

Thunderspire Labyrinth: 9-19-09 Game Session Notes

Game Date: Session 15 (9/19/09)

N1: Outlaws: The group was surrounded in the town square and falsely accused of setting the Half Moon Inn ablaze. Terrien Darkseeker, the group's guide, is taken away by the Ogre clan (led by a creature known only as "The Butcher") and assumed a horrible fate.

N2: Action Points: The group narrowly escaped their last encounter. Thus, the group does in fact receive their Action Points back at the start of this session.

N3: Down But Not Out (well maybe): Every party member except Magnum (4 HP) and Red Dawn (18 HP) suffered at least one death save during The Narthex and Guard Room combined encounters. Draco and Justice are stabilized but still unconscious. Healing surges have not been used to re-power any of the group.

N4: Experience Points: Overall total for session fifteen was 2,375 XP (800 for The Narthex, 925 for the Guard Room, and 650 for part of Torog's Shrine). Thus, the XP per character was 395. With 4,196 after session 14, the new per character total is 4,591 XP. The XP for level 5 is 5,500.

N5: Money Bags: Alas, session 15 was quite costly. The group lost all its personal money when they were arrested (this is still the case). The dead bodies hold the following coins:

23 GP | 29 SP | 54 CP

Note: 10 gp was already subtracted from the group's total to pay for Darkseeker's daily guide fee.

N6: Belt of Sacrifice: Draco could be given the bugbear's magic belt (since he has the most surges to sacrifice and is the hardest to hit). The daily power has not been used.

N7: Another Quest: The group accepts a third quest at the start of session 15...

Quest 3 – A Favor for the Mages: Orontor asks the group to search for clues on the disappearance of his acolyte mage, Paldemar. Learn his fate and aid him if possible. Reward: 600 XP and 600 gp.

"Look into the activities of my acolyte mage Paldemar," Orontor says, "he has gone missing on an important mission for the Mages of Saruun. If you can learn his fate or aid him in his mission, you will earn the favor of my brotherhood. I have not heard from Paldemar in many weeks, and the few reports I have received of his activities in the Labyrinth indicates that he might have searched the knowledge of the Grimmerzhul duergar of the Horned Hold. Help me, and the Mages of Saruun will owe you a debt of gratitude."

Note: Quest Cards have been made for easy reference and passed to Red Dawn.

N8: Time of Day: The group did receive a rest during its stay in the prison. They set out at 6:00 AM and traveled 2 hours in the catacombs under the prison. The battle took an additional 2 hours. It is currently 10:00 AM. An extended rest cannot occur until 10:00 AM the following day.

N9: Movement Options: Ben added movement to the key stats of the player summary card (as this question came up over and over again).

N10: Heal Thee: The Wizards of the Coast forum members have several excellent options for healing the party's two fallen comrades...

*Encounter Powers: The conscious party members can use their powers to force a heal (Inspiring Word, Healing Word, etc). A short rest is required to restore these powers though. A short rest is about 5 minutes long. If you use an encounter power during a short rest, you need another short rest to renew it so that you can use it again (PHB pg. 263).

*Stabilized after a Short Rest: An unconscious character can spend a healing surge after a short rest. If the healing effect requires you to spend a healing surge but you have none left, you are restored to 1 hit point and it becomes conscious after a short rest (PHB pg. 295).

*Second Wind: Make a DC 10 Heal check to allow an adjacent character to use his or her Second Wind without the character having to spend an action. The character doesn't gain the defensive bonuses normally granted by Second Wind (PHB pg. 185).

N11: Ammo Check: Some of the ranged weapons of the group have been decreased. Magnum is down 3 shurikens and McBeard is down 4 throwing hammers (just 2 remaining).

N12: Charging the Right Way: Move your speed as part of the charge and make a melee basic attack (PHB pg. 287). We had been adding powers with charges in the past which is incorrect.

N13: Gut Check: Can you perform a heal check next to an adjacent enemy without provoking an attack of opportunity? Turns out you can...heal checks to stabilize are not a ranged or area attack, you aren't moving out of their threatened reach, and nothing under the heal check skill says that it provokes an OA (PHB pg. 185 and pg. 290).

N14: Cheers: Justice rolled a one in the wee hours of the morning and still must belly up to the bar to make amends.

N15: Hit Point and Surge Recap: Here is where the group currently "stands"...

- Magnum: 4 HP | 9 Surges Remaining
- Red Dawn: 18 HP | 7 Surges Remaining
- McBeard: 10 HP | 5 Surges Remaining
- Bookman: 8 HP | 5 Surges Remaining
- Justice: 0 HP | 4 Surges Remaining (unconscious)*
- Draco: 0 HP | 3 Surges Remaining (unconscious)*

N16: Alarms and Voices: The group has barely defeated the initial Chamber of Eyes guard unit. With a perception check (DC 12), they hear lots of laughter and loud noise coming from the steel door ahead. With another perception (DC 18), slight stirring and noises are heard. The group has 10 minutes in between the next encounter.

Note: Remind the group that the ledge is not a room but a balcony. Thus, closing the door won't conceal anyone.

The Plan (crafted at a work lunch hour):

The guys want to quickly position the dead bodies (and leave the money/treasure) to make it look like the three Duergar Guards actually turned on the Bugbear and his Hobgoblin soldiers. Once they do this, they will rush to the front of the tunnels and hide (so they can do a Short Rest). They don't want the enemy to come out and see the bodies and start hunting for the battered party. If they pull the plan off then it looks like an enemy squabble which will buy them some key time.

Athletics: Party will use its strength to drag the bodies to their proper spots within the dungeon.

Bluff: Group will rely on this skill to position the bodies in the right poses.

Dungeoneering: The characters will use this skill to navigate the tunnels to get to an unseen spot.

Stealth (maybe): Maybe to do all of this as quietly as possible (without alerting distant guards).

I thought the 75% (6 + bonus) was a little on the easy side so I felt 65% (7 + bonus) was a little more challenging.

The group is a fourth-level party of six but two of the characters are unconscious and won't be able to do this skill challenge. Also, I went with a complexity of 2 (6 successes before 3 failures) as I feel the hoax they are going for here is a toughy.

The Party's trained skills from above are as follows:

Rogue: +3 Athletics, +10 Bluff, +2 Dungeoneering, & +11 Stealth

Fighter: +9 Athletics, +2 Bluff, +6 Dungeoneering, & +3 Stealth

Wizard: +2 Athletics, +2 Bluff, +8 Dungeoneering, & +4 Stealth

Warlord: +7 Athletics, +5 Bluff, +2 Dungeoneering, & +1 Stealth (but he will be healing the other 2)

So, I have set the DCs at:

Athletics DC: 16

Bluff DC: 17

Dungeoneering DC: 15

Stealth (if we use it) DC: 18

Potential DC modifiers: Did they leave the money in place? Did they leave the magic items (Belt of Sacrifice) in place? How much detail do they offer in re-setting the scene?

Note: For any other skill idea, take the party max and add 7.

Post Skills Challenge

When the party moves to the caves to hide and re-group, one Hobgoblin Solider will eventually stumble onto the crime scene from the steel door. He will immediately call for guards and Krand to review the carnage. Krand will hrmpf, pace, carefully review the bodies and call for a recently returned patrol to stand guard. If the group **fails** in its skill challenge, Krand will be suspicious and leave the veteran Solider to tactically support the guard unit and ultimately search out the party in the caves. If the group is **successful**, he actually believes the Duergar didn't mesh with the Bugbear and is content with simply leaving a minion garrison (minus the Sergeant) at the front entrance until reinforcements arrive two days later.