Our heroes rested and gathered their strength after returning from their patrol duty and informing General Stonesbane of the note they found mentioning a late night meeting in a cave. After the sun had went down Tauriel took the party through the dark forest towards the supposed meeting.

When the adventurers reached the cave they found a crevasse in the hard granite only wide enough to walk single file. The monk Milthrar, his dwarven ancestry making him feel right at home in the dark stone passage, led the group. Adran, chosen paladin of the goddess Eldrath, kept close behind Milthrar, ready to aide his companion if need be. The ever alert ranger Tauriel took up the middle. Behind Tauriel came the hulking dragonborn Mauzapen, carrying a torch in one hand and looking angry. Finally, the elf druid Adoros brought up the end of the line, ready to bring the forces of nature to bear against any orc they may find.

Upon entering the first chamber within the cave, the party heard some low growls. Suddenly a worg burst forth from the darkness, intent on chewing on Milthrar. Unfortunately for the worg it lost its footing and stumbled on a crack in the stone floor, falling prone in front of the group. Milthrar gave the worg a sharp crack across the back with his quarterstaff. Shoving his way to the front of the party, Mauzapen rushed to meet the second worg, slashing its shoulder with his sword. Adoros cast thorn whip on the first worg before it could get up, wrapping the thorny vine around the worg and yanking with enough force to send the worg clear across the cave. Tauriel fired two arrows, missing the entangled worg but killing the second worg with an arrow through the eye. Adran charged in and brought his axe down on the entangled worg, creating a huge gash in it’s side. Milthar, seeing one worg go down became recklessly bold and charged at the remaining worg, only to trip on the same crack that the worg had. Seeing that the last worg wasn’t long for this world, Adran finally finished it with a powerful overhead swing of his axe.

After the battle, the party searched a crate in the dark room, but were disappointed to find only torches. Mauzapen took ten torches and then they began to make their way down the passage opposite of where they came in. Milthrar, still in the lead, unknowingly stepped through a wire line, causing an axe to swing down from above right at his face. Luckily his monk reflexes allowed him to deftly dodge out of the way of the speeding axe. The party continued on, albeit more warily.

They came to a fork in the path and decided to take the right fork. They began to spiral down and around the right until they were below the room they had fought the worgs in. They found an empty room behind bars opposite of where they entered. They also found several crates, but again it was nothing of use. Behind the crates they found a lever which opened the barred room. Upon closer inspection of the room, the party noticed a hole in the ceiling, but not much else besides dust and bones.

Continuing on the group went down the only remaining path. The cave path weaved back and forth some ways until they came to a closed door. The group could see light coming from under the door and hear voices, but Tauriel and Adoros with their keen elf hearing were able to make out the sound of gruff orc voices. Mauzapen, eager to kill some orcs, kicked the door down and burst into the room to find two orc lieutenants and an orc shaman standing around a large bonfire on the other side of the larger cavern.

The shaman was the first to react, casting a spell at the dragonborn. Flames sprang forth from the orc’s hands, but the dragonborn easily evaded the spell. Tauriel loosed two arrows from the entryway, striking the shaman and one of the larger orcs. Adoros once again cast thorn whip at one of the orcs, but the orc managed to see it coming and dodged out of the way. Adran then ran towards one of the orcs and took a swing with his axe, taking a good chunk out of the orc’s bicep. The orc bellowed in pain and brought his mace up and swung it at the halfelf, but the strong paladin deflected the blow with his shield. Mauzapen rushed in to engage the orc shaman, slicing it with his sword and then bringing his hammer down on the orc’s shoulder. Milthrar moved to the last orc, spinning his quarterstaff around his head and swinging it into the side of the orcs skull. The orc responded in kind but the monk rolled under the swing of the orc’s morningstar. The shaman cast another spell and a spear of light appeared floating in front of Mauzapen, the spear stabbed at the fighter but only grazed him. Tauriel fired two more shots, this time each connected with a target. Adoros suddenly began casting a spell, mumbling words under his breath, and in an instant where the elf had stood there now sat a large brown bear; the bear growled at the orcs.

The orc fighting Adran looked over in confusion at the bear upon hearing the growl. The paladin seized his opportunity and brought his axe around in a quick chop, lopping off the orc’s right hand before swinging his axe into the orc’s chest, and then yanked his axe free from the now lifeless corpse. Mauzapen finally backed the shaman into a corner and brought the orc to its knees with a powerful blow from his Warhammer. He then plunged his sword through the orc’s throat and then kicked the body away from him. Adoros the bear then ran over the remaining orc. The bear bit down on the orc’s head and lifted him off the ground. The bear shook the orc violently side to side until the sound of a cracking spine could be heard, and the bear tossed what remained of the orc across the room.

After the battle the party looted the corpses, finding another note and a key to the chest in the room. The note spoke of the attack on Oakenshield at dawn. It went on to mention that once Oakenshield had been destroyed the dwarves would retreat into Citadel Mirabar and the orcs could move west towards Luskan. It also alluded to Ironheart and Puccini getting what the want. Adran recognized the names as a leading dwarf general in Mirabar and the governor of Waterdeep. Inside the chest the party found 2,300 gold coins, which they divided amongst themselves. Finally, after searching some crates in the room the party found two firebombs. While looking at the orc corpses Mauzapen discovered he recognized one of the orcs, but he couldn’t quite place from where.

The group made their way back towards the cave entrance, but not before first going down the left side of the fork they had passed earlier. They came into a small chamber with three crates. Inside one of the crates were small spheres of light, of which Mauzapen took 5. On the other side of the room was a crate with two bear traps; Milthrar and Adran took one each. Near the bear trap crates was a hole obscured by a rug. Milthrar, thinking he heard someone say there was beer at the bottom decided to jump into the hole. Thankfully his monk dexterity allowed him to fall the 15 feet without suffering grievous injury. He found himself in the now unlocked empty chamber the party had found earlier. Not wanting to walk all the way back up, Adoros turned into a large spider and brought the dwarf back up the hole to the rest of the party.

After leaving the cave Tauriel informed the party that he had to leave to gather the other members of his tribe. He bid the party to make haste back to Oakenshield and disappeared into the dark forest. Dawn wasn’t far off, but it was still quite dark under the forest canopy. The group arrived at Oakenshield and rushed to inform Stonesbane of their findings.

In the middle of talking with the dwarf the group began to hear the sounds of battle. Stepping outside they found the town gate open and four orcs already inside surrounding the half orc recruit. Adran reacted the quickest and ran to meet the first orc, chopping him down with his axe right away. Mauzapen charged in and engaged another orc. One of the orcs began casting a spell. Once again a corporeal spear appeared on the battlefield, stabbing at Mauzapen and then Milthrar. Adoros cast thorn whip at the shaman, but the attack missed. Stonesbane charged into the battle, swinging his greataxe with abandon and yelling for someone to close the gate. Milthrar sprinted towards the gate, only to find the horse gone and the rope to the pully system cut. He tugged at the remaining rope, but the door didn’t budge.

Mauzapen cut his orc down, then moved towards Milthrar to help with the gate. The large fighter grabbed the rope, but he was unable to move the gate as well. In the chaos of the battle Milthrar accidently cut what remained of the rope, leaving them nothing to grab onto.

Adran chopped down the remaining orc as Stonesbane moved to the gate and began to push on it to no avail. Milthrar and Mauzapen aided the dwarf and their combined strength was enough to move the heavy oak door into place, but not before a large orc chieftain slipped in. The party engaged the orc, but it was Milthrar and his fists that gave the killing blow.

Mauzapen roughly grabbed the halforc recruit by the neck and pinned him against a nearby wall demanding answers. The halforc wheezed out that it was the dwarf woman who had opened the gate and cut the horse loose. The dragonborn was still full of suspicion and didn’t believe the halforc’s explanation. As he was interrogating the halforc, the farm boy Claude emerged from hiding in the horse trough, confirming the halforc’s version of events. Adoros went to the bunkhouse to investigate the claims.

At the bunkhouse Adoros found a note in the hollowed out bedpost of the dwarf. The note told the dwarf to open the gates before the orc attack and then escape back to Mirabar. It was signed “I”.

After Adoros returned to the party with the damning note, the party heard the sound of many feet marching towards the gate and orc war drums. Everyone climbed to the wall to see a large force of orcs, at least 20 to 30, marching towards the gate. Arrows reached out at them but they were able to get behind the cover of the wall before any could hit. The ever perceptive Adoros also saw a human man with long dark hair and a scraggly beard standing in the shadows near the trees, watching the battle.

As the group discussed their next move the orcs loaded up a battering ram and began pounding on the door. Milthrar and Adoros stood at the top of the wall and readied firebombs while the rest of the group waited down below with Stonesbane, setting up bear traps for when the gate was breached. The elf druid managed to toss his firebomb down below, catching two of the orcs operating the battering ram on fire and scattering the rest. However the dwarf monk dropped his firebomb instead of throwing it. Milthrar and Adoros were able to jump off the wall in time before the bomb exploded, catching part of the gate on fire. Adoros used his druidic magic to put the flames out before they could do too much damage.

Adoros climbed back up the wall just as the sun began to crest the horizon. At the same time he saw a swarm of arrows leap from the forest and decimate the orcs in the field. When the final orc lay lifeless, Tauriel and four other elves emerged from the tree line and asked to be let in after some friendly verbal jabs with Adran.

The party was unsure how to get the gates open. The doors only swung inward, and with the rope cut there was no where to get a grip to pull. Adoros, once again came to the rescue and after speaking a few words the rope was mended. The group grabbed the rope together and pulled, nudging the large doors open enough for the elves to enter.

Inside the group discussed the battle and the information they had found with Stonesbane and Tauriel. Tauriel recommended the group head for Luskan since that’s where the orcs would be next. Stonesbane mentioned that Mirabar is on the road to Luskan, and that it might be a good idea to stop in and try to make sense of the reference to Ironheart.

After recovering from their long night of battles, the party then set off for the main road, and from there to Mirabar….