


Difficult Terrain: This chamber is cluttered with stalagmites, stalactites, and loose rocks. Several squares, indicated on the map (by a triangle in the bottom-left corner), are difficult terrain. Characters can press and squeeze through the jumble of stones, but the rocks do not allow an unobstructed line of sight.

Yellow Polygon: This is where bright light is provided.


 Nick, me and Random: Zero stifled a shriek of terror and somehow managed to fire his crossbow at the closest monster rat.

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[Hand Crossbow vs Giant Rat #01: **1d20+9+2: 19**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d6+4+2d8: 14**]

The bolt thudded into the rat and sent it tumbling end over end into the far wall, where it lay motionless. [Dead]

 Mark, me and Random: Khalin pushed past Bagrat and advanced quickly on the remaining rat, warhammer ever ready.


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[Warhammer vs Giant Rat #02: **1d20+7: 26**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d10+5: 9**]

With a great blow, Khalin crushed the skull of the rat, pinning the lifeless creature to the cavern floor. [Giant Rat Dead]

There were excited shrieks from the shadows.

 Me: The rats may have been vanquished, but Kireth was wise enough to understand that more lurked out in the shadows and behind the stalagmites.

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He took a step forward to see more clearly into the cavern, but kept his staff raised and his senses on alert.

[Total Defence]

 Me and Random: **Giant Rats**

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As Khalin had moved forwards more rats darted out from amongst the stalagmites, intent on turning the dwarf into a tasty meal. The rats were mean-looking, about the size of small dogs, over three feet long including their scabby tails, with beady red eyes and sharp looking teeth. With a squeal they all attacked.


[Giant Rat #03 Charge (Bite): **1d20+6+1: 8** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - critical miss!

[Giant Rat #04 Charge (Bite): **1d20+6+1: 25** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - hits!

[Damage: **3**]

[Giant Rat #05 Charge (Bite): **1d20+6+1+2: 16** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - misses!

Khalin did his best to fend the creatures off with hammer and shield.

 Matt, me and Random: With a sigh Tradden gently dropped his lamp onto the step behind him, which was of course raised up given the direction they were walking. [Free Action].

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Striding forwards past Bagrat he drew his other sword. [Minor Action].

"Why are none of these places ever empty of crawly things?" He asked grumpily to the cave in general as he slashed at the nearest rat.

[Cleave vs Giant Rat #05: **1d20+11: 18**] - hits!

[Damage: **1d8+7: 12**]

[Giant Rat #03 takes **4** splash damage]

The two rats fell to Tradden's sword.

 Me: **Bagrat**

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The goblin shuffled as best he could in the ropes that bound it.

"Peez, peeZ," it implored at Zero. "Don't leave Bagrat to be eat by rats! Give Bagrat knife, untie hands. Peez!"

It tried to shuffle back up the stairs, but could only make one step before the rope tied to Zero's arm stopped the creature.

[Bagrat must remain adjacent to Zero whilst restrained]

 Me and Random: **Unknown Assailant**

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***Khalin** looked over his shoulder to the advancing **Tradden**. Between the group they were carving through the dog-like rats with the minimum of fuss. This was more like the organised battle procedure and controlled action that the dwarf marshal preferred. No nonsense, straightforward manoeuvres.*


In an instant that changed.

From out of the darkness, beyond the stalagmites, shot what appeared to be a rope that tangled around his shield arm. It wasn't a rope, however, it was white, slightly moist, and sticky, and grabbed hold with ferocious strength.

[Unknown Assailant Attack: **1d20+8: 15** vs Khalin's Reflex(14)] - hits!

[**Immobilised**] and [Ongoing Damage **5**] (Save Ends Both)

*Something within **Khalin** knew it was going to hurt!*

 Nick, me and Random: Fighting against the insistent goblin to maintain his ground, Zero observed Khalin's plight with deep concern. He *knew* what was on the other end of that sticky thread.

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"Stop pulling, you bloody idiot!" he shouted at the fearful Bagrat. Then, with a regretful sigh, he drew his sword and ran to the dwarf's assistance.


[Shortsword vs 'Thread': **1d20+6: 17**] - misses!

The 'thread' wasn't quite like Zero thought it may be. Rather than be sticky, and perhaps silken, like a spider's, it was more fleshy and damp, and not at all pleasant. The shortsword just bounced off the rubbery, flesh-like substance and left the rogue somewhat puzzled, and for him, somewhat exposed on the battlefield!

He quickly gathered his thoughts.




[Zero Nature Check: **1d20+3: 7**] - failure!

But for now, at least, there was nothing he could reference this strange fleshy mass against.

 Me: The thread began to squeeze Khalin's shield-arm, getting a better grip, and pulling taut.

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[Ongoing **5** damage]



Mark, me and Random: *"That damned goblin has led us into a trap!"* raged Khalin, trying to keep his composure while struggling against the grip of the hideous 'thing'. The warlord had been feeling a growing sense of urgency as they'd headed down into the caves, and now this was brought keenly to the fore. Whether Gilmoril was down here, and whether his life was at stake, would be moot point for the dwarf if he didn't free himself, and quickly.

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He swiftly considered his options. Using the flaming torch against the tentacle or whatever it was might be the best bet, but he daren't drop his hammer, lest the light fail and he lose it. A warhammer blow alone might not be enough. The best of both worlds it is then, he decided, and he willed the bronze flame bracers on his forearms into action - now if Clangeddin could just bless his strike...

[Warlord's Strike vs 'Thread': **1d20+7: 23**] - hits!
[Damage: **2d10+5: 21**]
[Minor action: Flame Bracers Daily Power - Flame Damage: **1d6: 6**]
[Allies gain +2 to damage rolls against target until end of next turn]

The warhammer bounced against the thread, and it seemed difficult to know whether or not it had caused much damage. The flame raced along the length, lighting up the cavern and the stalagmites for a moment. Khalin thought he could hear a squeal from somewhere as the thread loosened for a moment, but quickly regained its grip.

[Save vs Immobilisation and Ongoing Damage: **1d20: 1**] - critical failure!

The thread continued to wrap itself securely around the warlord's arm.



Neil, me and 2 others: The rat could wait, there was no debate about that. Freeing Khalin, somehow, had to be the priority. The problem, for Kireth at least, was that as the 'thing' was holding onto the dwarf much of the offensive magiks he could cast against it would also affect Khalin (for a moment, just a moment, Kireth did way up whether this detail actually mattered).

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[Magic Missile vs Thread: Damage **2+4+1: 7**] - automatic hit!

The thread convulsed as the ball of force struck it, but it didn't release its grip on the dwarf.



Me and Random: **Giant Rats**

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The remaining giant rat continued to bite and nip at Khalin's legs and side.

[Giant Rat #04 Bite: **1d20+6: 12** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - misses!

Khalin managed to kick the rodent away from his legs.

With a flurry of screeches further rats poured out of the stalagmites.

One shot between Kireth and Bagratand in a flurry of tooth, claw, and tail attacked the restrained goblin.

[Giant Rat #06 Bite: **1d20+6+2: 9** vs Bagrat's AC] - critical miss!




But the goblin managed to get the ropes in the way of the sharp teeth.

A whole host of rats appeared from the east, attacking Zero.

[Giant Rat #07 Bite: **1d20+6: 19** vs Zero's AC(18)] - hits!
[Damage: **3**]

[Giant Rat #08 Bite: **1d20+6: 26** vs Zero's AC(18)] - critical hit!
[Damage: **3**]

Both rats bit into the rogue's flesh.



Matt, me and Random: *"Hmmm." thought Tradden to himself. "This is getting serious..."*

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He scanned the fast getting-out-of-control situation and made a decision. The rats were a concern, but despite their rabid fenvour could only do so much damage with their little nips. Yes, there was a danger of being overwhelmed, but the greater of the dangers appeared to be the strange tentcle-thingy that was currently attached to Khalin. For a second the whole thing had looked comical, but Tradden had very quickly realised from his friend's cry of pain that this was not some mock-danger to be laughed at.

Stepping around the back of Khalin and over a sole rat approaching from the westerly stalacmites he tried to ignore the bites from the rats.

[Giant Rat #06 Opportunity Attack: **1d20+6: 17** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - misses!

[Giant Rat #04 Opportunity Attack: **1d20+6: 13** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - misses!

He then stopped just short of the strand and hacked at it with all his might, hoping his sword could cleave right through it,

[Cleave vs Strand: **1d20+11: 15**] - misses!

As an admirer of comedy, Tradden would have laughed, had the situation not been so grave, at the way his sword bent down the strand like a length of elastic before being propelled back whence it came. The strand was untouched!

As he looked at his sword in disbelief, it occurred to the young fighter that there was something about this wierd strand that he felt he recognised...

[Dungeoneering Check: **1d20+4: 17**] - success!

The strand was nothing like he had seen before, not silken thread like a spider, nor a rope. It occured it looked almost like a tongue, but the strength of it to withstand so much force was amazing, as though it were reinforced.

"It's ... its like a giant tongue or something! Zero - if this is one of your ex girlfriends, can you tell her this is NOT the time!?"



Me: **Bagrat**

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"Urgh!" shouted the goblin as the giant rat tried to bite it. "Pakka! Pakka!" it squealed.

"Peez, peeZ, untie Bagrat," it pleaded through sobbing bursts. "Bagrat not want be rat dinner!"

*The goblin hopped from foot to foot as best it could, trying to avoid the rat's gnashing teeth, pulling **Zero** from side to side.*



Me and Random: **Unknown Assailant**

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['Power' Recharge Check: **1d6: 6**] - success!

*The line around **Khalin's** shield-arm stopped tightening, now locked in a vice-like grip. Slowly and surely it started to pull. The strength was incredible, but **Khalin** braced himself as best he could and tried to stop the motion.*

[Unknown Assailant Pull: **1d20+8: 25** vs Khalin's Fortitude(16)] - success!
[Khalin is Pulled **3** squares]

The dwarf couldn't do too much to stop himself moving, but managed to at least slow it down. Khalin was pulled inexorably towards the stalagmites and into the midst of the infestation of rats.

[Stand Your Ground - Pull reduced by 1 square]




Nick, me and Random: Swamped by evil, gnawing rats, Zero had to reluctantly abandon his grappled comrade. He swung hard at the closest pair of red eyes.

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[Shortsword vs Giant Rat #08: **1d20+6: 26**] - critical hit!
[Damage: **1d6+1: 7**]




The rogue's aim was true, his shortsword slicing through the rat with ease. Zero's confidence and ability with the sword being shown on the stage for once.
[Giant Rat Dead]



Me: The thread continued to dig into Khalin's shield-arm, blocking circulation and making it feel numb.

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[Ongoing **5** damage]






Mark, me and Random: Having hit the fleshy thread with his best shot to no avail, Khalin resigned himself to the fact he may have to wait till he was dragged to the 'owner' of the ghastly tentacle in order to do some real damage. He was determined that wouldn't happen without a fight though, and he continued to resist the pull of the 'thing'. The rats were complicating the issue however, and he swung his warhammer at the nearest one...

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[Warhammer vs Giant Rat #10: **1d20+7: 8**] - critical miss!
The pull from the thread put off the dwarf's aim. He tried one last yank in frustration...

[Save vs Ongoing Damage: **1d20: 10**] - success!

...and to his joy and relief the thread recoiled, leaving go of his arm and slithering away back through the stalagmites.



Neil, me and Random: "This is ridiculous" thought the mage "Rats, again with the rats". He was quickly developing a strong dislike to all things rodent like. He had a strong dislike for most things anyway, so this was not exactly a great leap.

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He slammed the butt of his staff into the floor. One of the rodents, reacting to this, sat up on its hind legs, baring its two sharp teeth, looking directly at the mage. It was what he wanted.

[Nightmare Eruption vs Giant Rat #07's Will: **1d20+8: 15**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+5: 9**]

The rat twitched its whiskers for a moment, its red eyes staring straight at the mage. Then it transformed into a thrashing of claws and teeth at the rats around it, spittle and fur flying in all directions.

[Giant Rat #06 takes **4** damage]
[Giant Rat #09 takes **4** damage]

After a moment, three rats lay dead on the cavern floor.



Me and Random: **Giant Rats**

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The screeching in the cavern appeared to have died down somewhat - around the party lay more than half a dozen rodents, but still the creatures came, snarling and biting at their legs.

[Giant Rat #04 Bite: **1d20+6: 7** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - critical miss!




Tradden easily dodged the rat that attacked him from behind.

[Giant Rat #10 Bite: **1d20+6: 23** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - hits!
[Damage: **3**]
[Giant Rat #11 Bite: **1d20+6: 23** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - hits!
[Damage: **3**]

Both of the rats in front of Khalin managed to sink their teeth through his scale mail.

[Giant Rat #12 Bite: **1d20+6: 23** vs Zero's AC(17)] - hits!
[Damage: **3**]

Another rat leapt from the safety of the stalgmites and began to chew on Zero's leg.



Matt, me and Random: With the bizarre kind of sixth-sense that was coming easier and easier to the fighter with every battle Tradden easily avoided the clumsy attack from behind him.

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Kneeling and sweeping round at the same time the youth cleaved across the ground, slicing clean through both his ill-fated assailant and another rat that had just appeared and attacked Zero.

[Cleave vs Giant Rat #04: **1d20+11: 18**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 9**]
[Giant Rat #12 takes **4** splash damage]

Completing his brutal 360 degree spin Tradden then moved up to the remaining rats, determined to put himself in front of Zero, Kireth and Bagrat and stand side by side with the beleaguered Khalin.

[Both Giant Rats Dead]



Me: **Bagrat**

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The snivelling goblin continued its sobbing not to be offered as a meal to the giant rats, although did not attempt to flee, even though Zero had released the rope.



Me and Random: **Unknown Assailant**

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['Power' Recharge Check: **1d6: 5**] - success!


It looked as though the party were making light work of the rats, but at the back of their minds they knew that something else was out there.

With the whistle of parting air another thread sped through the stalagmites and tried to wrap itself around Zero's leg.

[Unknown Assailant Attack: **1d20+8: 22** vs Zero's Reflex(19)] - hits!
[**Immobilised**] and [Ongoing Damage **5**] (Save Ends Both)

It grabbed on tight, almost yanking the rogue from his feet. It began to pull, slowly at first, and then quicker and quicker, reeling him in.

[Zero is Pulled **3** squares]



Me: The thread, filament, rope, tongue, whatever it was, spared Zero no pain. It was wrapped tightly around his leg, cutting off the circulation, and pulling him through the stalagmites without care for his health.

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Nick, me and Random: Zero could barely breathe, he was so frightened. He struggled to free himself from the unseen thing's clutches.

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[Saving Throw vs Immobilised: **1d20: 16**] - success!

The rogue clamped his arms around a stalagmite and pulled his leg furiously. He felt his grip slipping and his heart was in his mouth just before the blessed relief of freedom came, as the thread recoiled and whipped back towards its origin.

Zero kissed the slimy rock.



Mark, me and Random: Khalin gave a sigh of relief that his comrade had escaped the clutches of the 'thread' so quickly, followed by an eyebrow raise that a shake of the leg had apparently succeeded where his mightiest hammerstrike had failed.

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Zero was free, but so apparently was Bagrat. The goblin had not fled however - either Bagrat was braver than he'd been letting on and was seeing his end of the deal through, or he was in on the situation and was aware of the trap. Still, before Khalin could challenge the greenskin, the remaining rats would have to be dealt with. Khalin steeled himself...

[Minor Action - Second Wind: Khalin spends a healing surge and regains 10hp]
[+2 to defences until start of next turn]

...then turned his attentions to the nearest giant rodent...

[Warhammer vs Giant Rat #10: **1d20+7: 15**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 7**]

As the hammer struck and felled the rat he fired a challenge over his shoulder: *"Still here then Bagrat?"* But the dwarf didn't wait for a reply, and pushed himself past the rats to get alongside Zero, raising his shield to try provide some protection for the beleaguered rogue lest the devil in the dark attack once more.

As Khalin rushed amidst the stalagmites the remaining rat took one final nip at his heels.

[Giant Rat #11: **1d20+6: 19** vs Khalin's AC(21+2)] - misses!

But the bite was astray.



Neil and me: Aware that the "unseen" threat still needed to be attended to, Kireth darted down the steps and headed in its direction. "Ah yes" considered the mage, as if a second thought, "The rat".

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The mage threw a casual hand at the rodent, taking his eyes off it almost as quickly as he had looked at it. He did not need to see the outcome and kept moving to assist Zero and Khalin.

[Magic Missile vs Giant Rat #11: Damage **2+4+1: 7**] - automatic hit!

The rat almost exploded with the force of the bolt.
[Giant Rat #11 Dead]



Matt: Tradden took a moment to look around and think.

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The floor of the chamber he was stood in was covered in rats, and thanks to Kireth, "bits" of rats. It seemed entirely possible that there were more waiting to leap from the flickering shadows, but the biggest threat clearly came from whatever the owner of the large, long tongue was.

Well, there was nothing for it. Whatever it was it had brutally ravaged Zero and Khalin and if there was more to come it seemed right for him to be stood at the front. Despite the slight tremor that his subconscious was sending through his whole body to remind him that he was really, really scared he chuckled to himself. *"Why am I here, in this far away land, underground about to walk into a pitch black cave and into the arms, or mouth, of Correllon knows what?"* He mused to himself. *"Because that's your job. Now, get on with it Aversword!"* Was the testy reply of his subconscious, which was sticking its nose in where it wasn't wanted. Again.

Trying to put out of his mind thoughts of long, purple, slimy tentacles pulling him down into the briny depths of the great ocean the young fighter gulped, and started walking forwards, using the back of his hand to wipe cold, clammy sweat from his brow.

He pushed past Zero and squeezed in between the triangular rocks which poked up and hung down like the teeth of some nightmarish creature. The light faded as he picked his way forward through the difficult terrain. *"I really do hope this is an ex-girlfriend of yours now Z..."* he whispered back. *"Erm ...Don't hang back with the lights lads..."*

All in front of him was black. Completely black. He held his blades up and listened. Waiting for "It"...

[Total Defence as Standard Action]



Me and Random: **Bagrat**

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The goblin stood still for a moment. The nice human had let it go, and had dashed off to the south, although maybe not so much of his free will. The others had followed, including the mage that kept looking at the goblin with a funny eye.

The ropes were still quite tight around the goblin's arms and legs, and there was no way it could move quickly. It tried to loosen them a little.

[Bagrat Escape Check: **1d20+8: 16**] - failure!

The ropes had been tied too well, however.

Bagrat took a step back, towards the stairs, hoping no-one would notice if he did it quietly.

[Bagrat Stealth Check: **1d20+10: 20**] - success!

No-one seemed to sense it moving backwards.



Me and Random: **Unknown Assailant**

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[Power Recharge Check: **1d6: 4**] - success!

*As **Khalin** checked that **Zero** was more shocked than injured, another strand flew through the stalagmites towards him and tried to entwine itself around his waist.*

[Unknown Assailant Attack: **1d20+8: 27** vs Khalin's Reflex(14+2)] - hits!
[**Immobilised**] and [Ongoing Damage 5] (Save Ends Both)

The sticky line grabbed hold, but this time the dwarf didn't struggle - his mind was made up to follow the thing and put an end to the source. His mind was made up quicker than he thought as this time the line instantly pulled him.

[Unknown Assailant Pull: **1d20+8: 23** vs Khalin's Fortitude(16+2)] - success!
[Khalin is **Pulled 3** squares] but [Stand Your Ground - Pull reduced by 1 square]




***Khalin** was dragged roughly through the stalagmites - although smooth and slick they nevertheless hurt when the warlord was pulled through them. It took all of his dwarven endurance, and many a dwarven expletive, to hold onto his trusty warhammer and shield, and to keep his torch safe and lit. It was blessed relief as **Khalin** realised that the rock formations thinned out and he took the time to*

The light of **Tradden's** lantern, now seemingly far behind, had failed to fully penetrate through the stalagmites and the dwarf had to rely on the flickering flame of his own meagre torch. Pinned within the stones at the moment it was difficult to get a good view, but he could tell that on this side of the stalagmites was a chamber about twenty or thirty feet square, with blackness leading away indicating further passages.

In the glare of his torch, however, not twenty feet away, a large insectoid creature stared back at him with piercing black eyes. It was an odd creature that filled **Khalin** with revulsion. It seemed to be a cross between a spider and a lobster, huge in size, probably six or seven feet long and maybe half a ton judging by the hard, chitinous shell of overlapping plates that protected its back and eight spiny legs. The front two legs appeared to be equipped with powerful pincers, easily able to kill and dismember prey.

It's most unusual - and oddly frightening - feature was its long snout, from which the thread had been spun.

It clacked its pincers together menacingly and **Khalin** could swear it saw a smile in its eyes.




Nick, me and Random: Now unhampered by chattering rats, Zero sheathed his sword and withdrew his trusty crossbow.

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He then snuck forth, ducking behind one of the stalagmites at the edge of the dark chamber.

[Fleeting Ghost: **1d20+13: 18**] - success!




As far as he could tell, the rogue had hidden himself well.



Me: The thread, leading from the strange creature's snout to **Khalin's** waist, began to tighten again, restricting the dwarf's breath.

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[Ongoing **5** Damage]



Mark, me and Random: Khalin was under no illusions about the potential danger of this new foe. But determination burned in his dwarven eyes. Zero had 'spirited' himself away, but the warlord knew he could rely on a well-placed crossbow bolt piercing the beast very soon. Tradden's swords would be to the fore in seconds, and Kireth was boldly striding into the breach, the mage's stature seeming to grow with every enemy dispatched. Yes, his comrades had his back.

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He was being dragged into this side cavern, and through the flickering torchlight tried to get a good look around.

[Perception Check: **1d20+2: 8**]

The thread kept jerking, stopping the dwarf focusing on anything important. It seemed a normal enough cavern, the ceiling above lost in the gloom and only minor stalactites and stalagmites dotted about in this smaller area. Small rocks covered the floor, his feet slipping as the thread reeled him in. Against the southern wall of this chamber he did notice a lot of white stones, laid at odd angles, at the base of the wall next to another set of stalagmites.

Hammering the slimy probiscus would be pointless Khalin surmised, but nevertheless if he could break free it would expand the options at his disposal.

"Looks like we have found a worthy foe, eh Zero?" the dwarf encouraged, squeezing the breaths out.

[Inspiring Word: Zero spends a healing surge and regains **1d6+10: 13** hp]

Opting to stay his hammer arm till the enemy itself was in reach [Ready an Action - Khalin will attack when adjacent to creature], Khalin returned the beast's stare, searching his mind for stories of such a monster.


[Dungeoneering check: **1d20+4: 15**] - success!

Khalin had heard some stories, passed down the generations, about creatures in some of the mines in the mountains near kel-Morndin. Lurking in shadows, crevices, and ledges they spat out filaments of thread, catching their prey and reeling them in to be eaten. The males were strong, a nearly indestructible filament, and worked to attack and disable their prey. The female then would pick them up and feed them to their young. They were called 'Cave Fishers'.

Not wanting to become a meal for a clutch of small insectoids, Khalin continued to strain himself against the grip of the filament.

[Save vs Ongoing damage: **1d20: 5**] - failure!

The thread remained tight around his waist.



Neil: He had partially lost sight of his comrades as they had passed through the stalagmites. As he moved closer he could see the flickering of their lights and the odd flutter of clothing or glint of armour. The struggle against this assailant was ongoing.




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He carefully picked his own route through but the ground here was uneven and densely packed by the protruding stalagnites, as though the cavern had grown teeth, chewing them with every step. Even the mage's lithe frame struggled to break through.

[Attack swapped for additional move]

With an intake of breath and a push against his staff, Kireth, almost literally, popped out through the final stalagmite. Quickly regaining his composure he looked ahead at the creature. "Ugly"

Stepping to his right he hid behind a larger stalagmite, back pressed against it, he began preparing a spell he hoped would assist.



Matt, me and Random: "*By the Gods - what is THAT?*" asked Tradden, stalking forward.

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The thing was an ugly brute alright. An ugly brute that had a firm hold of his friend. That simply wouldn't do.

Falling foul of a long running inability to put together a good war cry, Tradden howled as he struck out at the beast. "*This simply WONT DO!*" It was something Khalin noted mentally as a point to take up with the lad at a later date.

[Surprising Stab]
[Primary Attack vs Cave Fisher Lurer's Reflex: **1d20+11: 16**] - misses!
[Marked]

The sword simply bounced off the chitinous shell of the creature.



Me: **Bagrat**

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The beleagured goblin was at the other side of the stalagmites from the rest of the group, and could not be seen or heard from.

[Removed from map until party have line of sight]



Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Lurer**

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The hideous creature continued to pull the entwined dwarf towards it, ignoring the young fighter in front of it, either in defiance, or in stupidity.

[Cave Fisher Lurer Pull: **1d20+10-2: 14** vs Khalin's Fortitude(16-6)] - hits!

Tradden's challenge hadn't made the creature change targets, so the young fighter leapt in, sensing an opportunity to strike.

[Tradden Combat Challenge vs Cave Fisher Lurer: **1d20+11: 28**] - hits!


[Tradden Combat Challenge vs Cave Fisher Lurer: **1d20+11: 26**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d8+7: 13**]

The sword managed to puncture the shell this time, and the creature's pincers clacked in alarm.

Khalin let the creature reel him in - he'd been waiting for this moment since the beastie first grabbed him. As the dwarf was pulled next to it, its pincers flexed menacingly, but **Khalin** was ready, and with a growl swung his readied hammer.

[Readied Action]
[Khalin Warhammer vs Cave Fisher Lurer: **1d20+7: 17**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 8**]

The hammer crashed down on the hard shell.

 Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Angler**


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With the creature now in their sights the battle seemed more promising for the party. Tradden had just hit the creature and cracked its shell and was just about to shout words of encouragement to his fellows when he felt his throat constrict.

[Cave Fisher Angler Filament Strangle: **1d20+7: 25** vs Tradden's Reflex(17)] - hits!
[Damage: **1d6+4: 5**] and [Restrained] and [Pulled 3 squares]

Around his throat was wrapped a filament or thread similar, but thinner and more supple, than that of the other beast. The filament led away up into the shadows of the ceiling, somewhere above the southern wall. Above the white stones. Or were they bones?


The filament pulled and pulled and Tradden felt his feet leave the floor!

 Nick, me and Random: Nicely concealed by his friend, the darkness, Zero aimed at the lurer and fired.

Jul 22 ▼


[Sneak Attack: **1d20+9: 10**] - critical miss!

The bolt skittered off one of the stalagmites and the rogue cursed in the gloom.

 Me: Although the dwarf had been fully reeled in by the lurer, it had no intention of letting go. It continued to squeeze Khalin's waist with it's filament.

Jul 22 ▼

[Ongoing 5 damage]

 Mark, me and Random: Khalin gritted his teeth as the breath was squeezed from his lungs. He could see Tradden being dragged off his feet by the second cave fisher and cursed himself for not anticipating its attack. The balance of battle was swinging back away from the group again. The warlord swung his hammer once more...


Jul 22 ▼

[Warhammer vs Cave Fisher Lurer: **1d20+7: 16**] - misses!

...but it bounced off the hard plates.

[Save vs Ongoing damage: **1d20: 18**] - success!


As the cave fisher defended itself against Khalin's blow, the dwarf finally managed to shrug off the filament thread.

 Me: Kireth needed to understand how this strange beast would react to some of his magics. A simple one first, would do, to test its defences and gauge it's strength.

Jul 27 ▼

[Magic Missile vs Cave Fisher Lurer: Damage **2+4+1: 7**] - automatic hit!

The missile exploded against it's spiny legs and the thing recoiled in pain.
[Bloodied]

 Matt, me and Random: The edges of Tradden's vision started to blur as the combined effect of being pulled off the ground combined with the tight restriction around his neck started to take their toll.

Jul 26 ▼

He had no idea what was happening and started to panic, breathing becoming extremely difficult, and realised he had seconds to do something - anything! He tried to claw at his neck, more out of instinct than anything else. There was no chance of finding a purchase though - he only had the ends of the fingers holding his short sword, and whatever it was that was strangling him was tight and thin - not enough to get a grip on easily in any event.

Abandoning any hope of escaping the vice-like grip that way, the young fighter instead cycled his legs around, trying to get some purchase on the wall next to him. The downside to last last ambit was that it further sapped his strength, but just as he was about to relent and give in to the inevitable he managed to gain the slightest of toe holds. It wasn't enough to support his weight, but it gave him the "something" he needed. With a strangled grunt he used as much strength as he could muster to try and swipe up, over his head with his longsword.

[Surestrike vs Filament: **1d20+13-2: 22**] - hits!
[Damage is **1d8+3: 8**]
[Daily Power Frost Longsword: **1d8: 2**]

The filament recoiled as the sword struck it and the grip loosened on the fighter, dropping him to the floor below.

Coughing so much that he nearly retched, Tradden moved backwards, holding one sword out in front of him whilst doing his best with the fingers on his other hand to try and massage some feeling back into his neck.

As he moved he looked upwards, trying to see exactly what had attacked him he could see only blackness. In his haste to back off however, the young fighter forgot what else was going on in the cave, and was only reminded when he bumped into a slightly annoyed Khalin.

"Watch it lad!"

Tradden smiled, painfully - he was at least now back on the ground and stood next to his battle-brother. Something else was nagging him at the back of his mind oh yes, the fact that the first creature they had met was also now stood next to him. The one he had tried to enrage into attacking him before.

"Uh oh"

 Me: **Bagrat**

Jul 26 ▼

The beleagured goblin was at the other side of the stalagmites from the rest of the group, and could not be seen or heard from.

[Removed from map until party have line of sight]

 Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Lurer**



Jul 26 ▼

The strange beast, it's filament now secure within its maw, advanced on the dwarf, its odd pincers clacking menacingly. It thrust its forelegs out and the pincers tried to snap down on **Khalin's** weapon arm.

[Cave Fisher Lurer Pincer: **1d20+10: 29** vs Khalin's AC(21)] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 6**]

The pincers clamped onto the dwarfs arm and their serrated edges cut a long, deep gash before they released an began their infernal clacking once more.

[Khalin Bloodied]



  Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Angler**

Jul 26 ▼

From up high in the shadows of the southern wall the filament snaked out again, whipping through the air, with a crack like a whip, towards the gasping **Tradden**.

[Cave Fisher Angler Filament Strangle: **1d20+7: 27** vs Tradden's Reflex(17)] - critical hit!
[Damage: **1d6+4: 10**] and [Pulled **3** squares] and [**Restrained**] (Save Ends)

The filament wrapped itself around the hapless fighter once more and dragged him to the base of the wall and into the air. **Tradden** tried his best to brace himself against the wall, but to no avail. It seemed as though he had been here before!



  Nick, me and Random: Seeing his friend hoisted off the ground and towards the ugly angler, Zero sprinted at an uncanny pace across the cave and grabbed his waist.

Jul 26 ▼

"No you don't, you horrible little..!" he growled, lifting his feet off the ground and putting his full weight on the fleshy tether.

[Attack vs Cave Fisher's Fortitude: **1d20+5: 12**] - misses!

Try as he might, **Zero** could not get his fingers around the filament to release it from his friend. Jumping up and down holding on to **Tradden** seemed to be turning the fighter blue, rather than helping him! The rogue then realised he too was off the ground, and being reeled in!

  Mark, me and Random: Khalin took a second to glance over his shoulder at the critical yet comical charade going on behind him.

Jul 27 ▼

"Will you two stop hanging around - we have enemies to smite!" he bellowed, hoping gallows humour might help where his hammer for the moment could not.

The dwarf was well aware that the duo needed help, but if he turned his back on the first monster it would have an opportunity to attack and the fight could be lost. Khalin resolved to remove the first Cave Fisher from the theatre, and quickly, then the problem of the unseen second beast could be properly addressed.


Through the crimson, blood-stained haze of battle, Khalin redoubled his efforts, hoping his comrades would take heart from his actions...

[Minor Action: Heroic Effort - allies gain +3 to damage rolls until Khalin no longer bloodied. Khalin gains 4+3 temporary hp]

"It's now or never," thought the dwarf as he brought his hammer to bear once more...

[Warhammer vs Cave Fisher Lurer: **1d20+7: 22**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+5: 15**]

The hammer thudded into the creature's shell, widening the cracks and exposing the soft flesh underneath.

 Me: Kireth looked briefly to his right at the dangling pair of idiots, scraping against the wall. Tradden had a filament around his neck and chest, squeezing the air from his lungs. Kireth's distant thought might be that a lack of blood to the brain wouldn't be anything knew for the fighter, so turned his attention back to the spiny creature attacking Khalin.



Jul 27 ▼

With a wave of his staff he unleashed another missile.

[Magic Missile vs Cave Fisher Lurer: Damage **2+4+1: 7**] - automatic hit!

The missile flew directly for the exposed flesh and sent a searing pain through the creature's body. After a moment or two of writhing, the creature slumped, and breathed it's last.
[Cave Fisher Lurer Dead]

Kireth strolled further into the cavern to see what all the fuss was about on the southern wall.

  Matt, me and Random: "**Urk!....**" choked Tradden as he again attempted to swipe above his head.

Jul 27 ▼

[Surestrike v Filament: **1d20+13-2-2: 11**] - misses!



[Save vs Restrained: **1d20+1: 2**] - failure!

 Me: **Bagrat**

Jul 27 ▼

The beleagured goblin was at the other side of the stalagmites from the rest of the group, and could not be seen or heard from.

[Removed from map until party have line of sight]



  Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Angler**

Jul 27 ▼

The filament around **Tradden's** neck continued to tighten an pull both the fighter and the rogue upwards alongside the wall.

[Cave Fisher Angler Filament Strangle Sustain]
[Damage: **1d6+4: 9**] and [Pulled **3** squares] (20ft from floor)

Tradden's vision was starting to blur with the lack of blood to his head, but **Zero** was intrigued to see a lip just above them and below the ceiling, perhaps a small cave, where the filament seemed to lead. The lip was still about five feet or so away, but in the gloom he thought he could make out the outline of some sort of beast moving, and could swear he heard slurping. The pungent aroma of rotting flesh assaulted his nostrils. The rogue wasn't too sure if going up was still a good idea, although the drop down didn't look too much fun either!

  Nick, me and Random: Too high up to consider dropping, Zero swung his leg over to the ledge and scrambled awkwardly for purchase.

Jul 27 ▼

[Athletics Check: **1d20+3: 19**] - success!

The rogue nimbly swung up and over and onto the ledge, peering into the gloom with trepidation as he drew his crossbow. Unfortunately, all he could see was darkness leading into the cavern wall - obviously some small chamber - and he couldn't decide whether it was reality or it was his imagination that envisaged a giant beast before him, with the filament protruding from its snout, jaws open, ready to swallow him whole.

  Mark, me and Random: With the first Cave Fisher now dead, Khalin quickly turned to Kireth, who had joined him in the middle of the cavern, and was surveying the predicament of their colleagues some distance above.

Jul 27 ▼


"Zero's on his own up there, I need to get up that cliff-face - I don't suppose you've got a levitation spell have you?" queried the warlord.

Kireth simply looked disdainfully down his nose at the dwarf.

"Thought not. What about a light spell up there? Zero's a sitting duck in the dark!"

With that Khalin hurried to the base of the rockface and quickly looked for handholds...

[Athletics check: **1d20+10: 22**] - success!
[Khalin climbs **2** squares] (10ft off ground)






Me: Kireth scowled at Khalin's comments as the dwarf hustled past him, but then began to smirk as he watched the dwarf scramble up the side of the cavern wall. There was only one way that could end.

Jul 28 ▼

With barely a motion the light at the end of Kireth's staff dissipated and another light began to shine outwards from Zero's crossbow, casting a shadow of the rogue on the cavern floor that the mage strode into.

Zero was almost blinded when the light took hold of his crossbow, his eyes took a few moments to adjust. When they did he could see a rounded passageway in front of him, perhaps four or five feet in diameter leading further into the wall, the filament taught along it's length. Only some ten feet in front of him the filament came to an end, attached to a horrific creature, similar to that on the cavern floor below, dribbling ooze from its protruding maw and clacking its pincers.

With the ooze, pincers, the smell of rotting flesh, the confines of the tunnel, and the exertions of the climb, Zero felt himself gagging, and had to use all of his reserves to keep himself steady.



Matt, me and Random: Something at the back of Tradden's mind told him that even though it was dark in the cave, it shouldnt be that dark... Things really were getting serious now - he could feel the strength ebbing away and the tips of his hands and feet were already starting to numb.

Jul 28 ▼

Lazily he swung his sword over his head.

[SureStrike v Filament: **1d20+13-2: 20**] - hits!

There was a squeal from above and the filament let go.

The young fighter felt something give, and there was a sudden lurch as gravity reinstated its general authority on items suspended in mid air. As an instinctive reaction the youth grabbed out, hoping to arrest his fall.

[Athletics Check: **1d20+10: 19**] - failure!

Tradden clawed desperately at the lip of the cave mouth but didn't manage to grab hold. For a moment he felt quite light-headed as he began tumbling and then realised that there was a dwarf below him on the wall. With a crash he buffeted into Khalin.

[Falling Tradden: **1d20+6: 16** vs Khalin's Reflex(14)] - hits!

Down came the pair together, slamming into the floor in a mixture of arms, legs, and furious beard!

[Tradden Acrobatics Check: **1d20+9: 23**]

[Reduces falling damage by **11**]

[Tradden Damage: **2d10: 12**] reduced to [**1** damage]

[Khalin Damage: **1d10: 8**]

[Both Khalin and Tradden are **Prone**]



Me: **Bagrat**

Jul 28 ▼

The beleagured goblin was at the other side of the stalagmites from the rest of the group, and could not be seen or heard from.

[Removed from map until party have line of sight]



Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Angler**

Jul 28 ▼

The strange beast didn't come forwards as Zero half-expected as he saw the filament snap back into its snout. The sound of crashing below him may have confused it for a moment, or it might be protecting something behind it. Instead, with a golllop, the filament shot out towards the rogue.

[Cave Fisher Angler Filament Strangle: **1d20+7: 18** vs Zero's Reflex(19)] - misses!

Zero was too quick for the line, though, and stepped quickly to one side as it swished in the air beside him and then retracted back into the snout.



Nick, me and Random: Zero heard the cries and crash of bodies colliding.

Jul 29 ▼

"Wonderful," he sighed, facing the monstrosity alone.



Kireth's light had illuminated the scene for him, but left him with nowhere to hide.

Given little option, he drew his crossbow and loosed off a shot at the creature before it could try grab him.

[Unbalancing Shot vs Cave Fisher Angler: **1d20+9: 27**] - hits!

[Damage: **2d6+4+3: 15**] and [**Slowed**]

The bolt thudded into the creature, spewing slime and spittle onto the tunnel floor.



Mark, me and Random: As he pulled himself to his feet Khalin could barely believe what had just happened.

Jul 29 ▼

"You're supposed to wait till you get to the top before breaking loose!" he raged, barely restraining himself from whacking his comrade around the head. What on earth had gotten into that boy lately? The dwarf added another item to the increasingly long list he needed to have 'a word' with Tradden about, if they ever made it back to the inn in Blackengorge. The warlord also silently considered how the trials and tribulations of the wild had seemingly purged his good humour. Again, perhaps a couple of flaggons of ale might be the cure.


[Move Action: Stand up from Prone]

No matter - once again there was no time for further recriminations right now. For the moment Zero was facing the multi-legged horror above alone. It might be the making (or breaking) of the rogue, but it would simply not do, and the warlord quickly scrambled back to the rockface, oblivious to the cuts, bruises and wounds he was accumulating.

[Swap Standard for Move]

[Athletics check: **1d20+10: 21**] - success!

For the second time the dwarf began to climb the wall, almost reaching the top, hanging onto the ledge by Zero's feet.






Me: Kireth watched the antics of the fighter and the dwarf with a wry smile. Although comical, it wasn't getting them any closer to riches or power.

Jul 29 ▼

However, for now there didn't seem anything else the age could do. Certainly he could send ribbons of force exploding into the tunnel above to destroy the creature therein, but Zero would bear some of the pain, and he had his uses still.

For now he was content to observe and be ready.

[Total Defence]



Matt, me and Random: Tradden took a huge breath of air. The environment was dank and cold, but right now it felt like warm chest full of warm spring morning.

Jul 29 ▼

It felt good to be able to breath again, and the young fighter stood up [Move Action] and rubbed at his neck for a second time. He adopted a suitably innocent-yet-pained look.

"I WAS being strangled to death you know..." he shouted at the now fast ascending figure of the Dwarf. "It may happen all the time to you Dwarves, living in your ... HEY wait for me!"




[Standard Action as Run/Climb. Athletics Check: **1d20+10: 30**] - critical success!

Clearly spurred on by Khalin's rebuke, Tradden launched himself at the wall, his nimble athleticism and strength allowing him to scale it as if it were merely one of the rolling hillsides outside Deepingwald.

Passing the Warlord on his way up he bounded over the edge of the cliff wall and ran past a startled Zero, standing between him and today's nemesis. He took a suitably heroic pose, laying his short sword over one shoulder * and pointing his longsword directly at the creature. Tradden was impressed at the whole move despite himself. Only Zero was present to see it, but the point was made.

"You!" he said to the burbling nightmare in front of him. There was a short pause whilst Tradden thought of something catchy to say. "You *Hold your tongue!*"


* - As a result of this he actually sliced off part of the collar of his shirt. He hoped Zero hadn't noticed.



Nick, me and Random: [Perception Check: **1d20+10: 30**] - critical success!

Jul 29 ▼

Not only did the rogue notice the tear, he also noticed the stains from Tradden's blood.





Me: **Bagrat**

Jul 29 ▼

The beleagured goblin was at the other side of the stalagmites from the rest of the group, and could not be seen or heard from.

[Removed from map until party have line of sight]



Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Angler**

Jul 29 ▼




Cornered and hurt, the strange creature thrashed out with its pincers at the new arrival, trying desperately to keep the metal swords at bay.

[Cave Fisher Angler Dual Pincers]
[First Pincer: **1d20+8+2: 20** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+6: 8**]

[Second Pincer: **1d20+8+2: 21** vs Tradden's AC(19)] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+6: 15**]

With two crushing strokes the beast tore through Tradden's armour and the creature dropped the limp body to the floor. It looked straight at Zero, with a cold, dark, piercing eye.

[Tradden Dying]



Nick, me and Random: Zero gawked as the capable fighter was felled and dropped like a torn sack of potatoes.

Jul 29 ▼

Yet, amidst the panic and fear, he managed to action a sensible survival plan.

[Preparatory Shot: **1d20+9: 27**] - hits!
[Damage: **5**]

The bolt pierced the creature's leg, causing it to stumble and leave an opening for the rogue.

[Cave Fisher Angler Bloodied]




[Zero gains CA until end of next turn]

[Spend Action Point]

He took the opportunity straight away.

[Hand Crossbow vs Cave Fisher Angler: **1d20+9: 13**] - misses!

But in the confines of the tunnel his next shot went astray!



Mark, me and Random: Khalin clambered over the lip of the ledge in time to see the creature stumble from Zero's first strike, and the rogue's second narrowly miss.

Jul 29 ▼

"Good work Zero!" cheered the dwarf, though his face fell when he saw that Tradden's valiant climb had ended with the young fighter prone and in a bad way.

"Come on lad!" Khalin urged, "a bold climb like that deserves a better ending!" and he willed his friend to stay conscious...

[Inspiring Word: Tradden spends a healing surge and regains **1d6+11: 17** hp]
[Tradden is conscious but Prone]

The dwarf managed the wisp of a smile as Tradden stirred and pushed himself back onto his elbows.

"Easy lad, stay down a moment," Khalin soothed as he stepped over the human to shield him.

The dwarf raised his shield and hammer and calmly addressed the beast before him, giving it the respect of a fellow subterranean dweller: "Now then lassie, I have no quarrel with you and your kind, but you struck first. You've brought this upon yourself."

The monster just clacked its pincers menacingly.

"So be it!" declared the warlord, and covering his comrades as best he could with his shield, he swung his hammer mightily at the beast...


[Shielded Assault vs Cave Fisher Angler: **1d20+7: 12**] - misses!
[+2AC to self and allies adjacent until end of next turn]

But to Khalin's dismay the blow cannoned off the thing's carapace. Unbowed the dwarf swung again, mindful that if the beast's pincers got to him he could be knocked off the ledge or worse, and Tradden and Zero would again be at its mercy...

[Spends Action Point]

[Warhammer vs Cave Fisher Angler: **1d20+7: 15**] - misses!

The beast was unharmed by Khalin's wild swings.



Me: Kireth looked at the wall and the climb, and the cluttered bodies in the light of his spell. There were shrieks and calls from the tunnel, but Kireth was firmly confident that his allies could stop one measly beast.

Jul 29 ▼

[Total Defence]

Me: **Bagrat**

Jul 29

The beleagured goblin was at the other side of the stalagmites from the rest of the group, and could not be seen or heard from.

[Removed from map until party have line of sight]

Me and Random: **Cave Fisher Angler**

Jul 29

The beast recoiled a little, being assaulted from range and from two creatures up close. It waved its pincers madly in the air.

[Dual Pincers Recharge: **1d6: 5**] - success!

It lunged forwards at the dwarf, the biggest target.

[Cave Fisher Angler Dual Pincers]
[First Pincer: **1d20+8-2: 8** vs Khalin's AC(21+2)] - misses!

[Second Pincer: **1d20+8-2: 25** vs Khalin's AC(21+2)] - hits!
[Damage: **1d10+6: 13**]

As the flurry of pincers struck the dwarf, Tradden took a swipe at his mark, it's soft underbelly exposed.

[Tradden Combat Challenge vs Cave Fisher Angler: **1d20+11-2: 14**] - misses!

However, from down below the dwarf's feet, aiming was harder than he anticipated.

Nick, me and Random: Zero loaded another bolt as fast as he could and fired at the thing while it was still staggered.

Jul 29

[Hand Crossbow vs Cave Fisher Angler: **1d20+9+2: 24**] - hits!
[Damage: **1d6+4+3+2d8: 16**]

The shot whistled past Khalin and struck the creature right in its snout. It continued to stagger for a moment and then let out an eerie whine, before crumbling to its knees, and then the floor. It coughed up some foul smelling blood, and then breathed no more.

[Cave Fisher Angler Dead]

Me: [...Combat Encounter Complete...]

Jul 29

Me: **Short Rest**

Jul 29

Healing Surges
Healing surges are applied.

Khalin spends 4 healing surges (4 left) to get to 41/41 hp.
Kireth spends no healing surges (8 left) and stays on 36/36 hp.
Tradden spends 3 healing surges (6 left) to get to 45/45 hp.
Zero spends no healing surges (6 left) and stays on 39/40 hp.

Encounter Powers
All encounter powers are recharged.

Levelling
No characters ready to level.

Me: The trio in the tunnel panted after their exertions. **Khalin** slumped down besides **Tradden**, who sat up against the side. The dwarf glowered at his comrade.

Jul 29

"Why are they always so ugly?" **Zero** asked, almost innocently.

Tradden and **Khalin** looked at him incredulously.

"Well, look at the disgusting brute," the rogue offered, motioning the lit-up crossbow at the beast. "At least those drake things have a certain aesthetic appeal."

The comment broke the tension and the pair began to roar with laughter.

From down below came a shout. "Have you finished yet? What's up there besides the creature?"

The trio just looked at each other.

Matt: "I don't know..." shouted down Tradden. "I will tell you something though - I am through trusting Goblins. If I see that little bastard Bagrat again I will run him through."

Jul 30

There was an odd darkness to Tradden's words which both Khalin and Zero picked up on. Looked like the young fighter meant it.

Me and Random: **Khalin** nodded in agreement, and then stood up, moving past the beast's carcass and taking a quick look around.

Jul 30

Beyond the dead creature was a small chamber, about twice the size of the creature, littered with bones that were picked clean, and some pieces of rotting flesh in the corner. **Khalin** instinctively put his hand over his nose and mouth, and thrust the torch further in to get a better look.

Judging by the way the bones were laid out in the centre of the chamber it appeared to be a nest of some sort - in the middle of the bones were three small eggs, glistening in the torchlight with a covering of goo.

[Khalin Perception Check: **1d20+2: 15**] - success!

In the nest, as part of the infrastructure were three stone vials, either indigestible by the creatures or mistaken for bones. Other than these, and the eggs, the chamber seemed to be bare of anything of note.

Matt, me and Random: Striding over with force, Tradden stood above the eggs nestled together in the middle of the macarbe collection. Raising one boot high he brought it down heavily. And then stopped half way.

Aug 2

He stood there for a moment, as if weighing something up.

"Awwwwwwwww - Nuts." he said, lightly placing his foot back on the floor. "What's the point - we are not coming back here and, do you know what, if Goblins inhabit this place then these creatures can have them."

Tradden turned back to the cliff wall. "I will go keep Kireth company whilst you two poke about - I know you want to!" He grinned.



Nimble descending the wall he re-joined the mage. Drawing another torch from his pack and lighting it, he also then drew his short sword. Prepared, he confided in the Half-Elf. "I was going to go and see if Bagrat was still kicking around, but I dare say he has scarpered anyway. Doesn't hurt to leave that torch I left on the stairs burning - we need all the light we can get in these damn caves."

Using a profanity in normal conversation was not like Tradden. If it impressed the mage, which it was unlikely to, it didn't show. He just stared at the youth.

"Anyway, I think it is still burning..." He scanned the stalagmites and stalagmites between them and where they had entered to see if he could see any flickering...

[Perception check if needed: **1d20+3: 5**] - failure!

Tradden couldn't see anything past the thick maze of stalagmites.



Me and Random: **Khalin** and **Zero** watched **Tradden** leave the passageway and climb down the wall with mild amusement. The dwarf then picked up the three stone vials, keeping a wide berth around the eggs, and stowed them in his pack before descending the wall. The magical light flickered out on **Zero's** crossbow, and reappeared on **Kireth's** staff. Left alone in the growing darkness, the rogue quickly followed the warlord to the cavern floor.

Aug 2 ▼

"What do you make of these, Kireth?" asked **Khalin**, passing the mage one of the vials from the nest.

Kireth turned it over briefly in his hand, noting the intricate carving of a stylised sun on the stopper. The vial was slightly warm to the touch, the stone smooth, the colour and ripple of marble, but surprisingly light. **Kireth** gave the vial a small shake, and he nodded in agreement to himself when he heard the slosh of liquid inside. He removed the stopper cautiously, and took a sniff.

[Kireth Arcana Check: **1d20+11: 29**] - success!

"Healing draughts, if I'm not mistaken," declared the mage. "Made by our friends from the Pelorian church, judging by the stoppers," he added, with a raised eyebrow.

"Yes, well, let's keep moving," offered **Khalin**. "We can't spend all day here. Where's that bloody goblin?"


Khalin started to squeeze through the stalagmites, heading back to the north, noting with a wry smile the scrapes and blood on the rock formations where he and **Zero** had been dragged through previously. When through, he held his torch up high to combat the darkness.

"Bloody runt has legged it," he shouted back through the barrier. "And he's nicked the lantern."

The dwarf began to push back through the stalagmites.

"Right, let's head down this way," said **Khalin** once he was back within the group, pointing to the south with his hammer along a passageway leading into darkness. "Maybe this fabled treasure, if there is such a thing, is down here."

The group nodded in unison and fell into order as they turned their heads towards the south.



Me:

Aug 2 ▼

[Party have found 3 Potions of Healing]


Potion of Healing (Level 5 Common)

This simple potion draws on the body's natural healing ability to cure your wounds.

Price: 50 gp

Potion

Power (Consumable, Healing): Minor Action. Drink this potion and spend a healing surge. Instead of the hit points you would normally regain, you regain 10 hit points.



Me: **Kireth** handed one of the vials each to **Khalin** and **Zero**, and then the group headed towards the south with care - **Zero** in the front, trying to spot anything out of the ordinary, and then followed by **Khalin** holding a torch. Not far behind were **Kireth** and then **Tradden**.

Aug 2 ▼

The passageway to the south was fairly straight, although the walls and ceiling were rough. However, the floor was fairly smooth, allowing the party to move onwards quietly. There was enough room to walk two abreast, but no more.

After about fifty feet or so, **Zero** could see that the passageway opened up a little into a larger chamber, and started to move forward to investigate.

[Zero Passive Perception: **20**] - success!

He suddenly halted, though, teetering on the edge of an open pit beneath his feet.


With a signal for the others to be wary, he peered down, using what light there was to try to figure out how far down it went. As **Khalin** closed on his shoulder he got a better view.

The pit seemed to be ten feet or so deep, perhaps once concealed by a layer of thin flagstone, now lying shattered at the bottom. Surrounded by the shards of stone was some sort of corpse, difficult to see in the flickering light from this angle.

"I think there's another trap over there," pointed **Zero** to the southwest. "You can just about see the elevated flagstone, yes?"




Khalin nodded, but the others just squinted into the murk.

"What is that down there?" asked **Tradden**, peering over the edge and gazing at the corpse.



Southern Tunnels

(Open Pit denoted by 'P' on map, other raised flagstone by a 'T')




Matt, me and Random: "Great..." said Tradden. "Looks like someone has been setting more traps. One for you Z - take a stroll round the corner would you, and let us know if you get impaled by anything?" he grinned at the Rogue with a wink.

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"I wonder who that was?" Tradden said to no-one in particular as he leant over the first pit, holding his torch out to see if he could shed any light on the subject.


[Perception Check: **1d20+3: 11**] - failure!

The torchlight failed to illuminate the scene enough to get a good look. Some sort of beast, but what sort was hard to tell without jumping down.

 Matt and me: "Oh, well," Tradden said, sitting on the edge and swinging his legs over. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained..."

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He nimbly made his way down into the pit to see what was down there...

 Me and Random: *The bottom of the pit was firm, but contained a thin lair of suspicious liquid that splashed as **Tradden** set down. He quickly moved to get his feet onto some of the larger pieces of fallen masonry. The thing at the bottom of the pit appeared to be a six-limbed reptile, about four feet long, decaying quickly, and obviously had been dead for some time.*

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A nose-wrinkling, snakelike musk still hung around the corpse.


Tradden poked the body with his sword, relaying some of what he saw to his comrades above.

[Khalin Dungeoneering Check: **1d20+4: 5**] - critical failure!

However, all he got back were a few shrugs.

[Tradden Perception Check: **1d20+4: 15**] - success!

The young fighter continued to prod out of curiosity, and noticed a green arm underneath the corpse. Shoving his boot against the reptilian corpse, he pushed it out of the way and revealed the decaying remains of a goblin, caught beneath. Strangely, in one hand it had a pair of open manacles held by the chain, and in the other a poker, its end rusting in the water of the pit.

 Matt: Tradden clambered out again, using his large frame to wedge himself between the two sides where needed.


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Once at the top he brushed himself down and relayed his findings to the group.

"I wonder if that beastie was a pet of some sort? Or whether it was looking to capture one of these things. Down here. Hmmm"

As the full realisation of what he had just said dawned on him, he drew one sword again. He had seen enough of strange cave creatures to last him a lifetime.

"We had best be careful..."

 Me and Random: *The group continued onwards, skirting the edge of the open pit and ensuring they stayed well clear of the covered one. As they ventured further south they saw a number of smaller tunnels, about a foot or more wide, leading away into the eastern rock face, but even thrusting a torch within did not light up where they led.*

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The larger area narrowed again, back to the ten foot wide passageway, as it led away westwards briefly and then back to the south, and then eventually turning east and away into gloom. The general scent of some form of musk became stronger the further they went.

[Khalin Perception Check: **1d20+2: 5**] - failure!

[Kireth Perception Check: **1d20+2: 8**] - failure!

[Tradden Perception Check: **1d20+4: 12**] - failure!

[Zero Perception Check: **1d20+10: 21**] - success!


[Group Perception] - failure!

The western passageway led off for about fifty feet before it looked as though it turned back to the north.

 Nick: Zero's face soured.

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"I don't like the smell of this," he whispered, creeping onwards.

 Me: *The group continued to inch slowly along the passageway, eventually turning to their left and looking northwards. Ahead, a few creatures were clustered around a small pile of loose coins and other objects. Most were small, similar in the size to the thing down the pit, but one was the size of a human. All resembled six-limbed reptiles with insectlike traits - silvery chitinous plates covering their bodies and short tails, and each had four limbs that ended in scythe-like claws. The creature's two forelimbs, closer to the body, had finer digits. Their heads were vaguely reptilian, and the lower jaw was a toothed plate, flanked by serrated mandibles.*

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When the light reached the creatures they began to chatter their mandibles together, creating an eerie and mesmerising clatter. From within the small tunnels dotted about the cavern, replies echoed out, surrounding the party with their cacophony. To the group's horror, they realised they would soon be surrounded!

 Me: [...continued in [Chapter #06, Scene #07...](#)]

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