

Border Watch

Session 8 8-7-02 Secret Base II

Next Session Monday 29-7-02 (19:30) At The George & Dragon

Lurking around the deserted mining camp the party discuss their next move. Solipsis and James assume that more Orcs will arrive shortly, despite any evidence to support this assertion. Solipsis insists that they tidy the area to disguise their recent Orc and Skeleton slaughtering activities. Snatch tries to reset the crossbow trap but fails to manage it, fortunately not impaling himself or anyone else in the process. Ryan is gently conveyed to a nearby building with Harn in attendance, as Soli's tidy-up operation gets under way. They spend some time looking for a secret passage in the bar but find nothing. Later Solipsis thinks he sees evidence of a track on the northern side of the camp but without their Ranger they can't be sure, or even see where it might lead. Rufus decides that there must be another entrance to the mines as Snatch explains his rather bizarre plan of poisoning the Orcish drink without using any poison. As darkness falls they wander around unsure of their next action, setting ambushes for foes that don't appear and generally milling around in an undecided manner. Solipsis casts CLW on himself and Harn before dozing off.

The Next day - Now what?

After 2 CLW's from Solipsis, Ryan is back in business again and immediately proceeds to discover the track that Soli had suspected from the previous night. After a quick check of their horses, all ok, no problems, Bod takes a careful look around the building concealing the shaft. They decide to send a scout down and Snatch bravely volunteers. While they loudly discuss this Solipsis goes to the stables and notes that although the orcish wagons are devoid of cargo, they are well provisioned, as if for a long journey. Communicating this information to the others both Soli and Bod quickly draw the same conclusion. This wasn't a guard patrol; they were caravan guards, having a rest and quaffing some ales before commencing their return journey. Noticing the racket they are making they quieten down as they tie four ropes together to provide a signal line for Snatch as he descends on the main rope.

Down Down Deeper and Down

Snatch is lowered down into darkness deep under the old mining camp. 50, 100, 150 feet and still he sees nothing. After a seeming eternity he feels the air move more freely around him as he swings in an open space suddenly locating a heat source below and to the side of him. After a moment of listening where he hears rather loud snoring, he tugs on the signal rope and is quickly lifted back up to the top. Bod is sure they have found "The back door". Snatch and Bod make extensive use of their rope skills as the assault plan is hatched. In total silence Rufus and Bod are lowered down into the stygian darkness (what do they care, they're Dwarves). As they descend into the open space they see just what Snatch had described and within a few more seconds the heavily armed and armoured Dwarven warriors touch ground. As their eyes become used to not-quite total darkness they pick out the shape of a dozing Orc sentry. Hefting his battleaxe, a grinning Rufus sneaks up to his favourite prey. One sharp swing and it's over as the Orc slumps to ground with barely a sound. Bod tugs a rope, sending the agreed signal, which causes the two ropes to snake up into the shaft and within a few minutes they are joined by the others, except for Joseph who remains on the surface guarding the entrance. In the distance they hear snatches of conversation and other less savoury noises.

Are We The Baddies?

Spreading out into the darkness they see rough-hewn corridors leading from the chamber. There is a dim light provided by torches in sconces at about 50 ft intervals. As the dwarves "tut-tut" over the clumsy human mining, Snatch, scouting ahead finds a large room packed with bunks and sleeping Orcs! Sneaking back to the group he hisses, "Rizla, you're with me!" The two thieves pad silently into the bunkroom each approaching a sleeping Orc. Five seconds later two Orcish throats are slit and James has yet another compromise to consider as he crouches in the darkened corridor. Using their stealth abilities to the max, Snatch and Rizla dispose of the next two Orcs. Over the next few minutes in a stunning display of stealth, they manage to murder the entire barracks room of twenty sleeping Orcs. James can't deny the tactical advantage but his heart is heavy as the two thieves return to the party casually wiping their bloodstained hands.

Given four different directions, with amazing luck, they Go North

As they head north, through a dark corridor it dawns on James that the Orc party they so successfully destroyed at ground level was merely a guarded caravan train, such as they had seen earlier, and not a base guard patrol as they had assumed. Presumably the base was considered adequately disguised without drawing attention to a location within Furyondy patrolled by Orcs. Indeed the more James thinks about this the more ridiculous the idea of Orcish guard patrols in Furyondy seems. Imagine, for example, a patrol of Paladins close to the hellholes of Dorakaa... "Hmm nice idea he thinks", until Snatch, scouting ahead, rounds a corner and runs straight into two Orcs! James snaps out of his reverie and along with Bod and Rufus does what comes naturally – CHARGE!

The Battle of The Cragson Mines

Summoned by the noise, more Orcs pour into the chamber and a desperate melee breaks out. Almost instantly Bod and Rufus dispose of the front rank, Snatch scrambles about trying to find a backstab opportunity and Ryan and Rufus plough into the battle. Soli rushes between the back and front of the party as suddenly a huge figure emerges brandishing a vast two-handed sword, an Ogre! Instinctively Solipsis unleashes Colour Spray dropping the beast and three other larger Orcs that have just appeared from another corridor. Their places are quickly taken by three snarling, leering Orog that seem desperate to engage the party in battle. Further down the corridor at the back the sounds of battle are heard as Rizla and Harn plough bravely into combat against an overwhelming number of Orcs. Fortunately, for now, they can only engage them two on two, but how much longer can they stand?

Back at the front line Snatch hurls daggers and strikes an Orog in the chest but the creature just laughs and screams out a curse in its guttural language as it plucks the daggers out. James, Ryan and Bod cleave Orcish flesh and are in turn hit by further opponents as Rufus whirls his battleaxe around his head, his face contorted in an expression of battle-joy as he drives into the packed wall of Orcs heading towards the Orog. Ryan, with a deft manoeuvre, tricks one of the larger Orcs into an ill-considered rush neatly finishing the brute with quick sword thrust. Rizla finishes another Orc as James grimly battles three of the creatures. Daggers fly through the air as Snatch attempts to hit the whirl of steel and muscle with Solipsis bobbing and weaving, desperately trying to keep a tactical overview.

As Rufus finally cleaves his way to the Orog, the Ogre staggers back to its feet. In a whirl of scything steel Rufus is hurt badly by an Orog, however, spitting blood, the battle-crazed dwarf gives a defiant cry and rejoins the fray as suddenly Ryan is caught off-guard and is battered senseless to the ground. Rizla polishes off another Orc as Soli deftly lobs a flask of burning oil into the ranks beyond Harn and Rizla killing one Orc and causing serious disruption in the attacking mob.

The battle continues as our heroes struggle against the odds. James surges through the opposition to take on the mighty Ogre in single combat but is quickly cut down as the party feels his Protection from Evil aura collapse around them. Orc bodies are piling up as Solipsis rushes into melee making a dangerous CLW on Ryan saving his life again. Bod muscles his way in front of the fallen Ranger protecting him as he pushes towards the line of Orog and the Ogre.

It becomes evident to the party that they are severely outnumbered as a seemingly limitless number of Orcs press Harn and Rizla continually backward, it can be only a matter of minutes until they are overwhelmed. Simultaneously the others decide that if they are going out so is that bloody Ogre! With re-doubled energy and under a hail of Snatch-launched sling bullets and Soli's Magic Missiles the fighters plough into the Orog finishing the remaining creatures and clearing a path to the startled Ogre. Dwarven battle-axes slice into Ogre flesh as the monster flails around desperately trying to defend itself against its ancient bitter foes until sorely wounded it backs away from combat dropping its huge sword. "Let go, let go an' will make knight betta – secrit healin' stuff," the creature pleads in halting common, gesturing to the rapidly expiring Paladin lying in a pool of blood on the floor. Rufus and Bod pause as Harn and Rizla are forced into sight by the sheer weight of Orcs attacking them however the Orcs, seeing their fallen leaders and the surrender of the Ogre break morale and flee, trampling over their comrades in their efforts to escape even the badly wounded Rizla and Harn. Much against their better judgement, but Solipsis warns they must comply or James is dead, they let the Ogre leave the room. It quickly returns with a pouch, which is handed to Soli. Finding a small amount of a fine dust he sprinkles it onto the ailing Paladin's bloodied lips and miraculously the worst of his wounds are healed, leaving him unconscious but alive. The Ogre nods toward the exit and reluctantly the dwarves step aside, honouring the bargain and letting it escape.

Are we still alive?

Looking around reveals terrible carnage. All of the party have wounds, James is unconscious and just holding together under Soli's care, and Ryan, Harn and Rizla can barely walk. All are amazed to still be alive however fallen Orcs lie everywhere, including the larger leaders with their fancy insignia and armour. As is often the case with Orcs it seems to be a smart idea to get the leaders first. Snatch, Bod and Rufus explore, finding what appears to be Orcish HQ next door where they find what could be battle plans for an assault on Furyondy beginning with a surprise attack from this secret base. They also find 2 potions and 300gp. Also in a side chamber they discover a vein of gold that has just been opened. Nothing too amazing but worth future investigation.

Further exploration reveals two enclosures where wolves are kept obviously as guard dogs since they make a deafening noise as soon as any party members approach. Later Ryan will calm them and release the creatures into the wild. Searching through a storeroom Snatch is attacked by a foul Carrion Crawler. Fortunately Bod destroys the monster as Solipsis drags the injured halfling to safety. Searching the room they discover 6 potions. Searching further they find the ground level entrance and meet up with Joseph who had fallen back from his post at the shaft to investigate when he saw the Orcs running in panic from base exit. Further searches reveal hauls of 200gp and 240gp worth of jewellery and 40 Shield Land gold coins.

While investigating a locked room (Bod smashed the lock) the dwarves are attacked by another Ogre. Bod fumbles in surprise and drops his axe but the mighty Rufus lands a single killing blow as the creature collapses with a very surprised look upon its face. Searching the area reveals the mother-lode. It seems they have found the paymaster's office. They find 2000gp, 8000sp and 12000 cp. Bod notices one of the crates is not sitting squarely and discovers a fine sword beneath. Later Ryan will try this weapon and discover it to be much finer than his existing sword. (+1 magical longsword). Another locked room is discovered revealing a huge stash of weaponry and arms. In another room they find an upturned table and a pack of cards scattered on the floor, also 180sp. Searching the Orcish leaders they find another 220gp and 3 fine longswords which will later be revealed as magical weapons +1. Having seen the battle plans Joseph wants to return immediately to Barduk to report to Captain Rildillian however the party is in no shape to travel so they stay in the base overnight.

The next day James is conscious again and Lays Hands on Harn as Solipsis casts CLW on Rizla, Ryan and James. Soli's 2 Detect Magic spells are used to identify magical items (the weapons and the potions). A battle axe is also revealed as a Magical Weapon +1.

Bod speaks his mind

Enemies disposed of, threat to Furyondy destroyed, Bod decides that now is the time to resolve his little accounting problem with Rufus. He thinks Rufus should get no share of the treasure since he has previously cheated the party in order to get the money for his plate armour. James and Snatch remember Rufus saying he promised to pay back the 280gp he owes them however Rufus says, he never agreed to that. A serious argument breaks out with Bod suggesting that Rufus should have his hand chopped off since he has cheated the party. Also Rufus wants to sell the battle plans to Furyondy (something that will cause a serious conflict with Joseph and Harn, who even now are urging an urgent return to Barduk). They vote on the plans with Ryan, Bod and James voting for giving the plans away and Rizla abstaining. The plans are given to Harn and the Furyondian soldiers prepare to leave as Solipsis remembers the attic room that they haven't yet explored. Searching in the bat guano he discovers a small metal box containing two 2 rings, 1 platinum, 1 gold.

Reason for XP	Bod	Snatch	Solipsis	James	Ryanair	Rufus
Opponents	390	270	60	150	150	440
Spells			150	10		
Proficiencies		130			50	
Ideas/clues	10		20	10		10
Problem Solving						
Role Play	120	50	50	50	40	90
Treasure						
Finishing	500	500	500	500	500	500
Fun Factor		10				
Bonuses						
Penalties						
Total (This session)	1020	960	780	720	740	1040
Total (This adventure)	2605	2175	3440	2790	2815	3045
Grand Total	9224	6900	6683/6683	9643	9278	9375