

Flower Moon ~ 27th Day

After the morning meal today, I went in search of Lieutenant Braddock, in order to seek his assistance in disposing of the items taken from the goblins and hobgoblins. The Lieutenant said that I should speak with the mess Sergeant, Milo Minderbinder. I was surprised they should have Sergeant in charge of messes, but the Lieutenant informed me that the "mess" was the army term for their dining lodge. Which is appropriate, I suppose, after seeing its condition after meals. Anyway, he said that the Sergeant had developed a side business in the trading of goods.

Initially, the sergeant wished to trade me shares in a "syndicate"¹ instead of standard coinage. After I informed him that I had no desire to share in sin, he then offered me sheets of paper. Lieutenant Braddock said that they were army script and could be used to purchase items from any army base. So I obtained 420 gold aurei worth of script in exchange for our spoils. Divided four ways gives 105 gold each. Not bad for a day of work.

Towards the end of the day Corporal Gomerus directed two new arrivals to the barn to meet with us. Apparently, the agency felt we could use reinforcements, so they sent us two more special agents.

The first special agent was a female warrior, who goes by the name of Tesh. She clearly shows the blood of the Long-Tooth People. She wore a breastplate and carried a double-bladed axe that is quite popular with my mother's people. She was polite and appeared competent enough – she said that she had been in the military and had experience fighting ogres. Now if I can get Grognar to quit calling her "pig-woman."

The second agent was a slim, blond-haired man named Calyx. He is fair of face and foul of tongue. He reminded me of Cassius, but without the honesty and helpfulness. Calyx didn't say why he was sent, but my guess is that Senator Belarius wished him to be out of the way and he wanted us to keep an eye upon him.

Flower Moon ~ 28th Day

Late Evening, The Barn In Castle Village.

An eventful day. We headed back into the valley early in the morning. The group consisted of Dawn Flower, Grognar, Tesh, Calyx and myself. Apple Thief didn't look that well, so I left him behind and Big Hill stayed behind in order to tend him.

1 Syndicate – a word unfamiliar to Speaks With Wind.

Once again, Grognar sent Scratch up and we found foes as they shot at him with arrows. This time they actually managed to hit the Scratch twice. Fortunately, they were only feather wounds. We immediately began to move in the directions the arrows had come from. At first we just saw a few goblins – I shot one with an arrow. Grognar charged several while Calyx snuck around and sniped at them with his bow. Tesh moved quickly into melee while Dawn Flower waited to heal the injured.

Grognar was hit several times but had difficulty hitting his foes. Scratch landed and began to whittle away at a half-dozen or so foes. I shot at several of those who were fighting Scratch. Seeing that the bird had his foes between a Roc and hard place, I decided to change my targets. I cast an spell of Enlargement upon myself and ran to aid Tesh. I entered the Frenzy and struck down the hobgoblin facing her with a single blow.

At that point, Calyx did prove to be of some use, as he cast an enchantment of multi-colored light striking down three of the hobgoblins, ending the battle. We quickly took the survivors prisoner – 5 hobgoblins and 8 goblins. Two goblins were dead as was the hobgoblin I struck down.

Dawn Flower healed Grognar, who was badly hurt. I myself had only taken a minor wound.

Near the area where we fought the hobgoblins was a circular stone tower, about 10 paces or so in radius, with a door set in the east wall. The door had been locked, but Calyx pulled out a set of thieves' picks and proceeded to use them in an expert manner to open the door. Inside was a single room, filled with five humans and five hobgoblins who had been empowered with the energies of the Death World. They had been turned into zombies.

Dawn Flower immediately called upon the ancestors to channel the energies of the Life World through her and against our foes. Grognar and Tesh held the zombies at the doorway, while I stood behind them. Due to my larger size, I could attack over my allies' heads. Calyx ran away.

Both Tesh and I entered the Frenzy. Under the influence of the Frenzy, Tesh and I slew several of the zombies, with notable assistance from Grognar. One of the zombies exploded when Tesh destroyed it, but the enhanced vitality of the Frenzy enabled her to resist the rotting plague. Dawn Flower again channeled Life energies against them, searing the remainder severely. When it was clear we had them, Calyx returned with a spear and poked a zombie.

Tesh made a mistake. She slew a zombie and then stepped into the building, allowing the remaining ones to surround her. She stepped back, but one of the zombies struck a critical blow against her, felling her. It was only Dawn Flower's healing powers that rebuked her death.

Despite the loss of Tesh from the combat, we managed to finish them off.

Inside the tower, we found ten additional bodies that had not been empowered. Six of them were human, four were hobgoblin. The human bodies (both zombie and not) had remnants of imperial uniforms on them. Presumably, these were soldiers that had been slain and then either animated or store in order to be animated in the future. We dismembered the hobgoblin corpses and decided to take the human bodies back with us for honorable disposal.

We decided to return to camp. On the way back we "interrogated" our captives. While not as efficient as the imperial professional interrogators, we did manage to gain some useful information. Specifically:

- All of the buildings in the ruins are supposed to be body warehouses used by the necromancer.
- The goblinoids are deathly afraid of the necromancer.
- They didn't know exactly where he is located, but thought that it is towards the center of the ruins.

When we returned to Castle Village, we found that an Imperial Inquisitor had arrived and was interrogating the five hobgoblins that we had taken prisoner in our previous foray. I was rather surprised – I didn't expect the Inquisition. The inquisitor, named Chaplin, was quite happy that we had taken more prisoners as opposed to just slaughtering them outright. Apparently he has been negotiating with the hobgoblins.

Chaplin told us that the necromancer is a goblin named Gorim, who had indeed been the assistant to the previous necromancer. Gorim has enslaved the goblins and hobgoblins and has been "recruiting" more undead – either by having his slaves bring him corpses to animate or by making them corpses if they don't make quota.

Chaplin also informed us that a division of the Praetorian Guard should be arriving in a couple of days for a full on assault on the valley. He said that might be avoided if we could rid the valley of Gorim prior to their arrival. If we did that, he thinks a negotiated settlement might be possible. He also said that he thought one or two of the hobgoblins might be willing to lead us to the

necromancer.

In addition to my report to the agency via the enchanted book, I made sure to inform Lieutenant Braddock of the details of what happened. I suggested that if the army does go in, that they might look at bottling up the undead inside the buildings using long-hafted weapons.

I asked the Lieutenant if there were any halfling scouts or other small creatures who might be interested in joining us for a short time on the morrow; not to go into combat but to scout on Scratch's back. The Lieutenant said he would check and would get back to me in the morning.

I made sure to me with Milo to dispose of our loot before retiring, getting yet more army script for it. Milo seemed especially interested in the ten suits of studded leather armor; apparently he has been having an armor shortage for new recruits. I also purchased an unusual looking hammer on a long spearshaft from him; he called it a "lucerne hammer."

This and my other game recaps may be found at www.launchpadzero.net .