



**banana (GM):** Ghol has a sore throat. Something in the abattoir air didn't agree with him - though he'd have thought it would turn his stomach, not his sinuses.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol, Getting Sick.



**banana (GM):** Kon is fine, being of an entirely different taxonomy, so really he's not much impaired. The last couple of days before the Games are frantic, but there's time in them to relax a little and see the sights of the town or just laze about.



**Kon:** Kon never lazes about. He does occasionally rest, however.



**banana (GM):** This is only the second time Ghol's spent time IN a town without, well, burning it to the ground; most of San Meat would be fairly resistant to that treatment. It brings to mind questions: what \*will\* they use to raze the city when they make it this far?



**Kon:** Sometimes wearing as many as five cats.



**Ghol, Going East:** He's mainly tried to avoid that line of thought: the current trick he uses is dreaming that hey, Estella's a chef! Maybe she'll totally want to keep San Meat around, and repurpose its slaughterhouses towards feeding the movement, and integrate the local elves instead of massacring them, and...yeah. He's not convinced either.

Before he left, he made another appeal to the van Sommens -- perhaps his last one, but if so not by choice -- to consider leaving town ahead of the Movement's arrival. He doubts it made anymore of an impact than his first one. Other than Adanneloc, they seem to like it here.



**banana (GM):** That \*guy\*. His basic position seems to be that the city would be perfectly fine if only it didn't have all this meat in it, and the other people.. Ghol's wandering thoughts have led his footsteps in that direction, it seems. But he won't find any van S sammens at home. In the fallout from the necroterrorist attack, they've been forcibly evacuated, staying at other places around the city while the priesthood conducts its sanitisation..

This whole block of homes is watched, now- the few white elf guards who didn't leave with the Dragon Soldiers are basically stationed around the defiled part of town, watching for repeats.



**Ghol, Going East:** Well, that might get them out of the city at least. He'd have more sympathy with the family having to move out of their storied, generational home...but he spent the first 16 years of his life as a nomadic hunter-gatherer and/or herald for the destruction of Civilization As It Is Known To Be.



**banana (GM):** Well, it's off to a decent start... only there's something odd about the soldiers in the streets, or about the remaining citizens (also Meat Khetherans?) watching the watchers from their homes. Roll me a wisdom.



**Kon:** Kon, were he to deign to stoop to written language to voice his concerns, might directly counsel otherwise -- the state of nature is well and good for wargs, and he would see them return to it. His time in the Movement with Ghol left him...less convinced of that truth, applied to orcs. The more orcs talk about destroying the evils of civilization, he's observed, the larger, more organized, and more permanent their own violent groups seem to get.



**Ghol, Going East:** rolling 1d20+7

(15)+7

= 22



**banana (GM):** Aha. All that spotting taught both the young friends well how to watch the watchers'

watchers.

One of these white-stonewood homes is not a home. It's empty, all the shutters up but little cracks revealing no furniture, oodles of dust. So why is there a big cloaked man in the doorway, watching the streets like elves do from the others?



**Ghol, Going East:** Hrm. Hrrrrm. He's got a hood up, does he?



**banana (GM):** Rough burgundy cloth with a rope headband.

Looks more like a monk than Placidus ever did, actually.



**Ghol, Going East:** Face covered?



**banana (GM):** Almost completely.



**Ghol, Going East:** ...Necromancer!



**Kon:** Dammit, Ghol.



**Ghol, Going East:** Well, he could be a necromancer.



**Kon:** Necromancers are known for a lot of things -- including insane stupidity -- but when they do those things, especially the insanely stupid ones, they generally do them loudly.

This gentleman is the opposite of loud.



**banana (GM):** Not a lot of noise going on here. The man in the empty home is just.. watching everyone that goes past. In fact, he's turned to go inside. Were you spotted?



**Ghol, Going East:** Well, Ghol HAS stopped in the middle of the street to stare.

He's doing this on purpose, of course, to provoke a reaction.



**Kon:** Kon, meanwhile, is slinking into the alleyway next to the house, circling around back.

As much as a creature his size can slink.



**banana (GM):** Guards look at him too.. but they know who he is. One of the new local heroes! If he wants to inspect the scene of the fight or whatever, no problem. They're already mumbling to each other in eager anticipation of what brilliant lightbeam or flood of pamphlets these visitors will produce next.

Gimme a dex check for Kon. We'll see about the slink.



**Kon:** Any bonus for Tracker, as he uses his hunting stealth?



**banana (GM):** It totally apples. Your DC is 25.



**Kon:** Yeesh.

rolling 1d20+8

(13)+8

= 21





**banana (GM):** Watching the empty house and empty alley, Ghol hears a noise. Can wargs \*yelp\*?


**Kon:** They can.

It's a bit deeper than most yelps.


 **banana (GM):** Then the street is no longer the right place to be.

 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol already has the Rune in hand as he sprints.

 **banana (GM):** In sudden motion, you burst inside. The air is musty, flavoured by ancient bacons. There's no source of light but the door and one back window.. there, look where the light isn't! In the central room, on bare whitestone, the cloaked man has Kon \*held\* on the ground - with enormous arms he's trying to pin the warg, forcing him into a submissive pose. Not that that works like it does for dogs.

 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol doesn't bother with a plea to desist, or to call for help, or to do anything but immediately launch himself on the man.

He isn't actually swinging the Rune yet -- but it wouldn't take much to get him to start.


 **banana (GM):** He fights, but not with weapons. Let's roll off for a brief undeadly struggle, here - strength of dex, your choice.

rolling d20+6

() + 6


= **17**

\*or

 **Kon:** Any bonus for Kon, either as a distraction as he tries to pin him or as a helper if he turns to concentrate on Ghol? It is two on one.


 **banana (GM):** Nah. The guy's oddly used to this sort of situation.


 **Ghol, Going East:** rolling 1d20+6


() + 6


= **9**

Ah.


 **banana (GM):** The cloaked man whirls around- grabs cloth, briefly preventing throwing off your stance. Ghol is thrown back, almost to a wall! The other is there with an arm across his neck... but Kon's up now behind him. Can wargs \*roar\*?

 **Kon:** Oh, they can roar.  
It's a bit louder than most roars.

 **banana (GM):** Common thugs and idiots would take the chance of repeating their successes. The watcher just throws back his hood to reveal he's neither.

 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** "It became easier to track you, Ghol, when you gave your own name in every city."

"Any remaining joy of challenge was removed from my task when you had likeness stuck up on walls."

 **Ghol, Going East:** "It became easier to track me when I slaughtered eight of the Wide General's

swordarms and sent them back to her with the story. The pictures just make it more interesting."



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** The Scoutmaster coughs. "Do you think I'm as weak as eight grunts?"



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol grins. "I haven't been away from the Movement that long, master."



**Kon:** Oh, it's Ingher. Fantastic.



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Too long. Like your *\*extended mission\**. It's time to report in."



**Kon:** Kon's eyes narrow. Extended mission?



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** The Scoutmaster scouts, of course. As long as Ghol's known, he spends more time away from the Movement than with it - but tracking down just one runaway?



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol sheathes the Rune. "I wasn't aware I was permitted the honor of serving you any longer."



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Our Lord *\*forgives\**, scout. Have cities already addled your memories?"

The older orc's voice takes on a sing-song tone as he recites. "The city is the worst of all crimes, which exists to contain the others. It is a pit of anonymity in which every vice can be practiced unseen. If ever someone tells you that you should build a city, what they mean is this: their ambitions have grown beyond what a village can conceal."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol nods. "It is true." He has seen some bad stuff here. Most of it just as bad as stuff in the main camp -- fights, random acts of violence, dishonest business practices -- but necromancy? Only here, in a city.



**Kon:** Kon wonders how large the main camp is, these days. How many people. And whether or not moving about absolves it of the crime of civilization.



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Indubitably." Ingher was always an orc. Like almost every *\*leader\** of the Movement, he arose from the earth, not from a blackened human (elven!) heart- so the source of his vocabulary is something of a mystery.

"The Wizard's deprivations have left these people unalert. I have three ways over the walls. We will leave tonight, unless you have something to flee sooner."



**Ghol, Going East:** "No."



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Yes."

Ingher's a little taller than Ghol, and he's *\*almost\** old enough to be past his physical prime. Almost. The man has a fantastic glare.



**Ghol, Going East:** The smile is gone. Flatly: "I will not return to the Movement to die. I have larger work."

"Kon, see to the door. That we're not interrupted."



**Kon:** The warg hesitates, then decides to let the two have their moment. If hears fighting, though, he'll be back in a flash.




**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "There isn't anything larger! Scout, you're one of my best and I know you think yourself better. You are *\*called\**."




**Ghol, Going East:** "I am called East."





 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** "What damned work of Men could call you east at midnight without your hunting bow? While your comrades suffer through the swamp?"


"Do NOT tell me you want to become a wizard."


He actually puts his hand inside his robe at that. Things clank.


 **Ghol, Going East:** "Not man. Elf." He doesn't laugh at the wizard crack, because it's not entirely a joke. "Do you know how elves dream?"

 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** This is not the face of an orc who knows how elves dream.


 **Ghol, Going East:** "They dream of their King -- or Queen now, as it happens -- in the Court of Stars, off in the eastern forests. And when he -- or She -- calls them, they answer. I am answering."

 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** Ingher relaxes, which just means he'd have to take a minor action before getting deadly. He looks Ghol up and down, slowly. He's been looking at a lot of elves today, of course.


 **Ghol, Going East:** "You know I speak the truth, master. I am different. Unless you've met another orc of 17 years who doesn't yet have to shave."


 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** Quoting the Teachings again: "The hive mind of the elves is more prone to \*civilisation\* than anyone but the lock-step armies of the dead. The ideal of the city arises from their consciousness itself. To be an elf is to \*know\* that you should live in layers, entangled, and in hierarchy. It is a birthright of power over woods, rivers and the sky. Men suspect themselves superior to the beasts, but elves don't have to wonder."


In his own words, rather than those of the Orc Lord: "How true?"

 **Ghol, Going East:** "Varied, as the truth often is. Elves live with man in man's cities, such as these, and may indeed be corrupted by them. But the elven court -- the Court of Stars, where the Elf Queen resides and from when


ce she reigns -- is said to be a smaller gathering that moves about, semi-permanent yet never stationary, and in that it is not so very different from our own Movement's host, save that it is not burning and pillaging in the name of war. After all, it is said that it was the black elves, acting against the wishes of greater elfdom, who launched their attack on the dwarves precipitating the current violence...out of their desire for a permanent homeland."

 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** "You've learned some history in the past month."

 **Ghol, Going East:** "You taught me to scout, master. I merely see history as new terrain."


 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** "We don't teach history to scouts. What would be the point? You're there to end it."


Although of course \*he\* seems to be au fait with this stuff.

 **Ghol, Going East:** "You don't teach scouts how to walk on clouds, either, but should I be called to face giants I'll learn to all the same." There's a certain comforting placidity in just, knowing you're doing what you need to be doing, and being able to draw confidence from that.

Master Ingher taught him that, actually.

Probably is none too pleased to see it turned about on him.

 **Scoutmaster Ingher:** \*Something\* made an impression. He's making grumbling noises before responding now. "You're called to 'answer'. What answer will you give?"

 **Ghol, Going East:** "'Soon.'"

"But not now."

"I am an orc, but I am also an elf. I have given the Orc Lord four years. It is time I paid the Elf Queen her due."



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Huh."

"Huh hu hu ha ha ha ha haahh. Hahahahahah."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol looks uncertain for the first time.



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** Sadly, the bellow devolves into a coughing fit. At least it makes the scoutmaster look less.. invincible for a moment.



**Ghol, Going East:** "Master, are you alright?"



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "The swamp fever again." Ingher rolls his eyes. "If I could write I'd take down your exact words, make it easier to repeat them to our Lord. Ahahaha!"



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol crosses his arms. "I'll write him a letter, if you'd like." Well, have Placidus write one, anyway.



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** He claps you on the shoulder with a hand the size of Kon's paw. "Our first time-share scout! Human economics find their place at last!"



**Ghol, Going East:** Quickly Ghol realizes the Orc Lord prrrobably doesn't put too much stock in reading or writing, either.



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Ehhm. Take a weapon. Go east! Meet this Queen if you can, scout, and serve her if you will."

He's reaching in his robe for what could be Ghol's own bow..! but actually it's pretty difficult to tell them apart. Who knows.



**Ghol, Going East:** Nice!!



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Then \*report\*. You have until we reach the Queenswood, obviously. Or I'll kill you."



**Ghol, Going East:** Erm. Decorum. "Yes, master. Thank you, master."



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "If success continues here in the south that could be quite a while! Not four years, I think." Ingher is basically jolly now.



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol smiles politely, but no longer has it in him to pretend to be overjoyed at the destruction of the south.

He's got friends here now, after all.



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "You will have to reconcile within your own flesh any difference in the accounting."



**Ghol, Going East:** Ghol nods.



**Scoutmaster Ingher:** "Off you go, Ghol. I'm not demonstrating my routes to a man on the Queen's time."

He's being pretty cavalier, but means it: if there's anything else you want to ask or say, this is the last reasonable chance.



**Ghol, Going East:** He is not in a position to make requests. The Scoutmaster is showing extreme leniency in not just assuming the Orc Lord's orders and attempting to execute him on the spot. That, or the Orc Lord expressly ordered him to stay his hand...Ghol somehow finds that even less comforting. So he will just say the expected goodbyes between a pupil and his scoutmaster, and see him off...  
...and hope that next time they meet, Ghol doesn't have to kill him.