**Chapter 4: The Banner of the Lycanbane**

15 Tarsakh, 1369

It was a warm spring evening, and the last light of sunset in the western horizon was now yielding to the moonlit night sky. Few stars were visible amidst the full moon in its perigee, when lycanthropic leanings were strongest.

A map of a river

Description automatically generated

Korik and Landorin had trekked to the Hill of Lost Souls, the focus of much superstition and hooey around the surrounding lands, in search of the fabled Banner of the Lycanbane, which Melissa and Parallax—their new traveling companions—knew to be held by a band of wererats who were unable to destroy the item without incurring woe and peril.

The wererats had sought out the services of a non-lycanthrope who could be trusted to take the artifact away and destroy it, and Melissa’s powers of persuasion had gotten her an invitation to their lair. However, upon their arrival to the wererats’ warrens, they were ambushed by the pack, and were now in the midst of a swarm of rats and a trio of the lycanthropes all around them and a rat swarm to their north.

A map of a game

Description automatically generated

Round 1

They’d been fortunate so far to not be hit by the two traitorous wererats atop the entry towers, but now the barbarian on the ground level was entering an enraged state, and preparing to charge-attack.

A group of rats with sharp claws

Description automatically generated

The barbarian then seemed to undergo the effects of a *mirror image* spell, with multiple facsimiles of it projecting outward from the central figure before they began to charge towards Landorin.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Group** | **Initiative** | **Roll** | **Modified Roll** | **Speed** |
| Melissa | 1 | 2 | 16 | 18 | 15’ |
| Landorin | 1 | 3 | 11 | 14 | 30’ |
| Korik | 1 | 2 | 9 | 11 | 30’ |
| Wererats | 2 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 30’ |
| Parallax | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 15’ |

Melissa shook her head sadly and called out “big mistake!” in Common as she readied her silvered light mace, putting as much confidence in her voice as possible. Taking a 5’ step to the east to guard Parallax better, she got ready to swing her mace at the first wererats to get within her reach.

Landorin smiled at Melissa’s bravura as he took a 5’ step to the east as well, close to Parallax, and swiftly cast his inspirational boost spell to power up his music, following that by belting out the first verse of a power ballad, activating his bardic inspire courage, greatly improving his party’s combat effectiveness. Drawing his finely crafted silvered short sword and looking around at the area, he kept singing away with glee!

*Friendlies gained +2 to AB and weapon damage rolls, and to saves vs. charm & fear.*

Korik the Quick noted that the northeast side of the sorceress was wide open, and true to his name, moved past his allies to get into that position to protect the woman, drawing his light mace in the process. He had no silvered weapons other than arrows, so he figured he’d have to deal with the swarm of rats, and guessed that like bugs, a swarm of rats would best be smash flat. He readied himself to smash his mace through the rats as soon as they were within his reach.

Immediately after Korik settled into position, Landorin exerted his willpower slightly, drawing up on Selûne’s power to activate his *protection devotion*.

*Friendlies within 30’ gained +2 to AC.*

The wererat sorcerer cast *magic missile* upon the silverbrow human sorceress.

*Dmg: 3 + 1 = 4 magic.*

A person in a robe with a rat head in a room with a priest

Description automatically generated

The wererat archer targeted Korik, and fired off an arrow from atop the tower.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wererat Archer | Shortbow | 1d6 | 2 | 2 + 2  height | 5 | 7 | 12 |

*Miss.*

The wererat barbarian and its *mirror images* peculiarly remained in place, squeak-growling. Landorin suspected it was a fugazi of some kind. The sorcerer must have cast an illusion to prop up the mighty barbarian and its facsimiles.

*[DM allowing for extra action:]* The rat swarm went to smother Landorin, not reaching him quite yet. Landorin got in a good lick before it reached him.

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| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Silvered Short Sword | 1d6 | 0 | 1 + 2 | 19-20, x2 | Piercing | 2.0 | +6 | 18 | 24 |

*Hit. Dmg: 3 + 2 = 5.*

Korik also had it close enough to attack, so he did too.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| Light Mace | 1d6 | +2 | 2 | x2 | Bludgeon | 4.0 | +5 | 1 | 6 | +1d6 Sneak |

*Miss.*



Hurt by the *magic missile* cast by her counterpart, Parallax cast *nightshield [expired on Round 41]*.

*Parallax gained +1 to Saves and immunity to magic missiles.*



Round 2

As no wererat had come close to her, and she really didn’t want to get swarmed, Melissa moved slowly over to the base of the ladder leading up to the archer, swiftly activated her motivate charisma aura, and called up, “Hey, you want to survive this? Shoot your buddy!”

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| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Melissa, Diplomacy** | 3 | **Cha (+2)** | 5 | 12 | 6 – 10 | ?? |

*Result unclear.*

The wererat archer shot at Melissa.

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| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wererat Archer | Shortbow | 1d6 | 2 | 2 | 2 height | 5 | 3 | 8 |

*Miss.*

The wererat sorcerer cast *magic missile* upon Landorin, taking him to be the leader.

*Dmg: 4 + 1 = 5 magic [13/18].*

The wererat barbarian roared and seemed to munch on a hunk of cheese rather than attacking.

The rat swarm enveloped Parallax and Korik.

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| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Light Mace | 1d6 | +2 | 2 | x2 | Bludgeon | 4.0 | +5 | 13 | 18 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 2 + 2 = 9.*

*Dmg to both: 4 + disease.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Disease | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Results** |
| **Parallax, Fortitude** | 1 | **Con (+0)** | 0 | 1 | 10 | 11 | *Nightshield +1* |
| **Korik, Fortitude** | 2 | **Con (+2)** | 1 | 5 | 13 | 18 |  |

*Success, success. Filth fever negated.*

The swarm dissipated, and the remaining rats scurried away.

Landorin kept singing, held his ground, and sliced at the swarm again with his short sword.

*NO LONGER APPLICABLE.*

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| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Silvered Short Sword | 1d6 | 0 | 1 + 2 | 19-20, x2 | Piercing | 2.0 | +6 | 4 | 10 |

*Miss.*

Korik did as well.

*NO LONGER APPLICABLE.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| Light Mace | 1d6 | +2 | 2 | x2 | Bludgeon | 4.0 | +5 | 8 | 13 | +1d6 Sneak |

*Miss.*

A dire rat entered the room from the southern opening, and charge-attacked Melissa.

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| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Dire Rat | Bite | 1d4+Disease | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 |

*Miss.*

Parallax cast *lesser orb of sound*, targeting her fellow sorcerer.

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| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Ranged Touch Attack | 2d6 sonic | 2 + 2 | n.a. | varies | 0.0 | +8 | 12 | 20 |

*Hit. Dmg: 8 sonic.*

That nearly killed the sorcerer.



Round 3

Melissa called up to the archer “Swarm gone, can still surrender!” as she turned and limped back to beside Parallax and within reach of the dire rat. She smashed down at the fat furry rodent with her silvered light mace, hoping to squash it flat assuming it wasn’t a were, or injure it at least if it was.

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| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Silvered Light Mace | 1d6 | 2 | 2 | 19-20, x2 | Prcg/Slash | 4.0 | +3 | 13 | 28 |

*Hit. Dmg: 4 + 2 + 2 = 8.*

The dire rat was done for.

Her father’s music flowed through her; she had not yet told him who she was, wanting to get a measure of the man, but so far he seemed a decent fellow, and her courage was inspired. Landorin nodded at the returning half-elf, admiring her spirit and apparent confidence in her companions, as he kept singing and glanced around the area. It was strange that the wererat across the fire hadn’t acted, perhaps it was an illusion?

Landorin grimaced, and then called up to the wererats archer, “Or don’t surrender, just die!” Seeing the dire rat collapse, Landorin focused on his *detect evil* ability while just facing the apparent wererat barbarian and its duplicates across the fire, to see if there was actually any evil, trying to confirm whether there was indeed a foe there.

Pointing his sword at the wererat barbarians, he called out “I think they’re illusions!” Landorin then moved over to stand at the base of the ladder leading up to the wererat archer.

With the swarm gone, and his only silvered weapon being a handful of silvered arrows, Korik dropped his light mace at his feet, readied his bow, took a step westwards, and fired a silvered arrow up at the injured wererat sorcerer.

Seeing Landorin threaten his friend, the wererat sorcerer cast another *magic missile* spell. He was apparently not as mighty as Parallax, based on his spell selection.

*Dmg: 2 + 1 = 3 magic [10/18].*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Concentration** | 0 | **Con (+0)** | 0 | 0 | 15 | 15 |

*See below.*

The bard’s cant did not weaken, though that was the second *missile* that had hit him, and his heartbeat did weaken a bit at that.

The wererat archer leaned over the edge to fire upon the bard whose singing returned to its normal bravado.

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| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wererat Archer | Shortbow | 1d6 | 2 | 2 | 2 height | 5 | 3 | 8 |

*Miss.*

The facsimiles of the wererat barbarian stood in place, menacing the heroes with its fierceness.

The rat swarm escaped to the north.

Parallax was ready to finish off the lycanthropic sorcerer atop the tower, and repeated her casting of *lesser orb of sound*, targeting the critically injured spellcaster.

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| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg** | **+ Mod** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Ranged Touch Attack | 2d6 sonic | 2 + 2 | 2 | +6 | 10 | 16 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 sonic.*

The wererat sorcerer died, leaving the archer to fend for himself.



Round 4

Melissa shook bits of dire rat off her mace, and, ignoring the images to her west, turned back towards the tower with the archer, pointed the mace at the archer, and shouted up, “Last chance to surrender, answer questions, and live!” She then cast her eyes around looking for any new threats.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Melissa, Spot** | 0 | **Wis (-2)** | 1 | -1 | ?? | ?? |

*See below.*

Seeing no new threats, the half-elven marshal noted that she wasn’t making much of a difference in the archer’s demeanor.

Landorin stopping singing as he looked up towards the archer, said “Drop your bow and come down, fool!” as he drew his wand with his left hand, and then activated it to use a cure light wounds on his own body.

“Piss off!” the wererat snarled.

Landorin figured maybe showing the wererat how futile his efforts were might bolster the Marshal’s attempt to negotiate.

*Landorin gained 1 + 1 hps [12/18].*

Korik looked at the elf and half-elf wondering why they kept offering the wererat archer a chance to live. “Whatever,” he thought to himself as he moved out into the open area a bit to get a better view of the archer on the tower. For giggles, he drew a cold iron tipped arrows and aimed, not at the wererat itself, but at his bow! He didn’t think he could damage it much, but with the effects of the bard’s song steadying his aim, he let loose!

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| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Composite Shortbow, Str +2 | 1d6 | +2+2 | 2 – 2  Height | x3 | 70’ | 2.0 | +3 | 18 | 21 |

*Hit. Dmg: 6 + 2 + 2 = 10.*

The bow fell out of the wererat’s hand, though it was not sundered. The archer was uncharacteristically valiant for a wererat, opting to die fighting rather than to surrender to save his own skin. He picked up the bow and shot at Landorin again.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wererat Archer | Shortbow | 1d6 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 19 | 24 |

*Hit. Dmg: 2 [10/18].*

The wererat barbarians swiped and bit at invisible foes a few times, showing ferocity, then disappeared altogether, revealing behind them a western passage.



Parallax could see that the wererat was not entertaining any parlays today, and thus cast *lesser orb of sound* upon the archer.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg** | **+ Mod** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Ranged Touch Attack | 2d6 | Sonic | 2 | +6 | 15 | 21 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 sonic.*



Round 5

Melissa moved close to the fire pit, **reattaching he made to her belt**, and looked to see if there was a burning stick or something that might work as an improvised torch, for shedding a bit more light into the shadowing areas in the side chambers. She didn’t have much more to contribute to the fight. There was a sconce for a torch, but no torch had been in use for some time.

Landorin shook his head as he burned another charge on his wand for another *cure light wounds*, and sheathed his silvered short sword, calling up, “Nice shot! Your funeral, I guess.” At least if he kept the wererat angry at him, the sorceress and the dwarf could finish off the wererat without getting further injured. He didn’t really want to use his potion, so he would climb up if necessary.

*Landorin gained 6 + 1 = 7 hps [17/18]. 23 charges remaining.*

Korik realized the talking was going nowhere. He nocked a silvered arrow to his bow and fired up at it. With the bard’s music lingering for a while, best to take advantage of it!

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| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Composite Shortbow, Str +2 | 1d6 | +2+2 | 2 | x3 | 70’ | 2.0 | +7 | 12 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 4 + 2 + 2 = 8.*

The wererat dropped his bow, then jumped off the eastern edge of the tower, falling 15’ down towards the narrow road between the two steep slopes.

*Falling dmg: 4.*

Parallax stepped back through the warrens’ main entrance, and saw the fellow dying.

A map of a game

Description automatically generated

Others followed her out and witnessed the wererat twitching as he reassumed his half-elven form post-mortem.

Rounds 6 – 8

Melissa sighed and, dropping her shield to the ground, took off her backpack, saying, “I’m gonna get a lantern lit; we may need it when we explore more of this place,” as she got out her bullseye lantern and a flask of oil, loaded the oil into the lantern, and finally used a tindertwig to light it. She listened to the others talking, ready to reply if asked a question but otherwise letting them decide what to do going forward.

Landorin had just used a *cure minor wounds* cantrip on himself to heal his last bit of a wound, then walked over to Parallax to ask her how hurt she was, while Korik hustled past them to stand over the unconscious wererat he had shot, drawing his rapier along the way, and thinking he might also want to look for the first silvered arrow he’d shot, he didn’t have many and the one that hit was ruined. It was still breathing, he figured to fix that...

Parallax let Landorin know she wasn’t too badly wounded, but would appreciate a cure spells from his wand, and thanked him for it.

Landorin nodded and, after asking the two whether it was worth the effort of keeping the wererat as a captive, used a charge from the wand to cast a cure light wounds spell on Parallax.

Parallax shrugged, while as Korik studied the best place to perform a coup de grace, he muttered, “naw, ‘e won’t give us nothin’ useful,” and then thrust his rapier into the wererat at its most vulnerable visible location, through its eye into its brain, with a grunt of effort.

“Okay then,” Landorin said after the coup de grace, secretly glad he hadn’t acted on his impulse to insist on taking a captive when there was much more to do. “How are you feeling now?” he asked Parallax, trying to gauge whether she was still wounded, and ready to use another cantrip If needed.

She gave a hand gesture suggesting full health, and nodded in gratitude to the healer.

Korik, meanwhile, said “I’ll go check their sorcerer” as he hustled back to the base of the ladder, thinking he really needed to get a silvered melee weapon. He decided to climb using his left hand, keeping his rapier ready just in case there was a surprise at the top, so he dropped his bow, figuring to pick it back up again when he came back down, and stepped up into the ladder, figuring to move up as quickly as possible given there was nobody distracting him.

Reaching the top, he saw what he’d expected, just a dead sorcerer—now fully human in form—and his staff and gear. The knave had a potion of healing on him, probably something light in scope, and little else of interest to the dwarf.

~\*~

Having scoured this level, they encountered nothing beyond the occasional clutch of rats—nothing as formidable as a swarm—before descending to continue to explore the warrens, looking for the Banner of the Lycanbane. It was hidden beneath the lowest of four levels of the dugout keep, and guarded by two traps, one of which Korik missed and sprung, earning himself a dart that would keep him subpar for days unless he sought magical or medical attention.

~\*~

Once back to civilization with the Banner of the Lycanbane, the group divided up the treasure they’d gained. Parallax left the Banner in their possession and took a fair bit of other loot with her as she bid the other three farewell, planning to acquire more wands and other arcane tools with her share.

Once the sorcerer had gone her own way, Melissa finally informed Landorin of the fact that she was his daughter. He was both surprised and, after the shock had worn off, very pleased! He’d remembered her mother and spoke well of the woman, and his easy acceptance of Melissa and desire to get to know her better gave her a feeling of relief, as fears she’d been suppressing drained away.

Korik took the news well—he’d sensed some tension between them but figured it was none of his business. The three decided to stick together, and returned to Hlammach where they could continue entertaining folks until another quest caught their attention.

In the month of Kythora, while engaging in some research as to the nature of lycanthropy, an elderly scholar by the name of Alabaster Baldemar, a follower of Oghma, told Landorin and his companions that The House of Many Tomes, one of the largest and most renowned temples of Oghma in all of Faerûn, might well have some old scrolls or other sources of information they might not find anywhere else.

It was located in the town of Songhal right there in Impiltur. As a matter of fact, he was looking for someone to accompany him there, for the roads were not always safe for an old man to walk alone; he couldn’t pay much, though he could afford room and board along the way for a small group, and he could certainly help them gain at least temporary access to some of the Temple’s resources on the subject, no charge.

The group agreed to the deal, and the group set off for Songhal, following the Royal Road up to Outtentown and then the smaller road west to the foothills of the Earthspur Mountains where their destination waited. Alabaster *did* tire easily, so they stopped occasionally to rest along the way, including camping along the way in between towns. The scholar had a donkey loaded with provisions and with various bundles of parchments that he was taking to the Temple.

One night they had camped off the road, and as was their practice, the group let the old scholar sleep while they each stood a watch. This night, as the Moon rose in the sky, it was bright and full, so the adventurers were a bit more wary. Not much past midnight, on Korik’s watch, the dwarf heard the sound of howling off in the distance, and deciding it would be best to be prepared, woke Landorin, who’d begun his nightly meditation after taking 1st watch, and Melissa, who was scheduled for 3rd watch with Landorin up as well, and it was well that he’d done so!

Round 0

Just as Landorin and Melissa had finished buckling on their weapons belt, having slept in their light armor, a wolf loped into view from west of the camp, heading towards where the warhorse and donkey were tethered!

Korik was unsurprised, and moved to interpose himself between the wolf and its prey—it wasn’t getting a free dinner here if he could help it!

Round 1

Melissa double moved slowly towards the wolf, drawing her silvered mace and readying her light shield.

The wolf charged at Korik and chomped down hard! Korik grimaced and cursed but stood strong, feet firmly planted, and resisted being thrown to the ground. He had taken a serious hit! But he trusted his friends to come to his aid, and his tough dwarven nature to resist infection... he hoped!

Landorin moved towards the sound of snarling and dwarven cursing, drawing his silvered short sword. Seeing there was a single, red-eyed wolf, he swiftly cast inspirational boost, and then started singing to get his Inspired Courage going.

Holding the Banner high in his left hand, Korik thrust hard with his rapier, and managed to execute a perfect thrust into the wolf’s chest! The creature must indeed be a werewolf, as he felt its hide resist the thrust for a moment, but then the point pressed deep.

Landorin took a breath and then immediately called upon Selûne’s aid to power his Protection Devotion, as the fight looked to be continuing.

Round 2

Melissa moved another 10’ to get into position south of the wolf, and swung her silvered mace, but the wolf dodged out of the way, not allowing the mace to touch it!

It then bit at the dwarf again, but the sacred bonus from Landorin’s action prevented the bite from getting through!

Landorin moved around to the north of Korik and thrust with his silvered short sword, and struck the wolf in its side, getting a decent hit, but not taking the wolf down.

With Melissa to the south of the rabid beast, with a snack of his own Korik took a step to get into position on its northern flank, and landed a sneak attack! The extra advantage helped him get through its damage reduction for a little damage, and the boost from the bard helped just enough to disable the creature!

Round 3

With the creature barely still standing, Melissa took another swing with her mace, and this time managed, with help from her friends, to thunk it and drop it!

The wolf lay dying but not dead, so Landorin used his detect evil ability, and alas, confirmed that the creature was evil. He put it out of its misery with a coup de grace, and the wolf changed into the body of a heavily scarred naked bearded man of perhaps 20 years of age. It looked like perhaps he’d been bitten himself, an affected lycanthrope, and probably lost in the wilds.

The group resolved to take the body with them to the temple, and after the dwarf’s wounds were cleaned, Landorin cured him with a couple of charges from his wand.

The rest of the night passed without incident, and the group continues on, eventually reaching the Temple. As it turned out, an afflicted lycanthrope’s bite could not pass on the Curse, so that was a relief...