

This transcript is colour coded for ease of use. Please download the PDF.

Tobe as played by Liz

Myx as played by Nina

Mhurren as played by Vinny

Erbak as played by Tom

Narrator/Scraw/GM/Everything else as played by Ray

[Audio Description]

{Tone Guide/Sarcasm etc}

[music]

Ray: Hello and welcome Tails from the Dark Dragons Inn, Episode 17: A Traitor's Resolve. This week, I've been focusing on learning a lot about our stats. As such, I'd like to take the time to say thank you to our listeners in California, Wisconsin, Illinois, New Jersey, Ontario, North Carolina, Kent in the UK, Washington, and most of all, Texas, which currently has our largest concentration of listeners globally. I can only believe you all are doing fantastic work and telling your friends about us, and for that I truly, honestly thank you.

Host: "Don't tell him I said, but after last week, I'm glad Myx slapped him. I had a mind to give him a piece of my mind too! But, well, he's ... He's the boss. And, {sighs}, the show is about to start."

Doomsinger: "Friends and listeners all, I welcome you once more to these humble halls. It's true, tensions were high when last we met, but things witnessed firsthand are not always what they seem."

Doomsinger: He winces and puts his hand up. "I may have deserved that."

Tobe: "May have?"

Doomsinger: "Tobe. It's good to see you. I'm so glad you're alive."

Tobe: I'm just scowling at him {laughs} 'cause I'm covered in gore and vomit.

Erbak: Erbak is just ambling forward to get a little closer look at what's going on here.

Doomsinger: The Doomsinger looks around at you, Tobe and you, Mhurren. He says, "Can I do anything about your injuries? Would you accept that, Mhurren?" And you notice that he calls you by your name.

Mhurren: "Well, {long exhale}, before we do anything else, I-I feel like you have a bit of explaining to do."

Doomsinger: "Well, the way I see it, I saved all of your lives."

Mhurren: "Is that true, my friends?"

Doomsinger: "Where's the thank you?" {laughs} "That's what I want to know."

Mhurren: I'm just looking around.

Myx: "Well, the way I see it, they had some kind of respect or some kind of admiration towards you, enough so not to distrust what you were doing. Wh-what was up with that?"

Doomsinger: "Admiration's a bit of a leap, don't you think?"

Myx: "No, not really."

Doomsinger: "Hmm. So, you missed the part where he called me a groveling worm and dismissed my presence?"

Myx: "He treated you better than he treated us."

Doomsinger: "Well, yes, but I believe you came here to kill him and his cohorts, so that's probably reasonable."

Mhurren: "You mean to say, you did not make a pact or a deal with these folk?"

Doomsinger: "I did what I had to do to survive. Would you not have done the same? {heavy sigh} Last I checked, you were all fleeing the camp when I provided the distraction for all of you to get away free and unharmed. Is that not the case? I think a little less persecution might be in order, don't you?"

Mhurren: Mhurren walks over to Doomsinger's side and puts a hand on his shoulder. "I believe you."

Doomsinger: "Well, I should bloody hope so."

Mhurren: "I believe that he speaks the truth."

Tobe: "My issue is not so much with the fact that he did what he clearly needed to survive. My issue's with the fact that he didn't tell us, really."

Myx: "Yeah, that's where I'm stuck as well."

Doomsinger: "My reasons are my own."

Erbak: "In his defense, he was dressed as a cultist. I suppose it was fairly obvious."

Tobe: "I feel like what happened just now, the fight with this half-dragon man and his guards, barbarian people, they-they knew him and clearly he's talked to them and told them things. He could have told us, could have warned us."

Doomsinger: "Let's just say I was hedging my bets. When it comes down to it, I did what I had to do to survive this long."

Erbak: "That is quite understandable after all."

Doomsinger: "I told them that you were likely to come back, that you would risk your foolish, foolish lives to save me because of honor or some nonsense like that. And they believed me, and that is why they did not kill me, because without me, they didn't have bait. But, quite frankly, I didn't know if you would win, and I didn't think it was in my best interests to allow them to believe that I was on your side, because if you lost, then I'd simply be next."

Mhurren: "For better or worse."

Doomsinger: "I did what I had to. You live and they do not."

Mhurren: "Yes. Just what I was about to say."

Erbak: "It makes sense. In the end, there are only old heroes and bold heroes, but there's no old, bold heroes. Like that, thanks. It's the reason I'm still alive. Now, if you'll excuse me, I would like to take a look at this dragon fellow."

Doomsinger: "Just leave him in one piece, will you?"

Erbak: "Bit late for that, I suppose. His head is not in a consistent state."

{laughs}

Doomsinger: The Doomsinger turns and looks over and, "Yes. What exactly did you do to him?"

Erbak: "This was not my handiwork."

Doomsinger: "What was with that ... What was with that bird? What do you have against birds?"

Myx: Myx is just looking at the sky, "{tuneless doo doos}"

GM: Looking at the sky in the cave? {laughs}

Myx: Trying to see what that tiny little speck is. Is it a bat?

GM: Go ahead and roll a perception check.

Myx: One of those stirge. Okay.

Tobe: {laughs} And just how intently is she looking at the ceiling. {laughs}

GM: The only thing up there is the remains of your conscience.

{laughs}

Mhurren: Geez.

Myx: Aw. So mean to me.

Tobe: {laughs} Oh, wow.

Myx: "It wasn't intentional!"

Doomsinger: Mhurren, The Doomsinger heals you as he puts his hand on your shoulder and says, "Thank you. The support was appreciated. I'm glad you're not dead."

Mhurren: I don't turn to look at him, but I ...

Doomsinger: "I forgive you for hitting me in ... back there, this time."

Mhurren: "{grunts}" I'm gonna go walk over to the statue thing that's over here.

GM: So you walk over to the giant statue and you take it in for the first time. You guys have been in this room for awhile and in this fight. It was over in a few minutes. It was very, very intense and you haven't really had a moment to look around. You walk over to the shadow and it's very interesting.

Tobe: Tobe's also going to go and have a look at it.

GM: Tobe, you go over and look at this statue and as you absorb what you're looking at, a chill runs through your spine. The creature portrayed in this statue is a five-headed dragon and it appears to be erupting from the peak of a volcano. And at the base of this volcano are other dragons. And it's the size of these other dragons that makes you stop and appreciate and realize how large the dragon this five-headed dragon is supposed to represent must be, because by comparison, these other dragons around the base of the volcano seem cat-sized, proportionally.

There are various dragons. Some of them are climbing the side of the volcano. Others are simply bowing in worship. There are other dragons that are reaching out with one claw and averting their gaze. There's some very clear symbolism happening in this statue.

Mhurren, as a monk of the Order of the Stone Claw and a follower of Bahamut, you are very well aware of the five-headed dragon who is the visage of Tiamat. The five-headed dragon coming out of the top of the volcano is probably about the size of a small dog in the statue and then the dragons that are surrounding the volcano, that are climbing it, that are reaching out, are kitten sized. So, not only is this dragon obviously supposed to be monolithic, but the volcano that they are climbing itself is huge. This isn't a volcano that was once under a hill or something. This is a gigantic, cavernous volcano.

As you are looking at the statue, Tobe, you jump, suddenly, as a hand is placed upon your shoulder.

Tobe: "{surprised sound}"

Doomsinger: And The Doomsinger leans in by your ear and, "It's rather remarkable, isn't it?"

Tobe: "That's one word? Disturbing's another."

Doomsinger: The Doomsinger, thrown off by your sarcasm whilst he was attempting to be generous, is only able to heal you for 4 hit points. {laughs}

GM: Myx.

Myx: I'm actually going to join Erbak. I want to ruffle through his pockets.

GM: So, you want to go over and inspect Langdedrosa also. In that case, Erbak, what are you doing?

Erbak: Well, I'm just examining his overall physique. I'm gonna try and, it sounds weird as it is, I just try and get some of the clothing off to check out the general torso anatomy because this is crazy. This is half dragon and half human, it's pretty resilient. Genuinely very interested by this.

GM: This is not something you've come across before. It's not half human, but it is a half-dragon. Or, rather, it's almost like a bipedal dragon. So, he's wearing a purple, gold embossed robe that is weaved into a heavy chestplate piece. You try to heft it off him physically. You try and push his body upright and pull it up over his head, as you would if you were just doffing the armor. You realize that's not gonna work. But, if you are careful, you can probably find the leather straps that bind the platemail together and disconnect those, but you will be damaging this armor irreparably to do so.

Erbak: Is Myx watching me do this? She's here as well?

Myx: Yep.

GM: You quite easily find the clasps and the various joints and you're able to slice through them and peel away a good majority of the armor. As you pull it back, it clangs heavily to the ground and it's not surprising that you weren't able to remove it yourself, as it clearly weighs a substantial amount. It's not something an elf could wander around wearing. The physical build would probably not support it. The Doomsinger definitely couldn't get away with it.

Myx: Just asking Erbak if he needed help removing it or moving things around.

Erbak: "No, no. Thank you. I should be able to have this. You didn't want that chest plate, did you?"

Myx: "No. I'm more interested to see if he has anything on him like a note or a map or anything that we can use for information since we can't ask him any questions anymore."

Erbak: "Eh, feel free to rifle. Just don't break any bits off, I suppose. And do be careful, there's quite a lot of blood here. It makes things a little slick."

GM: Once he removes the plate, you realize that he's not really wearing anything that would conceal any kind of notes or anything like that. This man is a warrior.

Myx: Well, that's a shame.

GM: But that doesn't mean that there isn't anything in this room.

Myx: Ooh! Or a key! Maybe he has a key on him.

GM: Hmm. I'm not sure what it would be a key for.

Erbak: I'm not looking for in anything in particular, although looking for things that stand out, such as unusually strong scales or skin that are basically quite durable. Any joints that are quite flexible in particular. Quite interested in his hands as well. I mean, taking a look at something here that is effectively digits and seeing how well armored they are.

GM: Glancing over this creature, you have the distinct sense that this creature is very much more dragon than any other race you've ever seen. Its upper torso is very heavily muscled. And you've seen examples of diagrams in books of dragon musculoskeletal structure. In that, because of the nature of their wings and the fact that those are connected to their chest and back joints, that that area in particular tends to be very, very heavily developed.

This creature does not have wings, and yet those muscles are clearly very well developed. And he's clearly also been training them specifically for the purposes of combat. The thing that stands out most about him is his muscle and bone structure are very, very dense, from what you can see. Even after removing the plate, his body itself was extremely heavy.

His hands aren't particularly unusual. You have never encountered a bipedal species that is capable of holding up this much upper body mass. I mean, he's been skipping leg day is what I'm saying. He's a strictly shoulders, chest and back guy. He used all of that shoulder and back strength to smash his head into the ground until he was dead.

Myx: Couldn't handle it. I was too intimidating.

{laughs}

GM: Myx, you are rifling through the cloak that Erbak pulled off and unfortunately, you don't find much in there. The cloak itself is quite nice. It's got a very fine gold embroidery through it and you can tell through the texture of it that the gold embroidery is not just for show. It's actually a metallic weave through the cloak.

Myx: "Hmm. Can I keep the cloak? Wait, does someone else need a cloak? Are any of you cold?"

Tobe: "I'm fine."

Myx: "But you're covered in goo! Do you want a cloak?"

Tobe: "You know what? Yeah. Sure."

Erbak: "Would it be wise?"

Tobe: "I'll take it."

Myx: And Myx waddles over to Tobe and wraps it around him to get rid of some of the ook.

GM: When you pick up this cloak, you realize it's actually really heavy. Not giant platemail heavy, but it's slightly heavier than you expect, given how easily and lightly it appears to move.

Myx: {gasps} Is it like Piccolo's outfit?

GM: Kind of.

Myx: Okay.

GM: It is definitely weighted because it is weaved through with metal.

Myx: "Erm. Careful Tobe. It's really heavy." And now I'm imagining Myx dragging it over rather than gingerly carrying it like I first thought I was doing, but yeah.

GM: You can pick it up. But as you're dragging it over, it is trailing on the floor a bit. It's not completely clean. It was being worn by somebody who smashed their face to death in a bloody, gory mess. It's a little mucky, but it's a lot less mucky than Tobe who is covered in gore and vomit.

Myx: "See, it's fine. It will do." And Myx is going to proceed to just help Tobe clean off a bit.

Tobe: "Thanks."

Myx: Scrub scrub.

Tobe: Do I have any idea how much this cloak would be worth considering it's got gold weaved into it?

GM: It might not be gold. It looks gold, but ...

Tobe: I'll get someone to look at it later. {laughs}

GM: You put on the cloak and you get a sense of the weight of it. You feel like this probably would be pretty useful in terms of defense. It's not armor per se, but you feel better defended wearing this.

Tobe: I'm very conflicted wearing this.

GM: You feel conflicted, and yet you feel like if somebody's trying to stab you with a sword, the metal weave might help.

Mhurren: How big is the statue?

GM: It's fucking huge. The statue in front of you is easily twice your height, so big statue. The top of the five-headed dragon is just scraping the ceiling of the cave.

Mhurren: Okay, so this thing, does it look like it was just carved from the rock?

GM: Looking around, you notice that near the statue, along the floors and around the walls, there are intricate carvings. You see dragon tails coiled into various patterns and knots that flow all the way around the walls and the more you pay attention to the room you see that this actually extends all across the back wall and all of the patterning seems to flow towards the statue and the statue itself is carved, as you say, out of the rock.

Looking, as you're following these patterns across the wall, you do also notice in the corner, there appears to be a chest.

Mhurren: Oh! I would like to head over to the chest. Can I check it for traps?

GM: How do you check it for traps?

Mhurren: Does it look like there's a lock on it at all?

GM: Yeah, absolutely. So, the lid itself does appear to be locked.

Mhurren: I'm just gonna try and open it.

GM: You put your hands on the lid and you give it a little shove, doesn't open. It's quite clear that, yeah, it's locked.

Mhurren: "Um. I found a chest over here. Can anyone find a key?"

Myx: "Uh, nope."

Tobe: "Assuming that the key is in this room."

Myx: "What if the dragon man swallowed it?"

Erbak: "I could open up and check if you like?"

{laughs}

Myx: "Uhhh. I mean, I'm not fond of the idea. {laughs}"

Erbak: "Trust me. I'm a doctor."

Tobe: "I trust you less every time you say that."

Mhurren: "Well, I mean, I could try to break it open."

Myx: "Wouldn't that make a lot of noise?"

Scraw: "I think that ship has sailed, don't you?"

{laughs}

Erbak: "We have made a lot of noise here."

Mhurren: Stealthily break it open.

{laughs}

Mhurren: "Well, I've got a mace. I could attempt to just ..."

Scraw: "If only we had a locksmith. Looks like we could just probably have somebody open it."

Mhurren: "Can anybody do that?"

Scraw: "Anybody have any lockpicks? I don't because I don't know how to use them, but anyone?"

Myx: "Uhhh."

Tobe: "I don't know how to use them either."

Erbak: "Hmm. Nothing I can do

Mhurren: I pause for a second and then I walk over to the other two barbarians in the room. Can I try and pat them down for a key?

Myx: While he's doing that, can I try?

GM: Can you try what?

Myx: To pick the lock with my quill.

GM: Yes, you can try and pick the lock with your quill.

{laughs}

Myx: Yeah!

GM: You're going to roll with disadvantage.

Myx: Why?

GM: Because it's a fucking quill.

{laughs}

GM: And you don't know anything about lockpicking.

Mhurren: It's a special quill of lockpicking.

Erbak: It's a quill from the magical key bird, a key-wi.

{blown raspberry}

Tobe: I'm watching this with interest.

GM: Unfortunately, it doesn't look like either of the barbarians have a key on them. You wander over, Myx and you take out your quill. You look over at Tobe and you crouch down by the chest and give him a little mischievous wink, and you take out your quill from your bag. And your tongue is sticking out of your mouth. You're narrowing your eyes. You put both hands on your quill and you just slowly move it into the keyhole. And then you waggle it up and down for a bit.

{laughs}

Myx: I'm an anime character. {laughs}

GM: Your quill snaps in the lock.

Myx: "Nooooo." {laughs}

Tobe: Who saw that coming?

Myx: "My quill!"

Tobe: I crouch down next to her and just give her a sympathetic pat on the shoulder whilst trying not to be sarcastic.

GM: You're trying to give her a sympathetic pat on the shoulder and Oz is sitting on your shoulder going, [caw laughs].

Myx: "That was a really good quill."

Oz: And in your head you get, "Next she'll be asking me to pick it with my beak."

Tobe: {laughs} {stammers} Whilst Oz is making all the noise, I just reach up, put my hand on his beak to keep his beak shut.

Oz: [muffled caws]

Tobe: "{shushes}"

Oz: He pulls back and pecks your hand.

Tobe: Ah, I deserve that.

Oz: He flutters up to the top of Tiamat and sits on Tiamat.

Myx: On that note, though, "Darconius?"

Darconius: "Yeah?"

Myx: "Are you any good at lockpicking?"

Darconius: "I'm not ... I-I've never tried."

Myx: "Hmm, can you think of any other way to open this chest?"

Darconius: "Hmm. Oh! I've got a stinger."

Myx: "Is the stinger likely to break?"

Darconius: "I mean, probably not."

Myx: "Mmm, no. I-I don't want to risk you getting hurt."

GM: Your familiar takes aspects of your personality.

{laughs}

Myx: "Nevermind. It, it's okay, buddy. Thank you."

Darconius: "No problem! I'm gonna sit over here." And he just runs over to one of the stairwells that leads out of the room. He keeps an eye out.

Myx: "Be careful."

Darconius: "I'm keeping watch!"

Myx: "{laughs} Bless him."

{laughs}

GM: No one else is hearing any of this, so. {laughs}

Tobe: If I take a glance around the room is there anything else of interest that I notice?

GM: What are you looking for and where are you looking?

Tobe: I guess the walls. I don't know shit. {laughs}

GM: These spirals are pretty, really pretty. You're wandering and you start touching the wall and you're like, "Wow, these are pretty." And then you realize they lead to the statue of Tiamat and go, "{frightened noise}"

Tobe: Ugh. {laughs} Creepy.

GM: Erbak, with what you learned from the dragon man, is there anything you would like to do?

Erbak: Well, given that I'm probably stood in the mess that was once his head, is there any large pieces of scales amongst the mess?

GM: You can have a quick investigation if you want to dig through the gore. You actually find, there's not much in the way of scales, but there is a perfectly intact canine fang and it is huge. And when you pick it up and you take a look at it, you actually see that the back of it is scorched by the lightning that it used to breathe, but at the same time, it's not actually damaged, it's just covered in years worth of buildup of carbon. And as you scrape away at it, you realize that even underneath all the scorch and carbon, the tooth is actually perfectly structured. And, that you realize, is due to the bone density of this creature.

You pick it up and the tooth is four inches tall and it's at least an inch and a half to two inches in thickness.

Erbak: Huzzah! I'm going to turn and see what everyone's faffing about with over this chest.

{laughs}

Scraw: Scraw is standing by the stairs in the room. He's been actually standing behind you, Erbak, while you were doing your investigations on this Langdedrosa guy. Not made any efforts to move further into the room. He's just been eyeballing The Doomsinger from across the way.

Erbak: I'm just going to turn to him. And, "I wouldn't worry too much, but do keep an eye out. I do understand his position. It is one of survival."

Scraw: "Hmm. Indeed. Not sure how long that'll be working out for him, though."

Erbak: "I'd say, well, he may not be something we can rely on in other more perilous moments. You understand, of course? You know how the scales of battle turn. You thrive on adversity. He may thrive in very different ways."

Scraw: He looks at you, Erbak, and he puts his hand on your shoulder. "Worry not, doctor. I will take no further action here. I have no desire to sully my blade on the flesh of such a creature."

Tobe: Ouch.

Erbak: "No, of course not. Just don't be surprised if when the tables are turned, he is opposite you."

Scraw: "We were The Scales of Justice and we will continue to be. He can be whatever he fucking wants." Scraw just walks past, walks into the room. "Mhurren, what are we doing? Where are we going? What now?"

Mhurren: "Just a moment." And I would like to try and pop this chest open. I'm going to attack it with my mace.

Tobe: I'm gonna stand back. I'm gonna stand way back. {laughs}

Mhurren: With my mace, I'm gonna try an uppercut, but I want to wind it back with a wide arc so my mace would connect with the front where the keyhole is. So, then, hopefully, that would break the lock and then it would pop it open.

GM: So, you guys watch as he walks over to the chest and takes out his mace. He winds it up and swings it down full force into the lock of this chest and you hear a crack and a snap, followed by a long slow, [hiss]. As the sound of hundreds of hissing snakes, just a rushing of hissing surrounds all of you like water flooding through a thousand tunnels.

Doomsinger: The Doomsinger rolled a natural 1.

Tobe: Unfortunate.

GM: Jets of acid launch out of the walls at you and you find yourself being splashed from pretty much every angle.

Erbak: "Agh!"

GM: Myx, you take a complete drenching. The rest of you manage to react and dodge away from some of the jets, but the acid still catches your skin and burns. The Doomsinger starts screaming as both Myx and The Doomsinger take 9 points of damage.

Tobe: It was like I was never healed at all.

Myx: You're telling me.

GM: You're clutching at your skin. You're patting yourselves down as the [hiss] just continues. Looking around, you realize that with all the jets of acid, most of this acid has not hit anyone, but you can see that where the acid collided with the walls

or the ground, what you thought was stone beneath the acid begins to melt and bubble and hiss and smoke.

Tobe: "Get out! Get out! Get out!" {laughs}

Myx: This is what curiosity gets us.

GM: You inhale the vapor and it begins to burn away at your lungs. There are, at immediate glance, there's only two exits. There's the entrance you came in through and there's another entrance towards the east which leads to a set of stairs that head downwards. Which way are you guys running.

Tobe: Down. Further in.

Mhurren: Yeah, I'm closer to that side.

Myx: Honestly, Myx is in so much pain, she just follows the others.

Mhurren: "This way!"

Erbak: Following the rest.

GM: So, you shout over to the doctor, lungs burning, full of acid smoke, as you charge out of the room, covering your faces and trying not to breathe in as much. Most of you manage it, but as you make your way down the stairs of the room, you see that Mhurren is coughing and hacking and he spits up a little blood in his hand. Once you guys make it out of the room, he seems to recover relatively quickly. The chamber that opens at the bottom of the stairs is absolutely huge. You find yourselves standing on a wide ledge that runs along the full length of the left wall, and on the right as you hit the bottom of the stairs, it appears to drop away to a large pit. You all hear the sound of dripping water in the distance.

Myx: Mmm. Somehow Myx feels uneasy.

GM: The gas is not filling the room that you're in. It's very much isolated to the area behind you. So, as you run down the stairs, you find yourselves able to breathe much easier.

Mhurren: "Well, I don't think I'll be doing that again."

Myx: "Maybe no more opening chests."

Tobe: "And maybe uh, {laughs}, certainly no more smashing them open."

Scraw: "Did we even get anything out of that?"

Tobe: "You could go back and check if you like {laughs}."

Mhurren: {laughs} I open up my hand with the bit of blood on it.

Erbak: Clean out that room with the acid on the floor and everything, would it stay just on the floor?

GM: Yeah, the acid's everywhere in that room. It's not pooling because where the acid landed on the ground and on the walls, the stone or whatever was in there began to dissolve, and those dissolving puddles are what became the toxic, violent smoke.

Erbak: "Just debating if it's worth popping in on account of the fact that I could hold my breath for a very long time."

Myx: "I think we should probably not go back."

Erbak: I might dart back into the room just to the chest, keeping a careful eye on where I'm putting my feet. And at the ceiling as well, in case anything drips on me.

Tobe: I want to go over to the ledge and see if I can see anything in the pit or if it's just black. Very slowly and very cautiously.

GM: So you do your best to casually sneak over to the edge of the ledge, but you've just taken a lot of damage. You got down here in a real hurry, and you're a little bit more disoriented than you realize. There's a point where you put your foot down in front of you and you slip, and some nearby loose rocks go scattering off into the pit below. But you make it to the edge perfectly safely. It looks like it's about 15 feet down and it appears to be pretty dark.

From where you are, you can see large, rock-like shapes. You do occasionally catch the hint of movement.

Tobe: I back away {laughs} from the edge of the pit.

GM: Okay, Erbak. You quite easily navigate your way back through the room. Go back up the stairs, step around the few puddles that are between you and the chest and you get there and it looks like, in some instances, the contents of this have now been damaged by the acid. However, you do find various bits of jewelry in there. There's a quite nice gold and sapphire ring. There's a string of pearls. And you do find a pouch of precious stones as well.

Erbak: I am going to pocket the jewelry and the ring and grab the pouch of stones.

GM: There is one more thing that you find and it seems odd that it's in here, because it's just a hat. A plain looking, brown leather, pointed hat. You remember, there was this one time you were treating a dwarf child. It was filthy and it kept trying to touch you, but it had a gangrenous foot and it was very, very interesting, but it kept babbling about wizards and how they all have pointed hats.

Now that you think about it, this hat seems remarkably like a hat that would have been worn by one of these child's wizards. You're not sure why it's in a box filled with incredibly valuable treasure, but there's a really weird pointy leather hat in here.

Erbak: Well, I've got one hand clutching the bag of gems. So, I'm gonna pick up the hat with the other and I'm gonna make my way out.

GM: So, you wander out with the hat. You going to put it on or are you just carrying it?

Erbak: I'm just carrying it, but first I'm going to go, "{sighing breaths}."

GM: You wander out of the room, walk down the stairs, and you let out a long exhalation of breath, enjoy breathing regular air for a bit.

Erbak: "So, erm, you may be interested in these." And I hold over the bag full of gems. "And there was this hat?"

Doomsinger: Doomsinger goes, "Hmm. That looks like a wizard hat."

Tobe: "Curious."

Doomsinger: "Huh."

Erbak: I'm gonna park it on my head.

GM: You put the hat on your head and feel like you've got a pretty cool hat on right now, but nothing happens when you put the hat on, but that doesn't necessarily sway you. You haven't come across magical items that frequently in your past, but you have heard of them and you do know that often when an item has particular potency, it actually takes awhile to get familiar with it for the magic to activate. So, you're probably just going to have to wear it for awhile.

Erbak: Well. For now I'm gonna put it in my backpack, fold it up and put it in there, because, lizard heads aren't the best for holding onto hats and ...

GM: Oh, the moment you put that hat on, it sculpted itself to your skull. It didn't fuse, but it's incredibly comfortable. It's very strange. You've never put on a hat that fit your head before. This one did and you're not really sure how.

For the rest of you, it looks like a skull cap has fused itself to the back of his head and then turns into a point.

Erbak: Yeah. I'm gonna put it in my bag for now. I may try it on later if we ever get out of this bloody hole, but I'm gonna, I'll just put this away. "Do you want the gems? They are no use to me."

Tobe: "We could always just split them up"

Mhurren: "Where did you find them?"

Erbak: "They were in the chest. I darted back. Can hold my breath for an extremely long time. It is a natural trait of our species. We're practically aquatic."

Mhurren: "Interesting."

Scraw: "Well, that's all very interesting."

Erbak: I'm just gonna drop the gems in Mhurren's hand, well, the pouch. "For you all. I'll take the hat and you can take this. This hat intrigues me."

Mhurren: "Welp, okay."

Doomsinger: "Now, before we continue, perhaps I should fill you in on some of the things I've heard."

Tobe: "That might be handy."

Doomsinger: "I wasn't lying when I said that I had not been through the entire cave. That's true. I had not been in the previous room or I would have potentially warned you about the trap that I had no idea about and now I'm covered in awful acid burns and I hate my life a little but, but that's fine. I probably deserve it. It happens. Whatever. Our suspicions were true. They are keeping some kind of progeny here, but I believe it's guarded well. I do know that he was not the only purple robe here. However, the other is far less fearsome a warrior. I'm sure that we can take them. They do have a small cadre of very loyal cultists with them, however. Um, I didn't like them very much, so whatever you do to them is fine."

Erbak: "The other one is Rezmir, I believe, her name? If I recall?"

Doomsinger: "No. No, Rezmir is gone."

Erbak: "Frulum?"

Doomsinger: "Yes, Frulum. Frulum Mondath is the one that's here. I'm not sure where she is right now, but she's obviously not here. Langdedrosa didn't have much to do with her. I don't think they get along very well if I'm honest. But, nonetheless, the progeny is somewhere in this cave. It may very well be here. However, I must warn you they did often bring a lot of meat into this cave. Now, whether or not that was to feed the progeny or something else, I do not know. Although, I suppose it could have been the drakes that we fought earlier. There is many unknowns, I'm afraid. But, I do believe we should proceed with caution."

Myx: "So, you don't know anything else about the progeny or possibly what direction it could be in?"

Doomsinger: "Let's just say they weren't exactly forthcoming with information to me, given that I was basically a hostage."

Myx: "Mm, that's fair."

Doomsinger: "A hostage held politely nonetheless."

{laughs}

Doomsinger: "But, mostly under the guise that I was working with them and I would join them should they allow me to live."

[music]

Narrator: Hey there friend, you look like you need a coffee. Why don't you take a quick moment to settle down, throw the kettle on, get yourself a hot, steamy brew, and in the meantime, here's something just a little bit different.

{laughs}

Player one : Note to self, if an irradiated man who happens to be like the third copy that you've run into ever tells you, "Don't go in there," don't go in there.

Guest Narrator: The Redacted Files is an actual play podcast.

Player two: Ooh, and a natural 20.

{laughs}

Player one: Is anyone just a little discomforted by the fact that she gets so excited with a natural 20.

Guest Narrator: With tales of horror and suspense.

Player three: And he wishes you a good afternoon.

Player four : I go home to the nightmares I will inevitably have.

Guest Narrator: Told one bad die roll at a time.

Player One: That's your attack?

Player Four : Yes.

{laughs}

Player two: Stop laughing at us.

Guest Narrator: Visit us at theredactedfiles.com where you can give us a listen or join us in telling the next story.

Player three: You can investigate or you can go down the stairs.

Player two: I think we'll go. Do you guys think we'll go?

{laughs}

Player two: I think we'll go.

[music]

Tobe: "That does make sense. I mean, they don't seem to trust their base level."

Doomsinger: "Also, I don't speak Draconic and most of them refuse to speak anything but. So, there is that."

Tobe: "Yeah, I can see how that'd be a barrier."

Doomsinger: "Bloody foolish language, if you ask me. What's wrong with bloody common?"

Tobe: I do tell everyone that it looked to be about a 15 foot deep and that I'd noticed bits of movement, but I couldn't see what was moving. So there's definitely something down there.

Scraw: Scraw has obviously followed you guys downstairs as well, I will clarify, because I know I haven't mentioned him in a bit. Whereas previously, his position was always taking the lead or joining whoever's at the lead to be at the frontlines, at the moment, his attitude's changed. I don't know if any of you would have noticed, but he is now taking up the rear. Every time you go anywhere, he is always following from behind.

Erbak: "So, where to now?"

Tobe: "Well, I think there's only really one choice is to further examine this room and see, see where it goes."

GM: Tobe you did mention that there's something moving down there. Did you tell the party about the landscape of them at all?

Erbak: Er, what's the lighting like in here?

GM: It's probably pretty dark in here. I don't think you can see much of anything, actually.

Myx: "Uh, Doomie?"

Doomsinger: "I'm in your good books now, am I?"

Myx: "Well ... {sighs}."

Doomsinger: "Are we friends again?"

Myx: "I need your help, okay? Could you please generate some light so that Erbak can see a little bit better?"

Doomsinger: "Where would you like it?"

Myx: "I guess, mm, center of the room, if you can get it that far?"

Doomsinger: He'll create a line of lights, [zapping sounds], across the room. And it's dim light.

GM: You also see boulder like shapes down in this pit. You can't get much detail from up here, I guess. It's so dark down there. Maybe it's just the angle. You don't have a clear shot of what's down there. Now, you are 15 foot up from what's down in the pit, so, you guys get the impression that in order to see anything further, you're probably going to have to investigate the room.

Myx: Myx just feels like she's not having the best hour at present.

Tobe: I don't think any of us are having the best hour at present. {laughs}

Myx: That is fair.

Tobe: Uh, I'm moving ...

Erbak: "So, what's down there then, just movement or? Creatures?"

Tobe: "Uh, we can't really ... Well, there's something moving down there and lots of rocks but neither Myx nor myself could see anything clearer than that."

Erbak: "What about pathways? Pathways out of here, then? There must be some kind of ... There can't just be a drop?"

Tobe: "Well, I think we're just going to have to investigate the room further to discover that."

GM: You do see that there appears to be some stairs that lead down from the ledge that you're on and the stairs have what appears to be iron railings that are driven into the stonework running down the stairs, either side.

Erbak: "Well, if that's the only way, I don't think I would be best taking charge. This darkness is not ... Not something I can really cope with comp- in comparison to yourselves."

Myx: {laughs} Myx does not want to lead on this one, but she does want to check for traps. I want to look at the floor and see if there's anything more raised or anything that looks like it dips down a little bit. Basically anything that doesn't look level with the texture of the floor.

GM: You crouch down in the area by the bottom of the steps, Myx, and you feel around on the ground. You narrow your eyes and you try and get as close to the

ground as you can to get a level view of the plane. Eh, it all seems pretty smooth, for a rocky cave. There doesn't appear to be anything that stands out as dangerous.

Myx: Okay. I will relay to the party, "Not to guarantee that there aren't any traps, but looking at the floor, I don't see anything that looks like a trigger. So, I think we can go ahead, but still be careful."

Mhurren: "Noted."

Tobe: I go further into the room, to try to see if there's a ...

Mhurren: Same.

Tobe: Anything other than the stairs leading to anywhere else?

GM: Whereabouts in the room are you moving. The ledge that you're standing on is quite wide. It's 20 foot across from the wall into the room. So, it's quite a wide platform. It's a good 70 foot long, so, there's a fair amount of room and the stairs are midway intersecting the platform that you're standing on.

Tobe: I head to where the stairs are and see if I can see from there any more to the room or if it is literally just this platform and the stairs going down.

Mhurren: And I would like to stealth before moving into the room. I wanted to edge along the back wall, opposite the stairs.

GM: So you both move towards the middle of the platform, but Mhurren, you move to the middle of the platform across the back wall and Tobe just strides across the platform towards the top of the stairs.

Mhurren: Yeah, because I'm trying to stealth.

Erbak: I'm just watching what the two are doing for now. On account of the fact that it's still difficult for me to see.

Myx: I imagine that if Mhurren's happy to proceed then Doomsinger's fine. He's following after, um ...

Doomsinger: He's going to saunter.

Myx: He's gonna saunter but he's gonna try and be stealthy about it.

{laughs}

Tobe: Stealthy saunter.

Myx: Yes. Yeah. I'd say he's trying to keep to Mhurren's footsteps because he knows those are the safe ones.

Doomsinger: The Doomsinger makes it about 15 foot into the room, down the platform, following in Mhurren's footsteps along the back wall. They both make a pretty reasonable job of sneaking along.

GM: Tobe, however, doesn't even bother. He just walks straight over to the top of the stairs. What are Myx and Erbak doing?

Myx: Um, Myx is concerned about Tobe's lack of sneaking, so she's gonna go after him, but she's gonna do it stealthy.

Erbak: I'm just gonna follow The Doomsinger's actions, carefully, but I'm sticking to the wall. I'm giving myself about 10 foot distance between or so.

Tobe: Hey, who ... I've already like kicked some loose rocks into {laughs} the pit here, so ...

GM: You have already signaled your presence.

Myx: A natural 1, ladies and gents.

GM: Myx is creeping along the ground, I think. She got down to see for traps and she's like, "This is a good place to be."

Myx: You see her with her butt in the air just like sliding on the floor. Please don't impale me.

{laughs}

Tobe: I think I'm the one that has to worry about being impaled right now.
{laughs}

GM: Mhurren, Tobe, make a DEX save.

Tobe: Oh, fuck. {laughs}

Mhurren: Mhurren reflects on the futility of him trying to stay quiet.

GM: Roll another DEX save, Mhurren. And Tobe, roll another DEX save but with disadvantage.

Tobe: Oh, shit. {laughs}

GM: Okay, and now, everyone roll initiative.

{laughs and groans}

Tobe: Oh, shit.

Erbak: You had to say it, didn't you. You had to say the H word.

Myx: {groans} Go away.

GM: This is how this goes down. [claps] Mhurren sneaks into the room, across the platform, hugging the back of the wall. The Doomsinger sees him leave and pursues slowly afterwards. Erbak, seeing everybody moving into the room, also follows suit, sneaking carefully across the back of the wall. Tobe's recent attempts at stealth failed to impress him and he decided that this time he was just gonna walk into the room to investigate further. He gets to the top of the stairs. As he left, Myx starts following behind him, slinking along the ground and just making a whole bunch of noise.

By the time Tobe gets to the stairs looking around to see if he can see a bit more of the room, he is not paying a huge amount of attention when something flies out of the air and collides with the ground at his feet. Mhurren, you see something flying through the air towards Tobe and you take a quick step backwards against the wall as you see what looks like a small jar smash on the ground by Tobe's feet and a thick, viscous fluid spreads across the ground.

Tobe, you find yourself not only covered by some of this fluid as it flies out of the bottle, but as the fluid smashes open on the ground, it drenches your feet and rapidly you find yourself stuck in place. As you panic and try to remove yourself, you look around and watch in brief horror as two similar looking bottles fly through the air, but these are on fire.

Tobe: Oh, shit. {laughs}

GM: These clay jars smash at your feet and cover the area in flames. Mhurren, the heat from the flames flickers up against you. Tobe, the flames cover you.

Tobe: {long drawn out} Fuck. {laughs}

GM: Myx, you see Tobe covered in fire and probably yelling a lot in panic and pain.

Tobe: Yes. {laughs}

Myx: Mmm. I am not okay with this. Really worried about Tobe.

Tobe: So you should be. {laughs}

Scraw: Scraw is going to rush over to Tobe's side. He is at the start of the stairs. He's just gonna charge in the room, pass Myx who's on the ground, over to Tobe. He's gonna grab Tobe, wrapping both arms around him, and hoist him as hard as he can out of the goop that he has seen Tobe stuck in. "Embrace the bugbear."
{laughs}

He wraps both arms around you, Tobe and with an almighty tug, pulls you free of the glue-like substance that is fusing your feet to the ground and you find yourself able to move your legs. Unfortunately, you're being held by a bugbear, so you're wagging your feet in the air right now. The fire is subsiding as he's slapping you whilst holding you.

{laughs}

Scraw: He's bongo drumming to put the flames out.

Myx: I just see Tobe's like tongue sticking out every time Scraw pats him, just like, "Blech," like he's being squeezed.

{laughs}

GM: The bottles that you saw flying through the air came from the east. Further into the room, at the other end of the platform. Myx, what are you doing?

Myx: Relieved, seeing the show that is Scraw carrying Tobe and patting out the flames. I want to try and see if I can figure out what dropped.

GM: Something threw a bottle of something on fire. And you saw it curve in an arc towards Tobe, in a straight line. At the end of the platform, you see that it actually drops off. Whereas there's a pit to your right, you see that if you focus carefully, you can see that there's actually also a pit at the end of this platform at the other end of the room. And it's pretty apparent that whatever threw this bottle of fire and goop is in there.

Myx: {sighs} "Guys. I-I think whatever we're fighting is down there," and Myx points to the origin of the bottle throwing thing happening. For now, just move

closer to Tobe. I'll prepare eldritch blast. When I see an enemy, I can attack.

Doomsinger: The Doomsinger ...

Mhurren: So he sees those jars being thrown, people getting hurt. He's going to move over to the edge here.

Doomsinger: So, yeah, he's going to move over to the edge of the pit in the center of the room.

Mhurren: Ready a firebolt, if that's possible? A ranged attack, for if something appears.

GM: What does Mhurren do?

Mhurren: Mhurren is going to slink back a bit, because he's not looking too great. Do the same thing. Go over to the edge and ready a dart.

GM: Erbak.

Erbak: From what I can see in this room, is there any of that pitch on the floor or is any of it lit?

GM: Um, once the flames landed, they kind of just died off.

Erbak: Hmm. So still haven't really got the full lights then. I'm gonna come up to here, clinging the wall.

GM: So you move into the center of the room?

Erbak: Carefully, just keeping my back to the wall, moving sideways. I know it's hard to see, but I'm just gonna keep moving. I'm gonna use another action to draw a torch, but I'm not gonna light it. I'm gonna prepare to do it the moment another jar of some kind comes over.

GM: Tobe, what are you doing?

Scraw: Scraw has put you down, but not directly in the goo.

Tobe: Feet firmly back on the ground, I'm going to retreat behind Myx and Scraw and towards the back wall because I am not doing good at all and do not want to be in the firing line of anything {laughs}.

GM: Tobe is not holding it together well.

Tobe: No. {laughs}

GM: This being a hero lark is tough.

Tobe: Especially when you're a squishy warlock who needs to stop going first. {laughs} I retreat behind Myx and Scraw and towards the back wall and I ready eldritch blast for if I catch sight of any creature that appears hostile to me.

GM: You guys stand around, readying attacks.

Scraw: Scraw puts his arms out to his sides, pulls out his glaive and wields it in preparation, looks around, watches as you move away and puts himself in a defensive position between you, Myx and in the path of you, Tobe, stands in front of both of you, and looks around, is waiting for something to happen. Just calls out, "Whoever you are, come out and face us, cowards!"

GM: You all hear a very odd noise. It sounds like the rushing of water, but it also sounds like the scraping of stone against stone, and it also sounds like slithering and it sounds kind of like it's coming from everywhere. Myx, nothing has appeared.

Myx: {groans}

GM: Your prepared eldritch blast dissipates as you lose concentration having seen no target. You, looking over at the dip at the end of the platform, you fire an eldritch blast directly ahead of you and it slams into the ground, scattering rocks into the pit below. It doesn't seem to hit anything, but as the rocks scatter into the nearby crevasse, you hear, [small grunts and chittering].

Myx: Shouting in the direction that she just damaged. "Hello? I-i- are ... Is there someone there?"

GM: "{shouting} WE'LL EAT YOUR BONES!"

Myx: "Please don't eat our bones."

{laughs}

GM: What does The Doomsinger do, Mhurren?

Mhurren: Can he move the lights towards the direction in which the jars or balls were thrown from? Attempt to reach the far end source of where the projectiles

were coming from.

GM: It's a pit at the end of the platform. So, The Doomsinger moves the lights over the platform so that they're all lined up and he hovers ones over the pit, but you can't see down into the pit because you're 40 odd feet away from it. However, there is now dim light over the pit and in fact, there is dim light crossing the majority of the platform. So, you can see everything now, Erbak, in black and white. I say everything, you can see around the platform.

Mhurren: Mhurren will ... He's weak and there's no enemy in sight, so, he's just gonna prepare another dart.

GM: Erbak.

Erbak: I am going to, still holding his torch, carefully sneak around up along the wall, at about the end of his movement, until he can see over the ledge into where the pit is.

GM: You continue to move yourself along the back wall towards the pit at the end of the platform. With the dim light being radiated by The Doomsinger, you see four kobolds huddling below the edge of the crevice and they're just holding themselves against the back side of the wall so that they can't be seen, so that they're completely out of view. And you see between them, they're preparing more jars.

Erbak: He looks at the closest one preparing the jar of pitch, and can I cast prestidigitation and ignite that jar of pitch immediately?

GM: You can certainly try. It's gonna require some precision. So, you see them filling this little jar with something huddling around, filling various jars, and you focus on one of the jars and ...

Erbak: Well, my stealth roll's terrible, so I'm gonna assume it's probably quite loud. So, I'm just gonna speak the words, and then, as the kobold looks up at me, I'm just gonna smile and wave.

GM: And as you do, you smile and wave, they look up at you, and you see one of the kobolds frown and he turns and looks back at the jar in his hands, which is suddenly burning. He drops the jar as it explodes in his hands and his feet are covered in fire. And that's the one closest to you, the kobold closest to the wall drops the jar. Unfortunately, it doesn't explode outwards and damage all of them. It does, but not by a huge amount. You can tell that the jar wasn't completely full yet, which is why they weren't throwing them. So, they all did take damage from it.

Tobe, you now hear a screeching and you can see Erbak happily staring down

into glowing warm lights coming from the pit in front of him now, flickering of flames.

Tobe: That's unnerving. I'm more unnerved by ... I mean, he's smiling and ...

GM: Flickering flames highlighting the yellows in his underbelly as well and very much making his face look very gaunt and ghoulish from where you're standing with the way that he's grinning down at whatever's down there screeching.

Tobe: Yeah, I'm gonna move further along the wall away.

GM: So, you're moving back towards the stairs?

Tobe: Yeah. And, gonna continue holding my eldritch blast because I'm not getting up in the front of anything. One hit will take me out.

GM: Kobolds here, now that you are easily within range, he no longer has a fire bomb that he can throw. However he does have to hand a oopy, goopy glue bomb, so go ahead and make a DEX save, Erbak.

Erbak: Aw, that's the worse kind of save. Curse my, oh! Natural 20. Okay. Nevermind. {chuckles}

GM: The kobold, distracted by the flames at its feet, takes out its second jar, goes to throw it and it makes it just over the little lip of the pit that they're standing in, but you casually take a step back and the ooze simply spreads around on the floor, not touching you in the slightest. Seeing their cohorts fail utterly to catch you with a glue bomb, this kobold is going to run up and scale the pit.

Erbak: Damn! He's a lot faster than I thought he was.

GM: And this is going to trigger everyone who's holding something {laughs}. So, if you're holding an eldritch blast, if you're holding a dart or whatever ...

Tobe: Now's the time. {laughs} That's gonna be one terminated kobold. {laughs}

GM: Unfortunately, everyone's attacks glance off this kobold, as he charges up and runs at you with his shortsword bared. He attempts to drive it into your thigh.

Erbak: That, sadly, is in my thigh.

GM: As it slashes down into your leg. Seeing the success of its cohort after the failed attempt of the other, this kobold is going to follow suit and charge up and

now have you surrounded.

Erbak: Not looking great right now.

GM: These two kobolds run up and just start slashing away at Erbak and he's trying to keep these kobolds at bay.

Scraw: Scraw, seeing Erbak in danger is just going to charge over. He's just gonna go ahead and attack one of the kobolds with his glaive and that's a dead kobold. He strikes the one that The Doomsinger set on fire.

GM: That weird, stone scratchy noise screeches along above you the more noise you guys make.

Tobe: Ohhh.

Myx: I'm going to eldritch blast the kobold that's closest to Erbak and attempt to save him from any further harm. Oh, my god.

GM: You try and focus and shoot the kobold next to Erbak with your eldritch blast, but Scraw's directly in your line of sight and Erbak's just off to the side and trying to navigate your blast between them just results in it going wide. This kobold ducks down, dodges it at the last minute.

Doomsinger: The Doomsinger sees your action, runs over and tries to do the same with a firebolt. He successfully kills that kobold with fire.

GM: What do you do, Mhurren?

Mhurren: I'm gonna move forward, just beside Doomsinger.

GM: You move further down the platform.

Mhurren: And prepare another dart for hopefully one of those kobolds jumps up.

GM: Erbak, Mhurren and Scraw all make a DEX save.

Erbak: Oh, dear.

Myx: That didn't sound good.

GM: Mhurren and Erbak you are now both restrained as your feet are covered in oozy, goopy, cement-like fluid.

Erbak: This burned one here I'm gonna try toll the dead on him. Well, I exploded his brain alright..

GM: He's patting the flames down on his body. He's like, [high pitched frantic noises that become more and more frantic and loud, culminating in a loud shriek], as his eardrums bleed down his face.

Tobe: Erbak gets all the gruesome death.

Myx: If only they wouldn't try attacking us. They'd save themselves so much goo.

GM: Okay. Tobe. You hear some really fucking horrific screams. Erbak, I believe, is still grinning.

Tobe: {sharp inhale} Trusting this lizardman less and less. Did you say before that we could hear something from above us?

GM: You do hear some scratching, scraping noises along the ceiling, yes.

Tobe: Uh, since there's not really much else I can contribute at this point to the actual battle, I'm gonna look up and see if I can see anything on the ceiling, or even how far away the ceiling is.

GM: So, what I'm going to do, for this, is I'm gonna show you what you see and I want you to describe it without using its name.

Tobe: Oh, god. {laughs}

GM: It's upside down and hanging from the ceiling. You're looking around and you see there are several stalagmites, stalactites, I don't know, the ones that come down. And there are several of those, and then moving between the stalactites ...

[music]

Tobe: So, I look up and I immediately regret looking up. So, I say loud enough for the rest of the group, "Guys ... There's like, a squid thing on the ceiling."

Ray: And that's all we had time for this week. Join us next week for Episode 18: A Fight for Survival. If you didn't catch my appearance in the Roll4Change livestream last week, you can rest easy, as that show will soon be coming to our podcast in audio format.

The song that you heard at the beginning of this episode was Extravaganza

by TRG Banks and the song that you're now hearing is While You are Here by Ending Satellites.

Until next time, travel safe, and remember, The Scales of Justice are here for you, always.