

Session/Game: 5 Hacks Deep #29 **Date:** June 20, 2021

Episode 29: Of Chonk and Thunder

Campaign Date: November 23, 1130 AD

Characters:

Duda, English, Soldier-3 (Andrew S.)
Sean the Irish Bastard, Irish, Templar-4 (Bob L.)
Reeve Angus McNasty, Scottish, Barbarian-4 (Bob L.)
Tariq, Moorish, Venturer-4, (Quinton L.)
Cain, Irish, New Guy-1 (Quinton L.)
Raoul, Frankish, Occultist-3 (Andrew S.)

Judge: Dave N.

LOG

November 23—Worm's Ferry

Muck-for-Brains, the clean-up guy for Angus's Mead Hall in Shepherd's Hollow comes riding up to Angus Manor in Worm's Ferry excited about something, but completely clueless about what he was excited and alarmed about. Luckily, a minute or two later Luke Dubois, a farm lad whom Wulfric had given a horse and the job to warn Worm's Ferry about any trouble in the Hollow rode up too and revealed the alarm.

It seems that the Mead Hall manager, Scottish Bill, had noticed Croktars lurking in the woods and hills around Shepherd's Hollow, and he and Edward, one of Wulfric's retainers in the tower garrison, and Elder Moss had decided that this was of great concern and had sent Luke and Muck-for-Brains to bring word to Reeve Angus.

Reeve Angus had begun to gather men to ride to Shepherd's Hollow when a hideous cracking sound and faint screams tore the through the air. Angus, Sean, Duda, Raoul, Tariq, Cain, Sean's 4 templar sergeants, and 5 of Duda's dudes rushed south of the town square. There they beheld a terrifying monster known as a House-Crusher which had just crushed the meager house of Raymond O'Nets, an immigrant Norman fisherman.

The Crusher Approaches:



They all begin to attack the Crusher, which fights back. At first the Crusher is unable to inflict any injury, and the housecarls do some impressive damage upon it. However, enraged with pain, the Crusher gets its groove and kills one of Duda's mercenaries, critically injures Angus, Sean (who has also been accidentally wounded by an arrow from Tariq), and Duda, who loses an eye in the process, before they finally kill the beast.

The Crusher dies, surrounded by wounded Angus, Sean and Duda



As they try to patch up Duda, Sean and Angus and get them on their feet, Raoul notices the sound of alarm and panic coming from the area of the village square. He discovers that the Ferry building itself is actually on fire. Angus orders Raoul to raise the "hue and cry" and gather the militia.

In a few minutes, 15 of the village militia have gathered in front of the manor and are joined by the survivors of the encounter with the House Crusher. They spot 3 large war canoes in the river, each with a Croktar Devil-priest and 4 Croktar rowers. The Croktars had set the roof of the Ferry Building on fire already, and were likely planning more devilry. The militia shoot down one of the Devil Priests with arrows, and Tariq, Sean, Angus and Raoul shoot down a second. The third launches a ball of Devil-fire against the militia, killing the 5 armed with bows. The Croktars then turn their canoes around and flee down the river.

It takes some precious minutes for Angus to get the villagers organized to put out the blazing roof of the Worm's Ferry Ferry building, but they get it under control to prevent a total loss. Realizing that it's getting close to sunset and the crisis at Shepherd's Hollow is still unresolved, Angus orders the remaining Duda's Dudes, Templars, Sean, Tariq, Cain, Raoul and Duda onto horses (he has a fair number of nags at the ready), and to all ride full speed to the Hollow.

November 23, Nightfall, Shepherd's Hollow

Arriving at the edge of the village just as the sun sets completely, they find that there are two trees felled across the path into it, and they're not bacon trees, its a ham-bush. A band of Croktars are hiding in the woods on either trail ready to leap to the attack. Cain uses a flickerheat spell to set one of the trees on fire. This allows the village militia gathered in the square ahead and the three soldiers in the tower to see and shoot down several of the Croktars. A drawn out brawl erupts at the ambush site.

Just at this moment a band of 10 ghouls rush the militia in the square, killing several of them. However, the militia stands firm and does not break and run. The 3 soldiers from the tower, unable to see anything in the darkness, sally forth to the square, only to become terrified by the sight of the ghouls and turn around to head back to the tower.

Meanwhile at the ambush site, all of Duda's dudes and 2 of the 4 Templar sergeants are killed by Croktars. Duda himself is critically wounded. Eventually, the croktars break morale and the last 3 of them turn and flee into the forest.

4 of the Ghouls break off from the militia and rush toward the town hall, where they all ignore the Doctor and Elder Moss standing there and grab hold of the irrepressible Chonk and begin to try to run off with him. The militia have killed 5 of the 6 remaining ghouls, and the last one runs off. Sean manages to break free of the ambush and ride into the square at this point and uses a spell—Restraining Hand of the Angels—to freeze the 4 ghouls who are carrying off Chonk in place. The militia, tower soldiers and Sean fall upon these ghouls and kill them quickly, rescuing Chonk from whatever fate was to befall him.

Sean uses his second sight to scan the perimeter, and sees a skeletal figure, standing in a chariot drawn by 2 hell-horses, shaking his bony fist in rage before it drives away. Of the 15 Shepherd's Hollow militia who had gathered in the square (of 23 total in town) 9 were killed, but the remaining 6 were praised and rewarded by the reeve for their gallant defense of the village. Angus also paid for the funerals of the 9 slain. The question remains, why was Chonk so valuable to these mysterious fiends?

The reeve's men gathered a pile of copper jewelry from the dead Croktars, some valuable rubies from the ghouls, and some Atlantean orbs from a collar around the Crusher's neck.