

Synopsis


The 20th Day of Ches in the Year of the Sudden Journey

Descending into the gloom of a long forgotten ruin in the northern forest the party have found what appears to be more than a goblin lair. After battling goblins, strange creatures, and legions of undead they have discovered a dwarf hiding out in a hidden room, resting up to recover, before he ventures out once more.

- [Khâlin Grundokri](#) - 5th Level Male Dwarven Marshal (Warlord)
- [Kireth Majere](#) - 4th Level Male Half-Elven Arcanist (Wizard)
- [Tradden Aversward](#) - 5th Level Male Human Weaponmaster (Fighter)
- [Zero Uhlit](#) - 4th Level Male Human Scoundrel (Rogue)
- Rangrim Ironnose - Male Dwarf


Scene Length

This scene starts on Wednesday 5 October 2011 and is expected to be completed by the end of Friday 14 October 2011. Players are expected to be able to post at least once a day.

 **Me:** *The dwarf regarded **Tradden** for a moment as the young fighter delved into his pack. He rested his head back against the weapon rack behind him, and closed his eyes.* Oct 5 ▼

"It's a long story," *he sighed*, "and one, I hope, that isn't finished just yet."

*There was a sharp intake of breath from the dwarf as **Tradden** started to pull some of the rough material away that had been used as makeshift bandages. There was a lot of blood, and probably not all of it was the dwarf's, but it was obvious that there were a few cuts that were quite serious.*

 **Me:** "We'd been employed by Padraig of Winterhaven to try to find some missing people - a few farmers from Timbervale and the like. His 'Regulars' were pretty thin, so he'd turned to us. Oct 5 ▼
This is probably a couple of months ago - the snows had only just thinned, and at first we thought it might be that they'd somehow got lost in the snow.

"Turns out that it were a bit more than that, an' some crazy cult led by some elf had been kidnapping people with the help of some hobgoblins."

*The dwarf yelped as **Tradden** pulled away some of the material from his arm, revealing a number of cuts, sores, and burns over powerful, tattooed arms.*

"By the Nine Hells, you were right when you said you weren't a healer. Be bloody careful, eh?"

"I'm doing the best I can," *retorted **Tradden**, fishing about in his pack for his waterskin.* "Staying still might help."


*By this time, **Zero** had sat himself down in the southern corner, and had grabbed something out of his pack to eat; zombies, skeletons, and large pools of blood did nothing to help his constitution, and he barely picked at the meagre rations he had.*

***Kireth** stood next to **Zero**, by the southern wall, regarding the dwarf with a mixture of distrust and disgust. However, he seemed to be listening intently for a change.*

***Khalin** continued to stand still just inside the illusory wall, his mouth slightly agape, as though a thousand things were running through his mind, but he didn't know how to say them.*

 **Matt:** Tradden continued at his work, doing the best he could with the skills he had. Oct 5 ▼

Through a slightly muffled mouth due to one end of a bandage being held between his teeth, he asked: "*Where did you geth all theeth cuts and bruthes anyway? Hold still!*"

 **Me:** "I'm coming to that," *winced the dwarf as **Tradden** pulled another batch of cloth away from his arms.* "Are you sure one of you others isn't any better at this?" *he asked, nodding his head towards **Tradden**, before leaning back, closing his eyes and continuing his story.* Oct 5 ▼

"Anyway, we tracked this elf back down the King's Road past Winterhaven and then over the Gardbury Downs. It seemed he was heading west past the ruins of Kiris Dahn to somewhere. They'd had a fair head start, but we thought we were catching them.

"We had to take it slower over the Stonemarches - too many orcs, and worse, to be rash. Some of us were thinking of turning back, no use angering Korosphylax or Aethelinda, but Rhasgar kept us going, Bahamut's protection and the like, you know how paladins can get.

"Anyways, it seems that an ambush was laid for us, and they did a good job on us, too. I've cracked a few hobgoblin skulls in my time, but there were too many for the seven of us, even with Aukan - it took four of them just pin him to the ground."

The dwarf chuckled for a moment, then became more sombre.

"We were trussed up and thrown in bamboo cages and driven west. I had no idea where we were - there's not really any maps of west of the Stonemarch that I've seen. The journey was about a tenday - slow and rough going in the cages. A tenday locked in with the twins, I can tell you, was no fun.

"From what we could gather, the elf was further off to the west, but we were being taken to his 'master'. The cage-train stopped at these ruins and we were shoved down into this goblin-infested hole, locked up, and then tortured."

***Tradden**, by this point, had put salves on both of the dwarf's arms, and had begun to tear away bits of blood-soaked cloth from the dwarf's chest. The act drew a long hiss from the dwarf, and interrupted his train of thought.*

With a cry from the dwarf, and a mumbled apology from the young fighter, the last bits of material were pulled away, revealing a festering sore on the dwarf's chest - a brand, a circle with two horns, a shocking red, weeping pus at the fringes.

"By Moradin, surely one of you has some ale, or preferably something stronger, to take away some of this pain from this bloody 'butcher'!?"

The dwarf seemed to be keeping his spirits up, his endurance impressive, but the pain was taking its toll.

 **Me:** "Oh!" *managed **Tradden**, nearly gagging at the wound.* "That's not good." Oct 5 ▼

"What were they torturing you for?" *asked **Kireth**, quite calmly, passing the dwarf a wineskin.* "What were they after?"

The dwarf took a few long gulps of the wine, and his breathing returned to normal.

"No idea," *he exclaimed.* "Didn't really ask us any questions - I think they were just doing it for fun. There were a few others locked up, too, maybe some of the farmhands from Timbervale, but some dwarves and elves, and even another goliath, too.

"We managed a break out at one point - Miri managed a few other tricks - but without decent weapons, or armour, there were too many goblins to get far, and they penned us in again.

"Most of us were then sent downstairs. Some of the others didn't make it - they died on that rack. When I get my hands on that masked hobgoblin, I'm gonna take delight in showing him how torture is really done!

"Rhasgar told me to get away if I could - I sort of have a habit of being able to do that - and then find a way to help them all. The hobgoblins down there aren't the most organised I've seen, and I managed to slip away into the darkness. I followed them a bit further and there's something going on down there, something I don't like the look of, even further below. I couldn't follow them far, but they were being led on. The place stank of death, or worse, and I swear I could hear chanting.


 Matt, me and Random: As the Dwarf had been speaking Tradden had continued to work. He had cleaned wounds and applied salves and bandages as best he could. Putting the remains of his kit back in his pack he stood up and dusted off his hands. Oct 5 ▼

From what the young fighter could tell, he'd done a pretty good job with the tools at his disposal. It looked as though the dwarf would pull through. There'd be a few nasty scars if he didn't get to a proper healer in due course, though, and there didn't seem to be any way the brand could be removed.

"So" he started casually "I am intrigued to know how exactly you managed to 'slip' away from your captors? Forgive the tone of my question but just as you were sceptical of us... if those hobgoblins were so unorganised how is it only you who is free? Were you not chained?"

As I said, I sort of have a knack at 'getting away'. We are pretty bedraggled, they'd really done a number on us. I think they nearly killed Aukan, and the twins and Sorrow looked on their last legs. Miri wasn't talking, and only Rhasgar and I seemed to have any fight in us left. I guess the hobgoblins figured we weren't much of a threat. They're all tougher than the hobgoblins think though, and I'm sure somehow they'll all survive until I can figure out a way to get to them.


Neil: Plausible but only led to ten more questions. For now Kireth just tapped his chin, nodded and waited to see what the others had to say.

 Matt: "*A pleasure.*" said Tradden, with an ever so slightly forced smile. "*You mentioned, Rhasgar, was it, a Paladin? Are you a follower of Bahamut yourself?*" Oct 5 ▼

"Bahamut, me?" *he asked, more of himself than of Tradden.* "No, I'm not sure he'd have me. I'm more of what you might call a 'free agent', although Avandra has her own certain kind of appeal I guess! Rhasgar's pretty devout, and keeps trying to bring me within the 'fold', but then again most Dragonborn are. He certainly wears his heart and soul on his sleeve."

"I can tell you're not from around here, nor are you from The Iron Circle, your, er, dress sense," Rangrim nodded towards **Tradden's** boots, shirt, and cloak in turn, "Is, well, niche at best. I guess you don't get out much, eh? Must have been a bit of a trek from the Dragondown Coast to get to here, I guess. Two hundred leagues, you say? I didn't think the Midnight Sea stretched that far east. Well, you learn something new every day."

Mark: Khalin looked pleadingly towards Tradden, apparently unsure quite how to break it to the newcomer that civilisation was alive and well far out on The Great Sea. Tradden's mouth curled as he shrugged awkwardly back at his friend. Then he double-taked. "East?!" Khalin spluttered. "The Great Sea is west of here. How far have you travelled?"

 Me: Rangrim's quizzical look grew sterner. "You've come from the west!? But there's nothing out there." Oct 6 ▼

He sank back a bit, breathing hard.

"I must be losing a lot of blood," he muttered. "Either that, or you lot have been broken by the torturer and you've all gone mad."


He tried to stand, but thought better of it as the room swam a little bit.


"I guess we were a little mad to head west over the Stonemarch ourselves - there's nothing but sharp teeth, claws, and broken ruins out this way. Well," he added with a shrug, "until we were dragged to this place, I suppose. And met you," he finished with a steely eye.

Rangrim regarded **Khalin** for a while, who stood silently, trying to think how to get across his bursting thoughts. The dwarf then looked at the others. Seeing the same sort of look, he decided to continue.

"Look, I'm not sure where you're from, and frankly at the moment I don't really care, I'm just glad you're here and able to help. I'll be even more glad if you can assist further, and help me rescue my friends. But, you seem pretty sincere about where you've come from, and you'd find it hard to make up your funny accents, so I'll believe you. I guess we can discuss the finer points of geography when we're out of this mess. Anyways, Rhasgar and Sorrow know more about the lands round here than I do."

The dwarf tried to get up once more, and this time managed it, albeit holding onto the rotting wooden rack behind him. Strength seemed to be returning to him slowly.

 Neil: The current line the conversation was following seemed to be confusing the dwarf. Whether he was being truthful with them may still be up for debate but his confusion at their references to the islands was real. Whoever he really was and wherever he came from, they seemed to have no knowledge of the great retreat from the mainland all those years ago. Oct 6 ▼

 Me: It was **Zero** that broke the short silence following Rangrim getting to his feet. The dwarf was stretching his arms out, trying to work out where the stiffness and pain still lay. It was the tattoos on the dwarf's arms, half hidden by the bandages, that had caught the rogue's eye. Oct 7 ▼

"Say, what are those markings on your arms?" inquired **Zero** politely. "They sort of look like writing."

Rangrim looked up at **Zero**, catching him with his steely-eyed stare. **Zero** felt a flash of defiance, and didn't back down, returning the stare as best he could.

"They're reminders," offered Rangrim, any sense of prior jolity lost.

"Reminders for what?" pressed **Zero**, his curiosity outweighing his caution.

Rangrim continued to stare at the rogue, sizing him up, gauging his qualities. He scanned **Zero's** clothes and armour, the weapons at his belt and thigh, the hooded cloak, and the way he sat in the shadows with his back to the wall, alert and watching all of this time.

"Have you ever been caught, rogue," Rangrim stressed the last syllable, "when out and about, 'minding your own business?'"


Zero shuffled uncomfortably. He'd never really thought of himself as a thief, the trinkets that he 'acquired' always passed quickly through his hands to the next new plaything that was amusing him at the time. He'd never really thought of it as theft.

He'd never been caught, either. There had been a few close calls - flights in the middle of the night, naked and cold, to avoid a furious father or two, and a number of times he'd had to talk his way out of 'misunderstandings', but he'd never been apprehended.

"I'll take that as a no," stated Rangrim, cutting through the uneasy silence. "Well, I did - and now I have these to remind me not to get caught again. Something I don't intend on doing."

The uneasy silence returned, but not for long - a grin spread across Rangrim's face as he picked at the bandages on his chest covering the brand mark.

"Hmm, perhaps I need to heed my own advice, eh?" the dwarf chuckled.

 Me: Rangrim began flexing his arms and legs tentatively, twirling the knife he still held in his fingers. Oct 8 ▼

"These goblin knives aren't much good," he commented. "Blade probably would've broken off if I had pushed it under your ribs, eh?" he joked casually at **Tradden**.

"I think I must have passed out when I first came in here, it's a bit of a haze. Must have only come to after I've rolled over and I'd come through the illusion. I'd not had much chance to look around," Rangrim continued, turning and starting to inspect the remains of the weapon racks, "before I saw you lot barge in."

"Well, what have we got here, hmm?" he mused as he was joined by **Tradden** and **Khalin** to inspect the weapons. "Think I need something better than this knife to get down there and rescue the rest of them, I guess."

Tradden took the chance to offer support. "Well, we were sort of heading that way, if you mean the stairs down nearby. We've pretty much swept the rest of this area, ridding the world of a few more goblin pests, and their pet creatures. Some strange ones, too, including the zombies just out here."

The young fighter puffed out his chest a little at his tale, between the goblins, drakes, cave fishers, kruthik, slimes, zombies, and skeletons, he felt they had grown in stature somewhat.

"Don't get cocky, kid," returned the dwarf. "There's plenty of pain down those stairs, I can tell you, and I'm not here for fun."

Tradden flushed with the retort - he hadn't quite meant it like that.

"Neither are we," he spat back. "In fact we're down here to rescue someone ourselves, an elven ranger named Gilmorril. We've done our best so far, and intend on keeping doing so!"

Khalin rested a hand on **Tradden's** shoulder and spoke in a softer tone. "Maybe you've seen him, Rangrim?"

Rangrim turned back to **Khalin** and thought for a moment. "Well, there were more than a dozen or so that were taken downstairs together. Me and the crew, and six, maybe seven others. Let's think. Hmm, yeah, there were three, maybe even four dwarves, a couple of humans - a man and a woman - and an elf. Not sure if it was your fella, Gilmorril - I think the goblins seemed to enjoy torturing elves even more than us dwarves - he wasn't conscious for most of the time, and kept babbling about some gorge."

Tradden and **Khalin** exchanged hopeful glances, as Rangrim pulled out a spear from the weapon rack. It was rusted, quite badly, and the dwarf tossed it to one side.


"Bloody useless," he exclaimed. "Looks like this lot has been in here for ages."

Khalin scanned the rack - most of the weapons were rusted beyond any use, and those that weren't were either bent or broken.

"Well, perhaps we should join forces, Rangrim. Maybe we'll be able to save both your friends, and ours? Here, as a token, here's my warhammer. Perhaps this is a weapon more of a liking to a kinsman?"

The warlord unfastened his warhammer from his belt, a weapon that had served him well through numerous battles, and handed it over to Rangrim. The dwarf turned it over in his hands.

"An unusual make, quite light, nice," he commented as he took a couple of practice swings. "It will do well, kinsman, until I recover my own. It will be an honour to fight alongside you." He made a gracious bow to **Khalin**, before succumbing to another fit of coughing.

 Matt: Tradden flicked through the various weapons and armours on the racks, almost as a shopper would at a rack at one of Deepingwald Highstreet's finer "off the peg" boutiques. A sudden thought struck him... Oct 7 ▼

"Do you use a shield at all...?"



Me: Rangrim moved to the southern rack and started inspecting the items there, nudging up alongside **Zero**.

Oct 8 ▼

"Shield?" *he said*, "No, no use for those. I like to keep one of my hands free - you never know when it'll be needed. Armour wouldn't go amiss, though, if you happen to have any spare. Something light, I don't like to be weighed down."

"I'm afraid not," *apologised **Khalin***, *assuming the question was aimed solely at him, being of the same stature and similar build.*

"Hmm, shame," *commented Rangrim, looking at **Zero***. "What about you? You're a bit taller, but I dare say you like your good food and wine, do you have anything?"

Zero frowned - *he wasn't tall and thin like **Tradden**, he had what he thought was a 'pleasant' size, not squat and broad like the dwarf. Plus, with the last tenday of excitement, coupled by the poor travel rations on this most recent trip, he was actually starting to thin. Still, the dwarf did have a point - somewhere he had his old leather now that he had strapped on the torturer's magical leather. Without a word, he eased into his pack and started fishing about for the leathers.*

Rangrim noticed **Zero's** industry and offered thanks. "If we live to get out of here, I'll be sure to return them."

Zero paled somewhat at the prospect.

"Ach, don't worry, lad," *said the dwarf with a comforting tone*. "If they're alive down there, and we can get them free, we'll have some formidable allies with us, even if they're unarmed."

"Rangrim, just so we make sure there's only enemies we attack, who's in your party? If we can free some of them, what can they do to help?" *asked **Khalin***, *his tactical mind always thinking.*

"Well, Rhasgar is probably the best dragonborn warrior I've ever seen, or the most foolhardy, depends on how you look at it, the amount of times he wades in with just a prayer to Bahamut on his lips. Aukan's size and strength is legendary, and once he decides nothing is moving past him, the decision is made. The halfling twins throw magic about like it's going out of fashion, and Sorrow can tell tales that fill your heart and soul with the energy to defeat enemies with your bare hands. Last, but not least, is Miri. She has her ways, let's just leave it at that.

"What about you lot? I guess you're the leader, Khalin, yes? You and Tradden here look like warriors. Zero," *Rangrim said, turning towards **Zero***, "it was Zero, right? Well, you look you're a sniper, is that right? That crossbow you wear at your thigh looks well used, and you seem quite adept at blending into the darkness when you wish."

The dwarf turned towards **Kireth** and looked the mage - *who was leaning on his staff, his thoughts a long way away - up and down*. "Hmm, and a wizard," *he said, disapprovingly.*



Me: **Kireth** dismissed the comment with barely a thought. This dwarf was but a pawn in a larger game, and barely worthy of his attention. Still, he might have his uses yet.

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"Do the names Helvec, or Skauril mean anything to you, Rangrim?" *asked the mage calmly.*

The dwarf thought for a moment, before shaking his head. "No, should they?"

"I was just wondering if either of these were the name of the elf you were tracking," *replied **Kireth***.

"Oh, I see," *said Rangrim*. "Well, Rhasgar or Sorrow usually take care of the details. I'm sure if there was a name, one of those two would know."

"I see," *remarked **Kireth***, *as he fished around in the folds of his robes*. "And what about this amulet - perhaps the symbols have some meaning for you?"

Kireth passed an amulet across to the dwarf - *the plain wooden one with the small swirl for decoration - who studied it for a moment*. "Well, I'm no artisan, but it seems pretty worthless to me. Not sure I like the symbol on it, sends the shivers up me spine."

"Indeed," *stated **Kireth***. "Khalin, you have a necklace too, do you not?"

Khalin looked blankly at the mage for a few seconds, before he remembered the dragon figuring necklace he carried in his pack. *He fished it out and offered it to Rangrim to take a look.*

"It's the image on the base we're not too sure about," *said **Khalin***. "Looks like a skull... with horns..."

The warlord hesitated at his own words.

"A bit like your brand, I suppose," *he said, the words faltering and thoughts fleeting across his mind.*

"You might be right," *returned Rangrim*. "Though I've no idea what the brand might mean. I'm stuck with it, whatever the case - I hope it's not some foul symbol!"



Me: As **Tradden** and **Khalin** continued their investigations around the room, **Zero** passed his original leathers across to Rangrim, who started to adjust the straps and hold it up against his body to judge the size.

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"Looks like we'll make this fit, lad," *said the dwarf as he started strapping on the leathers with a grimace*. "Won't be perfect, but it'll do. Tight across the chest, but it'll probably hold me together, eh?" *he joked.*

"Looks like it's seen some action, too," *Rangrim continued, admiring the scuffs, cuts, and tears from previous battles*. "And looks as though it's been through worse - have you been swimming or something in this?"

"We ended up in the sea as we headed to Blackengorge on 'The Guiding Fire'," *started **Zero***, *before faltering as the thoughts of black, shadowy tentacles rising from the ocean and wrapping themselves around his body floated to the front of his mind.*

"Blackengorge? Where's that then? Not heard of that one." *replied Rangrim casually.*

"That's what I've been trying to tell you," *muttered **Khalin** from the far corner of the room*. "And we think this place used to be Caulkin Keep, does that ring any bells?"

The warlord seemed to be getting a little frustrated at not being able to make Rangrim understand where they had come from.

"Nope, not heard of that one either. As I said, Rhasgar and Sorrow are the ones that know more about places than me. If we get a move on," *he added*, "perhaps they'll still be alive to help."

Khalin looked up from the ragged suit of armour he was inspecting on the eastern wall with a look of disappointment. *There was something inside him that just wanted to be welcomed 'home', and yet he felt just as far away from being on the mainland now as he had been on The Islands.*

He turned back to the suit of armour - *a few more minutes and they'd be done in here, and could get back to finding Gilmorril, and hopefully saving these other prisoners. He prodded the plate mail but found to his dismay it was almost rusting through, his finger knocking out a small hole. The helm atop the mail began to wobble, and before **Khalin** could react it fell to the floor with a clang, drawing stares from everyone.*

Khalin shrugged apologetically, picking up the helm, and for no reason that he could think of, tried to put it back on top of the armour.

It was then he noticed the plaque.



Me: In comparison to the armour that hid it, the plaque seemed to be new. It gleamed richly in the torchlight, a small silver oblong bound to the wall in some unknown way. It wasn't big, perhaps only the size of **Khalin's** hand, but it bore an inscription, beautifully worked into the metal and inlaid with a fine blue dye.

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To **Khalin's** joy the words were Dwarven, and he could understand their meaning even if the flow of text seemed somewhat archaic.


"Here, fellows," *he called*. "Listen to this."

The group stopped what they were doing and turned to listen, as **Khalin** cleared his throat and read out in a clear voice, translating the words into Common as best he could.

"A wondrous treasure,
Valued by all, sought by many.
Found in both victory and defeat,
Yet never at the bottom of a treasure chest.
It marches before you like a herald,
And lives long after you are gone."

Khalin turned around to face the others. "That's all it says," he shrugged.

[Party complete Investigative Rest]
[Party have spent 8 minutes]

 Matt and me: "Ha!" laughed Tradden, with a touch of sarcasm apparent. "That's easy."


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He stalked over to where Khalin stood and took a moment to read over the plaque himself before continuing.

"I might be a 'young whelp', but I do remember things. Sir Harbek gave me the answer to this when he was in the middle of telling me how rubbish I was."

He held his head up, thrusting his chin out, before speaking.

"It's 'honour'. The answer is 'honour'."

 Me and Matt: The room was silent for a few moments. Then, slowly, the group resumed checking their gear, ready for moving on as nothing happened, Tradden himself going over to Rangrim to see if there was anything else he might need if he were to fight. The two compared notes for a few moments. **Khalin** stroked his beard thoughtfully.

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"Hmmm. Yes, but what is the Dwarvish for "Honour" laddie?" he asked, with a grin.

The young fighter was delving in his pack, but took a moment to look up. He had to think about it for a second.

"Erm.... Hrazak?" he offered. "Why?"

Khalin waited silently. Nothing happened. Tradden just raised his eyebrows and went back to his pack. Khalin's eyes never left the plaque - he just "hmmmd" to himself and continued stroking his beard.

 Nick: "Errrrr, fame?" suggested Zero. He liked brainteasers.

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 Neil: Kireth smiled. He had been stood quietly watching the others considering this and was pleased to see the thief offer up the "correct" suggestion.

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He nodded at the stout fellow and actually smiled. "Precisely" he said "I dare any one of us to say we do not wish to be remembered. Reknown, reputation. The three R's some call them." he then went quieter, his voice becoming not much more than a mumble "but at what cost?"

 Matt: Tradden's face screwed up a little as he thought about this.


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"Sorry, I don't see the difference?"

Maybe it was his rather sheltered upbringing, maybe it was because he sometimes found it hard to shift his view when he had latched on to something.

 Neil: "The difference in a word? In common conversation, perhaps nothing. In magic, EVERYTHING" snapped Kireth

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 Matt: Tradden seemed about to say something, but then didn't. Instead, he just mumbled to himself and went back to checking his pack. It seemed that he couldn't do anything right of late - everyone was shouting at him! "It isn't even a magic thing, it's just a plaque!" he thought to himself.

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 Neil, me and Random: Ignoring the muttering and over-exaggerated tightening of straps coming from the corner, Kireth decided to cast a closer eye of this plaque and the area in general.

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He closed his eyes and listened for the sweet music only he could hear.

[Arcane Check: **1d20+11: 21**] - success!


The magic in the area seemed to be concentrated on the illusory walls, an ancient dweomer, but still strong. The rest of the room was silent to **Kireth's** senses.

 Mark, me and Random: Kireth peered at the plaque, then raised his head again, apparently satisfied with whatever he'd discerned. The dwarf turned back to study it once more...

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[Dungeoneering check: **1d20+4: 7**]

It seemed to be a plaque. Fastened to the wall. With writing on it.

 Matt, me and Random: Finally ready to go, Tradden picked up the torch from where he had left it.

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"Look", he said, "its only a plaque! Lets move out."


He did walk over though, one last time, just to see.

"Nice plaque mind. Lovely effect with the dye. Mr Ironfoot would have loved that. Big on ornate descriptions, Mr Ironfoot."

[Perception Check: **1d20+4: 15**]

The plaque was still there. On the wall.

"Lovely dye work. Do you know who else would have liked this, Caldring would have...."

 Me and Matt: "Right," concluded **Khalin**, interrupting the young fighter, aware of the passing time. "Let's make a move."

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The group headed out of the hidden armoury and across the open chamber to the top of the stairs. From somewhere down below came the soft orange glow of torchlight - at least the area was lit.

"So," whispered **Khalin** to Rangrim. "You said hobgoblins down there, right?"

"Yes," replied Rangrim softly. "I saw about a dozen, but there are probably more."

"Right, Zero and I will go first as normal. Rangrim, you stay close to Kireth in the middle, and Tradden you bring up the rear."

The warlord snuffed out his torch and cast the spent wood back into the chamber. He then unclipped his new hammer, and started slowly down the stairs.

 Me and Random: It looked as though the stairway led downwards at least thirty feet, but before the group reached the bottom they could hear the noises and industry of what they assumed were the hobgoblins. With a few measured steps, **Khalin** and **Zero** could peer into the chamber below.

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The stairs descended into a large, torchlit chamber, two human-sized creatures - obvious as hobgoblins even from behind - stood near the entranceway. Big, pointed ears stood out from under their

heimets.

[Khalin Stealth Check: **1d20+3: 22**] - success!
[Kireth Stealth Check: **1d20+4+1: 10**] - failure!
[Tradden Stealth Check: **1d20+4: 20**] - success!
[Zero Stealth Check: **1d20+13: 14**] - critical failure!
[Rangrim Stealth Check: **1d20+11: 23**] - success!

A simple scrape of a boot from the usually reliable **Zero** was enough to alert the guards at the bottom of the stairs. They turned slowly, looking up the stairs into the blackness, their sharp teeth glittering in their mouths.

One of the guards yelled out a challenge phrase: "Shadow seeks shadow!"

Khalin turned to look at Rangrim, but the dwarf simply shrugged his shoulders.

 Matt: Tradden tried to unsheath one sword as quietly as he could.


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"We really need to start paying attention to possible pass-words..." he hissed, to no-one in particular.

☐ Neil: The party had frozen their descent. They all exchanged glances with numerous shrugging of shoulders. Kireth decided anything was worth a shot, it was all probably going to end up in stabbing and screaming anyway.

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"Night engulfs light" he tried not to make it sound like a question.

 Me: The pair of hobgoblins looked at each other quizzically, and for a moment **Kireth** thought he had chanced upon the correct pass-phrase.

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Then one of the hobgoblins snarled, as they both grabbed their flails from their belts.

"Intruders!" it screamed out over the chamber, and began to charge forwards.

 Me: [...continued in [Chapter #07, Scene #01](#)...]

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