

Our adventurers rolled along in the wagon in a sweltering hot day. There was a light breeze and a small drizzle, but it did nothing to cool the heat. Milthrar the dwarf monk rode up front with driver while the rest of the band sat in the back of the wagon. The two tired looking horses clip clopped down the road at a dull pace.

Several hours into the morning the elf druid Adoros heard the sound of riders coming down the road behind them. Everyone save the dragonborn fighter Masapen jumped out of the wagon just as the riders were almost upon them.

Two members of the Axe of Mirabar approached the wagon eyeing the party suspiciously. They started to interrogate the party when the driver explained that he had hired the group to protect their wagon of merchants on the way to Luskan. The guards almost didn't believe him, but eventually they accepted the explanation and went on down the road warning of escaped convicts. The party climbed back in the wagon and set off once again towards Luskan.

Sometime after midday, the group began to hear the sounds of a river in the distance off to their left. As the wagon began to come around a bend in the road Milthrar, despite sharing drinks with the driver, spotted a chain blocking the road in the distance. The wagon stopped and everyone climbed out, ready for a fight. The ever alert Adoros once again spotted bandits on either side of the road attempting to hide behind trees, while a third sat in the trees with a crossbow.

After realizing they no longer had the drop on the group, the bandits left their concealment. The party recognized them as the same bandits they had encountered fighting orcs on the way to Mirabar. The smaller bandit with the shortsword was the first to act, rushing at Milthrar with his weapon held high. The monk, even with his senses dulled by drink, saw the attack coming and deftly dodged out of the way of the swing. The bandit was surprised to see a dwarf move so quickly. Milthrar countered with his own attack, bringing his staff around in a quick swing into the bandit's stomach.

Adran rushed into the clearing after seeing his companion in combat. The paladin charged towards the other bandit on the ground holding a greataxe. The halfelf battered the bandit's large weapon out of the way with his shield before stabbing his sword into the man's shoulder, drawing more than a little blood.

Masapen, never one to be left out of a fight, rushed towards the bandit fighting Milthrar. The large dragonborn slashed his sword across the bandit's chest in a downward motion, easily cutting through the bandit's leather armor. While the small man howled in pain the fighter brought his hammer around from the left in a thunderous blow, caving in the bandit's skull.

The druid Adoros ran towards the chain and attempted to bring down the bandit hiding in the branches above. The elf began chanting, stretched out his arm and a spray of poisonous gas sprang forth at the bandit. The gas missed the bandit, but the stench of the fumes was enough to make the man fall from his perch to the ground. Milthrar ran towards the man and brought his staff down on the man's arm, breaking the bone and causing the monk to drop his crossbow. Adran came up, feeling angry that they had let these bandits go only to find them still harassing travelers, brought his sword down into the man's chest.

The party looted what was left of the bandits, finding little of note other than the key to unlock the chain. Once the obstacle had been removed from the road the climbed back into the wagon and continued down the road. The sun was beginning to set, and the temperature was finally letting up.

After a little while the forest to the left began to clear, and the sound of a river could be heard in the distance. Just before dark the few remaining trees cleared up and the River Mirar could be seen. A clearing lay between the river and the road, and the driver of the wagon suggested the travelers set camp for the night. Near the camp stood a statue of an elven woman next to a unicorn. Adran and Adoros recognize the statue as the Goddess Mieliki, elven goddess of nature.

Several hours after sundown, Adoros and Milthrar heard what they thought were the sounds of boats landing nearby. Suddenly a band of elves appeared from down by the river, recognizing Adoros as one of their own. The party chatted with the elves for a few moments. Adoros learned his tribe had fled from Murkwood from the orcs. The tribe was headed south, and his family had been among the first to leave several months ago. Adran found himself thinking the elves looked familiar for some reason, and after a while he realized it was his mother's tribe, who he hadn't seen in many years. Adoros and Adran had been distantly related all along.

It was around this time that one of the elves recognized Masapen from his time raiding with the orcs. The elves began speaking quickly and hushed in elvish, while Adran and Adoros attempted to listen in. The elves circled around the dragonborn, fingering their weapons. They explained to Adran and Adoros that Masapen had been sighted burning villages with the orcs, and that he was not to be trusted. The druid and the paladin, having spent quite a bit of time with the dragonborn by now, attempted to vouch for his character, insisting there must be some mistake. After some convincing, the elves finally calmed down some.

After a while they withdrew to make their own camp, and the party decided who would take first watch before they began to rest after a long day. They awoke the next morning to a light rain. The temperature was thankfully cooler than the day before, and the party began to pack up to head to Luskan. There was no trace of the elves, so the party set off down the road.

After a few hours the party began to smell salt in the air and hear gulls in the distance. As they crested a hill suddenly the City of Sails came into sight. The road followed the edge of the trees to their right before curving to their left and reaching the north gate of the city. Behind the city the party could see the harbor, with more than a few ships floating in from the sea waiting to dock.

The wagon made its way down the road until it stopped before the gate. Two humans stood guard, eyeing the party suspiciously. They asked what business the adventurers had traveling in the north with so many orcs about. The guards almost didn't let them in, but after some quick excuses by the driver, they finally stood back and opened the gates.

The wagon rolled in through the north gate into the industrial district. Warehouses stretched to the right towards the sea. The bridge across the river into the main part of town lay ahead. The merchants explained it was time to part ways so they could store their wares until they figured out where to try and sell them. In payment for their protection on the road, the merchants gave Milthrar a bag of holding and set off.

The group of adventurers headed in to town in search of Adran's contact Regis. They crossed the bridge and headed south. After coming over the bridge, the party found themselves in the merchant district of Luskan. Stalls filled with foods and general goods lined the area. Across the square they saw a crowd of people gathered. The group made their way over to find a large cage with the top open. Inside the cage was a thin, hungry looking tiger. Above the cage on a platform stood a particularly ugly halforc next to a lever. Suspended above the cage was a man strapped to a chair hanging from a chain. The halforc yelled "CONFESS!" at the man, but the human shook his head no. The halforc laughed and pulled the lever, causing the chair to drop a foot lower. The tiger looked up and growled hungrily. The party came to learn the man was accused of rape, and were unsure of how they felt about the spectacle. After several more exchanges between the man and the halforc, the man finally admitted to the crime. The halforc once again laughed before pulling the lever all the way in, causing the chair to drop into the cage. The tiger instantly jumped on the man, devouring most of him in minutes.

The crowd began to disperse, but suddenly some yells could be heard. The tiger had managed to use the chair as a boost to jump the wall. The beast swatted once at the halforc before jumping down and landing in front of the party. Adoros tried to calm the tiger. It appeared to work for a moment, with the tiger standing for a brief second in front of the party unsure of what to do. Some shouting by some nearby guards broke the animal's trance, and with one last look at the druid it sprang away and rushed through the crowd towards the walls.

The party kept making their way south towards the pier. Eventually they made it to Half-Moon Street, where Adran suspected they'd find Regis. As the group began walking down the road, two oafish looking humans were seen drinking near an alley and eyeing the large dragonborn Masapen. Feeling the need to size up this newcomer, they approached and began taunting the dragonborn into a fight, not aware of his martial proficiency. Never one to take much convincing to fight, Masapen smirked at the pair before squaring up. He sent one right hook into the first thug, laying him out into the mud in one blow. The other human got in a few punches, but the dragonborn barely seemed to notice them before punching the man in the stomach and bringing his knee up into the man's face. Barely more than a few minutes had passed before both men lay unconscious in the mud.

The party made their way down the rest of the road before reaching a tavern at the end called "The Cutlass." Sure enough, inside Adran found his old friend Regis enjoying a drink down at the end of the bar. The halfling was talking to the old bartender when Adran approached, but he greeted the halfelf warmly. They talked casually for a few moments before the paladin began to inquire of the happenings in town. Regis told him that the Mirabar district had been empty for a few weeks now, after most of the dwarves left to return to Citadel Mirabar. They had heard word that Oakenshield was destroyed, and the city was bracing for an orc attack. Help had been sought from Waterdeep, but as of yet there's been no response. Captain Kurth, High Captain of Ship Kurth, is trying to get the other high captains to band together in defense, but it seems to only partially be working as most of the weaker houses see this as an opportunity to improve their ranking in the city hierarchy. There was a particularly grim attitude in the city.

After speaking with Regis, the party decided to head back to the north side of town to stay at an inn that Adran knew. Adran and Adoros retired to their rooms, while Milthrar and Masapen decided to go out drinking. After several hours of drinking ale and whiskey, the pair stumbled into Half-Moon Street in the early morning hours to head back to the inn. Suddenly a man had a knife pointed in Masapen's

back and was asking them for their gold. Milthrar drunkenly turned around and attempted to accost the mugger but he had drank too much. Masapen, though drunk, quickly whipped around and grabbed the man's wrist of the hand holding the knife. He broke it in one quick snap, then stabbed the man with his own dagger. The pair left the dead man in the street and headed to the inn without anyone seeming to notice or care. After a little while of searching, they finally found the inn and made their way to the rooms upstairs. At the top of the stairs, Milthrar went into a room and promptly passed out. Masapen, unsure of which room was his, began trying doors. He got to one that was locked, but the dragonborn was too drunk to care and kicked the door in. He found the bed in the room already occupied by Milthrar, so he passed out on the floor next to the bed.

A few hours later, the party awoke to the sound of bells clanging in the distance while a heavy rain poured outside. Everyone jumped up and put on their gear running for the door, Masapen and Milthrar moving a little slow. As Adran tossed open the front door he could see guards running down the road towards the north gate shouting to each other about orcs. The group rushed into the rain towards the north gate.

Climbing to the top of the wall, the four adventurers saw more orcs than they had ever seen before. Dozens of tribes were crossing the open plain between the forest and the city walls. The guards formed themselves into two groups on either end of the north wall. Milthrar quickly ran to the catapult and pulled the lever, hurling a firebomb into the distance. Several orcs died in the resulting explosion. Masapen hurried to load another firebomb into the catapult. Adoros, sensing the danger they were in, called deep into his connection with the natural world. Suddenly a large wave sprung forth from the hills and began washing orcs away into the fast moving river. Adran struggled with his armor, not seeming to get some of the buckles right in the rush to get out the door.

The guards fired their arrows, one group hitting some orcs and the other group not hitting a single shot. The orcs advanced onward towards the gate. Milthrar launched another firebomb from the catapult, causing more than a few orcs to be set alight. While Masapen began reloading the catapult once again, Adran finally got his gear set and picked up a nearby bow, launching an arrow at a distant orc.

The ranged assault on the orcs began to take its toll, with only a few tribes left on the field. For a moment it looked like the battle was over before it had begun. At that moment orc war drums could be heard and more orcs rushed out onto the field from the tree line. Adoros once again called forth a sweeping wave of water, washing scores of orcs into the rushing waters of River Mirar and ultimately out into the sea.

Milthrar fired the catapult once again, decimating a group of orcs, when suddenly he spotted a man in a dark cloak with long dark hair and a beard inconspicuously making his way towards the lever controlling the bars across the gate. The monk jumped from the wall to confront the man, easily landing on his feet. The man drew forth his weapons, a dagger in one hand, a shortsword in the other. The dwarf monk rushed the man and got in a sharp smack on the arm with his staff, following up with a powerful punch to the man's side. He staggered, but brought his sword across the dwarfs bicep in a deep cut.

Without someone manning the catapult, the orcs got closer to the city wall. Some groups got close enough that they began to put ladders up and climb the wall. One orc managed to get on top of

the wall near Adran. The paladin quickly cut the orc down with his sword and kicked the ladder off the wall before more orcs could climb up. The guards fired more arrows at the approaching orcs. The useless batch remained useless, downing no orcs. The other group of guards managed to put arrows in a few orcs in the field. Masapen breathed fired down from the wall at a group of orcs that managed to get close to the gate with a battering ram, turning most of them into screaming torches. Adoros finished the remaining orcs near the gate off with a spray of poisonous gas. Another orc managed to put up a ladder at the other end of the wall near Adoros. The druid quickly shapeshifted into a tiger and slashed a claw at the orc.

Milthrar traded blows with the man, but even with his monk training he could barely keep up with the man's speed. His two arms were a blur as they weaved his deadly blades around the dwarf. The monk twisted and dodged out of the way of most of the blows, but had received a few nasty cuts. Bleeding from several places, Milthrar managed to land a few solid strikes on the rogue. Masapen finally noticed the fight occurring below him and jumped down to aide his dwarven companion. Leaping down from the wall, the large dragonborn drew his own duel weapons and charged the man. The man was quick, but not quick enough for both party members, and soon he seemed badly injured from Masapen's crashing swings. He quickly disengaged and ran towards the bridge back in town before either Masapen or Milthrar could react.

Above, Adoros the tiger killed one orc with his crushing jaws while slashing four deep gouges across another orc's chest with his claws. Adran ran for the catapult and attempted to load more firebombs, but they were too heavy and he was unable to get them in. The guards killed a few more orcs with arrows before Masapen and Milthrar returned to the top of the wall. Masapen reloaded the catapult, and Milthrar was able to kill a few more tribes of orcs. It was late in the afternoon and only a few scattered groups of orcs remained in the field. After a few more volleys from the catapult and arrows, just one batch remained. Suddenly, Masapen spotted in the distance an orc he recognized. Gorlack Flesheater, one of the orcs who had initially captured the dragonborn and had been the one to break him when he was a slave. Hatred seethed in the large fighter, and without another thought he jumped over the wall into the field and began charging at the orc.

Adran, seeing the dragonborn jump into the field, quickly jumped over the wall after him, managing to land without anything broken. Milthrar fired another firebomb at the group, taking out all but Gorlack and another orc. Masapen shoved the remaining orc out of the way and charged at Gorlack with his weapons drawn. As he approached suddenly Gorlack's plate armor started glowing red hot and the large orc started howling in pain as he scrambled to unbuckle it. He threw it in the dirt, still glowing red thanks to Adoros' druidic magic. Masapen, seeing his opponent distracted and with no armor brought forth a flurry of blows from his sword and hammer, smashing into the orc. The orc managed to return a few attacks with his greataxe, but he was no match for the large dragonborn in his enraged state. Masapen cracked the large orc's ribs with a heavy blow from his hammer, before bringing the tip of his sword up through the orcs throat.

Adran approached and finished off the remaining orc still on the ground from Masapen's throw. The paladin stabbed his sword down into the orc's chest, channeling divine power into the strike. Light poured forth from the wound until nothing remained of the orc but ashes. Masapen and Adran looked up towards the tree line and saw a large orc with a very ornate looking helmet watching the battle before turning around and retreating into the forest. Masapen knew it had been Obould. Searching

Gorlack's corpse he found a gold ring with a dragon engraved in the band. Coming from the dragon's mouth was a "flame" composed of a bright ruby. Masapen knew this to be an item of dragonborn make, and put it on, feeling more in tune with his heritage.

The two marched back to the wall where Milthrar and Adoros waited. The day was waning, but the remaining guards cheered for the group and called them the saviors of Luskan. They were marched down towards the piers, when they met High Captain Kurth in the market. He was a tall, thin man in his 40's with dark graying hair pulled back in a pony tail. He had a thin goatee and wore clothes more suited for a pirate on a ship. He thanked the group for their bravery before giving them each a large sack of gold.

For the next few days, the party reveled in their status as heroes of the city. They enjoyed free drinks at any tavern they went to, especially Milthrar. They were greeted by name wherever they went. More than a few of the local women of the evening attempted to offer their services free of charge. After a while though, the party remembered they still had to get to Waterdeep to figure out what was going on. It was only a matter of time before Obould could rally more orcs from the mountains and the Underdark, and now they didn't know where he would strike next.