



**banana (GM):** who's feeling hungry.



**Zarick:** let's go to San Dwich



**banana (GM):** Imbo



**Placidus:** let's to to sans meat, the home of vegan skeletons



**Riidi WW:** no, roll20, i dont want to share my camer a with you.



**banana (GM):** Seven citizens of the Empire walk south along the blacktop road as the sun begins its climb into morning. You've travelled days - by waystone road - southwest from Axis, and are now between the mountains and the wood.

Far to the west is the Giantwalk, rolling hills that climb slowly into scarp - the shield wall of Marrow, border of civilisation. Half the country from here to there, stretching to a horizon that dips below your line of sight then rises up again as hills - Meat.

The farmland is vast and bountiful; even the copper dragons did little to deplete it. All this west country is devoted to the raising of swine, cattle and veal on the hoof. It's majestic.



**Ghol, Going East:** Mmmm.



**banana (GM):** Little roads wind from the west to join the Viacarnis, some already bearing wagon trains and herds under way. Everyone's heading south of you, into the valley that leads to the wood. To the holy city.



**Vraknaar:** "That's a lot of meat. I hope we're not in over our heads here."



**Placidus:** "Said the man-dragon who isn't actually small enough to fit inside a stew pot."



**Kon:** Kon barks happily in general at the concept of meat. He approves.



**banana (GM):** South and east, the ground deepens, becomes rocky - little lakes and streams run down from the great river up north, providing the city's water. This stony valley runs straight into the north Yetanotherwood, piercing the forest - and at the gate of the valley, between farmland and woodland, are alabaster walls beneath sausage-bedecked spires.



**Xarvrax:** "Depends on the stew pot, you should see the kitchens of Drakkenhall."



**Vraknaar:** "Don't worry, I won't let them cook you. No offense, but I've heard gnome doesn't taste very good anyway."



**Placidus:** "Is that something dragons talk about? Wait, what am I saying. Of course it is."



**Travis Meacham:** Tier lists of flavor.



**banana (GM):** San Meat is white and crystal and blood red in patches. It's all spiral towers here at the northwestern wall, descending gracefully to wood buildings that blend eventually into the trees. Inbetween are the homes of the white elves and a vast infrastructure of butchery, preservation, gourmandery and indigestion. The city doesn't smell as nice as it looks.





**Placidus:** Placidus, to his credit, gags less than he thought he would.


**Arielbeth:** "How are elves reputed to taste?"





**banana (GM):** let's do some bookkeeping! firstly, incremental advances


 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol is generally unfazed by the assemblage of industrial or near-industrial slaughter, engaged as he is with his newfound elven...kin?...

 **banana (GM):** during level 1 i'm giving them out once per session As Recommended, so you have three. i think this will turn out to be too fast, and so we'll likely slow down after that. but for now, three

 **Vraknaar:** "Not great. It's like deer, but even stringier, supposedly."

 **Kon:** Kon is less approving, sniffing the air once or twice before chuffing and shaking his snout.

 **banana (GM):** second, relationship rolls. the only one left from last batch is an elf queen advantage, which is in the process of resolving itself; let's have a new set all round. things, again, begin

 **Travis Meacham:** rolling 2d6 conqueror positive


( **1** + **3** )

= **4**

 **Kon:** rolling 2d6 ELF QUEEN, CONFLICTED

( **6** + **3** )


= **9**

 **Travis Meacham:** rolling 1d6 archmage conflicted

( **6** )


= **6**

THATS MY FIRST 5 OR 6

 **Kon:** rolling 1d6 ORC LORD, CONFLICTED


( **2** )

= **2**

 **Vraknaar:** rolling 2d6 the five positive


( **6** + **1** )

= **7**

 **Xarvrax:** rolling 3d6 The Five, Positive


( **3** + **4** + **1** )


= 8

 **Vraknaar:** rolling 1d6 conqueror conflicted

( 1 )

= 1


 **banana (GM):** the queen, the archmage, the five - all on the side of Pro You


 **Vraknaar:** rolling 1d6 wizard king negative


( 3 )


= 3


i don't think i've failed to get a dragon advantage in any session


 **banana (GM):** well there are a ludicrous amount of dragon dice in the party  
nobody take any more of those please >\_<


 **Placidus:** Placidus is sketching in his notebook as he walks. Between the whorls and delicate curves are a smattering of equations. At the bottom of the set he's just finished scribbling is the shape of a mountain, neatly boxed.


 **Vraknaar:** i'm gonna. you can't stop me


 **Placidus:** I'm going to channel.... the Dwarf King

 **banana (GM):** dwarf king conflicted!


 **Crion:** Ghol's Elf Queen devotion, coming through strong


 **banana (GM):** it is. either he's very conscious of his quest.. or it's conscious of him

 **Placidus:** Or maybe it's a complete coincidence.

 **banana (GM):** Whatever else San Meat may be, it is full. There are carts and stables all along the outer city wall, most empty, some still being unloaded of passengers and supplies. At the gate, elven guards in alabaster armour (??) stand haughtily glowing, two teams of six inspecting arrivals and giving them pamphlets and coupons as they enter the town.

**Adanneloc:** "This is as crowded as the town ever gets. Games year it's like a real city, but uglier."

 **Travis Meacham:** Wheres trhge channel at, obam,a

 **Xarvrax:** Oh god, not more guards.

 **banana (GM):** channel?

 **Travis Meacham:** placidus's roll

**Vraknaar:** he doesn't have to roll



**banana (GM):** he's the occultist.



**Vraknaar:** he just automatically gets An Five



**Travis Meacham:** oh he jsut gets an auto 5?  
teh.



**banana (GM):** There are banners waving just inside, at huge.. camps? There aren't permanent buildings just inside the walls, but there are impromptu 'villages' of visitors and, presumably, competitors. Colourful imagery and team names are everywhere, and the actual citizens are kind of thin on the ground.



**Vraknaar:** It probably sucks to live here right now.



**banana (GM):** It doesn't look like you're going to face any particular difficulties entering, though. Want to accept a cluster of brochures from a white elf?



**Xarvrax:** Uh... no.



**Placidus:** What's the elf talking about as we pass?



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol will take one; he's currently in an elf Phase.

**Guard:** "Come on, friend tourist! The finest chefs in the city, all in one place at the opening ceremony. There are merch deals in this book you'd be crazy to turn down."



**Travis Meacham:** Travis definitely takes a brochure.



**Xarvrax:** "I'm already crazy, so your book means nothing to me."



**Vraknaar:** "Truer words have never been spoken."



**Travis Meacham:** You never know when you might want a deal.



**Placidus:** Placidus doesn't take a brochure, confident he'll just be able to look at someone else's if he needs to. Without a pack to carry things in, the last thing he wants is another book in his pockets.



**Vraknaar:** "I'm assuming that my perhaps prophesied doom will come trying to pry you out of the jaws of a larger dragon who just couldn't take your shit anymore."



**Xarvrax:** "Most likely."

"That, or I'll end up killing you for making that joke one too many times."



**banana (GM):** The Meat Khetherans are all smiles and relief re-entering their city; travelling with you guys on the road is \*interesting\* but not very predictable. There's a wide boulevard running from the northwest gate between many white buildings and black tents, spitting side streets as it goes, terminating eventually at a kind of white-stone-sheathed ziggurat in the centre of town. Although pyramidal, it has only a few tiers and they're all very wide, forming roped-off areas with little buildings in which are set.. something, it's too far away to see.

**Arielbeth:** "What hotel do you have booked? We'll show you the way!"



**Placidus:** Oh dear.



**Vraknaar:** "Hotel? What's that?"



**Xarvrax:** "Which one has easily overpowered guests?"



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol will, of course, be pointing at random buildings and asking Arielbeth or, increasingly infrequently, Addaneloc, what they are.

On the subject of hotels: "Yeah...about that..."



**banana (GM):** San Meat's actual permanent structures are mostly tall and thin, elfhomes and commercial buildings made to look kind of tree-like (but utterly inorganic). The streets are lined with hot-dog carts and people selling t-shirts for "the Thaumaturgustators" and "Gnome Team".



**Placidus:** Well, it's fine. It's not like there's some massive event that's attracted people from all over the world which would leave all of the hotels and inns in the city booked solid.

**Elves:** "That's the hall of elders.. Siddie's.. the vomitorium.."



**Riidi WW:** are we back

i think we're back

**Addy:** Adanneloc laughs curtly. "You're that unworldly? 'Hotel' is just the elven world for 'inn'.. but you don't have a reservation, do you."



**VoxPVoxD:** back, baby got



**banana (GM):** All around now are crowds and voices and the smell of braised beef. You've only been walking a short way, so you don't \*need\* an inn any time soon.. but it's not like the Games are today, so..

If someone wants to get an Icon involved immediately, this would be a good time to cash in one of those 5/6es - but feel free to find other paths.



**Travis Meacham:** 6 cashed.

**Arielbeth:** "Well.. why not keep walking with us until we get home? Maybe you'll find something on the way."

**Adanneloc:** Her brother shakes his head, but not rudely.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol nods eagerly at Arry's suggestion, hoping it looks thoughtful and measured.



**Travis Meacham:** "At any rate, it will let us take in more of the city." Travis is breathing kinda shallowly here. He'll get used to the smell soon, he hopes.

**Arielbeth:** "Our premises are to the left - down Rib Street. It's not that far." Indeed, the street doesn't \*go\* that far- it leads within this quarter of the city to an area of densely packed whitecrystal buildings with little courtyards and fountains.



**Ghol, Going East:** As much as Ghol would like to stay with the elves -- well, one of them, anyway -- that's probably not an option, and is definitely an imposition.



**banana (GM):** There's some sort of crier behind you as you turn from the main boulevard - "Way! Make way for the gate guards!" Five of the armoured elves are practically dragging a pair of infuriated humans down the street, hella yelling.



**Ghol, Going East:** ?!



**Placidus:** What in the world-





**Kon:** Kon neatly sweeps Ghol to one side as he moves that way himself.



**Travis Meacham:** What's allt his then, Travis does NOT say because that's extremely triggering to him.



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax turns to watch, used to seeing people dragged through the streets in Drakkenhall.



**banana (GM):** During Xarvrax's youth\*, it was an unfortunately common sight. The conquest of Ostgard was not without its brutalities. Here, the force is pretty out of place! The celebratory atmosphere palls a little.

I guess you're turning to rubberneck with a couple of dozen other people, then, so you see:

**Tweed-jacketed human:** "Our equipment is absolutely \*essential\*, and property of ONN. Expensive property. We won't stand for this."

**Human with a cap:** : "We're invited guests of your priesthood! May Alabastien herself strike you down for this violation of property rights!"



**banana (GM):** At that, one of the tall guards backhands him and he goes silent.

**Arielbeth:** "We should probably move on."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol's eyes narrow. His time spent at the tip of the orcish spear has somewhat diminished his tolerance for that set of humans that is incessantly going on about property rights.



**Travis Meacham:** "Whoa."



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax glances around, surprised to see the lack of cheers, "Wait, is this not part of the festivities?"



**Vraknaar:** "Not traditionally, I think."



**banana (GM):** People are mostly watching and gossiping. It's clearly not expected. You can hear a couple of women in the crowd: "Aren't those the reporters?" "Captain said they were NECROMANCERS." This last word is loud enough that a lot of people hear it and start muttering unpleasant things.



**Travis Meacham:** How do you tell if someone's a necromancer, other than catching thme in the act?



**Placidus:** Sucks in a breath through the teeth.



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax shakes his head, "Drakkenhall festivals have clearly mislead me."

**Tweed guy:** "We ARE NOT NECROMANCERS. Our broadcasting equipment is perfectly ordinary magic - have you people been savages long enough now that you think any kind of magic is evil?" The crowd does not like this.



**Kon:** Kon is glaring now, too.



**Placidus:** Is the equipment visible?



**Travis Meacham:** "Well now, maybe they have a point."



**banana (GM):** It gets a guard to answer, though. "And we'll just have your things vetted, sir, and then we'll see. Just this way- please stop resisting. Fucking, stop twisting like that, we just need to get to the guardhouse, gods, he BIT me"

**Travis Meacham:** "Shouldn't bite a guard, though. Very unwise."



"You know ... I bet wherever they're staying has a vacancy."



**banana (GM):** As far as Travis is aware you \*can't\* tell whether someone just, knows necromancy.. well. Maybe if you read their mind.



**Xarvrax:** "Do you really want to stay in a room used by a biter?"

**Adanneloc:** Adanneloc, who's made no move to leave: "Ha. Meacham would be right."



**Vraknaar:** "You're a biter."



**Xarvrax:** "I'm also a dragon, it's normal when we bite things."



**Vraknaar:** "Only because you bite anyone who says it's weird."



**Placidus:** "I don't think the bedposts are going to be chewed on. I'd really like to know where we'll be sleeping tonight. We should check at any rate."

**Arielbeth:** "It's not like they can just follow the guards and ask 'hey, where did these necromancers live before you arrested them?'"



**Xarvrax:** "Good idea, let's do that."



**Travis Meacham:** Maybe we can't just follow the guards, but Travis ain't shy of asking around in the marketplace. "Hey, where were those guys staying, did anyone see?"

**Crowd member:** "They pulled them out of the Gut And Bowel just across the street. Terrible business."



**Placidus:** Placidus glances up at the elves. "All of the establishments here have names like that, right?"



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax snorts, "No, sorry, I'll be sleeping on the ground before I stay in somewhere with that silly of a name."



**Vraknaar:** "Seems like this town would be pretty dark most of the year, with names like that."

**Arielbeth:** "Not \*our\* shop. We're 'van Sammen Spices and Sundry'."



**Placidus:** "Oh, that's quite nice."



**Ghol, Going East:** "Neat!"



**Vraknaar:** "That's not too bad."



**Xarvrax:** "That doesn't sound horrible, congratulations."

**Adanneloc:** "It'd be nice if it mentioned the animal husbandry which is about a fifth of what we bring in, though."

**Arielbeth:** "No. That would be not-nice."



**Vraknaar:** "van Sammen Spices, Sundry, and Swine?"



**Travis Meacham:** Well Xarvrax might be sleepin' on the ground but Travis is going to walk on in to see if he can grab that room. AND, maybe they left their stuff behind and he can just kind of, take it.



**banana (GM):** The guards are disappearing down the street, oddly dressed men in tow. They look healthy and well off, but both are kind of thin and short, like.. dwarf humans or something.

	<b>Placidus:</b> That's the true adventurer spirit, right there.
	<b>banana (GM):</b> Travis makes his way into the Gut & Bowel before anybody else has the same idea- and finds a very odd atmosphere.
	<b>Ghol, Going East:</b> Ghol will let the rest do...whatever, he's gonna hang out with Arry until he is required elsewhere.
	<b>banana (GM):</b> There's a reception area, completely empty, with what looks like water spilled all over the counter and rug; one archway leads to stairs, and another to a common room and kitchen, beyond which an argument is audibly taking place.
	<b>Xarvrax:</b> Xarvrax follows the wizard, muttering, "I swear, I'll burn this place down if they make stupid jokes."
	<b>Travis Meacham:</b> "Hello? Anyone here?" Before there's really time for a response, Travis is strolling through the archway toward the kitchen.
	<b>Placidus:</b> Gut and Bowel is the last place anyone wants to feel a burning sensation.
	<b>Travis Meacham:</b> Well, second-to-last.
	<b>Kon:</b> Kon, meanwhile, will mark the location of Sammen Spices and Sundry in his head, then follow Travis to the hotel, mentally mapping the city as he goes.
	<b>banana (GM):</b> Adanneloc's eyebrows go up and just keep on going - far beyond what any lesser race could achieve with forehead alone - when Ghol stays with them down Rib Street. Arielbeth: "It's going to be good to slot away these discs. I can feel wear and tear on two stacks.. how freaking old was the ritual?"
	<b>Kon:</b> And consciously affecting enough of a large, dangerous animal swagger to ensure most strangers keep themselves that way.
	<b>Placidus:</b> Placidus gets closer to the spill, unconsciously counting stools, etc. as he goes. Is it, in fact, water?
	<b>Ghol, Going East:</b> Ghol notes Adanneloc's brow-climb, and dismisses it. If he's got something to say, he'll say it, right?
	<b>banana (GM):</b> At a bar between the kitchen and restaurant, two more white elves are arguing with an immensely muscled robed man. He's sort of penned them into their own service area and is refusing to move.
	<b>Vraknaar:</b> Vraknaar is more interested in the argument. Can we catch some of it without revealing ourselves?
	<b>Bar elf:</b> "...supposed to leave it for the gate guards. You can't just cantrip in here, I don't care *who* you work for."
	<b>Robed man:</b> "Same. I don't care who you work for either."
	<b>banana (GM):</b> Placidus finds water, yes. A big vase has been upset behind the reception desk, spilling long-stemmed flowers all over the ledger and floor. There's also a noticeboard back there with hooks for keys- every single one of which is missing. Something has been going the heck on here. If Travis or Vraknaar or anyone hang out outside the common room much longer, they'll be spotted.





**Travis Meacham:** wel lheck, i want a room - their room - and i'm gonna need to be spotted for that to happen



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax puts a hand on the man's shoulder, making sure to dig his claws in a little, "And I don't care who either of you work for, so why don't you leave the elves alone before I have to hurt you?"



**Travis Meacham:** "Hello? I was looking for a room?"



**Vraknaar:** ah yes

**Bar elf:** "And how long are you taking over our sacred B&B?"



**Placidus:** Placidus finds himself righting the vase and replacing the flowers. He's not the kind of person to impugn someone else's neatness, but he also can't abide untidiness. There's a place for everything.

**Robed man:** "Until we're done." At which point Xarvrax interrupts.



**Vraknaar:** "As subtle as ever, brother," Vraknaar mutters under his breath.



**banana (GM):** "Remove that paw, dragon. I will melt it off if necessary."  
Adanneloc, eventually: "Mother will replace the traveldiscs when we really need to. No sense wasting money."



**Xarvrax:** "Really?" Xarvrax asks, raising an eyebrow, "You're going to threaten heat to a dragon?"

**Arielbeth:** : "You're right, and they \*did\* last long enough.. here we are!" They and Ghol have arrived at a storefront, past which is a little wrought-crystal-walled garden. Arielbeth unlocks the latter with a key, and heads to an inner door. "Want to meet some of the clan?"



**Ghol, Going East:** They have parents! ...of course they have parents, Ghol, what's wrong with you. They're proper elves, not...you know. You.



**Travis Meacham:** "Xarvrax, there's no need to escalate this confrontation. We're just here because a room looked available, but we couldn't help but notice that there are no room keys left."



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax turns his head toward the wizard, "Look, I don't know about you, but I've had enough of robed thugs over the last few days."



**Vraknaar:** "Also, we couldn't help but notice that you're being physically intimidating to someone else and my brother thought he'd get in on the party."



**banana (GM):** The robed guy turns around. Beneath the robe he's shirtless, with a chestful of hair that blends uneasily into the long beard which covers it. His hood is emblazoned with little stars and runes. "I'm sure you can conduct your business with the Shitty Bowel in a minute, travellers- wait."



**Travis Meacham:** Now that is the damnt ruth, thinks Travis about what Vraknaar said.



**banana (GM):** Wait. Travis, roll an int check.



**Travis Meacham:** rolling 1d20+11

(17)+11

= 28



**banana (GM):** Does wizarding background apply? Yes.



**Placidus:** Damn.



**Travis Meacham:** no wait that might have been a cheat, i think it's +10



**banana (GM):** Holy shit, it's Capel the Bold.



**Crion:** Not if you took the skill check +1 incremental advance



**Vraknaar:** if you have +5 int and +5 background, +11 is right



**Xarvrax:** Well, he made a joke, I have to burn it down now, or else I'm a liar.



**Vraknaar:** (because you add your level)



**Travis Meacham:** ive got +4 int, so it's +10, but i think a 27 is still good renough to recognize capel the bold



**banana (GM):** Capel: "\*Meacham"? This is the last place I'd expect to run into you. Do you know they don't even have indoor toilets?"



**Travis Meacham:** "Capel? Wow .... and no, I did not know that, but we don't have reservations anywhere, and I saw those two getting dragged off, so ..."



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax sighs, removing his claws from the man's shoulder, "I never get to beat up who I want anymore, should've stayed in Drakkenhall."



**banana (GM):** Capel the Bold was not in your wizarding class or anything like that, because he's like ten years older than Travis. He's also a prominent journeyman of the Archmage, and an instructor to the Army. As well as being strong and good at explosions, the other wizard is known for his tactical memory- such as remembering the face of some young arcane scion from the capital.



**Placidus:** Placidus looks up when someone else says Travis's name. Is it... good if someone recognizes Travis? It seems like it might be bad.  
Given the alleged crimes.



**Kon:** Kon is poking around, meanwhile. He's already righted the vase, for instance, and is deciding whether or not to do anything with the assorted flowers.



**Xarvrax:** Everyone's got a few skeletons in their closet, some are just more literal than others.



**Travis Meacham:** this is an unjust slur, gnome, and if i could read minds i would not stand for it.



**banana (GM):** The other elf at the bar tries to kind of edge past but the human's just.. too big. "More of you? Lard it."



**Kon:** He is also keeping a healthy eye on this wizarding sort.



**Placidus:** Placidus appreciates Kon's help with the flowers. That bar's quite high up.

**Capel:** "Quick thinking. There's about ten thousand tourists outside, but help us out here and I'll leave you the keys to the whole place if you like."

**Owner:** "You can't-"



**Travis Meacham:** "What do you need?" Travis is ignoring the owner because it seems to be the thing to do.



**banana (GM):** rolling d20+12

(13)+12

= 25

Capel steps out of the bar area, gesturing idly. A cage of shimmering force encloses it, cutting off the elvish owners' escape just before they can rush out. "Obviously I can." To Travis: "The local authorities have some suspect persons here. Suspect..... of dark magic. So we need to check it out before they confiscate the stuff and destroy anything interesting. Do you remember whatsname's lessons in Arcane Scrutiny?" Frowning a little. What WAS Travis' master- actually, they never met..



**Travis Meacham:** Oh hellos to the yes, checking out their stuff was exactly what Travis had in mind.



**banana (GM):** Since Ghol doesn't respond in the negative, the Meat Khetherans go ahead of him into the inner compound - a large shaded area with thin trees and sweetened air (somehow).



**Travis Meacham:** "I remember the lessons, yes. My companion here - " he gestures to Placidus "occasionally has some pertinent insights of his own. Which room were they in?"



**Vraknaar:** Vraknaar's just standing quietly with arms crossed. He doesn't much like this guy, but the Wizard seems to have what they need for the moment.



**Kon:** Kon perks straight up at this, staring directly at the wizards, unblinking and unmoving.



**Placidus:** Placidus smiles vaguely at the hairy wizard.



**banana (GM):** In the yard are many doors into other parts of the complex (this must be a big family!) and another elf sitting on a bench, reading a long sheet of paper. This one's more like Ghol's height and build - a man with a youthful face and a labourer's arms. He rises, smiles, makes polite gestures of inquiry.



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax mumbles some unkind words about wizards and nosiness.



**banana (GM):** The barkeeper mouths AGREED, but no sound penetrates.

Keeping her head a little better, the other bar elf holds up four fingers on one hand and two on the other - seven silvers, the fee for a room, maybe?

She's definitely waving them \*at\* Xarvrax and Vraknaar.



**Travis Meacham:** four plus two is ..... ???



**Placidus:** But... four and two make six!



**banana (GM):** er

four and three



**Ghol, Going East:** "Hi! ...I mean. Ahem. Hello." Feels kinda self-conscious now. To Arry: "Is there any place I can put my weapons down...?" Feels weird just. Walking around someone's house, strapped up for battle.



**Placidus:** Check the sword-rack, right over by the umbrella stand.



**banana (GM):** Capel the Bold strides across the foyer and up the stairs. "Number four. Just the one bed, heh. I've only got a couple of idiot apprentices here so we're not sure yet if-" his voice disappears upward.



**Placidus:** If Travis is following Capel, then Placidus is too.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol, of course, put on his white peasant's shirt before coming into town, which he washed last night in camp -- making it look a bit out of place with his worn leathers, but whatever. He's confident this is respectable-looking, and not at all silly.



**Travis Meacham:** Travis is



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax follows the nosy wizard up the stairs, making sure to keep an eye out for any paltry wizard tricks.



**Travis Meacham:** somebody should give them money  
i guess vraknaar is the reasonable one



**Vraknaar:** Vraknaar looks conflicted. Maybe that forcecage will come down if the wizard moves away?



**Xarvrax:** "reasonable"

**Arielbeth:** The courtyard of the van Sammen compound is still kind of outdoors, but the indoor areas you can see definitely look nicely furnished. She points at another white stone bench. "We wouldn't want to have that many people sitting idly about anyway. Ghol, this is my nephew Azazul."



**Kon:** Kon eyes the wizards. Is there actually room for him to follow them upstairs?



**Travis Meacham:** AZAZEL IS A NAME OF ILL REPUTE

**Arielbeth:** "Azzy, Ghol is a traveller met on the road in.. energetic company. But he's the one from your dream."

**Adanneloc:** "Fuck that, I'm going to see to the cats."

**Azazul:** "Oh. Oh..."



**Ghol, Going East:** "Hi, I'm Ghol, Going East. It's nice to -- wait, what?"



**Placidus:** Suuuper glad to have dodged the cats.



**Vraknaar:** Vraknaar isn't going to follow the others upstairs, but he's going to listen hard for sounds of trouble. He's waiting to see if anything happens with this trap the elves are in, though.



**Ghol, Going East:** Adanneloc didn't seem like a bad guy, but Ghol's glad he's fucked off.



**banana (GM):** Kon.. could probably squeeze up the stairs. Might leave some hairs behind. The Gut & Bowel's owners have just noticed him and are kind of, clutching each other in terror? But you still can't hear what they're saying back there behind the force wall.

**Arielbeth:** "You can leave your stuff on that bench." If it wasn't clear already. "Let's head inside so I can start unpacking - we have blue spice from Newport, the Snakesrule sardines, enough salt and oregano to last for the Games.."





**Kon:** Kon chuffs and shakes his head. He has no real desire to go knocking about their place knocking over end-tables here and pictures from walls there. Instead he dedicates himself to very carefully tidying up the main room as best he can from earlier, nosing chairs back into position and carefully

replacing flowers into vases.


**Azazul:** "You're not going to follow up on that little revelation, Aunt? Well- nice to meet you."


 **banana (GM):** (to Ghol)


 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol unhooks his weapon belts and sling-pack and drops them on the bench. Could probably do with upgrading at least the axe while he's in town...


 **banana (GM):** Travis and friends(?) crowd into a moderately sized room which already has two other wizards. They're both white elves, \*very\* young - not even adult, to the point where you can't tell if they're men or women. Between them they're looking totally baffled at a collection of abstruse artefacts laid out on a large featherbed.

**Capel:** "The ONN guys got run off. We've got maybe twenty minutes before the inquisition is here. Find anything? I know you didn't, ha ha, keep trying!"

 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax stands in the doorway, looking cautiously up and down the hall.

 **banana (GM):** Xarvrax sees: another five rooms! Only one door is closed, and the others are all empty. Did the wizards turf everyone out of the inn for their investigation?  
Could Vraknaar please make a wisdom check? The elves are trying to signal him with charades.


 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax inspects the closed door, checking it for any tampering, and the number.


 **Vraknaar:** hm. i don't think either of my dragon backgrounds would help with charades


rolling 1d20+5 wisdom


() +5


= **22**

 **banana (GM):** That's number 1, and it's locked- someone is breathing inside, too.


 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax turns back to the nosy wizards, "Did any of you actually look in the rest of the rooms?"


 **Placidus:** Placidus stands on tiptoe to peer at the artifacts. The first thing he does, naturally, is count them.

 **banana (GM):** The weirdest and largest of the devices laid out on the bed are a pair of metal tubes, almost as wide as Travis' sphere; one end of each is sealed with what looks like a sculpted miniature bird hutch, and the other is stuffed with large quantities of multicoloured cloth stuff that flows through your hands like water.

 **Travis Meacham:** ... weird

**Capel:** "Well..... no. I'll check now."

 **banana (GM):** He backs out into the corridor, leaving considerably more room, and joins Xarvrax at the far end, peering intently at the keyhole.

 **Kon:** Meanwhile, Kon will nose around the main floor in the course of his helpfulness, just in case there are any interesting smells...





**banana (GM):** So Vraknaar (and Kon!) get the gist pretty easily here. The two inn-owning elves would very much like to be freed from the walls of shimmering brown light that have caged them behind the bar with nothing but alcohol and an empty rotating meat-skewer thing.

That is what they're signalling, in effect: help.



**Vraknaar:** Vraknaar would love to, but he's emphatically not a wizard. He's tapping on the wall of force with his talons, but presumably that has little effect.



**banana (GM):** It does vibrate, kind of like a silent bell...



**Kon:** Is there anything Kon can do to effect a rescue short of going upstairs and Conversing in Harsh Growly Tones with that wizard?



**banana (GM):** Perhaps if he acted in concert with Vraknaar to just, exert extreme force, whether pulling at the thing or smashing it or something.



**Travis Meacham:** Travis begins using some of his 'interact' verbs on the weird tubes. He speaks into them, looks carefully at them, blows on them, taps them, et cetera.



**Vraknaar:** Vraknaar upgrades from a tap to a strike, hoping that he doesn't damage his scales or the elves, then.



**Kon:** He'll bark upstairs, trying to get the bard's attention.



**Vraknaar:** a) vraknaar definitely isn't actually a bard!! and b) he's already downstairs with kon



**banana (GM):** As well as the fat cylinders, there are a few more mundane magic items laid out- a signet ring of a standard make that's proof against poison and warns of danger; a couple of oddly spiked collars with some sort of protective function as well. Or maybe just fashionable.



**Kon:** Warg yawn. Whatever. Even better.

**An Apprentice Wizard:** "Sirs, could this be a Ring of Meat Purity?"



**banana (GM):** Capel, to Xarvrax: "Please open the door violently on three... two.. one.." He squints at the lock, and it goes Click.



**Kon:** Kon paces around the...cage, seeing if there's any point he can get his jaws around. Strong muscles, warg jaws.



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax kicks the door in, making sure to get it as hard as he can to try and splinter it.



**Travis Meacham:** noice

"It might be. It looks like a pretty standard purifying ring, and a meat-focus wouldn't be out of place in this city."



**Placidus:** Placidus reaches out to touch one of the strange rods, run his fingers through the cloth-substance, etc. It vibrates slightly in his hands. "Hmmm...."



**banana (GM):** Arielbeth's leading 'Azzy' and Ghol into a sitting room filled with rugs and old wood furniture. There's a goblet of water with a lemon slice in it on the table - must be other people around the compound - but she's more preoccupied with setting down her towering floating bag stack things in a little alcove.



**Ghol, Going East:** Cool. Cool cool cool.



**Travis Meacham:** These elf nicknames are getting out of hand.

**Azazul:** Azazul watches Ghol, curiously. "I've not met many orcs, but you seem different."



**Travis Meacham:** Next thing it's gonna be Travvy and Gholly and Plassy and Xavvy.



**Ghol, Going East:** "Yeah. Um. How to put this...I dream of Her too."  
How best to put it is, as always: simply, and straight-forward.



**banana (GM):** Placidus and Travis can make straightforwardish identification (int) rolls at this point. From quite different paradigms, so we'll see how it goes..




**Xarvrax:** I will make a sword out of fire, just so I can stab and burn anyone who says that at the same time.



**banana (GM):** Vraknaar, meanwhile, will want to be rolling strength.



**Travis Meacham:** rolling 1d20+10 i am applying my wizarding bonus, so take off 5 if no

() + 10

= **13**

THAT WAS A BAD ROLL



**Xarvrax:** Wow, you are terrible at artifacts.



**Placidus:** rolling d20+6 I'm not going to add Natural Science, if it's applicable add five to this roll

() + 6

= **20**



**Vraknaar:** Crap. Vraknaar is not actually very strong. Thankfully, his dragon blood does grant him some of the strength of his forebears.

rolling 1d20+5 str, adding Dragon Forged

() + 5

= **22**



**banana (GM):** Xarvrax doesn't need to roll anything to impressively kick a door open! It's unlocked itself. Beyond - a slightly larger bedroom with a man inside, middle aged, dressed like a clerk. He's cowering convincingly. "Aah!"



**Kon:** Does he get a bonus from Kon at all....?  
Perhaps he doesn't need it.



**banana (GM):** Capel "Aah! Are you with the reporters from Omen? Tell us immediately."

He would have, but as it turns out: hard-edged scale arms and martial training mean the force shield shatters silently. Long brown-light splinters go everywhere, some of them grazing flesh- it's surreal, like

a bomb made of glass but utterly quiet.



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax just stands there, keeping a hand wreathed in fire, just in case.



**Vraknaar:** "Shit. Are you okay?" Vraknaar looks over the elves, hoping he didn't just spray them all with force-glass.

**Azazul:** Nodding: "It wouldn't make sense for Her to send you otherwise. Still, I'm surprised! I expected.." He looks at the pauldron on your shoulder. "One of us."



**Kon:** Kon sniffs the newly-freed elves from a polite distance, making sure they aren't injured or otherwise altered.



**banana (GM):** The white elves in the bar scramble for cover- thankfully the force wall mostly blew \*outward\*. One of them stands up and stamps viciously on a broken shard (failing to damage it any further). "This is intolerable. Thanks, stranger, but still! Still!!"



**Vraknaar:** Vraknaar shrugs. "Sorry. Why are they holding you and your... inn? Hostage here?"



**Ghol, Going East:** ...? Aw, crap. The pauldron. Is it impolite to wear a pauldron indoors here...? Well, he doesn't really care. He's not taking off a sign of his devotion. "You mean a pure elf? Or a worshipper of Khethera?"

**Azazul:** "Yes, a peacefulist."

**Arielbeth:** Arielbeth returns. "I'm totally unsurprised. Why would what you have be useful to one of our own people? \*She\* needs someone else in times like this. Someone with a huge wolf friend, daaaamn. You should have seen him."



**Placidus:** Placidus studies the rods some more. He's scrambled up onto the bed now, his weight not even disturbing it enough to jostle its contents. "Hmm....." Placidus doesn't normally 'hmm' to himself as he thinks, but he's hoping it'll drown out the sound the vibrating rods are making.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol brightens. "Kon is indeed a big dude."

**Bar elf:** "I have no idea. None!!" He begins collecting tipped chairs and glasses. "The guard came in here at the crack of dawn, dragging my guests outside- and these \*wizards\* slip in the moment they're gone. I prayed for countermagic but instead of using any spells he just... stood there."

**Other elf:** "So."



**Kon:** Kon returns to helping with the furniture.

**She:** watches the cleanup for a moment. "We DO have free rooms."



**banana (GM):** Interesting, interesting. This is something Placidus has never seen before, which is itself a clue.

They're magical pieces of equipment, alright- what they do, he has no idea. (Travis can tell they probably suck in or capture something, but that's about it). The mechanism of operation, however..



**Zarick:** "Maybe they were after some of your guests? Who knows what wizards think? We saw them drag two of them off down the street."



**banana (GM):** The tubes make heavy use of repetition over distance. They're carefully attuned, presumably by magic, to some inner being - a \*spirit\* within, perhaps? Which it, itself, cyclically in transit - between here and some far-off place. No, it's more than one - there are ghosts in the machine, quiescent, waiting to carry messages to a distant location.

	<b>Placidus:</b> "Oh. I see what's going on here."
	<b>Travis Meacham:</b> "Is it necromancy?"
	<b>Placidus:</b> "These are broadcasting devices." "That.... depends on what the definition of necromancy is." "If pressed, I would probably say 'yes'."
	<b>banana (GM):</b> Yeah, Placidus can guess there's a <i>*reason*</i> he's never seen spirits bound into arcane equipment before. There's like one branch of magic which is known to do that.
<b>Capel:</b> Capel the Bold strokes his beard and then springs ferociously inside to interrogate the guest. Xarvrax can help if he likes (Charisma roll) but it'd be solely for the sake of impressing or pleasing the wizard - this guy's just some tourist and does not know anything about the former guests.	
	<b>Xarvrax:</b> <div>rolling d20 + 10</div> <div>(15)+10</div> <div>= 25</div>
	<b>Placidus:</b> "It appears to be a vessel for long-range transmission. It uses ghosts as a sort of signal medium."
<b>Apprentice:</b> "Wow, that's cool."	
	<b>Travis Meacham:</b> "That IS cool. The authorities would definitely want us to hand it over."
<b>Apprentice:</b> "Yeah, but they don't have any wizards. Their inquisitors might not be able to tell.."	
	<b>Placidus:</b> "Inquisitors would soon as not see these destroyed, since strictly speaking they <i>*are*</i> suborning and damning the spirits of the dead to eternal, mechanistic slavery."
	<b>Travis Meacham:</b> "A lot of it depends on how you look at it." A truism you might say about anything whatsoever.
	<b>Kon:</b> It's a good thing Kon is downstairs, being mature and helpful, instead of upstairs, playing with toys. He would likely agree with the inquisitors here.
	<b>Placidus:</b> "I don't think they're dangerous. They're obviously not for spying, they're enormous. Probably these came from Omen to send back news of the Games?"
	<b>banana (GM):</b> Between Capel and Xarvrax, the clerk - Thonus of Titanfall - is intimidated into a pile of jelly. He tells you everything he knows about the reporters (They're from Omen) and the local crime scene (password for the illegal gambling clubs is 'A kiss in the shadows') and gives you a hundred silver pieces to make you go away. It's not really.. on point.. but it's fun.
	<b>Placidus:</b> "But they are necromantic, which is not the same as saying the people carrying them are necromancers, any more than whoever wears that ring there is an enchanter."
<b>Xarvrax:</b> Xarvrax turns to the wizard, "Well, that was useless. Fun, profitable, sure. Ultimately useless	



though."



**banana (GM):** Capel returns in time to catch Placidus' last statement. "Aha."  
(previously, to Xarvrax: "Completely!")



**Placidus:** "Perhaps the Wizard King's dominion is just filled with objects like this. People use necromancy as a device of convenience, without stopping to consider the implications."

**Capel:** "Right. I'm inclined to return the things to their owners, frankly- if we persecute people just for using what they see as off-the-shelf spellcraft, it bodes pretty crap."



**Xarvrax:** "Or. Counterpoint, we keep the magical things."



**Placidus:** "Mmm. I think the worst you could justify doing is confiscating them. Their presence or function doesn't say anything bad about the people who were carrying them. Certainly they didn't \*make\* them."



**Travis Meacham:** "I don't need a broadcasting device to report to Omen everything I do."

"And I agree, the struggle against necromancy will be won not by persecuting the lowest level end user, but by striking at the heart of the whole rotten system."

**Azazul:** "Cool, but the heirloom is.. it's ours. And it's dangerous. I'm honestly not inclined to follow this particular cryptic command from Queenswood." To Ghol: "No offence!"



**Travis Meacham:** "Rotten" of course being meant literally.



**Placidus:** He looks up at Travis. "It's worth considering, though, that if we win the Games, and these are returned to their owners, Omen will know immediately."

"Of us, I mean. As champion competitive eaters."



**Ghol, Going East:** "Heirloom?" Ghol perks up. "...A crown?"

**Apprentice:** "You're contestants?"

**Capel:** "Shut up."



**Placidus:** "Well, not me personally. I'm the manager."

**Capel:** "Hah. Well, good luck.. but you." This is to Xarvrax. "You haven't confiscated enough for today? Great fun, socially irresponsible, whatever, but think of the publicity."



**Placidus:** Somehow Placidus doubts the prospect of more and more attention would be a deterrent to the blue man-dragon.

**Azazul:** "No. Not a crown."



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax huffs, "Fine, no more 'confiscating' for today."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol frowns a bit. Well, he probably shouldn't have expected it to be THAT easy.

**Arielbeth:** "I'm going to talk to Ghol and find out if we can trust him. You know I'm never wrong. You just have some of the pastries I brought home and then I'll call you when it's time to fulfil your destiny."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol blinks. Well. That's blunt.

**Azazul:** "Aunt. A girl's demands from the other side of the world aren't necessarily our destinies."





**Travis Meacham:** what if she's the absolute stone hottest babe in the world hypothetically.

**Arielbeth:** "You're so young. When I was growing up there was no question about that." She looks almost queasy.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol agrees, this is something you gotta take into consideration.



**Travis Meacham:** well arry probably grew up before the elf king ruined everything and then the elf queen ruined it again

**Azazul:** "The blacks who questioned it are the ones who aren't-" he looks at Ghol again. "This can't be right."

**Calmer elven barkeep, to Vraknaar:** "You did help. Are you here for the duration of the Games? We could give you both free rooms for forty silver the week. 45 with the wolf."



**Zarick:** Vraknaar flips the barkeep a gold coin. "Keep the change, for your trouble."



**Kon:** Kon chuffs. Close enough.

**Capel the Bold:** "Right, good. Nice to meet you all. Nice identifying. I'm a TGS man myself, but best of luck eating - and managing."



**Travis Meacham:** "Thanks. Are you going to take these down to the lockup or should we?"

**Capel the Bold:** To the apprentices "Come, idiots! If we get out of here with the necrotubes now, we can get them over to the guard house and testify they're fine BEFORE the Inquisition shows up."



**Travis Meacham:** Travis nods. "Have a good Games."



**banana (GM):** Here's the even better news: they leave behind the magic ring by mistake.

One of the bar elves goes off to have a nap and a cry. Capel throws the keys at the other on the way out, and you're left more or less alone in the Gut & Bowel. Well positioned on the central route into town! It's not exactly luxurious athletes' quarters, but there are three big beds between your rooms, and a bathing chamber.



**Travis Meacham:** No indoor toilets?



**banana (GM):** No, there are outhouses behind the 'hotel'. There's this whole... trough.. system under the town. Something to do with all their agriculture.



**Travis Meacham:** Gross. The miracle of life, I guess.



**Placidus:** At least it precludes a sewer level.



**banana (GM):** Does Ghol have any input into this argument about destinies and dreams? He might never have actually encountered the idea that an elf could receive one of the Queen's calls and, like, disobey it.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol is still at the stage where he considers it impolite to interrupt elves while they're introducing him to how elves work, as a culture.

He's certainly not going to bust out a "The blacks...?"

Though he will look at Arry questioningly.



**banana (GM):** Then he's treated to another back and forth with the implacably cheerful Arielbeth running roughshod over the younger and dubious Azazul before the latter is called away by a much older man to "work on the big commission". They don't return to the topic of colours.

Arry takes a seat on one of the benches out in the sweet-smelling courtyard, near where Ghol left his arms. "It'd be weird to not keep an eye on them, right?"

**Arielbeth:** "van Sammens can be trusted. But you don't know that."



**Ghol, Going East:** "Yeah." In fairness, given that this is Meat City, he could probably find two suitable replacements for them in most any room in the house.



**Placidus:** Placidus slides off the bed. "Ooomph. Well, this is a nice place, at any rate. We'll need to see about formalizing our entrance to the Games, at some point, and I've got some shopping I'd like to do..."



**banana (GM):** Indeed - it was mentioned that registration closes in two days.



**Travis Meacham:** "We also need to get a grasp of what exactly is involved in the games." What does the brochure say about this, fi anything



**banana (GM):** , yesterday.

Your brochures have a bit of info - and heck, the games are famous. Anyone can make a general knowledge kind of Int roll here, though not many backgrounds would apply.



**Travis Meacham:** rolling 1d20+5

(17)+5

= 22



**Placidus:** rolling d20+5

(2)+5

= 7

General knowledge, pfah!



**Zarick:** Vraknaar assumes it involves eating a shitload of meat.



**Xarvrax:** rolling d20 + 1

(3)+1

= 4



**banana (GM):** A vegetarian from Gnoplace is likely to know less about the Hungry Games than most.



**Xarvrax:** Ah yes, 4.

Xarvrax doesn't really care, he's just along for the ride.

**banana (GM):** Xarvrax's excuse could be that he's like, what was it, six years old? and doesn't actually



know all sorts of things.



**Ghol, Going East:** "I like to think I'm a pretty decent judge of people," says the orc-elf teen. He likes to think a lot of things about himself, and some of them are even true!



**Placidus:** "I'll be honest: I've never cared about the Hungry Games before, and I wouldn't now, either, if the alternative weren't being MASSIVELY indebted to a company of dragons."



**banana (GM):** Travis, however, recalls the basic structure of the Hungry Games - last held when he was a teen, but eagerly reported in the burgeoning metropolis of Axis.



**Zarick:** rolling 1d20+1 as often, vraknaar trusts in blind luck

(  )+1

= **4**

and it fails him!



**Travis Meacham:** "I read all the stories about them last time they were held."



**banana (GM):** There are five major events, staggered across the week so that the heats for each precede the main tournament by one day. (Weeks in the Dragon Empire are six days long, and also in most of the Federation). First, second and third prize for each is a valuable gemstone- and popular acclaim!



**Xarvrax:** "I mean, I would say, 'let's just escape with the money,' but despite all of my posturing, it's really hard to outrun something with wings that big."



**banana (GM):** The team that wins the Games overall is the one which.. gets a lot of prizes overall..? General knowledge is failing you here. Anyway, the five events are as follows:



**Kon:** Kon, in the meantime, has finished helping tidy up and found a cozy place to doze off for the moment -- one ear open, just in case.



- banana (GM):** - the Hundred-Foot Sausage
- Jawsculpting
  - Night Steaks
  - Improv Sandwich singles and doubles
  - Taste Against Time



**Travis Meacham:** jawsculpting sounds horrific



**Xarvrax:** The hell?



**banana (GM):** The brochure calls it "most exhausting of the visual arts".



**Zarick:** a High Steaks Tummy Rumble

**Arielbeth:** "So. We should trust you with our family heirloom, right? The Queen says so, and she is unquestionably the Queen."



**banana (GM):** If you're really in this to win this, as well as registering for the Games, you'll need to train and figure out just who could do these things. The competition.. you haven't actually seen a lot of the

town yet, but there certainly was some.



**Placidus:** "Well, that's all astoundingly vile. I need a bath after reading that." He sniffs. "I need a bath in general, frankly. Hopefully the pumps don't run with meat drippings."



**Ghol, Going East:** "Hrm. I feel like trusting me with it means trusting me to decide whether or not to take it, not, shoving it my hands and sending me on my way." He can almost FEEL the wizard objecting to him not acquiring an odd, possibly magical item at first opportunity. "What IS the family heirloom, if you don't mind my asking?"



**banana (GM):** No, just water and it's well-insulated. In general the interiors here are not all 100% meat-focused, because people do have to live in the city.



**Placidus:** You can never put it past them.

**Arielbeth:** "It's a kind of weapon. The last van Sammen spellwarrior used it before he took up the way of peace, and Khethera has blessed it for a time of desperation. It might be the only weapon in the world that's sacred to the Goddess of Peace."



**Ghol, Going East:** Well, this is sounding more promising.

**Arielbeth:** "But what would you use it for? Why are you going East?"



**Ghol, Going East:** "To meet Her. Eventually."

"I need to know why I exist."

**Arielbeth:** The small white elf is quizzical. "Do you need a reason? Most of us just get on with it. Existing."



**banana (GM):** do the people @ the hotel want to be fast-forwarded to some sortof Scene, or, to work things out themselves



**Placidus:** Placidus: "So, things we ought to do: collect forms to register, clean up, get settled, go shopping. Someone will need to tell Ghol we've found a place to stay, but I bet Kon can find him if nothing else."

I'm fine with a fast-forwarding, whether you do it or we just do it collectively



**Travis Meacham:** "I can round up the forms and if Vraknaar comes with we can probably get a good start on figuring out training and practice shchedules."



**Placidus:** "We're going to need a team name, also."



**Xarvrax:** "You all can figure that out, I'm done doing things."



**banana (GM):** It's pretty obvious what structure was the Alabaster Grill.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol shakes his head. "Most of you aren't the bridge between an army of anarchist fundamentalists and the race that turned them loose on the world. I am an orc, and I am also an elf. I'm the only one -- She's told me so, in her own way. I need to know why." He sighs and glances over at the white elf. "And besides, these are no longer times when one can live by just existing."

"I'll not go back to that host as a scout again."

**Arielbeth:** "Most of my family think peace is returning, but it isn't, is it?"



**Kon:** When they leave, Kon yawns, gets up, and pads off after them.

**Arielbeth:** "Tell me what it was like to serve the Orc Lord."



**Zarick:** "Practice eating? How does that even work?"



**banana (GM):** Have you ever tried eating a hundred-foot sausage?



**Placidus:** "Stomachs are elastic, see. If you eat high volumes over time you'll acclimate yourself to higher volumes in future."



**Travis Meacham:** "Also, I'd imagine that apart from sheer quantity there are going to be issues of flavor or consistency or what have you."

"A hundred-foot sausage is probably different than eating a fifty-foot sausage sandwich."



**Placidus:** Placidus blanches. "Okay, okay, I'm going to leave you to your strategy talk while I wash up."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol shakes his head to the first, then to the second: "They came from the north and the west; one day a vast rumbling in the distance -- the next in our midst. A half-dozen of our oldest, most arrogant braves foolishly fell on their advance party, thinking them easy prey because they were lightly armed and armored and only half their number. The advance party slaughtered them as we watched. That was the first time I laid eyes on the Scouts of the Orcish Host. I remember thinking: now I know exactly who I want to be when I grow up. Those guys." He jabs a finger into the empty air in front of him for emphasis.

"I got my wish. Eight months later I killed my first man. Peasant, turned militia. Trying to defend his village. They were more successful against our advance party -- killed two scouts, strung up an emissary in the town square. Our commander ordered us to wipe the village from the map."

**Arielbeth:** The white elf's glowing pupils dim and contract to points as she listens. The courtyard air ceases its movement, and the trees become very quiet.



**banana (GM):** That afternoon, Kon and the two-legged dudes that hang around him are waiting in line.

The Alabaster Grill serves as high temple of Alabastien Meat, as the town's centre of governance and also as its most popular lunchtime restaurant. There are five paths up the ziggurat, and it's not a long way to the top, but the crowds throng and chant and, well, eat. There are four days to the Opening Barbeque of the Hungry Games.



**Ghol, Going East:** "I was rearguard, with Kon. He and his surprised us; I grabbed what I had at hand -- my handaxe from my belt, and a machete I'd been using to clear brush from the edge of camp. First time with two weapons in live combat. It felt...good. The fighting, that is. The killing not so much. I got him in the neck with the axe and just, watched the life run out of him." Ghol pauses. "Stood there for a moment, then gurgled some sort of, attempt at a war cry, alerting the camp. Charged off into the bushes. Told them I was going off after another one I saw in the trees. Really just ran fifty paces, keeled over, puked and cried."

"Got over it quickly. Had to."



**banana (GM):** There are a just a few groups in line ahead of the indebted adventurers - oddly, including the two men from Omen, with their tubes restored and slung over their necks.



**Placidus:** "Hello!" says Placidus to the men.



**Ghol, Going East:** "I avoided razing duty. Was able to do so the entire time I was in the scouts. If I had to guess, that's part of what put Estella on to me."

A bit bitterly: "What kind of orc doesn't enjoy wholesale slaughter, right?"



**banana (GM):** \*Behind\* you are a group of eight boisterous bearded women, no two dressed alike - they're all wearing mismatched armour, made out of odd metals and bits of barrels and trinkets and



sheets. They occasionally break into chanting - "Wash-It-Down! WASH-IT-DOWN!"



**Kon:** Kon is panting, now, due to Smells. He is NOT slaving, however. He has self-control.

**Arielbeth:** Arielbeth doesn't say anything for a moment. "The kind that's also an elf, instead of the other way around."

She doesn't seem inclined to inquire further into the business of the Movement. "Those of your companions with pasts didn't- talk? Did they remember them?"



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol isn't quite sure what she's asking. Does she want to know if any of the others have spilled the beans on their own backstories...?



**banana (GM):** The ONN reporters aren't actually in line per se. One of them turns to Placidus and points the cloth tube right at him. "We've been hailed by a curious entrant - a man with eyes bigger than his stomach, perhaps? What's your story, for our viewers?"



**Travis Meacham:** she means the other orcs, right?



**banana (GM):** As far as Ghol's aware, those orcs who began life as members of other races a) tended not to know it, and if they did b) tended not to admit it. Anyway, most of them lived in the moment and didn't refer even to the past of their lives AS orcs.

yes



**Placidus:** "Er, hello. I'm Placidus Fixlmillner. I just wanted to say I'm glad we were able to get your broadcasting devices returned to you."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ah. "We didn't talk about stuff like that. Sort of unwritten rule; life before the Movement was a different life. One that's over." Usually.



**banana (GM):** Reporter: "What's this? Remember the scoop from our early report - it seems we're famous about town now, too. Thanks very much, Imperial- you've done the world of sports entertainment a service by standing firm against overzealous priests. We love the priests that run THIS place, of course- mm-m. If you could smell what we can smell.." He's turning away.



**Ghol, Going East:** "Even our nomad-band was...encouraged not to hold too tightly onto our ways and shared histories, but instead learn and adopt those of the Movement. Full orcs and half-orcs alike."

**Arielbeth:** "So it could be that you don't know."



**Zarick:** Vraknaar looks skeptical but says nothing. Broadcasting? The term means nothing to him.



**Travis Meacham:** Travis yells "HUNGRY GAMES! WOOO!!!!"

Some behaviors are universal to all times and places.



**banana (GM):** Dwarf: "Washitdown team gonna win this thing! He's gone already..?"



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol shakes his head. "I've been like this at least since I was two years old. That much the elders told me."



**Placidus:** Oh, wait, crap. "I-I'm also managing a team sponsored by one of the Free Copper Companies!"



**Ghol, Going East:** "They were vague on most everything else."



**banana (GM):** To either side of the line on the stairs at the Grill are seating areas, but only one has people eating. The other, while shaped \*like\* an outdoor bar or standing-room eatery, seems to be

administrative- white-robed elves in the holy symbols of Alabastien Meat are moving unhurriedly about exchanging paperwork and occasionally sending messengers into or receiving them from the city.

**Arielbeth:** "It's not about you. Or maybe it is."

"You're the only elf who's an orc. I believe that, and you're decent even coming from a.. different place. But you aren't the only orc who's an elf, of course."

"That's how scattered and occasional bands became a horde. By Her command. So many at once."



**Zarick:** "Man. I'm growing less confident of our ability to out-eat everyone here as time goes on. These people are serious about this contest."



**Ghol, Going East:** "The point is," the orc-elf presses on, "that I'm not just an elf inconvenienced -- infected -- with orcishness. I am an elf, and I am an orc, and while I really want to learn more about elf society and elf culture and all the cool things you -- we -- are, I'm not going to turn my back on the orcs."



**banana (GM):** The line moves ahead, slightly. Dwarves jostle at Xarvrax and Vraknaar. "Mooooove up, boys."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol listens to that last, then nods slowly. "That makes...sense."

**Arielbeth:** "It's not something we ever, ever talk about with aliens. That means 'non-elves', which you aren't."



**Placidus:** Well, that went poorly. Managing is hard. With the reporters' attention elsewhere, Placidus turns back to the dwarves. "Hello. Are you joining the competition?"



**Ghol, Going East:** "So that means the Orc Lord..."



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax glares down at the dwarves.

**Arielbeth:** "I was hoping you'd know. Not that it's my place in the world to find out."



**Ghol, Going East:** He nods. "I've never met the man myself. Just heard stories."

**Front dwarf, shoving:** "Yeeep! We've got the first got brewing season of Forge under our belts. And above. Our belts. Nobody else.. got a chance!"

**Soberer dwarf:** (But not sober enough to avoid using that word) "Kind of forgot to register, but we've been tarining a month. Tray-ning."



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax turns around to face them, standing firm against the shoving, "We've got two dragons, a warg, and an orc. I wouldn't be so sure of yourselves."

**Arielbeth:** "I'm becoming less and less convinced that this is a good idea, but what other hope do we have?"



**Ghol, Going East:** "'This' meaning the heirloom, or helping me, or me in general...?"

**Arielbeth:** "Orcs on the way here, negotiations failing in the south, massacres in the east. And Khethera is one ballot from deElection."



**banana (GM):** "There are just three meatkheteran families here in San Meat. The church is growing increasingly.. dogmatic. Most of us just want to double down, keep out of trouble. But I see our problems as a microcosm for the world."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol nods. "You may...want to consider going east as well. I know this is your home, but..."

**Dwarf:** "Holy shit! Dragons?"

**Dwarf near the back:** "Where!"



**Zarick:** "They're hiding. Wouldn't want to spoil the surprise."



**banana (GM):** The frontmost dwarf points at Placidus. "And what's HE do?"

**Arielbeth:** "It always will be."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghols just nods again, this time in silence.



**Xarvrax:** "He blows your mind, sometimes it blows in an upward direction."



**Travis Meacham:** "Counts things, most of the time."



**Vraknaar:** "What -doesn't- he do?"

**Arielbeth:** "There's a prophecy going around. From the meatists' church. Maybe it's just a rumour? They say these will be the last Hungry Games- ever. A lot of priests are saying things like that about everything. I don't know if the Queen has a plan, but- She is who She is. We are not."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol shakes his head. "How old is the Queen, even? It's...a lot of responsibility."

**Arielbeth:** "She's just a child, like you." A smile softens the blow. "Only those born to this new world have a hope of saving it, I think."  
"I don't know. I'm just a spice chef."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol nods again. "And I'm just a woods kid with a warg buddy. Weird world."

**Spokesdwarf:** "Hell yes. Gnomes in deed and gnomes in.. nature."



**Placidus:** "I'm sorry?"

**Slurring dwarf:** "Megga. You've got the thing, right?"

**Spokesdwarf:** "I do indeed.. have the thing. From the backwards gnome."



**Placidus:** Placidus's polite smile sort of freezes on his face. What?



**banana (GM):** There's just one cloaked person in front of you now! The registration booth on the second-highest floor of the Alabaster Grill is occupied by two priests and a couple of guards - the guy, who can't possibly be a team on his own, strides forward and asks "Can you direct me please to Ironhenge?"

**Slurring dwarf:** "Very well, Megga. You know.. what to do. With the thing."

**Spokesdwarf:** "That is correct, Vill! I can guess your intention! From your subtle implications."



**banana (GM):** She reaches into a pocket of her chainmail and withdraws.. something. A mess of metal. "There was another gnome in Forge. Guess where we found her?"



**Placidus:** "Somewhere safe and comfortable, I hope?"

**Arielbeth:** "Come back tomorrow. We'll get you the weapon, because it's better than just waiting for the end of the world!"

"Like, a LOT better. Things might even turn out well."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol grins at that.

**The shortest dwarf:** "Very very safe, mister Everything. When we dug the deepest chamber for our King's thhhhrrroone under the mountain! She was there. Counting."



**Vraknaar:** "I'm betting that's not the answer."

**Spokesdwarf:** "But she ran away and dropped this. So take it."



**banana (GM):** At the head of the line: "You cannot direct me, with all this holy power? Very well. I apologise for the waste of time." The guy's leaving.

What's that in the sky..?



**Placidus:** Placidus gulps, and holds out his little hands.



**Ghol, Going East:** Before he goes, though: "Is there any place in San Meat -- a library, maybe -- I could look up some old stuff from elven history?" Elven history about three crowns, maybe. "There's some...dream stuff...I'm not sure about."



**banana (GM):** Is it a bird? A dragon? No, it's- actually yes. It's a copper dragon, three metres long, plummeting from a great height.



**Xarvrax:** Xarvrax glares at it, "What is one of those imbeciles coming here for?"



**banana (GM):** Megga of team Wash-It-Down unceremoniously dumps into Placidus' hands something that's like a fossilized structure, or.. metal, rather than rock, but in pieces? They click apart and move about, always staying partly attached, with no obvious purpose or order.

"Looks like you're up."



**Travis Meacham:** "I think he's going to pay for us."



**Vraknaar:** "Maybe to deliver our entry fee."



**Placidus:** Placidus is still playing with the thing as he turns around. Someone else? In Forge? He doesn't even have the presence of mind to ask more questions of the drunk and rowdy dwarves. It's only rote habit that has him mutter "Thank you..." before turning.

**Arielbeth:** "You could ask at the Grill, but they don't really do worldly concerns. There's an old folklorist who lives on the woods edge of town, Silesas the Grey. I don't know if he'll help you, but I don't know that he won't!"



**banana (GM):** Xarvrax turns out to be definitively wrong this time, and everyone else correct.



**Placidus:** Weird.




**Ghol, Going East:** Old folklorists...! "Silesas the Grey, huh. I'll take my chances with him first. Thanks again, Arry. Tell Adanneloc thanks for me, too."



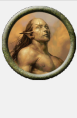
**banana (GM):** The copper wurm thuds to a nearly-elegant landing as the two white elf guards leap up and brandish spears at him. He just puffs smoke in their faces and turns to the registration booth.


**Ghol, Going East:** After saying the polite farewells and getting the proper directions, Ghol will set out

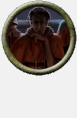



 for...hrm. Where the heck IS everybody?

**Doulz:** "Doulz the Imperturbable returns. The Free Copper Companies will sponsor these dragon..like beings and the rest of their team. Our champions will def-eat all comers, ahahaha."


 **Ghol, Going East:** He remembers something about the Alabaster Grill, so he guesses he'll wander over there?


 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax groans, "And you were the one I didn't want to kill, why must you tempt me?"


 **Placidus:** "You're going to need a name," Placidus mutters as he fiddles with this metal thing. It sort of spins? But it seems to jam on itself from every conceivable angle. That can't be right...


 **banana (GM):** An elderly meat priest shakes his head. "The riff-raff trickle in on the last day as always. To compete is holy and you are all equally blessed, but I'll wish you luck because you'll need it."  
  
This seems to be addressed to the dwarves as much as to you guys.  
  
Speaking of which, Ghol has to kind of shove his way past a bunch of friendly, grabby dwarf women to get up the stairs to you.


**Doulz, imperturbed:** "There will be no need for you to count this coinage." He shakes large heavy sacks onto the white stone, which jangle impressively. "I will roost on the arara eyrie. Meet me soon, champions, for merchandising."


 **Xarvrax:** "What."


 **Travis Meacham:** "We shall find you there."


 **Ghol, Going East:** "Whoa. What's with those...guys? Hey, wait--"


 **banana (GM):** "Synergy, whelp." Doulz nods his long neck and just, takes off again.


 **Kon:** At this point Kon walks up, sniffs him, and nudges him a bit.


 **banana (GM):** There's a dragonspan of space between you and a pair of priests. One of them is staggering under the weight of huge sacks of silver, but the other asks: "..and you are?"


 **Ghol, Going East:** "Hey, bro what's -- hey -- is this still about Arry and Addy? We're all good there."


 **Vraknaar:** "Do we have a name?"


 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol spends the next minute quietly whispering to Kon, before: "So, what's up?" to the rest of the gang.

 **banana (GM):** Looks like it's time for a Huddle.  
  
The priests are fairly patient, as they need to secure the money. Most teams don't just have a dragon drop off cash.

 **Placidus:** Placidus looks up. Oh, that's right, he's the manager. He's the one who's supposed to tell them a name. "We are, er..." He looks up at the others. "We need a name. Suggestions?"

 **Travis Meacham:** "The Travis Meacham Five."

 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol: "Haha, no."

 **Placidus:** "I like the way you think, Travis." Placidus turns and addresses the registrant-priest. "We're Kon's Men."





**Ghol, Going East:** "Woah."



**banana (GM):** oh my god



**Kon:** Kon barks happily.



**Travis Meacham:** "Apropos."



**Placidus:** "We'd also like a comprehensive listing of the tournament rules, to brush up on."



**Xarvrax:** "I'm okay with this."



**banana (GM):** This name is so powerful that i've actually been blown away and need to brb. The meat priest just writes it down as if it wasn't a big deal, which it is. "These are your signup sheets for the heats.. opening barbeque tickets.. here's a copy of the hymnal.."



**Placidus:** Placidus doesn't take these documents himself, as his hands are full. Surely Ghol or someone will oblige.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol does indeed.



**Kon:** Kon will set the hymnal down and start nosing through it. It's unclear if he's reading it -- if he even knows written language at all -- but he's definitely concentrating real hard on what's on those pages.



**Placidus:** Placidus has gone back to fiddling with the metal thing the dwarves gave him. The hinges(?) shudder and clatter as he tests them with tentative pressure, but it's difficult to see how this could be anything but a pile of mangled junk. It's not even clear what it might have been when it worked.



**banana (GM):** ok, i'm back. actually is this a good stopping point maybe



**Travis Meacham:** it may be



**Xarvrax:** Probably, yeah.



**Crion:** banking that Elf Queen 6 for next session, then



**Travis Meacham:** Quelf, the Queen Elf



**banana (GM):** Comprehensive documentation is provided- surprisingly so, given the registry you can catch glimpses of as the priests write. You're only the tenth team, and the dwarves will be the eleventh.



**Crion:** \*Quest Efl  
Elf



**banana (GM):** Death Elf




**Crion:** No.





**Placidus:** Placidus could've guessed there would only be eleven teams without even looking at the roll. It had to be some multiple of eleven, and with a moment as great and terrible as this, only the basic factor could express it cleanly.





**banana (GM):** As Kon's Men turn away to descend, the afternoon deepens. Holy scents rise into the air from the Alabaster Grill, and the reporters drone on, and small crowds cheer - small, as this is only registration. In four days, the Games themselves begin.


 **Vraknaar:** hanging on my dragon 6 then as well


 **banana (GM):** i'm going to say this is a full heal-up- the first part of the game proper is over, even though we didn't have \*4\* fights. it doesn't have to be exact. no incremental advance for this one, though


 **Crion:** I don't think it will be major spoilers to state that I'm probably going to spend that Elf Queen 6 on Silesias the Grey, who had best actually be a grey elf or that's just awkward


 **Placidus:** I spent my dwarf king 5 on this weird pile of junk  
and I don't regret it for a second


 **Crion:** there's a t-shirt

 **Xarvrax:** Woooooo daily speeeeeelllllsssss

 **Travis Meacham:** hell, i love me some wizards.

 **banana (GM):** with a name like that he's either one of the few grey elves in town, or, gandalf

 **Placidus:** what IS this metal thing, and also, that black goo


 **Crion:** black goo USUALLY comes from some horror from outside space/time and spreads as some kind of language violence

hth

virus

not violence

end result, however: likely the same

 **banana (GM):** don't forget to note down that money xarvrax extorted!  
from your fellow guest

 **Placidus:** I'm sure it'll come up again when Xarvrax's crimes are recounted, finale-of-Seinfeld-like