*Chapter 8: Juiblex Island*

Less than an hour had passed over the perpetual afternoon, though it had seemed like longer. They’d spotted neither a jackalwere, nor a centaur, nor a hearth where a fire might have warmed them. “Maybe they were taken to the Abyss, or somewhere on the Material Plane where Pale Night’s forces are amassing,” suggested Atlas.

“But how do we find them?” Brene asked as she looked around.

“I’m not so sure we want to find them,” Devrion said over his shoulder, as he was sitting facing backwards to watch behind them.

“I don’t think the Goddess would like that much,” Angren sighed. “She expects us to finish this thing.”

“What thing?” Brene turned to look at her friend. “That bastard just looked at us, and I peed my pants. We killed him, and he’s off somewhere in some shithole, regenerating into something that we will have to kill again. When does it stop?”

“It doesn’t,” Atlas replied quietly. “With or without Graz’zt in existence, life, and evil, doesn’t stop. Other people have fought before us, and the people after us will keep fighting.”

The group rode in silence for a few minutes. Finally, Brene spoke. “We need to rest, first. Let’s go back to Waterdeep.” The halfling guided the carpet to a clear landing spot, and Angren stored it in her haverpack. Atlas gathered everyone around, and took them all back to the City of Splendors, gating in as close as the archivist could get them to the city.

~\*~

The quartet made their way to the same inn where they’d stayed a few days ago. They checked in and settled into their rooms, with Atlas and Brene sharing one room, and Devrion and Angren sharing the other. They each bathed ad returned to their rooms.

“Oh, Gods! Don’t stop!”

Devrion sighed. “Don’t they ever get enough sex?” He looked at the closed interconnecting door in consternation.

Angren grinned at him from her chair next to the fireplace. “They’re humans. Well, one of them is.”

“Okay, so we’re both half human, and we’re not going around looking for a bedmate.”

“True enough,” Angren agreed. “But, they really do love each other, I think.”

The elf turned away from the door and stripped off his nightshirt. “Let’s go out to eat. I don’t think I want to hear the next round.”

Angren watched as he padded across the rug to the wardrobe. They had all seen each other many times while bathing or changing, but her eyes were drawn to his tumescent member wagging almost comically as he walked. She wondered what it would feel like to touch it, or... “Good idea,” she agreed hastily as she rose. She hesitated for the barest moment, and then she stripped off her own nightshirt.

Devrion turned to see the drow arch her back and stretch her arms to remove her clothing. It was odd, he thought; there is a great difference between seeing and noticing. And, he was definitely noticing Angren. Her mottled skin rippled as the muscles beneath stretched and contracted: it reminded him of a jungle cat, although she was deadlier than any feline. He banished the thought from his head, and quickly dressed before she could spot his arousal.

The pair walked out of the inn, having elected to dine at a place near the wharf where they served steamed crabs. Atlas and Brene hated the smell, and so the elves went alone. They walked along in companionable silence that was in sharp counterpoint to the gabbling throngs they passed. Sailors and caravan guards caroused loudly in the taverns, while women and children went about their shopping in the early evening air. Angren still drew the curious looks, and most people avoided her, especially since she’d eschewed her cowl, preferring to go bare headed.

“Well, well,” came a voice from in front of them. The pair looked up to behold a well-dressed woman nearly Angren’s own height. “If it isn’t Ohtistar Bolchanar, his own self.”

“Briana,” Devrion said as he halted in front of her. “What are you doing here?”

Angren looked curiously at the woman as she stopped two paces from Devrion. She was pale-skinned, with delicate features and ash blonde hair pulled back in a pair of elaborate braids. Her pointed ears gave away her elven heritage, though she was part human due to her stocky stature. Very stocky, Angren thought. Her makeup was somewhat overdone, and Angren’s nose wrinkled as her perfume wafted across the gap between them.

“Why, Honey, my new husband is here. Why wouldn’t I be here with him?” She spared Angren a haughty glance. “Where did you pick her up, on the wharf? You need to find a better class of working girl.”

“She’s not a whore, Briana.” Devrion’s voice went tight with anger.

“No, I guess she’s not. Who would pay her?”

Angren put her hand on Devrion’s arm to stop him from saying or doing something rash, especially since a woman from the City Guard, who was standing a few feet behind Briana, had taken notice of them. “No, you’re right,” she said agreeably. “I am paying him to stay with me.” The woman smiled nastily, but Angren continued. “I pay him with decency, kindness, trust, and loyalty. I pay him with a body that hasn’t known a man’s touch, and I pay him with friendship and love. He has no need of my coin, and I have no need of his, since I have learned to make a living without spreading my legs for the next male who comes along.”

Brene’s mouth flapped open, and she was lost for words. The guard stepped up next to her and looked at Devrion and Angren. “Is this woman bothering you?”

“No, officer, not at all. We were just leaving.” Devrion took Angren’s hand. “Let’s go, my dear.” The pair stepped around the two women and continued down the street.

They walked hand-in-hand, with not a word passing between them, until they entered the crab emporium at the docks.

~\*~

The next morning, everyone awoke uneventfully, though Devrion’s thoughts lingered on Briana’s harsh words towards Angren. The duskblade said nothing, but in her eyes, it was clear that she would not soon forget such an evaluation of her own looks. She’d never gotten by on looks, but suddenly, it seemed nearly as important as vanquishing the Demon Lord Graz’zt from all existence.

They got suited up, and eventually found themselves on the ground floor eating biscuits and mutton, and planning out the day’s agenda.

Atlas awakened early to pray, as was his habit. He kissed Brene as the halfling stirred next to him, and went to dress. The taproom was nearly deserted at this hour, so he picked a corner booth and sat down with a cup of cool water and his prayer book.

Devrion had spent the evening thinking on how he felt about Angren. He’d never felt an intense need to mate. Oh, he’d had a few encounters, but they were nothing more than that. Once, he had been a warrior, but now he was not. Their current circumstances were arguably more dangerous, but there was a world of difference between a battle, and choosing to fight a few enemies in brief skirmishes. He glanced at Angren’s still form as she lay deep in her own trance, allowing her mind to rest, as well as her body. He felt the stirrings of desire, and he wanted to lie next to her. The thought surprised him, and he spent the rest of the evening thinking on it.

Angren sighed as she replayed the encounter with the woman in the street. As much as she hated to admit it, the insult had stung her. Devrion’s leap to her defense, though, was unexpected. She’d always been careful about males, as they were possessive of their mates. Angren wasn’t about to be anyone’s possession, and her fierce independence made it difficult to get close to anyone. She could hear Devrion’s soft breath as he sat in the room’s overstuffed chair. She thought about inviting him to lie next to her, but that would probably lead to something she wasn’t quite ready to experience. She mulled the idea over in her mind as she rested.

Brene arose when Atlas did, and she went to wash away the remains of their late-night lovemaking session. She thought over their recent adventures as she bathed and dressed, and she resolved to find something to aid her friends when they went out demon hunting again.

Now, the foursome sat in the inn’s taproom, enjoying a light ale after breakfast.

“I miss this when we’re camping,” Brene said. “Which reminds me, we need to restock our supplies before we go back out.”

“I’d like to find something that will help us against all of the mind tricks we faced,” Devrion shook his head. “This thing about making us run away needs to not happen again.”

“Let’s go look at that shop we found the last time,” Angren suggested. “Maybe he can give us a good price for that sword, and help Atlas with the armor.”

“I would like to trade for another sword, if he has a good one,” Atlas mused. “I think I can wear that armor and still execute my prayers, but I would need his guidance on that.” He took a drink and set his tankard down. “Speaking of guidance, I think we shouldn’t tarry here, beyond attending to what we’ve mentioned. Once that’s done, we will need to seek Aasterinian’s direction on where we go next.”

“We also have that hole in the carpet to be mended,” Brene reminded them. “I also need more scrolls, and maybe another healing wand.”

“So,” Angren summarized, “the magic shops, the market, and then somewhere quiet to meditate?” The others nodded in agreement. “Let’s go, then.”

~\*~

Two days later, the group sat down to dinner in Gondalin’s taproom.

“Well, that was expensive,” Atlas sighed as he sat back from his place and contemplated his mug of ale.

“You wanted the tenderloin,” Brene said. “It was good, but wow, the price.”

Atlas smiled. “Yes, that, but also what we’ve spent over the last two days.”

“We still have enough for when we want to study our other forms,” Angren pointed out. “Especially if you want to be a paladin, that will be expensive.”

“And, we have the new enchantments,” Devrion added. “I don’t know if they will help us, but I couldn’t find anything better. At least, not that we could afford. At least Surtlan’s was able to repair our armor and replace the gambesons.”

“And we have scrolls, fresh food and,” she winked at Angren, “new clothes.”

Angren frowned repressively at the halfling. “Everything we had on during the last fight was ruined, if it wasn’t magicked, remember? The stored clothing was okay, but we really needed better clothes.”

What Angren didn’t say was that, the day before, Brene had dragged her into Merioth’s, the city’s premiere, and only, silks merchant. “What are we doing here,” the duskblade asked. “I’m not wearing anything like this.”

“Hush, and come here,” Brene said with a grin. She stepped up to the gnomish sales woman, and the two of them conferred quietly in a gnomish dialect, each of the glancing at Angren as they spoke. Just as Angren was about to leave, they both approached her. “Come on, we have something for you to try.”

“I can’t wear this!” Angren stared in horror at the large mirror in the dressing room. The ladies had dressed her in a light blue, one-piece robe of sorts that barely covered her backside, and was so thin as to be nearly transparent. It wrapped around her middle, and a silken belt around her waist held it in place. The top clung to her breasts, and was cut so wide that a handspan of skin showed halfway to her navel. The material was, well, silky smooth, and it felt wonderful on her skin as she turned to and fro.

“You have underwear on,” Brene pointed out helpfully.

“Oh, you mean this,” Angren retorted. She flipped up the robe’s back to reveal that her entire butt was bare, except for a tiny strip of material than ran between her legs. “This isn’t underwear, it’s a string!”

“Don’t argue. I’m buying it for you,” Brene said with a grin. “I think that someone we both know will like it. And, at ten gold, it’s a really good bargain.”

“Ten! What?! NO!”

“Hush, and get dressed,” Brene pointed at Angren’s neatly hung clothing.

Now, Angren sat back and watched Brene enjoy her discomfiture. She knew that her friend meant well, but there was so much to consider before approaching Devrion in that way. “So, what do we do next?”

“I will go to prayer again in the morning, and I suggest that you all do the same. We are as ready as we will get, barring some additional help from Aasterinan.” Atlas sighed. “I do know that we are far from finished with this business.”

~\*~

The city lights seemed different than the heroes remembered. They were flying atop the carpet, testing its skyworthiness after repairs were made, and their new duds were quite the outfits, fit as much for a gala as for a melee scuffle. They had taken a few days off from their plight to rid the planes of demons, and in that time, the forces of evil and chaos had likely amassed even more. At this point, their imagination ran wild with speculation of what was transpiring in the Whalebones and likely elsewhere.

“Have you received any answers yet?” Angren asked Atlas as they sat and watched Brene flying the carpet around the city.

“I’m not entirely sure of the meaning behind it all, but it’s beginning to come together,” Atlas mused his own mind with revelation and interpretation. “But if the Whalebones are being used as a waystation for the forces of Pale Night, then it is there where we must make our stand.”

“In that case, let’s get two *teleport* spell scrolls, and that way you don’t have to use your magic, or take us somewhere else first,” Devrion suggested.

“Good idea,” Brene said. She turned the carpet back toward a safe landing spot near the trades district, and set it down. After storing it, the group made their way to the wizard’s shop to purchase two scrolls of greater teleport.

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Steelshade thanked the vendor, and slipped the scrolls into her *[vest?]*.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scrolls and Potions** | **Qty.** | **Level** | **CLev** | **Value** |
| Scroll of *Teleportation* | 2 | 7 | 13 | 4550 |

They then continued to speak with the woman who ran the shop called Aurora’s Realms Shop, the one stop for all things arcane here in Waterdeep. Aurora had just finished appraising the items that they’d gotten off of Graz’zt, and had agreed to pay the amount they’d asked, seeing as the renown of the items—particularly when displayed together behind the front window—would likely attract the business of local residents and outlanders alike.

“Now please take a moment to look around on your own,” Aurora invited them. “If you’re hunting greater demons, there’s likely to be much to aid you here. Perhaps something to ward your mind from possession?” she asked as she pointed to the third isle from her.

Atlas and Devrion followed Aurora’s lead, and went to the indicated section of the store. “What would you recommend?” Atlas asked.

Led by Aurora, they made their way along the aisle and found an assortment of mindarmor crystals for their armor. It then occurred to her that this was indeed a serendipitous encounter. “Say, are you the adventurers that sold this kit to Awgust, the spellscale?” She pointed to the four items, which were now repackaged and going for the price of 11,000 gold.

“Why... yes,” Steelshade answered before Brene could bluff or elude the woman.

“It’s a rarity. I’ve only seen something like that once, and that was in Neverwinter, or was it Evermeet?” the middle-aged elf couldn’t recall. “I’ll tell you what, heroes: I don’t do this on most days, but if you are in fact ridding the worlds of demons, I’ll forego the imbuing fee for these, and prioritize affixing one of each of these to your respective armor in order to better shield you from those who would possess your minds.”

“When could we pick them up?”

Aurora estimated, “Same time tomorrow, maybe earlier?” It was evident from the size of her shop that she had the caliber of staff and infrastructure to make this happen.

“We will be here,” Atlas promised.

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The next day came and went, and all they’d accomplished thus far was \_\_\_\_.

They were now donning their respective suits of armor, and admiring the handiwork that went into adorning each defensive suit with a mindarmor gem.

“Do we need anything else?” Atlas looked to see that it was mid-Afternoon.

Angren shook her head. “No, I think it’s time to go back to the island. We have work to do.”

With that, Atlas used one of their newly-purchased teleport scrolls to take them to Backbone: the shantytown settlement on the west side of Sedesty Island.

~\*~

And just like that, there the heroes were, about 100’ from the shallow, rippling waves that crashed into a 40’ surf margin. The place was still barren, and the only tracks they could see where the ones they’d made in the last few days. It had neither snowed nor rained since then, and as a few pelicans and albatrosses flew overhead, the heroes sheathed and shouldered their weapons to free up their hands as they talked.

“I should take my next holiday here,” Brene commented as she looked around. “It’s so balmy.”

“Yeah, the demons have a lot to answer for,” Devrion stated quietly.

Steelshade spread out the carpet, and everyone climbed aboard. Brene took control. “Where to?”

“Let’s start with the village where we saw the corpses, and then move to the last battle site.” Atlas pointed northeast.

A picture containing text

Description automatically generated

~\*~

The carpet took the heroes to the northeastern village where they’d spotted zombies, and now could see that the bodies were exactly as they’d left them the last time they passed through. The barrenness of the place under the peppering of clouds above them on this midwinter’s day made it easier for them to spot the demons that flew at an altitude of thousands of feet. Both forces likely spotted each other, seeing as the demons quickly turned directly northward and fled.

“Okay, so they don’t want to fight us right now,” Brene said.

“And to think, you even bathed this week,” Devrion muttered. Brene stuck her tongue out at the half-elf, and he laughed quietly.

“I’ve never known them to run from a fight, unless they’re baiting us to follow them.”

Atlas watched them flee while he tried to identify them, and also think about what it all meant. “They know we’re here, so we can’t surprise them. All we can do is to keep searching.” He applied his knowledge to discerning any useful information about fighting demonic forces.

Brene turned the carpet northward, following after the high-flying creatures. She made sure to stay about 400’ above the surface, high enough to avoid most spells, but low enough for their *feather fall* spells to deliver them to the ground if needed.

~\*~

A few minutes passed, and the heroes were now between Sedesty and the next island to the north, perhaps five to ten miles from both, though it was difficult to gauge distances over the water.

“Anything?” Angren asked Atlas as he sat, deep in thought.

“Not other than go and see,” Atlas replied.

The duskblade nodded. “Okay.”

Brene steered for the next island at the carpet’s best speed.

~\*~

They had been able to keep up with the demons who flew 1000’ overhead, and as they descended from 400’ to 350’, coming up on the southern coastline of the northern island, Brene and Devrion could clearly spot a few now swan diving almost directly downward like peregrine falcons upon unsuspecting prey. They were all headed to what appeared to be a deforested area a few thousand feet north of the coastline.

The rest of the island was—based on the portion they could see—more thickly wooded with pines, birches, and aspens than Sedesty Island, and with a more uneven topography. Where Sedesty had been nearly flat, this island was characterized by rolling hills and partial cliffsides along the thin shore.

“We have a few hours of daylight left,” Devrion commented on the time of day on this part of the Material Plane; he was starting to take a liking to the feature of Krigala that lodged the plane in a perpetual afternoon, and was developing a fondness for that idyllic plane.

The duskblade estimated the deforested area—which she assumed was synonymous with the demon-infested area—to be a quarter of a mile in diameter, and anticipated an afternoon of exterminating dretches and the like with a possibility of upgrading to another Graz’zt showdown.

“Do we really want to do this?” Brene asked as they closed in on the demons. “There could be a hundred of them there.”

“I don’t think we should land in the middle of them,” Devrion replied. “We may be able to launch a few spells from a distance and see what happens.”

“If a bunch of flying ones come at us, we’re dead,” the rogue replied. “If we land within that circle, we’re also dead. We need some help to fight that many.”

“From where do we get them?” Atlas asked.

“That’s a question for Aasterinian,” Brene answered. “Unless you have some sort of revelation, I’d advise we not fly into that mess.”

“Get lower and bring us in toward the shore,” Angren suggested. “We can retreat if there are too many of them for us.”

They got a little closer to the epicenter of whatever had blighted all the trees that could now be seen to have fallen away from a central blast. The radius must have been a thousand feet or so, the outermost 500’ of which boasted a few hardier trees that had withstood the blast.

Round 1

Atlas cast c*hasing perfection [expired on Round 181]* on himself.

*Atlas gained +4 to all six primary abilities.*

Brene cast *stoneskin [expired on Round 801]* from a scroll.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Brene, Use Magic Device** | 10 | **Cha (+0)** | 0 | **10** | 17 | 27 |

*Success. Brene gained 80 points’ worth of DR 10/adamantine.*

Devrion cast *mage armor* *[expired on Round 10,801]*.

*Devrion gained +4 to AC.*

Steelshade cast *protection from energy –* Fire [1701] upon herself.

*Steelshade gained 120 points of immunity to Fire damage.*

Round 2

Atlas c*hasing perfection [expired on Round 182]* on Brene.

*Brene gained +4 to all six primary abilities.*

Brene decelerated, guiding the carpet a bit downward, but still high enough to see ahead.

Devrion cast *accuracy [expired on Round 1802]* on Brene’s shortbow.

*Brene’s shortbow gained x2 to its range increment [60’ x 2 = 120’].*

Steelshade cast *dragonskin [expired on Round 1702]*.

*Steelshade gained +5 to AC.*

Round 3

Atlas c*hasing perfection [expired on Round 183]* on Devrion.

*Devrion gained +4 to all six primary abilities.*

Steelshade cast *resist energy –* Acid [expired on Round 1703].

*Steelshade gained Resistance to Acid (10).*

Round 4

Atlas c*hasing perfection [expired on Round 184]* on Steelshade.

*Steelshade gained +4 to all six primary abilities.*

Steelshade triggered all the charges in her Amulet of Tears.

*Steelshade gained 24 temporary hps [203/179].*

Round 5

Atlas cast *freedom of movement [1805]* on Steelshade.

*Steelshade gained freedom of movement properties.*

Steelshade cast *true seeing [expired on Round 175]* from a scroll.

*Steelshade gained true seeing ability.*

Round 6

Atlas cast *freedom of movement [1806]* on Brene.

*Brene gained freedom of movement properties.*

Steelshade cast *keen edge [expired on Round 176]* on her scimitar.

*Steelshade’s scimitar gained a threat range of 15 – 20.*

Round 7

Atlas cast *true seeing [expired on Round 187]* on Devrion.

*Devrion gained true seeing ability.*

Round 8

Atlas cast *true seeing [expired on Round 188]* on himself.

*Atlas gained true seeing ability.*

Now—and not a moment earlier—the party gauged their distance from the southernmost edge of the circle, and counted at least fifty demons ranging in size from Small to Huge. Some of them were winged, and making their way down from the clouds after having drawn the heroes here like good lures, but the rest appeared at this distance to be landborne demons.

In any case, it was fairly evident that their presence was or would be known to the demons’ leadership soon enough.

“It looks like Pale Night is establishing colonies throughout the Whalebones,” Devrion—who had hardly heard Atlas saying as much when asked about his revelation—noted. “Delegating jurisdiction to Graz’zt and Juiblex, and maybe others among her immediate offspring.”

Round 9

Atlas cast *protection from evil [expired on Round 189]* on himself.

*Atlas gained +2 to AC vs. evil creatures, plus other PfE bonuses.*

About twenty quasits were the first to be unleashed upon the No Laughing Matter crew by whatever force was guarding the infestation. They were flying in a patternless formation, with the closest ones being a few thousand feet away.

But as the quasits approached, it was evident that these clumsily flying demons were gelatinous facsimiles of what they had been mistaken for, and the more they beheld the demons on the ground, it became evermore evident that just about everything down there was a spawn of Juiblex in the form of other demons.

This may have been unforeseen, but if it was indeed as they saw it to be now, it would likely simply matter, as their resistances and weaknesses were likely more homogeneous than the riffraff they’d encountered under Graz’zt’s command.

Round 10

Atlas cast *protection from evil [expired on Round 190]* on Brene.

*Brene gained +2 to AC vs. evil creatures, plus other PfE bonuses.*

The quasits were a little over 2700’ north of the shoreline.

Round 11

Atlas cast *protection from evil [expired on Round 191]* on Devrion.

*Devrion gained +2 to AC vs. evil creatures, plus other PfE bonuses.*

The quasits were now about 2500’ north of the shoreline, flying quite haphazardly, but swiftly. Brene slowed down a bit as they flew above the breaking waves.

Round 12

Atlas cast *protection from evil [expired on Round 192]* on Steelshade.

*Steelshade gained +2 to AC vs. evil creatures, plus other PfE bonuses.*

The quasits were now about 2300’ north of the shoreline.

Round 13

Atlas cast *call lightning [expired on Round 193]*.

*Atlas gained 10 lightning bolts.*

Brene was now about to reach the shore, and land, after which they would have no line of sight to the phenomenon. In the middle of that circle, as the party floated 3000’ south of the phenomenon, they could now discern what appeared to be a crater about 50’ in diameter with a deeper hole in the center, maybe large enough to fit an elephant or bebilith through. She set the carpet down, and hopped off it.

Devrion stepped off the carpet. “Well, here we go.”

Steelshade stepped off the carpet. “Atlas, be ready to take us out of here.”

The quasits were now about 2000’ north of the shoreline, but the heroes could no longer see them, given that they were now at sea level, just feet away from the surf’s zenith.

Round 14

Atlas stepped off the carpet. “I’ll watch behind us.”

Brene readied her bow and moved 20’ to the group’s left flank.

Devrion moved to the right, and took up position on their right flank. He judged that the oncoming creatures were still too far away for his spells to reach them without using his metamagic feats.

Chart, scatter chart

Description automatically generated

Steelshade rolled up the carpet and put it away in her pack. She then drew Arkenlyl and stepped to the front of the group.

Round 15

Unable to see or hear much at this distance, they waited for the gelatinous quasits to pounce on them, choosing the breaking waves to be the background symphony of this mid-Afternoon battle that would soon ensue.

Steelshade cast *swift fly* and levitated straight up over the trees to take a look, seeing the gelatinous quasits now about 1500’ away and closing in.

Chart, scatter chart

Description automatically generated

A picture containing text, water, wave, nature

Description automatically generated

Round 16

Steelshade let herself settle to the sand as the group waited for their enemies to arrive.

Round 17

“They’re likely about 1000’ away by now,” Steelshade estimated, hearing their screeches now during the moments when waves weren’t breaking nearby.

Round 18

“What do you think will happen tonight?” asked Devrion. “Think we’ll kill at least one Demon Lord?”

“Prob-lyyy,” Brene called out from the opposite extreme of the formation.

Round 19

At a distance of 500’ or so, the demons were nearly upon the heroes.

Round 20

“Any moment nowwww…” muttered Devrion, opting for no *fire shield* on this occasion, seeing as the demons were probably immune. Usually, the spawns of Pale Night preferred to deprive the heroes of any anticipation of a battle, preventing them from buffing up beforehand. Today was different. The quartet waited for their enemies to show themselves.

Round 21

The quasits flew over the tree line and unto the coastline, spotting the heroes and converging on them.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Group** | **Initiative** | **Roll** | **Modified Roll** | **Move** |
| Devrion | 1 | 6 | 20 | 26 | 30’ |
| Steelshade | 1 | 5 | 15 | 20 | 20’ |
| Brene | 1 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 30’ |
| Spawns of Juiblex | 2 | 1 | 10 | 11 | 40’ |
| Atlas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 30’ |

Devrion selected the quasit on the far right, and pointed at it with his fingers, palm downward. “Mágikus rakéta!”

*magic missile*

Steelshade waited for the enemy to close with her.

Brene selected the quasit on the far left, and fired on it with her shortbow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shortbow +2 | 1d4 | 2 | 2 | x3 | 60’ x 2 | 2.0 | +25 | 14 | 39 |
| Shortbow, 2nd Shot | 1d4 | 2 | 2 | x3 | 60’ x 2 | - | +20 | 16 | 36 |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: (4 + 2) + (4 + 2) = 12. Partial damage negated.*

The spawns of Juiblex—more specifically, his luftphlegm pawns—pounced upon the heroes with the waves crashing to their south in the early afternoon. They were like giant, self-propelled loogies, and were fixin’ to digest the humanoids alive.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Crit** | **Targeting** |
| Pawn Spawn 1 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 14 | 18 | Atlas |
| Pawn Spawn 2 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 18 | Atlas |
| Pawn Spawn 3 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 18 | Brene |
| Pawn Spawn 4 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 12 | 18 | 18 | Brene |
| Pawn Spawn 5 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 18 | Devrion |
| Pawn Spawn 6 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 11 | 18 | Devrion |
| Pawn Spawn 7 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 19 | **25** | 18 | Devrion |
| Pawn Spawn 8 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 17 | 23 | 18 | Steelshade |
| Pawn Spawn 9 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 19 | **25** | 18 | Steelshade |
| Pawn Spawn 10 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 15 | 21 | 18 | Steelshade |

*Targeting Atlas: 1 hit.*

*Targeting Brene: 1 hit.*

*Targeting Devrion: 1 threat [hit].*

*Targeting Steelshade: 2 hits; 1 threat [hit].*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Crit** | **Targeting** |
| Pawn Spawn 1 | Grapple | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 14 | 22 | 18 | Atlas |
| Pawn Spawn 4 | Grapple | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 17 | 18 | Brene |
| Pawn Spawn 7 | Grapple | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 14 | 18 | Devrion |
| Pawn Spawn 8 | Grapple | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 18 | Steelshade |
| Pawn Spawn 9 | Grapple | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 13 | 21 | 18 | Steelshade |
| Pawn Spawn 10 | Grapple | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 11 | 18 | Steelshade |

*See below.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Atlas** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +6 | 2 | 8 |

*Atlas is grappled.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Brene** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +18 | 11 | 29 |

*Grapple fails.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Devrion** | **D+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +3 | 14 | 10 | 24 |

*Grapple fails.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Steelshade** | **D+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Grapple | +9 +2 | +26 | 10 | 36 | +5 Soul of Anarchy |
| Grapple | +9 +2 | +26 | 1 | 27 | +5 Soul of Anarchy |
| Grapple | +9 +2 | +26 | 20 | 46 | +5 Soul of Anarchy |

*All 3 grapples fail.*

Atlas was enveloped by the protoplasmic demon that now used its wings as clamped appendages that hugged tightly to the human, trying to asphyxiate him. Then his *freedom of movement* spell compensated, and he was able to release a lightning bolt that *[DM rules this to be a fluke]* somehow didn’t also electrocute Atlas.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| *Call lightning* Spell | 7d6 | x1½ | 1 – 4 firing  into melee | +16 | 3 | 19 | 9 bolts remaining |

*Hit. Dmg: 21 x 1½ = 31 electric.*

The heroes were overwhelmingly disgusted by the Juiblex spawns’ sludge forms that now enveloped around their nostrils and eye sockets.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Sludge Form | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Atlas, Fortitude** | **11** | **Con (+3)** | 13 | 27 | 3 | 30 |
| **Brene, Fortitude** | **6** | **Con (+3)** | 3 | 12 | 19 | 31 |
| **Devrion, Fortitude** | **6** | **Con (+3)** | 3 | 12 | 8 | 20 |
| **Steelshade, Fortitude** | **10** | **Con (+5)** | 3 | 18 | 4 | 22 |

*Success4. All PCs saved for ½ damage and ignore Sickened effect.*

*Dmg to Atlas: ½ x 6 = 3 [96/99].*

*Dmg to Brene: ½ x 4 = 2 [97/99].*

*Dmg to Devrion: ½ x 10 = 5 [94/99].*

*Dmg to Steelshade: ½ x 9 = 4 [****199****/179].*

***NOTE:*** *I failed to take into account the PCs’ Concealment, so to counter that, I only applied one round of Sludge Form effects above per PC instead of one per demon.*

Chart

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Round 22

Devrion put his palm out toward his would-be assailant. “Erőgolyó!”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| Ranged Touch Attack | +6 | 1 | 16 | 14 | 30 | Weapon Focus Included |

*Hit. Dmg: 40.*

That instantly bored a hole in the demon that was upon him, destroying the integrity of the living goo.

Steelshade tore into the creatures surrounding her with a blistering full-attack.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +29 | 17 | 46 |
| SB Falchion +3, 2nd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +24 | 14 | 38 |
| SB Falchion +3, 3rd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +19 | 4 | 23 |
| SB Falchion +3, 4th Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +14 | 1 | 15 |

*Threat, hit, hit, miss.*

*Dmg to Pawn Spawn 8: (2 x 6) + 9 + 3 = 24. Partial damage negated.*

*Dmg to Pawn Spawn 9: 5 + 9 + 3 = 17. Partial damage negated.*

*Dmg to Pawn Spawn 10: 8 + 9 + 3 = 20. Partial damage negated.*

The first one she hit died on the spot, but the other two swings did not finish off the second and third demon upon her.

“Ew, ew!” Brene nimbly stepped away from her attacker and shot it with her bow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shortbow +2 | 1d4 | 2 | 2 – 4 firing  into melee | x3 | 60’ x 2 | 2.0 | +21 | 9 | 29 |
| Shortbow, 2nd Shot | 1d4 | 2 | 2 – 4 firing  into melee | x3 | 60’ x 2 | - | +16 | 19 | 34 |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: (3 + 2) + (1 + 2) = 5 + 3 = 8. Partial damage negated.*

The goo before her was nearly dead now.

The spawns of Juiblex did their worst. Those that had missed previously tried to latch on.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Crit** | **Targeting** |
| Pawn Spawn 2 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 19 | **25** | 18 | Atlas |
| Pawn Spawn 3 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 18 | Brene |
| Pawn Spawn 5 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 13 | 19 | 18 | Devrion |
| Pawn Spawn 6 | Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 18 | Devrion |

*Targeting Atlas: 1 threat [hit]. 1d100 = 13, hit negated by concealment.*

*Targeting Brene: 0 hits.*

*Targeting Devrion: 1 threat [hit]. 1d100 = 79, concealment bypassed.*

Those that had hit, along with those that were already latched on, put the squeeze on the heroes.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Opposing** |
| Pawn Spawn 4 | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 20 | Brene |
| Pawn Spawn 5 | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 9 | Devrion |
| Pawn Spawn 7 | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 20 | Devrion |
| Pawn Spawn 8 | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 20 | 28 | Steelshade |
| Pawn Spawn 9 | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 14 | 22 | Steelshade |
| Pawn Spawn 10 | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | 15 | 23 | Steelshade |

*See below.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Atlas** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +6 | 16 | 22 |

*Atlas was grappled. Freedom of movement immediately negated effect.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Brene** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +18 | 10 | 28 |

*Grapple fails.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Devrion** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | 1d3 | +3 | 14 | 9 | 23 |
| Grapple | 1d3 | +3 | 14 | 15 | 29 |

*Grapples fail.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Steelshade** | **D+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Grapple | +9 +2 | +26 | 9 | 35 | +5 Soul of Anarchy |
| Grapple | +9 +2 | +26 | 10 | 36 | +5 Soul of Anarchy |
| Grapple | +9 +2 | +26 | 16 | 42 | +5 Soul of Anarchy |

*All 3 grapples fail.*

Chart

Description automatically generated

Atlas thought better of using *lightning bolts* as he felt the tingle along his arms. The archivist murmured a quick prayer, opened his mouth, and ROARED!

*The PCs gained +1 to attacks and saves against fear, plus 1 + 18 = 19 temporary hit points.*

*Atlas [113/99].*

*Brene [112/99].*

*Devrion [109/99].*

*Steelshade [215/179].*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *lion’s roar* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Pawn Spawn 2 | Fortitude | 5 | 18 | 23 |
| Pawn Spawn 3 | Fortitude | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| Pawn Spawn 4 | Fortitude | 5 | 18 | 23 |
| Pawn Spawn 5 | Fortitude | 5 | 10 | 15 |
| Pawn Spawn 6 | Fortitude | 5 | 15 | 20 |
| Pawn Spawn 9 | Fortitude | 5 | 11 | 16 |
| Pawn Spawn 10 | Fortitude | 5 | 8 | 13 |

*Fail7. All demons suffer 38 sonic damage.*

The blast destroyed all of the wretched blobs in the vicinity.

The heroes did their best to breathe and not choke with the demonic sludge all around their faces as the demons died off and coagulated, encrusting the heroes’ faces and bodies.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Sludge Form | **Rank** | **Ability**  **& Mod.** | **Misc.**  **Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Atlas, Fortitude** | **11** | **Con (+3)** | 13 | 27 | 8 | 35 |
| **Brene, Fortitude** | **6** | **Con (+3)** | 3 | 12 | 15 | 27 |
| **Devrion, Fortitude** | **6** | **Con (+3)** | 3 | 12 | 16 | 27 |
| **Steelshade, Fortitude** | **10** | **Con (+5)** | 3 | 18 | 13 | 31 |

*Success4. All PCs saved for ½ damage and ignore Sickened effect.*

*Dmg to Atlas: ½ x 5 = 2 [94/99].*

*Dmg to Brene: ½ x 9 = 4 [93/99].*

*Dmg to Devrion: ½ x 8 = 4 [90/99].*

*Dmg to Steelshade: ½ x 6 = 3 [****196****/179].*

***NOTE:*** *Again reducing the number of applications from 10 to 4.*



Round 23

As the halfling-sized pawn spawns died off, a human-sized blob with a vaguely anthropomorphic shape entered the forum from the northern curtain of vegetation, and cursed in Abyssal, << Jian’ik Jhuiphlex! Krarkstos fi’enra-ahk! >>

Map

Description automatically generated

The creature then began to sprint towards the heroes, likely Steelshade.

Devrion pointed his fingers at the incoming creature. “Mágikus rakéta!” *[magic missile]*

*Dmg: 11 + 5 = 16 magic [force].*

That blew the demon prone upon its makeshift back, but it got up and continued southward.

“Oh, I think he’s pissed off,” Steelshade *[freedom of movement]* said as she stepped forward to meet whatever it was. The two melee combatants clashed at the midpoint.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Drone Spawn | Slam 1 | 1d10+4 +  slimy infestation | 5 | 4 – 2 Power  Attack | 2 charge  + 2 opponent charge | 11 | 18 | 29 |

*Miss.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone  Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 + 2 charge  + 2 opponent charge | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +33 | 5 | 37 |

*Hit. Dmg: 7 + 9 + 3 + 2 charge + 2 opponent charge = 23. Partial damage negated.*

The humanoid blob was sliced in half and sizzled into innocuous but offensive vapors.

Brene waited only long enough to confirm that the demon was dead, already having aimed her bow at the incoming creature, then stayed her hand, looking out for more incoming fiends.

Juiblex’s pawn spawns were writhing as they sizzled into nothingness, now joined by the single drone spawn that forecast perhaps a score more if they pressed on into the epicenter of the infestation.

Atlas *[freedom of movement]* checked behind them, and then he considered the creature closing in on them.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Atlas, Know: The Planes** | 21 | **Int (+8)** | 5 | 34 | 4 | 38 | Trivial Knowledge |
| **Atlas, Know: The Planes** | 21 | **Int (+8)** | 5 | 34 | 5 | **39** | Trivial Knowledge, **best of 2 rolls** |

*Beats DC by 20+. PCs gained +3 to attacks against drone spawns [and maybe similar spawns].*

*This bonus is translated to a -3 to AC to drone spawns [and maybe similar spawns], so it won’t show up in the to-hit resolution, but it’s reflected in the AC fields:*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **TAC** | **FFAC** | **AC** |
| **Drone Spawn 1** | **8** | **13** | **14** |

Timeline

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Round 24

“Let’s move,” Atlas said as he used a kerchief to wipe his face. “Our enchantments won’t last too much longer.”

Steelshade extracted the carpet and unrolled it, whereupon everyone stepped aboard.

Rounds 25 – 27

They flew the carpet over the stretch of forest that was left between the coast and the deforested area, and as they gained altitude, they began to behold once again the panorama of demons within that area. It was a Juiblex feast to say the least, so they anticipated a fairly straightforward conflict against gelatinous foes.

Rounds 28 – 30

Brene piloted the carpet straight up above the trees, and held it in place while she and the others looked around. They were now flying northward, slowing to a halt at an altitude of about 60’.

Round 31

Another volley of pawn spawns was sneezed out of the cavern in the epicenter of the dead space and came flying towards them, developing flapping wings on the fly. The self-guided gobs of greenish demon goo looked more like lemures at first, then took on that quasit-like appearance as they formed and approached the carpet, looking to topple and ground its passengers.

“They’re coming from below!” warned Devrion.

It looked like six of them, but they were larger than the previous ones, and looked to be clustered in pairs. On the ground, a few dozen tetrapod demons were roaming, taking delight in the prospect of eating the heroes.

Devrion gauged the sneezed-out demons to be making their way over along an arc at a speed comparable to what their carpet had just been doing. Estimating that the closest one was about 250’ away, and the farthest probably just over 300’ north of them, the jungle half-elf warmage pointed at the ground in the center of the tetrapods. “Földrengés!”

Though this had zero impact on the flying demons that had just been spewed from the nostril-like cavity at the epicenter of the *desecrated* area, the majority of the lesser demons on the ground fell into the fissures that Devrion manifested, and to their doom.

Steelshade said, “Brene, get us back to the beach!”

Brene turned the carpet and made for the beach.

“Good idea. We don’t need to be overrun by all of these.” He considered the cavern’s arrangement as they moved away, thinking of anything that might help them defeat the demons.

The spawns of Juiblex flew close enough to have reached the point where the carpet had just been, and were now chasing behind them at distances between 20’ and 75’ from the carpet.

Atlas warned against retreat. That snot cauldron is going to continue to spit out more of those gelatinous things until it’s destroyed, and our presence is agitating it, so it’s likely to speed up the rate at which it throws its gobs at us.

Round 32

“Brene, turn us slowly,” Atlas said. “Circle around.”

“I’ll hit that cavern with another earthquake spell when I can,” Devrion said. He stepped to the rear of the carpet and pointed at the nearest pursuer. “Erő gömb!”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Ranged Touch Attack | 10d6 | +6 | 1 | 16 | 4 | 20 |

*Hit. Dmg: 43 force.*

That was enough to shoot the demon out of the sky, causing it to burst into a puff of green dust as it crashed into the ground below.

Brene began a wide right turn while keeping the carpet’s speed steady. “They’re going to gain on us,” she warned.

“I’m ready,” Steelshade said. She stepped up beside Devrion, resolving to strike at any of them that came into her reach. It was mostly those farther from the carpet that were able to close in more when the carpet arced, and they all changed trajectories.

Atlas continued to consider their enemy to discern any weaknesses *[DK: Tactics]*.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| **Atlas, Know: The Planes** | 21 | **Int (+8)** | 5 | 34 | 18 | **52** | Trivial Knowledge, **best of 2 rolls** |
| **Atlas, Know: The Planes** | 21 | **Int (+8)** | 5 | 34 | 17 | 51 | Trivial Knowledge |

*PCs gained +3 to attack vs. pawn spawns (S) and possibly drone spawns (M). Does not stack with previous DK Tactics against this type of foe.*

None of the demons reached the carpet yet, though they might if it continued to veer.

Round 33

“Atlas, take over,” Brene said.

“Got it.” Atlas took control of the carpet, turning it in a wide arc as the demons followed. He intended to circle around to the west to pass near the cavern so Devrion could attack it directly.

*Atlas can’t effectively use the Use Magic Item skill untrained.*

As he did so, two demons took advantage of the course correction to gain on them enough to snap at Brene and Steelshade.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** | **Targeting** |
| Pawn Spawn | Slam | 1d6+2 + slimy infestation | 4 | 2 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 11 | 15 | Brene |
| Pawn Spawn | Slam | 1d6+2 + slimy infestation | 4 | 2 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 3 | 7 | Steelshade |

*\* Chase is not a canon penalty, but it’s the mechanical opposite of charge, which is based on the momentum of a running start. In this case, both parties are moving in the same general direction, but at slightly different speeds.*

*Miss, miss.*

Both gobs overshot their marks and had to veer upward to regain their bearings.

Brene stepped toward the rear of the carpet, took out her bow, and shot the demon furthest to the left.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Shortbow +2 | 1d4 | 2 + 3 DK | 2 | x3 | 60’ x 2 | 2.0 | +28 | 4 | 32 | Sneak Attack 9d6 |

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

Three more demons converged on Devrion.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Pawn Spawn | Slam | 1d6+2 + slimy infestation | 4 | 2 | 3 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| Pawn Spawn | Slam | 1d6+2 + slimy infestation | 4 | 2 | 3 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| Pawn Spawn | Slam | 1d6+2 + slimy infestation | 4 | 2 | 3 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 9 | 13 |

*Miss, miss, miss.*

Steelshade also took out her shortbow [action 2] after sheathing her sword [action 1].

Two other demons pounced on Atlas and Steelshade, but with more prehensile intentions than their predecessors.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Pawn Spawn | Touch (Atlas) | Grapple | 4 | 2 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 14 | 18 |
| Pawn Spawn | Touch (Steelshade) | Grapple | 4 | 2 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 6 | 10 |

*Hit (touch; see below), miss.*

One of the spawns attached itself to Atlas as the hive of pursuing winged globules appeared to be getting more coordinated in their flight and attacks.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | | **Attack Type** | | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Pawn Spawn | | Grapple | | 4 | 4 | -2 size | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| **Atlas** | **Atk** | | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +16 + 3 DK | | 9 | 28 |

*Grapple failed.*

Unable to guide the carpet due to his lack of experience in using magic items, Atlas guided the carpet down on a collision course with the forest and landborne demons.

Devrion pointed at the demon furthest to the right. “Mágikus rakéta!”

*Dmg: 10 + 5 = 15 force.*

Another demon reached the carpet, attacking the craft itself.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Touch | Touch Attack | 4 | 2 | -2 chase\* | 4 | 16 | 20 |
| Grapple | Grapple | 4 | 4 | -2 chase\* | 6 | 11 | 17 |

*Hit. Automatic success on grapple vs. carpet.*

Round 34

Steelshade fired on the demon to the right of the one Brene targeted.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shortbow +2 | 1d6 | 2 | 2 + 3 DK | 2 | 3 | 60’ | 2.0 | +23 | 19 | 42 |
| Shortbow +2 2nd Attack | 1d6 | 2 | 2 + 3 DK | 2 | 3 | 60’ | - | +18 | 13 | 31 |
| Shortbow +2, 3rd Attack | 1d6 | 2 | 2 + 3 DK | 2 | 3 | 60’ | - | +13 | 12 | 25 |

*Hit, hit, hit. Dmg: (4 + 2) + (2 + 2) + (5 + 2) = 6 + 4 + 7 = 17.*

That seemed to be what was needed. With the third arrow, the gelatinous demon fell and poofed out of existence before hitting the ground.

Two brave demons attacked Brene before the carpet crashed into the trees. Five other demons flapped upward, curious to see what the heroes would look like all splattered.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Pawn Spawn | Slam 1 | 1d6+2 + slimy infestation | 4 | 2 | -2 chase\* | 6 | 16 | 22 |
| Pawn Spawn | Slam 2 | 1d6+2 + slimy infestation | 4 | 2 | -2 chase\* | 6 | 6 | 12 |

*Miss, miss.*

Atlas, now cognizant that he was unable to emulate the proper commands to guide the carpet under pressure, said, “Brene, help!”

“Oh, damn!” Brene took control of the carpet and leveled it off.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save & Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Brene, Reflex** | **11** | **Dex (+8)** | 3 | **22** | 11 | 33 |
| **Brene, Use Magic Device** | **10** | **Cha (+2)** | 0 | **12** | 16 | 28 |

*Success, success.*

The woman was able to steer the craft upward as it skidded only inches from the vegetation below.

As they gained an altitude of about 15’, Devrion cast *magic missile* again, targeting the demon hanging onto the carpet.

*Dmg: 8 + 5 = 13 force.*

That second *missile* dropped the demon.

Round 35

They were now headed straight for the cavern that seemed to be spewing up some other type of ballistic, flying demon at them.

There were a few stragglers left in the chase, most of them wounded in one way or another, and these weaker, slower demons snarled as they continued in their pursuit. One of them caught up to Steelshade.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Pawn Spawn | Touch | 4 | 2 | 6 | 12 | 18 |
| Pawn Spawn | Grapple | 4 | 4 | 8 | ***20*** | 28 |

*Hit. Grapple initiated.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Steelshade** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +26 + 3 DK | 10 | 39 |

*Grapple failed.*

They were only a few hundred feet from the cavern entrance now, and would be there in mere seconds at this speed. Atlas and Steelshade noticed that the demons on the ground were so bloodthirsty that they were fighting amongst one another, and those nearest the epicenter were mostly already destroyed. Puffs of green dust flashing about the desecrated area outlined the dumbfounding tragedy of gelatinous demons and even more gelatinous zombies moshing and slamming into one another in a haphazard celebration of mayhem.

Atlas looked down at the opening. “Devrion, see if you can collapse that thing.”

Devrion pointed at the cavern entrance. “Földrengés!”

Brene turned the carpet to keep them equidistant from the opening as they circled it.

<https://fly8ma.com/topic/turns-around-a-point/> [will watch after work]

Steelshade full-attacked three demons still pursuing them with her bow.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shortbow +2 | 1d6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 60’ | 2.0 | +23 | 11 | 34 |
| Shortbow +2 2nd Attack | 1d6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 60’ | - | +18 | 13 | 31 |
| Shortbow +2, 3rd Attack | 1d6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 60’ | - | +13 | 12 | 25 |

*Hit, hit, hit. Dmg to each: 4 + 3 + 2 = 9.*

They could now see fissures forming below them, and flightless demons falling into what appeared to be an entire level of incubator chambers chockfull of larval dretches and other spawns. Devrion hadn’t expected that, and as the spell began to subside and the ground above returned to some semblance of its previous state, they noted that the larger demons getting caught in the sealing fissures were preventing the fissures from fusing together again as the spell’s transmutational effects reverberated throughout the area of effect, leaving numerous cracks and vents through which other demons now crawled as the larger, dying obstructions poofed back towards the Abyss.

Round 36

There was a fairly rocky ledge that had not been as significantly affected as the rest of the central cave entrance, now only the largest of many others, in the area that Devrion sundered. “We can set down there,” Atlas trusted, glad to have friends who could confidently fly the magic carpet.

“And do what?” Steelshade fired four more arrows at the pursuing demons.

“We will be overwhelmed if we set down,” Devrion said. He pointed down into the cavern. “Tűzgömb!”

*Damage undetermined, but see below.*

Brene kept circling the cavern with the carpet.

A flying gizzard of a globule erupted from the sizzling nostril in the ground not long after Devrion’s *fireball*, sprouting wings and coming at the flying carpet as it took on the form of some new demon. They were close enough to it that it would reach them within seconds.

Round 37

The globule was the size of a bed fit for two humans, like the one’s they’d been using in Waterdeep when lodged there. It sprouted arachnid limbs and could best be described as Juiblex’s best rendition of a bebilith on the fly.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Greater Spawn | Touch | Touch Attack | 8 | 8 | 16 | 3 | 19 |
| Greater Spawn | Grapple | Grapple | 8 | 18 | 26 | 14 | 40 |

*Hit, considerable envelopment of carpet.*

The winged monstrosity slammed into the carpet with unanticipated momentum, the force driving them all about 100’ back to the south and onto the ground as the jelly-like foe reassembled itself and suckled the carpet into its gullet.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Eating Dirt | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Atlas, Reflex** | **6** | **Dex (+4)** | 13 | 23 | 3 | 26 |
| **Brene, Reflex** | **11** | **Dex (+8)** | 3 | 22 | 7 | 29 |
| **Devrion, Reflex** | **6** | **Dex (+4)** | 3 | 13 | 17 | 30 |
| **Steelshade, Reflex** | **5** | **Dex (+4)** | 3 | 12 | 19 | 31 |

*Success4.*

The heroes managed to land on their feet, losing only a little dignity as the key-lime-pie-colored goo dripped from their faces and gear.

They were standing about 10’ apart from one another in a rhombus formation, with Steelshade at the north facing the gelatinous bebilith, which was maybe 35’ from the heroes and trying not to gag on the carpet.

Within a 50’ radius were three other tetrapod demons about twice as tall as the heroes, moving clumsily towards them, and between 50’ and 100’ of the heroes were an additional ten or so demons who now stopped bickering amongst one another and took an interest in the downed craft and its former passengers.

Atlas murmured a prayer, and then let loose a loud roar.

*PCs gained +1 to attacks and saves against fear effects, plus 5 + 18 = 23 temporary hit points.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Evil/ Neg** | **Total Damage** | **Temp** | **HPs** | **Calcul. Total** | **Current HPs** |
| **Atlas** | 5 | 5 | 23 | 99 | 94 | 117 |
| **Brene** | 6 | 6 | 23 | 99 | 93 | 116 |
| **Devrion** | 9 | 9 | 23 | 99 | 90 | 113 |
| **Steelshade** | 7 | 7 | 43 | 179 | 172 | 215 |

Every lesser, drone, and pawn spawn in the vicinity was either destroyed or reduced to a dying husk. The few that had not been decimated by the spell looked on in fear, then—one by one—turned tail and ran away, inducing little stampedes along the way as they put distance between themselves and the heroes.

Devrion pointed at the more stalwart demon who was trying to eat their carpet. “A halál ujja!”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *Finger of death* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Lesser Spawn | Fortitude | 10 | 9 | 19 |

*Fail.*

Brene was about to fire at the huge demon, but saw that Devrion

Steelshade quickly put up her bow and drew her sword anticipating more incoming enemies, but finding quite the opposite. The nostril-like cave entrance looked inert now, and out of it, were a few dog-sized, cockroach-shaped demon larvae—nearly fully developed—coming outside to die. A few sizzled and poofed into gelatinous particles that evaporated into the Astral plane, but most just kicked up and twitched for a while under the midday sun.

Rounds 38 – 44

“The carpet!” Brene moved in to see if she could rescue it. Atlas and Devrion followed, while Steelshade guarded them.

It was all munched up along the middle, and would need at the very least two *mending* spells cast on it before it was reintegrated. Brene could not tell this by just looking at it, but Atlas and Steelshade could.

“It’s all torn up,” Brene exclaimed as she picked up one end.

“I can fix it,” Atlas said, “but not until after my next daily prayers.”

“Let’s clean it off and put it away,” Steelshade said. She and Brene cleaned off the carpet as best they could, rolled it, and stored it in Steelshade’s haverpack.

Meanwhile Atlas and Devrion looked into the cavern, all while keeping a gimlet eye on the remaining demons.

The lingering demons crawled away as best as they could, and the battlefield belonged to the Aasterinianites for the moment.

The earthquake had caused some unexpected topography, and as they beheld the bodies on the battlefield that slowly disintegrated as they expired, they saw a clear path to the cave entrance from which larval demons still emerged only to suffer their last and perish.

“Looks like you’ve destroyed an entire level of incubation chambers,” Atlas theorized on the effect of the *earthquake* spell on the battlefield’s underlayer, and wondered just how deep down the tunnel extended.

Round 45

Brene peered into the cavern. “We have to go down there, don’t we?” She sighed and put up her bow. “And I have to go first.”

Steelshade grinned at her. “We are behind you – as far as we can get.”

“Bite me,” the halfling grumbled.

“Ask him for that,” Steelshade said as she pointed at Atlas. “I’m sure he’d be glad to comply. Her gin widened as Atlas nodded in assent.

“You’re both assholes, do you know that?” The rogue turned her attention to finding a way down into the cavern while the others chuckled behind her.

~\*~

Round 53

They’d been approaching the mouth of the cavern, where an ooze as large as a small bedchamber now emerged, seemingly comprised of several smaller larval and fledging young ooze-demons.



It hissed as it smelled the heroes, turning to Brene, who was about 40’ away.

Chart

Description automatically generated

Round 54

Brene stayed quiet, and slowly moved to her right to flank the creature.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Brene, Hide** | 10 | **Dex (+8)** | 4 | **22** | 15ish | ?? |
| **Brene, Move Silently** | 10 | **Dex (+8)** | 0 | **18** | 15ish | ?? |

*See below.*

Atlas looked at the creature and jabbed his finger downward.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Notes** |
| *Call lightning* Spell | 7d6 | x1½ | 1 | +15 | 6 | 21 | 9 bolts remaining |

*Hit. Dmg: 24 x 1½ = 36 electric.*

That put the creature ill at ease, and it now began to charge towards Atlas.

Devrion pointed at the creature. “Mágikus rakéta!”

*Dmg: 12 + 5 = 17 force.*

The demon tripped as it charged when the missiles targeted primarily its front, right leg.

Steelshade walked forward with her sword ready to engage the creature.

The charge was compromised, but the jousting spawn of Juiblex persisted in its attack nonetheless.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Dex Mod+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Lesser Spawn | Slam 1 | 2d8+7 + slimy infestation | 6 | 6 | 1 | 12 | 5 | 17 |

*Miss.*

Steelshade swung back.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +30 | 10 | 40 |

*Hit. Dmg: 6 + 9 + 3 = 18.*

Chart

Description automatically generated

Round 55

Atlas could tell that the Dark Knowledge he’d gained on the pawns and drones also gave them an edge on this hardier demon. It was not yet finished, but had been cut in half, and was writhing around, reconfiguring itself as two entities.

*DK Tactics +3 bonus is expressed as a -3 to this enemy type’s AC.*

Steelshade executed two coups de grace on each half.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +30 | 15 | 45 |
| SB Falchion +3, 2nd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +25 | 2 | 27 |
| SB Falchion +3, 3rd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +20 | 10 | 30 |
| SB Falchion +3, 4th Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +15 | 9 | 24 |

*Hit, hit, hit, hit.*

*Dmg to left half: (5 + 9 + 3) + (7 + 9 + 3) = 17 + 19 = 36.*

*Dmg to right half: (5 + 9 + 3) + (3 + 9 + 3) = 17 + 15 = 32.*

Both halves bit the dust and themselves became a greenish dust.

Other than the sound of fleeting and evaporating demons in the distance, all was quiet as Steelshade turned around—a cloud of apple-green vapor behind her—and ensured that her friends were all intact.

Steelshade stepped back toward the others to avoid the green vapor. “Now what?”

Atlas looked around to see if there were any other cavern entrances other than the one in front of them.

There were certainly plenty of fissures partly open due to demons having gotten lodged as the spell’s effects coagulated the earth’s topmost layer. They could have entered through any of the exposed incubation chambers, but the nostril-like cave entrance provided a more slanted entry, as opposed to the vertical paths through the fissures and into the top level of Juiblex’s gate into this plane.

“Oh, no,” Brene sighed as Atlas pointed to the open cavern. “I’m going to cut that bastard’s balls off, if he has any.” She trudged toward the entrance for a few steps, and then she took a breath and got into her routine of searching for traps.

Steelshade grinned and followed her with Devrion ten feet behind her, and Atlas another ten feet back, bringing up the rear.

“No traps,” Brene announced. “We’re advancing upon the most basal and bestial a Demon Lord that has ever existed. I’ll stay alert for traps, but I doubt Juiblex brought trappers with him.”

“I’m inclined to agree,” Steelshade nodded as a demon’s arm clawed and crawled towards her, refusing to disintegrate like the rest of the body did. “Juiblex is straightforward. Unless Graz’zt or another mischievous, resourceful, and cunning Demon Lord is also behind this mess…” she waved her free hand in reference to all around her as she skewered the arm that tried to swipe at her boots, “We’re pretty much up against a straightforward army of blobs.”

At last, the appendage writhing upon Steelshade’s sword tip fizzled and vaporized.

Atlas said nothing, but was in agreement that this was to be a day of few surprises. They’d tested their mettle against Juiblex’s forces enough by now to expect that surprises would be few and far between.

A dog-sized demon emerged from the cavern, shaking off its larval husk as it flexed its muscles for the first time. It failed to spot Brene but locked Steelshade in its sights.

In the back of Devrion’s mind, the warmage suspected that Graz’zt was pulling Juiblex’s strings all along. He had no substantive basis for this; he just wanted to raise the red flag that they might all be getting played. These *were* demons, after all.

The dog-like demon leapt towards Steelshade, who was prepared.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +30 | 12 | 42 |
| SB Falchion +3, 2nd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +25 | 17 | 42 |
| SB Falchion +3, 3rd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +20 | 9 | 29 |
| SB Falchion +3, 4th Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +15 | 17 | 32 |

*Hit, threat, hit, threat. 1d20 = 7 + 25 = 32; 18 + 15 = 33, two critical hits.*

*Minimum damage destroyed the demon.*

Before it even hit the ground, the dog-like blob was severed into two, then three, then four, then five mint-jelly-like slices that now boiled and whimpered out of existence.

Round 62

The group kept moving forward as they watched for their next enemy to appear.

“I don’t know about this place,” Devrion said quietly. “Graz’zt is using Juiblex, but I’m not sure what it means to us, other than there are a bunch of these jelly things to kill.”

“In any case, we need to clean them out of this place,” Steelshade replied.

They were now at the mouth of the cave.

Brene led the way into the cave.

A picture containing water, outdoor, swimming, shore

Description automatically generated

Devrion was sorry to see the carpet damaged beyond use. Tomorrow they would mend it, and set to the skies upon it once more.

They meandered throughout the few top levels, sometimes almost falling through thin membranes and into a clutch of gestating eggs or voracious demon larvae.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  Falling into Goo | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Atlas, Reflex** | **6** | **Dex (+4)** | 13 | 23 | 17 | 40 |
| **Brene, Reflex** | **11** | **Dex (+8)** | 3 | 22 | 4 | 26 |
| **Devrion, Reflex** | **6** | **Dex (+4)** | 3 | 13 | 14 | 27 |
| **Steelshade, Reflex** | **5** | **Dex (+4)** | 3 | 12 | 1 | 13 |

*See below.*

Steelshade was unfortunate enough to fall waist deep into a vat that contained a feisty, little, green fucker. Steelshade stabbed at it with her falchion—not ideally suited to be used as a jabbing instrument—as her friends grabbed her and pulled her out. The slightly acidic goo of the incubation chamber was not enough to damage her skin on contact, but her clothing and boots would likely need replacing.

They spent a good ten minutes or so scouring what had not been goo-inundated of the two topmost layers of this conduit into the Abyss. They found a central esophagus of sorts that—like Pale Night’s anatomy—was slightly sloped. In this case, as they took it further downward into the third level of this gestation complex, they noted that it not only sloped down at about a 30-degree angle, but it also veered ever leftward at about the same angle into a downward spiral. Having stabbed anything that moved on the topmost layer of the lair, they now corkscrewed their way down the 10’ x 10’ tunnel until they reached a precipice overlooking a stream of mineral-rich water.

A picture containing nature, several

Description automatically generated

Looking down about 10’ to 15’, they noted a handful of huge placentae dangling from tensely drawn tubes that grew naturally from the porous ceiling wall of this organ-like chamber, which had to be at least 50’ in diameter. The subterranean stream—lit by the phosphorescent rocks through which it meandered—ran east and west, while to their north was the way back up and to the south, past the precipice, the path continued downward along rougher topography.

One right after the other, each placenta’s cord snapped, dropping each of the fleshy bags of flesh onto the cavern just south of the heroes. Quite quickly, four demons rose to their feet, revealing their gelatinous musculature. They were about the size of the bebilith-like form they’d just killed on the surface, but they looked more like dire, horned apes made of Juiblex juice.

Round 165

Having cast medium- and long-term spells that were still in effect, the heroes turned towards the three demons, who were about 10’ to 15’ down the precipice, and another 30’ south from there.

Atlas studied the creatures closely.

*DK Tactics +3 bonus is expressed as a -3 to this enemy type’s AC. Daily DK use not expended; see below.*



It came to the archivist’s understanding that although these acidic monstrosities were morphically different from the previous ones they’d fought, they were taxonomically close enough that their weaknesses were the same. He spoke a few words in the midst of his friends, and they—too—noted the similarity in these creatures’ core bodies, and adapted their tactics as they had with their previous opponents.

Brene sheathed her dagger and produced her shortbow.

Devrion pointed at a spot in the midst of the demons. “Tűzgömb!”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  *fireball* | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Lesser Spawn 2 | Reflex | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| Lesser Spawn 3 | Reflex | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| Lesser Spawn 4 | Reflex | 3 | 13 | 16 |

*Fail, fail, fail. Dmg to each: 31 fire.*

That toasted all three of them on their outer layers, but they were still intact on the inside, and continued to approach.

Steelshade stepped to the edge of the precipice and looked down to see if there was a place for her to stand and fight. The ground below seemed to be as stable as where she was now. Before she could make any further decisions, the three ape-like demons leapt up with little effort onto the platform and charge-attacked her.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **Damage** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Lesser Spawn | Slam 1 | 2d8+7 + slimy infestation | 6 | 6 | +2 charge  –2 height | 12 | ***20*** | 32 |
| Lesser Spawn | Slam 1 | 2d8+7 + slimy infestation | 6 | 6 | +2 charge  –2 height | 12 | **13** | 25 |
| Lesser Spawn | Slam 1 | 2d8+7 + slimy infestation | 6 | 6 | +2 charge  –2 height | 12 | **6** | 18 |

*Threat, miss, miss. 1d20 = 14 + 12 = 26, not a critical hit.*

*1d100 = 05, concealment not bypassed, but slimy infestation still applies.*

Now partly coated with a layer of greenish goo, Steelshade full attacked the creatures.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +30 | 12 | 42 |
| SB Falchion +3, 2nd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +25 | 3 | 28 |
| SB Falchion +3, 3rd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +20 | 11 | 31 |
| SB Falchion +3, 4th Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +15 | 3 | 18 |

*Hit, hit, hit, hit. Dmg: (5 + 9 + 3) + (8 + 9 + 3) + (5 + 9 + 3) + (4* *+ 9 + 3) = 17 + 20 + 17 + 16 = 70. Partial damage negated.*

That took one of the three out of commission, leaving the other two. She perceived that she could likely take down each one with two hits.

Round 166

Steelshade swung twice at each of the remaining demons upon the precipice.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +30 | ***20*** | 50 |
| SB Falchion +3, 2nd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +25 | 5 | 30 |
| SB Falchion +3, 3rd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +20 | 16 | 36 |
| SB Falchion +3, 4th Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +15 | 17 | 32 |

*Threat, hit, hit, hit. 1d20 = 7 + 30 = 37, critical hit.*

*Dmg to lesser spawn 3: (5 + 9 + 3) + (5 + 9 + 3) = 17 + 17 = 34. Partial damage negated.*

*Dmg to lesser spawn 4: (4 + 9 + 3) + (3 + 9 + 3) = 16 + 15 = 31. Partial damage negated.*

Both demons remained standing, but they would not withstand another pair of swipes like those. Atlas and Devrion could tell that they wouldn’t have to emit much magical mojo to render both asunder at this point.

Brene fired twice at the demon to her left.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Rng.** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** | **Properties** |
| Shortbow +2 | 1d4 | 2 | 2 | x3 | 60’ x 2 | 2.0 | +24 | 19 | 43 | Sneak Attack 9d6 |
| Shortbow, 2nd Shot | 1d4 | 2 | 2 | x3 | 60’ x 2 | - | +19 | 6 | 25 | Sneak Attack 9d6 |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: (4 + 39 Sneak) + (2 + 38 Sneak) = 41 + 40 = 81.*

The woman’s first arrow destroyed the demon, and her second arrow destroyed the first arrow.

Devrion pointed at the demon to his right. “Mágikus rakéta!”

*Dmg: 14 + 5 = 19 force.*

That brought down the remaining demon.

Round 167

“North is that way,” Atlas pointed behind him.

The precipice led down to the southward path that lay ahead and presumably into a deeper chamber.

The four made their way to the path, Devrion using a *swift fly* spell, and the others using their feather fall rings to negotiate the descent.

Brene led the way, with Steelshade, Devrion, and Atlas following.

Round 191

They’d walked for a few minutes down an esophagal tunnel whose acidic cilia lashed out at them like snake-like tentacles. Brene had given Steelshade the lead position in order to facilitate the trimming of said cilia. By the time they’d slashed through the thousands of tentacles that had come at them in the last few minutes, they were all coated in acid, and would need herbal or magical remedies upon their skins. Their gear was still functional, but they would not be mingling at parties with these outfits and complexions.

The heroes reached a level point and noted that gelatinous membranes had given way to magically or perhaps divinely morphed masonry. The tunnels had been lit by the Juiblex-like gel that coated just about everything in here, but now the lighting became more prominent, as if a green sky nearby was illuminating the path ahead.

Round 194

They walked a bit longer, and saw a short flight of stairs up ahead, and possibly a door along the left wall: the first door they’d seen anywhere on this island.



Rounds 195 – 197

Brene stepped up to the door, checked it for traps, and listened at it for a moment.

She found no traps, but the door was locked, and she also noticed the false wall behind her.

A picture containing tiled

Description automatically generated

The sound of water flowing nearby alerted them to the presence of the underground stream they’d passed earlier, and the green glow up ahead illuminated a lavishly tiled room whose floor they could not yet see, though it matched the walls an ceiling.

Round 198

“That wall is a false wall,” Brene said as she pointed across the hall. The halfling extracted a thin, black wooden rod from her pack, and turned it base up. She touched a hidden stud, extracted her thieves’ tools, and set to work on the lock.

“You may not want to stand there when you unlock the door,” Devrion said. “That false wall might be the trap.”

Brene stopped and stepped back. “What do we do?”

Round 199

“Check the wall before you open the door,” Steelshade advised.

Brene put up her tools and went to examine the false wall. It could easily be pushed along the right side to swivel counterclockwise.

“Stand clear,” Steelshade said. She used her sword tip to push in on the swiveling panel of the false wall as she stood across the stairway from the door. Everyone else stayed further to the false wall’s right past Steelshade.

Round 200

The false wall required the push of someone far less strong than her. It clicked and pivoted counterclockwise 90 degrees, and about ten small, green snakes could be seen in the corridor beyond, which was only lit by the phosphorescent light in the stairwell. The swiveling wall panel clicked into position, most likely now stuck in the open position.

A picture containing text

Description automatically generated

A few of the snakes slithered out to say hi and lick the air with forked tongues.

Rounds 201 – 202

Steelshade quickly dispatched the snakes with her sword and her boots. Devrion joined her, while Atlas and Brene looked back down the corridor whence they’d come. There was nothing downstairs moving, though Brene thought that she heard something upstairs. It was hard to tell with Devrion and Steelshade slashing at the limbless, green reptiles.

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Rounds 203 – 204

Brene walked toward the top of the stairs, and carefully peeked over. The chamber and the stairway that led to it were sized for giants, with each step taking her at least five paces to cover. The geometric perfection of the marvelously tiled floor and matching ceiling and walls seemed a departure from the haphazard and formless tunnels through which they’d been traversing. She stood in awe for a moment as she reached the last step.

A picture containing text

Description automatically generated

Meanwhile, Steelshade looked carefully beyond the doorway, but she didn’t step through it. A few more snakes came out, and she and Devrion dealt with them. The two half-elven adventurers swung their falchion and sickle at the slithering and striking snakes that did little more than poison their boots before being decapitated.

Round 205

Brene backed away and came back to the others. “The place is huge. Even the steps are giant-sized.”

“I think we should open that door before we go up there,” Devrion said. “Locks are placed for a reason.” He smirked at Brene. “Mostly to keep snoopy little rogues out.”

Round 206

Brene stuck her tongue out at him. “Maybe you will stand in front of the door as I open it.”

Devrion grinned and moved to the wall south of the locked door. “I’ll pass.”

Atlas and Steelshade went to the west wall and stood just north of the locked door.

When everyone was ready, Brene worked to unlock the door.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill & Save** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Brene, Open Lock** | 12 | **Dex (+8)** | 2 | **22** | 6 | 28 |

*See below.*

The halfling was fooled by the first layer, having bypassed it, but remained unaware of the lock’s secondary mechanism, which triggered a corrosive explosion.

*Evasion negated damage.*

Calendar

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Round 207

The lock was reset, and this time the rogue had a much more certain understanding of its properties.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Open Lock** | 12 | **Dex (+8)** | 2 | **22** | 8 | 30 |

*Success.*

The lock’s twin mechanisms slid into place, the latch opened, and the door could now easily be pushed open. Brene noted no traps around the door or threshold.

Round 208

“Ick,” she sighed. She unlatched the door and pushed it open, stepping aside to clear the doorway, just in case.

A screenshot of a video game

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Round 209

A greenish, white light shone from within a pool of clear water.

Atlas pulled out a small, leather book covered in worked silver. He perused it for a moment as he observed the light in the pool.

Brene moved forward toward the pool, searching for traps along the way. She noted the pressure plate in front of her, and stopped where she was, checking for redundant mechanisms above and around her.

Round 210

“I never understand why these people leave traps all over the place,” Brene muttered as she traced down the mechanism. “Who wants to live in a place that will kill you if you forget your key?”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Disable Device** | 10 | **Int (+6)** | 2 | **18** | 14 | 32 |

*Success.*

“And yet you’ve trained to disable or bypass them,” Devrion said with a chuckle.

“Typical male. I work and you stand there and make bad jokes.”

Devrion grinned at Atlas while Steelshade shook her head. “Ignore the boys, honey.”

Round 211

They all laughed a bit, ignoring the fact that the pool was now visibly swelling along the steps, and a clear, goo acid elemental now attacked Brene, splashing her with corrosive, gelatinous fluid.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Attack Type** | **BAB** | **Str Mod+** | **Other+** | **Total Score** | **Roll** | **Total** |
| Greater Spawn | Touch | 8 | 8 | 0 | 16 | 12 | 28 |
| Greater Spawn | Grapple | 8 | 18 | 0 | 26 | 10 | 36 |

*See below.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Grapple | +17 | 2 | 19 |

*Grapple remains in place + 4 acid + slimy infestation [****112****/99].*

Brene called her dagger into her hand, and slashed at the elemental. “Get off me!”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Critical** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Keen Dagger of Wounding +2 | 1d3+2 | 3+? | 2 | 19-20, x2 | Prc/Slash | 0.5 | +19 | 9 | 28 |
| Dagger, 2nd Attack | 1d3+2 | 3+? | 2 | 19-20, x2 | Prc/Slash | - | +14 | 19 | 33 |

*Hit, hit. Dmg: (2 + 2 + 3) + (2 + 2 + 3) = 7 + 4=7 = 14. Con damage negated.*

Devrion pointed at a spot in the pool past Brene. “Gömb hideg!” He then noted the amount of remaining daily mojo under his belt.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **Dmg.** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Ranged Touch Attack | 15d6 cold + Blindness | +6 | 1 | 15 | 13 | 28 |

*Hit. Dmg: 53 cold.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Save vs.**  Blindness | **Ranks** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Greater Spawn | Fortitude | 14 | 15 | 29 |

*Success. Blindness negated.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Warmage Spells by Level** | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **0th** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** | **7th** | **8th** | **9th** |
| **Warmage Spells** | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 3 |
| **Charisma Bonus** | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | **1** | **1** | **1** | **0** | **0** |
| **Total Daily Spells** | **6** | **8** | **8** | **8** | **7** | **7** | **7** | **7** | **5** | **3** |
| **DC** | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| **Cast?** | **0** | **2** | **1** | **1** | **6** | **0** | **0** | **2** | **0** | **0** |

Steelshade ran to Brene’s side and carefully *[-4]* slashed at the creature while ensuring that she didn’t hit Brene.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 – 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +26 | **18** | 44 |
| SB Falchion +3, 2nd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 – 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +21 | 7 | 28 |
| SB Falchion +3, 3rd Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 – 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +16 | **16** | 32 |
| SB Falchion +3, 4th Attack | 2d4 | +9 +3 | 3 – 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +11 | **15** | 26 |

*Threat, hit, threat, threat. 1d20 = 3 + 26 = 29; 14 + 21 = 35; 7 + 16 = 23: 2 critical hits.*

*Dmg: [(2 x 7) + 9 + 3] + (5 + 9 + 3) + [(2 x 4) + 9 + 3] + (7 + 9 + 3) = 26 + 17 + 20 + 19 = 82.*

Atlas stayed back and watched at the door. He could tell that this was a different manner of demon than those they’d fought before, and it was likely not susceptible to the same types of strategies that brought down the others.

*Dark Knowledge checks against the greater spawn would not be redundant with those of the pawn, drone, and lesser spawns.*

Though it left Brene and Steelshade doused in acidic goo, the demonic cousin of gelatinous cubes lost integrity, and subsided, evaporating and fuming up the place.

“Get out!” Atlas warned the others.

Round 212

At Atlas’ warning, everyone ran out of the room and into the hallway, avoiding the damaging properties of the vapor that emanated from the pool room as they made beelines away from that doorway. They breathed heavily as their lungs ached with the minimal vapors that wafted into them. A puff of green vapor continued to billow out from that room and upward towards the domed ceiling to the north.

Round 213

At the top of the stairs there now emerged a Juiblex mage: a human of evidently black dragon lineage fired an *orb of acid* upon Atlas.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ranged Weapon** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Ranged Touch Attack | 15d6 acid | 0 | 13 | 16 | 29 |

*Hit. Dmg: 49 acid [68/99].*

The mage then moved north to get out of the heroes’ line of sight.

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Steelshade ran to the stop of the stairs and looked for the mage whose name was Ozyman the Onyx, finding that he’d run a bit further north, and was now preparing some other spell for them.



Devrion followed, but he halted short of exposing himself until Steelshade spotted their enemy. When he read in her posture that she had him in her sights and had raised her sword, he continued a bit further up the steps until he established a line of sight with Ozyman.

Brene moved as far west as she safely could while climbing the stairs. She also hid herself against observation.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skill** | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Brene, Hide** | 10 | **Dex (+8)** | 4 | **22** | Poor | ?? |
| **Brene, Move Silently** | 10 | **Dex (+8)** | 0 | **18** | Middling | ?? |

*See below.*

It appeared that the gnome was able to crouch down along the last step and remain hidden as vapors continued to emanate from the pool room.

Atlas extracted his wand of *cure moderate wounds* and tapped himself with it. He moved closer to the center of the staircase while keeping watch on the vapors escaping from the room.

*Atlas gained 10 + 4 = 14 hps [58/99].*

Diagram

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Round 214

It was evident now that Ozyman was warded by a *stoneskin* spell. The wizard activated his Amulet of Ghost Step, disappeared, and reappeared behind Devrion, casting *radiant assault*.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Save vs.**  *radiant assault* | **Rank** | **Ability & Mod.** | **Misc. Mods.** | **Total** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| **Atlas, Will** | **11** | **Wis (+6)** | 13 | 30 | 11 | 41 |
| **Devrion, Will** | **11** | **Wis (+3)** | 3 | 17 | 16 | 33 |
| **Steelshade, Will** | **10** | **Wis (+4)** | 3 | 17 | 1 | 18 |

*Success, success, fail. Atlas and Devrion saved for ½ damage and reduction of condition from Dazed to Dazzled (–1 to attacks, Search checks, and Spot checks) until Round 217.*

*Dmg to Atlas: ½ x 48 = 24 fire [light] [58/99].*

*Dmg to Devrion: ½ x 53 = 26 fire [light] [87/99].*

*Dmg to Steelshade: 54 fire [light]. Damage negated (protection from energy absorbs 54/130 possible points).*

Diagram

Description automatically generated

Steelshade blinked against the burst of light and spoke sharply. She swift-cast *dimension hop* and appeared behind the mage, channeled vampiric touch through her blade, empowered her strikes (+4), and full-attacked.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Melee Weapon** | **Dmg** | **D+** | **TH+** | **Crit** | **x** | **Type** | **Wt.** | **Atk** | **Roll** | **Check** |
| Shattermantle Bloodstone Falchion +3 | 2d4 | +9 + 3 + 3d4 | 3 + 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | 8.0 | +33 | 12 | 45 |
| SB Falchion +3, 2nd Attack | 2d4 | +9 + 3 + 3d4 | 3 + 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +28 | 17 | 45 |
| SB Falchion +3, 3rd Attack | 2d4 | +9 + 3 + 3d4 | 3 + 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +23 | 9 | 32 |
| SB Falchion +3, 4th Attack | 2d4 | +9 + 3 + 3d4 | 3 + 4 | 15 | 2 | Slashing | - | +18 | 17 | 35 |
| Greater Crystal of Arcane Steel | +1 to touch spells | 1 | +1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

*Hit, threat, hit, threat. 1d20 = 14 + 33 = 47; 15 + 23 = 38; 2 critical hits.*

*Dmg: (6 + 9 + 3 + 9 AS + 32 Vampiric) + ([2 x 4] + 9 + 3 + 8 AS) + (5 + 9 + 3 + 6 AS) + ([2 x 7] + 9 + 3 + 9 AS) = 27 + 28 + 23 + 36 + 32 Vampiric = 146. Partial damage negated.*

*Lauren gained 0 hps [****215****/179].*

Devrion whirled around and pointed at the mage’s chest, but held his *finger of death* spell once he saw the mage die.

Atlas moved further up the stairs, and used his wand on himself once again.

*Atlas gained 8 + 4 = 12 hps [70/99].*

Brene checked the chamber to be sure nothing else was sneaking up on them while Steelshade and Devrion dealt with the mage.