

Session 10

Downtime, levelling and moving plot forward

Esme has been communicating with the nearby homesteads regarding the threatening bandits. Bran Fartreader often travels around the area for trade and is able to write, and has been sending detailed reports back to Esme. The reports show that the bandits seem to be divided, and witnesses report their leader doesn't have a good amount of control over the group. The leader calls himself Bogden, the group calls themselves Bogden's Marauders. The reports also notes that they are running low on supplies, and are likely to strike again soon. They have mostly been operating from the barrow hills, it is not a populated area so either they have business there or it is their lair.

A few weeks pass with the village continuing with business as usual. One day Cadmor brings an arrow with a note attached to Treasa. Treasa unrolls the not with a hint of trepidation and it reads "Leave your food, money and treasures in the hollow stump at Hanson's Hill. If the goods aren't there then your fields were burn." Cadmor then says a person on horseback rode near them, fired the arrow towards them and then rode off to the north-west. Treasa takes a minute to observe the arrow and look around the outside of the village before heading towards the public house, spreading the word on the way for a general town meeting. When she gets there she pulls out the note and pins it to the wall. Once the majority of the village is present she gives a breakdown of the situation. Rua speaks up quickly "They want all our stuff? We can't give them our food, we need it, we should fight back!". Esme also shares the intelligence she gathered from the nearby homesteads. Soren supports Rua's idea of fighting back, if we wait for them to come here the collateral damage is certain but if we take the fight to them then the damage will be outside the village. Ogden and Stella also share their fears of potential damage to the fields. There is another aspect to consider, Cutha speaks, we need access to the foothills for wood and salt. If they are there long-term it could make our lives really difficult.

With a general agreement that waiting for them to come is a bad idea the discussion turns to two different ideas; Setting an ambush at Hanson's Hill when they come to pick up the tithe, or send a party to the Barrow Hills to scout their camp, cause some mayhem and report back on their exact location. Soren wants to setup the ambush, but it becomes apparent from Treasa and Esme's comments that it is a very risky plan, putting a small group in the middle of armed adversaries. It only takes a day and a half to get to the barrow hills, it would be better to at least scout a bit and there will be enough time to setup the ambush if that can be done, or another plan that may become apparent.

With a general plan set Esme starts up a battle song, a quick and repetitive rhythm that is not subtle with the lyrics, the song about fighting and winning. Treasa goes around the village rattling a spear on the doors of homes and drawing as many more people as possible to the public house. Oden breaks open a keg of beer and he and his two assistants pass it around, adding to the growing aura of community and determination. Once the song finishes work begins on organizing

the initial scouting/strike group. Soren and Rua and Treasa volunteer immediately, Stella as well to bring Helior's light, and Kiva and Esme to help with planning/coordinating. Fio stands up and volunteers as well. Willem would also be a good choice for his experience in the bloody business, Shan pipes up and says she will go get him. Emmer also stands up to volunteer, but Treasa's protective instincts kick in. Emmer is boisterous and impulsive, not a good fit for this mission, and says to him that if she is going on the missions she needs someone smart, strong and capable to organize the watches and keep the village safe while they are gone. Esme winks from behind Emmer's back to the gathered villagers to get them to go along with what Treasa offers him. To show her confidence in him Treasa gives him her sword, a distasteful act for her, but Emmer is sensitive to slights against his pride and needs some concrete symbol of the responsibility he has been given.

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