



a 5th Edition D&D campaign

SESSION #7

Lair of the Purple Wurm

Last Session...

The heroes **Hadrian**, **Brey** and **Serena** were wrapped up in a hectic chase after a strange purplish dragon, aided by the mysterious Feathergale Knights. Led by **Thurl Merosska** himself on a snow white griffon, with Brey and Hadrian upon an owl but Serena left behind at the Spire, the hunters followed the beast into the Sighing Valley, managing to wound the thing but not before it drove all of its attackers and damn near killed Thurl and his white griffon.

Ultimately the beast was chased into a cave that might have originally been a manticore's lair, and although Thurl is itching to dive in and slay the dragon while they still have it on the run, the heroes are able to convince him that this idea might be folly and they would recuperate overnight and try again in the morning.

So they all return to the Spire, but not before Serena tells them all about the strange note she found in Thurl's personal chambers. She didn't take it, but she remembers it in high detail:



Merosska,

We are pleased to hear of your outcome with the Black Earth cult last week! It was a glorious ambush you unleashed upon them near the Spire. We praise you as well for the prisoner you liberated. This noblewoman from Waterdeep has an interesting tale to tell, and we shall continue to –ha ha—question her further. In the meantime continue surveillance upon the Sacred Stone monastery. I want to know exactly what our enemy is doing at all times.

Your Beloved Queen, **AERISI KALINOTH**



The assorted flying creatures and knights and PCs all return to the spire to rest and recuperate and plan their next move against the wyrm. For reasons known only to the Knights, they seem determined and bound to slay the monster. Hadrian the aasimar paladin has his own reasons for killing the monster that ties to his own backstory from five years ago with the purple wyrm killed his dragon Haux. By the glory of Bahamut, he'll see it cut down!



Thurl is still mightily agitated and retires to tend his wounds. The Wyndweirds **Lasko**, **Tavist** and **Bardo** of course want to hear ALL about the PCs adventure so they can write a ballad about it.



The PCs ultimately retire to the rooms and discuss and when and IF they should mention the letter from Aeirisi to Merosska, but decide for now that might be getting them into unnecessarily hot water. Best to kill this dragon first and then worry about such details later. At worst Serena will just say she was desperately searching for more knights to aid in the dragon chase and wandered into his chambers. Not the best excuse, but maybe passable.

The night passes with few incidents, save that one time Brey the elf is woken by whispering in his ear. He bolts up and sees no one and eventually drifts back into a fitful sleep...

The Knights are up at the crack of dawn and Thurl Merosska is rearing to get the bloodlust of battle on again!

“You have proven yourselves time and again, brave giantslayers. Join me again this morn as we slaughter this monster once and for all. We’ve found its lair!”



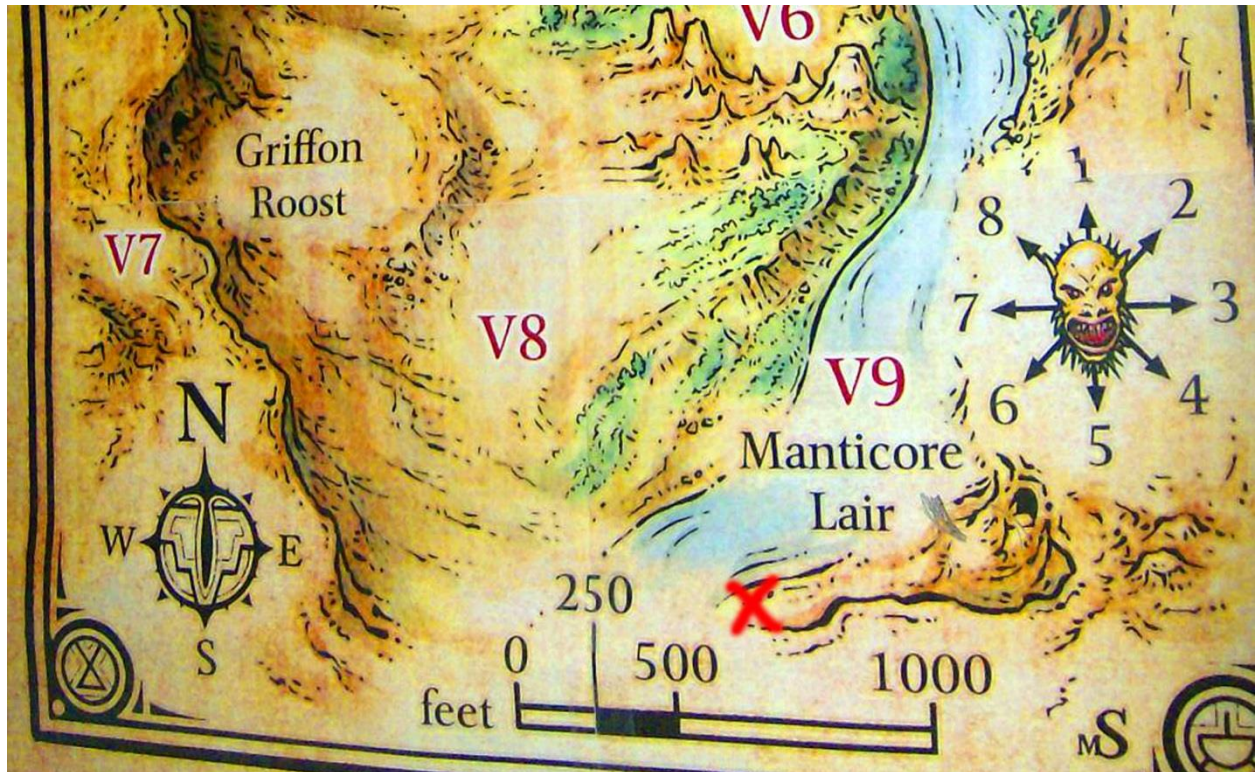
Hadrian doesn't need any convincing, but they do ask if the Knights have any potions to share to give them an edge, such as Featherfall or Healing. Featherfall they do have, and gave them a random 30% chance to have Healing potions as well...and rolled EXACTLY a 30%! Yay for random rolls! Each PCs is handed 2 healing potions from the Knights personal stash.

Soon they're mounted and off again, this time with Savra accompanying them along with 2 other knights and Thurl himself, so seven dragon hunters.



But Hadrian spots something from the back of the griffon he's riding with Brey. Serena has already winged ahead while holding onto Savra. Down at the base of the cliffs east of the Spire is a large congregation of read-head vulture like birds, maybe a dozen or so. They seem to be ripping apart some bloody thing at the base of the rock wall....

Brey and Hadrian swoop down and they fly back into formation with the others before their absence is really noticed. The group wings through the canyon and finally alights on the sandy bank of the river about 500 feet from the entrance to the cave.



They advance quickly up the sandy slope and the humans light torches before entering the black cave entrance. Instead they can see little except for a branching pathway left and right. An obvious blood trail from the wounded purple wyrm the day before stretches into the gloom.

The three heroes and Savra follow the blood trail while Thurl and two Knights flank the other direction.



Soon they hear bubbling water and air grows warmer and they see its source – a percolating pool of black water spewing jets of hot flame like angry candles, some sort of escaping methane from underground (JUST like *Dragonslayer*)



And then they hear the VOICE, seemingly coming at them ominously from all directions!

**“FOOLISH MEN. TRUSTING YOUR LIVES AND SOULS TO
THE MADNESS OF AIR AND FLAME.
YOU COULD NEVER CONTROL IT.”**

Thurl Merosska snarls. “Shut your lying, mouth worm!”

The two groups fan out around the bubbling pool, wary of the dragon possibly hiding in its opaque depths. The blood trail leads into the water and vanishes. On the east side of the smallish chamber they see another exit. Gripping his sword tightly, Hadrian advances toward, prepared to have his revenge.

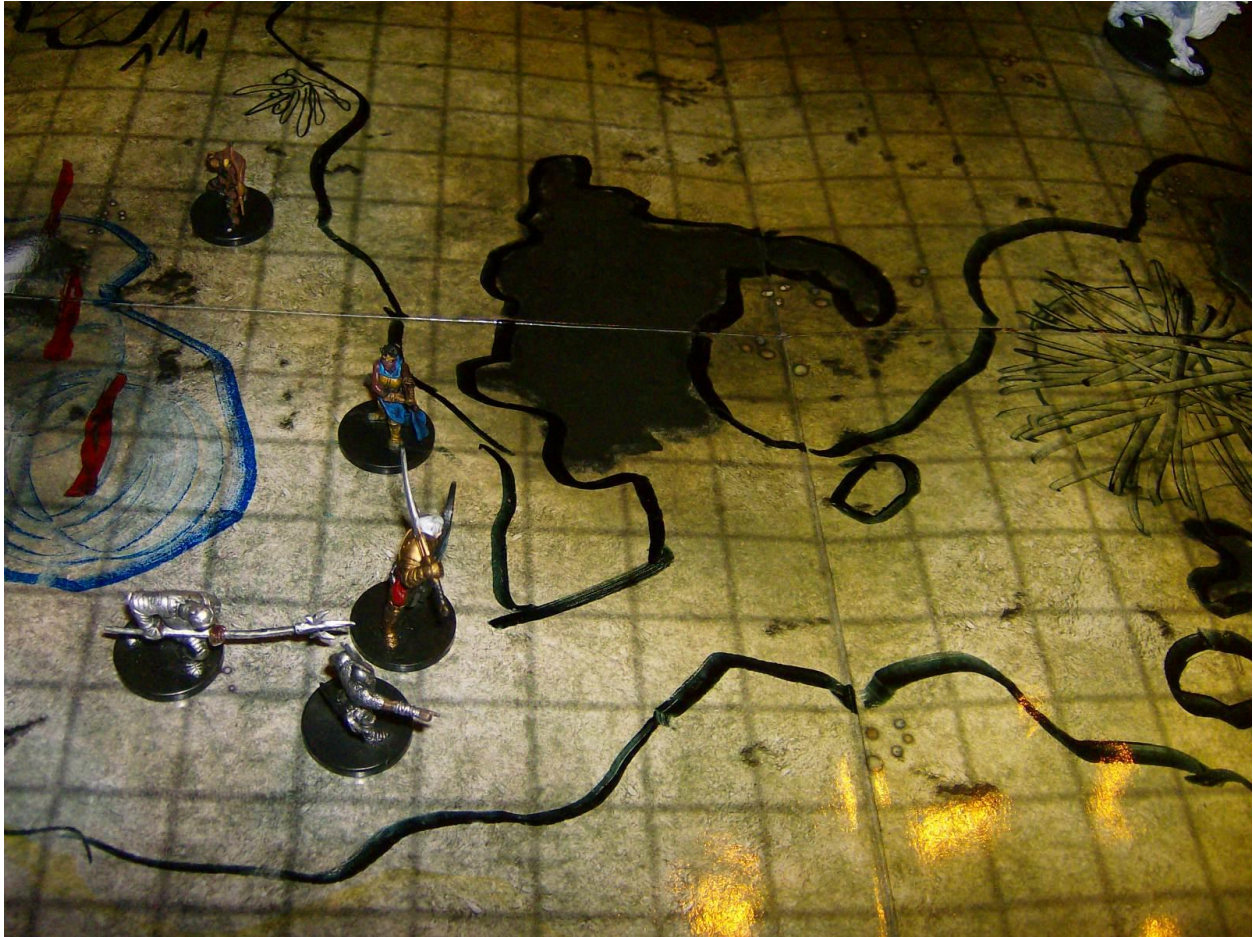
**“YOU ARE NOT WORTHY OF THE COMING GODS. SEE HOW
YOU DIE BY MY BREATH. SEE HOW YOU SUCCUMB
BENEATH MY WINGS.”**

“The only one dying here today is, foul liar! You know NOTHING of what you say! You know nothing of Yan-C-Bin’s promises!”

A deep draconic chuckled reverberates through the room.

**“HEH, HEH, HEH. YAN-C-BIN WILL RIP THE AIR FROM
YOUR LUNGS AND BLAST THE FLESH FROM YOUR BONES.
LORD IMIX WILL MELT YOU ALIVE,
SCREAMING FOR MERCY
THAT WILL NEVER COME.”**

“LIES from a DEMON!” shrieks Thurl, his face contorted in anger. The PCs are not exactly sure why he’s so upset by this monster’s words. Hadrian reaches the next tunnel and peeks around the corner with darkvision. He sees a nest of some sort in a cluttered cave, a flickering reddish glow and gold coins and gems scattered among the straw.

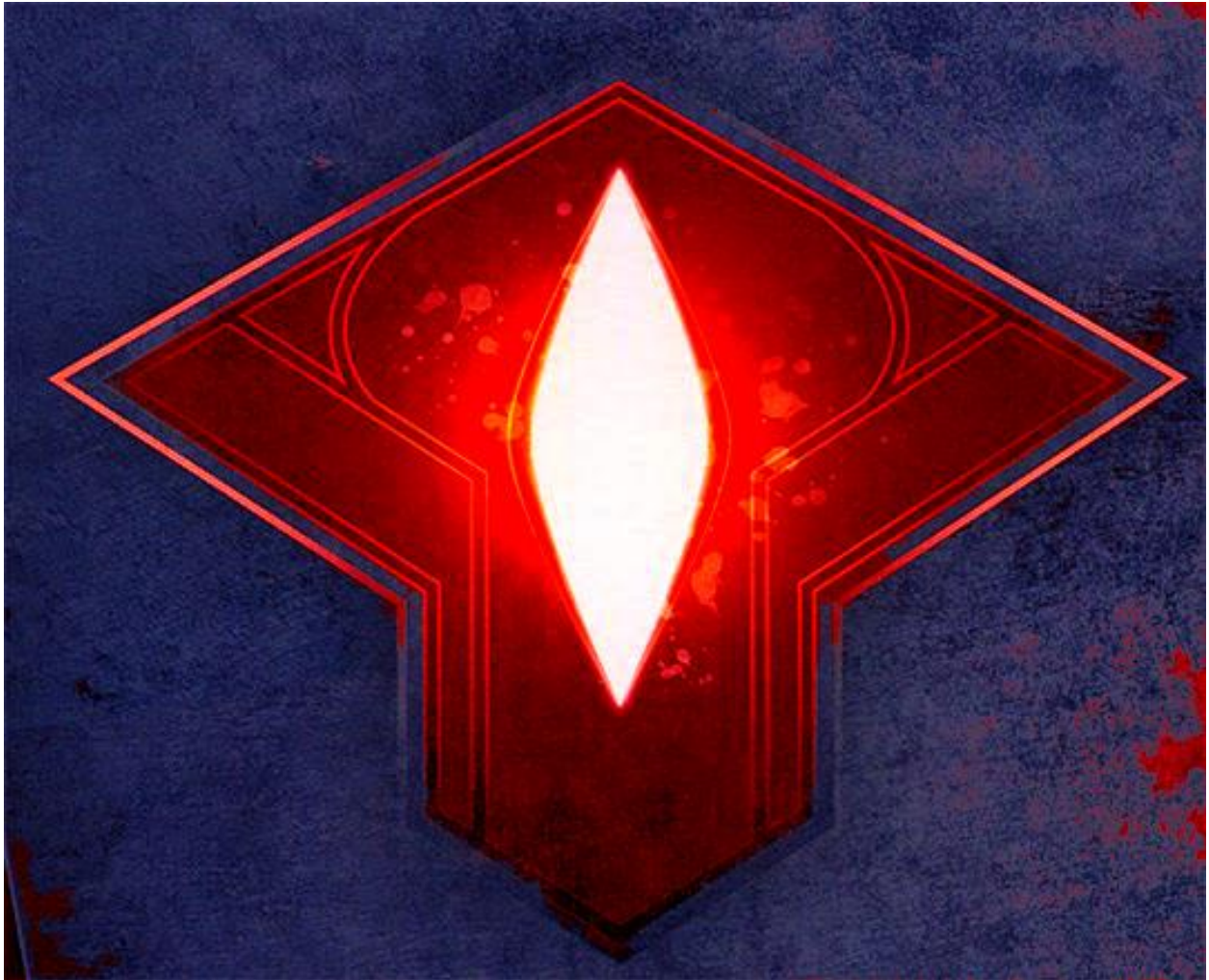


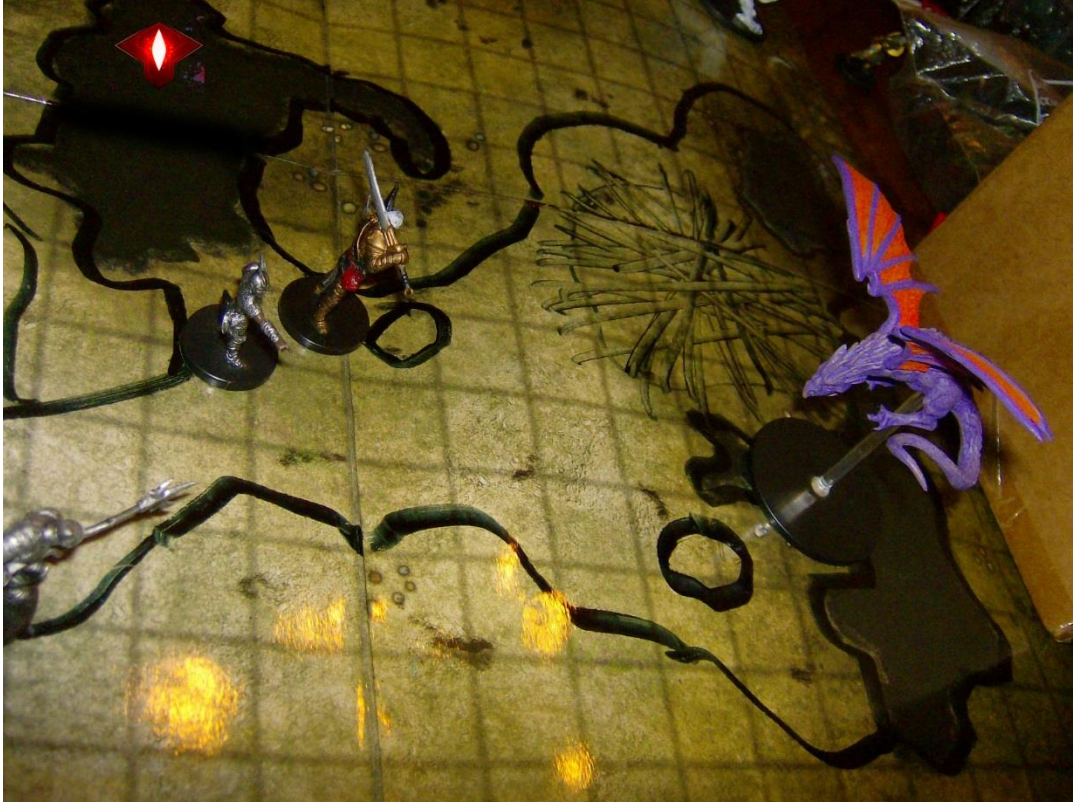
Thurl motions toward the cave and brings up his guards. Licking his lips and wary of any dragon breath surprises, he creeps into the tunnel, Thurl and a soldier close on his heels.

**“MORTAL MEN SHALL ALL PERISH BENEATH THEIR
MIGHT, AND THIS WORLD WILL BE OURS!”**

They fail to see the dragon Shadowflame clinging to the sides of a pit ahead, even as Hadrian spots the source of the flickering red light – the strange symbol of the Elemental Eye they first saw in the Necromancer’s cave where they rescued the two blond girls (well, rescued one alive and one deceased)

A similar reddish eye spins slowly over a black pit to the north, translucent and eerie, but then they hear scrabbling claws and a serpentine neck lurches up from the other direction and a blast of sticky black fire EXPLODES over them!





Black flames wash over the paladin, Thurl and a Knight, but all make their saves, and with plumes of smoke trailing behind him, Hadrian charges forward with an uproarious battle cry and challenge to the death!



His blade sinks deep into the thing's side and it bellows in agony, trying to rake its claws down Hadrians' face. Thurl Merosska and the Knight surge up but the beast knocks them away and focuses on Hadrian. Then Serena tosses a twinned chromatic orb from the entrance to the cave and the dragon is rocked by a burst of electrical energy that burns holes clear through its scaly armor.

The battle is fierce but short, with seven attackers beating down on the dragon, but only three are within range of its claws and teeth. The dragon fails to recharge its breath weapon which could have possibly ended the lives of all three people engaged with it, but fortune was not with the wyrm.



[Yay. New Initiative card system worked like a charm.
I might never use a d20 + Dex again]

Three or four rounds later and the wyrm is beaten and stabbed and burned to within an inch of its life, and Hadrian delivers the killing blow with a vociferous, “IN THE HOLY NAME OF BAHAMUT I SMITE THEE MONSTER!”

His blade hews through its neck in a splatter of scales and blood and the head is detached from the body, the mouth snapping like a beheaded snake while the lower half stumbles and flaps and finally falls back into the pit.

Thurl grabs the severed head and neck of the wyrm and spits in its face.

“As I said, you know NOTHING of what you speak, wyrm,” he growls to it.



Upon the death of the wyrm the Elemental Eye hovering over the other pit also fades into nothingness, just as it did when they slew the Necromancer.

“Giantslayers and dragonslayers, you are now both!” shouts Thurl. “My friends, you have earned your keep and then some. Take whatever bounty you desire from this lair, all that we Feathergales require is this head to mount on our wall!”

The PCs loot the dragon’s nest and find 20 enchanted arrows with red fletching and blue fletching, a magical red cloak emanating the Conjuraton school, and over 500 gp worth of coins and gems. It’s a good haul!



So they return to the Spire with their new bestest of buddies, Thurl and the Feathergale Knights, but not before Brey and Hadrian make ONE more sweep over the bloody vulture birds and see one flying away with a HUMAN HAND. Ok, something bad is going on, and they further see brown blood splatter patterns on the rock wall as if bodies had been pushed from a great height to explode at the bottom. But the PCs still have some questions for the Lord Commander once the festivities have begun and the ale is flowing and the knights and bawdily singing and rejoicing their victory over the wyrm. The thing's head is indeed nailed to the wall and drips viscous ichor to the flagstone floor.



The knights and Savra and Thurl and the PCs and the Wyndweirds are all gathered in the Meeting Hall and Feast Room and the PCs eventually come around to asking Thurl what that red Elemental Eye was. The Knights quiet down as their Lord Commander chews his food and then takes a long draught of ale.

“There are things I have not told you, my friends. I think by now you have earned it. Your deeds speak for you. There are more powerful gods in the unseen realms than you can possibly imagine. That wyrm, I spit upon its name, it spread blasphemous lies. Our Lord Yan-C-Bin, Master of All Air, has promised to show us the Way, and it is NOT reserved just for those things with wings!”

Indeed, the wyrm seemed to be berating the humans as not worthy of the attention of **Yan-C-Bin** and **Imix**, whatever those entities are. The PCs have never heard the names and they do not correspond with any known Faerunian deities.



From what they can gather so far, this Elemental Eye is like “One Ring to Rule Them All...” the disparate elemental forces. OF WHICH, the Black Earth and these Feathergale fellows seem to be bitter enemies and diametrically opposed.

“Come with me,” says Thurl, obviously drunk by now on wine and ale, and he invited the PCs upstairs to the rooftop observatory and asks him what he sees.



Hadrian puts his eye to the lens and looks to where Thurl has positioned the scope. He sees a cleft going into the mountain side about half a mile and two men in white clothing guarding it, crossbows in hand.



“That,” says Thurl, slurring slightly, “is the entrance to the Temple proper. The **Temple of the Howling Hatred**. Home to our Queen Aerisi! I want you to meet her. I feel the time is right, you have proven yourselves time and again now as honorary Feathergale Knights, and I can think of no greater honor than to induct you to the wonders that await!”

“Uh...riiiighhhht,” says Hadrian, glancing at Brey and Serena. Brey’s eyes are saying HELL NO but Serena is intrigued. The air genasi does feel a certain tug from the wild elemental nature of these people and this place, but even she has reservations.

“You must meet Queen Aerisi,” says Savra, putting a hand on Serena’s shoulder. “You will LOVE her. Her wisdom and connection to the other world is like nothing you have ever seen!”

“What do you say?” asks Thurl pointedly. “I can take you there now! We will escort you to the temple personally and you can meet our Queen.”

The other Feathergale Knights reverently bow their heads and lace their fingers in a symbol.

WELL, this is sounding worse by the second. Hadrian has no intention of letting these guys escort him someplace underground called The Howling Hatred! Brey and Serena don’t like that either.

“I have other obligations currently,” says Brey. “As you may recall, the missing delegation from Mirabar. We are still tasked with finding them.”

Hadrian politely declines and says they DO have other business to attend to, but he promises to come back when it is completed. Thurl stares blankly at them throughout their gentle refusal, his expression unreadable.

“We’re happy to stay the night again, and we can leave with the Wyndweirds in the morning,” says Hadrian. “If that is acceptable to you?”

Thurl is quiet and then nods slowly. “Acceptable. Regrettable, but acceptable. We’re be sure to take care of you.”

Something in Merosska's tone subtly changes. Hadrian does NOT like the implied threat. Oh, gods, take care of us HOW? Thrown from the parapets or cliffs? At his point they're thinking that refusal of his offer has put Thurl into a predicament – the PCs know too much now, and they can't leave alive with this information.

They all return to Feast Hall and continue the merriment, but there's an unpleasant change in the atmosphere, and by the time the heroes retire to bed that night they are sure to lock and bolt the door and quickly discuss their options.

"We're GOT to get out of here! I've got a bad feeling about this," whispers Hadrian.

"We can't fight them all, we're sorely outnumbered," says Brey.

"And the Wyndweirds, what of them? We can't leave them, can we?" asks Serena.

They're not sure what to do, but as the session ended their thoughts kept turning to the owl in the stables. If they can somehow charm it, maybe they can fly out of here to Red Larch or even Beliard? But the bird can only hold two people, so that's a problem as well. And the vultures and griffons in the lower level, they'll raise a ruckus if the PCs show up in the middle of the night without the Knights present.

The whole tower could come down on their heads unless by some miracle they were all too drunk to hear, which is unlikely. And that's just the Knights, there are also the other guys, *the quiet ones who masquerade as servants...*