*Chapter 45: The Chessboards*

In the blink of a god’s eye, they found themselves on the eastern edge of a 20’ x 20’ chessboard, overlooking a 100’ cliff beyond which was a trio of chessboards of different sizes, and some blokes also gathered there. Looking up, Saradette and Akilesh were the first to notice that there were others above them looking at them from a precipice beyond the 100’ cliff that separated the two levels.

Then a bolt of lightning lit up the otherwise black sky, and they beheld the giant forms of deities—dozens of times larger than their avatars—facing one another menacingly. Among them were Mayaheine and Lurue, but standing on the highest ground was Red Knight.

A cartoon of a character in armor

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The flash from the lightning dimmed, and the heroes now stood across from the notorious ettercap paladin of slaughter named Jinx the Nibbler. Clad in full plate armor, the sword-and-shield-wielding devotee of chaos and evil said something beautiful about Lolth and cast *protection from good*.

A red and white checkered table

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Round 1

A screenshot of a game

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Saradette cast *mage armor* on herself.

*Saradette gained +4 to FFAC & AC.*

*[DM edited to avoid friendly damage…]* Tore took a step forward, then cast *knife spray* at their foe, his shield and sword ready for battle.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *knife spray* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Jinx, Reflex** | 2 | **Dex (+1)** | 6 | 9 | 4 | 13 |

*Fail. Dmg: 6 + 5 = 11.*

Akilesh felt like a new man, and thought to cast *Chaav’s laugh [expired on Round 111]* now that his spell repertoire had been replenished. Targeting Jinx, the dwarf did his best to cause the so-called anti-paladin to lose his wits.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *Chaav’s laugh* | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Jinx, Will** | 4 | Wis (+3) | 6 | 13 | 11 | 24 | True Believer bonus +2 |

*Success. Effect negated.*

“Drat!” quoth the dwarf.

Zvetlana witnessed the ettercap shrugging off the effects of her friend’s spell, and thus shot at the armored bug’s chest, reloading.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Zvetlana | Light Crossbow +2 | 1d8+2 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 12 | 4 | 16 |

*Miss.*

*Protected from good*, Jinx aimed to smite one of these do-gooder fools. Akilesh was closest, and that suited the ettercap just fine.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Unholy Greatsword +1 | 2d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | Slashing | 8.0 | +20 | 11 | 31 | +2d6 to good |
| 2nd Attack | 2d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | Slashing |  | +15 | 6 | 21 | ignores 20 hardness |
| 3rd Attack | 2d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | Slashing |  | +10 | 5 | 15 |  |

*Hit, miss, miss. Dmg: 5 + 2 + 6 + 1 = 14.*

All around the precipices were the gods contending. Aasterinian and Malar were in the throes of a grapple as Lathander and Shaundaukul aided the Earthmother against the avarice of Mask and Lolth. Red Knight’s spade met with Garagos’ spiked, flailing balls of unheavenly steel. It was a moment for historians and theologians to behold and capture.

A screenshot of a game

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Round 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Group** | **Initiative** | **Roll** | **Modified Roll** | **Speed** |
| Jinx | 1 | 1 | 17 | 18 | 30’ |
| Zvetlana | 1 | 4 | 11 | 15 | 30’ |
| Saradette | 1 | 3 | 8 | 11 | 20’ |
| Tore | 1 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 30’ |
| Akilesh | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 30’ |



The heroes who hadn’t met Jinx the Nibbler before were getting a pretty good idea of his prowess, and did their best to mind his sword as the ettercap Swiftly activated his *enlargement ability*, and swung again at the dwarven favored soul of Leira.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Unholy Greatsword +1 | 3d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | 17-20/x2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +20 | 2 | 22 | +2d6 to good |
| 2nd Attack | 3d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | 17-20/x2 | Slashing |  | +15 | 19 | 34 | ignores 20 hardness |

*Miss, hit. Dmg: 8 + 2 + 6 + 1 + 5 unholy = 22.*

Zvetlana fired again, reloading.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Threat** |
| Zvetlana | Light Crossbow +2 | 1d8+2 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 12 | **20** | 32 | þ |

*Threat. 1d20 = 2 + 12 = 14, not a critical hit.*

*Dmg: 2 + 2 = 4.*

Saradette zapped the ettercap with her glove.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **Rng.** | **Notes** |
| Glove of Lightning Bolt | 5d6 Electric | 120’ | Ref DC 16 for ½; melts most metals |

*Dmg: 17 electric.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *lightning bolt* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Jinx, Reflex** | 2 | **Dex (+1)** | 6 | 9 | 13 | 22 |

*Success. Saved for ½ damage: 8 electric.*

Now with the giant Jinx in front of him, Tore took a 5’ step forward and attacked with his sword.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Longsword of Frost | 1d8+1 | +1+1d6 Cold | 1 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +11 | 16 | 27 |
| Longsword, 2nd Attack | 1d8+1 | +1+1d6 Cold | 1 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | - | +6 | 4 | 10 |

*Hit, miss. Dmg: 4 + 1 + 1 + 2 cold = 8.*

Akilesh was pretty badly hurt, and reached for a potion of healing.

*Akilesh gained 9 + 10 = 19 hps.*

A screenshot of a game

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Round 3

Jinx attacked Akilesh some more, seeing that he was about to end him.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg[Large]** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Unholy Greatsword +1 | 3d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | 17-20/x2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +20 | **20** | 40 | +2d6 to good |
| 2nd Attack | 3d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | 17-20/x2 | Slashing |  | +15 | 2 | 17 | ignores 20 hardness |

*Threat, miss. Dmg: 10 + 2 + 6 + 1 + 6 unholy = 25.*

Zvetlana fired upon Jinx and reloaded.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Zvetlana | Light Crossbow +2 | 1d8+2 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 12 | 3 | 15 |

*Miss.*

Saradette zapped Jinx again with her glove.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **Rng.** | **Notes** |
| Glove of Lightning Bolt | 5d6 Electric | 120’ | Ref DC 16 for ½; melts most metals |

*Dmg: 19 electric.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *lightning bolt* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Jinx, Reflex** | 2 | **Dex (+1)** | 6 | 9 | 6 | 15 |

*Fail. Full damage taken.*

Tore shifted slightly, and continued to hack away at Jinx with his sword.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Longsword of Frost | 1d8+1 | +1+1d6 Cold | 1 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +11 | 17 | 28 |
| Longsword, 2nd Attack | 1d8+1 | +1+1d6 Cold | 1 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | - | +6 | 16 | 22 |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: (2 + 1 + 1) + (3 + 1 + 3) = 3 + 4 + 4 cold = 11.*

“You truly *are* evil, Jinx!” Akilesh announced as he took a 5’ step back, and cast *castigate* upon their foe, reciting a passage from the Luruan creed.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *castigate* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Jinx, Fortitude** | 5 | Con (+2) | 6 | 13 | 13 | 26 | True Believer bonus +2 when invoked |

*Success. Saved for ½ damage: ½ x 16 = 8 good.*

A screenshot of a game

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Round 4

Jinx saw that the enemies were trying to flank him, but with only one melee combatant to deal with, he had a free moment to give this Luruan cleric his undivided attention. The paladin of slaughter full-attacked Tore.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg[Large]** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Unholy Greatsword +1  *Smite Good* | 3d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | 17-20/x2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +20 | 10 | 30 |
| 2nd Attack | 3d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | 17-20/x2 | Slashing |  | +15 | 14 | 29 |
| 3rd Attack | 3d6+2 | +6 + 1 | 3 | 17-20/x2 | Slashing |  | +10 | 4 | 14 |

*Hit, hit, miss. Dmg: (9 + 2 + 6 + 1 + 2 evil) + (7 + 2 + 6 + 1 + 1 evil) = 18 + 16 + 3 evil = 37 [42/79].*

Zvetlana fired upon Jinx once more.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Zvetlana | Light Crossbow +2 | 1d8+2 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 12 | 16 | 28 |

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

Saradette moved to gain a flank attack advantage and zapped Jinx again with her glove.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **Rng.** | **Notes** |
| Glove of Lightning Bolt | 5d6 Electric | 120’ | Ref DC 16 for ½; melts most metals |

*Dmg: 20 electric.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *lightning bolt* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Jinx, Reflex** | 2 | **Dex (+1)** | 6 | 9 | 3 | 12 |

*Fail.*

The anti-paladin was nearly done for now.

Even though he took a couple of powerful blows from Jinx, Tore was glad that the evil paladin and switched to him and left Akilesh alone. Smiling, the cleric-fighter responded with a couple of strikes of his own as he yelled, “You are a foul minion of evil and you shall perish at our hands!”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Longsword of Frost | 1d8+1 | +1+1d6 Cold | 1 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +11 | 11 | 22 |
| Longsword, 2nd Attack | 1d8+1 | +1+1d6 Cold | 1 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | - | +6 | 12 | 18 |

*Hit, miss. Dmg: 2 + 1 + 1 + 2 cold = 6.*

Akilesh cast *castigate* once again on Jinx, reciting another proverb from the Book of Lurue.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *castigate* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Jinx, Fortitude** | 5 | Con (+2) | 6 | 13 | 17 | 30 |

*Success. Saved for ½ damage: ½ x 14 = 7 good.*

A screenshot of a game

Description automatically generated

Round 5

The entirety of Malar’s form came crashing down near the chessboard, and as Jinx was about to swing at Tore again, they all went flying into a seeming maelstrom of shadowstuff that ended up being harmless as it strewed them all across the multiverse.

Zvetlana, Saradette, Tore, and Akilesh could do little but cast spells and talk at the moment.

“Grab hands so we don’t get separated,” Saradette called out, holding both hands out to the nearest people.

Tore reached out for Saradette as he also extended his hand towards the others, hoping they could complete the circle. However, he was not aware of any spell he knew that would help their current situation.