

Session/Game: Rampage/Shieldlands #16

Date: October 15, 2023

The Shieldlands Episode 16: Rescue from Blorgon,

Or, It ended up with a paralyzed half-ogre in the mouth of a stunned demon snake

Campaign Date: October 25-27, CY 576

Characters:

Ikarus, changeling, J-4, L (Quinton)

Gryll Kun, wood elf, J-2, L (henchman)

Reth Grimborn, human, CM-1, L (henchman)

Milton of the Dirt, human, MU-1, L (henchman)

Sister Payne, human, CM-1, L (henchman)

Rolando, human, F-1, L (henchman)

Freely Bucket, human, F-4, N (Bob)

Dert, dwarf, J-2, L (henchman)

Apollo Greed, human, F/J-3, N (Craig)

Dimitria, human, CM-2, L (henchman)

Sloppy Jimbo, human, J-2, N (henchman)

Gruz Bondro, half-ogre, CM-3, lawful (David)

Judge: Dave N.

Prologue; Fudley, October 22

Lady Mildgard of Chendl, the sister of Sir Normlan of Chendl, approached as many of Sir Normlan's friends as she could find in Fudley. She said that her brother, their old comrade, has been taken as a hostage by Rancid Thung, the hoborg sorcerer who holds Blorgon Manor (previously Blue Skies Manor) and she was to pay a ransom of 3000gp to Thung on November 1, at Good Time Charlie's. At the mention of Charlie's, William Snow refused to go. Bardhun and Jackolos were nowhere to be found and Sir John and Gnomelash! were over in the Petestone region, not in Fudley. So, Gruz Bondro, Apollo Creed, Freely Bucket and Ikarus (and his crowd of henchmen) agreed to either rescue Normlan or deliver the ransom. Lady Mildgard made it clear that she would much rather he be rescued than 3000gp be given to a Horned Society Sorcerer and said that our heroes could keep the ransom money if they rescued Normlan before November. She arranged for a guide named Trusty Bunyon, a former resident of the manor 10 years earlier, to lead them to the manor.

October 25, Blorgon Manor

Bucket, Gruz, Apollo and Ikarus arrived at the outskirts of Blorgon Manor. They observed it from a distance throughout the day. And they asked their guide Bunyon about the manor itself. He told them that it likely held a large number of hobgoblins and other jerks and a direct assault by the party would likely end in death. He said that the River Tower had been a deserted ruin in his day, but appeared to have been completely rebuilt. The small wooden blockhouse near the creek was entirely new, and it looked like the former pig house and pen seemed to have been re-purposed for slaves. Also, the ferry dock and the stone bridge construction project were also new. A squad of 8 horse men did ride in the direction of the party, but they escaped into the sorghum without incident.

Waiting until 10:30 at night, the team sends Gryll Kun, the elf, to scout the near edge of the manor. He finds the blockhouse to be open, and its single room empty of all but some garbage. Then he sneaks across behind the pond to the barn. He noticed that the pond,

which Bunyon had said had been an ornamental fish pond, was surrounded by piles of bones, mostly goblins, but some bigger. He looks into the barn and spots 8 horses and 2 goblin stable hands. He is nearly spotted by a hoborg archer on the roof of the manor house, and so decides to withdraw back to the party.



BLORGON FROM THE EAST

October 26, Blorgon Manor

The team moves to the north of the manor proper, to the trail that leads to the enslaved farming village 8 furlongs away. They take position 3 furlongs outside the village and await whatever traffic they might find. Before noon, they spot 4 human slaves pulling a hand cart containing 2 disabled human slaves, all of whom were guarded by 4 hobgoblin mercenaries (2 speargobs, 2 crossbowgobs).

The party ambushes the group, cutting down all 4 hobgoblins with little in return damage. They manage to save 3 of the 4 enemies and even to bring one back to consciousness. They were going to question them, but realized they could probably get as much information from the slaves willingly. The slaves revealed that they were from the farming village, but Rancid Thung keeps a draft of 20 villagers to do the heavy lifting for the team of 10 dwarf slaves who were doing the masonry on the new bridge meant to cross the Ritensa River to Horned Society territory proper. Importantly, the slaves also disclose that Sir Normlan is being held in the River Tower. Gruz heals the two wounded slaves in the cart, the party gives the slaves two of the hobgoblin daggers and sets them free. The former slaves take the 3 hobgoblin prisoners with them in order to sell them to Baron Zander at Bromley. The party keeps the corpse of the 4th hobgoblin and arranges it to appear as if he had been slain by rebellious slaves.

The team returns to a camp site east of Blorgon, so that they can recover the healing spells used and get some good rest.

October 27—Blorgon Manor

The party rests, builds a ladder and draws up their plan of action during the daylight hours.

THE PLAN

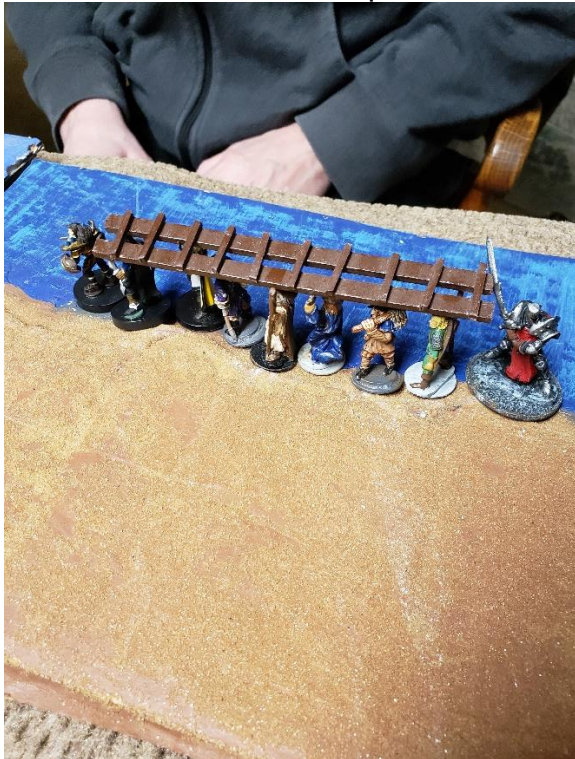
They plan to send Gruz and Dert to the back of the dwarf slave cabin, where Dert will reassure them and Gruz will tear out the bars on the windows. They then intend to distribute weapons and torches to the dwarves and ask them to create chaos as a diversion.

Meanwhile, the rest of the party, having created an improvised ladder, will creep along the river bank and approach the River Tower from the West, scale up the ladder to the 2nd floor western door when the distraction starts and rescue Sir Normlan.

THE EXECUTION—10:00pm

The first phase goes well, Gruz and Dert reach the dwarf cabin and the river crew move slowly along the riverbank unseen. Both groups have an eerie feeling that “something” is lurking in the darkness around them. Dert talks to the dwarves and eases their fear of the half-ogre Gruz. The pair pass through some captured hobgoblin weapons to the dwarves inside. Gruz then yanks on a barred window and pulls it out of the wall with a very loud CRACK.

At this sound, the river crew rush forward with their ladder to the tower. The hobgoblins on the tower top spot them coming, and a patrol of hobgoblins come out of their guardhouse and rush the slave quarters, fearing an escape.



THE LADDER CREW RUSHES DOWN THE RIVERBANK

Once the dwarves have climbed out of the window-hole, Dert immediately runs off. Gruz hands those without weapons some torches, but has no way to light them, except for cling fire. He fortuitously throws the cling fire onto the slave cabin setting it ablaze and catching the attention of the hobgoblins. Rather than lighting their torches from the flaming

cabin, the dwarf slaves immediately just flee as fast as possible from the manor toward freedom.

The tower roof hobgoblins shoot a few bolts at the ladder crew, inflicting some wounds on Apollo and Bucket. They then sound the alarm gong, alerting their boss, Captain Hork, inside, who begins to arm. Apollo climbs the ladder but can't get the door open, so he throws a grappling hook on a rope to catch the battlements on the roof. Meanwhile, Milton casts a sleep spell and drops the 5 hobgoblins on the roof, stopping the alarm. Apollo reaches the roof and drops the rope downward, and Ikarus climbs up. Milton then casts Concealing Fog at the base of the tower to hide the rest of the ladder crew.

Captain Hork reaches the top of the tower, swearing at his crew, who are asleep. Ikarus throws acid on him, ruining his armor. Apollo brutally and repeatedly stabs him till he dies before he can do any harm at all. The ladder crew begins to swarm up the rope to the top, but Bucket looks around to see if anyone is coming toward the tower and senses there is something "other" out there in the darkness. He then climbs the ladder and waits at the top at the west door. The bulk of the party slaughters the sleeping roof hobgoblins and sets them up as scarecrows to hopefully make things seem normal up there.

The hobgoblin slave guards enter the human slave pen where one of the slaves says that the dwarves were making a break for it. The others, of sterner stuff, try to slow down the hobgoblins, but several are killed for their trouble. The wandering hobgoblin patrol rush over to their pals at the slave pens. Half go to the back of the cabin to try to stop the fire, and the other half rush toward the manor house to get help and alert the boss. Gruz decides to return to the main body of the crew and rushes off toward the tower, sensing something "other" lurks in the darkness.

The river crew, now on the roof, open the hatch and kill 3 of the 5 hobgoblins on the third floor by arrow shots. The last two jump down to the 2nd floor, closing the hatch above them. The attackers cram into the 3rd floor, just as Gruz reaches the roof.

Ikarus opens the hatch to the 2nd floor, but the hobgoblins have wheeled their large cling fire siphon into position and squirt a huge dose of cling fire into the 3rd floor above, burning many of the attackers. This causes much damage to the bulk of the party (except Milton, Bucket, Payne, Gruz and Dert) almost killing Reth, Jimbo, Rolando and Dimitria.

Dimitria manages to Stun the siphon operator with a spell. Apollo leaps down and opens the west door to allow Bucket to enter the room and Gruz leaps down from the roof to join in. They manage to chop the 7 hobgoblins there into tiny bits. The party then reaches the first floor where they seize the pay-barrel of Captain Hork. Thereupon they reach the cellar where Sir Normlan is imprisoned. Apollo jumps in and kills both hobgoblin jailers. Gruz heals Sir Normlan and they arm him with a gambeson and short sword from the hobgoblins. They loot some mail-piercing arrows and some more gambesons from the arms closet in the basement and begin to quickly withdraw from the tower.

The half squad of hobgoblins now reach the manor house. They are admitted and report that the dwarves are gone and their cabin is on fire. Thung orders a horde of goblin lackies to go forth and fight the fire, and sends a messenger to the horsemen at the way station to see if they can find the dwarves in the morning (stupid, non-see-in-the-dark humans).

Rushing down the bank, the uneasy feelings the party has been having manifest into a gigantic demonic snake which rises to block their path. They throw acid and arrows and cling fire at the beast, all to no avail. Only Bucket's magic spear has any effect. Sloppy Jimbo is filled with complete terror at the sight of the beast, but Reth uses an Encourage spell to steady him. Gruz then runs in to engage the beast, but his mace is ineffective. The snake bites Gruz and paralyzes him. It maneuvers around and begins to swallow Gruz head first.

Dimitria, however, uses her talisman of Stun Blasphemer to stun the beast. Bucket starts stabbing the stunned beast repeatedly, and Ikarus reaches inside it to take 2 vials of holy water from Gruz's belt and uses them to damage the creature as well. As the rest of the party flees from the beast, the goblins horde notices Bucket and the rest from the light given off by the cling fire sticking to the snake. Bucket manages to make the final stab and kill it before the goblins arrive, and the party escapes into the night.

Epilogue:

Sir Normlan is safely returned to Fudley and the ransom paid to the party (each of the principals getting 854gp total take), plus 2000xp for a job well done. The dwarves and the 6 human slaves escape. Because the skilled workforce is gone, the Horned Society's plans for a bridge across the Ritensa at Blorgon is thrown into shambles. Therefore, the doom clock does not advance.