

65: Crossroads

After our victory over the demon from the book we sped upwards toward the surface. In the Inn we discovered a very angry bear prowling around the building. In our absence Aloth Kakanos had dominated Odvar and sent him straight to us. After that he'd cast a spell on Kendalan's bear incapacitating the beast, freed the prisoner and took off with some horses, leaving the Bear pretty angry.

Reed decided to read the stars and found a peculiar reading about a known destination, but a travel under a starless night?????. Grimwald asked for guidance to his god and received a vision of a ruined tower on a hilltop, guarded by a Thayan knight, a cowering swirfneblin and some dead Ettins lying around

One and one added up to two and we figured out that the red wizard was trying to reach his comrade and tried to fled toward safe ground through the underdark. This tower and the dead Ettins reminded me of the safe passage into the underdark that Semmemon guided me to. I knew that this place was roughly a days travel to the north of us.

The tracks left by the traitors also left to the north and Cuura decided we should go into hot pursuit immediately. Grimwald in the meantime had somehow attracted a sort of earth elemental that he could ride (I know of no better way to describe it).

Together we started the pursuit with a few hours in the arrears. After about half an hour we stumbled upon a gruesome sight. A circle was made from rocks, strengthened by magic while the entrails of two horses and a very dead Zhent priest lying around. We concluded that Aloth had gated in a demon and fed the horses and the priest to it. Searching for tracks on the ground we knew it had to be a nightmare, a demonic flying horse!

In the meantime Reed had discovered that this place was located on a crossroad between several roads and she spoke about strange druidic/Feyish back-roads guarded by guardians and started playing really beautiful music on her pipa. Felina accompanied her while Cuura danced. A huge Fey figure appeared and we opened up negotiations with the guardian.

The creature was very angry that the Red wizard had summoned a demon on his crossroad, but fortunately his backroad led us very close to the tower. Gaining entrance to this backroad would give us the lead and would allow us to ambush the traitor wizard.

We all had to persuade the guardian into allowing us entry. We all had to awe the creature in some sort. Grimwald created a truly marvellous road sign and Odvar did some tricks with a rope that would have earned him a spot in a Calimport circus. I had to persuade the Fey into believing that my presence was absolutely necessary for us to punish the wizard for creating his summoning circle in the guardians crossroads.

Finally we were all granted access and we entered the backroad, just to appear somewhere else in a heartbeat. We could see the ruins in the far distance and quickly closed in on our prey. Odvar remained behind us to warn us for the approach of Aloth while Felina and a scouted the ruin. The knight was still waiting for his master and the deepgnome was still looking miserable. Our plan was simple, kill the knight, take care of the gnome and ambush the wizard.

The first part was very easy. Felina and I sneaked up upon the knight who was unaware of our presence until the last moment and before he had the time to react he was down. The gnome

was forced to help the Thayans because they had stolen a sacred item from his people and blackmailed him into helping them.

The last part however was, as usual, the difficult one. The fight with the wizard and the nightmare nearly brought the party down. The wizard cast a spell on us that paralyzed almost all of us. Finally Reed knew to escape this hold and grappled the wizard, allowing Grimwald to strike him down.

Reed then allowed Aloth to regain consciousness and decided to let the wizard walk on his promise to Mystra that he would give the scared item back to the deepgnome and release all bounds he held over him! I was sure we wouldn't leave an enemy like him roaming around, but Reed persuaded the others that her solution was the best and the party decided to follow Reed in this one. Fortunately we did strip the mage of all his valuable belongings and we discovered some nice trinkets.

Now we've regained possession of the book and we've found the other half of it in the sword. Everything is back together and we're at the spot Semmemon guided us to as the best entrance to the underdark and the safest route to Candlekeep. Will we finally complete this quest soon?