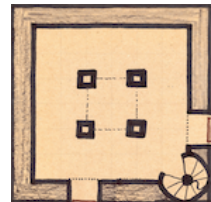


Episode 12 At Dervish, Searching for the Portal

Tuesday, March 14th: Weather breeze, pt cloudy – Arrival at Dervish

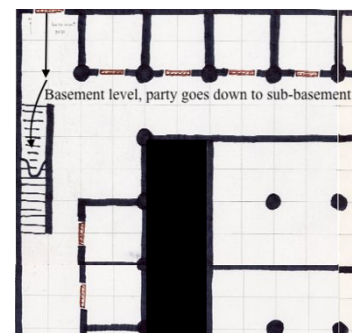
1. Party arrives from Orctown on their way back from escorting Merchant Thizmour and his daughter the Selleze then to Orctown, as he journeys back to Circe. (Pay for that mission of 48 gp. each is expected upon returning to Guardraw. But the party had also been tasked to look for the “portal” that the evil priestess of Seth said she had used, when she was interrogated while charmed by Melodious. The party members are Oliver, Melodious, Groa, Veylann, Doil, Slippa, and Belfor. (Oliver, Melodious and Groa swap xp.’s for days of training credit to make 4th level. All four of the NPC’s remain at 3rd level.)
2. Upon arrival the party went to see Captain Wishhook, commander of the Dervish Fortress, about this. Also, to see if they could use that store room in the basement of the northwest tower for lodging rather than have to be out in the courtyard or rent expensive rooms. Also, the party had used the basement door to the abandoned and closed off Hold before, and wanted to do the same this time.
3. Captain Wishhook says no to any entry through the store room. or use of the store room for lodging. “I have received a message from Mister Urtles. He says that the idea of there being a ‘Portal’ here can’t be considered credible. The words of a Sunnite priestess of a strange god of trickery can’t be trusted. The bandits surely must have come from somewhere else. I have accepted Mister Urtles’s wisdom on this, and it would be a good idea if you would as well. Maybe there are still some bandits in those caves, but there should be no danger from the Hold itself. A few undead, maybe, and you killed those, so nothing to worry about. Do I make myself clear? I don’t want you opening any of those boarded up doors to the Hold, either!”
4. Melodious made the case that the party really would be performing a valuable service in proving whether the portal existed or not, which might calm unnecessary rumors. The party would add to and assist the guard, freeing up the guardsman usually stationed at that basement entry to the Hold for other duties. Maybe Captain Wishhook was tired, but he was rather easily cajoled into granting the party what they asked.
5. Slippa expected Veylann to rent a room at the tavern for the two of them, but Veylann declined, saying it was too expensive at 5 Sovereigns, even with her paying half. Lodging in the basement was free. Slippa was rather angry over this, and said, “Well, don’t expect me to go to the Equinox Party with me. I’ll find someone not so cheap who values a girl’s love!”
6. Expenses each -.5gp for food and drink at the tavern. (Rations from road trip replaced.)

Tower basement:

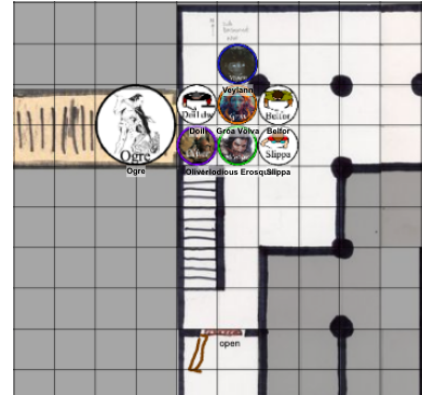


Wednesday, Mar 15th: Cloudy. At Dervish.

7. The party entered the Hold at the basement level after removing the shoring and opening the door south from the basement store room. Apparently the door from the access tunnel to the Hold had been left unbarred. No monsters were encountered. The remains of the zombies previously encountered were gone. Doil and Oliver led the rest of the party down the nearby steps to the sub-basement. Three giant rats fled into the debris toward the eastern end of the room. The party assembled at the secret door down the steps to the caves below.



8. Doil opened the door. There was an ogre standing there! Or, rather a bit stooped over due to the limited height, as if he had been listening at the door. He was surprised when Doil opened it. There was a flurry of attacks by everyone. The ogre got off a swing at Doil but missed. That was the only chance he got. The dead ogre was dragged back out of the way.

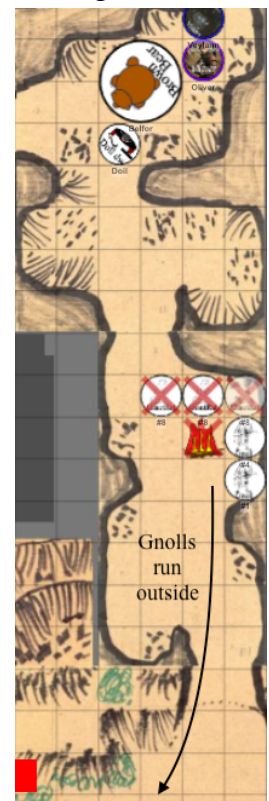


9. The party descended the stairs. As Oliver and Doil led the way into the first cavern, they could see flickering of a fire in the next cavern to the west, the pool cavern where the bandits had been lodging. It was actually a fire under something, that turned out to be a giant constrictor snake suspended on a pole over the fire. And, there were ogres, two of them, in sight. The ogres didn't notice the approaching party, and everyone attacked with missile weapons or spells except Doil, who stood at the front prepared to hit the first ogre to approach.



The ogres eventually reacted, and it turned out that there were three of them. One had been out of sight off to the left. Belfor moved to the front and assumed bear form, and attacked toward one of the ogres on the right next to the pool. That ogre hit him, and the one at the back of the cavern came up and threw a javelin at the bear, also hitting. The third ogre attacked Doil but missed. That was as much as the ogres could accomplish. Soon all three were big dead bodies cluttering up the cavern. Belfor's bear form was badly hurt, but otherwise nobody had been injured. Belfor remained as a bear for the time being.

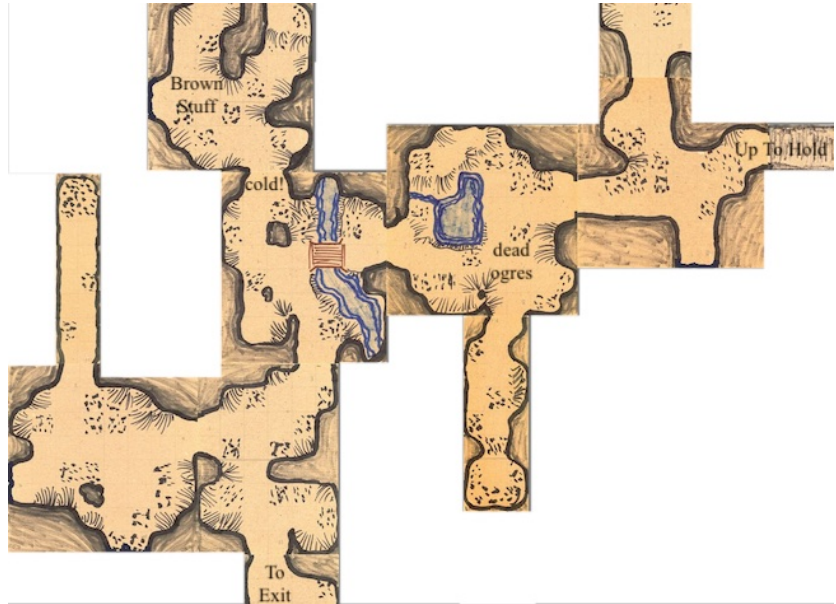
10. The party paused to gather up whatever treasure the ogres were carrying. The three in the cavern had 7, 7, and 14 Sovereigns. The one at the secret door had been carrying 6 Empros. In addition, there was a sack containing four agate figurines as well as a set of seven differently shaped dice crafted of ivory. One had four sides, the next six, and the last was a round sphere. The party didn't take the time to search thoroughly, since the purpose was to find the portal.



11. The party continued through a cavern with a bridge then south toward the entrance. Two gnolls were camped at the cave entrance, apparently roasting dead giant rats. Both heard the party coming and ran outside. The party did not pursue. There was a cavern off to the west of the path to the cave entrance that was empty except for a giant wolf spider at the end of a tunnel. As it approached Belfor the bear, he killed it. That was all there was nearby except a branch north from the bridge cavern.

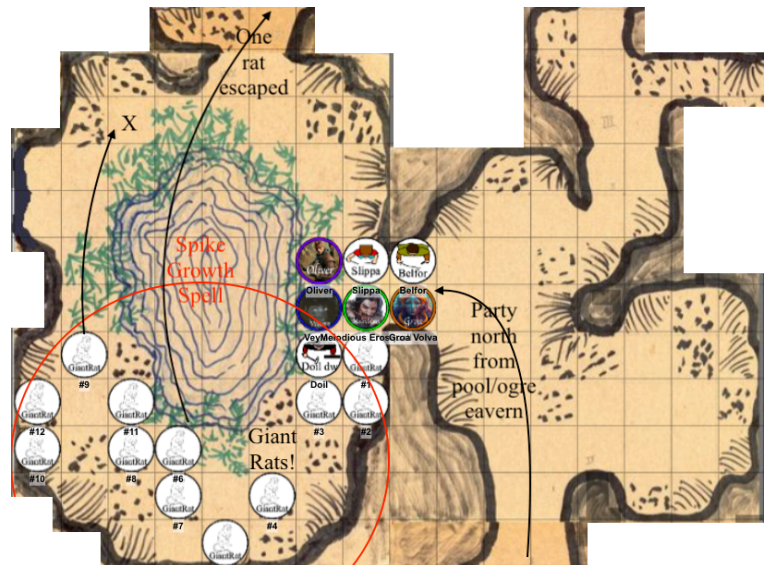
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12. Returning to the bridge cavern, the air was noticeably colder at that exit. Frosty even, at the entrance. Melodious, using his “Mage Hand” holding a lantern, provided illumination inside the room. There did seem to be swirls of brown dust around the lantern. In fact, most of the northern end of the cavern was covered by what appeared to be a brown dust. The body of a gnoll, probably, could be seen there to the left, and maybe an orc and something toward the right, both covered by the brown stuff. Veylann ventured in and was immediately swarmed by a cloud of brown arising from the nearest patch of the stuff, choking and freezing him. He backed out quickly, leaving the brown dust where he had been, but that was closer and now attacked Slippa similarly, and as she withdrew, Melodious. All three withdrew to a more respectful distance. But, now the coating of brown extended all the way to the cavern entrance, and the chill effect extended as far as the bridge, well into the bridge cavern. Nobody in the party knew what this might be, and the decision seemed to be to leave it alone rather than experiment further.



13. The party took the one remaining unexplored route within the cavern complex. From the cavern at the foot of the stairs there was a passage north, and from it a western exit led to a sunlit cavern with no roof, essentially the bottom of a large sinkhole. There was a largish pool of water there in the middle, with ferns and other greenery growing around the margins. There was also a north exit, toward which the party was moving when Doil and Melodious (?) spotted rats in the pool cavern.

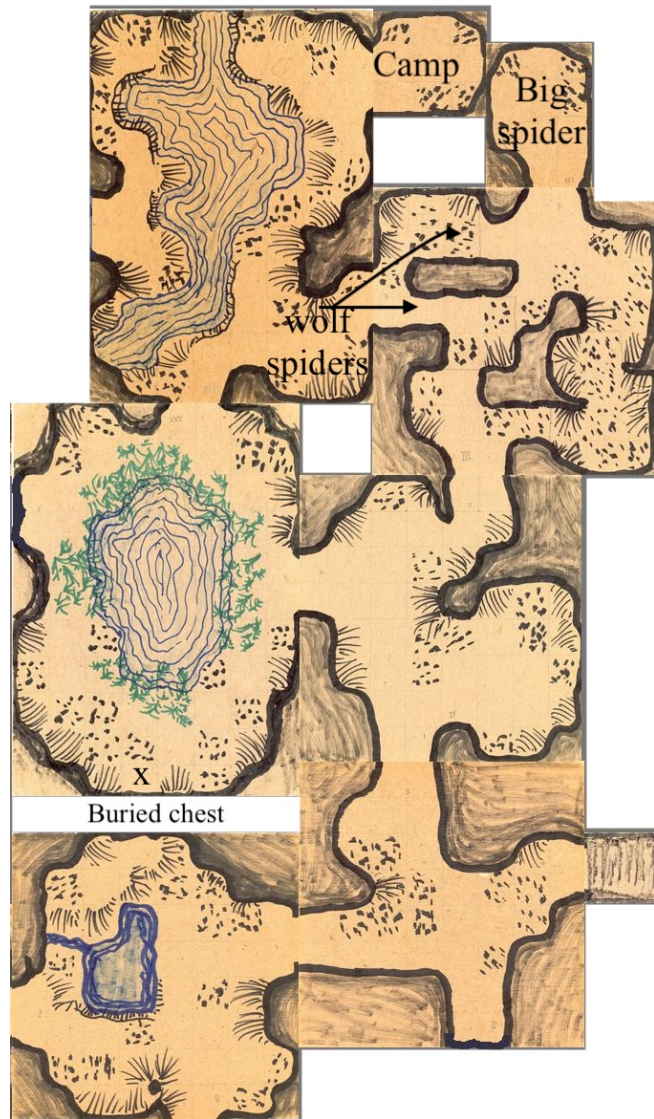
14. The party attacked, moving into the pool cavern to take shots. It turned out that there were a dozen giant rats. The party got the jump on them. Critically, Belfor cast a “Spike Growth” spell that neatly covered all of the still living giant rats. One escaped by diving into the pool, swimming to the north end and out the north exit of the cavern. Others



died of the spikes or not moving and being shot down in place.

15. Oliver took a look into the cavern immediately north of the pool cavern. That cavern, like the bridge cavern, also had a small stream running through it. But what Oliver noticed was three giant wolf spiders enjoying a freshly killed giant rat, likely the one that had escaped through the pool. Oliver withdrew without being spotted. The party returned east out of the pool cavern and ventured west through a tangle of small passages. That meant that different party members went in different directions. After going about 40 or 50 feet Oliver and Veylann came out at about the same place, and right ahead was a giant spider, one of the huge web-building types. They managed to get the jump on the spider, killing it immediately. The commotion, though, attracted the attention of the three giant wolf spiders from the adjacent stream cavern to the west. Those spiders attacked Melodious and Veylann but were quickly killed.

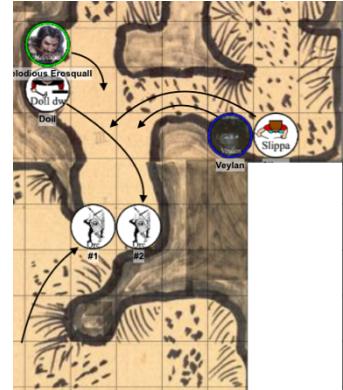
16. The party finished exploring the cavern of twisty passages and then searched the stream cavern, all without finding additional exits. Except for the part of the cave complex filled with the cold brown stuff, it seemed that the complex had now been thoroughly explored. No portal had been found. It was still probably mid to late morning, since the party had not yet stopped for a rest. It was Groa who suggested taking a long rest to recover spells. After some discussion, that was what was decided. Belfor and Groa, both of whom could benefit from a long rest with spell recovery, would rest at the back of a small niche at the back end of the stream cavern. Someone would stay there and guard, while the other four party members would search the nearby caverns thoroughly. There could be hidden treasure or secret doors or, well, who knows?



17. The stream cavern was searched first, then the pool cavern. While searching the pool cavern, Slippa noticed that the sandy floor around there the rats had been was disturbed by more than just rat tracks and diggings. With help from Veylann, Oliver and Melodious a buried chest was found. It was in good condition, too, except for signs of being roughly handled. It looked rather new, actually. It contained a large quantity of coins. That would prove to be 500 Sovereigns, 100 Ducats, and 100 Pennies, all of the currency of Aarbat. There was also a small pouch containing 5 pearls. Aside from the treasure, it was noticed

that the time seemed to be late afternoon buy the shifting of shadows, with sunlight no longer reaching down to the sandy floor of the cavern. Occasionally gusts of wind above would blow a sprinkling of more sand from the surface down into the cavern. Melodious remarked that the weather had been cloudy when the party had started their adventure in the morning.

18. Somewhat later, as Melodious, Doil, Slippa and Veylann were searching the cavern of twisty passages, two orcs suddenly appeared coming up from the south. They were as surprised as the party members. Doil attacked immediately. The others searching, Melodious, Slippa and Veylann, were close enough to get off attacks too, and the two orcs died before being able to react. The orcs had 5 gp. and 19 sp. between them, and greataxes of inferior “pot metal” that at most might bring a silver piece each if sold. The rest of the searching did not find anything of value or particular interest. The last cavern searched was the one east of the pool cavern.



19. The sleepers, Belfor and Groa, completed their eight hours of rest and spell recovery. Others received “short rest” credit. [I don’t have hit point situations for characters. Veylann and Slippa and Melodious took damage from the mold, and maybe someone else took hits. Probably Belfor would have used healing spells on them before he took his long rest to recover spells.] The party is now prepared to continues adventuring. It is likely about the “12h hour,” about sunset or somewhat later, you figure. There’s no light from the sun visible in the sky in the pool room, but you can see stars. The moon must be just rising in the east, since there’s a sliver of moonlight on the western edge of the sinkhole rim on the west side.

Treasure:

- 4 Ogres: 29 gp., 6 pp., 4 agate figurines (@25 gp. est.), 7 ivory “dice” (@ 10 gp. est.)
- Treasure chest (@3 gp): 100 cp., 100 sp., 500 gp., pouch with 5 pearls (@100 gp.)
- 2 Orcs: 19 sp., 5 gp., 2 pot-metal greataxes (@1 sp. est.)
- Expended: Various arrows and bolts, .5 gp. each for rations or meals (same either way).

Experience:

	Oliver	Melodious	Groa	Veylann	Doil	Slippa	Belfor
Ep. 11 Escort to Orctown 1200xp	+240	+240	+240	+120	+120	+120	+120
Convince Wishhook 20xp (M)		+20					
4 ogres(CR2 1800)(OMB(VDSB))	+360	+360	+360	+180	+180	+180	+180
3 rats(1/8),2 gnoll(½)(allx½)138xp	+28	+28	+28	+14	+14	+14	+14
1 g.w.spider(¼)(B(OMG)(DVS))	+8	+8	+8	+4	+4	+4	+15
brown mold (2/2)(M(SVOG((DB)))	+32	+64	+32	+32	+16	+32	+16
12 g.rats(1/8)(OMGB(VDS) 300xp	+55	+55	+55	+27	+27	+27	+55
1 g.spider(1)(O(MGV)((DSB))200xp	+62	+31	+31	+31	+15	+15	+15
3 g.w.sp.(¼)(OM(SVG)((DB)) 150xp	+38	+38	+19	+19	+9	+19	+9
2 orcs(½)(M(dvs)) 200xp		+80		+40	+40	+40	
Adventure(Ep. 11-12)Totals	+823	+924	+773	+467	+425	+451	+424
Previous totals	3664	3585	3135	1645	1656	1692	1529
Updated Character Totals:	4487	4509	3898	2112	2081	2143	1953

Training:

Oliver, Melodius, Groa all: 0(to 5th); Diol, Veylann 1 day, Slippa 5 days, Belfor 0 days((to 4th);

