

21: Skirting Dangers

Travelling was easy, we found time for practice and most of us decided to read the magical books that shielded the evil book. After listening to Reed and the others speaking about them, I heard that there was a chapter in the book of death that described better ways to fight the undead. Our last encounter with skeletons left my fighting style completely useless. The fencing style Blade taught me is based on agility and precise thrusts into key body parts of my opponents. Fighting the undead is based on inflicting devastating amounts of damage to dismember the complete corpse. Sticking a rapier in a dead rotting corpse won't do anything useful and I simply do not have the strength to clobber like Cuura and Zhae can.

Fortunately this book might help me improve my capabilities against the undead. Of course Grimwald objected against my wishes to read the book of death. A quick remark about reading the book of the brotherhood as an alternative quickly shut him up!

I started reading in the book, but I must admit that I find it hard. Somehow I can read the same page five times and I clearly see what the words mean but I have troubles understanding what they actually mean. It's good I've got all the time of the world, we're not anywhere near to Candlekeep.

While travelling we spotted a column of smoke in the far distance. We all fear the presence of dragons and we decided to travel through the outskirts of the wood of Sharp teeth. This forest would give us some cover against airborne threats. The forest itself has a dangerous reputation, but uncertain dangers are always better than known threats like dragons.

When we almost reached the wood we spotted another column of smoke, this time much closer to our position and we decided to scout. Kendalan and Felina took this task upon them and returned with word about a burned farmers place with pieces of livestock scattered about. Kendalan knew for sure this was work of a dragon. To make things worse they've spotted the Ninja again. This strange assassin who keeps hunting Reed is an elusive one. He took me out with poison in the past and always hunts us down. A quick battle plan was formed. This Ninja's strength is based on using shadows and cover. Reed has some magics to make him visible at all times and take away his best protection. I'm pretty sure we'll be ready for him when he attacks. Last time my friends were almost cut down by the Ninja, but I his poison left me out of the game and now we're more than ready. Let him come and he'll taste Blades rapier. It will prove to be a worthy fight to hone my fencing style and it will surely make our travel much more comfortable, when we don't have to live in the constant threat of the Ninja lurking in our presence.

The trail led us in to the forest of sharp teeth. This forest is probably named for the small furry scavengers who live in the woods. Our horses were attacked by hordes of these little critters. Small balls of fur and countless teeth swarmed the horses and three horses galloped away. When the initial attack was countered and most of the party was searching to retrieve the horses, Reed and I remained to guard the wagon. I'm sure I spotted the Ninja in the tree tops, but for one reason or the other it decided not to attack.

We retrieved all but one of the horses. The last horse was found dead, eaten by the small critters. With one horse less we kept on moving through the outskirts of the forest. A few hours on the road we encountered a ramshackle house and a hermit living here in the middle of nowhere. Reed exchanged a knife for some knowledge of the area and got some information about a dangerous creature in the bogs. Felina and I immediately thought about the possible treasure to be found. This combined with the mere fact that these bogs were right on our paths made the choice easy. Kill the monster and retrieve the treasure!