**Chapter 5: The Hissing Chambers**

Afternoon, 12 Eleint, 1371

The heroes found themselves in the outskirts of Hlondeth, overlooking the straits of the Vilhon Reach to their south. They’d been following tracks to a reputed fortification of separatist wereserpents whose allegiance to Hlondeth had waned in the wake of a transition in power. Melissa and her father walked about 100’ behind Korik, who scouted the land and watched for natural and artificial hazards. Wereserpents were nothing if not cunning, and the dwarf had already spotted a few booby traps along the way. Behind them all walked a man calling himself “Badnews”, though he’d admitted that his mother called him Dredge. The whisper gnome was a pickpocket who dabbled in divinations, and had aspirations for becoming a locksmith in good time.



The wilderness rogue gestured for alertness, and the others were duly cautioned, keeping their eyes and ears ready for sounds, such as those made by the dozen or so birds that flew in their direction, and then past them, overhead.

A boat in the water

Description automatically generated

Their motive was neither the seizure of a much-coveted magic item nor their usual preemptive strike against evil lycanthropes. In this instance, they’d been hired as mercenaries to accomplish two objectives, namely to vanquish this cell of wereserpents and destroy their lair, and furthermore to liberate any of the humanoids kept captive for meat and blood in the dungeons beneath the swamps. Their passage had been booked aboard the Rebel Causeway, a long-range fishing vessel, and they had disembarked onto a smaller, sailed junk with beaching capacity, from there rowing to the mainland, just about 20 miles west of Hlondeth.

A boat with a deck chair and two chairs

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Staking the boat to the sandy shore’s high-tide mark, they then trekked along the coastline, careful to stay in the trees in lieu of taking the sandier, straighter path via the beach, and now came upon an expected inland path that they took, reaching higher ground in little time. The stronghold was allegedly built into a mound surrounded by a pungent bog, and their defensive infrastructure was dependent on drainage channels and swampy, underground causeways into the central area.

Unlike the majority of Hlondeth’s denizens, these separatists were all humanoid wereserpents, only distantly related in bloodlines to the yuan-ti that ruled the City of Serpents, as Hlondeth was also known. It was not long until they spotted the recent tracks of slithering and pacing wereserpents headed along a heavily used trail.

The group’s scout then gave the signal to approach quietly, which the others did. Upon catching up to the naturalist rogue, they surveyed the panorama beyond the precipice where they stood, most notably the reputed hilltop entrance.

A map of a tower surrounded by trees

Description automatically generated

Guarded by a handful of hybrid-formed wereserpents, the stone structure atop the spirally faceted mound to their west was the highest object visible other than the cliff where the heroes were now standing. It must have stood 50’ above the barely flowing, anaerobic waters, while they were perhaps 30’ above this waterline, and about 100’ east of the paths that began to rise above the swamp.

They discussed alternate routes to the hilltop, and converged on three paths offering various tradeoffs:

* Optimal stealth; soft cover; middling path length
* Minimal stealth; hard cover; short, direct path
* Middling stealth and cover; long, meandering path

All were equally muddy at first, then less so as the ground tapered upward towards the hilltop.

Rounds 1 – 2

“You all know my position. I’m with the majority vote,” Badnews said as he crouched, cast *mage armor [expired on Round 2401]*, then produced a scroll of *cat’s grace*, and cast it upon himself *[expired on Round 42]*. The diviner added, “Let’s just be decisive and swift in our execution.”

*Badnews gained +4 to FFAC and AC, +4 to Dex, and +2 to TAC and AC.*

~\*~



Malicia had grown ever powerful, and now made her way across the woods with a singular aim upon arriving at Red Raven’s cemetery stronghold. For months she had trained and studied up what lore she could get her hands on regarding the vampire’s strengths, weaknesses, and reputation, and she was now prepared for several possible luring tactics before she was too close to the undead witch’s lair.

~\*~

Taking the most direct route, the group got a little closer, with Korik in front, carrying Landorin’s *enlarge person* potion in his right hand, moving stealthily at only 10’ per round so Melissa could keep up. He kept the Banner held low to the ground in his left hand, out of sight as much as possible.

About 10’ behind Korik, Melissa followed. She wasn’t very sneaky, so Korik had to whisper instructions to her from time to time as to what to watch out for and avoid, where to step, and the like. With neither a weapon in hand nor her shield on her arm, she walked about 5’ in front of Landorin, who also bore no weapons in hand.

The whisper gnome Badnews brought up the rear, keeping an eye out for any threats from the sides or rear of the group.

Rounds 12 – 13



Landorin moved up past Melissa to beside Korik at his right front flank, lacing his hands together as a stirrup, and Melissa stepped up next to Landorin, put her right foot in his “stirrup” and reached up to grab Korik’s backpack strap with her left hand and Korik’s right hand or at least part of it with her own right hand.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Melissa, Ride** | 5 | **Dex (+2)** | 1 | 8 | 16 | 24 |

*See below.*

As they heard movement to the south, Korik and Landorin assisted Melissa in climbing aboard, though she hardly needed the help. Korik, with his dwarven stability, stood quite still and helped Melissa to get up his body on his right side and support her weight as she swung her left leg over his backpack, while Landorin’s linked hands support her right foot and help lift her up into position.



Round 14

The dwarf was noticeably encumbered, but still able to move about. Korik then spotted a scimitar-wielding wereserpent routinely slithering towards them, still about 80’ away, and drank the potion in his hand *[enlarge person, expired on Round 23]*. The dwarf grew to a height of 8’ 6”, and now weighed 1136 lbs., stepping a bit backwards and leftwards so Melissa was now right behind his right side. He held his right hand out and behind a bit for Melissa to grab.

As Korik grew to an ogre-sized dwarf, Landorin lifted Melissa’s right foot to keep her rising with the dwarf’s growth, basically making sure she didn’t fall back down.

Melissa, her natural riding skill kicking in, used her father’s helping hands to ride Korik’s back as he grew, feeling the backpack under her butt expand along with the dwarf, and as Korik reached his full height, she settled into position.

Without stirrups - akin to riding bareback, but with at least an improvised saddle, she tucked her toes in towards Korik’s ribs, careful not to interfere with his arms. She got a firmer grip on the left backpack strap, now as wide as a good belt, and decided not to try to ready her shield, she would rather make sure not to fall off during the next minute and get left behind!

Seeing the dwarf growing and remaining quiet, Badnews produced his wand of *magic missiles*, and prepared to send off a pair of *missiles* towards their enemies as soon as their element of surprise was spent.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Badnews, Move Silently** | 6 | **Dex (+5)** | 4 | 15 | 15 | 30 |

*Result unknown.*

Landorin noticed wood and stone knobs that had been deliberately impaled into the mound wall to their left, and was wise enough to suspect that these were akin to ladders for the slithering serpentfolk. He thought they might be in for a long-running battle but needed to get moving, so he shouted, “Press forward, let’s go!”

Melissa also noted the protrusions running up and down the undulating side of the mound, and also took notice of the deliberate cultivation of vines that formed sconces to bear the weight of an ascending or descending serpentine creature. She giggled, unable to resist, and in a low voice, said in Korik’s ear, “giddy-up, let’s go get that guy!” The enemy would probably block their retreat path using that ladder, but so be it.

Korik was struggling to bear the weight and still be useful in any upcoming conflict, and his teammates were acting as blinders for him on both sides as he faced the wereserpent. He snorted at the half-elf’s remarks, but was actually much amused, and contemplated his possible options as she settled into place.



Round 15

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Group** | **Initiative** | **Roll** | **Modified Roll** | **Speed** |
| Landorin | 1 | 3 | 19 | 22 | 30’ |
| Melissa | 1 | 2 | 14 | 16 | 10’ |
| Wereserpents | 2 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 20’ |
| Korik | 1 | 2 | 10 | 12 | 30’ |
| Badnews | 1 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 30’ |

With a swift motion and verbal utterance, Landorin cast his *inspirational boost* spell, then shouted “Press forward!” as he suited his actions to his words, moving forward and to his left while drawing his silvered short sword. With a loud, bold voice, the bard then began singing, using his bardic music, boosted by his spell, to inspire courage in all his allies, as well as himself!

*Inspire courage (bestowed on all friendlies) increases to +2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

The bard kept a close eye on the situation, and was prepared to activate his protection devotion if any of his allies were about to be attacked in melee.

Holding on tight with her left hand, Melissa used her recently mastered magic to cast *magic weapon [expired on Round 25]* on her silvered mace, and then drew it with her right hand.

*Silvered mace gained +1 to damage.*

The wereserpent raised his falchion and charge-attacked Landorin. As the creature charged him, Landorin immediately activated his protection devotion feat *[expires on Round 25]*, calling upon Selûne to protect him and his allies from harm.

*Landorin and allies within 30’ gain +2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC, duration 10 rounds.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wereserpent Guard | Scimitar | 1d6+5 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 2 charge | 10 | 4 | 14 |

*Miss.*

A second warrior came into view, spotted first by Melissa. The snake woman appeared at the top of the vines and pegs that she could use to descend, but instead she hurled a rock down at Korik and his friends.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wereserpent Guard | Thrown Rock | 1d4+5 | 4 | 2 height | 9 | 13 | 22 |

*Hit (Korik). Dmg: 4 + 5 = 9 [8/17].*

The second wereserpent then ducked back behind the 20’ ravine.

Korik moved up behind Landorin, lifting the Banner vertically up high for all to see so its power would give them all benefits against these wereserpents, treading a bit carefully so as not to get himself or Melissa hung up on the terrain to either side, and drawing his now large, silvered rapier as he went.

*Item description: “To activate it, the banner needs to be held by any character with a Cha 13+ and the ability to* ***provide boosts to friendlies*** *(such as a bard, marshal, or dragon shaman).”*

*Consequently, this has no effect while in Korik’s hand.*

Sneering at the puny wereserpent in front of him, the ogre-sized dwarf thrust past the elf at the scaly for with his rapier, hoping to score a brutal hit on his favored enemy.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Silvered Rapier | 1d6 | 2 | 1 + 2 | 18-20, x2 | Slashing | 2.0 | +7 | 17 | 24 | +1d6 Sneak |

*Threat. 1d20 = 3 + 7 = 10, not a critical hit.*

*Dmg: 2 + 2 + 2 Courage + 4 Favored Enemy = 10.*

Crouching down to get a line of sight between the dwarf’s enlarged legs to the first lycanthrope, Badnews tapped on his wand cast *magic missile* upon it.

*Dmg: 4 + 2 = 6 magic.*



Round 16

Landorin, continuing to sing, thrust enthusiastically at the wereserpent with his shortsword, inspired even more by the Banner flying above him.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Silvered Short Sword | 1d6 | 0 | 1 + 2 Courage  + 2 flank | 19-20, x2 | Piercing | 2.0 | +6 | 13 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 4 + 2 Courage = 6.*

Leaving the wereserpent nearly dead, he then took a step up along the side of the ravine, and strode forward up the ravine, ignoring the wereserpent up above for now.

Melissa, thinking she might have drawn her mace too soon, shrugged, and swiftly activated her *motivate charisma* aura, calling out encouragement to her allies while glancing around.

*Allies gained +2 to Cha-based checks.*

Then, looking up at the wereserpent who’d thrown a rock at her, she focused her willpower and activated her *flare* spell-like ability to try to dazzle the creature.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *flare* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Result** |
| Wereserpent Guard | Fortitude | 7 | 1 | 8 |

*Fail. Wereserpent Guard 2 suffered–1 to attacks, Search checks, and Spot checks.*

The bedazzled wereserpent retreated further as a third snake-man appeared to the southeast behind another climbable part of the ravine.



The first serpent-person they’d spotted now full-attacked Landorin.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wereserpent Guard | Scimitar | 1d6+5 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 11 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 2 + 5 = 7 [11/18].*

Having studied the moment, the third wereserpent threw a rock at Landorin, and called out with a reptilian rattle of his voice box, warning others nearby.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wereserpent Guard | Thrown Rock | 1d6+5 | 3 | 4 | 2 height | 9 | 3 | 12 |

*Miss.*

Korik handed the Banner *[Swift action]* down to Landorin, who then held it high in his left hand *[Free Action]*. He then thrust at the injured wereserpent with his rapier, now feeling the boost from the Banner in its proper hand.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Silvered Rapier | 1d6 | 2 + 4 | 1 + 2  Courage | 18-20, x2 | Slashing | 2.0 | +7 | 5 | 12 | +1d6 Sneak |

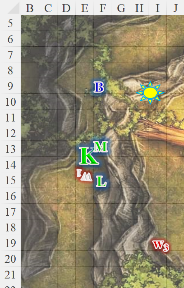
*Miss.*

Scowling, the giant dwarf took a 5’ step forward so that he could reach past the creature - and give the beast another possible target, given that Landorin was already wounded.

Badnews had lost his line of attack to the bedazzled wereserpent, but the one up front was still a viable target so he zapped that fool as Korik took a step southward.

*Dmg: 5 + 2 = 7 magic.*

The first guard dropped, its serpentine musculature falling limp as it slowly bled to death.



Round 17

Landorin kept singing, and dropped his sword at his feet for the moment so he could draw his wand. He used the wand to gesture at the gnome to move up as he drew it, then activated it to cure his wounds.

*Landorin gained 4 + 1 = 5 hps [16/18].*

With no foe to engage in melee and no wereserpent in close range, Melissa put her mace back on her belt, and focused on her defenses, ready to dodge any incoming attacks as best she could.

*Total Defense: +4 to AC.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

The wereserpent to the southeast disappeared from view, and they could now hear another, higher-pitched voice rattling a similar warning to those nearby.

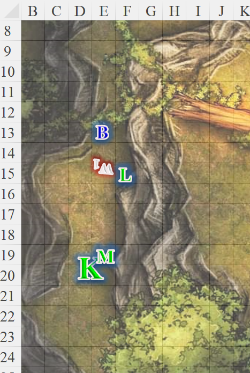
With no active wereserpents in sight, Korik moved forward 30’ to the next narrow point in the path, where he stopped to take a good look and listen around, trying to spot any hiding foes and hear any slithering of serpentine bodies.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Listen** | 3 | **Wis (+1)** | +2 +2 | 8 | 16 – 20 | ?? |
| **Korik, Spot** | 3 | **Wis (+1)** | +2 +2 | 8 | 16 – 20 | ?? |

*Movement heard above them, plus maybe some armor chinking.*

Moving towards Landorin a bit, Badnews cast *see invisibility [expired on Round 417]*.

*Badnews gained see invisibility ability.*



Rounds 18 – 19

Landorin put his wand away, reached down to pick up his sword, and stepped past the dying wereserpent, while continuing to belt out lyrics that spoke of doom to those under the curse of Lycanthropy at the hands of noble heroes! It seemed appropriate with the Banner in his hand waving high, a magnet for their foe to either be drawn to or repelled from...

Melissa drew her wand of *burning hands*, figuring that might be most useful if the wereserpents go close, and continued to focus on her defenses, ready to dodge any incoming attacks as best she could.

The wereserpents they’d spotted up above continued to slither about—no doubt—and they may have fled into the lair for reinforcements.

Korik led the way southward, turning southeastward along the winding path.

Badnews held his wand in one hand, and his sling in the other, listening and watching out for enemies, both above and below.



Round 20

Korik and Melissa heard metal-clad wereserpents moving up above, but saw nothing. They put on a burst of speed, taking advantage of the wereserpents’ seeming retreat to get around the corner quickly.

Landorin swung a bit wide around the downed tree, staying away from the wall as he strode forward, belting out his ballad and holding the Banner high and his sword at the ready.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Melissa held her wand tightly in her right hand so as not to drop, and held tightly onto Korik’s backpack strap so as to keep herself properly seated on her improvised saddle as she rode the giant dwarf, while continuing to focus on her defenses, ready to dodge any incoming attacks as best she could.

*Total Defense: +4 to AC.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+1 to silvered mace damage*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The wereserpents continued to attend to their contingencies up above.

Korik hustled eastwards with Landorin, his large feet thumping along on the ravine floor. Leading the way, he looked ahead hoping the lair wouldn’t be too much further. He tried to remember just how long ago he’d drink the potion, as it only lasted a minute, and was ready to signal Melissa to dismount right before it wore off.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

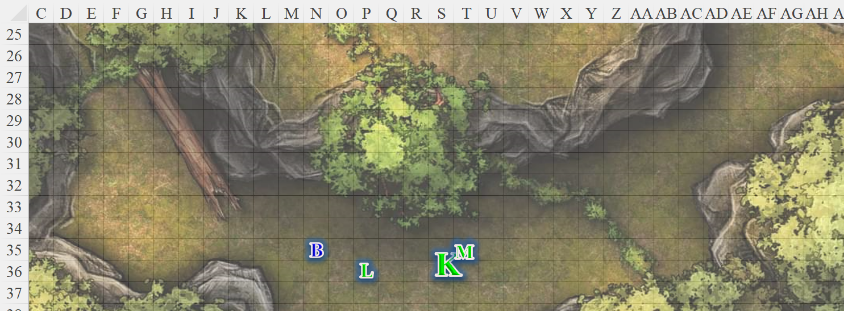
Badnews spotted and heard nothing worth zapping as he—too—followed.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*



Round 21

Feeling that time was running out, Landorin continued hustling forward. Seeing a line of shrubbery crossing the path ahead, he guessed that there might be a trip rope hidden there, and hoped that by jumping over the sparse portion, he could clear that imagined trap. Belting out his ballad and angling the Banner forward as he got a running start, and he went for it!

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Melissa continued hanging on and being totally defensive as she rode Korik, though she was definitely missing her own saddle.

*Total Defense: +4 to AC.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+1 to silvered mace damage*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The wereserpents spoke to one another up above, preparing for the heroes to advance.

While Korik saw Landorin getting ready to jump the weeds ahead of them, in his current form the giant dwarf figured size and strength would suffice. He strode forward, and slowing down slightly, took an ogre-sized step over the greenery.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews followed close behind.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*



Round 22

Landorin thought he heard a quick call up above, as if answering a question Landorin hadn’t picked up. He saw the estuarial jungle to the east and north, along with the arcing ravine wall. Coming to a stop with 2 directions possible, Landorin realized he wasn’t sure which way the wereserpents’ lair was - but there were definitely wereserpents up to the north. Calling out to the ranger, he asked in Damaran, “Korik, which way do you figure to the lair?”

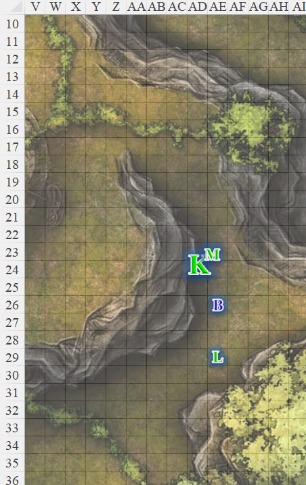
“Upwards, I’ll wager,” Badnews spoke up on Korik’s behalf. “... based on what we just witnessed from the two foes up above us.”

Melissa continued hanging on and being totally defensive as she rode Korik, though she was definitely missing her own saddle. She started to get concerned that the spell was going to wear off...

The wereserpents spoke to one another up above, preparing for the heroes to advance.

Korik moved up to just north of Landorin and glanced to the north and east, and then continued moving in the direction he considered the most likely to lead to the entrance.

Badnews followed and passed Landorin for a moment.



Round 23

Switching back to Common, Landorin continued singing of the doom about to befall the evil wereserpents, and hustled almost due north, getting next to another line of vegetation and a step or so away from the ravine wall to the east, waving his allies forward with the Banner.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Melissa continued hanging on as she rode Korik, though she was definitely missing her own saddle. Expecting the spell to wear off quite soon, she got ready to dismount right after Korik got to where the ravine wall on the left ended.

*Total Defense: +4 to AC.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+1 to silvered mace damage*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik hustled forward alongside the left wall of the ravine, and as he got to where that wall ended, he slowed down and carefully straddled the row of shrubbery to the north. He then shrunk down to his normal size as Melissa expectedly dropped to the ground onto her feet, her weak leg flinching a bit before regaining a stable footing.

*Melissa: Reflex check auto-succeed.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Having cast *see invisibility* a while back Badnews kept an eye out for anything slithering as he caught up with the others.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Silently and stealthily, one of the wereserpents tossed a flask of alchemist’s fire at Korik who had now come into view.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wereserpent Guard | Alchemist’s Fire | 1d6 fire | 3 | 4 | 2 height  -4 distance | 5 | 7 | 12 |

*Miss.*

“There!” Korik pointed out the bloke who threw the flask at him.



Round 24

Landorin saw Korik almost get fire-bombed, and breathed a sigh of relief into a brief interlude, then continued to sing as he moved up to stand in front of the dwarf to present a new target. Then, just to make sure these wereserpents were indeed evil, he focused his attention on detecting for that as his voice maintained his melody.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Melissa, her left hand empty and a wand in her right hand, feet on the ground again, stumped forward to stand next to the dwarf, and seeing that the one enemy was outside her close range effects, just readied her shield as she stumped forward a bit more.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+1 to silvered mace damage*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The wereserpent threw another flask—this one filled with cold-sealed liquid nitrogen—aimed at Melissa’s shield.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Wereserpent Guard | Flask of Frost | 1d6 cold | 3 | 4 | 2 height | 9 | **20** | 29 |

*Hit Melissa. Dmg: 4 cold [11/15].*

*Splash dmg to Landorin: 1 cold [15/18].*

The bloke then ducked into what was once a well, and slithered away.

Korik grunted with the near miss, and decided he should take a moment to heal his earlier wounds. He grabbed his potion of *cure light wounds* with his left hand, drank it down, and dropped the empty vial on the ground.

*Korik gained 7 + 1 = 8 hps [16/17].*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin pocketed his wand, seeing that his friend was now in much better shape.

Badnews huffed northwestwardly to get a better view and see if he could help, but he had no line of sight to any enemy by the time he reached the others. “This is the summit,” he pointed at the former well, and cast *shield [expired on Round 64]* upon himself.

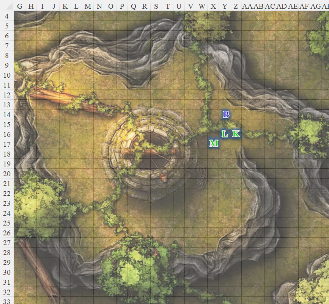
*Badnews gained +4 to TAC & AC, and immunity to magic missiles.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*



Round 25

With Korik still slightly wounded, and both he and Melissa a bit more wounded, Landorin decided to get the dwarf healthy first, and wove a *cure minor wounds* into his singing, reaching a hand out to touch the party scout. Then, since his right hand was currently free to help him climb if necessary, he scrambled up the slope carefully to the top of the well and glanced quickly down, keeping the Banner held high in his left hand.

*Korik gained 1 hps [17/17].*

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Wincing due to the sudden serious frostbite from the very cold liquid, Melissa did her best to climb up next to Landorin.

*Total Defense: +4 to AC.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+1 to silvered mace damage*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik nodded his thanks to the elf, then hustled his way up to the left of Melissa, and as got to the top, turned and reached out his left hand to help the half-elf up as well if she needed it.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Still *seeing invisibility*, Badnews cast *detect magic [expired on Round 65]* and also went to the edge of the lair’s vertical entrance.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

They could hear the wereserpents slithering down the spiral downward path that had once been merely a vertical shaft for collecting potable water.



Round 26

“Nothing magical, no *alarm*, no sigils, no wards,” Badnews reported after a few seconds of sensing around for magic.

Landorin nodded at Badnews’ good news, and continuing to hold the Banner high, and singing heartily, pulled out his wand again, and wove the activation of a *cure light wounds* spell into his music, reaching out and delivering the healing to his half-elf daughter. Then with a quick flourish with the wand he gestured for Korik to head down the ramp.

*Melissa gained 8 + 1 = 9 hps [15/15].*

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Melissa muttered, “thanks dad” in Elvish, some of her frostbitten skin recovering its color, and moved to the top of the well and then carefully down onto the ramp.

*Total Defense: +4 to AC.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+1 to silvered mace damage*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

One of the wereserpents likely dropped something, making a clanking noise down below.

Korik nodded at Landorin, then moved along the top of the well to get ahead of Melissa so he wouldn’t have to pass her on the ramp. He trusted his own balance and dwarven stability, but as for the half-elf girl, her movement issues worried him a bit.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews ?

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 sacred bonus to AC, flat-footed AC and touch AC.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*



Round 27

Landorin delayed for a bit, waiting for the others to move down the ramp so he would be able to bring up the rear along with Badnews.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Melissa ducked under the wooden beam and moved carefully down the ramp to right behind Korik, while calling up in Common, “hey Badnews, got any *light* spells?” She could do a *dancing lights* if necessary, but it would slow her down a little.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

“‘Fraid not,” the diviner shrugged, then listed his spells.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Memorized Spells* | | | |
| **Spell** | **Level** | **DC** | **Cast?** |
| Detect Magic | 0 | 13 | þ |
| Acid Splash | 0 | 13 | q |
| Acid Splash | 0 | 13 | q |
| Mending | 0 | 13 | q |
| Read Magic | 0 | 13 | q |
| Mage Armor | 1 | 14 | þ |
| Shield | 1 | 14 | þ |
| True Strike | 1 | 14 | q |
| True Strike | 1 | 14 | q |
| Reduce Person | 1 | 14 | q |
| See Invisibility | 2 | 15 | þ |
| Sonic Weapon | 2 | 15 | q |
| Sonic Weapon | 2 | 15 | q |
| Burning Sword | 2 | 15 | q |

Not wanting to get too far ahead, Korik went into a total defense posture and moved down the ramp 20’, so that Melissa could keep up.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews followed behind Korik.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

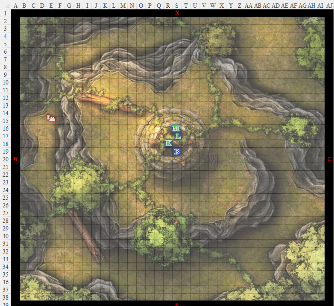
*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin figured he could catch up easily enough, so while continuing his epic improvisation, he wove in another activation of the wand, casting *cure light wounds* on his own injured body. Then he carefully stepped down onto the ramp and moved forward, putting his wand away as he caught up to Melissa.

*Landorin healed 4 + 1 = 5 hps [18/18].*

And they were now descending in single file along a spiral corridor.



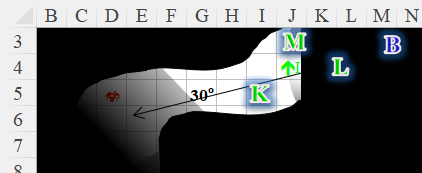
Round 28

They slid a bit as the 20 degrees became 30 for a portion of the slithering tunnel, and beyond this point, they would need a torch to guide their path. Korik’s vision let him know that there was a guinea pig-sized monstrous spider just down the path.

“I’ll get a *dancing lights* spell effect going in a moment,” Melissa said as she recovered her balance. Stupid ramp...

Landorin replied, “Excellent, I don’t fancy holding a torch right now!”

Korik called back, “Great, put it about 30’ gown the well!”



Round 29

Melissa cast *dancing lights [expired on Round 39]*, then stepped carefully 10’ down the ramp along the ramp wall, using the edge of her right hand to use the wall to steady her, and willed the lights to move forward as far as she could see to about 10’ south of the spider. “They only last a minute,” she called out as she moved, thinking someone probably out to work on providing a longer-lasting light source, since she could do only a few more of these.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

She had the four orbs orbit the team for a moment as the team beheld the spider in their midst.

The wereserpents were nowhere in sight.

Korik muttered “I got this,” as he moved carefully down the slope and thrust at the 8-legged vermin, feeling inspired by the bard’s ballad. The spider sprinted away southward with alarming reflexes before he could truly menace it.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews followed along.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin, realizing the well was no longer an issue and the tunnel allowed passing others, kept singing as he moved carefully down into position behind Korik, once again putting his wand back in his pocket, leaving his right hand empty, ready to cast a spell or draw a weapon as needed. He was very glad he’d acquired that wand, he just hadn’t expected to use so many charges before the real battle had begun!

*Detecting evil.*

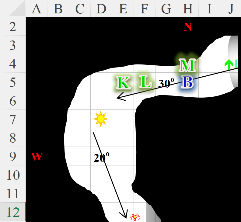
*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The singing was preventing Badnews and the others from being able to discern the presence of baddies, but Korik’s Darkvision gave him a clear line of sight to the few dozen feet in front of him before the curvature blocked his view.

The dwarf was momentarily on level ground as the others caught up.



Round 30

Melissa moved diagonally southwest across the tunnel, stepping carefully between Badnews and Landorin, and then up against the corner, using the wall to steady herself.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Less worried about falling, with the next slope less steep, and annoyed at the spider skittering away, Korik charged straight south at the vermin, lunging with his rapier to skewer it!

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Silvered Rapier | 1d6 | 2 | 1 + 2  Charge | 18-20, x2 | Slashing | 2.0 | +7 | 12 | 19 |

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

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The spider died, but another two were now in the dwarf’s midst. The one closest to Korik attacked him.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| T monstrous spider | Bite | 1d3-4+Poison | 5 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 10 |

*Miss.*

A spider the size of a dog prepared to attack the dwarf as well.

Badnews moved until he saw the spiders, then drew his sling and attacked the remaining one.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Sling +1 | 1d3 | 1 | 1 – 4  Melee | x2 | 50’ | 0.0 | +5 | 14 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 2 + 1 = 3.*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin moved carefully down the sloping tunnel behind the dwarf, looking over the shorter fellow to see what else lay ahead, as he continued to belt out improvised lyrics to keep his allies’ morale up, and of course drown out any noises the enemy might be making and clearly informing them of the party’s advance. At least the acoustics of this winding tunnel were interesting!

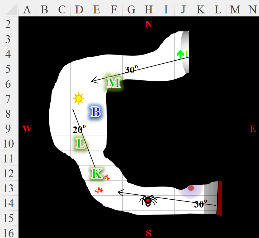
*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The way ahead began to veer upwards again, and Korik could see a closed door.



Round 31

Melissa decided to risk moving a little faster as the slope seemed to have lessened a bit after the small flat area. First she slid her shield arm along the wall to her left, turning the corner and down to just past Badnews, as far as she could get. Then she mentally moved her lights down to the far corner, which she could now see.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

… the wereserpents and/or spiders …

Thinking the smaller spiders were a threat Landorin could no doubt defeat, Korik tumbled diagonally between them to in front of the more robust spider and thrust at it.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Tumble** | 5 | **Dex (+1)** | 2 | 8 | 19 | 27 |

*Success. No AoOs.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Silvered Rapier | 1d6 | 2 | 1 | 18-20, x2 | Slashing | 2.0 | +5 | 6 | 11 | +1d6 Sneak |

*Miss.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews moved past Melissa, and attacked the Medium spider with his sling.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Sling +1 | 1d3 | 1 | 1 – 4  melee | x2 | 50’ | 0.0 | +5 | 17 | 22 |

*Hit. Dmg: 1 + 1 = 2.*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

*[DM edited based on dead foe at E13]* Landorin drew his silvered shortsword, moved alongside Korik, and thrust at the dog-sized spider, while continuing to sing.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Silvered Short Sword | 1d6 | 0 | 1 + 2  Flank | 19-20, x2 | Piercing | 2.0 | +6 | 13 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 6.*

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The spider flinched from the pain and moved back, inciting one more jab each from the elf and dwarf.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Silvered Rapier | 1d6 | 2 | 1 + 2  flank | 18-20, x2 | Slashing | 2.0 | +6 | 3 | 9 | +1d6 Sneak |
| MW Silvered Short Sword | 1d6 | 0 | 1 + 2  flank | 19-20, x2 | Piercing | 2.0 | +6 | 16 | 22 |  |

*Miss, hit. Dmg: 5.*

The spider crept back after Landorin’s second stab, and slowly rolled onto its back.

They noticed a chilly draft coming from the direction of the door, and Korik spotted a vaguely familiar clump of brown mold growing along the northern wall. “Careful... that mold emits a painful chill.”

A screen shot of a computer screen

Description automatically generated

Round 32

A person in armor holding a sword

Description automatically generated

Melissa moved carefully south then southwest, asking “Does anyone know if fire burns that cold mold or whatever?” She tried to remember if she’d ever learned about that stuff...

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melissa, Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Knowledge: Nature** | 1 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 3 | 11 – 15 | ?? |

*See below.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Melissa also recalled some tidbits about the mold, and concurred that it was a hazardous organism to deal with. “Fire will only make it stronger,” she cautioned.

Korik tried to remember the best way to deal with brown mold, and how to avoid its effect. “Hug the right wall,” he suggested, thinking if the spiders and wereserpents came this way, it had to be possible to use that door without getting chilled to the bone, and suited his actions to his words, moving forward as close to the right wall as he could get, stepping over the spider and stopping about 3’ from the door to look it over. “Any magic on the door, Badnews?”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Korik, Search** | 5 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 7 | 11 – 15 | ?? | +2 unusual stonework, free ≤10’ |

*See below.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

“Looks like an easily pickable lock, nothing fancy,” muttered the rogue.

Badnews approached, avoiding the mold, and offered, “Want I should take a stab at it?”

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin kept singing, working the lyrics, “I don’t like spiders and snakes, and that ain’t what it takes to kill me,” into the ballad, as he moved forward as close to the right wall as possible to poke the spider with his shortsword again, making sure it wouldn’t be getting better any time soon.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A screen shot of a computer

Description automatically generated

Round 33

Melissa heard Badnews’ question, and answered, “Go for it, Badnews, “ and moved the lights forward about 20’ and up to the ceiling to give him more light to work with, as she also moved down along the wall.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik decided to wait for stuff to happen, thinking that the smaller chap was probably better at locks than he himself was. He got ready to act as soon as the situation changed, and muttered, “I’m ready to go through as soon as it’s unlocked.”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews got to work.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Badnews, Open Lock** | 5 | **Dex (+5)** | 2 | 12 | 9 | 21 |

*Success.*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The whisper gnome easily undid the old, rickety lock, and turned the handle downward, creaking open the door.

Landorin nodded to Badnews as the guy had stepped forward and gotten started, and kept singing, while focusing his attention on whether there was any evil within range.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The door opened further, and a straight, 15’ wide, level, eastbound passage led further into the compound for at least 30’.

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated

Round 34

Korik saw that Badnews had gotten the door open, stopped delaying, said, “I’ll take lead,” and moved before Melissa could act. Stepping past Badnews into the doorway, he then proceeded forward at half speed, using one foot to stomp the area just ahead of him trying to activate any pit trap before putting real weight on it. It wasn’t a surefire method to avoid falling in a pit, but it was certainly safer than rushing ahead full speed, and it also have him a chance to look the floor over to see if it was swept clean or had evidence of creatures passing through dust or the like.

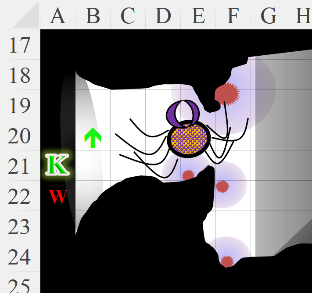
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Korik, Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Craft: Stonemason** | 1 | **Int (+2)** | 4 | 7 | 1 – 5 | ?? |  |
| **Knowledge: Dungeoneering** | 1 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 3 | 11 – 15 | ?? |  |
| **Knowledge: History** | 0 | **Int (+2)** | 0.5 | 2 | 16 – 20 | ?? |  |
| **Knowledge: Local (UE)** | 1 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 3 | 1 – 5 | ?? |  |
| **Knowledge: Nature** | 5 | **Int (+2)** | 2 | 9 | 11 – 15 | ?? |  |
| **Search** | 5 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 7 | 11 – 15 | ?? |  |
| **Spot** | 3 | **Wis (+1)** | 0 | 4 | 1 – 5 | ?? |  |
| **Survival** | 5 | **Wis (+1)** | 3 + 2 FE | 11 | 1 – 5 | ?? | +2 with Tracks |

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Spotting a horse-sized spider carcass being eaten by what looked like its own larvae, he stopped before getting too close. Seeing more of the molds growing along the walls, the dwarf recalled some lore that he’d never thought he’d need, but here was the moment. He whispered, “These spiders like the cold. They’re cursed, and I’m willin’a bet the wereserpents are keen on cold as well.”



Melissa moved up behind Landorin and moved her lights forward through the doorway about 20’.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews stayed about 15’ behind Korik.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin kept singing as he sheathed his short sword and then followed Korik through the doorway up the middle of the new passage, angling the Banner to keep it high without scraping the ceiling. He figured the best way to ensure an attack by the enemy would be to sheath his weapon, the way the day was going! But if not, an empty hand allowed spellcasting.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The undeniable smell of feces or some other nitrate-rich substance gave the heroes pause.

A screen shot of a map

Description automatically generated

Round 35

Melissa moved forward normally, passing through the doorway and stepping up beside Badnews, while moving her lights even further and spreading them out like torches held by 4 people.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A screen shot of a computer screen

Description automatically generated

Korik called back to Melissa, “Hey, a found some larvae for you to burn,” as he carefully stepped forward 10’, avoiding stepping on the spider’s legs and ready to stab any larva that moved into his space, or any other foe that stepped close. He put his back against the wall to keep out of any fire that might happen, though at the rate the half-elf moved, he didn’t expect that to happen immediately. Then, upon closer inspection, the rogue identified the horrid faced creatures as rot grub, a much deadlier beastie than a mere maggot.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

He saw a few spiders the size of his fist crawling along the walls.

Landorin kept singing as he moved up behind Korik, and then wove a *message* spell into the song, pointing at Korik and then back at Melissa to connect up with them. At a pause between verses, he whispered “Testing… can you hear me?”

Both whispered back “yes” and the bard nodded, starting the next verse. This ballad might not win any awards for its random composition, but it continued to keep the party inspired, which mattered. Though he was beginning to wonder if the wereserpents would ever face them...

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews entered the chamber, witnessed the spiders crawling along the walls and ceiling, and thought to target one with his sling.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A black silhouette of a spider with yellow dots and yellow dots

Description automatically generated

Round 36

Melissa could see more molds up ahead, and knew that if she burned the maggots too close to the molds, the fire would stoke the molds’ auras. She moved forward 10’ into a position to use her wand, said, “this is risky, but here goes.”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

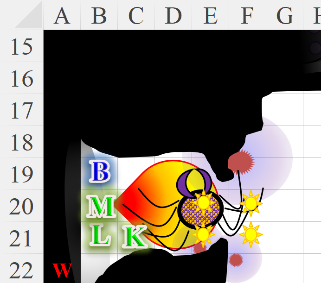
*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

She raised her wand up high, quickly selected the best downwards and leftwards angle she could to have the cone burn all the nearby vermin while not burning her allies and hopefully not strengthening the molds, and expended a charge of its *burning hands* ability.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scrolls and Potions** | **Qty.** | **Level** | **CLev** | **Notes** |
| Wand of *Burning Hands* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 14 charges left |

*Dmg: 4 fire, no save.*



“What the fraud?!” exclaimed Korik as he almost got singed by the wand.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *burning hands* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Reflex** | **6** | **Dex (+1)** | -1 | 6 | 12 | 18 |

*Success. No damage taken.*

… the wereserpents and/or spiders …

Korik saw the maggots getting cooked, deciding that they were dead enough for their purposes, though they’d still have to push their way through spider guts if they were to steer clear of the molds’ auras. He thought for a brief moment, sighed, then carefully stepped up onto the spider and made his way forward, keeping roughly to the middle of the spider, at first veering slightly north to give the closest mold on the south a bit of space, and then veering slightly south as the larger mold on the north got closer and needed a bit more space. He was willing get a little frostbitten to make sure the path he left was in between the cold zones.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Concerned for his friends’ ability to follow, he spent a little time trying to trample out places where his more gravity-challenged compatriots could step safely without getting chilled. He was a pathfinder, after all, but in this case more of a pathmaker. “Come ahead, keep to the area where I kinda made a trail.”

A few of the maggots that had survived the burn now emerged from the parting carapace, coiled, then sprung forth towards Korik.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  infestation | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Reflex** | **6** | **Dex (+1)** | -1 | 6 | 19 | 25 |

*Success. No maggot got on his skin.*

With a few banana-sized maggots on his sleeves, the dwarf needed to get clear of the other emerging goolings as the spider’s body opened up and gave way to a still fresh mass of them.

Badnews noticed that the mold to the south was growing slightly, and said as much before casting *acid splash* on it.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Ranged Touch Spells | 1d3 acid | +8 | 19 | 27 |

*Hit. 1 acid.*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*Detecting magic.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The mold remained active, but ceased to grow. Perhaps acid was a deterrent to these molds.

A few guinea pig-sized spiders watched the heroes curiously from the walls and ceiling.

Seeing a bunch of new maggots boiling out of the spider guts, Landorin improvised his next verse, belting it out quickly as he started hustling forward and tried to leap over the new batch.

“Burn the maggots,

Both new and old,

Burn them again,

Just don’t hit the mold!”

*Landorin gained extra XPs for a DM LOL.*

He moved northeast and then east, and angled the Banner forward so as to not hit the ceiling as he jumped over the new batch of maggots in the middle of the spider. Then he kept moving straight east, figuring he might take some cold damage from the larger mold but he feared cold much less than maggots...

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Jump** | 1 | **Str (+1)** | 0 | 2 | 13 | 15 |

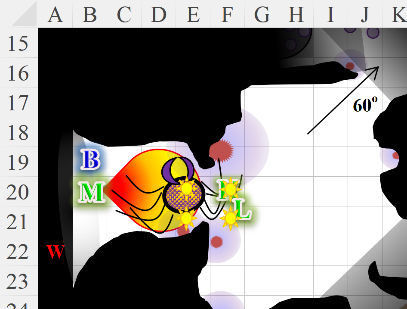
*Successful clearing of maggot-threatened area.*

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*



Round 37

They heard hissing in the distance, though the echoes across the chambers made it unclear as to whether they originated from the northeastern or southeastern passage.

Melissa chuckled, and called out, “Okay, dad, got the idea!”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Staying in place, she fired off another *burning hands* from her wand, angling it more to the left as she had originally intended. Then she looked carefully to see if there were still and maggots moving around in the spider body.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scrolls and Potions** | **Qty.** | **Level** | **CLev** | **Notes** |
| Wand of *Burning Hands* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 13 charges left |

*Dmg: 2 fire, no save.*

“I think I got them all!” she said as took a step forward, then saw a bit of movement within, shaking her head. “There’re still some wigglers!”

Korik asked, “One more fry?”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews waited to learn the result, sniffing, grimacing, and noting, “The wereserpents probably crap in here.”

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

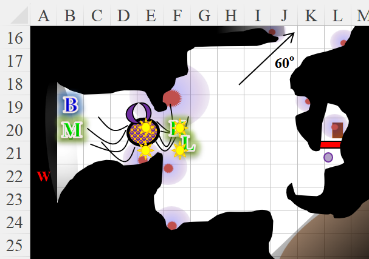
Landorin waited as Melissa contemplated another frying of the nearly cooked spider and maggot casserole.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*



Round 38

Melissa seared the core of the smoking flesh, adding to the odor of feces a hint of seafood.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scrolls and Potions** | **Qty.** | **Level** | **CLev** | **Notes** |
| Wand of *Burning Hands* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 12 charges left |

*Dmg: 3 fire, no save.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The thing was done for, and if any maggot remained alive, it would have to eat its way through the toughened flesh of the host body.

Korik moved to the northeast a bit, scrambling carefully down the steep slope to peer into the area beyond and report, aiming for the cave wall to brace himself on. Looking around, he said, “There’s a few clutches of those maggots, some molds, and a rope leading back up another, steeper slope.”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews skipped eastward to join the others, pointing out that the stench was coming from the southeast.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin moved closer to the openings to the east and southeast, continuing to belt out his never-ending ballad, looking first to see what was in the small alcove to the east, and then took a moment to concentrate on his *detect evil* to determine if any evil registered from the dimly lit area to the southeast.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The elf, too, could tell that the draft from the southeast was carrying with it the miasma of rotting, digested things.

A screenshot of a map

Description automatically generated

Round 39

The *dancing lights* spell expired.

A screenshot of a game

Description automatically generated

A nasty looking snake came down the slope that Korik had just identified, and hissed menacingly at the heroes. It measured about five feet in length, and coiled up, poised to strike at them.

A colorful snake with large wings

Description automatically generated

Melissa thought to herself, this darkness just won’t do! She used her Arcane Attunement ability to once more use her *dancing lights [expired on Round 49]* spell-like ability, placing them in the pattern of 4 lights but 20’ further to just in front of the opposite case wall. Then she moved 10’ forward, almost onto the squashed and burnt remnant of the big spider.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik reported back, “weird snake critter coming this way,” and carefully moved back to stand north of Badnews, then sheathed his rapier. “Don’t think it’s a were; gonna get my bow ready.”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews moved north to get a better look at the serpentine aberration. *[defer standard action]*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin spotted a door to his northeast as he kept singing, and took a few steps to the north and one to the east, being sure not to get too close to the nearby mold, and drew his masterwork cold iron rapier. At the foot of the door—like a doormat—lay a clutch of eggs and maggots hatching.

Whatever this snake thing was, he was willing to fight it with cold iron, and let Korik use his bow. He planned to be the first person the thing attacked when it arrived, indeed he readied an action to stab the first snakish creature to get within reach, in case it was very fast.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

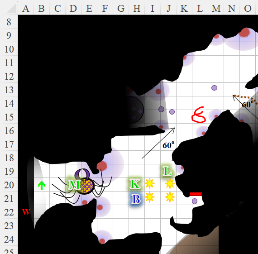
A creature with a long tail

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

The monster slithered further along the floor towards the base of the slope atop which stood Landorin.

Badnews saw its approach, and zapped it with twin *magic missiles* from his wand.

*Dmg: 5 + 2 = magic [force].*



Round 40

As if roused by the slithering, rasping, and screeching of the aberrant serpent, the clutches of maggots began to squirm more. Perhaps they anticipated a meal.

Melissa carefully moved across the flame-broiled spider residue, following the path Korik made between the mold auras, and stepped into the space west of Badnews.

“Fun times, eh?” she asked the little guy in a low voice, looking around for any more targets; maybe those maggots about to hatch in that alcove.... She figured to cover this flank for the moment while the others dealt with strange serpents.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik readied his bow while reviewing what he might know of such a strange creature. Then, taking a 5’ step back west for a better angle, he nocked a cold iron tipped arrow and let fly at the creature! After firing, he let his allies know that...

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Korik, Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Knowledge: Dungeoneering** | 1 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 3 | 1 – 5 | ?? |

*See below.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Composite Shortbow, Str +2 | 1d6 | +3 | 1 | x3 | 70’ | 2.0 | +3 | 3 | 6 | +1d6 Sneak; 1d6 Skirmish |

*Miss.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The wilderness rogue had to admit that he was at a loss as to what this creature was, as it bore features of both a reptile and a larval arthropod. He’d beheld a grick once, but this specimen was not quite the same, having more chitinous mandibles in place of tentacles. He might have called it a faux grick.

Badnews zapped again with his wand.

*Dmg: 3 + 2 = 5 magic [force].*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The serpentine creature flinched and fled back up the slope whence it had emerged.

“Nice work, Badnews!” Landorin slipped in between verses, glad he didn’t have to face that creature. He moved down next to the other exit and peered into the dim light, hoping his elven eyes could make out more details in the chamber beyond now that there was another *dancing lights* effect nearby, while continuing to send his music echoing through the area.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthrope**s*

Landorin began to feel the effects of nausea taking over him, nearly causing him to stop singing.

*He may have to roll a Fortitude check to avoid being Sickened if he gets closer to the stench.*

The monster slithered up the 60-degree slope, gripping at the rope with its prehensile mandibles.

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 41

Melissa moved forward to stand next to her father, mentally directing her lights and spreading them out a bit, within the 10’ radius the effect allowed. Then she used yet another charge on the wand to blast a pair of *burning hands* eastwards at the maggots hatching in the alcove. As she did so, she belatedly realized there was a door there, and idly wondered if it was susceptible to catching on fire...

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scrolls and Potions** | **Qty.** | **Level** | **CLev** | **Notes** |
| Wand of *Burning Hands* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 charges |

*Automatic kill.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

She was satisfied with the crispy flapjack that she’d rendered from the clutch of malignant maggots.

With the strange, snakelike creature retreating, Korik sighed, and headed south. Seeing Landorin checking out the other exit, he headed towards and through that entryway, ready to fire at the closest foe he spotted.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Sickening Gas | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Fortitude** | **2** | **Con (+2)** | 1 | 5 | 16 | 21 |

*Success. Sickened state avoided.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik readied an action to fire at the first hostile creature to show up, planning to grab a silver-tipped arrow if he thought it was wereserpent, otherwise going for a cold-iron-tipped one. There was a pit in the room, from which a fungal growth tendrilled outward, suggesting that the majority of the decomposing matter it was eating was down below.

Badnews held on to the wall as he stepped onto the downward slope, watching for the serpent to return in case it did.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Badnews, Balance** | 2 | **Dex (+5)** | 0 | 7 | 7 | 14 |

*Success. Remains stationary.*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin staggered back from the stench, continuing to sing after a brief breath of fresher air, and after the next verse, said “that’s too foul, other way!”

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A screenshot of a map

Description automatically generated

Round 42

Melissa called out, “Hey, Korik, can you check out this door? I’m going maggots burning,” as she moved back north towards the sloping area, catching herself With a little exertion of her mind, she moved the lights to the area at her left side.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik agreed that going further through this area would be problematic. He moved back to the other chamber, then into the alcove, ignoring the crispy critters underfoot, and throwing caution aside, attempted to open the door.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

“Hm… locked,” he muttered to himself.

Seeing and hearing nothing up ahead now, Badnews wanted to proceed, but noted that the others were hesitant. He asked Korik what was up with the door they’d spotted.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin kept singing and stood watch, looking in all directions while two of his companions made their way down the slope and Korik checked what was behind that door.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 43

Melissa moved carefully down the slope, using the right wall to brace herself, moving the lights forward and spread out a bit again, and up near the ceiling, knowing that Korik could see fine in the dark alcove and wanting to shed light into the next chamber.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik wasn’t sure he wanted to be left behind, but nonetheless he stashed his bow, remarking to Badnews, “It’s locked, I’m going to take a shot at unlocking it.” He got out his masterwork thieves’ tools, figuring to pick the lock quickly... he hoped. It didn’t seem to him like this was a door that would warrant a superior lock, but who knew?

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews lost his *cat’s grace* buff as he spotted the peeking head of the spider-faced serpent they’d briefly beheld, but the creature ducked back as soon as it made eye-cluster contact with the gnome. “Careful,” he warned Melissa.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

“I think I wasted my *see invisibility* spell,” he sighed, having spotted no invisible creatures since the casting so far. It would last him the better part of the hour, unless dispelled.

After the gnome’s voice stopped echoing, Landorin’s sensitive ears picked up on the slithering of the serpentine aberration to the northeast, or perhaps a wereserpent. He decided it was probably the aberration so, keeping his rapier in hand, more effective against creatures other than lycanthropes, and continuing to sing the improvised ballad, moved carefully down the slope and then into the middle of the chamber, avoiding spaces with molds or maggots.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The snake with the spidery face stared at Landorin from the top of the slope, hissing. Molds covered this area, and a few vermin clutches were writhing about as if about to hatch and squirm over to the elf.

A screenshot of a game

Description automatically generated

Round 44

Melissa moved to stand next to Landorin, facing the west wall. She didn’t think she could burn the maggots without getting one of the molds in it, but she hoped making the larger mold a bit bigger would still leave room for them to get through the area. She aimed carefully and fired another burning hands from her wand.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik picked the lock on the door.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Open Lock** | 1 | **Dex (+1)** | 2 | 4 | 15 | 19 |

*Success.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

“How’d it go?” Badnews asked.

“Got it,” reported the dwarf as the door uneventfully creaked open, revealing a chest with a mold deliberately planted right atop it.

The chest looked solid, composed mostly of wood with metal edges and hinges. It opened outward facing west, but to get that close, he would be hurt by the cold aura, and knew this from what they’d just experienced. Even with a reach weapon, it would be a feat to undo the latches and pry it open from 10’ away.

Keeping a lookout on both areas, Badnews congratulated Melissa on a nice job before the flames subsided.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A close-up of a graph

Description automatically generated

Once the flames subsided, they could see the charred remains of the clutches, and the engorged mold to Landorin’s immediate west.

A person's silhouette with a graph

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Landorin took a step to the north while he looked at the maggots in front of him, and wondered if he could just poke them all really quickly, and as he continued to belt out his ballad, started doing that with his rapier.

*Automatic success.*

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *Parasitic larva* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Reflex** | **3** | **Dex (+3)** | 0 | 6 | 2 | 8 |

*Fail. See below.*

A carnivorous maggot got onto Landorin’s shin.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *Parasitic larva* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Fortitude** | **2** | **Con (+0)** | 1 | 3 | 12 | 15 |

*Success. See below.*

The larva failed to bore through Landorin’s clothing and flesh before the elf could scrape the leech-like thing with his other boot.

The faux grick sprung down the slope and attacked the elf who triggered it.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Faux Grick | Bite | 1d6+Poison | 3 | 3 | 2 charge | 8 | 11 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + Poison [15/18].*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Poison | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Fortitude** | **2** | **Con (+0)** | 1 | 3 | 14 | 17 |

*Success. Ability damage negated.*

Badnews cast *magic missile* upon the spider-faced snake.

*3 + 2 = 5 magic [force].*

It was evident that the serpentine monster was almost dead after this and the previous blasts it had sustained.

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 45

Landorin and Melissa heard what sounded like a woman crying in the far distance.

Melissa muttered “I hope this thing doesn’t like fire,” and grateful that item activation wouldn’t get her attacked, took a step north to stand by her father and fired yet another charge from her wand, sending the *burning hands* flames due east.

She wasn’t hitting any molds this time, she thought, just the weird tentacled snake-thing and any maggots that might still be alive in front of her.

Then she put the wand away. There might be more maggots in that pit but she didn’t think they’d be catching up with them any time soon, and she wanted to get ready for the lights to go out again. “Hey, Badnews, you want to carry a lantern for us? I got one, give me a hand with it.”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *burning hands* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Result** |
| Faux Grick | Reflex | 4 | 8 | 12 |

*Fail. Dmg: 3 fire.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

That was enough to finish off the faux grick.

“Sure,” Badnews replied to Melissa.

Korik put away his tools as he headed to rejoin the others, and continuing to hustle, redrew his silvered rapier. He figured sooner or later the damnable wereserpents would make another appearance! The slope slowed him down a bit, but he made it into the next chamber, being careful not to get too close to the mold on the right wall. “Chest behind door, moldy,” he reported, “left it.”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Nodding with satisfaction, he carefully stepped around the body and dead maggots and started carefully down the slope.

Landorin grinned at his daughter as he continued singing while he thrust down at the creature with his rapier, wanting to ensure it died from its wounds. Then, with a nod, he carefully stepped around the body and dead maggots and started carefully up the slope.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Climb** | 0 | **Str (+1)** | 0 | 1 | 16 | 17 |

*Success.*

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews slid down the slope.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin could now see a closed gate to his south, and a puddle just beyond it.

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 46

Melissa took a step to the southeast, slid the strap of her backpack off of her shoulders and swung the pack around and down so that the left strap was stopped by her shield and her right arm free, setting it down between her and Badnews. “Grab the lantern and open it,” she told him, “I’ll fill up the oil and get ready to light it.” She grabbed a tinder twig from a side pouch and set it on the ground, pointing to the lantern for the shorter fellow to grab from its place on top of the carefully stored flasks.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik moved around the other two as well as the faux grick, careful not to bump into anyone or anything, and then carefully moved up the slope to join Landorin, and noticing where Landorin was looking, started heading towards the gate.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Climb** | 2 | **Str (+3)** | 0 | 5 | 8 | 13 |

*No slippity slide.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Between verses, Landorin asked Korik, “do you hear a woman crying?” Then, making it hard to hear again, he continued singing as he stepped past pretty close to the dwarf, not wanting to stir up another clutch of maggots, and moved to get a look through the gate. He concentrated his mind on seeing if there was any evil directly ahead.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The elf detected no evil, but noted that the stone floor, walls, and ceiling beyond the vertical bars were slightly phosphorescent, casting a dim light on the corridor beyond the closed gate. The ground here became more damp, and the air was heady with the increased scent of fungal spores.

Badnews retrieved the bullseye lantern, and opened it to allow oil to be added.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The sound of a woman crying persisted, and now Korik’s ears picked up on it as well.

No monsters made themselves evident, but the clutch of maggots to Korik’s east began to writhe as if agitated by the scent of the two fleshy men in the chamber.

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 47

Melissa got out a flask of oil, handed it to Badnews, closed and slipped her backpack back on her shoulders, and then picked up the tindertwig, getting ready to light it once Badnews filled the lantern and had it ready to go.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik grumbled “this gods-forsaken place is starting to annoy me” as he stepped ahead of Landorin and sheathed his sword again, studying the gate to determine the best way to open it.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Just on the other side of the gate, a sole spider the size of his fist puffed up and menaced him before scurrying back eastward and out of sight.

A close-up of a game

Description automatically generated

Landorin kept singing but reduced his volume a little now that everyone was closer together again, and wove his last casting of *cure minor wounds* into his music, healing himself a small bit of damage.

*Landorin healed 1 hp [16/18].*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Spells per Day* | | | | | | | |
|  | **Spell Level** | | | | | | | |
|  | **0** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
| **Bard Spells** | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Charisma Bonus** | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **3** | **3** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** |
| **DC** | 12 | 13 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| **Cast?** | 3 | 0 | - | - | - | - | - | - |

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews filled the bullseye lantern with oil.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The pod to Landorin’s northeast split open, and the clutch of vermin larvae emerged therefrom, spewing forth in all directions, albeit slowly. They were squealing, off key, Landorin noted as he struggled to stay in tune.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Distraction | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Will** | **3** | **Wis (+1)** | 1 | 5 | 8 | 13 |

*Success. Nauseated effect negated.*

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 48

The bemoaning woman’s voice was coming in more clearly for Korik, whose ears were now pointed at the corridor to his south. The dwarf’s eyes gazed upon the smooth, flat wall to the south, noting the mediocre stonework that buffed it along most of the façade; it was not magic, but manual labor, that had rendered it. His intuition told him that the wall concealed something worth encasing or occluding, perhaps something dangerous.

Melissa glanced up the slope as the movement of larvae past Badnews’ shoulder caught her attention. She handed Badnews the tindertwig as she moved carefully up past him, muttering “dammit, more larva to burn.” As she continued up the slope past him, she drew her wand once more. “Burn alert!” she shouted as her comrades came into sight, and mentally moved her *dancing lights* into the area above the expanding larvae.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Melissa, Climb** | 0 | **Str (+1)** | -3 | -2 | 16 | 14 |

*Success.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik picked the old lock.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Open Lock** | 1 | **Dex (+1)** | 2 | 4 | 14 | 18 |

*Success.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The lock was hardly functional, and the mechanism easily slid open with some budging. “… for my long…” Korik thought he discerned part of what the woman in the distance was saying. Korik opened the gate and then moved carefully through it and to the south, stepping over the blood on the floor, drawing his silvered rapier yet again once through, and looking around.

The fist-sized spider in the corridor studied him from the wall at a height of about 7’.

Landorin kept singing at his lower volume, and moved carefully through the gate to stand behind Korik, similarly avoiding stepping in anything suspicious, and retrieving his scroll of *protection from evil [expired on Round 58]*. At a natural gap between verses, he quickly read and cast the spell, reaching out to touch Korik on the shoulder to give his literal frontman some divine protection.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews took the tindertwig from Melissa, lit it and used it to light the lantern, then got behind Melissa.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A screenshot of a map

Description automatically generated

Round 49

Melissa noted her *dancing lights* spell expiring, and was glad the timing worked out with the lantern. She carefully climbed up a bit further, using her shield to brace herself against the spur of rock to her left, and could now see the swarm of maggots.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Melissa, Climb** | 0 | **Str (+1)** | -3 | -2 | 17 | 15 |

*Success.*

She activated the wand to do another *burning hands* spell, pointing the centerline of the cone towards the center of the expanding, squirming mass. She was a little concerned that she might feed one of the molds, but frying the maggots to an immobile clump of crispy critters was the priority.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

She caught one of the molds in the flames, engorging it with the heat on which it fed.

Korik and Landorin could tell that the woman was somewhere to their northeast, possibly 100’ out. The sound comingled with what they suspected to be the chittering of spiders and the slithering of serpentine creatures.

With his bow still in his left hand, Korik carefully searched the wall in front of him for secret doors, panels, or traps.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Korik, Search** | 5 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 7 | 6 – 10 | ?? | +2 unusual stonework |

*See below.*

*+2 to AC vs. attacks from evil foes.*

*+2 to saves vs. effects from evil foes.*

*Cannot be possessed, mentally controlled.*

*Cannot be touched by any non-good-summoned creatures.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Seeing nothing unusual, the wilderness rogue shouldered his bow.

Landorin could smell the blood at his feet. He dropped the empty scroll, and continuing to sing, he drew his silvered shortsword as he turned to face eastwards, and concentrated on checking for the presence of evil in that direction, peering into the shadowy area with his sharp elven eyes.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin caught sight of the fist-sized spider creeping under a flap that was fashioned to look like part of the rock wall. It could be a spider’s nest trap, or a secret path somewhere.

Badnews held on to the rope and climbed up behind Melissa, aiding her when she needed a boost, then made it the rest of the way up.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Badnews, Climb** | 4 | **Str (-1)** | 0 | 3 | 17 | 20 |

*Success.*

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A screenshot of a map

Description automatically generated

Round 50

Melissa moved southwards normally to catch up with the dwarf and elf, wand in hand, saying “Badnews has my lantern; we should have light for hours.”

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews thought he’d remind his newfound friends about his day’s repertoire of spells.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Memorized Spells* | | | |
| **Spell** | **Level** | **DC** | **Cast?** |
| Detect Magic | 0 | 13 | þ |
| Acid Splash | 0 | 13 | þ |
| Acid Splash | 0 | 13 | q |
| Mending | 0 | 13 | q |
| Read Magic | 0 | 13 | q |
| Mage Armor | 1 | 14 | þ |
| Shield | 1 | 14 | þ |
| True Strike | 1 | 14 | q |
| True Strike | 1 | 14 | q |
| Reduce Person | 1 | 14 | q |
| See Invisibility | 2 | 15 | þ |
| Sonic Weapon | 2 | 15 | q |
| Sonic Weapon | 2 | 15 | q |
| Burning Sword | 2 | 15 | q |
|  |  |  |  |
| *Whisper Gnome Spells* | | | |
| **Spell** | **Level** | **DC** | **Cast?** |
| Ghost Sound | 0 | 14 | q |
| Mage Hand | 0 | 14 | q |
| Message | 0 | 14 | q |
| Silence (on self) | 0 | 14 | q |

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik muttered “sounds good, where’d that spider go?” as he moved past Melissa and Landorin to start up the northeastern tunnel. Stopping where Landorin pointed, he checked out the area to see where it went, not having seen the moment it disappeared from view.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Spot** | 3 | **Wis (+1)** | 0 | 4 | 2 | 6 |

*Fail.*

As his did so, he continued, “big mold ahead, hard to avoiiiiiii....”

*+2 to AC vs. attacks from evil foes.*

*+2 to saves vs. effects from evil foes.*

*Cannot be possessed, mentally controlled.*

*Cannot be touched by any non-good-summoned creatures.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Having focused on the secret entrance that the spider had taken, he’d overlooked the floor trap that sent him 10’ down towards a pit of spikes.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Spiked Trap | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Reflex** | **6** | **Dex (+1)** | -1 | 6 | 16 | 22 |

*Success.*

The dwarf hung on to the ledge of the pit with both hands, hoping to climb up and maybe get his friends’ help.

Landorin could see perfectly well to his east, the phosphorescent fungi or lichens illuminating the path, but was suddenly distracted by Korik suddenly dropping into a pit! He kept singing as he took a step forward while tilting the Banner down to avoid scraping the ceiling, dropped his weapon at his feet, and reached down to grab hold of Korik’s backpack strap, getting ready to aid the dwarf in climbing back out of the pit or at the very least keep him from falling!

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Landorin, Climb** | 0 | **Str (+1)** | 0 | 1 | 6 | 7 |

*Fail.*

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A map of a map

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

~\*~

A person in a garment

Description automatically generated

Malicia had found her way through a quarter-mile-long thistlebrush topiary maze, and now beheld the causeway that led further towards Red Raven’s inner cloister.

A building with a stone structure surrounded by trees

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

The warlock called upon her patron, the Undying, for courage and prowess in whatever combat would ensue now that she was in the periphery of the vampire’s confines. Up ahead, a figure positioned itself between her and a crypt of sorts.

Without a greeting or other gesture, the warlock buffed herself and made an angled approach towards the apparently undead fellow, studying its movements.

~\*~

Round 51

Melissa saw Landorin trying to help Korik, moved forward to stand just of the pit the dwarf was dangling over, and crouched, using her legs to brace her back against the wall to her east as she stretched out her right arm to give Korik something to grab onto to haul himself up on. She gripped the wand firmly with it pointing back towards her, as she really didn’t want to drop it in the pit.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin failed to get a good purchase on Korik and was unable to help him rise, though he tried. Still singing, he nodded to Melissa, who’d had a better idea he thought. Huh, maybe he should have tried using the Banner to help, though he wasn’t sure how that would work.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik grunted, and tried to climb out of the pit, using whatever worked best, including Melissa’s offered appendage.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Korik, Climb** | 2 | **Str (+3)** | 2 aid | 7 | 16 | 23 |

*Success.*

*+2 to AC vs. attacks from evil foes.*

*+2 to saves vs. effects from evil foes.*

*Cannot be possessed, mentally controlled.*

*Cannot be touched by any non-good-summoned creatures.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews joined the others as Korik was getting out of the pit. “Spiked trap, eh?” he stated the obvious, shining the bullseye lantern eastwardly. “These wereserpents were pretty prepared for an incursion.”

*Seeing invisibility.*

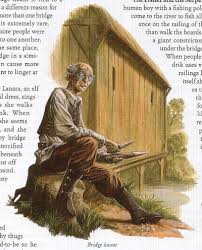
*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

~\*~

Malicia was about to charge-attack the undead figure, but her wiles aborted the hustle of her poised legs. The first indication of a trap before her was the shifting figments across the floor, which was no floor at all but an illusion occluding a vast, spiked pit. Secondly, the undead figure—which was likely incorporeal—came into the light, and took on the semblance of a living man whittling a piece of wood and smiling with a nearly perfect denture. “Hi!” the figure used an unfamiliar greeting as he waved the hand with the wooden peg that he’d been whittling.



Malicia refrained from returning a greeting, instead studying the figure as she did her best to discern the true path ahead from the path that would get her impaled.

“Come on over! I got some cornbread!” offered the male figure whose evil nature she could detect.

Her eyes continued to scan the area, as the warlock knew the vampire to lean heavily on layered deceptions. There was a single causeway—a wood-plank bridge suspended by ropes—that led downward into the mouth of the crypt where the vampire likely resided.

The apparition now walked along the illusory surface as if it were solid, assuring her, “Come on in! This is a *safe* space.”

A person in a garment

Description automatically generated

Without a warning, the warlock sent an eldritch blast towards the apparition, hitting it squarely in the chest, but not quite destroying the creature.

It was a bridge haunt, and such undead were perniciously insistent when it came to luring their prey into an impaling death. “No, don’t do that!” the elderly masculine figure pleaded as it got within range, and tried to wrest Malicia from her held-fast stance. “Come and join me for dinner!”

A second blast a point-blank range perforated the incorporeal undead’s head, leaving the rest of the glamer to fizzle away, and leaving her to continue the pursuit of her objectives.

~\*~

Round 52

Melissa waited briefly until the dwarf was once more solidly standing on the floor to her northeast, and said, “Korik, if I start to wobble, grab me and pull me across!” Then she carefully stepped past the pit, placing her right foot on the narrow ledge between the pit and the wall and continuing with her left into Korik’s proximity and on past the dwarf towards the center of the passage. She didn’t let herself be distracted by the hole, focusing on moving with care.

*Automatic success.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik waited, ready to grab and pull the half-elf forward if she started to slip. Then, having made sure she was safely across, he moved forward up the tunnel, also moving somewhat cautiously, keeping a sufficient distance away from the molds while redrawing his silvered rapier.

*Aids in automatic success.*

*+2 to AC vs. attacks from evil foes.*

*+2 to saves vs. effects from evil foes.*

*Cannot be possessed, mentally controlled.*

*Cannot be touched by any non-good-summoned creatures.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Landorin heard movement at their north, picked up his dropped weapon while singing the chorus that he’d been using to give his improvised ballad structure, and then followed Melissa’s path close to the right wall, arriving to her east, just past a dead mold.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews made his way through the phosphorescent chamber, stepping around the pit’s edge, and shining the light on the wall to study the mosses casting light upon this portion of the tunnels.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

A cat-sized spider came into view as it approached from the north, menacing Melissa. This was also where the woman’s voice was coming from.

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 53

Melissa said, “That spider’s all yours, Korik,” as she moved to check out the right side passage, walking to the bottom of the slope and then starting back after a quick scan, seeing a throbbing pod containing something nasty.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik carefully moved up the slope to his north, using the walls to provide a little extra stability, and once in position, thrust hard at the cat-sized spider with his rapier.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Silvered Rapier | 1d6 | 2 +1d6  skirmish | 1 | 18-20, x2 | Slashing | 2.0 | +5 | 16 | 21 | +1d6 Sneak |

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

*+2 to AC vs. attacks from evil foes.*

*+2 to saves vs. effects from evil foes.*

*Cannot be possessed, mentally controlled.*

*Cannot be touched by any non-good-summoned creatures.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Slaying the spider, Korik spotted a door to his northwest, where he was hearing the woman’s crying far more clearly now.

Landorin was focused on finding the source of that voice, and decided to follow Korik up the slope to the north. Continuing to improvise additional verses for his song, he climbed the slope carefully, moved past the dwarf and the spider, while hoping Korik had killed it, but willing to risk a chance of getting bitten.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Noting a lot of dead molds here, and a few live ones, the elf also saw a passage to the northeast.

Badnews came in and shone the bullseye lantern towards the east, casting the light upon the tunnel.

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The guinea pig-sized spider in the room backed away, hissing.

A screenshot of a video game

Description automatically generated

Round 54

Melissa called out loudly over the sound of the singing, “A pod of larva in this side chamber,” her voice echoing in various directions. She glanced to the southwest in case they were being followed as she took a step north, then started carefully climbing the incline to the north, in the direction of her allies, using her right arm to steady herself along the east wall.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The tiny spider scurried further back against the wall, then climbed it a bit.

Korik replied equally as loudly, “Okay! I think the woman is behind this door!” Watching out for more pit traps, he moved up near that door and scrutinized the floor in front of the door as best he could in the space of a few seconds. Seeing nothing unusual, and spotting no traps, he tried the door handle.

*+2 to AC vs. attacks from evil foes.*

*+2 to saves vs. effects from evil foes.*

*Cannot be possessed, mentally controlled.*

*Cannot be touched by any non-good-summoned creatures.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The woman’s weeping continued, setting the key for Landorin.

Landorin kept singing despite the yelling going on, and hearing his daughter’s voice come from behind him as well as less loudly echoing from the east. Caves, he thought... why did it have to be caves? He moved over to stand behind Korik, tilting the Banner up a bit so as not to poke the dwarf, and improvised a verse relevant to the situation, pitching his voice to carry.

“Who’s that crying woman,

Behind yonder door?

Shall we now rescue her,

So she cries no more?”

He paused for a brief moment hoping to hear a response, but then went back to the chorus so as not to lose the rhythm of the musical mojo....

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews replied in singsong, “Sure, let’s save a wench before the day is throuuuuugh!”

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik found the door to be unlocked, and turned the handle all the way down before pushing the door open *[on the next round]*.

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated

Round 55

Melissa carefully climbed up the slope into the next chamber, switched from the right wall to the for support partway. The spider corpse right in front of her didn’t seem to be spewing anything, which was a bit of a release.

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Korik found the door to be unlocked, and turned the handle all the way down before pushing the door open. Looking around, he saw an empty room, though he couldn’t see behind the door he’d just opened. And now it was clear to him that it was a *ghost sound* spell they’d been following as the woman’s voice emanated loud and clear from the center of the room.

*+2 to AC vs. attacks from evil foes.*

*+2 to saves vs. effects from evil foes.*

*Cannot be possessed, mentally controlled.*

*Cannot be touched by any non-good-summoned creatures.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 +2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

As Korik shook his head and muttered “magic sounds,” Landorin nodded and motioned for him to wait a moment. He continued singing, and headed into the room to check behind the door, and maybe scan the walls for any secret panels or doors. Passing through the doorway he headed straight north and then cut left, looking back to see if there was anything lurking and then scanning the wall.

*Detecting evil.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

Badnews shone a light into the room, peeking in. “Nothing?”

*Seeing invisibility.*

*+2 to attack, weapon damage, and saves vs. charm and fear.*

*+2 to Cha-based checks.*

*+2 to weapon damage vs lycanthropes*

The elven spelunker’s eyes then noted a seam along the wall that bore the telltale signs of a secret passage. A few slithering tracks along the floor corroborated the narrative he was about to relate.

A screenshot of a computer game

Description automatically generated