



## Adventure #2

*[Session Music: Pandora - Conan the Barbarian station].*

Last time we played, the PCs had infiltrated the goblin hideout in search of Sildar Hallwinter and Gundren Rockseeker, but according to their enthralled goblin accomplices, the dwarf has already been taken to a place called Cragmaw Castle. The human, Sildar, will probably be cooked up and eaten by the goblins and Klarg the bugbear at the hideout.



[Every levels to 2<sup>nd</sup> while they recuperate in the ambush area just outside the entrance]

Only three goblins have been slain so far: the two guards outside and the one on the bridge. All the bodies have been hidden, and hidden from their charmed allies as well, whose spell could be broken if seeing their dead gobber friends.



First they have the wild mage Juju instruct the goblins Splug and Nob to go inside with some bear jerky and distract the three wolves. Splug and Nob are happy enough to comply with their new buddy, they like Juju, and they like playing with the wolves anyway, they're like pets, so they go in and draw the wolves away.

Elgwith the elf rogue sneaks back in, followed by Cora Lightfoot the monk, Thoradin the cleric and Juju the wild mage [to reiterate, Juju is an experimental class I'm adopting from DCC just to see what happens].

Elgwith stealthily makes his way toward the back of the cave, hearing little more than a few rocks fall and the constant rush of water from the stream. He saw 3 goblins on his

previous entry in a large chamber near the waterfall, and this is where he heads now. Sure enough, they're still there lounging lazily about, so he motions the others to approach. Thoradin the dwarf has darkvision, but Cora and Juju will have more trouble, so they carry small stones with *light* cast upon it, but keep them hidden. As a precaution, Juju casts a darkness Cantrip at the opening on the bridge, in case foes come at them from above. Elgweh hides behind a stalagmite, watching the goblins, and decides to unleash an arrow at an unsuspecting foe. It catches a goblin squarely in the throat and it dies in a gurgle of blood. The other two are completely shocked, not even seeing where the arrow came from. Cora kills one with a throwing star, and the last goblin flees screaming up a nearby stairway.

They've all advanced into the top chamber now, and Elgweh hugs the corner and peeks into a large room flickering with light from coals. The chamber is packed with crates and sacks, probably stuff stolen from the trail ambushers. He hears voices in goblin: "Klarg! Intruders! Somebody killin'!" "*WHAAT?*" But by the time Elgweh gets a look their enemies have already hidden themselves.



But the circle of burning coals looks enticing, so they toss a couple flasks of oil into the room. WHOOSH! Flames explode up, not hitting or hurting anyway, but in the sudden burst Elgweh spots two goblins lurking behind crates.

"Show yourselves, cowards!" shouts a deep voice, whom they all assume to be the bugbear Klarg. They also hear a deep growl that someone identifies as a wolf. To

answer that ominous sound, a *minor illusion* is cast, this time recreating the sound of a rampaging bear, just to sow more confusion and fear among their enemies.



Juju the wild mage advances to use spellburn-- draining a point of Intelligence to cast a spell not memorized but in his spellbook: *stinking cloud*. The spell works, but he rolls very poorly, and manifests a belching burp of yellow noxiousness that washes over



Elgweth, making him gag. "GET—away from me!" the elf snarls.

The stinking cloud settles right on top of the bugbear Klarg, clinging to him like an obnoxious smelly cape. But unfortunately, Juju has ended his turn right in the line of fire. Two arrows whistle out, whittling him down to low hit points, then Klarg tosses a javelin, and THAT downs the wild mage.

He crumples to the floor with a soft whimper of pain.



The party doesn't really want to advance straight into their line of fire, but there's not much choice. Either that or try to goad them out, but the bad guys seem entrenched. Elgweh settles for an arrow he plants right in Klarg's shoulder, wounding him.

[DM Note: I should have made Klarg more interesting, antagonist and talkative...but I didn't. Poo.]

Elgweh backs away to the rear of the water room, and that's when he really notices the river trap. He sees the stops that can be kicked out, so he does that. A wave rushes down the tunnel, perhaps further masking the sounds of their battle, although the waterfall alone was fairly obscuring.

Cora runs in, slicing the head off a goblin in hiding, and then Klarg and his wolf charge forward, both howling. The bugbear, wolf, elf and dwarf all clash on the stairway, blades and teeth ripping and cutting. Elgweth kicks the wolf in the head and dodges a vicious morningstar blow that rips a chunk out of the wall.



Cora flanks them from behind and beats the wolf down. Another arrow flies out from the goblins in cover and one of them hurts her pretty bad. But between Elgweth's rapier and Thoradin's hammer, the bugbear can't take much more punishment, and his skull is finally caved in, but not before he nearly kills the dwarf. That morningstar is very, very dangerous they discover.

Speaking of nearly killed, Juju the wild mage rolls a ONE on his first death save. He loses two at once and teeters on the brink of death. On his third and final save...he rolls a TWENTY.

He rises up like Lo Pan in *Big Trouble in Little China*, clinging to 1 meager hit point, but

otherwise functional. [And lucky for him because I don't think anyone was going to waste resources on an NPC at this point].

Out of combat momentarily, they search the room. It is filled with items stolen from the Lionshield Coster; the crates, barrels and sacks stamped with their emblem in blue ink. Elgweth recognizes the coster from Phandalin. There's a hole in the wall on the east wall, and eventually they figure out it is a chimney leading down to where Splug and Nob are still playing with the wolves. Klarg has a key on his stinky body that opens a chest, and there they find the biggest yield yet: hundreds of copper and silver coins, a jade owl statuette and two blue potions. They don't use magic to identify them yet, keeping the little spellpower they have remaining to heal.

They don't find anything else of value, and nothing that looks like it might have belonged to Gundren or Sildar. In fact they don't find any evidence of a human being devoured in here at all, not even in the smoldering fire pit. There's still one large room

remaining across the bridge, where Splug/Nob said the sleeping quarters are, so they head that direction. Thoradin and Juju hang back, they're particularly bad off and clinging to low single digits, but Elgweth and Cora are in serviceable shape. To help even the odds in a possible confrontation, Elgweth SEVERS KLARG'S HEAD and carries it as an intimidation trophy. Furthermore, they amplify their ranks with another *minor illusion* that creates the sound of marching boots, lots and lots of them. They announce their presence long before they reach the final chamber, with Klarg's severed head dripping a trail of blood the whole way.



Sure enough, there are more goblins left in the final chamber, and they've prepared themselves for attack. On the upper level of the room a goblin has dragged the nearly naked human Sildar Hallwinter. He looks rough, he's been beaten nearly senseless, cut and bruised and staggering. The goblin holds a knife to his neck.

*"Surrender or this human DIE!"*

"No deal." Elgweth tosses the severed bugbear head into the room, and this greatly disturbs the goblins. "*Um...pay us gold, and dis human live!*" says the goblin instead.

"Just one moment," answers Elgweth. He steps back around the corner, notches his bow, steps out, and sends an arrow RIGHT through the goblin's eyeball. Gurgling, it collapses before it can slit Sildar's throat. Two more goblins are slain in quick succession, and the remaining two surrender against overwhelming odds.

Sildar is rescued and graciously thanks the party, but he wants to get the hell out of here as soon as possible. "Please help! I will pay you later if you can escort me to Phandalin safely!" So, the last reserve wave in the river trap is released, the last goblins killed so there won't be any witnesses (well, not Nob and Splug, they're released), the wolves are freed to roam the woods, and salvaging as many supplies as they can carry from the Lionshield coster, the party heads back to the intersection of the High Road and Triboar trail to retrieve their cart of Gundren's mining supplies.

Along the way, Sildar tells them a story.

He is a member of the Lord's Alliance of Waterdeep, somewhat of a marshal who seeks order in the land. He was searching for a fellow Lord named Iarno Albreck who went to Phandalin two months ago, but never reported back to the Alliance. Curious as to whether he was alive or dead (or somewhere in-between) Sildar was accompanying Gundren Rockseeker to Phandalin to find Iarno.

"Gundren," says Sildar, "had a fascinating tale." He told Sildar of his adventures on the way to Phandalin, before they were ambushed, and Sildar now relates it to the PCs.

Apparently Gundren and his two brothers had found a long lost place called **Wave Echo Cave**, which houses a legendary artifact known as the Forge of Spells in the lost mines of Phandelver, which no one has seen in over 500 years. Well, Gundren and his brothers found a map leading to the cave, and it was their plan to fund an expedition to dig it out and to take possession once again of this old dwarven mine and the fantastic magic within.



Well, someone else caught wind of this. Someone named THE BLACK SPIDER ordered Klarg to waylay Gundren before he reached town and take everything to Cragmaw Castle. The PCs recall finding an empty scrollcase beside his dead horse, which must have been the map to this Wave Echo Cave. In fact everything that Gundren and Sildar carried was taken to Cragmaw Castle. Only Sildar himself was brought to the hideout, and he wouldn't have survived much longer after the goblins grew tired of playing with their food.

They will arrive in town soon, and once there Cora Lightfoot the Halfling is curious to meet her long estranged relative, Carp Alderleaf. Elgweth feels anticipation as well, for the vile Redbrand gang is still in control of the town, and the elf wants his revenge one way or another. Sildar the NPC wants to find his compatriot Iarno Albreck of the Lord's Alliance, whether dead or alive. And the wild mage NPC Juju...well, after nearly dying in the goblin cave, he's reconsidering this whole adventuring lifestyle and might just find himself a nice quiet home instead. That will probably get blown up in a magical backlash.

That all took about 2 hours. Next session we find out what happens in Phandelvin.