

Session Zero Summary

The party—comprising Shushuh, Tsemin, Joee, and Othokent—arrives in Muckcross, a castle town bustling with the festival celebrating Amleth Boru, a legendary warrior king. After enjoying the festivities, they approach a barber named Sean O'Mallory, who directs them to speak with a guard named Hapthor under the bridge about a potential job. Hapthor offers them 3 silver to investigate "The Tower," a location steeped in superstition, on his behalf to check for suspicious activity.

Upon sneaking into the tower, the party discovers a large elm tree growing in its center. They encounter a shadowy, robed figure near the tree who claims ownership of the tower before initiating combat. The figure, injured slightly by Shushuh, magically puts the party to sleep and escapes. The adventurers awaken in a nearby infirmary in Muckcross, where Deckard Maymus, the court alchemist, requests their aid. He explains that they must obtain the legendary golden lyre harp of Amleth to ward off the fae and protect the kingdom. The alchemist promises substantial rewards but notes that the harp's location can only be determined after acquiring five magical tomes. The party accepts the quest but is paid only 2 silver for their trouble at The Tower—less than Hapthor's promised 3. Oh well.

Afterward, they visit Arthur's Pub, reputedly the best in town, where they enjoy good food, complimentary drinks, and a long rest.

Their journey begins as they set out for Branfor in search of the first tome. Along the way, they share backstories, hunt, and set up camp for the night. However, during the second watch, distant drumming announces the approach of a goblin band. Five goblins converge on the camp, singing a chant. The lead goblin demands payment in money, bones, or other valuables to leave the party unscathed. Othokent negotiates a deal, promising a share of future spoils to avoid unnecessary violence. To seal the agreement, he gives them a bone enchanted with runes to appear valuable. The goblins retreat, and the party resumes their rest.

Continuing their journey, Tsemin communicates with a bird to find a shortcut to Branfor. Along the way, they encounter Shaymus, a merchant traveling with a donkey and a cart laden with wares, including jars of firefly lantern bugs. Shaymus bears numerous cuts on his body, a symptom of the rumored curse afflicting the land. He explains that the fireflies can combat the magical darkness that pervades the area. Tsemin purchases three jars of fireflies, and Othokent buys an "exotic" toad, which he immediately eats. Othokent then acquires an additional jar of fireflies by gifting Shaymus a jar of wine. With new directions, the party continues toward Branfor, only a few kilometers away.

As they near Winenut, the vibrant green forests give way to gnarled, barren trees. The town itself is dirty, impoverished, and notably devoid of guards. Visiting an antique mall owned by an unusually clean man without cuts on his body like the rest of the locals, the party spots a gold-painted lyre harp in a glass case behind the counter. Othokent casts *Detect Magic* on the harp, revealing it to be mundane and non-magical.

Next, the party heads to the library, where they delve into history books about the nearby ruins and the curse plaguing Branfor. They learn that the curse of misfortune is relatively recent, as it is mentioned only in newer volumes. Seeking more information, they decide to gather local knowledge about the ruins before venturing into them. Joee speaks to a librarian and confirms that the curse's origins are indeed recent, further piquing their curiosity about the area.