

32: Wood woes

Finally Felina graced us with her presence again. Fighting of the dragon convinced the mayor to grant us access to the cold iron Grimwald needed so much. In fact the Mayor was so grateful he provided us with an ample supply of the material.

Besides that, our reputation of saviors of Nashkel led the mayor to ask Felina for help in an entirely different matter. The town was encountering problems with the supply of timber needed for the mines. Historically they got their timber from a forest east of town. But apparently the fools failed to plant new trees after cutting the old ones down. To make things worse the Mayor sold the foresting concessions to an strange trade house. We have been asked to investigate that and somehow secure the timber supply for the mines.

Is this truly a stupid mistake or is it ploy from the mayor to improve his financial standings? Felina and I discussed the matter and decided that we couldn't easily change the situation in our favor. So for the moment we all decided that is was in our best interest to investigate this case. We shouldn't forget that the mayor promised us access to certain closed of parts of the mines that are supposedly rich in very special metals.

The first course of action was to have a chat with the Fey that inhabited the forest to the west of Nashkel. Perhaps we could discuss a sort of arrangement with them. The first Fey we met besides some pixies was an impossibly beautiful dryad. We spend the evening in her presence. While I tried to slip her some liquor, the others tried to find out who was calling the shots in this forest. The others got their success and I found out that Fey can handle their liquor surprisingly well for I'm all out and she didn't even noticed the fact she'd drunk half a gallon of strong wine.

The next morning we started the search for the "old one" or the spokesman of the wood. The directions from the dryad were not very helpful because she told us that he was only two "flashes" away, but since we can't transport in that way we had to guess. Finally we arrived at the big rock that marked It's whereabouts. Actually we found later that the big rock was the spokesman! Zhae somehow got contact with the gigantic creature and it was only interested in Zhae, so it seemed. It asked Zhae all kind of questions about what he wanted to do and what he wanted out of life. As we all know Zhae can be a very timid person who doesn't show his emotions very well. He's always content to accompany the party without following his own goals in life. The big creature somehow explained this to Zhae and I think he understood that he should start looking for his own master in a more active way. After that revelation he also gave us a clue regarding our own quest. We should travel again to the masters cave because we had have missed a clue there and there we would learn something valuable.

We had to travel through the depleted forest before we reached the Cave. There Kendalan and Reed made a discovery. The destruction of the forest wasn't done by simple mis-management of the forest. Some foul magic was used to diminish the growth of nature here. Another piece of the puzzle was recovered, but to be honest I was more interested in returning to the masters cave. We left that place too rapidly!

The masters place near Greenest was warded by the emotions of dread and Zhae and I could almost feel the presence of the masters there. When we crossed our swords there, it was so easy to fall into a trance. Movements followed by movements, the clarity of mind we've found there was magical! We had the same feeling when we entered the cave for the first time, but that special connection had disappeared. The shadows guarding the cave had vanished and the cave itself was just an empty place void of anything supernatural! Still this

notion left me thinking about the traps that had been prepared for us in the lake and now in the cave. Somehow I just know that these traps were no part of the masters meeting places but if someone had planted these traps the magic of the masters place should have disappeared. Perhaps it was an inside job. Perhaps the one who killed Blade was a fellow masters as well. One time I'll find the truth and I swear on my demon heritage I'll avenge my master!