

8: Broken promises, broken chains

Then on a night I was sitting on the edge of the camp when I spotted some movement in the south. Something was glowing a few hundred yards away and it was marching straight for us. The other guards saw it and informed the caravan master. He turned to look towards the intruder and snarled some orders. He awaited the arrival of the intruder and drew his sword. Seeing him stand like that was an unnerving sight. His sword, black as his soul emanated some sort of power. Even from a distance you could feel the hairs on your back stand up, but deep inside me I could feel that blade calling for me.

In the meantime the intruder was closing in and he turned out to be a very peculiar sight indeed. The guards were taking shots at him with their crossbows but the bolts simply bounced off. Then he started to change, he was shining in the dark with a fine glow. His armor seemed to be seamless, how could an armor fit so perfectly? But did I see that correctly? It looked like clockwork gears working in unison inside his armor.

Quickly I decided that this was a potential time to part with the caravan and I moved to the side to hide in the bushes.

The guards went crazy, but the caravan master just awaited the arrival of the strange creature. Then the fight began. They attacked with incredible force. The glowing weapon of the creature met the evil dark blade. Waves of energy crackled around, the fight started off evenly but the creature hammered on the caravan master like a smith on the anvil. Nothing could stop him and within a few minutes the battle was fought and the caravan master perished without having a fighting chance. The creature took the black sword and broke it on his knee.

At that moment a hell broke loose, The guards were looking at the caravan and fled away, somehow the demise of the caravan master set the creatures inside loose!

But what do I see there, There seem to be more people around, a complete party of adventures have followed the strange creature and they are moving to the camp. In the meantime strange creatures are emerging from the carts, flying creatures emerge and fly toward the main group of newcomers. Some follow the fleeing guards and some creatures without wings emerge from the cart. But where is the strange clockwork armor now? He seems to have been vanished!

Right now I think it's best to try to approach the newcomers and find safety in their numbers. I stand up and run for them, some of their fighters are already engaging the floor crawling monsters, I scream that I'm no enemy and that I will assist them. Somehow they do not oppose me and I already see some of the flying creatures sweep down to attack the frail girl in the party. I run towards them while firing my hand crossbow at the flying horror. The girl gets bitten and turns to stone immediately. I don't have time to think about that and try to act upon the lessons thought to me by my master. Sweeping in, finding the vulnerable spots in the creatures defense, striking with a true aim, straight into the creatures kidneys. I pair up with another girl and an elf. Again and again I find an opening in the creatures defense, Blade would have been proud! Quickly the fight is over and they approach me. I tell them I only hopped along with the caravan for safe travel and they tell me that they were ordered to follow some Orcs or something. They met this strange guy who turned out to be the clockwork fighter and the rest of the story is known.

Somehow they too were not really impressed by my heritage and they did not mind my presence. They turned back towards a nearby city to help the girl who was turned into stone and I decided to follow them. It was a strange party indeed. A small bearded grumpy dwarf who clearly did not trust me. The girl who I had paired up with fighting off the flying

creatures accepted me somehow. Then there was another fighter who didn't say much, but clearly didn't mind my presence. Then there was the elf who acted pretty normal. Finally I met a friendly person, a huge woman on her horse turned out to be good company. She was a little bit dimwitted and incredibly gullible, but a nice girl indeed.

Together we moved to the city and sold some of the goods looted from the caravan. The big girl who called herself Cuura and me sold the cart for much above the market price. She stood there towering over the merchants with an intimidating stance while I bragged about the cart being very special indeed. Well the merchant bought my stories and was clearly afraid by the towering Cuura, so did not even dare to offer us a bargain price. Clearly happy we walked back to the inn we were sharing. On the way back I even convinced Cuura to scare another rich guy into parting with his money, this girl was promising indeed.

When everybody returned to the inn with some money we went to some guy called Weldin who looked at me with some interest, but accepted my presence. He aided us into curing the stone girl who was apparently called Reed.