance to turn the tide, however.*

Mar 31

[Recharge - Animate Minion: **1d6: 2**] - failure!

Contemplating its next move it decided the troublesome fighter that seemed fairly ineffective should be its next target. The mage with the party was useless, the plated dwarf similarly so. The two major strengths they had were the other dwarf and the sneaky archer. Get rid of the two-bladed warrior and then concentrate on the real threats.

[Shadow Claws: **1d20+9: 12** vs Tradden's Reflex(14+2)] - misses!

The apparition snarled in disgust as the shadowy tendrils issuing from the floor at his command barely touched the fighter's legs. It thrust out a palm towards Tradden and a bolt of pure shadow aimed for his head.

[Shadow Bolt: **1d20+10: 23** vs Tradden's Reflex(14+2)] - hits!

[Damage: **1d8+4: 9**]

The bolt passed through Tradden's head with a cold shiver and then dissipated in the air.



Matt, me and Random: Tradden was already walking towards the ghost when it started raining attacks down on him. The young fighter strode strongly, confidently, around the large rock in front of him, each step bringing him closer to his enemy.

Mar 31

He easily sidestepped the claw like tendrils which suddenly burst forth from the scree-covered ground. He spoke slowly, but loudly, his voice resonating around the crater even as a bolt of nightmarish darkness shot out from the ghost's hands, powering through his head and causing his skull to be visible and lashing his hair out behind him for the moments the beam was in evidence. He gritted his teeth as he spoke, refusing to be intimidated.

Khalin, Rindall, aghhhhh, Take Down ... The ... Spitters... Kireth, Zero This ... One... Is.... Going NOWHERE!"

And with that last word he struck, hoping to be the anvil to the Mage & Rogues hammer. His frost sword, Narcissus, flashed with a bright sheen in the sun as it was wielded in a wide arc. Khalin looked up and gave a little nod in recognition of the effort - Tradden was trying to force the thing to step back, over the edge of the crater!

[Sweeping Slash]

[1st Attack vs Spectral Apparition's Reflex: **1d20+9: 12**] - misses!

[Marked]

The apparition just stood with a pitying look at the fighter and cast him from its mind.



Mark, me and Random: Khalin gave a barely perceptible nod towards the body of the rage drake. It was a magnificent beast, no mistake, and one part of the dwarf regretted slaying it. But in the heat of the skirmish a warrior must divorce himself from pity for his foes, and he turned swiftly to size up the theatre of battle. Kireth and Tradden were tackling the apparition. Though they'd had trouble landing blows so far, Khalin knew the pair were too talented for their fortune not to turn soon, and he had no hesitation in leaving the spectre for them to deal with.

Mar 31

"Heads up lads, the tide is turning!" he shouted in encouragement to Tradden and Kireth.

[Inspiring Word: Tradden spends healing surge regains **1d6+9: 15** hp]



With that he homed in on the second of the two remaining drakes, running up alongside Rindall.

[Warlord's Strike vs Spitting Drake #2: **1d20+6: 18**] - hits!

[Damage: **2d10+5: 21**]

[+2 to allies' attack rolls vs Spitting Drake #2 until end of next turn]

Another heave of his trusty hammer resulted in a devastating blow, this time drawing a huge crack from the ribs of the second drake and a roar of pain. [Bloodied]

  **Me and Random:** Zero swiftly moved up behind the largest rock on the northern rim and wrapped his cloak tight around him to squeeze against the boulder as best he could. Mar 31

[Fleeting Ghost - Steath Check: **1d20+12: 24**] - *success!*

He took his time to line up his shot, aiming for the drake nearest Rindall - right between the eyes.



[Gloaming Cut]

[Hand Crossbow vs Spitting Drake #01: **1d20+8+2: 23**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **1d6+1+2d8: 18**]

[Stealth Check: **1d20+12: 23**] - *success!*

As Zero melded back into the shadows the drake fell where it stood - a bolt snuggled perfectly between its eyes.

  **Neil and me:** Matters might possibly be going in favour of the party as a whole but the mage was certainly not happy with his own contribution. Spell after spell had failed. Weakness and failure were not to be tolerated... not for a moment. Apr 4



"Istar Koron" snapped the mage, daring the spell to fail. It did not and his hands glowed ever so slightly. "Hmm" he snorted, not exactly satisfied.

[Wizard's Fury]

Turning his attention back to the apparition he relied upon the one spell that, to date, had never let him down

[Magic Missile Spectral Apparition: Damage **2+4+2: 8**] - *automatic hit!*



The bolt caught the apparition off-guard and drew its attention to the wizard once more.

  **Me and Random:** *The remaining drake licked it's teeth with it's long forked tongue and then lashed out at Khalin, hoping to sink its many teeth into his flesh.* Apr 4

[Spitting Drake Bite: **1d20+8: 28** vs Khalin's AC(20)] - *critical hit!*

[Damage: **1d6+4: 10**]



The drake found purchase and closed its jaws around Khalin's leg. [Bloodied]

  **Me and Random:** Rindall moved as swiftly as he could to the other side of the drake from khalin, being careful to avoid its flicking tail. He then brought the war pick down on the beast with a silent prayer. Apr 4

[Righteous Smite vs Spitting Drake #02: **1d20+7+2+2: 20**] - *hits!*

[Damage: **2d8+4: 10**]

[Rindall and each ally within 5 gains temp hp of 8]

  **Me and Random:** *The apparition was now beset on a number of fronts, with his allies reduced to just one of the remaining drakes.* Apr 4

[Recharge - Animate Minion: **1d6: 6**] - *success!*

But it still had tricks up his sleeves.

With a lurch the red drake began to move, rising from the floor, its head and neck at an odd angle where Khalin's warhammer had broken its neck. Pinpoints of light within its dark socketed eyes searched out a foe.

With a smile upon its lips the apparition called once more for the smoky tendrils of shadow to rise from the ground to entrap one of the party.

[Shadow Claws: **1d20+9: 27** vs Tradden's Reflex(14)] - *hits!*

[**Grabbed**] and [Ongoing **5** necrotic damage]

The shadows whirled around Tradden, rooting him to the spot and chilling his bones.

The apparition then reached out one of its spectral hands towards Tradden's shoulder.

[Shadow Touch: **1d20+11+2: 33** vs Tradden's AC(18)] - *critical hit!*
[Damage: **1d8+2: 10**]

The touch froze Tradden's shoulder, drawing a whimper from the young fighter.



Me and Random: *The newly arisen rage drake looked quizzically around its head lolling to one side. Apr 4*
It tentatively snapped its jaws a couple of times, checking that they still worked. To its delight they did and it turned its head towards Tradden.

[Rage Drake Bite: **1d20+10+2: 22** vs Tradden's AC(20)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **2d10+5: 16**]

The jaws clamped around Tradden's arm, drawing a large gout of blood, and the fighter dropped his sword.



Me and Random: *The shadowy tendrils surrounding Tradden burnt ice cold into his bones, and Apr 4*
wisps of the shadow floated into the cuts the rage drake had opened.

[Ongoing **5** necrotic damage]

The young fighter's body could not take any further bombardment, and he passed out.

[Dying]...

As Tradden's eyes began to close Khalin saw the danger and without regard for the drake confronting him, charged like a madman up the slope and beset the apparition.

[Spitting Drake AoO: **1d20+8: 22** vs Khalin's AC(20)] - *hits!*
[Damage: **1d6+4: 6**]

The drake managed to snap at Khalin's heels as he set off.

[Fearless Rescue]

[Basic Attack vs Spectral Apparition: **1d20+7: 23**] - *hits!*
[Damage: **2d10+5: 8**] [halved to 4 for insubstantial]
[Tradden spends a healing surge and regains **1d6+9: 15** hp]

Tradden's head swam in pain - he was still held by the shadowy tendrils, and had the apparition and reanimated rage drake in front of him. But at least he now had his friend, and renewed vigour coursed through his veins.



Matt, me and Random: *In less frantic times Tradden had often mused to himself that in battle Apr 4*
he sometimes found that time seemed to slow for him. In those moments he would be able to move quickly, easily and as if his opponents were trying to wade through honey or mud.

This was the exact opposite everything had happened so swiftly, just one blur after another. He wasn't even quite sure why he was still indeed in the land of the living surely the attacks had been too many, too fierce? The reason he was still, just, on his feet must be to do with Khalin, who was now stood next to him. That was odd wasn't he down in the crater?

Oh, *hello Khalin...*" muttered the youth cheerfully, but weakly in his dazed state, the effort of even speaking bringing a dark edge to his vision. He swayed back and forth, and would have fallen had the grab of the shadows not held him fast.

Come on lad we're still in the mire!" Bellowed the Warlord, trying to encourage the nearly-broken human. *Give that Spectre a taste of frost if it falls, yon undead Drake surely will also!*"

Drake? What Drake?" enquired the young human, unaware of the undead monstrosity now mostly behind him. *Frost?*" He wasn't sure what Khalin was on about the Drake was dead. It wasn't like the Warlord to talk such nonsense, but on the other hand he was a trusted friend and he wasn't usually wrong. *Oh, alright.*"

With that he, flicked out lackadaisically in the general direction of the Spectre, but it were as if he were swatting a fly or picking a flower on a sunny spring day, without any real force.

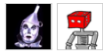
[Cleave vs Spectre's AC: **1d20+9: 13**] - *misses!*
[Marked]

The action did cause him to lurch sideways though, and the shadowy tendrils looked for a moment as if they would snap under the weight of him falling to one side.

[Move Action as escape attempt from Grab: **1d20+5: 9**] - *failure!*

Predictably the effort was all too much for the battered young fighter, and his efforts to strike out at the ghost failed. Even his unintended escape attempt proved in vain. It did however give him chance to clear his head, and the squeeze of pain as the tendrils re-asserted their grip caused his blood to boil. The fighter's heart and courage had not given out just yet, and he gave out a fierce roar.

Now, if only he could avoid having his head bitten off by an undead dragon...



Me and Random: Khalin was a little out of breath, having scrambled up the cliff-side in a whirl of anger to rescue his comrade. Tradden had been ineffectual against the apparition, neither striking it, or releasing himself from the bonds of shadow around him. Apr 4

"Zero," shouted Khalin above the sound of battle, "we need a good shot. Now!"

As the dwarf shouted the last word he made a bold lunge towards the apparition, leaving himself open for the counter, but hopefully letting Zero get in a devastating shot.

[Brash Assault vs Spectral Apparition: **1d20+6: 23**] - *hits!*
 [Damage: **1d10+5: 10**] [Halved to **5** as Insubstantial]

The apparition whirled upon Khalin, reaching out its spectral hands.

[Shadow Touch: **1d20+11+2: 27** vs Khalin's AC(20)] - *hits!*
 [Damage: **1d8+2: 3**]

As the apparition turned its back, Zero let fly with a bolt.

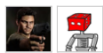
[Zero Hand Crossbow vs Spectral Apparition: **1d20+8+2: 20**] - *hits!*
 [Damage: **1d6+4+2d8: 23**] [Halved to **11** as Insubstantial]

"Come on, Tradden!" ordered Khalin. "This is no time to falter!"

[Inspiring Word: Tradden regains **1d6+9: 10** hp]

He then spent a couple of moments regaining his own breath.

[Dwarven Resilience: Khalin regains **9** hp and adds +2 to defences until start of next turn]

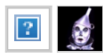


The.brainbuster@googlewave.com, me and Random: Concealed behind a rock, Zero drew a bead on the evil apparition in answer to Khalin's plea, but the bulky animated drake lurched into the way. Apr 4

"Okay then..." the rogue murmured, squeezing the trigger of his crossbow.

[Gloaming Cut vs Animated Drake: **1d20+8+2: 29**] - *hits!*
 [Damage: **1d6+1+2d8: 13**]
 [Stealth Check - Hide: **1d20+12: 13**] - *critical failure!*

The bolt cut through the drake and it fell once more, this time hopefully for good. Zero then tried to step back behind the rock, but stumbled against the base, leaving himself exposed.



Neil and me: Who knew what more this apparition had in its arsenal. Kireth made the decision to do everything he could, right now, to stop them from having to find out Apr 6

[Spend action point]

Focusing every fibre in his body the mage swung his staff around in a wide arc, finishing with its tip aimed where a ghostly heart should be.

[Magic Missile vs Spectral Apparition: Damage **2+4+2: 8**] - automatic hit!

The arrow of force exploded against the apparition, who started to fade into nothingness, the shadowy tendrils holding Tradden firm slowly evaporating and releasing the young fighter from their grasp. After only a couple of moments the only remains were two pinpricks of light where its eyes used to be, that glowed balefully at Kireth before disappearing into the ether.

The wizard swung his staff round at the drake assailing Rindall on the crater floor and another bolt shot from the tip.

[Magic Missile vs Spitting Drake #02: Damage **2+4+2: 8**] - automatic hit!

Again the bolt hit the drake, knocking it backwards and off its feet, where it remained, motionless.

Once more, after volleys of energy from Kireth's staff, a battlefield was still and silent.



Me: [...combat encounter completed...]

Apr 6



Me:

Apr 6

Khain spends 2 healing surges (36/36)
Kireth spends 2 healing surges (31/31)
Tradden spends 2 healing surges (38/38)
Zero spends 2 healing surges (35/35)
Rindall spends 2 healing surges (41/41)



Me: *Khain* grounded his warhammer and spent a few moments leaning against it catching his breath. Apr 6

"Nice finish, Kireth," he grunted, nodding at the mage. "Now, let's see what this lot have been up to, and be quick about it, before any further beasts arrive."

The dwarf started to prod the ground with his hammer where the apparition had once stood, somewhat tentatively, and marvelled at the size of the drake that lay right on the rim of the crater.

Zero steered clear of the beasts and any sign of spectres, but slipped silently towards the gnome to study the strange little creature.

Kireth kept to one side, watching the scene with thoughtful eyes, the image of the apparition being burned to his memory.

Tradden headed down into the crater, spotting Rindall tugging away near the hobgoblin corpses at a battered wooden crate.



Me and Random: *The gnome was smaller than the halfling Skillet from The Bronze Lion in Blackengorge, barely four feet tall. It resembled an elf somewhat, with pointed ears and high cheekbones and a sharp jaw. It looked wilder than an elf, though, with hair protruding in random directions. It was difficult for Zero to tell how old this one was, though, mainly due to him not seeing a gnome on The Islands before.* Apr 6

Zero gave the body a cursory check, being careful that the trickster, even dead, didn't have any last tricks up its sleeves.

[Zero Perception Check: **1d20+7: 15**] - success!

*The rogue was a little disappointed with what he found - a couple of knives secreted away and some crossbow bolts, but nothing of any real substance. The only item he found that seemed to have any monetary value was **an ornate silver amulet** hung around the gnome's neck. It was small, but quite well made, and would be worth a pretty penny he was sure.*



Me: *Tradden* helped Rindall shift the crate out of the freshly dug earth, casting an eye as he did so over the large bones that had been stacked to one side. Apr 7

Rindall put one end of his warpick between a pair of the boards on the crate and gave a great heave. The sound of wood splintering echoed around the crater.

Inside the crate was something wrapped in a silken blanket. Rindall carefully laid it down on the compact earth to the side of the dig and unwrapped it slowly. Within the wrappings was an mirror, about two feet long and a foot wide, enclosed in an ornate golden frame. It was fairly obvious the piece was old, but seemed to have no other markings, on the front or the rear, that gave any indication of its ancestry. The mirror was untarnished, spotless, and wonderfully made.

Tradden, disappointed with the contents of the crate, headed back up towards **Khalin**, to speak to the dwarf and to keep an eye on the woods to the north.



Me and Random: **Kireth**, intrigued by the glittering reflections from the mirror, made his way across the crater, picking his way carefully through the mud. He looked carefully at the mirror and the frame as Rindall held it up, softly murmuring and gesturing with his hands. Apr 8

With a sniff, and a look of contempt at the piece, he folded his cloak around him and slowly marched up the slope to the northern rim without a further word.

*"We seem to be led a merry dance, time after time, with no reward," the mage said to **Zero** as he reached the group, the rogue nodding in agreement. "The mirror is but a show piece."*

*"Never mind," continued **Kireth**, more to himself than the rest of the party, "we shall strike out on our own terms in the near future."*

As Rindall wrapped the mirror back in the silken blankets and looked for a way to stow it safely in his pack, the rest of the party turned to one another to assess their next move.

*"Well, the only thing we've found is this," offered **Zero**, holding up the amulet.*

Kireth took a quick look, murmuring once more and moving his hands deftly around the amulet without touching it.

[Kireth Arcana Check: **1d20+10: 21**] - success!

The mage's eyebrow raised and he took hold of the amulet, pressing a recessed button that opened up the amulet in half on delicately constructed hinges. Inside, connected to the amulet by a thin leather strap were a number of tiny keys.

*"This device appears to assist in unlocking items - valuable for someone as, uhm, inquisitive as yourself, Zero," **Kireth** teased. "It also has other powers of movement. Use it wisely."*

*With that he let go of the amulet to let it dangle on it's chain. **Zero** shrugged, closed the amulet together, and placed it around his neck.*

[Necklace of Keys +1]

[+1 to Fortitude, Reflex, and Will]

[+1 to Thievery to Open Locks]

[Daily: Minor Action. If you're grabbed or restrained, you can teleport 3 squares]



Me: *While the group discussed their next steps, Rindall approached from the crater, his pack much larger than before to accommodate the mirror.* Apr 7

"Where do you plan to head now?" asked the paladin. "I'm anxious to get back to Blackengorge to report what we've found and then head back out to look for Gilmorril. I'd hoped we would have found some trace of him around these parts, but alas, nothing yet.

"What do you make of the activity here, too? It appears they were looking for this mirror, so I believe I should get it back to the Council as quickly as possible for study.

"If you gentlemen wish to continue into the wilderness, I will take it back myself and report on our deeds so far."

Rindall looked to the group for further instruction.



Matt: *"Hmmm" mused Tradden, scratching the stubble now starting to grow on his chin whilst eyeing the bulge in Rindall's backpack.* Apr 7

"I can't beleive that three, Drakes, a spectral apparition and other foot soldiers came here to dig only for a worthless mirror.

Remember when we were watching they had just literally uncovered the crate and they all seemed very excited. What are we missing?"

His view turned to the north again.

"Anyway, it seems a shame to come this far and not continue the search for Gilmoril. If it were me lost out here I think I might be a little upset if I found you chaps came out, found a mirror, and then left without me. I say we continue the search, all of us. If we come up against heavy resistance then we can fall back and head back towards the town."



Me: "We should rest if we can, and plan our next move carefully," responded **Khalin** sagely. "There's no point in us striking out further into the wilderness without a good plan." Apr 8

The warlord turned to Rindall.

"If you feel that you must return then do so with haste and with Moradin's protection. We will make camp somewhere around here and take our time to decide our next move."

"Then I shall leave immediately," said Rindall. "With Moradin's blessing I may catch you up on the morrow. Which direction will you head?"



Matt: Tradden, who was not so much simple, but who always looked to the simple approach asked: Apr 8

"Well, if you were Gilmoril and you had been here, maybe lost, maybe hurt, which way would you have gone Rindall?"



Me: "I would have headed back to Blackengorge", replied the dwarf. Apr 8



Matt: "Quite!" exclaimed Tradden holding up one finger to make the point. "And yet, we came that way and saw nothing of him, even with skilled eyes and senses such as yours." Apr 8

The young fighter, enjoying what he considered to be logical, sound reasoning, addressed each in the group as he spoke.

"Is it therefore reasonable to assume that Gilmoril did not, in fact, head back to the town, and is still potentially around here somewhere?"

"Let us rest - Khalin is quite right about that. Once we have all had some sleep we can look for signs of Gilmoril. If we find anything to follow up we can do so, or if not we can head back."

With that Tradden stood back, arms folded, looking smug for being so clever. He waited for the others to congratulate him on his fine thinking.



Me: Rindall looked a little confused, turning to the rest of the group. Apr 8

"Right, I shall take my leave, then I shall return as soon as I can," the paladin stated. "With the agreement of the Council, of course," he added.

"If I have any news on the mirror, I shall double my efforts to return in good speed.

Blessings of Moradin upon you all."

With that, the dwarf turned and headed off at pace to the west, leaving the four members of the party alone on the edge of the crater.



Matt: "Right," continued Tradden, rubbing his hands together. "Shall we find somewhere suitable to make a camp? I don't know about you three, but I am starving!" Apr 8



Me and Random: The group nodded in agreement with **Tradden**, and everyone had a quick look around for the most appropriate campsite. Apr 8

[Khalin Nature Check: **1d20+1: 12**] - failure!

[Kireth Nature Check: **1d20+1: 18**] - success!

[Tradden Nature Check: **1d20+3: 5**] - failure!

[Zero Nature Check: **1d20+2: 7**] - failure!

After a few minutes **Kireth** called out to the group that he had found somewhere he thought suitable, a small glade in the trees to the north with underbrush and bushes providing a good screen around three sides, leaving just the southern access to the glade open to casual view.

"I guess we'd better collect some wood for a fire," suggested **Tradden**. "C'mon, Zero, let's you and me go and grab some, and leave these two to get a camp prepared."

The pair headed across the woods to collect dry sticks whilst **Khalin** and **Kireth** began to set their packs down and determine what they needed to lay out.



Me and Random: *There were plenty of old branches and sticks of all shapes and sizes on the forest floor for **Zero** and **Tradden** to recover. Most were fairly dry, despite the rains of the previous few days, and would make a good fire.* Apr 8

The wood around the camp wasn't too thick, the trees of oak thirty or forty feet apart interspersed with heaths of blueberry, laurel and azalea, with the occasional chestnut.

Many of the oak woods on The Islands had been hewn for timber for building and only the thinner, less pliable trees were left. These trunks were majestic, thick, old, and gnarled.

Further north it looked as though the wood grew thicker, more forest-like, with a mixture of trees and shrubbery forming a canopy that let in less light. Here, the sunlight could find its way freely through the canopy, casting ripples of light playfully over the root-covered floor.

[Tradden Passive Perception: **13**] - failure!
[Zero Passive Perception: **17**] - success!

Broken out of his reverie with the wood **Zero** heard a branch snap to his left. Whirling around, fearing the return of the wolves, or worse, he scanned the underbrush intensely, grabbing **Tradden's** arm and pulling them both down into a crouch.

"Wha...?" started **Tradden**, before realising what **Zero** was up to, and looked around himself for anything out of the ordinary.

[Tradden Perception Check: **1d20+3: 21**] - success!
[Zero Perception Check: **1d20+7: 17**] - success!



Me: *They both spotted them as the same time - two small goblins peering at them through a blueberry bush. Neither party moved for a moment, and then the goblins were up and off in a flash, sprinting away through the bushes and trees towards the north.* Apr 8

Zero and Tradden looked at one another for an instant, deciding what to do!



Me: [...continued in [Chapter #05, Scene #06...](#)]

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Tags:

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