

## Grimwald's thoughts part 46

We continue onwards through an increasingly rugged landscape. Suddenly Jay and I spot Nethander ahead of us. He and Kendalan have spotted an ambush site manned by four skeletons with bows. Little threat, but one easily overcome by their skill to sneak close so we crush them from both sides in the vise of our forces. Kendalan and Nethander rush the skeleton's position and the rest of us rush to their aid. We see some flares of flame as enchanted arrows find their mark and both Kendalan and Nethander are fumbling in bringing down the skeletons since they are using the wrong tools. Fortunately Jay is upon them soon and starts crushing them. By the time I run up to them there is only one skeleton left. Nethander hands me a sturdy thighbone with which I crush its skull. Nethander is really getting into the teamwork thing these days. After some pushing we manage a small rock slide to cover the bones and pray for their rest.

After a short distance we come upon a pack of wargs and winter wolves. Foul beasts often cooperating with goblins serving them as mounts and scouts. I had hoped they would not fare this far south. Kendalan and Reed who are more knowledgeable in this however claim they are mere hungry beasts, not an defiling evil which must be purged like the goblins they ally with. Although I have my reservations I allow myself to be guided in this and we discuss plans how to pass without having to butcher the pack. Rather than face the unknown and possibly lose our way Reed summons a big bug which starts to catch fish for the wolves. While they are eating we hastily wade the stream. Apparently satisfied with their meal they don't pursue.

As the weather turns bad we can make out the contours of the tower in the distance. It is a mighty fortress, sturdy stone, deep moat, single access bridge guarded by two gate towers. We are fortunate it is not properly garrisoned otherwise we would need quite an army to gain access. Our scouts find a small guarded bridge and an ensorcelled archway blocking our path. After some discussion Nethander is persuaded to try to pass the arch and a web of lightning springs forth narrowly missing him. A formidable trap indeed. Reed also manages to slip between the twisting arcs of electricity in a way which baffles me. The rest of us hesitate, unwilling to brave the deadly lightning web. Using our knowledge of the arcane we theorize that the trap needs time to reset, which is shown by Reed who dances back and forth to give the rest of us the chance to slip by during the recharge time.

The skeletons guarding the bridge start firing on us and I call upon Moradin's hammer to smite them, while Reed incinerates them and Kendalan strikes with some arcane power. They do not last long. Meanwhile Jay, Nethander and Felina rush across the bridge, well Nethander tried to, but fell. Upon closer inspection I recognize the armoured undead as a doom guard, probably capable of wounding Jay quite severely so I decide to help the boy out by sending him my shield, hammer and roasting the skeleton in his armour. At the healing after the battle Moradin showed his support for Jay's bravery and his discontent at being asked to aid a fumbling tiefling. I shall not provoke Moradin by such requests anymore. The armour and sword which were empowered by the doom guard are quite mundane now, worn but not beyond repair so I decided to load them onto my back.

Nethander however proved his usefulness in spotting a beast called a phase-spider lurking in the gatehouse. Quite a dangerous animal dragging its prey to the ethereal plane away from the support of party members. We decide to rope ourselves together while readying ourselves to strike as it appears. Without so much as a shimmer it is suddenly before Kendalan and grabs him while we strike at it. For a moment I feel the rope slacken as Kendalan becomes transparent he fades out with just a pair of panicked eyes remaining, but then suddenly he is there again and the spider is not. It appears again in front of me, but this time we are ready and quickly slaughter the monster before it gets another chance to strike.

Reed claims that the silk it has is useful in some way for protection. Probably a bit like an earth silk shirt, but better. I don't quite grasp it, but apparently the effect is similar to enchanting an armour so it shifts to protect the vitals should an attack bypass the plates. Reed and Jay feel we should not kill the remaining spiders, just knock them around a bit. Well lets see if we can help with that.