

## The Trouble with Triffids....

I start this the morning after the guild meeting, after we had all met and decided to go our separate ways to prepare our provisions for an up and coming adventure. For all but one of us this was to be our first adventure. We had met our employer who told us that there was some trouble and he wanted us to 'clean it up', not a problem we thought to ourselves and proceeded to introduce ourselves to each other. With this concluded we found we were quite a Diverse bunch of mages and a Fighter as well.

Bob, a friend of mine whose also a hobbit (But I won't hold that against him yet) said he was going to be collecting a fair bit of stuff so I decided to tag along and help him carry everything. (Besides which he's a business partner of mine so Its good to help a partner. You never know when you'll need a substantial loan. <grin>) Upon his travels around the guild I got to meet three people, Aqualina, Phaeton and Starflower. I didn't like the mind mage much and told bob I thought they were decidedly creepy however the watermage and the healer were both nice people. I found out a bit later that Bob had adventured with two of these people and unfortunately one of them was the mind mage, well it would explain a few things.

It was fast approaching time to leave so we headed on down to the docks to meet the ship we were to board, stopping only to watch another ship take off with two of the people we had met before on board. It was a fairly spectacular sight but it didn't worry me in the least about the voyage we were undertake, however if some on board didn't fair well at sea then a launch like that certainly wouldn't help.

We walked onto the ship and Bob and Caitlin both decided to meet the captain while the others (Myself included) had a look around the ship. It looked sturdy enough and it was good to be outside in the air. The only truly worrying thing was that I was on water, I feel I should explain at this point that I am an Earthmage, and a Dwarf at that so being on water I could not cast any of my chosen colleges Spells. Ah well when all is said and done I can always revert to the axes I'm carrying, a dwarfs best friends are his axe. At least this small bag of dirt I'm carrying is a small assurance that one day soon we should be back on land.

Not to long later we set sail only to be stopped soon after by Destinies blockade, annoying to say the least. One of their inspectors boarded the ship and announced he was looking for contraband, he also announced to me that he didn't like dwarves, at this point I felt the blade of my axe could do with sharpening and offered him a bit of dwarven bread. (Preferably tied to his leg while he's thrown overboard) He was actually quite an offensive man but what made him likable was the row of archers

sitting a top the deck of Destinies boat which loomed overhead. The inspector was peering into Bobs backpack (Which I might add is not a pretty sight due to all the sticky buns!) and after a small exchange of words bob proceeded to cast a spell on him. (Sleep as I later learned) Not a bright move considering the archers overhead as Bob was preparing the spell one of them fired an arrow straight into Bob, not really a nice thing to do was it? But I'm still debating wether or not it was actually a

\*bad\* thing.... Oh well he wasn't dead but he'd need a couple of days rest. The inspector concluded his inspection of the ship deducing that we had no contraband and left us to go on our way, albeit with some ill feeling towards them.

The cook gave Bob a herbal remedy that night and seems that the remedy had done its job fully restoring Bob to his albeit somewhat stupid self. The following day I proceeded to check over my own equipment and get a feel for the boat, I had a chat with some of the sailors and that night we dined with the captain. "How is it you come to no your way around at night without any points of reference?" I asked the captain and he proceeded to teach me and the others a few small tricks of navigation, he also said that he would teach us something the following night, this technique intrigued me and I think I may actually follow up learning it later. (At least if the hobbit ever gets shot again we could still find our way out of things by some means! <grin>) and we proceeded to go to sleep.

The next thing I know is I'm being awoken by Bob, "Wake up! Wake up! There's something going on!" He cried, still dreary I got my wits about me and pulled out my hand axes (My battle axe would be useless in this sort of situation) but Bob had already raced ahead to the hatch that led up to the deck and had drawn his scimitars. The others had also been woken now and some of us stood back to assess the situation. Bob was knocked down and unconscious! Bugger, he could have cast a useful spell if he hadn't rushed off, I wonder if the captain can teach him restraint?

After some fighting however we managed to knock back the intruder at the hatch and Bob had also managed to shake himself out of his daze, soon after Bob, the fighter and I became quickened which we felt was, beside having a fighter in our midst our only benefit. We went up top and soon discovered a pirate vessel along side our own, with a firemage standing shrouded in fire and with her fellow pirates yelling 'Red Kate! Red Kate!', perhaps in anticipation of an early victory? Instead what they found was a ship with a party of hardened adventurers <smirk> (ok would you believe one hardy adventurer and three really top people?) who helped swing the battle in the tide of the sailors.

All along I had been thinking that our friends from destiny had done but after a furious battle in which our sails were burnt and all of us fatigued in some way or another I then began to think that after the battle perhaps Red Kate should become the object of a fox hunt, and I would love to be there with a bucket of water..

The Sailors set about repairing the ship after the ferocious battle that we had just encountered. We set sail again and sometime around mid-afternoon we spotted the coastal port of Dar, the captain motioned for the ship to dock and we tied in at port. Bob, Kelvin and I set off into town however at getting to the top of the docks Jack soon came running out of the ship and joined our town party. There appeared to be two taverns in the port, one was quite lively while the other seemed extremely laid back, I headed for the lively one and others seemed to follow. Stopping outside the tavern I looked up and a rather curvaceous girl announced the place's name as 'The Lusty Wench', rather than get cold we all entered. Looking around there was a rather large group towards the middle of the tavern, two Elves in the corner and various other small groups. Bob and Jack headed off towards the Elves, Kelvin settled near a window and I headed off for the angier group. I talked with the locals for about 15 odd minutes Bob and Jack headed over and joined us. We talked for a bit, ate and drank and decided to find out what the other tavern was like. (Probably a bad move in hindsight but you get that with the big adventurers. <grin>)

Walking in we immediately discovered that this inn was different from the other, much quieter and fairly laid back, they also had a bouncer, an Ork at that and for some reason Bob seemed to take some offense at that, we walked over after having a somewhat innuendo loaded

conversation with the ork and talked to the Barlady about some supplies to be delivered to the ship. Deciding unanimously we all went to the other tavern to spend the rest of the night.

The next morning Bob and I felt like going into town to stretch our legs before setting sail again. Looking around we really didn't find any interesting shops however I was soon to get the chance to see the vast hobbit intellect at full working speed again. Let me explain, I don't mind hobbits, I don't think they're stupid but Bob really is going to have to learn some diplomacy and I don't mean the kind in a dark robe and a knife. We walked around the small town and passed an Ironmongers, Bob decided to ask if the Ironmonger also stocked weapons, he didn't as he wasn't a weapon smith but he did have some rather large knives which the hobbit looked at closely. The hobbit then asked what they were made of and somehow I could feel trouble brewing like a rather large seastorm, "Iron" replied the Ironmonger and a look which could only be described as mild terror crossed the hobbits face, "Here have them back!!" He said passing them rather quickly to the Ironmonger which earned him a look of curiosity.

"Your not a faerie are you??" Asked the ironmonger, as the crowd milled around us.

"No, not a faerie." Bob replied.

"Then he's a witch!!" said someone in the crowd! Yes this was going to be a bad day.

"No he's not a witch..." I tried to tell thee towns people ".. and besides you saw how much he had to drink last night, you can't blame him for being stupid!"

"He's a witch!", "Burn them!", "Get them!" and "Quick! Don't let them escape!" were the cries I heard as we had to make a quick getaway. Bob managed to make himself invisible (great, heres me, the Dwarf left to take the fall for thee hobbit! And I hadn't even been shot once in this whole venture!) The crowd managed to find me but I talked myself out of it and managed to casually walk away, however they weren't that stupid and started to follow. I worked our way back to the ship and managed to loose the crowd in one go, "Bob," I said out of the corner of my mouth "you are really going to get it!". We boarded the ship just as some of the lines were being untied and went straight to the cabins, it might not be a good idea to show our heads before clearing Dar. We travelled till night where we dropped anchor in a nice large lake, got some rest and then resumed travel for another day.

We reached the Silverwater river and proceeded up it until we reached a small dock which incidently was where the fork in the river was. We docked and looked up at the rather large stone castle looming overhead, a figure came down to meet us, Sir Guthgar as he introduced himself.

"Ah I see you've arrived fairly safely I see..." he said.

"Fairly." I said out of the side of my mouth to Bob as we gathered up our gear and set off up the hill to the castle. Once we had gotten up to the castle we were led though a rather large set of wooden doors into what could only be described as an immaculate and varied garden, however we really didn't get time to look as we were ushered through by Sir Guthgar. Finally after traveling down a rather large corridor we reached a huge banquet hall, which had at the end of it a throne. Shortly after we were introduced to the Baron DeHonore. Caitlin and Bob made pleasantries while the rest of us took in our surroundings. Eventually however Sir Guthgar dropped a hint to Caitlin that the rest of us were here and perhaps we'd also like to be introduced.

Once we were on proper speaking terms with the baron we started to discuss why we were here. He related to use the trouble that a village had been having but Apparently didn't know much else. I asked him if anyone from that village had come down to confirm any reports but none had. We finished gleaning what we could about the surrounding areas and also what services the baron might be able to offer as assistance, he in turn offered the assistance of his Court Gardener Belemy, every well trained herbalist and healer. I also suspected talents in another area

but I'll try and get that later on. The Baron asked us to join a feast he was having that night and we gratefully accepted. We left to sleep and also to prepare for the up and coming dinner, it had been a somewhat long and boring journey after the attack so we were somewhat eager for something, anything to happen. Getting out good clothes and shining up armor we eventually all met sometime just before Six in the evening. Bob and I had agreed with ourselves not to bring our bigger weapons, not only do they get in your way when dancing they also are pretty impolite things to take to dances.

Entering the hall we could now see a big square U shaped table, Some people were already on one side of the table and we were shown to ours. Some 5 minutes later the Baron and a couple of others entered and the feasting did commence. The first course was pretty light, nuts and fruits so Bob and I had a chance to discuss a few things. I warned him about consuming too much alcohol tonight by threatening to cut off any hang over he would develop, his response (as I should have guessed) was "Don't worry!". As if. Both the first and second courses passed fairly fast and not too much mingling was going on until, that is the second course was over. It appeared the main course was going to take some 20 minutes or more to fully cook and prepare so we started shifting out and talking to people. Shortly before I had noticed Belemy wearing a sprig of mistletoe in amongst a small decoration he was wearing, now I could just be paranoid or it could just confirm what I had suspected upon meeting him. Deciding to exercise my talent slightly I DAed him and sure enough he was an Earthmage. I decided he'd be the first person to talk to. Casually walking up I asked if he was D or P, knowing that he should know the branches of our College.

"P..." He got out "but don't tell anyone here, they don't know and I want it that way."

"Not a problem with me." I replied as Caitlin strolled up. She apparently also had noticed and wondered the same thing and again Belemy told her what he had just told me.

It appeared that we had got to talking and before too long the main course came out, and we proceeded to take back our places. A good selection of meats was brought before us and was a welcome change from fish. We ate and had a rather good time and somewhere near the end of the course the entertainment appeared. I found this rather monotonous and for the first time wishing I was another college, at least if I had been a Necromancer I could have entertained myself with the chickens on the table or something, mind you with the company I was keeping things soon took on a chuckle. Bob decided he'd try his hand at juggling, this should be mildly amusing as I don't think he's done it before, he soon proved this by failing miserably. However time pressed on and the last course came and went. After that Bob headed off on his own merry way but not before having one last try at juggling. (I really hoped he would have continued, he was making some progress at failing and it was quite amusing. <grin>)

I also decided to take a breather and left the others too it, its a pity the Dwarven guards I has seen earlier weren't around as I really wanted to talk to a few of my own species. It seemed that my little walk to clear my head had lasted longer than I thought as when I got back the dance was Winding down and the tables were all but clear, a pity as I had wanted to talk to Belemy more. No matter, he was coming to help us anyhow so plenty of time to talk to him later. I headed back and went soundly off to sleep.

Morning came with its usual bright lights and chirping birds, oh for a fireball! ghods, did I say that?! I really must go and wash my mouth out. Ah well things were quiet so it looked just right to purify for a few hours before breakfast and before others got up. After breakfast Belemy told us he'd have quite a few things to gather and a few of the others said they'd like to get things together. (More like get their heads together after a nights drinking) I went off and helped Belemy as I really didn't have much with me that I needed to prepare.

Lunch fast approached so we grabbed a quick bite to eat and set out on horseback for Dottery following the path of the Bluewater river. Some time later after a few hours of travelling we came across a small village built around a bridge. I must admit to myself that what happened next did cause me to chuckle later but because of previous events what Bob did made me more than a little embarrassed. We walked into the nearby general store, being a farming community there was no shortage of food so the others stocked up, for some reason I found myself checking out 'weapons' with Bob, I'm afraid he's getting me into some very bad habits. He proceeded to pick up a scythe and mentioned that it would make a good weapon then he rushed over to the clothing section and it was then I realized what he was doing, picking up and putting on a black robe that totally obscured his face and started yelling things like "Good afternoon, Death here, Can I help?" Well as you can probably guess like the other two times he's gone and done something like this it backfired on him. Dropping the robe and Scythe he was dragged outside by a local law authority, since our party leader didn't look to be doing anything I stepped in and casually mentioned the barons name and that we'd probably have to be leaving soon, however as a crowd drew (and they didn't actually look to pleased) I decided I could be just as diplomatic from the back of the pony I was riding. Caitlin and the others went just to make sure that Bob wasn't overly hurt while I sat back and wait to hear what happened this time. Some 30 odd minutes later Bob returns covered in pond scum and smelling like, well something that smells pretty badly. It appeared that they had bawled him about verbally then thrown him in the shallow end of a dunking pond then continued the verbal attack, well at least he'll learn from all of this. Those of us not smelling like a walking swamp decided to go and sit in the tavern for a while as Bob cleaned up and then it was off.

Night approached us fast and it didn't look like we were going to reach Dottery before sunset, we were advised to setup camp so we made home for the night by the river seeing as though it was a good source of food and limited the ways we could possibly be come at from. We also set up a two man watches and then had dinner. Come midnight it was time for Caitlin and my watch, everything seemed alright for the first couple of hours until picked up something, I got Caitlin to wake everyone up as I tried to make out what was approaching. DAing it I found out, Canis Lupis, or Wolf, the others weren't so pleased as well as this was a bloody big (yet skinny) wolf! Moving towards Belemy as he was the least deft with a weapon the others started to slowly rise and come to my Aid, however by then it was getting to be too late as the leed wolf seemed to be gunning for me specifically. For some reason this thing thought I was going to be a midnight snack and jumped me, I had other Ideas and stated to struggle with it. Luckily Jack felt the same way and came to my aid, mind you some help he was, instead of hitting the wolf he ended up hitting me, luckily only once. I couldn't see what else was going on but after what seemed an eternity the wolf backed off from me. I heard the horses in the distance as did some of the others and it appeared that we had lost a couple of our mounts. I was hurt badly and it somewhat showed the main wolf seemed to retreat, it appears Belemy had been controlling him, as leed wolf the others followed him with out question but did look confused.

Morning again came without any more surprises, some of use, well okay I was just happy

to be fit again. We packed what we could onto our remaining mounts and headed off for Dottery, Belemy estimated it'd probably be about another 4-6 hours till we got there so all of use decided to purify again and save ourselves from boredom. Somewhere around mid-morning we came to the outskirts of the village, now I don't claim to be a travelled dwarf but something seemed amiss about the place, others

also noticed this. We decided to head into the general store since it was the closest and because there were people there, mind you only two of them. They seemed to evade us at most costs and weren't very fourth-coming at all, we decide not to push them and instead DA them which turned up an alien aspect to their aura which was plant in nature. It also appeared as if most of the townspeople were infected with this as from what we could see of people in the open using DA they all had a green tinge

to their auras. We decided to plan what we were going to do and headed to the local tavern to have lunch and discuss what we were going to do for the rest of the day, in the end we decided to rest after the journey and glean what we could from the locals in the tavern. The barmaid, a Miss Long-Dagger didn't appeared to be effected at all which we could probably count as a blessing. I also noticed a Bard casually sitting in the corner in the sun but we actually decided to leave him alone, for once. We talked to the Barmaid who was quite a help in telling us about the surrounding area and also a bit about 'the green devils' that were plaguing this village. apparently the things we were looking for only came out at night, a bit of an advantage to use since most of the things we'd want to do would be done through the day. We asked her of the personalities in this village and apparently there was a Wicker in amongst them, she went to the top of our list immediately. It appeared the afternoon had dragged on for quite a while and the sun ha gone down, a few more people had milled in so Miss Long-Dagger excused herself to get on with her job. After finishing out meal some of us partied for a small while then headed off to bed.

The next morning we found someone new in the tavern, apparently passing through. He told us his name was Casper and I think Bob somehow recognized this name. Meanwhile however some of the others had left through the night leaving us with only a handful for the party, seeing as how we were short and his skills as a Necromancer would probably be handy we asked him if he'd sign aboard with us.

"I'd be happy too!" He said as we all introduced ourselves.

We decided to go and pay a visit on the local Vicar who might be able to shed more light on what Miss Long-Dagger had told us. Passing the town barracks we decided to stop in there first just to let our presence be known and also to see if we might get any help. What they told us did help however, it seemed that these creatures were equipped with some sort of Acid spray as a couple of his soldiers had bad burns on their arms from some combat they got into with them. He could offer us no more assistance than to tell us what he told, with that we bade him farewell. We walked on and knocked on the door to the church, only to have "Get away Demonspawn!!!" and "Come ne further!", I mean he didn't even know us yet and he was screaming that!

Sensing that nothing was to be gained we went to a freshly dug grave, Casper cast something and started asking questions, I gather from him its like DA but for the dead. He didn't get all that much so we moved on, earlier we had discussed who we thought it might have been that caused it so going on an earlier hunch we decided to go and check out the wicker, who also happened to be a baker. Arriving we found her to be quite a happy sort, overly happy. I decided to DA her and yes again, she was infected by the green devils as well. While bob and Casper kept her busy talking about breads, sampling and making orders I decided to go and sit under a near by tree and talk to her familiar. A sleek black cat came up and curled beside me as I

talked with it, it confirmed that almost everyone in the village had been infected and indeed that the monsters only came out at night, it didn't know what they did or where they came from

however which was a bit of a let down but at least it confirmed everything we had known. I promised to bring it back something, just as I was getting to leave it also said to watch out for the other person like its owner, I took this to mean another wicker and that I would. This cat probably would have all the fish it could eat after I get it what I promised.

We left the bakers and started to try and decided what to do next when Bob and I both noticed a familiar sound, the banging of a forge and off we went. Finally! A Dwarf! Now here was someone I could relate to. I bade him Greetings in Dwarven and he returned them in kind. We could tell from the adornments that he wore that he was of some skill. With all the iron about I wasn't able to get DA off this time and nor was I going to try. We asked the smithy what he liked to make and he replied that he had both a fair trade in axes to the Squire and his family. Dusk started to creep up on us so we decided to place our orders with the smithy and get back to the inn for the night. Bob made a comment to me about us almost being golems with a routine.

The next morning the party had dwindled away to just Belemy, Bob, Casper and me however again it appeared there was another passer by in town. His name was Elan and he told us how he was travelling through. We took him somewhere private and explained both the situation of the town and the situation he was in, thankfully he was a good hearted mage and offered his services to us although like us he was only a novice. We told Elan of where we had gotten up to in our investigation when Bob and Casper joined us. I introduced them both and then Belemy as he wandered down. Since everyone was here it seemed like a good time to plan what we were going to do. Elan suggested that we go and see the Squire, Casper replied that we were about to anyhow so we may as well get a move on. I also mentioned it might be best to check out the other wicker as well just to cover all exits when Bob mentioned that they had some goods to pick up from the bakers. "We'll meet here in half an hour then? Right." Everyone agreed. Elan and I headed off to the wickers place where things didn't rally go well. We arrived at the brewery to be confronted by rather a large man, I tried some diplomatic methods to find out if he was the wicker or not but finally I just straight our asked him. He seemed to take some offence at that so we left in rather a hurry to catch up with the other two. I asked Bob later if he'd mind going and trying to bring her to us but it seems hubby went into protective mode because he wasn't letting anyone near his wife, onto the squires place. It took us about 15 good minutes to reach there, on the east side I noticed recent signs of work, battle damage perhaps?

We knocked on the door and was shown in to see Squire DeValient, he had his two sons with him at the time, Brian and Guy who were also introduced to us. This time Belemy decided to tell them what we were doing here while we looked around the walls. Casper seemed to notice someone he knew and motioned Bob and I over, having not met many people in the guild I could not help what so ever. The squire also noticed us staring and came over, he explained that some of us may know her being from the guild.

"Thats my Daughter Felic...."

"FLAMIS" he was interrupted by Casper who finally clicked.

"..Yes I believe she does go under that name."

"Oh wow!" exclaimed Casper somewhat taken aback that we were in somewhat friendly territory. We asked if the Squire would like to offer us some assistance to which he replied "Yes thats no problem, I'm sure my two sons here \*will\* have no problem pointing you in the right direction as well as accompanying you."

"Thats very much appreciated sir." I said thinking how half the party had decided to up

and leave us.

"However for the moment you shall stay as my guests, at least for tonight. I'm sure you won't mind leaving tomorrow?"

Great another delay, it seems all we had been doing is taking a few steps and resting for a day.

"Yep! We don't mind at all." Added Bob.

That night we had quite a lovely dinner and things passed swiftly, well after all the stories of Flamis were told that is. I tuned out after the first couple of words offering the occasional "Yes." and "uh-huh" where need be. Morning again came upon us and we felt quite good, we didn't need to prepare anything so we decided to leave about lunchtime and take our time. As it was the brothers said the spot where they first encountered the green demons wasn't too far. We reached the spot late afternoon and saw the trap they had setup, unfortunately they had burned the remains. We decided to make camp for the night not too far away in a clear spot as to provide some visibility. The brothers went off to do some trapping for our dinner while the rest of us pretty much did nothing. A couple of hours later however we were rudely interrupted by our first green devils, for those of us not awake they were soon about to be. Belemy DAed the creatures as Triffids which at least now gave us a name to add to the leaves, so to speak. They seemed to split their attack as one went after Bob two came after me. Elan managed to come in from behind with a torch however which didn't make things too bad. Having Belemy there probably saved my life at least. (dying just gets in your way too much) A fierce battle sprung up with everyone getting tangled or hit badly by the alien plants and it seemed to drag on, maybe that was just because we were quickened, I however started to feel drowsy and blacked out, the last thing I remember was a smell as Elan plunged the torch into the Triffid. I woke up later to find the battle nearly over so decided to lay there just in case. It seems though that the branches overhead were particularly close and they were getting closer. I could also here the cries of the brothers as they helped lay into the triffids. The battle drew to a conclusion with the triffids quite killed, it seemed Belemy did something to the trees and used them to squash the triffids with the branches while the far one was massacred by Bob and the brother Brian. It looked like we were going to be here a while resting up and healing so we set abouts cooking the meat the brothers bought back and got down to some well deserved rest.

The next morning was a bit of a change to the usual hum-drum, well not totally, Casper had left saying that he had something to do and would probably meet us back at the guild, but we were used to people coming and going so said good-bye and told him we'd bring him something, so it looks like I was also stuck with unofficial party leader status. We also had an Ent visit our camp, most of us except Bob were pleased to see him. Apparently Bob had met some very nasty Ents on his last adventure and at the moment seemed to be quite over reacting. I turned around to and told him to at least let the Ent tell us why it was here and then he can decide whether or not to make kindling out of it, I wasn't too pleased myself at having yet another plant stroll into our camp but this one hadn't attacked on sight. The Ent told us its name and enquired about ours, commenting ours were quick names, great, another thing that wanted to take forever to get anything done! We chatted for at least an hour to the being who told us it could take us part way to the Goblins Lair entrance but wouldn't leave the forest. Fine, we agreed and left. Part way through the travel we came across these three granite pillars, quite odd in that they weren't supposed to be here geologically. We decided to Da them, Formerly living, Hmmm, it also appeared Transformation magic had been worked here. I told Belemy this and he inturn got that it was an Earth College spell, and that they were formerly Giants. It seemed there had been some interesting stuff going on here quite a few ages ago but



we really didn't have time to stop and investigate this. Sometime later perhaps.

Another hour of walking and we finally reached the entrance to the goblin lair, about twenty feet or so ahead was the cave mouth. I had a little word to a willow that had been seriously damaged from bark stripping and swinging by the Goblins, Belemy applied something to help regenerate it and the plant thanked us for the help. I fired up Detect snares and traps and then Belemy proceeded to do Walking Unseens all over. Bob, being the most stealthy of us all entered first, he returned about another 5 minutes later after apparently knocking out a Goblin guard. We decided to get in there and tie him up immediately and find a near by place to put him.

"But where is there a place big enough?" I asked.

"The chimney!" Said Bob. I grinned.

"We could always put him somewhere else." Suggested one of the brothers and Belemy and Bob and I stuffed him up the chimney and put a walking unseen on him.

"Why did you go and do that for?" Belemey said, looking quite confused.

"We did it so no one would see him snow white!" Bob said. "And at least he won't bother us!"

Since none of us except the brothers were rangers we decided to let them lead the way, the tunnels seemed endless, bending off into other directions, forking, going up, going down. We kept a fairly straight path only turning a couple of times but the footing was still quite difficult. Eventually we made it to near the end of a sloping tunnel, we stopped only because I managed to notice a triffid in time. It hadn't noticed us we proceeded back just a bit and organized what we wanted to do in so close a space.

"I'll go up front." Bob volunteered. "So long as I get backed up with the brothers."

"Sure." They both replied and readied their bows.

"Oh yes now see, what we need is something that effects their acid." Blurted out Belemy. "If I had taken those Alchemy lessons all those years ago I might be able to help."

"Well if its a junior alchemist you need why didn't you say." I replied in turn. "What we'd need is lime stone or something similar which reacts when its dipped into poison."

"Well look around then! We're in limestone caverns!"

"I didn't really have the time to notice." I glared back. "Some of us have been busy \*fighting\* things off." It was probably all the walking we had been doing that was making me short tempered.

"What if we were to put the lime stone in chunks on our arrows, or groove the heads and put it there, would this be fine?" Suggested Guy, the other brother.

"Should be," replied Brian. "So long as we can get it through their armour."

We started to prepare the limestone, powdering it one some of the weapons and organizing the arrows. Finally we managed to begin and landed a couple of arrows into the triffid, a faint smell arose from it from minutes later that wasn't too pleasing. We finally managed to get to the mouth of the cave and saw the mother of all triffids, at least fifteen foot wide and quite tall we only hoped she wouldn't come running after us.

Bob prepared his usual spell and asked if I wanted to be quickened, for once I turned him down saying that both the brothers needed to be so that they could get their arrows off fast. Once that was done he entered and fell to the ground almost instantly. Not knowing what happened the brothers decided to go on in anyway to make sure we at least had some cover and began launching some warning shots. Belemy went in just ahead of me and I bought up the rear. Elan was covering the original entrance to make sure no-one came in from the back end. Another two goblins entered on wolf back, luckily not as big a wolf as we had fought before but still we were

wary of them. I could see now there was also two triffids in this rather large cavern but they shouldn't be able to get to us anytime soon. Guy tried to take out the first Goblin we saw, I thought it was a mage personally well Brian shot at the wolves to try and warn them away, however one of the Triffids thought it would take a shot at us and fired a stream of acid directly at us, it missed, just impacting on the surface but started the limestone to bubbling. When I finally managed to get inside I took up beside one of the brothers to make sure that those wolves nearest us wouldn't maul him, seeing as though he was quickened and out best shot at getting the mother triffid.

"You take the mother, I'll take the wolves." I said to Brian while he yelled out to Guy to concentrate all firepower on the supertriffid thing. The wolf strode up and its rider, carrying a javelin attacked and missed, so I stunned him. Fairs fair. The other also came in but was headed off too fast by the other. The brothers in the meantime just shot arrow after arrow into the mother. The goblin riders were fairly easy to hit and kill so Brian and I made short work of them with a triffid still advancing. Guy also looked to have his coming up on him but was able to move faster and kept away while hitting the new target with arrows. We heard more foot steps and found that two more goblins had come in at the top while another had come in the side. The battle drove on with Belemy and I staying back while the brothers kept shooting at the bigger target. It appears we'd misjudged about the first goblin as the one who was standing at the back made a small chant and waved her hands about, all of a sudden Wall of Stone came up around the mother Triffid! This was going to make things slightly more difficult. The battle had raged for sometime now with us killing both the wolf riders and both the triffids we saw upon entering, all that left was the Goblin with the crossbow, the two goblins at the back and the... The goblin riding the bat! Oh this wasn't a good day. I could also hear moaning from where Bob was lying maybe he was coming too at last. Brian lobbed a shot at the bat and managed to stun him, we all watched as the bat flew straight into a wall, incapacitating both rider and mount. Bob had managed to actually regain consciousness and looked to be slowly getting his wits together. The two goblins that were at the top appeared to be closer to guy and Bob than I thought as within a few seconds battle had again

broken out with Brian and Guy attacking the female goblin with an aerial strike as Bob moved up. I held back knowing it would take me too long to get around. A few arrows later and both goblins were nearly down, Bob got in there and finished off the one with chainmail which left us to sit around.

Eventually however the Earthmages Stone Wall wore off and we threw a few lanterns of flaming oil at the Mother Triffid. We sat and watched as she burned and to make sure nothing else was about. The goblin guard we'd originally tied up had fled and a goblin with a crossbow who had been up quite high had killed herself seeing the odds. All that was left to do was the clean up, the looting and then it was back to the Squires place to see if there was anymore news about Flamis, and their newborn kid.

... And so ended, the trouble with triffids, the story of a Guild party of Seven forced down to two players.

Glod Ironfoundersson - Earthmage