

## Dark Dice, Chapter 9 - Tunnels

### Travis

The team passed the second great gate into the silent passage beyond. The dark 30-foot wide hallway was lined with numerous large stones, and while the air was free of the rancid decay that had followed the party for the past day, it was oddly moist and cold. Despite the chill, darkness, and feelings of unease, the hallway stretched beyond the party's field of vision as they shuffled through.

The stones bore masterfully crafted dwarven runes, incredibly small and detailed, covering the surface of the massive five-foot-tall stone blocks. The first five thousand feet of the tunnels were lined with skeletons in small alcoves, erected into an eternal standing position... But the team silently moved onward.

As they cautiously continued down the dark passage for the first hour, prepared for whatever horrors this place had to offer, they found only more of the same. Bare yet sturdy stone walls and evidence of the passage of countless centuries since its construction.

### Eypór (Sindri)

We seem to have reached, again, some form of unhallowed ground... I cannot feel the presence of Pelor in this place and I suspect my abilities may be limited here.

### Kessi (Flygia)

(muttering) Dammit. My spells are not working here either.

### Eypór (Sindri)

I recommend we all keep our eyes open for the Silent one. I feel that we're getting quite close to the nameless god and he soon might be out of his tricks and be forced into an open confrontation with us.

### Travis

The sounds of motion behind the team were briefly audible as the words 'The Silent One' were spoken.

### Eypór (Sindri)

Eurgh.

### Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)

*Perhaps we ought to give him another name? Cause it seems to be summoning. Let's, let's just call him SO.*

### Kessi (Flygia)

SO? Maybe TSO?

### Eypór (Sindri)

I stare into the dark towards the chittering sound I heard.

### Travis

Father Westpike gazed back into the darkness, sweat forming over one eyebrow from the heat of the torch.

### Eypór (Sindri)

Whatever it is, it's keeping its distance. At least 60ft. We should keep moving...

**Travis**

Soren and Fylgia led the party down the passage, eyes and weapons ready for any surprise... But a second hour of travel passed, and gradually, even laus began to ease up a little bit. The plain featureless tunnels and the shifting light from Soren's torch began to wear on their focus and their vigilance began to tire. They gradually began to feel the weight of the day's events... The loss of Sister Cavernsfall, the remaining aches from the traps sprung...

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

Hold up a moment. I'm going to leave like a really odd object from my entertainer's pack on the ground, to see whether we're repeating the same thing, you know? I'm, I need to check what's in my entertainer's pack.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

We're going down a creepy stairway, just for hours now?

**Peter (Soren)**

Hallway. Though it does have a slight decline.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

I, I have two costumes, so I will leave the costume of a bunny rabbit on the ground. *Just, leaving it there.*

**David (laus)**

I'm not sure why you had a dwarf sized bunny rabbit costume, but I'm not one to judge.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

I'm leaving a bunny costume on the ground. I have one more costume but I'm not gonna tell you what that is.

**David (laus)**

I could help out here. I've got some ball bearings. I'm gonna just roll a few and see... (kneeling to scatter a few) if... Nope. They don't seem to roll back.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Well, now we have to be on the watch for ball bearings in the future.

**David (laus)**

Well Shit... Let's keep moving, shall we?

**Travis**

Over the next hour, the walls became gradually more minimal, showing evidence of previous collapse and renovations. Every so often a mild tremor reverberated the passage but despite the light rain of dust, it still felt generally safe.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Okay, I know we're all getting pretty worn down but do not lack on your observations: we are in hostile territory right now! Look out for traps, the S.O. and the Nameless G, - I mean, the N.G.

**David (laus)**

Can anyone see any more of those runes on the walls at all? Any inscriptions, any blood, any -

-?

**Peter (Soren)**

No, it's incredibly bare... From up here the only thing I can... -Oh, well maybe Father Westpike is a psychic because there's a brief section up ahead where I think I can see stairs being introduced. Steps to accommodate the increasingly noticeable decline.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

We've been awake at least 7 hours, what harm could stairs do?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I think we should Rest.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

In the stairway?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Well, if anything comes at us it can only come from 2 directions

**Eypór (Sindri)**

That is a good point. I would like to be fully rested, but we are now beyond the gate. Time is moving at the normal pace now, we do not have much time to waste.

**David (laus)**

Wait, hold up... I think the little canary Lady Cavernsfall gave me is trying to say something... I feel movement... Okay... (not really singing the poem, as he's in a rush) "Siggy Siggy can you hear me." (sigh) What do you have for me?... Ugh, I'm gonna lean in and listen. Better not attack me.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Hmm.

**Travis (*Speaking as Old Siggy*)**

*"Time flows differently for all who pass through."*

**David (laus)**

Ah, no -Westpike, you're wrong. Time is slower for us now that we've passed the next gate, and it's even slower for those who are further ahead. So it all sort of evens out in the end.

**Travis**

Witnessing their faithless companion speak to a dead bird, the team's sanity was tested... Was this truly laus Innskeep? -And if it was, was he becoming unhinged? -Anyone who failed took 10 stress damage.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

I've spoken to a sword...

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Yeah, me too.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

... yesterday, I'm not worried. Natural 20.

**Peter (Soren)**

16. Normal enough for me.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Because talking to animals is fairly normal to me.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

It's dead though, It's not living.

**David (laus)**

I don't need to roll one since I'm pretty sure I'm hearing this.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Well, I got a 10. I'm *pretty* sure it's laus?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I got a 4. I forgot dat' the bird was dead... And now I'm over 50 stress.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Oh my god... (in character) -Well, we will certainly want to rest then, if time will allow it.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

*I don't see the reason for why we should stop right now. I mean...*

**Peter (Soren)**

Yeah.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

*... no one seems to be out of magic right? No one's massively hurt because of your spell earlier...*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Hmm.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

*...We should keep going on. It's just, this is so boring.*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

The, the track takes its toll, I fear that it may, I fear that exhaustion may become a problem later. It did hit me quite hard yesterday and I barely got enough sleep last night, with, and I look at Fylgia, constant distractions.

**Kessi (Fylgia)**

Hey!

**David (laus)**

I, I would like to have a quick chat with whatever his names is, -old skags. One second... Alright. Siggie Siggie, do you know anything else about what is going on down here, what we need to do?

**Travis (*Speaking as Old Siggie*)**

*"Follow the path."*

**David (laus)**

Well yeah of course, but do you know any hints?!

**Travis (Speaking as Old Sigg)**  
"One foot after the other."

**David (laus)**  
Oh great, my sense of humor has affected this dead bird.

**Eypór (Sindri)**  
Are you still talking to the bird?

**Kessi (Flygia)**  
(whispering, crazy-talk) What an unnatural thing... An abomination... It should not be let to live.

**Travis (Speaking as Old Sigg)**  
"You can make the journey in what will feel like three days of travel."

**David (laus)**  
3 days to go before what?

**Travis (Speaking as Old Sigg)**  
"Before you reach he whom you seek."

**David (laus)**  
Right, apparently we got 3 days before we get to the children.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**  
Have we to enough food?

**David (laus)**  
I do

**Eypór (Sindri)**  
Oh Soren, I forgot to tell you this because we were, there was a bit of a chaos, I stole Flygia's trail rations. -Lady Cavernsfall's trail rations.

**Peter (Soren)**  
Ok

**Eypór (Sindri)**  
And I did not steal them, I, I politely took them away because well, they were going to rot anyway.

**Peter (Soren)**  
How many are there?

**Eypór (Sindri)**  
There were exactly 3 in her backpack so I have 4 now.

**Peter (Soren)**  
Awesome, now we won't have to eat the children... (silence) That was a joke.

**David (laus)**

Yeah, do we still have those manacles?

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Sorry I just realized when he asked about the food last night I never brought this up.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

Apparently I had, I have I have 5 in my entertainers pack so I think we're good, so I should have 4 left.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

So wait, so the bird told you we have...

**David (laus)**

The bird said that we've got 3 days until we find the one I seek, which I'm assuming is my son so...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Hmm, then shall we push on a little bit further, maybe until we reach another door and then take a break?

**David (laus)**

Ok.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Please watch for the ball bearings.

**Peter (Soren)**

I actually see them. They stopped just before the stairs, just kind of sitting near a crack in the wall.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I point at them for whoever's in the front, just like don't don't... watch out.

**David (laus)**

I'll pick them up and stick them back in my pocket.

**Travis**

The team descended the staircase slowly for forty minutes until the steps faded into an even surface that continued at a noticeable downward gradient. As they continued to walk, Soren spotted a superficial archway, an embellishment of the passage. It didn't feel particularly out of place.

**David (laus)**

Now didn't someone say that when things go through arches things change?

**Kessi (Fylgia)**

I am assuming that that meant original arch, the one we passed though and then got attacked by the big slicey-wire thing.

**Hem (*Speaking as Rowena*)**

*Maybe we ought to check if there are any runes or anything on it.* 16. *It appears to be empty. It's no trap, and it's very bare. It has some runes but they're in, again, the old draconic...* I'll give it ago with a wee bit of translation for a few moments... Nah, I can't quite understand it but I can tell you that

it doesn't have any inherent strangeness about it. With a few hours here I could get more but we're in a bit of a rush.. *I mean, I don't really read draconic that well, but, it doesn't seem magical or anything.*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Then shall we make camp here before the archway, just in case it is magical?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Yes I'm all for resting. My feet are killing me.

**David (Iaus)**

*(Laughter)* I would actually quite like, -talking to the bird -I would just like to know for *sure* about the arches, whether time flows differently before each arch, or after each arch, seeing as we got to another arch.

**Travis (Speaking as Old Siggy)**

*"The destination is the same either way."*

**David (Iaus)**

Existential satnav(?transcription error?), got to love it. No, let's keep going a bit. My son is in danger.

**Peter (Soren)**

I'd also like to continue a bit more before we rest...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Three to two, we're not resting just yet. Now let's get moving.*

**Travis**

...For the next hour of travel, the tunnel walls were partly hidden behind scaffolding. Limestone could be seen behind the stacked stones of the tunnel, and all of the wood sat in a state of disrepair, either due to rot or another form of decomposition. Two more hours and in the distance Soren made the party aware of another superficial archway.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Sorry, we don't have the time to research the archways. I don't like it but we need to press on.

**Travis**

The team continued past. During the next hour, they noted entire sections of wall that were yet incomplete, or perhaps were intended to accommodate safe travel into long-forgotten passages. But the trail of the children remained on the main path. The party also began to realize that they were shivering from time to time now as the passage had gotten noticeably more cold. With the an additional hour, Soren pointed out another superficial archway.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

At this point we've been awake for, what, 14, 15 hours?

**David (Iaus)**

Yup. Something like that.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Father Westpike, at this point, puts his hands up like, no no, we need to rest.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Yes, I agree, let's rest already.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I am sorry, I, I, I too want to reach the destination as soon as we can but we cannot get there exhumed.

**David (laus)**

*(correcting Westpike)* Exhausted.

**Peter (Soren)**

And we have no idea what lies ahead... Before we exhaust ourselves I'll be the third vote for a long rest. This part of the passage is an ideal location.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

*(tired)* Ugh, thank the gods!

**Hem (Rowena)**

Who's going to take the, the watch?

**David (laus)**

I'll take first watch.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Ok I take, I take first watch wit'ch you.

**Travis**

Flygia and laus both needed to make constitution saving throws to stay awake...

**Kessi (Flygia)**

20

**David (laus)**

13.

**Travis**

And while they sat, back to back, each watching one direction of the passage... what were they doing to stay awake?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I'm doing the journaling thing again... And glancing over at laus' bird whenever I can steal a glance. *(whispering to self)* That abomination must be put to rest...

**David (laus)**

I'm gonna spend my, some of my time, partly making sure to kick Lady of bunnies, just to make sure that she doesn't fall asleep or get too lost into her journals. But also I'm, I'm quite interested by this, by this mechanical canary still... "Hey Bunny-witch, what's with the book?"

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I write down everything that we've been through. It's a journal.

**David (laus)**

Interesting... Considering how shitty of a day it's been I think (DAVID MAKE A SILLY NAME FOR THE DEAD BIRD like "Mr. Ticklefeathers") will probably make for better conversation...



**Travis**

As laus spoke with the existential canary and Flygia updated her journal they both needed to make perception checks for their watch, representing their efforts to remain actively focused on their surroundings.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

20

**David (laus)**

16.

**Travis**

While Flygia was journaling, she noticed a curious seam on the wall next to her.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(quietly to self) Da' fuck is that?

**David (laus)**

(concerned) Flygia, what are you doing? Another bathroom break?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

There's a seam, like a crack, but intentional. In one of the massive stones. -I'm trying to follow the seam with my finger and assess how big it is. Where it's leading too... It's door sized and rectangular... Seems to be intentional.

**David (laus)**

Alright, yeah, I'm not sure how I didn't notice that, I generally have pretty good perception.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

What do you think? Should I push it a little bit? Should I, should we try to see if it moves at all?

**David (laus)**

Yeah, why not?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Ok. Let's see where you lead.

**Travis**

Flygia required a dexterity saving throw.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

9. (surprised gasp as she falls through) Fuuuu(ck)!

**Travis**

As Flygia pushed the stone she fell right through, as if there were no stone at all. The grey surface of the ten foot stone rippled briefly as she fell through. laus rushed to grab onto her, but he wasn't fast enough and he only succeeded in jamming his hand through the ripples in the rock before they solidified once again. He found himself now stuck in solid rock.

**David (laus)**

Oh fuck! My hands in the wall! It's like one way extra-dimensional passage. And there's totally an awkward moment where my feet are on either side of the wall and I'm trying to pull my hand out.

**Travis**

Anyone watching would probably make fun of this because laus' tail is also at the ready.

**David (laus)**

I am going to use my tail to prod Rowena, cause she seems to have good ideas.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Why me? Just want to sleep.*

**David (laus)**

Cause I know you've got a grumpy, grumpy cousin, whose...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Alright, I'll get up-oh! What the fuck! Yer' arm's it the wall!...

**David (laus)**

I know.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Well, odd as this may sound this isn't actually the first time I've seen this happen... Have you tried letting go of whatever you're holding onto?

--

**Travis**

Flygia, fell through the darkness before landing in a small room, enclosed in complete darkness.... Her darkvision quickly adjusted and she could see a small room with a single exit up ahead.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Is laus hand still stuck somewhere on me? *(to self)* No. *Whew... Well, at least I'm all here, so time to move on... Oh damn... My staff is back with the others. (sigh)*

**Travis**

Flygia followed the a narrow hallway ahead of her, discerning a number of tall flat objects ahead, possibly glass? Flygia could see a glint up ahead, the feral glow of a pair of eyes, intelligent, cunning, dangerous... and at roughly the height of her own eye level. For a brief moment Flygia braced herself to attack before realizing that the eyes were her own, a mere reflection. The room was filled with mirrors.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

You know what? I light a torch.

**Travis**

Yes, the light allowed her to see so much more detail. It was definitely a narrow hallway made of glass and mirrors. As she took a few steps closer she could hear her own voice off in the distance:

**Kessi (Flygia)**

**(Flygia Evil – angry / far away hollar)** What is this? Another trick?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

-(as Kessi the player) And this is my own voice? I don't trust it. I ask who's there.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

**(Flygia Good -angry/ far away hollar)** Who's there?

**(Flygia Evi/ far away hollar I)** Da' fuck? If you're the Silent One -or whatever, I don't have time for your bullshit. I just fell through a rock-wall. I need to get back to the others before they wake up, so kindly get out of my way before I make this into a flame blade!

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Am I just completely surrounded by mirrors or is it just like a hallway with mirrors?

**Travis**

Flygia had entered a hallway with numerous mirrors in it, and behind her was a dead end, a room of bare dirt and stone, no indication of how she arrived there in the first place.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I guess I'm just gonna try to move forward.

**Travis**

Flygia continued quietly for a minute as she cautiously passed the hallway into the entrance of a large room with rows of mirrors, each reflecting her light and a terrified expression on her face. Up ahead she could see a torchlight approaching the far end through a similarly narrow passage

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I stand still and wait until the torch light approaches.

**Travis**

It stood still as well, it's holder just out of view due to the rows of mirrors.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Is it a reflection, I wonder?... **(Flygia Good – scared)** If you're not the Silent One, this lends way to many many other questions. I'm going to walk around this mirror and by the Allshadow – if you look like me I'm going to...

**Travis**

Flygia walked in sync with the bearer of the other torch around the large room. The room was perhaps sixty feet in size with a ten foot tall ceiling, rows and rows of mirrors with gaps interspersed were the only defining features between the glass floor and ceiling.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I try to move along the hall, along the side of the hall in a circular way around it, and see, and watch the, the other torch. See what where it's going.

**Travis**

Slowly, cautiously, Flygia took timid steps through the maze of mirrors, following the far wall, shattering any mirrors that blocked her path with her dagger. The light of the other torch seemed to make the same pattern, taking the same wall. After breaking her third mirror, she looked ahead and was horrified to realize that the reflecting standing thirty feet away from her was not contained within any mirror. The holder of the other torch was... a perfect mirrored likeness of Flygia. Flygia, having heard of such things in tales of Ferati and the Allshadow passed her Sanity Saving Throw and took a few bold steps forward.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

"I ask again, who are you?"

(pissed) "I asked you first!"

(Thinking) "Trying to look like me obviously won't fool me into thinking that you are *not* the

Silent One, so clearly you must be something else... Not a doppelganger... Not an illusion... So what exactly?"

I try to get closer.

**Travis**

Both figures stepped forward cautiously, yet meeting the fierce inquisitive gaze of the other.. A mere 15 feet apart things felt very uncomfortable. Each watched the other breath with a strange fascination, turned their body slightly, and stared longer yet. They both checked for illusion and alternation magic yet none were present and no mirror separated them.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I raise my hand.

**Travis**

Both Flygias raised the same hand. As the other's tail reached for a dagger, Flygia found herself unconsciously reaching for hers.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(serious) "I did not initiate that move."

(taunting) "Because you're not evil."

(understanding) "I understand now... and cannot let you leave this place alive."

(taunting) "At least we can agree on something, then"

**Travis**

Both Flygias stood, each holding a dagger. A coin toss by the player would decide which one would be the victor over the coming conflict: Heads or tails?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Heads.

*(COIN TOSS SOUND)*

**Travis**

Thirty seconds later a battered and bruised Flygia violently slammed the skull of her twin into the ground, using her tail to pin the double's arm. She stabbed the grappled Flygia in the torso with her flaming sword. She leaned closer, watched the focus, the life, leave her twin's eyes... She had to be sure... Good had prevailed on this day... And as her twin died the floor and room around her shattered... Having murdered a version of herself, even one that was evil, Flygia now had to make a sanity saving throw...

**Kessi (Flygia)**

A one, Critical Failure.

**Travis**

And she took the full 40 stress damage, pushing her past the breaking point... As she cackled, she told herself that the creature she killed couldn't have been the same as her, couldn't have been anything like her, couldn't have been identical in every way except a murderous moral alignment, a calling to sacrifice the living in the name of the Allshadow... It had to have been a mistake... But Flygia had little time to ponder this as she fell from the ceiling just beyond the light of the fire around which her allies slept, and where laus and Rowena were standing near a block of stone, seemingly still perplexed.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Is your arm almost out the wall yet?

**David (Ilaus)**

You're somehow making this terrifying moment very embarrassing... I need to tell you something important -about Flyg- WHOH! (arm freed, falling away from the wall)

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

WHOH! (falling while freeing his arm) *See? Told you we'd have you out of there... Now next time you get your arm stuck in a wall, you better call me again. I'm the fecking best when arms are stuck through walls! Just ask my second-cousin twice removed Thanein.*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I wanna confirm this. You guys did not wake me up intentionally.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Yeah.

**David (Ilaus)**

No, I didn't. I didn't... The only person I woke up was Rowena because I thought there is no way I'm gonna wake you up 'cause I don't want the religious grumpy-man speech.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*And you need to get your sleep cousin...I mean, you're talking about like being exhausted and what not. So, gonna have to let you sleep. You know, beauty and all that.*

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(causal) Hi, I'm back.

**David (Ilaus)**

(surprised gasp)

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

(surprised gasp) *Oh Hi! Where'd you run off to? -And what the hell happened to your face?...and arm?*

**Peter (Soren)**

(Sleep-talking) zzzzz Hey, Flygia's back. Cool... Back to slumber-land...

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(causal) I got into a fight with some rats. I'm fine, go back to bed.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Sounds like they were pretty big rats...*

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(causal) Not really, it was more that I hurt myself while trying to hurt them... Let us not dwell on it. Really, please.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*As hilarious as this sounds... Okay...* -And I'll curl up into a little ball next to my Cousin.

**David (Ilaus) – low voice**

I'm glad you're okay... (suspicious) So, what happened? Where'd it lead?

**Kessi (Flygia) – low voice**

(causal) An empty room. It was dark, and there were a lot of rats, but I killed them all so we should be fine.

**David (laus) – low voice**

Okay then. Good enough for me, glad you're okay... I guess we've got the rest of our watch to still go, about another hour and a half left... (as David -normal volume) I'll sit down near my sleeping bag and watch the lady of bunnies doing her journaling, kicking her, making sure that we're still all ok and yeah...

**Kessi (Flygia) – normal volume**

I'm going to be leaning on a different wall now. Not the original.

**David (laus)**

Yeah. Smart thinking, that.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I'm staying away from that one.

**David (laus)**

Yeah but we're still, we need to still be positioned so that we can look down the corridors, making sure there's nothing coming.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Okay, I'll sit next to you and read my journal, and write in there about the things I found in the wall... And I just get up to walk around sometimes to stretch my legs. At one point I just stand in front of that wall that was sucking me into it, just pondering.

**Travis**

Flygia did exactly that but eventually returned to her seat next to laus to journal a bit more... Scribbling harshly she passed a note to the DM – er... She began to speak in a whisper, almost as if reading aloud what she wrote, when suddenly the staff in her hand shifted, reforming into a flamesword.

**Kessi (Flygia) -Whispered**

Tehrem Deys verrs Kal-obrahm!

(teh-rem day-iss verz Kal, Oh-braam!)

*Bring fourth the primal flames!*

**David (laus)**

What was, ah!(surprised brace for impact) Ugh! (stabbed)

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I rolled a 17, plus a bunch of stuff, to stab laus.

**David (laus)**

(David, outraged) Me?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

So it would appear...

**David (laus)**

(David, outraged) Okay, I'm calling bullshit and using my inspiration to force Flygia to reroll her attack.

**Travis**

As laus saw a vision of his heart being run through, his body immolated by the immense heat by Flygia's blade, the very hands of fate seemed to intervene and prevent his demise... And would you mind re-rolling the attack Flygia?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Natural 20. A Critical hit.

**David (laus)**

(David, outraged) Well fuck.

**Travis**

Yup. That's so much worse...

**Kessi (Flygia)**

85 on the critical hit chart, and 12 damage.

**Travis**

The blade did not kill laus in a single swipe but instead caught him in the stomach, sealing the wound instantly as he pulled away to disengage and regroup.

**David (laus)**

(gasp of pain as stabbed in guts)

**Travis**

laus put the sleeping Father Westpike between them as he pulled his own weapons, a matching dagger and rapier.

**David (laus)**

(pained) What the hells are you doing?! Let's not be rash!

**Travis**

Smiling wickedly, Flygia moved to attack again striking laus' left arm, nearly severing it.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(attack sound with sword)

**David (laus)**

(pained) Ah! (arm cut with sword reaction) -Wake up! She's gone mad and just started stabbing me! -Fuck, I'm down to 4 health points. Someone wake up and do something!

**Travis**

laus disengaged again and propped Father Westpike up as a human shield as Soren Arkwright awoke.

**Peter (Soren)**

So, I see two party members fighting, and... I'm not sure why.

**David (laus)**

I, I, I haven't actually raised anything... Except these blades in a defense pattern. I, I'm just, I'm still being nice. -Just disengaging, all the time.

**Peter (Soren)**

He has a sword and dagger out and he's been burned and cut pretty severely by wounds matching Flygia's flaming sword... I'm, I'm trying not to do anything related to smiting, as we know how that goes. What if I just for fun, in a sleep stupor, I wake up and immediately throw my flask of holy water onto Flygia, distraction style?

**Travis**

The vial struck Flygia in the head before shattering and dousing her in holy water from the church of Torm.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(hit in the head with a glass vial) Ow, fucks! Not on me you idiot, he is the Doppler! Kill him not me!

**Peter (Soren)**

(hurried – to Flygia) Sorry! (to laus) Sorry about this (struggle sounds of restraining laus)

**Travis**

Seeing the wounds Flygia herself had recently sustained, Soren moved to grapple laus, not in a way that would hurt him, but just as a means to restrain him. He did so with an opposed strength check, at disadvantage.

**Travis**

But despite this, laus was restrained by Soren. Rowena awoke at that time to the sound of laughter.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(Maniacal laughter)

**David (laus)**

(struggle sounds of being restrained by Soren) No! Look! Maniacal laughter! Maniacal!

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Seeing that, seeing that Soren has one, and - I'd grapple her but she has a flaming sword so fuck that. I'm just gonna look up and just start like whispering under my breath like *Don't be scared, don't shed a tear, but it won't be a problem if you weren't, here*. And I'm gonna cast dissonant whispers at her.

**Travis**

Dizzying dissonant whispers began to take hold over Flygia's mind, but her wisdom overcame the challenge. Still, she took 6 psychic damage even as the headache began to wear away.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Wake up sleepy head, do something cause you're not dead*. I'll give bardic inspiration to my Cuz.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Alright. So I was woken up by screaming, then propped up sort of like a hostage, and as laus was -and as laus's hands are clasped behind his back I almost fall on my ass. I'm sorry I'm gonna ask



a little bit of a gamey question. Can I make an educated guess on what is wrong with the one that was manically laughing and then got really upset when holy water was thrown on her.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I just didn't like getting wet and laughter is how I relieve stress. I stress laugh (laughing) see? I'm doing it now.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

She does not appear to be under any charm effects. She appears to be of sound-ish mind and of her own accord. (to self) Alright, then it's the second choice: I tackle her. 20!

**Travis**

Father Westpike moved to pin her down, using his slightly above average dwarven height and body weight... But despite his limp and old age he was able to restrain her, forcing her to drop her blade, which returned to the form of a staff as it hit the ground.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I'm not the enemy here!

**David (Ilaus)**

No! She went through a wall and then she...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

She what?

**David (Ilaus)**

... and then came back. She disappeared through that wall over there! Rowena can-

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Yeah, and then she appeared on you from the ceiling.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Yeah...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

You were there for this? When did this happen?

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Oh, you were asleep don't worry about it.* I'm going to meander over to Ilaus, and I'm gonna put my hand on his shoulders like *Your wounds I'm gonna heal, all your wounds are now gonna be sealed.* And then I'll give you a level 2 cure wounds cause fuck mine you're almost dead.

**David (Ilaus)**

What, what does that even mean?

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Mean's I'm gonna give you some hit points.

**David (Ilaus)**

Oh, cool.

**Peter (Soren)**

I will just be hugging throughout this exchange.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Basically I let, I let go of Flygia and push her away from laus. As I look back to laus,

**David (laus)**

And then she just went made, she ,she, pulled out her sword and I... and hit me, and stuff. Each time I disengaged trying to make sure that, just trying to find out what was going on and then, and then she just kept coming at me.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Don't listen to him! He's the doppler, he was trying to kill me, he had a rapier in his hand.

**David (laus)**

I was defending myself!

**Kessi (Flygia)**

You attacked me first!

**David (laus)**

Oh yeah where are your wounds then?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I dodged it!

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

I'm going to insight her, looking really closely at her to see if she's lying... cause he's beaten to crap.... Well fuck, she's actually kind of believable covered in those bruises from the rats.

**David (laus)**

But she's not got a stab mark on her that matches my blades!

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*You could just be a really crap assassin.*

**David (laus)**

If only you knew.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

That didn't stop you from trying! (nervous cackling) See? You're making me nervous cackle again...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I look to Soren kind of confused. Like: do you have any idea what's going on?

**Peter (Soren)**

He's just nuzzling laus. Not much, not much happening there.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Why, why do you think he's a doppler?*

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Because he tried to attack me.

**Peter (Soren)**

Just what's the last thing that you remember before we were all embroiled in combat here?

**David (laus)**

Who, me or her?

**Peter (Soren)**

Flygia.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

Why did I stab him with da flamesword?

**Peter (Soren)**

Just before that yeah, what started all this?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I don't know, I was just writing into my journal, and suddenly I see laus smile at me all funny-like, and he has his rapier out, and tries to stab me.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Wait, wait we've all been tricked by the... S.O. and N.O. do you think maybe this was a trick on you?*

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I supposed it might have been.

**Peter (Soren)**

I have also had my mind scrambled by the Silent One less than a day ago...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Because I'm pretty good at reading most people and I'm pretty sure you're telling the truth, and I'm also pretty sure not a doppler because... well, yeah, you were really properly beaten and you're bleeding normal so. Are you sure you weren't tricked?*

**David (laus)**

She disappeared through the wall. And then she reappeared, you were there, you saw her reappear from the ceiling.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Yeah, I'm, I'm, I'm not disputing that but maybe she was tricked into attacking you, like when you cast the thunderwave at everyone and that thing wasn't real.*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

What happened in the wall? Where did you go?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

I don't know I just stepped into the wall and then it was black just for a moment and there were rats... then suddenly I was back here. I can't remember much beyond that and fighting the rats.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I Fear that Flygia might be under some kind of mind magic. Since I, I have seen laus fight and I highly doubt that given the opportunity to strike first he would miss.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**  
*I agree.*

**David (laus)**  
Thank you.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**  
*Ok, so let's go with everyone is normal, everyone is themselves, and this is just another one of those tricks. Ok?*

**David (laus)**  
Well you keep her away from me.

**Eypór (Sindri)**  
I can take shift with Flygia. Don't worry.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**  
*Well, you two've only got an hour to go right? So we'll take over the watch from here.*

**Eypór (Sindri)**  
Hmm. That's, that's approvable. And yeah, I guess we're taking a longer watch. Now everyone go to bed, okay. We need to rest, because there's no telling what we must face at the end of this tunnel...

**Travis**  
The team dispersed, each going back to their sleeping accommodations – laus far away from Flygia, and Soren playing quietly with a dagger for a few minutes before sleep took him. The cousins were now on watch, but what were they doing as the minutes rolled by?

**Eypór (Sindri) – Low quiet voice**  
I'll keep a very close eye on Flygia, since she's the one that went through a magical portal and had no wounds from laus.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena) – Low quiet voice**  
*Right. I'll watch Soren... I'm still not entirely sure that he's in control of himself.*

**Eypór (Sindri) – Low quiet voice**  
I'll also keep an eye on, on laus. An Eye on laus.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena) – Low quiet voice**  
*If like we sit in the middle of the corridor and one of us looks one way and the other looks back the other way, and we can just look at each other and keep each other awake.*

**Eypór (Sindri) – Low quiet voice**  
I think that's a, that's an ok idea. I'm assuming that we will have very minimal conversations then since we're speaking over the sleeping people.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena) – Low quiet voice**  
*A quiet watch it is.*

**Travis**  
Both members of the watch were required to make constitution saving throws to remain awake.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Alright. Baby, 20.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

12.

**Travis**

And so it was that the next watch went without incident. A few hours passed, and it was time to change watch... But who among them could still be trusted?

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*You go back to sleep, I'll, I'll sit up with Soren.*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Then you won't have rested enough.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*I'm Ok, I am, you know I slept pretty well yesterday and you know I'm not too bad...*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

None of us slept well yesterday, don't lie to me.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

She kind of does that half embarrassed smile thing. Like *Ok so you called me out, but you need to sleep more than I do. You're a... I can deal with it, don't worry.*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Get your sleep, I'll take this watch with Soren

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Know if it becomes a battle of wills, you know I'm going to win right?*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I, I, I know I can't beat you in a battle of wills, but I am pretty sure I can still pin you down and tie you to your bedroll. Go to sleep.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*No. you'll remember I'm stronger than you.*

**Peter (Soren)**

I see what's happening here, but there's plenty of me to go around, let's not fight.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

I throw something at Soren.

**Travis**

Rowena threw a small piece of bread at Soren, who caught it and quietly ate it in the coming minutes.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

You get the first two hours, I get the second hours.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Ok, that's fair. Now go to bed [TERM OF ENDEARMENT]!

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I curl up into my bedroll.

**Travis**

Soren then required a constitution saving throw to see how focused and awake he remained during his watch...

**Peter (Soren)**

Sure.

**Peter (Soren)**

17.

**Travis**

Soren had no difficulty maintain his vigilance while silently shaving his face with his cursed dagger... Blood occasionally dripped from the blade but no marks appears on his skin... And for the rest of the time he held the dagger closely, examining it and reexamining it.

During the rest, the team was able to fully recover... except for Father Westpike and Rowena, who did not get a full rest.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

That's fine.

**David (laus)**

Does that mean I get my hit points back or do they stay where they are?

**Travis**

He did. Reluctantly aided by the magics of Father Westpike, laus' crippled arm recovered swiftly. As the team regrouped and ate a silent meal, Rowena took only a single bite before spitting the food out, disgusted... As they finished eating, they stood up one by one and continued down the dark passage.

**David (laus)**

Thanks.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Bleh!

**Travis**

Another hour of travel passed and the tunnel was clearly sloping downwards again, though little else seemed to change. A few minutes more and the team was about to pass another superficial archway.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Are we passing the same archway every time? Or is the walls changing?

**Peter (Soren)**

They're slightly different, it is different.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Alright, I make a slight mark on the archway, somewhere where I won't disturb the symbols that have been written into it. Ahh! (Surprise/pain)

**Travis**

Father Westpike lingered beneath the archway to make the mark as mass of green fell atop him, requiring a dexterity saving through.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Yeah that's a 7.

**Travis**

As the slime landed on his shoulder it seemed to eat into him, hissing and bubbling like acid, burning his skin for 6 damage.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(pained) Rrrrg! (Icelandic cursing) Get off me!

**Travis**

Father Westpike flailed and tried to push the acidic slime off his body, his arms succeeding in removing it from his shoulder but the residual acid burning through his gloves and armor for another six damage. Remnants of the thick hissing slime continued to eat away at his flesh, exposing areas of red across his shoulder arms, and hands... Though he remained calm and level headed, even at the sight of his own skin being eaten away.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(pained) God damn!

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

I'm going to put my hand on where this goo is and I'm going to can cast prestidigitation to clean this crap off him.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(pained) Ahh! Ow.. Thank you, Rowena... I've... I've seen these things before in the Craig. They are not too great a threat, but they can be quite damaging as you've just seen...

**Davis (Ilaus)**

You've taken some serious damage there...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*-Pride. Some pride damage too.*

**Travis**

Father Westpike began to bandage his hands and shoulder as Flygia and Soren examined the green slime near their feet.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I've done this many times before. I've, I've encountered these things before. Don't worry. Practice.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*So you've burnt your hands every single time, that this stuff falls on you?*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

What else are you supposed to do? Let it burn you?

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Well you can clean it off like I just did!*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Not everyone wants to..

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*What did you do before I turned up?!*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Used my hands. Ah wait, that could be taken wrong.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Alright, let's, let's skip past the awkward conversation and walk on.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I quietly cast cure wounds on myself, shamefully.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

There's no, you cannot recover, it's like necrotic damage, you can't recover pride, it's gone.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Soren, if you would, please continue.

**Travis**

Another hour of travel, and the construction and stones gave way to a natural limestone wall, which formed a natural passageway which followed the team's descent deeper into the earth... As they followed the trail of their quarry, the missing children, a small red light flickered far in the distance from one of the side passages before vanishing. This event was marked by a brief tremor.

**Peter (Soren)**

Thankfully, the passage appears to be stable... For now.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

I'm also happy to report that I'm pretty sure that the shaking feels pretty normal for a low-grade earthquake... But it might be related to the light we just saw... I dunno... Regardless it seems like a tangent from our purpose and we don't have any time to spare.

**Travis**

The team continued... And after travelling for 2 more hours down the featureless cavern, Father Westpike alone noticed that the walls are no longer limestone, but a sort of thick glistening grey, which appeared to undulate and move away from the heat of the torches.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Um... So I wasn't gonna say anything, but um...

**Peter (Soren)**

Yes?

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Please stop a moment. Hm... This isn't a type of wood or granite... It's... (to self, quietly) Oh no...



**Travis**

Coming to the very real realization of his situation, Father Westpike's sanity was tested... and found lacking... He took 15 stress damage as he swiped the torch from Soren and began shaking with the physical manifestation of fear.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(terrified, crazy talk, temporarily lapse of sanity) Alright, everybody just don't, don't panic. Stay in single fault line and do not, for the love of everything that is holy, touch the walls.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Are you ok?*

**Travis**

He could not bring himself to name what he'd see, for fear of it suddenly becoming more real than it already was.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(crazy-talk) The walls will kill you if you touch them Rowena!

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

I touc... I look at the wall, I look back at him like... *ok promise not...*

**David (laus)**

The walls to strange things around here I can tell you that.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(Crazy-talk) No, no...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*Ok...*

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(crazy talk) No, No, they will...

**David (laus)**

People disappear into them and then come back as murders

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(Crazy talk - yelling) Are you not, are you not listening to me?!

**David (laus)**

yeah.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*No no, that's ok, look, look, look father it's ok, we'll promise not to touch the walls, we'll, just don't worry about it. I mean, you said don't touch the walls, we're not touching the walls, we're just gonna keep walking forward, it's ok.* And I'll like put my arm through his and take the torch.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(Crazy Talk) No! I hold onto the torch!

**Travis**

Rowena lit a second torch quietly, trying to remain calm and collected before her unhinged cousin.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(Crazy Talk) Yes... Yes... Smart thinking... More is better... We all need.... Need the torch...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*(calming) Well we're all going to have torches, it's fine, right guys?*

**Peter (Soren)**

Sure.

**David (Iaus)**

Yeah, see? (motioning to his lit torch) Torch.

**Kaitlin (Sister)**

A good idea, Father Westpike.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

My eyes see just fine. Shut up and let's keep going.

**Travis**

... an hour of travel, the six adventurers, walking in single file, slowly became aware of a wet squelching sound just barely audible all around them. After an hour of hearing it the team's concerns lessened, as if it was something natural, something that always was...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I look around make sure we're still walking in a single file line and no bodies straying closer to the wall than they should.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I, I, I often snap at people then they like take a little step out of line.

**Peter (Soren)**

(alarmed) Hold up!... Did you just see that?

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*(alarmed) See what?*

**Peter (Soren)**

I saw something... A grey ooze -It was picking something up off the path before merging into the (realization/despair that the wall is ooze) wall... Oh god.

**David (Iaus)**

(terrified) We're surrounded... There's no passage anymore, just ooze in every direction... Moving just out of the torchlight with every step we seem to take.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(emotionless) It's like the stone itself is breathing.

**Travis**

As the rest of the team realized what had set Father Westpike off, their resolves were tested... But, one by one, they passed, sturdy and focused, willing to do whatever it took to get as far away from this place as possible...

**Peter (Soren)**

We have to keep going... Alright, the passage ahead is still spacious by most standards but it's a bit more narrow than we've been used to... We're going to have to get uncomfortably close to the ooze-walls in another twenty feet or so. Before we do this, I need to focus my primal awareness to ensure that we're not ambushed... This would probably make a perfect point of attack...

**Travis**

Soren stood there silently as the others could only fidget quietly in the darkness behind him. As he opened his awareness, used magics to expand his mind he could feel the presence of the following creatures within six miles: infernals, aberrations, fey, and undead...

**Davis (laus)**

Soren, could you please hurry it up over there? Some of us back here are- (AH – being hit by a club in the head)

**Travis**

At the back of the group, Sister Cavernsfall, struck laus with a wickedly barbed staff for seven bludgeoning damage. Hearing the start of combat, Soren Immediately turned around, locked eyes with Sister Cavernsfall, and threw both of his daggers at her, one missing, the other finding its home in her shoulder sinking into an artery.

**Peter (Soren)**

That's why I'm using my daggers, come full circle here.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(sound of pain from stabbing daggers)Ah! Abyss Take you! "ihk-hiww zicy haff (ick hew zycky hoff)"-Hellish Rebuke!

**Travis**

As the Sister Cavernsfall's eyes glowed with hate, Soren could feel a heat erupting from beneath him. He was only just barely able to scramble away in time, taking only half of the 18 damage in the process as the purple flames singed his left side.

**Peter (Soren)**

(sound of pain from being burned) I don't feel good.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

(in self, panicked) Quick headcount...-feck... I have to do a genuine headcount I'm so confused. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. -Feck! *You do matter, I'll cast shatter!* [use scream from Hem's magical Mp3 of screams]

**Travis**

Rowena saw Sister Cavernsfall and immediately cast Shatter behind her target so that the thunderous effects would not hurt laus... but she overshot her distance, only partially hitting her target for 11 damage, clearly damaging Sister Cavernsfall, who appeared winded but whose face still betrayed a hateful glare. As the deafeningly loud crash echoed and reverberated, a dim silence returned, notable lacking the wet smacking noises that had surrounded the team... The walls stopped moving...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

Bonus Action to give Bardic Inspiration to Soren: *"Soren, all you got to do is keep trying, and just try, and just make sure that whatever you do you don't die!"*

**Peter (Soren)**

(hollering in combat from a few feet away) Thank you.

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

*(hollering in combat a few feet away) You're welcome.*

**David (Ilaus)**

I'm, I'm gonna bring the crossbow out again cause that's the last time I've been, I'm gonna be attacked by someone. I know, I noticed that it was hellish rebuke and I'm thinking only a tiefling can do hellish rebuke.

**Travis**

Ilaus dropped his torch and pulled up his crossbow, staring hard at Sister Cavernsfall's eyes and finding something familiar about the expression.

**David (Ilaus)**

(hateful, to self while aiming) Goodbye "Sister!"

**Travis**

He pulled the trigger. As she still prepared a counter attack against Rowena, Ilaus' shot rang true, catching Sister Cavernsfall's forehead, just above the brow, her eyes rolled up as her form began to shift, becoming a duplicate of Flygia, who still stood between Ilaus and Father Westpike, a look of surprise and shock clear across her face... Already beyond the breaking point Flygia cackled nervously as the doppler before the team collapsed in front them, unconscious, presumably dying.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(being hit with an arrow in the face) ugh!

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(nervous cackling) What....the...fucks... (nervous quiet laughter for 60 seconds to go under the scene)

**David (Ilaus)**

She'd *better* be dying there.

**Peter (Soren)**

I was a bit confused before... But now I'm very confused...

**Travis**

Father Westpike and Soren also all failed their Sanity saving throws and as the deadly silence continued Father Westpike stood in silent shock unable to act or speak. After a considerable amount Father Westpike stumbled forward, trying to put himself between the team and the fallen Flygia. Soren found himself caressing the bloody dagger he'd thrown just moments ago glancing carefully from Flygia to the unconscious Flygia and back again, the dagger called out for more blood...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(clearly shaken) Um... Everyone... Just, stay back everyone... Stay back a moment, I'm going

to heal laus. (in Icelandic) Morning lord please heal this man's wounds and keep us safe as we try to figure out what is happening right now. – 11 health.

**David (laus)**

Thanks...

**Travis**

The standing Flygia held onto her sacrificial dagger, gripping it tightly.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(shaken) I -I... (laughter) I don't know what that was, that, -that must have been a Doppler... I don't know what's happened. Why did it take the form of Sister Cavernsfal? Do you think this is The Silent-

**David (laus)**

(demanding) What happened when you went through the wall?

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(nervous laughter) I, I told you, -I told you I don't know. It was, it was just suddenly black and then I just, found myself falling from the ceiling again and then I was back with you guys, I don't know what happened in between.

**David (laus)**

(demanding) You mentioned rats before.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(scared) I just don't know anymore! This place... It does things to you, to your memory...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(nervous, shaken) I'm doing a head count, even though it's dumb at this point. laus, Flygia, dying Flygia, myself, and, I already said Rowena, the one time, just the one. Soren. That's it. Just the five of us... The Flygia on the ground... She might... I'm going to look for her diary.

**Travis**

Father Westpike began to approach the downed Flygia, one hand on his torch. He began to move her cloak away and search for the journal when the sound of wet movement just beyond the light of his torch caused him to glance up just in time to see a large dark shape rushing toward him. He had only enough time to drop his torch and stagger back as the shapeless form landed with a squelch atop the body of Flygia, which began to immediately bubble and denigrate somewhere under the thick... crimson... ooze. Still paralyzed in shock and fear, Father Westpike was prone, and helpless to react as the shapeless form moved to overtake him.

**Peter (Soren)**

(yelling) "Watch out!" Hrr! (swinging a torch at it) "These things don't like fire!"

**Travis**

Soren swung his torch toward the monstrosity and pulled Father Westpike to his feet, but the thing quickly formed around the path of the torch, avoiding the strike. As it moved, the bones and flesh of a grinning face beneath the ooze became temporarily visible, before sinking back beneath the red wriggling mass.

[editor: Soren's second half of the line goes here]

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(scared, coming out of shock) T-t-thank you!

**Travis**

Rowena, quick to her cousin's aid, cast Vicious Mockery at the creature...

**Hem (Speaking as Rowena)**

She's just gonna look at it and say *I'm not scared of you, you're just a giant ooze!*

**Travis**

The ooze, unable to understand Rowena, was unphased by the magic within her words...

**David (laus)**

(attacking) Then eat steel! (attack sound) Hmph! (pain of being hit with acid) aggh, fuck!

**Travis**

laus stabbed the quivering ooze with his rapier, seemingly damaging it, but as his sword pierced its surface, an arterial spray of red semi-coagulated slime splashed back for three damage, partly burning his face and sword-arm, and weakening his blade -permanently reducing its effectiveness by one as the acid began to pit the steel.

laus quickly dashed back, disengaging from the monstrosity.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(hollering into combat) "Only ranged weapons, do not touch it with your own!"

**Travis**

Coming to his senses, Father Westpike began to push the line back away from the fiend. Flygia, still in a terrified state was unable to act but gladly followed his lead.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(hollering into combat) We should destroy it if anybody can.

**Travis**

Father Westpike fumbled as he tried to pull his crossbow, but instead Soren passed him the lit torch while notching an arrow on his bow.

**Peter (Soren)**

(stern to Westpike) Hold this and get down.

**Travis**

Soren fired a shot into the central mass of the pulsating ooze, the arrow impacting and popping the dermis like boil for 15 damage, a thick runny liquid now trailing down its side. A second shot trailed behind from Rowena, causing an additional 6 damage from her hand crossbow... And just like that the creature changed course, retreating back into the darkness, the wet slimy sounds of the cave having returned to greet them.

**Peter (Soren)**

(Tensely to Westpike) Pass me the torch, the Ooze ahead of us isn't moving.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

(to Soren) Here... (to laus) laus, can I see your sword? I am proficient with smithing tools and I could maybe patch it up.

**David (laus)**

Yeah, thanks... You can, but not when we're in the hallway of ooze... with the big crimson ooze lurking somewhere just beyond the torchlight.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Alright, gotcha. Bad idea. Well, then, I don't know if that sword is sentimental to you, but I can probably patch it up next time we take a break.

**David (laus)**

Yeah, sure thing. Thank you.

**Peter (Soren)**

(Tensely to team) Good news... We can keep moving. The Ooze hates fire more than it wants to keep us here.

**Hem (Rowena)**

(relieved) Thanks the gods.

**Kessi (Flygia)**

(nervous laughter, scared, to self) I, I couldn't fight it...

**Eypór (Sindri)**

By the way, how are you doing? I saw you took quite a beating from that doppelganger.

**David (laus)**

Just a few scratches after your last bit of healing... I've seen worse.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Alright alright. Do you think you need some patching up or do you want to push on?

**David (laus)**

I'm good to push on for now.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

Great to hear that. You are a good man, laus... At least I would like to believe so. We will find your son.

**David (laus)**

(sincere) Thanks... I appreciate your concern for once.

**Eypór (Sindri)**

I want to get us out of this hallway as soon as we can. These literally want us dead.

**Hem (Rowena)**

Yeah, if you wouldn't mind moving a little bit faster Soren, that would be great.

**Travis**

And so the team continued through the cavern of ooze, praying to their respective gods to see an end to the tunnel... and to not find themselves pray to the Crimson Ooze...