

## 47: Forth and back

After the defeat of the phase spider we approached the gatehouse. We knew that structure was inhabited by normal spiders. Reed begged us not to kill the beast but try to pummel them into admission. That plan failed beautifully for Zhae was attacked almost immediately when the spiders dropped cobwebs on him. I shot a dragon breath bolt deep into the vaulted ceiling of the gatehouse hoping the fire blast would sever the cobwebs entangling Zhae. The following explosion was beyond my expectation when the complete structure almost seemed to explode. Huge fires erupted from the gatehouse followed by a powerful BOOM! I saw Zhae drop to the ground like a rock and before I knew something shot at me. A tentacle of some kind bit me and tried to pull me into the depth of the dark gatehouse. My heartbeat stopped for a few beats when I felt icy cold sensation of poison being pumped into my body. I tried to resist the pull of the tentacle and stalled enough time for my friend to sever the tentacle.

Quickly Grimwald cast a spell on me to resist the poison eating away inside my veins. The following fight was kind of a blur to me. I know Grimwald silenced a sonic spider and Cuura wrestled a huge spider trying to eat her head off. I even saw Reed slashing away with her strange pole arm. Quickly the fight ended with two dead spiders and a fleeing cave fisher spider. This was the creature that tried to pull me in with it's tongue or mouth. The small venom fangs still hung from my thigh. Reed helped me to remove the thing and gave me some herbs to chew on to battle the poison inside me.

Zhae was still unconscious from the sonic blast and had to be carried by Cuura. Felina and I searched the gatehouse and found a strange looking dagger made from a material Grimwald couldn't identify. Cuura was happy with the dagger and we continued and crossed the bridge crossing the moat that surrounded the towers ramparts.

The next gatehouse was finally part of the actual towers structure and was build completely different then the previous buildings. This building was built to last forever and time did not have any affect on this gatehouse, in contradiction to the other who were in a poor shape to say the least. Grimwald explained that the previous ones were probably made to collapse on an attacking army when the dwarves had to give up that defensive position. What incredible evil drove the dwarves from this location for it really seems that they could have faced the complete combined might of the Zhentarim army in this fortress?

As expected the next and final gatehouse was also protected by magic traps setting off walls of fire trying to cook us inside. Felina and I dodged the traps and were cut of from the party by two blazing walls of fire. Fortunately we weren't attacked by the towers inhabitants and we were able to climb the walls of the gatehouse. Finally the complete party was safely inside the gatehouse. We decided to camp here and enter the tower after we had a good rest.

After just a short time we found out why it was so hard to get a rest inside the tower proper when a howl cut ripped trough the quietness of the night. Immediately were all awake grabbing our weapons. Nothing attacked us but is was clear that the magic users were not going to get a good nights sleep an the party decided to retreat back behind the first gatehouse protecting the entrance to the tower. In the middle of the night we had to hurry our way back through the trap ridden gatehouses. With the spiders dead or driven away the first one didn't prove any problems. The shadowy tentacles were passed without any problems. To make short the only problem occurred when I was zapped but the electricity trap jolted through me! Fortunately my ego was hurt more badly then my body but exhausted we made camp and the next morning we took the same ride through the trap again.

This time we didn't expect any opposition, but the skeletons and the doom guard had respawned during the night. With Zhae still being out of the fight I knew we were in problems. This time I knew that the bridge was trapped with grease and I nimbly crossed it, engaging the doom guard to keep it busy until the party had taken care of the archers and carefully crossed the bridge.

Last time I had missed the fight and I was aching to combat a worthy opponent in a clean duel. Although my weapon was useless I was sure I could evade his blows and fence with him. All blows directed at me couldn't hurt my friends and in full defensive I danced the dance of cold steel and death. If only Blade could have seen this fight! The heavily armoured undead laded powerful blows in my direction, but Blade's teachings proved true. Waiting for a chance I evaded the blow until the skeleton overreached and with a flick of the wrist I send the glowing blade flying into the distance. Confident that the threat was eliminated I only had to block his path to the blade and wait for my friends to bash this sorry remains into the afterlife I unleashed a flurry of blows. The skeleton had some tricks in his sleeve when it opened is had and summoned the blade back into his grasp. I didn't expect that and tasted the acidic touch of the blade. The raw power behind the blow bit deep into my side and I knew I had to finish the fight soon. Just a few more hits from the doom guard would end my quest to avenge Blade and I decided to use one of the runes Grimwald prepared for me. Grave strike would allow me to land a precision attack on an undead creature, disrupting his "un"life forces and finally do damage to the monster.

This was a one hit chance and to make the most of it I had to lower my defences and go for the full offensive. With a quick prayer to lady luck I took the gamble and again Tymora graced me with some luck. The blow landed squarely between the slits in the skeletons visor. The force knocked the helmet back and for a split second the green glow coming from the doom guard flickered as the hit disrupted the foul energy keeping the monster walking. After that the other joined the fight and the doom guard was crushed between Grimwald and Cuura's powerfull blow. Still somehow it felt like my victory!

Strangely enough I felt that Blade's rapier approved of it as well and somehow it changed too. I cannot explain it better then that it just adjusted more to me. Slowly it's becoming my rapier as well!