

20-MAR-2010

Tonrar and Issaria Snowleaf are attacked in their respective rooms while the others are relaxing in the Last Drop's common room. Tonrar is badly injured in the attack and Issaria is abducted. A note pinned to Tonrar demands that the Dwarrowdelve scroll is left in a local house, or Issaria will be killed.

At this point Ethan Quarry arrives, the town Sheriff. He deputises the group and begins preliminary enquiries in a gruff fashion, quickly ascertaining that a group of men were allowed to enter the town by a gate guard. He sends two of men, Kristof and Drayon to fetch the gate guard for interrogation, and invites the adventurers to sit in on the interview.

Bartholomew, the gate guard, is initially tight-lipped, but Quarry quickly loosens his tongue with a somewhat direct approach. Bartholomew was paid to allow a group of five men access to the town. He has never seen their faces but remembers one of them has yellow eyes and was called the Master, and that the men wore green cloaks. One had a black crown tattoo on his hand. He saw them leaving on horseback, carrying a large sack. He was paid with Graveweed, a potent narcotic, and has been in the outlaws - and the Master's - employ for some time.

Ragaan's House

The group chooses to investigate the house where the drop is supposed to take place, an abandoned house belonging to the former crime lord Ragaan. Hilda Ungart sneaks in and opens the door. Dust is thick on the floor and there is little sign of any activity, with two exceptions. One is an extensive cellar complex and in one of the upper bedrooms, footprints lead to the window from the fireplace. There are no secret passages, but Hilda Ungart finds a small safe with some gold and a waterlogged map to a location in the mountains.

Looking out of the window, the group notices that the house is surrounded by mist - although the town itself is unaffected. Unnerved, the group hear a thump on the roof. Mist starts to pour down into the fireplace into the room. The group try to start a fire, but the fire won't catch - deciding that discretion is the better part of valour, the adventurers retreat into the inner garden.

A few minutes pass then all hell breaks loose. An inhuman roar of anger echoes from the upstairs rooms and the windows shatter outward. A monstrous bat-like humanoid stands amid the wreckage, and takes flight. Chewey attempts to hit it with an arrow, scoring a minor wound as it wings toward the mountains. Immediately Chewey feels a massive mental assault, but the dwarven Ranger manages to weather it - although he feels marked in some way.

After this incident, the group head downstairs to investigate the cellar complex. Discovering a cache of rusty weapons and armour, the adventurers also find a secret door. The door opens in a long earthen tunnel that ends in a subterranean chamber. Dug out of the slimy black earth is a depression, six feet long, three feet wide, and one foot deep. A narrow tunnel winds upward, and Chewey squirms his way upward - he emerges in the Hammerfall Pass necropolis. As he slides back down to report his findings, he sets off a cave-in that quickly threatens to bury the whole chamber, and the group retreats.

The Mountain Hideout

Quarry is unconcerned by the groups report, certain the town watch can handle what he believes was a Mandragora. First thing in the morning, the group head into the mountains proceeding with a certain amount of caution. They find themselves in a narrow canyon after following the map. When the group spots a lookout, they decide to see if they can neutralise the sentry after nightfall.

Chewey kills the sentry, and Damien Kross assumes the bandit's likeness through a magical spell, but not before the sentry blows an alert on the whistle he carries. Kross heads down into the valley, while the group make preparations for their assault. Damien Kross notices a corral containing horses and a green-cloaked sentry watching him get closer. The sentry disappears inside and Kross hears raised voices, demanding to know why the guard didn't ask Kross for the password - the wizard decides to make a hasty exit!

At first light, the adventurers attack the complex, but come under heavy fire from the top of the canyon. Dodging arrows, the group make it into the complex, where they quickly learn that there are more than five bandits, according to the bedrolls laid out. The adventurers sneak up to the roof of the canyon and surprise attack the bandits, resulting in a victory for the group. As they climb back down, they hear the sound of running feet - although no one appears to challenge them.

The adventurers press onwards through the caves, discovering an opulent bedchamber, currently occupied by two women, both very pale and obviously no longer human, as their mouths gape open to reveal razor-sharp pointed teeth. The two vampire-spawn women attack the party, but when one is slain, the other turns to mist and flees through a chimney.

The rooms show signs of someone having left in a hurry as the group hunts for Issaria. Mike Smithson triggers a *firetrap* left on a magic user's room where Damien Kross appropriates a spell book he finds there. In the opulent master bedroom they discover a large chest, filled with gold and curios.

In a jail cell nearby, the group finds [[Issaria Snowleaf] - she is muttering about yellow eyes and has a nasty hand-shaped burn on her arm, and appears to be under some kind of spell. As Daemon and Xantha Lukka heal their wounds, the group find more loot and prepare to make their return to Hammerfall Pass.

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