Chapter 8: Besieging the Drow

They had taken Xiomara and Lolthalot back to Candlekeep for questioning, and were finally seeing the city’s eastern walls.

As they got within shouting distance of the towers ensconcing the main gate, they were asked, “Whose bodies are those and what is your business here?”

Baldoor responded to the challenge. “They’re alive, acshully. We are retrenin’ with prisoners we’ve taken while actin’ on behalf o’ tha’ Candlekeep authorities. We have our writs with us if ya need ta see them.”

They immediately turned the prisoners over to the guards, providing testimonies of their actions, and by the time the whole thing had been notarized and the local Captain had presented herself, they were ready to proceed to the southwestern end of town where the zoo was still expected to be.

News of two additional spider attacks since they’d left reached their ears, and they, in turn, offered their speculations as to the involvement of these elves in the matter. “Where will you be staying if we need to follow up?” asked the Captain.

“We’re with the zoo that’s in town,” responded Nihm.

“Oh, I believe they shut down after the last attack, and are on route to leave,” commented the senior official.

“Beg to report, Captain,” a junior officer holding the gate ledger updated her, “The entire caravan of cages and keepers struck camp and passed through here this morning, heading...” he looked down to be sure of his report, “along the north fork.”

“Just as they’d originally planned,” Kassuq recalled.

“They *did* say they might not wait, and there’d be no hard feelings,” Baldoor reminded his mates.

The Captain then said, “We do appreciate the testimonies, and the corroborating evidence, and I would ask you under no obligation to join me briefly with our investigators to see if we can harness a clearer narrative around these villains, and determine whether they had anything to do with these Underdark sieges.”

Faram was still with them, and agreed to head to the precinct office just two blocks down to provide further assistance in the investigation. The others had intended to give the horses to the Kondratieff and his company, but with that prospect unavailable, they now contemplated whether to accompany the Captain and Faram, or see to some other priority.

Baldoor looked at Kassuq and Nihm who each nodded. Baldoor then turned to the Captain. “We’ll go with ya ta see tha investigators. If ya have a place fir tha horses, we’d appreciate it. We’d be willin’ to give three o tha horse to tha keep to use as needed.”

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A few blocks down the way, they were led to an oblong room, the carpentry and décor of which were definitively suited to elven tastes, and as the Archbishop of Corellion Larethian entered the room, all the elves present turned and gave their attention, followed soon thereafter by the others. This elf-friendly reception room served as a suitable venue for such a racially sensitive topic, and it quickly became evident to the heroes that the officials of Candlekeep were doing their best to convey to the elven communities within and near the settlement that they harbored no animosity toward elvenkind.

It also didn’t take very long after the Archbishop’s arrival for evidence to be presented that placed at least some local elves under a dubious light, and a touch of diplomacy often bought law enforcement a measure of cooperation. Within minutes, it became clear to those present that there were a few elves in town—some, loudmouth rabblerousers; others, covert plotters—who had cavorted with a drow or two in the last few months, and via a series of carefully dug tunnels, a concerted effort to undermine the city, both literally and figuratively, had ensued.

“We have sealed about thirty confirmed entry points so far,” said one investigator. “But we’re still finding some, and our volunteer spellcasters are out of *stone shape* spells for the day.”

“We’ll need to round up these suspects,” one of the Prefects concluded before long. “We haven’t enough teams at our disposal in the area, so we would ask some of you to undertake the task on behalf of the City.”

Baldoor again looked to his companions, each nodding in turn. However, this time it was Nihm that spoke up. “We would be glad to assist. Provide us with the name or names of those you would like us to bring in and whatever information you have.”

Baldoor and Kassuq both looked at the Archbishop and gave a serious nod to confirm what Nihm had said.

Some of the folks present declined, and were led outside before the remainder of the briefing took place. “Now that we are among those who are committed to seeing this investigation through, I am at liberty to take you all into my confidence,” Prefect Shang scanned the room and looked everyone in the eyes before continuing. “Based on the artifacts confiscated by *these* heroes,” he pointed at Baldoor, Faram, Kassuq, and Nihm, “we have ample reason to suspect that these elves are members of the infamous sectarians known as the Eldreth Veluuthra.”

There was much stirring and murmuring about before Shang re-singularized the conversation. “If—in fact—we are correct that these emblems are authentic Veluuthra regalia, and not some decoy, we must pursue this investigation with the utmost discretion, and henceforth, any information you gather must be compartmentalized within this investigative body. The Eldreth Veluuthra are a sinister cult of spies, infiltrators, and other guttersnipes. The more you know of one another’s investigations, the more you compromise your own safety and reputation.”

Faram spoke up, “Prefect, my name is Faram Kithre, unseen seer from the Dalelands. I’ll be the first to admit that I’m no stranger to intrigue, and spent half my youth in pursuit of quick-return, fly-by-night enterprises relying on misinformation and subterfuge before finding a more righteous path. While I am not familiar with the faction of which you speak, if we did in fact have a run-in with these Elder Veluuthra, I can assure you that the insignia and other items on their persons were of high quality, lacking all the telltale signs of fugazies, replicas, decoys, fetishes, and memorabilia.”

“We appreciate the input,” the Prefect thanked the diviner, then added a few statements that clarified that they were far from drawing any conclusive speculations for the moment. “We should be steadfast in our toil, and know that it is largely thankless work outside of these walls.”

~\*~

94 Narnak Circle

A picture containing outdoor, building, old, stone

Description automatically generated

“There it is,” said Kassuq. “Looks a bit... lived in.”

The address led them to one of the better kept homes on the block, but it was part of the historic district, and its façades were deliberately kept rustic looking with neglect.

“Stay alert,” Baldoor said to the group as they got closer to the residence. They were not sure what to expect in this neighborhood, a place that certainly seemed out of place for Candlekeep.

They all looked at the doors and windows, trying to see just how many prying eyes were watching them, and it was more than a few pairs. Kassuq also sniffed the air, trying to identify as many odors as he could, picking up all manner of humanoids, and better kempt than what he might have expected from the scenery.

After a brief pause, they continued towards the door of the address they were given.



An effeminate elven male opened the door as if he’d seen them coming, or was perhaps privy to their presence via some arcane method. It was evident from what they could see behind him that the man was a bookworm, and the visible wall was wholly lined with tomes as the male bid them a good day, squinting through his eyeglasses as he studied the four agents of the City of Candlekeep, who now carried a new writ and wore insignia denoting their functions. “Good day. Mellion Starborn, is it?” Faram replied and asked, producing the writ, and asking politely once the elf had nodded if they could come in and ask Mellion some questions.

“No doubt, this is about the spiders,” he nodded, and opened the door wider that they might enter.

None of the heroes got a sense of foul play, but this could just be a really well trained deceiver inviting them into his trap.

Baldoor took the opening, “What do you know about the spiders?”

“Just what the criers have been reporting outside,” he motioned with his head to the street from which they’d just entered. “The drow are the primary suspects and expeditions into the Underdark are on their way.”

Kassuq looked around as he continued to sniff the air, trying to pick up any other scents from anyone, or anything, that might be hiding.

Nihm stole in and gave the other elf a once over, making no attempt to hide that she was looking for anything that the elf might be hiding. She then looked about the main room as they entered, having a line of sight into two adjoining rooms—a bedroom and a study—and seeing nothing out of the ordinary.

Mellion studied the four agents of the city, and offered them some tea, expecting them to say no.

As he poured himself a cup, he invited them to sit in any of the soft chairs available. The domicile was definitely an arcanist’s abode, and as they took in the scenery of a well read magician’s living room, he proceeded to confirm, “So, no doubt you’ve read my file?”

Faram thought to be forthright from the start with this investigation. If there was indeed a file on Mellion, they could requisition it later, and this would have been a peculiar thing to lie about; thus far, Faram heuristically trusted this elf more than any of the elves back at the lavender farm. “No, I’m afraid not, Master Starborn,” the gnome applied what little diplomacy he could. “If you’d care to relate anything that might have placed your name on our list, I’d be glad to hear it.”

He nodded, then led them into his study to show them a few artifacts corroborating his narrative. What was said over the next minute or two didn’t exactly shock them, but it further complicated the investigational bog that they were figuratively navigating. In brief, the elf was an outspoken anti-establishment mage—wholly against guilds, cabals, and governments—who wanted everyone to have the opportunity to understand arcane magic, even if they chose some other vocation.

“So, you’re an anarchist,” Kassuq asked a statement.

“Yyyy-, no, not really. Structure always exists, and I recognize that almost everyone benefits from it in some way,” he began to pontificate, “but the City’s resentment for me stems in my attempts to render their conversations transparent to the citizens. Their opacity yields a structure that favors not those who seek to do good, but those who seek to empower themselves through the political machine.”

“I see,” Faram squinted, looking down as he thought of what to say next.

Nihm stepped into the dialogue, “And these attempts,” she looked at the arcane setup that the wizard had put together, and noted its Divination-heavy facets. “They *only* involve transparency... not conjuring spiders?” She smiled, “We *have* to ask before we can check you off our list.”

“Noted,” Mellion said. “No, while I can summon monstrous vermin like most wizards, my conjurings only last a minute at most. From what I’ve heard, the spiders in question were identified as a variety specially bred by drow. And before you ask, while I do know a few drow in Candlekeep, I highly doubt any of them are involved in this. If you want my mad ramblings—as the City would call them—my money puts our very government in the full light of culpability.”

“And you suspect this because of something you’ve heard or seen via *clairvoyance* or *clairaudience*?” asked Baldoor.

“Not any one thing, and nothing as of late, but over the years, administrators have come and gone, and during their respective tenures, worse things have been proposed, though not carried out. So, yes, I’ll admit that they have some apparatus whereby they vet their policies against some moral code, but sometimes, the gatekeepers of that code turn a blind eye or resign in protest.”

“All very interesting,” Kassuq nodded and sighed. “We’ll convey this to the investigators downtown.”

“For your sakes, try to do so in a manner that doesn’t suggest you agree with me,” he warned them.

“Is there anyone else who lives here?” Nihm asked.

“No, my lover, Franz comes over sometimes, but this is just me.”

Before they stepped out, Nihm asked, “Does Franz feel the same way about the rulers and politics as you do?”

He tilted his head left and right a few degrees, “Yyyah, sometimes, but other times we agree to disagree.”

“Uh, one last thing, Master Starborn,” Faram posed as he stood up. “Is the government aware of your awareness of their deeds?”

“My surveillance is as clean as can be,” the wizard shook his head.

When they did step outside, Baldoor asked Faram, “What sense did ya get from him?”

He smiled and shook his head, “You know, I know the type. I’m a diviner—an unseen seer by trade—so I’m sympathetic to his cause, and from what I saw in his study, all the accoutrements in there corroborated his spiel. I don’t know either way about the City’s motives, but he doesn’t strike me as someone who likes drudging along the low moral ground, and my *know alignment* spell puts him squarely at Neutral Good.”

Their sense of Mellion converged on Faram’s, and after hearing him, Baldoor asked Kassuq, “And what about you lad, did ya pick up anything?”

“I’d like to find motive to pursue this further, but it probably won’t get us anywhere. I have to agree with Faram’s assessment,” the archon shrugged. “What’s important is whether we include or omit the part of his testimony that would put the government on alert. If we’re trying to get to the bottom of this, we may want to let any actual culprits in government think that their plans are intact, particularly if his scanning wizardry has not been detected by the City.”

Baldoor nodded, “I agree, we keep that bit o’ knowledge quiet for now. Let’s get back and report.”

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They just submitted their account of Mellion as a minor culprit, noting their doubt in his involvement in recent events. Faram provided the majority of the testimony with the specificity and descriptiveness of a diviner. They were careful to omit the accusatory portion of the suspect’s testimony without leaving an obvious gap in the report. All in all, there were no lies in the information they rendered; just well-placed omissions.

“Thank you all for your contributions,” one of the bureaucrats said as she notarized their statements.

Prefect Shang then offered, “Would you be interested in another case before the day is through?” It was approaching Highsun, and they were ready for lunch. “Perhaps you’d like to have lunch first,” he figuratively read their minds as one of their stomachs grumbled its first complaints of the day.

Baldoor looked at the others and nodded. Kassuq and Nihm both nodded as well, with Nihm replying, “We would be happy to assist further, after lunch, as you suggested.” The three smiled and headed off to the garrison for their meal.

During lunch, as they talked with Faram, the group was approached by some of the big names in the room with a young human male clad in the dressings of a gentleman and a scholar, and the gnome was asked for his divination skillset to be exploited on site. “We have another rather learned lad that we’d like to introduce you to,” said one of the Council Elders whose name they’d already forgotten. “I present you Haal Ven Hrambsaing.”

Baldoor looked the human up and down, noting the clerical insignia that gave away his class and rank. Baldoor was already the group’s cleric, but perhaps this second priest would allow him to focus on a more strategic spell repertoire moving forward. Nihm and Kassuq thought he looked a teeny bit like Lee’s younger brother, and took a liking to the bookish young man before them.

“Now, to your assignment: there’s evidence of a drow enclave beneath the Warm Blanket Inn on the edge of the Cliffs Quarter,” the Councilperson said as he handed the others a magically enhanced illustration.

A picture containing text

Description automatically generated

“This visualization reflects what an *arcane eye* revealed to a diviner very recently, and we believe that the *eye* was not detected,” one of Faram’s known colleagues added. The guards on the above-ground levels are high elves and the like, while the subterranean levels are fiercely guarded by drow who appear to not even trust the surface elves. Six total drow were spotted across and below the sewer level. We have three strike teams, but need to have as much of an advantage when executing this raid. The likelihood that the cell is headquartered there is high based on the description of the area, and our ideal outcome today is for you and the other two strike teams to infiltrate, neutralize resistance, and capture their leadership. If we have to resurrect their leaders in order to question them, we are prepared to make that investiture. This plan of theirs *will* be foiled.”

One of the other two strike teams consisted of a sorcerer, a warmage, a duskblade, and a beguiler, while the other one was comprised of a favored soul of Oghma, a cleric of Oghma, a paladin of Oghma, and a knight.

“Based on your expertise, you have been designated as Strike Team 1,” they were told. “Other than Sir Brynner,” the Elder pointed to the plated knight, “these folks are all fresh out of their respective academies, and have limited field expertise at best. They will come as reinforcements once you activate this *sending* ring,” they were handed a single ring with a button that would not be depressed accidentally. “Press the button, and they are dispatched to reinforce your advance. We should try to leave as much evidence intact for our forensic team to tally afterwards, but you have the City’s authorization to use lethal force on any hostiles within. Be advised that the Warm Blanket is a fairly reputable family establishment, so there will be innocents in the frontstage portion of the complex.”

The three looked at the illustration for several moments. While they did, Haal spoke briefly, “I just want to say, I heard about the member you lost, and you have my sympathies. I likely am not as good a warrior as he was, this being my first real mission, but I will do all I can to assist.”

Nihm looked at Haal and gave him a sad smile. She appreciated the sentiment, but now wasn’t the time for distractions.

Baldoor looked at the councilperson, “Yer certain about tha layout? We understand tha number of drow and other elves may have changed.”

Nihm pointed to the lowest levels, first to the left and the right. On the left she asked, “What is all of this?” On the right she asked, “I assume this is a tunnel further underground.”

“Correct.”

Baldoor spoke up again, “We’d like ta try en get inta tha place without much trouble. Perhaps one of us kin sneak into tha basement and scope things out before we start breaking skulls.”

Turning to the Councilman, “How soon do ya want us to pay tha place a visit?”

“Time is of the essence,” the Councilman replied. “With every hour that our enemies are free to plot against the City, we lose opportunity.”

A ring of *sending* was presented to Haal, the man whose integrity had been most vetted by the Council.

The strike teams were dispatched by three wagons along three separate routes to three corners of the Cliffs Quarter that were roughly three blocks away from the address they’d just been told. The Warm Blanket Inn was on the street to their right, and as they exited the back of the wagon, scanning the area for possible spies, they nodded to the wagoner and Nihm blew a kiss to the nearest horse as she passed by. The wagons then proceeded to an undisclosed location, and along with the other two strike teams, they held rings that would allow them to capture the information that Haal’s team would magically *send*.

“It’s this way,” Baldoor noted, seeing the numbers on the houses leading them westward towards 325 Bookmark Way.

Haal had cast *detect evil [expired on Round 401]* before he exited the wagon, while Kassuq had changed into a red fox. As the group headed down the street in the direction Baldoor had indicated, Haal casually scanned their surroundings, see what he could detect, which at the moment was nothing out of place. Nihm also kept an eye out for anyone watching them as they approached.

Baldoor was in front, followed by Nihm and Haal walking side by side, Kassuq just ahead of them and slightly behind Baldoor.

When the Warm Blanket Inn came into sight, the three humanoids paused for a few seconds to take in their surroundings while Kassuq moved ahead of them, trying to remain out of sight. Kassuq in his fox form will try and get as close to the front door as possible using shadows and objects to hide behind.

They were spotted by a kid, who turned his head as the four stealthily skirted along the walls and such, then shrugged and kept on walking.

They were now at the address, and were greeted by a gender-ambiguous elf clad in soft linens and simple, vestigial regalia. “Care for some lodging tonight?”

A picture containing clothing, person, person, head covering

Description automatically generated

Baldoor was in front, followed by Nihm and Haal walking side by side, Kassuq just ahead of them and slightly behind Baldoor, who spoke up, “Aye, that en perhaps a cold ale and some warm food?” The other two stood behind him and nodded. Haal focused on the youth for a few seconds before looking beyond him/her into the room beyond. Kassuq approached quietly and sat next to Nihm.

Nihm simply said, “Our friend is thirsty and hungry too.”

The elf looked down at the fox, and pursed their lips, squinting, “Oh, I do apologize; we can’t have animals within the premises. If you’d like a menu, I can seat you outside at the table with the complimentary tether,” he pointed to a chain leash with an adjustable collar next to a wooden bowl filled with water and a few leaves.

The party conferred on their next course of action as Kassuq contemplated flagging his duplicitous identity to a suspected member of a faction expected to be on high alert for subterfuge and intrigue.

The door opened, and a trio of bearded dwarves—all women—came out, two of them unfurling their aprons and donning them as they passed the heroes, headed for the soup kitchen across the street where indigent men and women stood in line for bread and porridge, and whatever other alms may merrily come their meager way. The door closed itself as the elf waited for the party’s response.

Nihm looked down and Kassuq, “He’ll be fine,” she said and motioned with her head, and Kassuq wandered off as Baldoor, Haal and Nihm followed the elf into the inn.

Round 1

Kassuq circled the building and stuck to the shadows, looking for another access point. It was sealed drow-tight, with every aperture being a window with closed shutters too high to jump and crash into. It also stood to reason that—this being an inn—there would be no chance of doing so stealthily, even if a window were open.

A drow and a wood elf guarding the area behind the inn and adjacent to a brewery spotted Kassuq and pointed their crossbows at what they considered vermin, firing from about 25’ away.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex**  **Mod+** | **Total**  **Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Hand Crossbow | 1d4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 12 |

*Miss.*

The wood elf hadn’t properly loaded his crossbow, and took a few seconds to do so before firing.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex**  **Mod+** | **Total**  **Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Light Crossbow | 1d8 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 7 [20/27].*

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Once inside, Haal slowly looked around the room, picking up the presence of evil auras in the building. Within seconds, he would be able to isolate said fields and eventually determine more about the wickedness around him.

Round 2

Baldoor and Nihm looked to Haal, who did his best to remain nonchalant as he counted the dozen or so auras now becoming more clearly defined in his field of vision. Half the patrons and all but one of the visible staff—the bloke who’d let them in—registered as evil hombres and mujeres. All of the servers were fair-skinned elves, as were the evil patrons; others were humans and dwarves. Not a half-elf, halfling, gnome, half-orc, or other humanoid was in sight. Those who were not emanating evil auras looked to be enjoying their meals and otherwise finding the atmosphere quite to their liking.

Haal leaned in a little, and made sure there was nobody close before he whispered to Nihm and Baldoor, who also had leaned in. “I’m getting impression off of all of the elves. Nobody else.”

Baldoor and Nihm leaned back, then Baldoor motioned for a server, “Kin we get a pitcher o yer best ale en a glass of red wine fir tha lass?”

Nihm smiled at the server as Baldoor referred to her, adding, “Something a bit dry would be preferred.”

“Coming up,” the server replied promptly.

Haal sat back and continued to take in his surroundings.

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Kassuq ran away, back out to the street where dwarves, elves, and others comingled in broad daylight. Meanwhile, drow likely colluded in heinous crimes beneath the foundations.

The drow and the wood elf reloaded their respective crossbows, and went to chase the wounded fox, but by then, Kassuq had bolted leftward and was now past the front door of the establishment, and near the soup kitchen.

Kassuq continued to run to the alley and find a place to hide, then began to transform back into his normal form when he was out of sight.

Round 3

As he finished transforming, Kassuq took a moment to fix his clothing and equipment behind a pair of stacked barrels before emerging.

Kassuq then listened closely for anyone following him. He then slowly stepped out from behind the barrels and looked around before deciding his next course of action. The elf and drow passed by him, still looking for a mundane fox or perhaps just doing a round of security patrolling. The wood elf looked at him queerly, but probably did not assume Kassuq to have been the fox in question.

Meanwhile, inside, the other three patiently waited for their food and tried to eavesdrop on any of the conversations going on around them. These involved the food and service here, the proposition to eliminate the gold standard as a generalized means of exchange within Candlekeep, and Solonor Thelandira, the patron deity of archery in the Elven Pantheon.

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Baldoor nodded, “Sure enough. That ugly eight-legged goddess doesn’t deserve tha title.”

Nihm tilted her head slightly, “I’d hesitate to call her ugly. She does also have a place in the pantheon.” Nihm did her best to sound neutral in her tone as she played along with the others. Keeping an eye on those near them as they spoke, they noted a patron—one dwarf who’d mentioned the gold standard—nodding at them and making a fist of solidarity against Lolth’s lot. He wore the regalia of a layperson worshipper of Moradin, and sat with a younger man—perhaps his son—eating mutton and wheat germ.

Round 4

Kassuq waited about 6 seconds after the two elves (wood and drow) passed by before stepping out of the alley.

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Round 5

Kassuq stepped out of the alley, then headed to the front door of the inn.

Rounds 6 – 9

Kassuq took a while to say words similar to what his mates had said to the host at the door moments earlier, then entered and saw Haal and the others already engaged in a small discussion, loud enough to be heard by those around the table or passing by. “I hope that the city finds a way to end these spider infestations. The beasts are almost as filthy as that deity of the underdark. She’s an evil mess she is.”

The host said something in Elven that Nihm could not hear well enough, and the cook nodded, showing two fingers and getting to a new order.

Rounds 10 – 11

Kassuq took a chair by the bar, giving a casual glance as if checking out a stranger or just curious about the new patron to the location. The other three sat together at a corner booth, Baldoor facing the front entrance, with the other two facing the back door that Kassuq had half-wanted to enter as a fox, but couldn’t.

Continuing their discussion, Baldoor spoke next, “Don’t go defendin’ that ugly piece o’ filth.”

Haal leaned forward, “I’ve done a bit of reading on the spider goddess, and I would have to agree with my dwarven friend here. Lolth has no redeeming qualities that I am aware of.”

Round 11

Nihm nodded adding, “But not all drow are evil, nor do they all worship the dark goddess.” She put up a hand to stop Baldoor’s reply, “However, I do agree. Those that do worship her have traded their souls to a heartless deity.”

Round 12

Baldoor nodded as he turned to a table not far, “What about yee? How do ya feel ‘bout that Lolth and her evil spawn?”

Baldoor and Nihm looked at the occupants of the table, waiting for their reply. Haal looked at them as well, before looking around the room, trying to keep an eye on those radiating evil to gauge their reactions.

Kassuq sat watched the interaction, also focusing on the staff, figuring they would be the most likely source of any problems.

“What can I get you, Celestial?” asked the server nonchalantly.

“How about a bowl of soup or stew and a glass of water?”

Round 13

“We have zucchini soup and mutton stew,” replied the waiter.

“Probably the stew for now,” confirmed the archon.

“Coming up,” said the young elf before going back to the cook, relaying the order, and getting three fingers bouncing back at him.

Round 14

It was evident to those with greater senses that some of the elves were restraining their tongues. Their held back gestures were not necessarily a betrayal of fanaticism towards Lolth, but perhaps a reaction to the mere mention of Lolth in this particular establishment.

A bold choice.

Rounds 15 – 22

One table where three elves sat was now being cleared, and the busboy doing it was visibly offended or preparing for hostilities. This immediately triggered Nihm’s and Haal’s sense of self-preservation, though Baldoor didn’t catch the war face that the lad had sported before heading back to the kitchen with a tray of wares and leftovers.

The three elves sat up from their chairs, smiled and nodded politely to the heroes as they walked towards the entrance, and bid the cook and servers a pleasant afternoon.

Baldoor looked around, then returned to those at the table with him. “Well, I, fir one, will be glad when tha city launches its attack. I heard a rumor that they found an entrance to tha underdwellers domain on the other side o’ town.”

Kassuq continued to scan the room, trying to read the intentions of the staff and the remaining patrons. At the mention of the city attacking, the archon noticed more than one elven ear twitching.

Haal nodded, “Yes, I hope they are able to bring this spider infestation to a halt and rid the area of those evil elves.”

Nihm remained quiet, as if in thought.

Those facing the kitchen noticed one of the elven patrons getting up and entering the kitchen, while most of the others notably looked at Baldoor and his friends—taking the dwarf for a rabblerouser—and leaving abruptly in anticipation of a belligerent æthen or three. There was madness about the town, and Kassuq could not conclude that those leaving were conspiring with the drow, but there was a high likelihood that the male that had entered the kitchen was even now informing the drow of what words had just come out of his friends’ mouths.

The host tried to express his regrets to those leaving, and occasionally looked to the heroes as he apologized and offered them free breakfasts tomorrow.

“Yeah... maybe,” a female moon elf said as she and her party of three left.

The cook also looked concerned now, his eyes studying the body language of those exiting, and putting his hands to his sides as if to ask what had happened. The host approached at about the same time that their server came back out from the kitchen. The host looked stern, but collected his voice and flung his white hair back behind his shoulders before saying, “Will there be anything else today?” Meanwhile, the server cleared away their dishes, visibly upset at the racially charged undertone that came with the phrase “evil elves” and all that accompanied it. Nevertheless, the patchouli-scented waiter placed their forks, knives, napkins, and plates on a tray before taking them away, leaving their drinks and jug of ale on the table, as was customary after a meal.

Round 23

With all the patrons gone, and only the staff left, Baldoor got up and yelled into the kitchen, “Ya all kin come out now, we know ya bunch of drow lovers are up ta no good.” As he finishes speaking, he has his warhammer and buckler shield in hand.

Haal leaned in and told his mates, “The entire staff, except for the young server are all showing Evil.”

Round 24

Haal began casting *detect thoughts [expired by Round 33]* while Nihm drew her rapier and Kassuq got up, crossing the room towards the basement stairs as he also drew his sword.

“Prepare for a fight,” Nihm whispered as the group headed downstairs.

The host shook his head and headed out through the front door.

The cook followed the heroes, and asked in broken Common, “The fregs is go on? Who are you?”

Round 25

Haal activated the alarm ring, and began detecting the presence of thinking entities, including his friends.

The ring lit up a few seconds afterwards, indicating that the other two teams had received the alarm and were on their way.

“Step no further, trespassers,” stated a drow as he came out from around the corner, armed with a crossbow.

A second drow—a young woman holding an unusual ranseur-like weapon—proclaimed, “You have ventured enough, and will now see judgment.” And with this, the male fired upon Haal.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Light Crossbow | 1d8 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 6 |

*Miss.*

Haal continued to focus towards the drow and the other rooms in the basement, trying to pick up others’ thoughts as he readied his quarterstaff.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Haal: Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Knowledge: Local** | 4 | **Int (+2)** | 0 | 6 | 14 | 20 |

*+2 insight bonus to AB and Damage to elves, including drow; reminders welcome.*

Seeing no one new inside the establishment now, Baldoor held his ground at the top of the steps, prepared for a defensive stand, giving the cook a mean grimace, threatening to attack with his hammer.

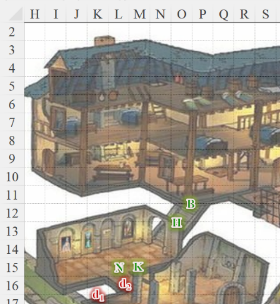
*Combat Expertise exchange 2 points from his attack bonus to his AC; contingency held until cancelled or triggered.*

The cook frowned, said a few words in Elven, and fled out through the main door.

Kassuq and Nihm both rushed the closest drow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Kassuq: Longsword | 1d8 | +2 | 2 charge | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +7 | 12 | 19 | Drow2 |
| Nihm: Rapier | 1d8 | 0 | 1 +  2 charge | 19-20, x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +7 | 6 | 13 | Drow2 |

*Hit, miss. Dmg: 8 + 2 + 2 charge = 12.*



Round 26

Haal tried to concentrate on the thoughts of those within a 60’ radius. The thoughts of the two drow that had just come around the corner were still not clear to him. If there were others, they were too far, mind-armored, or perhaps obfuscated by solid stone and packed earth. He moved to protect Kassuq and Nihm’s flank while he continued to sweep the rooms for more evil targets.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Quarterstaff | 1d6 | 0 | 0 | x2 | Bludgeon | 4.0 | +5 | 13 | 18 |

*Hit. Dmg: 4.*

Nihm and Kassuq continued to fight.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Rapier | 1d6 | 0 | 1 | 19-20, x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +5 | 15 | 20 |
| Longsword | 1d8 | +2 | 0 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +5 | 2 | 7 |

*Hit, miss. Dmg: 3.*

The drow with the ranseur jabbed at Haal as her assistant reloaded and shot at Nihm.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 11 | 15 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Light Crossbow | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 12 | 15 |

*Hit (Haal), hit (Nihm).*

*Dmg to Haal: 4 + 1 = 5 [17/22].*

*Dmg to Nihm: 5 + 1 = 6 [22/28].*

Baldoor took a last look around the first floor, seeing no one about, then headed downstairs, past the first drow guard, who had no melee weapon with which to swipe at him.

Two guards were already at the door that Baldoor had nearly reached, and the closest one now fended the dwarf off.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Short Sword | 1d6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 6 |

*Miss.*

The second one prepared to get into a melee with the dwarf, holding a ranseur, and stepping northward.

Round 27

The dwarf smiled as the ranseur-toting drow seemed to be moving to flank him. He shifted slightly to his right, putting himself closer to the wall as he swung his hammer at the drow in front of him.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Warhammer | 1d8 | +1 | 1 + 2 CE | x3 | Bludgeon | 3.0 | +6 | 11 | 17 |

*Miss.*

Kassuq continued his attack on the drow in front of him, hacking away with his sword once again.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Longsword | 1d8 | +2 | 0 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +5 | 14 | 19 |

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

Nihm thrust her rapier at the drow once more, then maneuvered past him into the next room, flanking him.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Rapier | 1d6 | 0 | 1 | 19-20, x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +5 | 13 | 18 |

*Hit. Dmg: 4.*

Nihm then moved into the other room, forcing the drow to watch his flank.

Haal moved into the next room and position himself where he could see the door and the stairs. The drow woman with the ranseur took the opportunity to swipe at him.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Crit** | **Threat** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | ***19*** | 23 | 19 | þ |

*Threat. 1d20 = 1, not a critical hit. Dmg: 4 + 1 = 5 [12/22].*

He focused on the stairway for any additional thoughts that he can pick up, and informed the others, “More drow in here!”

Baldoor was already fending them off, and continued to do so.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 11 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Short Sword | 1d6+1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 7 |

*Miss, miss.*

The two drow to the north focused on Nihm.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Light Crossbow | 1d8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 11 |

*Miss, miss.*



Round 28

Baldoor was frustrated by his miss but continued to do what he could to defend himself and keep the two drow focused on him. Baldoor swung and the drow in front of him (d3), relying on his shield to keep the other drow (d4) at bay.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Warhammer | 1d8 | +1 | 1 + 2 | x3 | Bludgeon | 3.0 | +6 | 16 | 22 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 1 = 6.*

Kassuq lunged forward and took a bite at the drow (d2) in front of him, trying to rip open the evil being’s throat.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Bite | 1d8 | 2 | 0 | 20 | Piercing | - | +5 | 17 | 22 | Sanctify Natural Attack  *Wyrmfang Amulet* |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 2 = 7.*

Nihm thrust her rapier into the same drow that Kassuq had just mauled, hoping to end the evil being’s life.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Rapier | 1d6 | 0 | 1 | 19-20, x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +5 | 8 | 13 |

*Miss.*

Haal decided that he didn’t need to focus on thoughts anymore. They knew there were drow below them, that much was obvious. Letting the *detect thoughts* spell end, he cast *summon monster I [expired on Round 32]* and called forth a Celestial dog, directing it to attack the drow near the stairs.

The two drow to the north focused on Nihm.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Hand Crossbow | 1d4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 flank | 6 | 12 | 18 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | 18 | 24 |

*Hit, hit. dmg: 2 + (2 + 1) = 5 [17/28].*

The other two fought against Baldoor.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | 5 | 11 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Short Sword | 1d6+1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 flank | 5 | 3 | 8 |

*Miss, miss.*

Round 29

An augmented Celestial riding dog appeared between Haal and the drow closest to the narrow, downward flight of stairs. It turned towards that enemy, and snapped with its toothy maw.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Augmented dog | Bite | 1d6+3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 5 |

*Miss.*

Haal anticipated reinforcements arriving within the minute, and turned and took a step towards Baldoor, intending to help the dwarf with his two opponents.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Quarterstaff | 1d6 | 2 KD | 2 KD | x2 | Bludgeon | 4.0 | +7 | 12 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 6 + 2 = 8.*



Another woman with a ranseur entered through the south door, and cast a spell that Haal misidentified as a *necrotic skull bomb*. In truth, it was a far less potent spell that he hadn’t studied much: *wither limb*. Targeting Baldoor, she smirked and wished him dead, but would settle for his legs to fail him. She then proclaimed in Common, “We are the Chosen Eldreth, and you shall feed our Dark Queen!”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *wither limb* | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Baldoor, Fortitude** | **4** | Con (+1) | 0 | 5 | 17 | 22 | +2 vs. Poison & Spells |

*Success. Effect negated.*

Baldoor’s endurance allowed his jelly-like legs to immediately stiffen again and return under his control.

The appearance and declaration of the cleric of Lolth boosted the morale of her minions, and they all fought with ever more fervor than before, striking at Nihm and Baldoor.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Light Crossbow | 1d8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 flank | 5 | 12 | 17 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | ***19*** | 25 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | 11 | 17 |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Short Sword | 1d6+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 flank | 5 | 7 | 12 |

*Hit (N), threat (N), hit (B), miss (B). 1d20 = 3 + 6 = 9, not a critical hit.*

*Dmg to Nihm: 3 + (8 + 1) = 12 [5/28].*

*Dmg to Baldoor: 2 + 1 = 3 [21/24].*

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Kassuq neither saw nor heard anyone behind them, but kept a cautious ear pointed behind him. Lolth’s representation was evident in the regalia and insignia borne by the drow around them. Seeing Nihm take to solid hits, he used his spell-like ability and cast Aid on her, hoping to return some of her health at least temporarily. He then taunted the drow, adding in Drow, << Loth is no queen, she’s just a bug to be trampled under a giant boot!! >>

<< Aghh! >> gasped the priestess who had devoted her life to the Queen of the Demonweb Pits. << *Your* skull shall be my next bedpan. >>

Nihm grunted in pain from the hits she took. She decided she needed to fall back, so she took a defensive posture as she tried to move past the drow back into the other room.

*Total Defense, withdrawal does not provoke an AoO, but bow must be drawn on next round.*

Baldoor, with the appearance of the cleric, decided to go a little more offensive, and continued to focus on the drow in front of him, swinging his hammer once again.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Warhammer | 1d8 | +1 | 1 + 1 CE  + 2 flank | x3 | Bludgeon | 3.0 | +7 | 10 | 17 |

*Miss.*

Diagram

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Round 30

Nihm got into the other room, sheathing her rapier and drawing her longbow. Having seen her successfully withdraw, Haal continued to attack d4 as the summoned, augmented dog took on d1.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Quarterstaff | 1d6 | 0 | 0 | x2 | Bludgeon | 4.0 | +5 | 18 | 23 |

*Hit. Dmg: 2.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Augmented dog | Bite | 1d6+3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 13 | 17 |

*Miss.*



The drow minions did their best to fight the intruders, some taking a step back to better poke their enemies. One of the women targeted Nihm yet again while the other went for Baldoor’s groin.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Mod+** | **Targeting** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard 1 | Light Crossbow | 1d8 | 2 | 1 | Dog | 0 | 2 flank | 5 | 7 | 12 |
| Warm Blanket Guard 2 | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | Nihm | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | 14 | 20 |
| Warm Blanket Guard 3 | Short Sword | 1d6+1 | 2 | 1 | Baldoor | 0 | 2 flank | 5 | ***20*** | 25 |
| Warm Blanket Guard 4 | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | Baldoor | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | 15 | 21 |

*Miss, hit, threat, hit. 1d20 = 20, critical hit.*

*Dmg: to Nihm: 1 + 1 = 2 [3/28].*

*Dmg: to Baldoor: [(2 x 6) + 1] + (3 + 1) = 13 + 4 = 17 [4/24].*

The cleric positioned herself such that she could threaten either Haal or Kassuq, and chose to jab at the human for the moment.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Priestess of Lolth | Unholy Ranseur | 1d8+1+2d6 unholy | 4 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 11 | 17 |

*Hit. Dmg: 2 + 1 + 7 unholy = 10 [2/22].*

From the downward staircase near the dog, a crossbow bolt shot said dog.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Hand Crossbow | 1d4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 13 |

*Miss.*

Kassuq could tell that his mates were about to collapse, and considered the idea of urging a retreat while he held back the fray. He yelled, “Fall back!!” He could see this was beginning to turn against them and wondered where their backup was. He stood ready to attack any drow that tried to come through the hallway.

Baldoor, meanwhile, went on the defensive and withdrew to the other room.

*Attack of Opportunity*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 11 |

*Miss.*

Diagram

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Round 31

Nihm fired off an arrow at the drow in the hall.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +8 | 14 | 22 | +1 within 30’ |

*Hit. Dmg: 6.*

Killing the first woman with the ranseur that they’d encountered, she then moved to her right to be able to cover the hallway and the stairs leading up to the inn.

The Celestial dog snapped at the crossbow-wielding male at its heels.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Augmented dog | Bite | 1d6+3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 18 | 22 |

*Hit. Dmg: 6 + 3 = 9.*

That angered the drow, so he shot at the dog.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Light Crossbow | 1d8 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 11 |

*Miss.*

The drow at the staircase took a few steps closer and also fired upon the dog.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Hand Crossbow | 1d4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 14 | 18 |

*Hit. Dmg: 2.*

Haal moved northward, careful to avoid the three adjacent enemies.

The three drow moved in on Kassuq and did their worst.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard 4 | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| Warm Blanket Guard 3 | Short Sword | 1d6+1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 flank  2 charge | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| Warm Blanket Guard 5 | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | 13 | 19 |

*Miss, miss, hit. Dmg: 5 + 1 = 6 [14/27].*



Round 32

Haal commanded his Celestial dog to move and attack d3, then began casting *obscuring mist* before he, Kassuq, and the others headed up the stairs. Haal started casting *obscuring mist [expired on Round 72]*, finishing as Kassuq moved past him. Haal them moved up the stairs as the cloud of mist built.

The drow could see in normal darkness, but this spell obfuscated even their vantage to the panorama before them.

Baldoor continued to withdraw up the stairs. Nihm followed. Kassuq also withdrew and headed to the top of the steps.

Looking back into the *obscuring mist*, the heroes anticipated their enemies coming after them imminently. Through a small window near the front door, Baldoor could now see about a dozen fair-skinned elves clamoring, and two of the folks from one of the strike teams arguing, possibly about to fight. Others were standing around spectating and taking sides in what appeared to be a clear disagreement between the elves and others.

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Round 33

Kassuq flipped the table next to the stairs so it fell down the stairs, landing with the legs facing up. He then stood ready for any drow that came up the stairs.

Haal moved a little further away then sacrificed *owl’s wisdom* in order to cast *cure moderate wounds* upon himself. After seeing Kassuq flip the table, Haal commanded his celestial dog to come up stairs.

*Haal gained 13 + 4 = 17 hps [19/22].*

Baldoor stayed near the door, his foot holding it closed as he sacrificed *shield other* in order to cast *cure moderate wounds* upon himself. He stood with his shield and hammer ready.

*Baldoor gained 11 + 4 = 15 hps [19/24].*

Nihm moved behind Baldoor so that she could also see up the stairs to the upper level. She pulled out a potion of *cure light wounds* and drank it.

*Nihm gained 11 + 4 = 15 hps [19/24].*

The Celestial dog attacked the drow it heard right next to it.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Augmented dog | Bite | 1d6+3 | 1 | 2 | 1 – 4  darkness | 0 | 19 | 19 |

*Hit. Dmg: 3 + 3 = 6.*

The lesser ranseur-wielding woman and her assistant with the light crossbow came up the stairs, and noted the table. The male shot Kassuq, whom he could barely see (partial concealment).

*1d100 = 31, concealment bypassed.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | Light Crossbow | 1d8 | 2 | 1 | -2 height | 1 | 13 | 14 |

*Miss.*

The other drow were probably right behind these two. The woman did her best to step across the table.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  slipping | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Priestess of Lolth | Reflex | 5 | 2 | 7 |

*Fail.*

The woman fell onto her knees, holding her ranseur as she tried not to slip further down. The table budged a few inches downward, but then stayed in place for the moment.

Outside, a scuffle could now be heard as steel clanged and resounded. Nihm and Baldoor had a line of sight, and could see their reinforcements now fighting the light-skinned elves on and near the porch.

Round 34

Kassuq moved back and motioned for Haal to do so as well. As he moved, Kassuq sheathed his longsword.

Haal noticed Kassuq’s motion and movement as he directed his celestial dog to attack anything it could hear. He then moved a little further away from the stairs. As he moved he shouldered his quarterstaff, then pulled out his sling *[free action]* and readied a sling stone. He wasn’t truly confident in his ability to hit anything with it, but he didn’t want to use up all his spells at this point.

Baldoor glanced outside then back at the stairs with no line of sight to the drow *[as previously noted]*. He took a 5’ step eastward to get a sense of who was available to attack, cast *spiritual weapon [expired on Round 38]*, and directed the hammer that appeared to attack the crossbow-wielding drow who was now in the lead.

The hammer pounded against the man with the crossbow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 2 height | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +7 | 2 | 9 |

*Miss.*

The *obscuring mist* was dispelled by someone below, and the defenders of this enclave began to push upward.

Nihm also glanced outside, trying to determine the success of their reinforcements. She then turned back to the stairs and let her arrows upon the crossbowman in the lead.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +8 | 16 | 24 | +1 within 30’ |
| Longbow, Rapid Shot | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | - | +8 | 15 | 23 | +1 within 30’ |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: 3 + 6 = 9.*

The drow took two arrows, and dropped to the ground, bleeding out as his mistress tried to charge-attack Baldoor, but had no direct path from which to approach, so he circumvented her dying assistant and poked at the dwarf.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 9 |

*Miss.*

More drow emerged, and made their way towards Haal, but did not yet reach him. The cleric of Lolth still held her ranseur, and now decided whether she would fend off the stalwart Kassuq or join her underling with the short sword in killing off the unarmored cleric first.

Downstairs, the drow with the hand crossbow that had come up to reinforce from the west now slew the Celestial dog, and approached the staircase.



Round 35

Kassuq drew his bow and readied an arrow, took a step towards Haal, and fired his arrow at the closest drow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Composite [+2] Longbow | 1d8 | +2 | 0 | x3 | 110’ | 3.0 | +5 | 9 | 14 |

*Miss.*

“Deng!” said the well spoken archon as he prepared to repeat his attack.

Haal felt the spell end as the Celestial dog was slain. He smiled, knowing the dog was back in its home, unharmed, or at least that is what he believed. He then flung his sling bullet at the closest drow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Sling +1 | 1d4 | 1 | 1 | x2 | 30’ | 1.0 | +4 | 17 | 21 |

*Hit. Dmg: 3 + 1 = 4.*

The commotion outside built, and Nihm turned for an instant to see that the majority of the townsfolk on the street were now actively fighting against the elves. One of them must have given away their identity and/or motives.

Baldoor commanded his Celestial hammer to attack the priestess.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 0 | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +5 | 11 | 16 |

*Miss.*

He then took a step forward and swung his own hammer at the guard before him, trying to cave in her chest.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Warhammer | 1d8 | +1 | 1 | x3 | Bludgeon | 3.0 | +4 | 13 | 17 |

*Miss.*

Both of the well-armored drow refused to cave in to the dwarf’s physical and spiritual swings.

Nihm took a slight step to her right, then fired her arrows at the ugly drow priestess of Lolth, trying to bring an end to this fight.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +8 | 14 | 22 | +1 within 30’ |
| Longbow, Rapid Shot | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | - | +8 | 13 | 21 | +1 within 30’ |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: 2 + 8 = 10.*

The priestess pulled both arrows out of her arm and shoulder, and grimaced with the intention of bringing down the traitor to her own kind.

The door swung wide open, and two of the reinforcements from strike team 2 entered, seeing the drow assaulting the heroes. The scuffle continued as the duskblade and warmage rushed the woman with the ranseur, the former hero intending to cut her down with no questions asked after what they’d just witnessed outside, where their sorcerer and beguiler friends were even now casting spells against the elves on the porch. The warmage cast *lesser orb of fire*.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 7 + 2 flank | 2 | 11 |
| Burly Bob | Touch Spell | Varies | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 5 – 4 firing  into melee | 14 | 15 |

*Miss, hit. Dmg: 3 fire.*

It wasn’t enough to kill the already wounded combatant, but it made a good dent in the woman’s overall health.

Strike team 3—which consisted of a favored soul of Oghma, a cleric of Oghma, a paladin of Oghma, and a fledging knight—was also representing the City’s order as metal tested mettle.

From the basement, there emerged the man who had dispatched Haal’s dog, revealing that he was no mere crossbow-wielding lackey, but a dreadfully charismatic and emblematic aspect of his evil deity: a favored soul of Lolth. The horns atop his head were toothy and clipped the air like a spider’s maw, and from his hands there now emanated a greenish mana that gravitated downward and became a spider swarm. He stepped around the table, which slightly delayed his movement but did not pose a slipping hazard for the dexterous spellcaster.



The swarm moved eastward, and took Baldoor by surprise.

*Dmg: 1 + poison [18/24].*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Poison | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Baldoor, Fortitude** | **4** | Con (+1) | 0 | 5 | 15 | 20 | +2 vs. Poison |

*Success. No primary poison damage.*

The priestess and the guard with the ranseur poked at the duskblade, seeing this male as the greatest threat now.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Threat** |
| Priestess of Lolth | Unholy Ranseur | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 4 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 15 | ý |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | ***20*** | 24 | þ |

*Miss, threat. 1d20 = 17 + 4 = 21, critical hit. Dmg: (5 + 1 + 4 unholy) + ([2 x 6] + 1) = 6 + 13 + 4 unholy = 23.*

The attacks nearly killed Drawud, who had to rethink his overture.

A picture containing diagram

Description automatically generated

Round 36

Baldoor was distracted by the spider swarm.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Distraction | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Baldoor, Fortitude** | **4** | Con (+1) | 0 | 5 | 1 | 6 |

*Fail. Baldoor was Nauseated [only one move action allowed] for this round.*

The hammer repeated its previous attack.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | x3 | Bludgeon | +5 | 12 | 17 |

*Miss.*

Baldoor moved to the side, up against the half-elf warmage, holding back a gag reflex.

Haal realized that the favored soul would be a big threat, even outnumbered. He cast *summon monster II [expired on Round 40]* and called forth a Celestial riding dog next to the favored soul and commanded it to attack.

Kassuq shifted his focus to the new arrival on the stairs and fired off an arrow. He was glad to see the arrival of their reinforcements and hoped more would be arriving shortly.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Composite [+2] Longbow | 1d8 | +2 | 0 | x3 | 110’ | 3.0 | +5 | 8 | 13 |

*Miss.*

Nihm gave a bit of a smile seeing the discomfort on the priestess’s face, so she followed her last attack up with two more arrows at the priestess.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 – 4  firing into melee | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +4 | 2 | 6 | +1 within 30’ |
| Longbow, Rapid Shot | 1d8 | +0 | 1 – 4  firing into melee | x3 | 100’ | - | +4 | 16 | 20 | +1 within 30’ |

*Miss, hit. Dmg: 3.*

Drawud took a valiant step forward, and swung at the priestess as well as Burly Bob attempted to cast *lesser orb of fire* once again.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 12 | 19 |
| Burly Bob | Touch Spell | varies | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | -4 firing  into melee | 1 | 6 | 7 |

*Miss, miss.*

The drow did their best to finish off the duskblade, yelling to those outside to << purge the surfacers! >>

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 15 | 19 |
| Priestess of Lolth | Unholy Ranseur | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 12 |

*Miss, miss.*

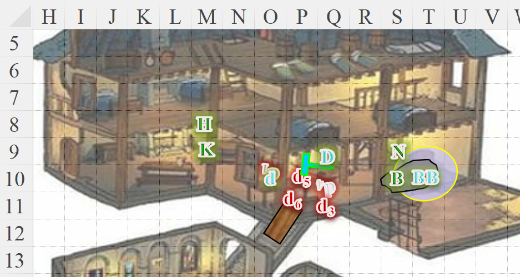
Having expended his Quickened *summon swarm* spell, and having previously cast *spider climb*, the favored soul of Lolth now cast *shatter* upon the warmage’s person, getting Baldoor and Nihm in the blast.

Baldoor’s potions of *darkvision* and *remove fear* shattered, their contents spilling onto the ground, and the same happened to Nihm’s. Burly Bob was all about potions, having them strapped across his chest like ammunition. Now, he boasted a damp chest, and no magical buffs to show for it.

The swarm of spiders now covered the 10’ x 5’ area on which Burly Bob and Baldoor were standing.

*Dmg to Baldoor: 3 [15/24].*

*Dmg to Burly Bob: 6.*



Round 37

The Celestial dog that Haal conjured finished materializing, and attacked the favored soul of Lolth.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Augmented dog | Bite | 1d6+3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 6 |

*Miss.*

Haal readied and launched another sling bullet at the female drow at the top of the stairs.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Sling +1 | 1d4 | 1 | 1 | x2 | 30’ | 1.0 | +4 | 12 | 16 |

*Miss.*

Reloading, he was hoping to reduce the number or drow involved in the fight and felt he had a better chance of hitting that drow. He also abstained from wasting his time to mentally command his Celestial riding dog to continue attacking the same drow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Distraction | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Baldoor, Fortitude** | **4** | Con (+1) | 0 | 5 | 11 | 16 |

*Success. Nausea negated.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  Distraction | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Burly Bob | Fortitude | 2 | 15 | 17 |

*Success. Nausea negated.*

Baldoor moved forward to try and take some pressure off of Drawud by attacking the drow by the stairs. He used caution, focusing on his defense as he moved forward, and also kept his hammer attacking the priestess.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Warhammer | 1d8 | +1 | 1 + 2 CE | x3 | Bludgeon | 3.0 | +6 | 6 | 12 |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 0 | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +5 | 9 | 14 |

*Miss, miss.*

Kassuq readied and let loose with another arrow. He was frustrated with his previous misses, and hoped this arrow would find a soft spot in the priestess’ armor.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Composite [+2] Longbow | 1d8 | +2 | 0 | x3 | 110’ | 3.0 | +5 | 17 | 22 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 2 = 7.*

Nihm focused on the priestess and let two arrows fly.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +8 | 13 | 21 | +1 within 30’ |
| Longbow, Rapid Shot | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | - | +8 | 14 | 22 | +1 within 30’ |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: 7 + 4 = 11.*

The stalwart woman finally went down, dropping her ranseur and clutching at the arrows that just punctured her chest.

The remaining woman with the ranseur—an elite guard—attacked Drawud.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Guard | MW Ranseur | 1d8+1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 8 |

*Miss.*

Drawud dodged the jab and took a step south, swinging back at the woman.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 14 |

*Miss.*

Burly Bob emitted a verbal spell component, and released two *magic missiles* upon the female drow.

*Dmg: 6 + 2 = 8 magic.*

The woman with the ranseur dropped to the ground, much like her cleric had seconds ago.

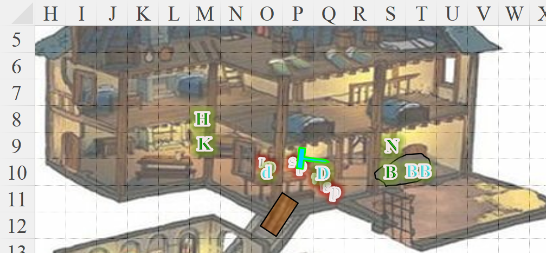
The spider swarm continued to assail Baldoor and Burly Bob.

*Dmg to Baldoor: 4 [11/24].*

*Dmg to Burly Bob: 5.*

The favored of Lolth shook his head, and fled back down the stairs, cursing in the language of Lolth.

With only the spiders threatening them now, the strike teams turned their attention back to the porch, where the elves were even now



Round 38

Baldoor stepped out the door and directed his *spiritual hammer* to attack the nearest elf fighting with the city guard. He then cast *cure light wounds* upon himself, losing *shield of faith*.

*Baldoor gained 7 + 4 = 11 hps [22/24].*

Nihm headed upstairs quietly, arrow at the ready, and found herself in a windowless hallway surrounded by doors that likely led to sleeping quarters. A single candle lit the hall, ensconced along the northern wall.

Kassuq moved towards the front of the building when he saw Nihm headed upstairs. He motioned to Haal to follow as he pulled out his longsword and followed her. He kept his bow in his left hand, though he couldn’t do much with it at the moment.

Haal directed his dog to stand guard at the stairs in case any more drow came around. He then grabbed his quarterstaff as he followed Kassuq and Nihm upstairs. He tucked his sling back into his pouch for now.

Drawud drank a potion of *cure moderate wounds*, and turned his attention back to the porch, as did Burly Bob. They jumped over the spider swarm and braced for the remainder of the conflict.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Check** | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Burly Bob | Jump | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| Drawud | Jump | 4 | 9 | 13 |

*Success, success. Both NPCs clear the 5’ square blocking the doorway.*

The spider swarm bit at Baldoor.

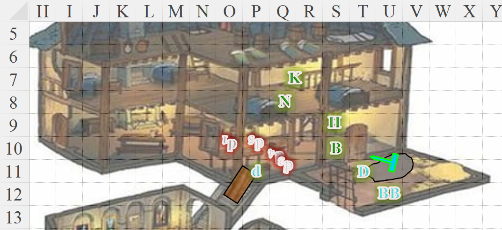
*Dmg: 3 + poison [19/24].*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Poison | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Baldoor, Fortitude** | **4** | Con (+1) | 0 | 5 | 14 | 19 | +2 vs. Poison |

*Success. No primary poison damage.*

The remaining elves outside had either been slain, clobbered unconscious, or restrained, and the reinforcing strike teams now took control of the situation, presenting badges to the townsfolk and declaring this site to be suspected of harboring the unlawful clade of drow that had besieged their beloved city.

The spider swarm then came outside as if to prove the defenders’ point, and was promptly put down, but not before it could cause others a little harm.



Rounds 39 – 40

The spiritual hammer disappeared.

As uniformed city guards approached the scene and took names, the other strike teams effected a division of labor wherein the paladin and knight helped the guards to take the elves into custody. Those that remained to aid in the siege of this enclave entered the main hall and greeted one another once again.

Baldoor yelled out, “If ya have ‘em secured, I suggest we pursue the dark ones. Give me four oh ya and we’ll chase ‘em down.”

Drawud moved the drow bodies away from the staircase, and pushed the table down the stairs with a firm footing.

Nihm and Kassuq took a moment to just scan the room for anyone hiding, then headed back down. While at the bottom of the stairs, Haal called up, “See if you can find a small chain with something on it. I’ll need to cast a *light* spell if we’re going underground.” Haal also looked around the lower level near him as well.

Kassuq replied, “Not sure what we’ll find be we’ll take a quick look.”

The Celestial dog dematerialized.

With Nihm and Kassuq once again on the ground floor, Haal filched a copper coin from a pocket, which he tied to a length of string to use as a light source once he’d cast *light*. He could then carry it when they needed light and wrap it up when they didn’t.

The strike teams were ready to dive down into the caverns now. In the lead were Drawud called out, “Clear!” and motioned for others to follow.

Drawud and Burly Bob drank potions of *cure moderate wounds*.

*Drawud and Burly Bob each gained 8 + 5 = 13 hps.*



Round 41

Haal cast *light* *[expired on Round 441]* as they followed the other strike teams down into the caves. He wrapped a napkin around the coin and stored it in his belt pouch when they didn’t want the light.

*[Assuming this to be the PC marching order for this round]* Baldoor, Nihm, Haal and Kassuq followed the others down the stairs. Haal wrapped the string around his staff to provide a decent amount of light as they went back into the basement.

Kassuq took a few seconds to sniff and listen as they moved about, trying to make sure they didn’t get ambushed/surprised.

As Drawud approached the westward staircase, someone cast *fireball* on him, substituting the fire damage with cold.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *fireball*  *(energy substitution)* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Drawud | Reflex | 3 | 8 | 11 |
| Burly Bob | Reflex | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Chirip | Reflex | 4 | 7 | 11 |
| Oghmar | Reflex | 2 | 19 | 21 |
| Brother Krum | Reflex | 1 | 19 | 20 |

*Fail, fail, fail, success, success. Oghmar and Brother Krum saved for ½ damage.*

*Dmg to Drawud: 19 cold.*

*Dmg to Burly Bob: 12 cold.*

*Dmg to Chirip: 18 cold.*

*Dmg to Oghmar: ½ x 19 = 9 cold.*

*Dmg to Brother Krum: ½ x 17 = 8 cold.*

Chirip—a sorcerer—almost died from the cold blast, and gasped, drinking a potion of *cure moderate wounds*.

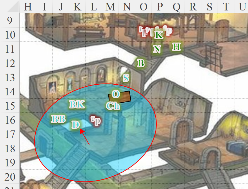
*Chirip gained 13 + 5 = 18 hps.*

Drawud dropped to the ground, dying. *[Not yet dead.]*

Burly Bob and Brother Krum hastily dragged their friend about 5’ until he was out of the line of attack of the spellcaster below.

“Drawud needs healing!” Bob called out.

“They have a spellcaster below!” warned Krum.



Rounds 42 – 51

Haal ran over to Drawud and cast *cure light wounds*, forfeiting his last *obscuring mist* spell.

*Drawud gained 8 + 4 = 12 hps.*

Baldoor stood at the bottom of the stairs and asked, “Any o’ you have a *fireball* ya can toss down there?” He pointed to the stairs where the iceball had come from.

The sorcerer among them had such a spell at his avail, but when he got a line of sight to the bottom of the staircase, he could see no one. “Don’t want to waste the spell,” Chirip said. “Looks like there’s no one there.”

“Could be an invisible foe,” Drawud said after thanking Haal for the healing.

“Or they fled further downward to lure us into another iceball trap,” suggested Oghmar, the lead tactician in his strike team.

Nihm kept her bow at the ready, an arrow nocked and ready to fly as she waited for them to get organized and head down the stairs.

Kassuq took a few moments and began using his special ability to *aid* the others in his team that would accept his offering. He started with Nihm *[expired on Round 82]*, then went downstairs to the others.

Baldoor was next *[expired on Round 83]*.

Then, Oghmar got the archon’s magic touch *[expired on Round 84]*.

Brother Krum *[expired on Round 85]*, Haal *[expired on Round 86]*, Burly Bob *[expired on Round 87]*, and Drawud *[expired on Round 88]* were grateful for the love.

Kassuq finished up with Chirip *[expired on Round 89]* and Sven *[expired on Round 90]*.

Realizing he hadn’t tapped himself with the boost, he then did so *[expired on Round 91]*.

*Friendlies gained +1 to attacks and saves against fear effects, plus 3 + 4 = 7 temporary hit points.*

*Baldoor [****26****/24].*

*Kassuq [21/27].*

*Haal [****26****/22].*

*Nihm [10/28].*

Grateful for the boost, everyone prepared for the next leg of the downward siege.



Round 52

Kassuq stopped as he heard the voice of the favored soul of Lolth up ahead, though the echoes made it difficult to discern the source. He could smell drow and fair skinned elves as a draft blew upward along the stairwell.

<< The Victorious Blade of the People has set into motion events that you cannot yet fathom, >> the voice of The Chosen called out from the lower levels, speaking in Elven, not Drow, causing the heroes to look down the staircase, though they could see nothing stirring downstairs. << Your city will fall to Lolth’s faithful, and all worthy elves will follow us! >>

Nihm and Drawud understood, as did Kassuq, the consummate linguist of Celestial origins.

The strike teams got into a more efficient formation, with a majority eager to head west, since that’s where the iceball had come from.



Round 53

As they moved forward, Kassuq did his best to move silently and kept his eyes and ears open.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Kassuq, Move Silently** | 6 | Dex (+2) | 0 | 8 | **19** | 27 |
| **Kassuq, Listen** | 6 | Wis (+1) | 0 | 7 | **1 – 5** | ?? |
| **Kassuq, Spot** | 6 | Wis (+1) | 0 | 7 | **6 – 9** | ?? |

*See below.*

Baldoor, Nihm and Haal were more focused on spotting as they moved along.

*See below.*

Haal would have liked to use a more permanent or longer-lasting *light* spell, so he grabbed a mostly spent torch from the wall before heading down with the others.

Drawud recognized the reference behind the “Victorious Blade of the People” in the statement made by a male in the Elven tongue with an Underdark accent. Drawud translated and reminded the others, “He means the *Eldreth Veluuthra*.” The duskblade drank a potion of *cure light wounds* as everyone took up positions, splitting their focus between the northern and southern passages.

*Drawud gained 1 + 3 = 4 hps.*

At this point, there was no doubt as to the culpability of these elves—drow and surfacer alike—in at least some general malfeasance, but with this declaration of membership in the very group suspected of besieging the City of Candlekeep, they now had full motive to bring these villains to justice.

Kassuq reached the bottom of the staircase, turned southward, and spotted a dead body on the ground, just a few feet from a closed door.

Baldoor peeked around a few barrels to his north, and saw some cots on the ground in a room dimly lit by a single candle at the northeastern corner.



Round 54

Oghmar immediately used his ring of *sending* to alert those who dispatched them, “We have confirmation that this is a Veluuthra cell... possibly multiple cells.”

Drawud prepared for some evil thing to befall them, as did most of the others still coming down the stairs.

Squinting, Kassuq now identified the dead body before them as Emo Syd Cringe, the depressant lad they’d encountered along the road to the lavender fields, only to find out later that he was in cahoots with the Veluuthra cell managing those fields. A few shadow-infused bolts stuck out from his chest and belly. In life, this was a beguiler, and the archon now suspected that this was just another of the magician’s illusions, but saw no evidence supporting this.



Beyond the corpse—if such it was—the door sported an emblem betraying Lolth’s prevalence in this lair. Kassuq spit at the emblem on the door, deciding he would rip it off on their way back.

Once the others appeared to be ready, Kassuq approached the closed door and checked for any traps or locks. It seemed safe, but it was locked. He was in no rush at the moment.

Baldoor went into the northern, candlelit chamber in order to fetch the candle and hand it to Haal, “Might be needin this later.” Baldoor added to the group, “We can’t be down there too long, most o’ you can’t see in tha dark.” Then he stepped on a trap, and triggered another *fireball* spell with the cold descriptor substituted for fire.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *fireball*  *(energy substitution)* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Drawud | Reflex | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Burly Bob | Reflex | 5 | 8 | 13 |

*Fail, fail.*

*Dmg to Drawud: 13 cold.*

*Dmg to Burly Bob: 17 cold.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *Fireball (Cold)* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Baldoor, Reflex** | **1** | Dex (+1) | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | +2 vs. Spells |
| **Nihm, Reflex** | **4** | Dex (+2) | 0 | 6 | 18 | 24 |  |

*Fail, success. Nihm saved for ½ damage.*

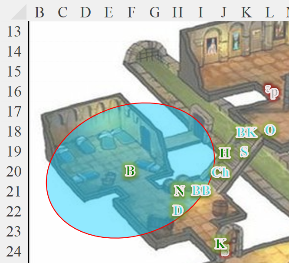
*Dmg to Baldoor: 14 cold [12/24].*

*Dmg to Nihm: ½ x 20 = 10 cold [****0****/28].*

Nihm fell to the ground, seemingly lifeless while Drawud and Burly Bob gasped for life. They both quaffed the last *cure moderate wounds* potion that each carried.

*Drawud gained 7 + 5 = 12 hps.*

*Burly Bob gained 12 + 5 = 17 hps.*



Round 55

Seeing Nihm fall to the floor at the foot of the stairs, Oghmar pushed his way downward to cast a *cure* spell on her.

*Nihm gained 6 + 4 = 10 hps [10/28].*

Baldoor felt like an idiot setting off the trap. He felt worse seeing Nihm collapse from the spell. As Oghmar came rushing down, Baldoor also moved to her side and burned his *healthful rest* spell in order to cast *cure light wounds*.

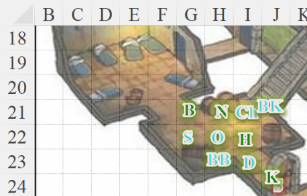
*Nihm gained 4 + 4 = 8 hps [18/28].*

Nihm got up from her prone position, and *[move or standard action]*.

Haal also moved down the stairs. Seeing Nihm being tended to, moved over near the door. “Kassuq, can you step back for a moment?” When Kassuq did, Haal cast *detect magic [expired no later than Round 95]* and looked at the door as well as the rest of the room. He figured if there was one magical trap, there would likely be another.

With Nihm back on her feet, and forgetting about the candle for now, Baldoor turned to the others, “We need ta be very careful. I’d prefer ta wait en’ get fully healed en’ resupplied, but we can’t wait too long.”

Oghmar protested, “They’re probably making an escape as we speak. We need to press on.”



Round 56

Oghmar got a reply to his message, and recited it as it was revealed, “Proceed with caution. Sending in cleanup crew and additional healing.”

Having helped to load the surviving culprits onto the City Guard wagons, the knight and paladin of Oghma now reached the others in the basement.

Haal could *detect magic* around him, which was no surprise, given the number of active spells boosting the heroes present. Within moments, he would be able to discern whether the door itself bore any magical dweomers.

With Nihm back on her feet, Baldoor gave a slight smile. Nihm collected her bow and arrow, then prepared to move on with the others.

Meanwhile, by the door, Kassuq waited patiently as Haal turned his focus to the door. They were not in a rush and concerned they may set off another trap.

Haal said, “I see no magic emanating from the door.”

The rest of the crew steeled themselves as they anticipated the door opening, and the scuffle continuing.

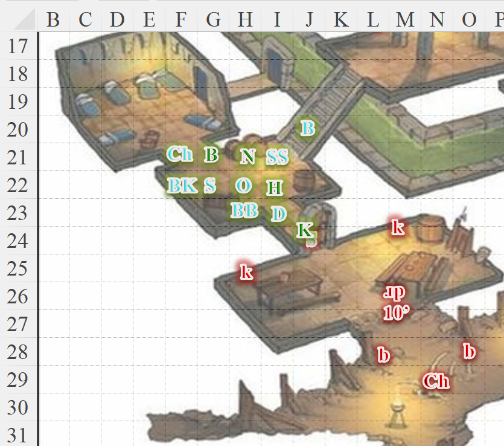
Round 57

With Haal’s declaration, Kassuq looked back at the others. “Let’s go.”

Kassuq then opened the door and peered into the next room, resolving to proceed into the room cautiously, looking for anyone hiding or any traps. Haal would follow, scanning the room for any emanations of magic.

Before them, Kassuq and a few folks behind him identified a drider on the irregular, natural ceiling of a cavernous chamber whose walls and floor had been covered in stone tiles. Beyond the 20’ x 35’ room was a completely natural tunnel, just as their map had led them to expect.

The drider eyed the heroes from its upside-down position, hanging from a snug mucous thread, and cast what appeared to be a summoning spell, which Kassuq expected would manifest on the next round.



Behind the drider, two drow arbalists pointed and fired at Kassuq, then reloaded their unholy crossbows.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Arbalist | Unholy Light Crossbow | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 11 |
| Warm Blanket Arbalist | Unholy Light Crossbow | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 13 | 19 |

*Miss, hit. Dmg: 2 + 1 + 9 negative energy = 12 [9/27].*

The Chosen [favored soul] of Lolth stood behind the arbalists and cast *Aganazzar’s scorcher* with a cold substitution.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *Aganazzar’s scorcher* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Kassuq, Reflex** | 3 | **Dex (+2)** | 1 | 6 | **13** | 19 |

*Success. Kassuq saved for ½ damage.*

*Dmg: 7 cold [2/27].*

The foul drow then hissed in High Elven with a dry, chirping arachnid voice, << I—the Chosen—shall devour your hearts, and feed your livers an innards to our ettercaps. >>

Two knights quaffed a potion each, and blocked Kassuq’s path southward, wielding falchions much like Drawud’s, but made of shadow adamantine.

*Both knights gained +4 to strength.*

The knight to Kassuq’s right said, << Jha visztriogh, pael-schinfriukc gaztielon! >> Some identified this as the Drow language, which no hero present understood, but it was clear to the archon that this was the knight’s *Fighting Challenge*.

*Knight 1 gained +1 to Will saves, attacks, and damage vs. Kassuq.*

Haal could see magical auras around all of the enemies in his line of sight, which included part of one knight, one arbalist, and the Chosen. It would take more time to discern their power and nature.



Round 58

Kassuq felt the pain from both hit and withdrew back into the room, “There are at least 4 of them, one drider on the ceiling,” Kassuq warned.

Haal took a step to the side and sacrificed *detect secret doors* in order to cast *cure light wounds* on Kassuq as he recalled what other spells he had left.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Prepared Spells* | | | | |
| **Spell** | **Level** | **Focus?** | **DC** | **Cast?** |
| Detect Magic | 0 | 1 | 13 | þ |
| Detect Magic | 0 | 1 | 13 | q |
| Light | 0 | 1 | 13 | þ |
| Purify Food and Drink | 0 | 0 | 12 | q |
| Read Magic | 0 | 0 | 12 | q |
| Read Magic | 0 | 0 | 12 | q |
| Detect Evil | 1 | 1 | 14 | þ |
| **Detect Secret Doors** | 1 | 1 | 14 | þ |
| Obscuring Mist | 1 | 0 | 13 | q |
| Obscuring Mist | 1 | 0 | 13 | þ |
| Summon Monster I | 1 | 1 | 14 | þ |
| Summon Monster I | 1 | 1 | 14 | q |
| **Detect Thoughts** | 2 | 1 | 15 | þ |
| Owl’s Wisdom | 2 | 0 | 14 | þ |
| Summon Monster II | 2 | 1 | 15 | þ |
| Zone of Truth | 2 | 1 | 15 | q |

*Kassuq gained 4 + 4 = 8 hps [10/27].*

Nihm looked down the hall and through the door, looking for someone or something to shoot at. It would be a longshot, figuratively, but she could target the drider’s cephalothorax as it hung effortlessly from the ceiling.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 – 4  friendly bystanders | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +4 | 10 | 14 | +1 within 30’ |
| Longbow, Rapid Shot | 1d8 | +0 | 1 – 4  friendly bystanders | x3 | 100’ | - | +4 | 19 | 23 | +1 within 30’ |

*Miss, hit. See below.*

Baldoor moved towards the door, but stopped at the end of the hall. Seeing the two knights he smiled and cast *spiritual weapon [expired on Round 63]* for the second and last time.

Baldoor’s knowledge—and Haal’s even more so—informed the conclusion that the spell cast had not been one of those generic *summon monster* spells, but an *invisible stalker* spell, given the somatic components spotted and the fact that a visible monster would have materialized by now.

However, Nihm’s insight told her that the second arrow she shot should have hit, though it ricocheted off the ceiling behind the drider, whereupon she noticed its illusory sheen. “Drider’s an illusion!” she declared curtly and loudly enough to be heard.

The knights on the ground seemed real enough, though, and as Drawud took Kassuq’s place as the melee combatant of honor, the second knight issued a *Fighting Challenge*.

*Knight 1 gained +1 to Will saves, attacks, and damage vs. Kassuq.*

The knights then falchioned the falchion-wielding duskblade.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Notes** |
| Warm Blanket Knight | Unholy Falchion | 2d4+1+2d6 negative | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 8 | 17 |  |
| Warm Blanket Knight | Unholy Falchion | 2d4+1+2d6 negative | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 7 | 16 | +1 vs. Kassuq |

*Miss, miss.*

Drawud attacked the knight that issued the challenge (k2).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 aid | 8 | 12 | 20 |

*Hit. Dmg: 7 + 1 = 8.*

The drider appeared to be casting the same spell, chirping and gesturing the same components as before.

Both arbalists came around from the cover they were taking around the corners of the passageway, and attacked Drawud, reloading.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Arbalist | Unholy Light Crossbow | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 3 | 2 | 1 | -4 firing  into melee | 2 | 9 | 11 |
| Warm Blanket Arbalist | Unholy Light Crossbow | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 3 | 2 | 1 | -4 firing  into melee | 2 | 7 | 9 |

*Miss, miss.*

Squire Sebastian handed Nihm a potion of *cure moderate wounds* and winked at her, then did the same for Kassuq as he cleared his throat with no wink.

Chirip could see the Chosen of Lolth, and assumed correctly that he wouldn’t be wasting a *magic missile* spell on that target.

*Dmg: 3 + 2 = 5 magic.*

Sven traded spots with Oghmar, got a good look at the knight who’d just snubbed Drawud in Elven, and cast *sleep [expired on Round 98]* on him.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *sleep* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Warm Blanket Knight 2 | Will | 6 | 5 | 11 |

*Fail. See below.*

The knight fell to the ground, leaving his friend to fend off Drawud.

Burly Bob then got in front of Sven and cast *lesser orb of fire* on the knight still up.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Burly Bob | Touch Spell | varies | 2 | -4 firing  into melee | 1 | 11 | 11 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 1 = 6 fire.*

The other heroes did their best to buff up.

Diagram

Description automatically generated

Round 59

The dwarven god’s spiritual hammer materialized and attacked and Baldoor now directed it to attack the evil knight to aid Drawud in his fight.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 0 | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +5 | 15 | 20 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 1 = 6.*

Kassuq downed the potion he was handed and took a moment as the potion worked its way through his system.

*Kassuq gained 10 + 5 = 15 hps [25/27].*

Nihm took to potion and gave Sebastian a nod and smile in return. She drank it down and readied another arrow as she moved forward.

*Nihm gained 9 + 5 = 14 hps [24/28].*

Haal, having recalled his available spells, decided to hold off for now. Instead, knowing he wasn’t the best fighter, kept out of the way for now.

Drawud stayed where he was, attacking the knight who was still on his feet.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 10 |

*Miss.*

Burly Bob cast *lesser orb of electricity* upon the knight.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Burly Bob | Touch Spell | varies | 3 | 2 | -4 firing  into melee | 1 | 8 | 9 |

*Miss.*

Sven cast *sleep [expired on Round 99]* again, targeting the knight still on his feet.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *sleep* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Warm Blanket Knight | Will | 6 | 13 | 19 |

*Success. Effect negated.*

The knight remained awake.

Squire Sebastian moved right behind Drawud, and said, “I got you; fall back and quaff one.”

Drawud then took a step back as Sebastian now faced the knight, stepping over the corpse of Emo Syd Cringe.

The others could do little but cheer the frontline combatants on as the fray remained at the doorway.

Round 60

Baldoor again directed his *spiritual hammer* to attack the knight that was still standing and facing off with Drawud.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 0 | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +5 | 6 | 11 |

*Miss.*

Sebastian took another step forward, and Drawud got back in his previous spot to aid his ally, both now taunting the arbalists and Chosen, as they swung at the knight.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Squire Sebastian | MW Longsword | 1d8+2 | 4 | 2 | 1 + 2  flank | 9 | 6 | 15 |

*Miss.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 + 2  flank | 9 | 11 | 20 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 1 = 6.*

Burly Bob repeated his casting of *lesser orb of electricity* upon the knight.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Burly Bob | Touch Spell | varies | 3 | 2 | -4 firing  into melee | 1 | 15 | 16 |

*Hit. Dmg: 11 electric.*

The zap caused the knight’s armor to glow blue for an instant, and the dark elf went down, suffering cardiac arrest.

Baldoor urged Kassuq and the others forward, and everyone did their best to take up positions based on their specializations, with frontline combatants to the south, and spellcasters off to the sides. Nihm, like the others, was waiting for the hallway to get cleared so that she could get a shot or move forward, and remained in the hallway behind Baldoor as the dwarf wondered where he might be best situated before his next action.

Nihm, too, was off to the side, and only had a line of sight to one of the two fanatical crossbowmen.

A picture containing map

Description automatically generated

Round 61

Nihm shot at the arbalist in her crosshairs.

*1d100 = 61, 68, concealment bypassed.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +8 | 12 | 20 | +1 within 30’ |
| Longbow, Rapid Shot | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | - | +8 | 15 | 23 | +1 within 30’ |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: (6 + 1) + (1 + 1) = 9.*

The elder drow flinched both times when Nihm’s arrows struck him, though he did not die, and instead fired upon her before ducking back behind the corner.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Arbalist | Unholy Light Crossbow | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 16 |

*Hit. Dmg: 3 + 1 + 3 negative = 7 [17/28].*

Bannerman charge-attacked the Chosen of Lolth.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Bannerman | Greatsword +1 | 2d6+3+1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 charge | 10 | 4 | 14 |

*Miss.*

Drawud charge-attacked the younger arbalist, Ms. Ballisterman, Jr., and cast *blade of blood* as he did so.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 + 1d6 BoB | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 charge | 9 | 18 | 27 |

*Hit. Dmg: 7 + 1 + 2 charge + 2 Blade of Blood = 12.*

The younger crossbow wielder hissed as he took a step back and fired upon Drawud.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Warm Blanket Arbalist | Unholy Light Crossbow | 1d8+1+2d6 negative | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 16 | 22 |

*Hit. Dmg: 8 + 1 + 8 negative = 17.*

Drawud was again nearly slain, and would have to fall back to Oghmar or some other healer for now. Oghmar was already around the corner, and manifested a *cure moderate wounds* spell, touching the duskblade.

*Drawud gained 7 + 4 = 11 hps.*

Not quite fully healed, the half-elf was glad to have the healer behind him.

Squire Sebastian didn’t have enough of a running start to charge, but attacked Nihm’s assailant nonetheless.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Squire Sebastian | MW Longsword | 1d8+2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 10 | 17 |

*Hit. Dmg: 6 + 2 = 8.*

That dropped the elder drow to the ground as the Squire turned to the Chosen, now outnumbered, but not cornered.

Kassuq had no line of sight to any enemy, and the drider could be easily ignored as it continued to cast a *summon* spell repeatedly.

Baldoor advanced, directing his *spiritual hammer* against the Chosen One *[move action]*, then stepped up *[move action]* in order to swing his hammer at the evil minion of Lolth.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 0 | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +5 | 16 | 21 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 1 = 6.*

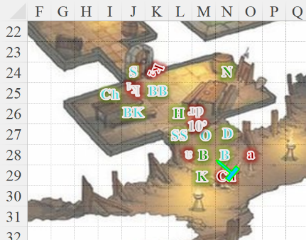
Seeing Baldoor advance into the other room, and still holding his bow in one hand and longsword in the other, Kassuq followed and approached the Spider Queen’s minion, pushing a bit past Squire Sebastian.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Longsword | 1d8 | +2 | 2 flank | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +7 | ***19*** | 26 |

*Threat. 1d20 = 15 + 7 = 22, critical hit. Dmg: (2 x 3) + 2 = 8. Partial damage negated.*

Haal watched as the fight was going on. He felt a bit useless and was realizing just how dangerous the outside world could be. He’d been behind temple or library walls so much of his life, he’d forgotten what it was really like. As he continued to observe the area, he noted the magical auras that he would have expected hovering around the evil Chosen and his ilk.

*This information is a freebie (I think), since he cast a spell and stopped concentrating on detect magic.*



Round 62

Nihm, upon seeing her previous target go down, moved to get a shot on the chosen of Lolth if she had a gap.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| MW Longbow | 1d8 | +0 | 1 | x3 | 100’ | 3.0 | +8 | 15 | 23 | +1 within 30’ |

*Hit. Dmg: 3 + 1 = 4. Damage negated.*

Nihm could see that only magic weapons would truly affect the Chosen.

Haal still felt a bit useless, not quite sure what to do next. He didn’t want to use another spell in case healing was needed. He also didn’t want to use up his last *summon* spell yet, so he decided to follow the female elf in case she needed healing again. Seeing her

wounds still bleeding, he sacrificed his last *summon monster I* in order to cast *cure light wounds*.

*Nihm gained 7 + 4 = 11 hps [28/28].*

Baldoor’s hammer continued to attack the chosen one of Lolth. Baldoor also swung his hammer at the vile creature.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Warhammer | 1d8 | +1 | 1 + 2  flank | x3 | Bludgeon | 3.0 | +6 | 2 | 8 |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 2 flank | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +7 | 16 | 23 |

*Miss, hit. Dmg: 5 + 1 = 6.*

The spiritual hammer sunk itself nicely into the Chosen’s chest before pulling back for another attack.

Kassuq took another swing at the evil beast, wanting to bring its life of evil to an end.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Longsword | 1d8 | +2 | 0 | 19-20/x2 | Slashing | 4.0 | +5 | *1* | 6 |

*Miss.*

Bannerman also attacked the Chosen of Lolth.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Bannerman | Greatsword +1 | 2d6+3+1 | 4 | 3 | 1 + 2  flank | 10 | 8 | 18 |

*Miss.*

Drawud attacked the adjacent arbalist.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str**  **Mod+** | **Dex**  **Mod+** | **W+** | **Total**  **Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 11 | 18 |

*Hit. Dmg: 7 + 1 = 8.*

Oghmar cast *cure light wounds* upon Drawud.

*Drawud gained 4 + 4 = 8 hps.*

Brother Krum sacrificed an *entropic shield* spell to cast *cure light wounds* upon Baldoor.

*Baldoor gained 7 + 4 = 11 hps [23/24].*

Squire Sebastian positioned himself just south of Kassuq, and attacked the Chosen.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Squire Sebastian | MW Longsword | 1d8+2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 flank | 9 | 11 | 20 |

*Miss.*

Chirip also ventured south, but lacked the opportunity to cast a spell.

The drider above them continued to be an illusion as it perpetually cast a *summon* spell that spawned nothing.

Burly Bob cast *magic missile* again, targeting the Chosen.

*Dmg: 2 + 2 = 4 magic.*

Standing near the knight he’d rendered sleeping, Sven now cast *sleep* upon the surviving arbalist.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *sleep* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Warm Blanket Arbalist | Will | 3 | 17 | 20 |

*Fail. Effect negated.*

The Chosen was beginning to wane in confidence as the heroes cut him down, but he was still a threat. He cast *boneblast* and touched Kassuq.

*Dmg: 1 Con.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *boneblast* | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Kassuq, Fortitude** | 3 | Con (+3) | 1 | 7 | **14** | 21 |

*Success. Constitution damage negated.*

Round 63

Kassuq, having foiled the Chosen One’s last attack, smiled at the evil creature, showing his sharp teeth. He then lunged and went to bite the creature’s throat.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Bite | 1d8 | 2 | 2 flank | 20 | Piercing | - | +7 | 16 | 23 | Sanctify Natural Attack |

*Hit. Dmg: 3 + 2 + 1 good = 6.*

Baldoor again directed his hammer to strike the foul follower of Lolth. He also added his own hammer to the attack, not sure it would do any damage.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **.** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| MW Warhammer | 1d8 | +1 | 1 + 2  flank | x3 | Bludgeon | 3.0 | +6 | 4 | 10 |
| Spiritual Hammer | 1d8 | 1 | 2 flank | x3 | Bludgeon | - | +7 | 16 | 23 |

*Miss, hit. Dmg: 1 + 1 = 2.*

The Chosen faltered in his step, then began to die as the *spiritual hammer* disappeared.

Nihm, not having any magical arrows, turned to the two drow knights by the hallway into the room. “We need to secure them,” she said to Haal, “See if anyone has rope so we can tie them up.”

Haal gathered a coil of 50’ of hempen rope from his new mates.

Drawud, Bannerman, and Squire Sebastian wasted no time in wasting the defiant arbalist.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 flank | 9 | 1 | 10 |
| Squire Sebastian | MW Longsword | 1d8+2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 flank | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| Bannerman | Greatsword +1 | 2d6+3+1 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 flank | 10 | 16 | 26 |

*Miss, hit, hit. Dmg: (5 + 2) + (7 + 3 + 1) = 7 + 11 = 18.*

The drow’s head slipped clean off once it was cleft by Bannerman’s greatsword, leaving the sleeping knight to deal with.

Chirip, Burly Bob, Sven, Oghmar, and Brother Krum coalesced around those now tending to binding the surviving drow.

The drider above disappeared, and the room became more silent. They could all feel and smell a faint, briny draft coming in from the southeastern passage.



Rounds 64 – 70

Haal did his best to tie the knot, asking those that he got the rope from how it looked. He might have the ‘book knowledge’ on how to tie a good knot, but he didn’t quite have the practical application down.

As Haal tied the sleeping knight, Nihm checked the dead drow near her for any useful information, items or equipment, saying to the others, “See if they have any intel or anything useful.” Turning to Haal and whomever is helping him, “Make sure to check that one too. Don’t let him keep anything.”

Nihm checked on Haal’s knot after checking the other dead knight.

Kassuq did as Nihm suggested and checked the chosen one for anything of value or that might be useful.

Baldoor, meantime, walked over to Haal and said, “Let ‘em know we have a prisoner en find out where tha healers are.” Then, to Oghmar, he said, “I think we shud be go’in down that tunnel to tha southeas as soon as we’re ready.”

Round 71 – 77

With the knight now bound snugly, and a few confiscated items of interest on the floor, they took inventory of what lay before them. The items made of shadow adamantine would be destroyed when exposed to direct sunlight; these included the armor still worn by the fallen, the two crossbows, two falchions, and five daggers. The rest of the equipment was made of other materials that would remain useful to surfacers, namely some jewelry (some of which was likely magical), potions, and a few mundane items of no particular worth, though they may be solid evidence of the drow’s involvement in evil deeds.

Footsteps coming from behind them turned their attention to their reinforcements, which were not an additional strike force, but a handful of helpful bureaucrats who had brought a crate of *cure moderate wounds* potions, and a smaller crate with flasks of acid.

*The party now has access to a reasonably bountiful number of CMW potions. These should be “infinite” for practical purposes during the rest of this raid.*

“Larson!” Burly Bob greeted his good friend. “We were *wondering* when you’d show.”

They exchanged brief updates on what had just happened, and as the four new folks shuffled in, they clarified that they were even less war-ready than Haal, and would not venture forward with the strike teams. Their diviner—a stringy fellow named Brussel—said, “I have never been here, so casting *clairvoyance* wouldn’t be of much use here, but I have already cast *divination*, and can tell you the augury that was revealed: you are to steel yourselves against Lolth’s poison, and will do well to bring down the remainder of the resistance with acid.” He then handed Drawud the smaller crate with a dozen acid flasks.

A picture containing map

Description automatically generated

Round 78

The knight on the ground groaned, but remained asleep for the moment.

Everyone quaffed a potion, and they were now all tiptop.

*[Anyone who wants to can take either a move or standard action. 6 seconds of dialogue can also go here.]*

Round 79

Baldoor stood near the door and looked at Kassuq, “Careful, lad. Ya see, hear or smell anythin odd, ya stop and we check it out carefully.”

Kassuq nodded and then headed through the door. Baldoor let Drawud go next before he fell in line.

Round 80

A few more heroes entered the room through the now opened door. To the east was a stagnant body of murky water that smelled of brine and a little death.

When they got closer, Kassuq looked for any tracks or signs that anyone had come through that way. There were plenty of signs, including footsteps, a dragged along the shore made by a keel or some similarly shaped object, and some half-eaten drow food consisting of centipedes and spiders.

“It appears as though at least some of the drow might have taken this route to escape,” Oghmar surmised as others took in their surroundings, aided by Haal’s lit coin in the otherwise pitch-dark room.

Round 81

Kassuq and Baldoor nodded their agreement. “Let’s get movin, but be careful and be quiet,” Baldoor said. He knew his armor would make that difficult, but that’s why he wasn’t on point.

Kassuq then cautiously entered the water, moving slowly and making sure of his footing. He scanned the area ahead of him and made every effort to move silently.

Nihm and Haal each fell into place as they advanced. Haal tried to hold the coin in such a way as to provide light as long as possible. He was worried they wouldn’t have enough time with the light to get very far. He decided he would have to look into a more permanent and useful source of light.

Nothing else was found in the vicinity, and it became clear that the drow had used some type of submarine vessel—or magic—to navigate whatever flooded tunnel lay ahead.

Round 82

Each with a flask of acid in their hand or easily handy, they became accustomed to the smell of brine and dead fish, and it was then that they heard the City Guards entering the adjacent room where they’d downed the Chosen of Lolth and talking to Larson and the other acid-flask-and-healing-potion-bringing guys. “They’ll take the knight away now,” Oghmar’s experience made him confident in saying.

One of the Guards poked her head into the tunnel, recognized Haal and a few other folks from the Each with a flask of strike teams, gave a brief greeting, and returned to the open door that had led her to the narrow passage.

“I was half-expecting a dragon in this dungeon,” sighed Sven, the beguiler.

Brother Crum reprimanded the lawless man, “This is no time for games! Steel your senses in case they’ve left traps for us.”

Round 83

“Actually,” Sven pointed out, being the resident expert in traps. “Now that you mention it...” and the human went over to the shore to look at something more closely, then backed away quickly. Watch out!”

And suddenly, an acid elemental the size of a goliath emerged from the pool and took the shape of a serpentine beast with a hissing, spitting mouth.

“Fall back,” Baldoor yelled as Kassuq moved past him back into the other room. Baldoor did likewise.

Haal’s encyclopedic knowledge of things comparable to what they were beholding told him that the diviner’s spell had likely gotten the poison part correct, and the acid part backwards.

Before Kassuq could get completely out of the murky water, the acid elemental reached out with a swipe of its main appendage.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Large Acid Elemental | Slam | 2d8+5+2d4 acid | 6 | 4 | 10 | 13 | 23 |

*Hit. Dmg: 7 + 5 + 5 acid = 17 [10/27].*

“Aw, what?” one of the frontline combatants said as the bunch took to defending Kassuq.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Crit** | **Threat** |
| Drawud | Falchion +1 | 2d4+1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 flank | 9 | 16 | 25 | 20 | ý |
| Burly Bob | MW Quarterstaff | 1d6 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 flank | 6 | ***20*** | 26 | 19 | þ |
| Squire Sebastian | MW Longsword | 1d8+2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 flank | 9 | 13 | 22 | 19 | ý |
| Bannerman | Greatsword +1 | 2d6+3+1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 flank | 10 | 5 | 15 | 19 | ý |

*Hit, threat, hit, miss. 1d20 = 9 + 6 = 15, not a critical hit. Dmg: (2 + 1) + 6 + (6 + 2) = 3 + 6 + 8 = 17. Partial damage negated.*

“Nooo, brethren!” Oghma warned. “We cannot face it on its own terms; it will spell doom!” The divination-sensitive favored soul of Oghma had encountered elementals of this size, and the acidic property on this one was nothing to overlook.

Round 84

Trusting in their friend’s expertise, the frontliners withdrew as Kassuq did his best to outrun the corrosive burn already on him.

*Dmg: 2 acid [8/27].*

The elemental seemed bound to the pool of muck to their east as everyone compacted along the tunnel that led back towards the open door.

Baldoor continued to encourage the others to fall back. “Get away from tha beast! We can’t fight it in such a small space!”

Kassuq did what he could to remove the acid and stop the damage. Haal fell back and assisted Kassuq, using his knowledge to determine the best method of removing the acid, though the worst of it was over.

Nihm likewise fell back, with nothing in her arsenal that would affect the acid monster. If it were tied to the murky water, then their best option might be to take a different route or take the time to recover and approach again with a better prepared group.

Everyone’s *aid* spell started wearing off.

Rounds 85 – 87

The majority of the men and women were back in the chamber with the dead Chosen of Lolth, and Brother Krum came out from the tunnel confirming that the acid elemental was indeed confined to the pool. “We’re alright as long as we don’t approach it.”

Kassuq was able to shake the rest of the acid off without spraying his friends.

An argument ensued to the north as Oghmar brought to the diviner’s attention that his omen about acid attacks was dead wrong. “We did the best with the time we had, sir!” Larson’s friend said.

Diagram

Description automatically generated

Round 88

“Aw, forget it. Thanks anyway,” Oghmar was noticeably upset by the intel blunder.

Then, Brother Krum heard some movement coming from the west. He turned, and pointed out a spider swarm as he fired a bullet at it. “Spiiiidersss!”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Brother Krum | Acid Flask | 1d6 acid | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 11 |

*Miss.*

Burly Bob was almost out of 1st-level spells, and spent one more on a *magic missile*, targeting the swarm.

*Dmg: 4 + 2 = 6 magic.*

Sven had no good spells for such a situation. He moved so he wouldn’t hit his friends, then threw his flask.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Dex Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Sven | Acid Flask | 1d6 acid | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 17 | 13 |

*Miss.*

Chirip also tried a *magic missile* spell.

*Dmg: 5 + 2 = 7 magic.*

The swarm was almost destroyed by now, but pressed on forward as Squire Sebastian came in from the north, and rushed the swarm, unable to get enough momentum to charge.

*Dmg to Sebastian: 1 + Poison.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  Poison | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Sq. Sebastian | Fortitude | 5 | 8 | 13 |

*No initial Strength damage.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **W+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Squire Sebastian | MW Longsword | 1d8+2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 13 | 20 |

*Hit. Dmg: 5 + 2 = 7.*

The remaining spiders jumped and scurried away as the heroes stood their ground.

Diagram

Description automatically generated

Round 89

Nihm kept her flask of acid in case another swarm came out from the cavern crevasses below.

Baldoor looked at Oghmar and the man he was arguing with. “It’s clear tha dark elves have prepared fir us to attack en we are NOT fully prepared. Is there another way ta get to their underground sanctuary or is this tha only way?”

“There are myriad paths into the Underdark,” Brother Krum attested. “But based on what we’ve gathered here, our job is done, or nearly so.”

Kassuq moved to keep a watch to the southwest to make sure nothing else surprised them. Once the last two came out of the door to the south, Kassuq made sure it was shut.

Haal, meanwhile, wondered if they would attempt another move on the elves today, or if they would fall back and wait for the elves to try and counterattack. The organization had been dealt a good blow today with several of its members dead and others in custody. The cleric said, “The Administration will likely gain more intel before dispatching any of us to quash their plans.”

With the decision to go no further, Baldoor called Kassuq, Nihm and Haal over. “Let’s go through all tha stuff in this place en see if there is any more intel of useful items about.” The other three nodded as Baldoor added, “But be careful, watch out fir any traps.”

As they searched, Nihm said to Haal, “If you intend to stay with us, you are welcome to. We would also be happy to teach you some better fighting techniques.” She smiled and gave him a wink to sofen the comment about Haal’s fighting ability.

Haal returned the smile, though a bit embarrassed, “I would appreciate any tips that you or the others can give me, and yes, I would like to join you and get out from behind these city walls.”

~\*~

The heroes were back at the City Hall, and were commended on their efforts alongside the other two strike teams. They were awarded honorary trinkets made of tin and ribbons, and were compensated with 1,000 GP each.

Before leaving, the parties had searched the upper floors for any useful items and valuables, finding a collection of letters, other parchments, potions, and maps of Candlekeep’s key security locations. Once they had collected these, as well as some personal items among the cots to the northwest, Haal had cast his remaining *detect magic* spell. They had just turned in the loot and magic items, and Haal provided testimony based on the *detect* spell.

One of Haal’s former classmates, and current Notary Recordkeeper on this case—Hedge q’Larusz—now commended them on the finds, and said they should have a much better sense of things once the investigators had process the letters and other evidence.

One of the current chiefs on task proclaimed, “I am now at liberty to announce that the outlanders known as Xiomara and Lolthalot have confessed to complicity with the drow and other elven supremacists you all bested today. All those apprehended in this investigation are still being held for further questioning, and we should be able to provide more details on this after sunup. We shall reconvene at the ninth bell to brief any parties still interested in continuing this investigation. None of you are deputized, and while we’re grateful for your service to order, we’ll understand if you are not here in the morning. In any case, the City owes you a debt of gratitude unexchangeable for coin.”

The four nodded, glad to hear that things had turned out well and that the city would be better prepared to deal with any further incursions from the drow, at least for now. However, Baldoor was a bit put off by the fact that they would not be deputized, even for the short term. They had performed well, though he admitted things could have gone better. “Their loss,” he muttered under his breath, which got a glance from Kassuq. Baldoor looked up at the large pup and simply waved it off.

The heroes from the various strike teams nodded, smiled, schmoozed, and bowed out of the room one by one as the evidence was magically documented and curated.

They all accepted the acknowledgement and complimented those that had also fought well and had shown bravery against their adversaries. In the end, they headed out and then went their separate ways.

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As they left city hall, they stopped outside before Haal headed off towards his quarters.

Nihm spoke first, “If you are interested in some fighting lessons, be at the inn bright, before the 6th bell. We would all be willing to impart what we know and show you a few things.”

Kassuq nodded, adding, “You showed good composure and bravery down there, and if you do decide to travel with us, we’d be honored to have you.”

Baldoor shrugged his shoulders, “I guess havin’ ya along wouldn’t be so bad.”

Kassuq and Nihm both looked at Baldoor and smiled. Nihm then turned to Haal who seemed a bit surprised by the dwarf’s comments. “Don’t worry. From *this* grump,” she said patting Baldoor on the shoulder, “that was high praise.”

Haal then smiled and nodded, “Thank you all very much. I am very tempted by the thought of leaving, so I will sleep on it and decide in the morning. I will, however, be at the inn bright and early for a few pointers and a lesson or two, regardless of my decision.”

With that they departed, Haal headed in one direction, the other three in another.