**Travis Pike** <travisbpike@yahoo.com>

**To:**Yahoogroups

Jun 24, 2018 at 8:47 PM

Fun time had! Players picked from 16 pregens, and a party of eight enlisted for the mission.

A council of high elves, along with the leadership of the city of greyhawk engaged the party to follow the tunnel under the Hall of King Snurr, the defeated Fire Giant. The coordinated rampage of the Giant tribes against to good peoples of Oerth was apparently instigated by the long forgotten dark elves who live deep below the surface. The leadership entreated the party to learn about these evil and powerful ancient foes, their numbers, location, motivations and intentions.

The party and their three mules were ferried over a river of lava to begin their journey underground. A mile in, the party encountered a hoard of ghouls and ghasts. The cleric and paladin were quickly able to destroy and turn these foul undead.

Three miles further along the descending cavern passage, and now  hundreds of feet underground, the party discovered a broadening of the underground tunnel, with several side passages splitting off to the sides. Ahead shambled three fire beetles and a floating orb creature with one big eye. The party backed away, and after some time these creatures moved off. Exploring the passageways to the left, the party were ambushed by a male Drow sentry party. The drow mage's Ice storm and lightning spells quickly damaged the party. The party's most powerful mage was struck by the poisoned bolt of a Drow fighter's hand crossbow, and instantly fell unconscious. However, the party soon turned the tables, killing many of the drow warriors, and eventually the drow mage. A whistle signal in the main cavern was heard, and the five remaining drow retreated to the main passage. In pursuit, the party discovered the female contingent of the draw sentry squad, ready and waiting to take on the intruders from the surface.

Let's pick up again in a few weeks. We'll send emails out to see if we can find a day/time that works for everyone.

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Jul 29, 2018 at 8:39 PM

With barely a pause for breath, the intrepid party turned their attention to the arrayed groups of female drow, ready to take over from the vanquished males. A few healing potions were quickly quaffed, and a few party members made themselves invisible, and then the battle was on. The stakes were high... the drow were able to shake off much of the party's magic with their innate resistance, while the party was able to avoid the worst effects of their enemy's magic. However, a few poisoned darts made their way through the defenses, and several party members were rendered unconscious. And to make matters worse, one of the Drow priestesses began lobbing glass balls that burst into noxious gas plumes, incapacitating the heroes further. But the tide turned, and heavy magic including fire strike, fireball and blade barrier inflicted great damage and took out the drow high priest. Though the drow were cunning in their efforts to dispel magical light and effects, and set terms more favorable to their liking, their numbers quickly drop. In fact, the party was able to vanquish all of the drow, letting none escape to warn others... but not before a devious drow warrior slashed the throat of Cloyer for an instant kill. No prisoners survived for questioning, but Roaky was quickly able to raise Cloyer back to living.

Our heroes now find themselves armed, armored and cloaked with the best of the drow's magical gear, and look much more the part of underground denizens. Now that the main sentry post closest to the surface has been successfully assaulted, perhaps the party can begin their investigations in earnest and learn more about the underdark and the machinations of the drow!

Travis

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Oct 20, 2018 at 10:56 PM

Fun game today! Here's the recap:

The party rested and recovered after having vanquished the drow forward security outpost. After loot was gathered and HP restored, the party decided to take the secondary tunnels, avoiding the second major marker on the drow map (scary tentacles).

They came across a giant snake, constricting a goblin, with other dead goblins lying nearby on the ground.. The party assailed the snake, only to be attacked by a second, even larger snake. To their surprise, these snakes were huge, with ferocious bites, deadly venom dripping from their fangs, and wicked strength as they squeezed their coils around their victims. Behold, the deadly underdark boral snake(TM)  (ie. boa-coral).

The party killed the snakes, rescued the goblin, and soon learned much about these caverns. The goblin was a slave of one of the drow noble houses. There are several drow houses, which vie against each other for position, honor and prestige. Yet, all drow are cruel and foul, enslaving lesser creatures (surface and underground) to do their bidding. The party let the goblin go, for which he thanked them profusely.

The party travelled, rested and travelled some more, approaching the concerning location on their map, and the cleric composed himself and cast divination. Exploring with his mind, he perceived several scurrying rats.... no humans! ?... unclear. But then two foreboding dark presences were felt, and as the cleric focused on one, milky white pupil-less eyes came into focus, obscured by randomly waving slimy tentacles. And then the second dark presence drew near, perhaps sensing the Cleric's divinations, which were immediately ceased.

The party headed further into the underdark to the next location marked on their map. The goblin had said this was a major outpost for the drow.. The party's mage surveyed the area with a Wizard Eye spell, and then summoned a group of lizardmen to make contact with the Drow within. The Lizardmen followed the party's instructions, and then followed the instructions of the Drow, and were soon led to their kill box (death instruments unknown).

The party then approached the drow, torches lit, and explained they were on their way to continue negotiations with the House Devir for potential trade possibilities. The party showing the correct broach sigil for House Devir, and having clearly been allowed past the main security outpost, the drow allowed the party to make their way further into the underdark to arrange their meeting.

Concerned that a poor decision was made, the commander of the drow outpost approached the party and questioned them further about their identities and motivations. The Ranger and Cleric cleverly convinced the Drow of their bonafids, and even the grey elf in the party gave good rationale for her feigned dark and selfish impetus. The commander, of House Baenre gave two additional broach sigils of his own house to the party, to ease their passage... such is the lure of promised gain.

And so, the party continued on deeper into the underdark, leaving behind the second major drow outpost, and all it's complexity behind.

Cheers til next time! D2!!!

Travis

Jan 6, 2019: No recap ☹

Summary: The party’s first foray into the Shrine of the Kuo-Toa, where much mayhem ensued.

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Feb 24 at 8:04 PM

The Shrine be Defiled!

There was not much in the way of resistance remaining in the Shrine of the Kuo-Toa. The party returned a few days after their last incursion, and explored the eastern rooms. A variety of empty barracks and pool rooms were discovered. In one room, Kuo-Toa concubines of the high priest were found, and were quickly tied up and relieved of their valuables. In another room, two Kuo-Toa fanatics guarded an ornate pool, filled with odd tadpole creatures. The fanatics were dispatched, though the royal progeny were left unmolested. A huge pool was found, filled with other tadpole creatures... a general populace breeding ground it would seem. With the help of a summoned water elemental, a jade idol was recovered from the bottom, and a series of underwater passages identified. One final room revealed pools filled with maturing Kuo-Toa young... apparently almost at the stage of leaving the water.

The party strove north, to the last main unexplored part of the shrine. They quickly came upon what would be the final stand of the Kua-Toa people. A  tough slog the fight was, but the outcome was never in doubt. The party vanquished the enemy, with only one priest (the high priest?) fleeing the scene. The party explored the remaining areas and soon found the shrine's treasure vault. Seven very large chests, of varying design, and apparently with varying traps. The party disarmed the most valuable of chests and acquired significant rewards. However, as Cloyer the Thief retrieved a bejeweled Idol from on chest, he unexpectedly disappeared. Whilst the party did not know the whereabouts of their comrade, Cloyer was not yet dead.

Cloyer found himself surrounded by water, with a looming presence behind him. Turning, the giant form of Bilbdoolpoolp, the Kuo-Toan Lobster headed goddess glared at Cloyer. In shock, Cloyer began to breathe in water and drown. However, with a wave of a claw, the goddess provided Cloyer with gills such that he could breathe. He was then questioned in advance of his imprisonment. Cloyer was able to convince Bibby that returning him to the underdark so that he could be the true Harbinger of Doom to the cursed Dark Elves was in her favor. The goddess placed a Geas on Cloyer, such that he must never act or allow for the harm to her peoples and worshipers, and must strive in her service until a life debt is paid (that being 60,000 GP in Gems, and/or Drow live sacrifices in her temple).

The party has an open invitation to the Snirfneblin stronghold, or may choose to move on to the Drow city further underground.

And so ends The Shrine of the Kuo-Toa!

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Jun 2 at 8:44 PM

6/2 game recap:

After clearing the Kuo-toa temple, the party recovered and reequipped with the svirfneblin. They gathered what information on the drow that the gnomes could provide, then set off deeper into the caverns with the drow city in their sights.

Taking a relatively direct path towards the city, the party had a number of encounters with underdark denizens and fauna..

1st - A giant slug crossed their path.  The party let it go on its way.

2nd - A demon lurking in a side cavern jumped the party.  With a judicious application of protective magics and thrown hammers, the demon was dispatched (3000 EP, 1000 GP).

3rd - A large drow patrol (15 individuals) stopped the party.  Ycore, as the party's "leader" identified herself as being vouched for by representatives of House Banrae, and the party negotiated/bluffed their way past the patrol, showing that they all held medallions of drow houses, and sticking with the story of establishing trade with the dark elf city.  The drow commander allowed tehm to pass, and noted taht they were to check in at the "black tower" upon arriving in the City.

4th - A depression in the cavern floor yielded a quite resistant ooze blocking a narrow defile. After much casting about, the party finally climbed and jumped their way past the hazard.

5th - The party camped in a large chamber that showed signs of use as a way-stop for travelers going to and fro in the caverns.  After setting up camp, a merchant party arrived, camping on the opposite side of the chamber.  Other than some side-eye, the parties let one another be.  Some time during the third watch of the night, a chill came across the room and Redmond and Cloyer witnessed a collection of translucent being accompanied by corporeal undead (ghouls/ghasts).  These begins paused to parlay with the drow leader, and passed onward deeper into the caverns.  Redmond attempted to chat up the drow for some info, and generally got stonewalled by the either unhelpful, or literal-minded guards.  Noting a dwarf in the slave company, Redmond attempted to bargain for his release, but the drow merchant drove a hard bargain...  Cloyer, feeling the draw of his geas, attempted to coerce the merchant party to visit the city of the Kuo-toa, hoping that Blibdoolpoolp would recognize them as offerings.  The merchants noted that they were headed that way, and were intrigued by/skeptical of Cloyer's claim to have decimated the Kuo-toa forces there.

6th - The party opted to take an indirect path toward the deep city, and detoured toward a 'spider' icon on their rudimentary map.  While passing through the caverns, they found a fungus garden, although they attempted to pass through carefully, they set off several shriekers.  Judicious use of *fireball* silenced the fungal alarm, as well as a number of lurking violet fungi.

7th - They continued on toward the 'spider' symbol, finding a large (50x100x80'+) cavern filled with webs and desiccated remains.  Something was moving in the cavern, and the party attempted to illuminate the cavern.  Gleep called a few troglodytes as fodder for whatever lurked above.  Yup, spiders.  After the troglodytes' ignominious deaths, Gleep launched a fireball towards the roof, with limited success at roasting arachnids.  The party opted to back off and strategize for potential spider extermination tasks...

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Oct 20 at 8:18 PM

Yeah, thanks everyone. If anyone wants to write a short recap, would be cool to have.

Thinking on it, on the way home, D3 Vault of the Drow is done, and I'm happy with our finale. The party got to see the true underdark world of the drow, learned crucial details that connected many dots which will help the powers of good on the surface, and you took a crack at doing some lasting damage to the drow enemy. Perhaps having two mages in the battle, launching more heavy magic early, and maybe prepping with spells or potions may have evened the odds a bit more.

That said, there is an APB going out for the party, with the High Priestesses of Lolth having been summoned and given orders from their demonic mistress. The Noble House's plateau and the Fane itself is now heavily guarded around the clock, with several demons summoned to wander the grounds. Cloyer, the human thief, left behind in Lolth's temple entrapped in webs, and in the last moments of the battle seemingly feasted on by Lolth, is not dead. Lolth fed from his juices just to the brink of death, and then gated to the Abyss, where Cloyer is now being tortured and interrogated... it will not be long before the identities and purposes of the party members will be fully known.

The party quickly establishes disguises, magical and mundane, and begin their escape and ascent. You have a descent head start, though drow patrols closer to the surface may have been alerted by magical means, so final escape to the surface is not assured.

Unknown to you, in the midst of this chaos, when Lolth and her most loyal houses are focused on the surface invaders and the direct attack on her unholy demonhood, House Del'Armgo senses an opportunity, and perhaps their chance to free the Elder Elemental God (EEG) from his prison, where he was entrapped centuries ago by Lolth herself. The intrigue of the underdark continues...

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Oct 28 at 4:05 PM

D3 Vault of the Drow, final session recap.

The party made their way stealthily past the spider warrens and soon approached the main entrance to the Vault of the Drow, a huge underground cyst easily 6 miles across. While for many in the party the scene was one of dark gloom, for those with infravision, the vault bloomed in color and splendor... a dark fairyland. The party made their way past fungal forests and crystal outcroppings until they reached the Black Tower. There they met an elf cleric, sent by their patreons from the surface to ascertain their status and help where he could. Together the party made their way into the tower, where they presented their medallions and broaches, and gained green cloaks and were allowed access to the great drow city. Anyone wearing the green cloak was a foreigner allowed entrance to the vault, and would generally not be accosted. Alternatively, some party members forego the cloaks, hoping they would have time to present their broaches and medallions should anyone challenge them.

The party made their way into the drow city at the far end of the vault, lying just below the noble's plateau which loomed across a great watery rift. Within the city, the party observed all manner of strange and dreadful beings and behavior, slaves and harlots, drug dealers and alley gamblers, and even a passing pair of illithids. Within a tavern, the party met a low-spirited member of the drow noble house of Hun'ett named Hethelred. Showing their crossed scimitar broaches, the party made acquaintance, and then learned much of the goings on amoung the Drow houses. They learned there were eight houses in total, Del'Armgo, Baenre, Devir, Noquar, Hun'ett, Godeep, Tormtor and Oblodra. House Del'Armgo and House Tormtor had abandoned their worship of the demon queen Lolth, and switched their allegiance to the Elder Elemental God. The houses of Baenre, Devir and Noquar were Lolth's most devoted followers and struggled against the traitorous houses, who where currently regrouping after a failed effort to extend their power to the surface, with the help of the giantkind. House Hun'ett took no position in the conflict. Hethelred's sister, Hefeweisen, who was in training as a priestess of Lolth was betrayed by one of her fellow priestesses, likely from House Baenre. Lolth's anger was fierce and Hefeweisen was cast out of the cult and cursed most horridly. Hethelred and House Hun'ett are weakened and angry, and would encourage the party to take action against any of their enemy houses, or even against the priesthood of Lolth itself.

About this time, Gleep the magic-user was returning from the little mages room, when he passed by an open doorway. Within, he saw a terrifying 9 foot demon, having its way with their bar server, an indentured wood elf. Not able to ignore such evil and injustice, Gleep attempted to disintegrate the demon, but the creature's inate magic resistance defeated the spell. Gleep quickly made his way back to the main bar. The demon, charged into the common area and demanded to know who had just reentered the bar. The bartender pointed at Gleep, saying "that's him, boss". A fight quickly broke out, and the party soon hurt the demon to such an extent that the creature gated to some plane of the Abyss. The party quickly left the tavern. Outside, they met up with Hethelred who told them how the party could find his cursed sister, if they wanted to learn more about the great Fane of Lolth, and the priestesses who resided within.

The party, having learned much of the drow city and the competing noble houses, were prepared to make their way back to the surface, with extensive information that would greatly aid their powerful patreons. However, they first wanted to take one crack at doing some lasting damage to the drow kind, with an ambush into the great Fane of Lolth. The party tracked down Hefeweisen, and the end of a dark alleyway. The fallen drow priestess was cursed by Lolth to have the body of a giant spider upon which her drow head, arms and torso were mated. She was clearly in agony and dispair, but shared with the party all she could tell of the great Fane.

The party made their way to the noble plateau and then through the passage to the Fane itself. Using invisibility, the party avoided the spider sentries and entered the Fane. They came across a great pillar of amber liquid rising from a pool, within which was suspended a great black spider with the face of a beautiful drow woman. The party realized this to not actually be the demoness queen Lolth, but rather an artifact intended for the general population for their worship within the temple. The party made their way downstairs to the basement, where only the high priestesses were allowed, A guardian spider on the stairs was quickly dispatched.

The party came across a large room with an alter and a pair of changes on the far end. An aura of fear and dread filled the place, and Ycore the elf fled in terror. The party found a paralyzed drow male in one cage, and chose to place him within the humanoid shaped cavity which was on top of the alter. Suddenly webs shot out from little perforations in the alter and cocooned the drow. Cloyer the human thief, now pledged to the Kuo-Toan god blibdoolpoolp via a geas, drove a dagger through the encased drow, pledging the sacrifice to his goddess.

With this act taking place in the unholy warrens of the Fane, a beautiful drow woman entered the room from a side passage filled with webs. The evil demoness queen Lolth herself!

The demoness quickly transformed into her giant towering spider shape and unsuccessfully attempted to gate in aid from the Abyss. Meanwhile the party's magic could not break through Lolth's innate magic resistance. Lolth summoned 9 giant spiders to aid her in the battle, and the party was fraught from all directions. Cloyer was webbed by Lolth. The rest of the party chose to flee, leaving Cloyer behind, to be killed and eaten by Lolth, or worse.

The party then made their way out of the Fane, through the noble plateau and drow city, across the great vault, and onward and upward towards the surface, with pursuit perhaps not far behind.