

## 35: Razer's return

Reed and Kendalan returned to Nashkel shortly after our victorious expedition. They brought the good news, they had found the most likely center of the magical blight! We were sure that the Zhentarim spy had relayed the message to his master and now we could move to the forest and start luring the evil druid.

While traveling towards the forest Kendalan instructed us about the druid and what he could do. This druid seems to me like a kind of priest or mage of the land. He could muster the powers of nature and summon nature's creatures to fight right beside him. Even more dangerous was the fact that they could change themselves into any creature they wanted. This would call for an interesting fight, but with our history together I was sure we could handle the threat.

During travel we divided the spoils of war from the kobold raid. Zhae exchanged his trusted longsword for the scimitar we took from the kobold fighter. A strange thing that one who claims to be in training to become a weapon master would voluntarily change weapon. The fact that he even talked about a scimitar Grimwald was making was even more strange to me. He would switch weapons again in the near future. The thought of exchanging Blades rapier for an other weapon frightens me. Somehow I had grown attached to the beautiful sword. Even when I practice with my daggers a part of me revolts to the thought of wielding another blade. Come to think of it, the sword actually seems to fit me more and more as I walk the path of training. I should discuss this with Grimwald some time.

I think Zhae just follows another path than I do. In some ways he doesn't seem attached to his weapons and fighting styles he uses. Maybe he's just behind me in his training as a weapon master. Although that thought surely frightens me, he's already a very capable warrior. Could he show more potential than me? Perhaps it's time we really crossed the blades some time. The mock sparring sessions we do just doesn't seem to unleash the true potential from our different styles and capabilities.

Another strange one was Reed's reaction to the bracers of protection we've found. We all decided that these bracers would fit her perfectly but she was adamant in her decision that these powerful items should be given to Kendalan's wolf. She started talking about the power from inside and other completely on logical comments why these bracers were more fitted to the wolf. Perhaps for the first time all of the party agreed on the fact that she should just accept the bracers and be gone with it. In the end she just accepted but I could tell she didn't agree. Reed the one person in the party who I regarded as a friend in first slowly becomes to be the enigma of the party. Grimwald, my enemy from the start, I have grown to understand and even respect. Even Felina isn't so much different from me. Just this little girl who speaks mysteries in strange tongues, who wields such powerful magics, who detects all lies I seem to tell and now doesn't want to accept a gift fit for pasha's...

The fight itself wasn't too much to talk about. It started with our party preparing for an ambush. We dug pit traps and Reed, Kendalan and Felina prepared some sort of magical ritual that surely looked promising. Too bad it was only a ploy to lure the evil druid out into the open, out into our waiting blades. The ploy however worked beautifully for I spotted a strange phenomena in the air. Reed decided this meant someone was scrying us. We had attracted the attention and now we could only wait.

I asked Reed to do an astrological reading for it look rather imposing and would surely attract the druid even more. She then asked what to ask to the stars. Why can't she accept a simple lure to be a simple lure? Fortunately Cuura thought to ask for a direction. I didn't even

thought that information like this was written in the starts but Reed came up with a cryptic sentence: *'From out the darkness, under water, he will come in a straight line.'*

Again the party drew analogies to Noob's condition and decided that the druid would come from the south west. Quickly we decided that watched and decided that Kendalan and I would wait for the druid to intercept and belay information to the rest of the party.

It turned out we were approached by a huge Rhinoceros, a huge wolverine and a thin giant. Kendalan instructed her wolf to return to the party and inform them that the enemy was coming. We let the enemy past and waited to follow them quietly. The plan was nice but I can't seem to get used to the wild life and stepped on a branch. The breaking of this little branch sounded like thunder through the quit of the night. Immediately the wolverine charged us while we just ran. During my flight, the wolverine lost my tracks and I was able to find the camp with my friend still awaiting the enemy.

The fight was quick and relatively uneventful. The Rhinoceros turned out to be the druid that had summoned several worgs to aid him in battle. I called for my powers of protection to keep them at arms length, while Grimwald did the same to protect the others. Zhae and Grimwald worked together to attack the wolverine and the giant that was a disguised golem. Reed assisted the pair with her fire magics while I cooperated with Cuura to assault the druid himself. The fight was actually over when I finally made it in melee. Reed threw another fireball while Cuura was hammering in on the Rhinoceros. The wolverine was already reduced to smoldering cinders and Zhae and Grimwald were taking care of the golem.

This left the worgs for me. Assisted by Kendalan's wolf I attacked them and dropped them without even being scratched. After the worgs were all but defeated I regarded the fight to see that Zhae and Grimwald were actually struggling with the Golem. Immediately I rushed to gang up on the monstrous thing, only to get my first hit of the day. These giants just can't be approached without taking a solid hit so it seems. Cuura also charged the creature and for the second time this night the enemy was dropped before I could even take one swing at it. All in all a fight that left my performance wanting.