So You’ve Been Captured By Cultists and Exposed To Dark Magic and Don’t Know What to Do

*A Survival Guide*

We all have our share of problems from time to time. The first key to keeping in control of the situation is always to remain calm. Then, remember these steps.

1. **Identify the problem**. Has your soul been bound to a crystal, allowing your body to be reformed and destroyed until the sun consumes the earth at the whims of evils from outside of space and time? Or is that just indigestion? Is that hissing noise a ghost monster sneaking up on you? Or did someone just leave the Bunsen burner on? Is that clacking sound an infernal self-replicating machine of bone held together by malevolent sorcery? Or is it someone having too much fun with clogs?
2. **Identify your assets**. Some of us are quite skilled at running using the WASD keys, and looking around using the mouse. Some can willfully engage an out-of-body experience with the Tab key to locate themselves within an actively hostile labyrinth. A few of us can place our soul-bound crystals with left click, to ensure we can rise again to meet our challenges. Others can use their ability to resurrect themselves to explore extremely dangerous areas without fear. Yet others really like lighting things on fire with the spacebar.
3. **Identify a solution.** Remember, dark magics tend to fall apart when exposed to the sun, and most cultists are low-ranking flunkies just as susceptible to brute force as anyone else. Their otherworldly masters, not so much.
4. **Follow through.** Make sure to re-evaluate your situation as it changes—for example, sprouting a second head that speaks only in rhyme might in some situations be part of the *problem* (blending in with the crowd), but might also be an *asset* (winning poetry contests). For every problem, there is a solution. For every locked door, there is a key somewhere.

It’s also important to keep in mind the following rules of thumb.

* **Not every problem can be bludgeoned.** We may all be adventurers here, but skin-dissolving acid jellies, lung-igniting gasbeasts and flesh-flaying bone chariots simply require a different solution. Remember, there’s no shame in running away, and no shame in sneaking.
* **Keep your goal in mind.** If you’re trying to free yourself from ancient curses, make sure you’re making forward progress towards freedom.
* **You can always try again**. Sometimes, it’s just easier and more efficient to start over.
* **Protect your assets.** If you lose your assets, you lose your options. If you lose your options, you lose choice. If you lose choices, you lose power. If you lose power, when dealing with insane cultists, you can lose everything.