



banana (GM): i'm glad we're starting an rpg, because what i was doing up til now was: writing regular expressions in xml.



VoxPVoxD: yikes



banana (GM): In the barren lands east of Marrow a ship comes sliding from the blasted wood, making slow headway on gusts and fits. The wind is not as fierce on land as at sea - a miscalculation on the part of the spirit vessel's builders.



Placidus: Math is hard, I hear.



banana (GM): Within and about the boat are a group of travellers going east to kill a necromancer, or to see the world, or because that's the Way they're Going.



Ghol, Going East: Ghol wouldn't know.



banana (GM): You've won free of the forest, and most of your pursuers. Nearly free agents again. There's grass and a river ahead, too, which might mean more fowl to cook. In fact, everything is basically okay, with only one major pressing decision to make.



Riidi WW: What would Placidus know about math frankly



banana (GM): It's this: you could keep heading southeast, straight for the lake and the Snakesrule - you've been diverted anyway, so that's now the quicker route. Or, if you turn northeast, you could probably be in Chorizon by nightfall. As far as I know you have no specific reason to go to Chorizon. But if *Travis* knows anything about mathematics, his beacon's going off again tomorrow morning.



Travis Meacham: so we'd go to chorizon to tempoorarily throw our pursuers off course?



banana (GM): If you don't want to be a literal beacon in the wilds, yeah. But: maybe you don't care.



Ghol, Going East: Chorizon is east.



banana (GM): Northeast and southeast are both east, yes.



Ghol, Going East: Therefore he has no real preference, unless She's made one known to him. And recently, She's been pretty quiet.



Xarvrax: Whichever one is faster is the way Xarvrax wants to go.



Kalira: Is Chorizon really much safer to become a huge beacon in?



Travis Meacham: presumably travis will just be lighting upt he sky before they leave town and go south




banana (GM): Kalira raises a point. Gimme int rolls - worldly lore - to see if you actually know anything about the city.



Travis Meacham: rolling 1d20+8


(15)+8


= 23


 **Ghol, Going East:** rolling d20+3 maybe it'll be a 20


(11)+3


= 14

 **Skeleton:** i've not quited r'd b, but here: 13

 **Placidus:** 26 here's worldly lore, by which I mean, theatre

 **banana (GM):** As you sail, meanwhile, terraced farms are coming into view. Slow ridgelines are leading up no hills in particular - just rising and falling. There are sheep, and men and gnomes that look like the sheep they tend.


 **Ghol, Going East:** nope


 **banana (GM):** They do not watch you happily. Some drop their crooks and run. This must not be a very safety-inducing part of the world.

 **Xarvrax:** rolling d20 + 5

(14)+5


= 19

 **Placidus:** We also aren't in a very comfort-inspiring sort of vehicle.

 **Ghol, Going East:** They might not be a huge fan of either orcs or wargs either, but hey. Maybe the Movement's reputation hasn't preceded it this far south.

...If so, no one tell the Orc Lord. He'd take it as a personal affront.

 **Placidus:** Dorc Lord.


 **Kalira:** rolling 1d20+2 not much


(6)+2

= 8

 **banana (GM):** DEFINITELY nobody tell the Dorc Lord.

Okay, Placidus has heard of Chorizon, probably known well some people who've visited it on the circuit. It's kind of a crapheap.

 **Xarvrax:** I make it a habit of not telling the Orc Lord things.

 **banana (GM):** Chorizon is a *big* town, but not on purpose; it was just the largest town in the east of the west when the Conqueror's armies stopped. Since the past decade has been mired in negotiations, Chorizon has become a) the major southern trade route into the Federation and b) a massive military garrison. In fact, the armies will be following behind you from Horizon to repopulate it eventually - perhaps they can take care of the Thing on the road.

However, it was originally a bucolic place with narrow streets and no culture (no coast) or crafts.

Expansion has been forced. Everything there is mean and shabby and sometimes, if that counts for anything, large.

It's USUALLY a very safe place if you like the Dragon Empire, but right now who knows?



Placidus: Well, the Mixed Company has an affinity for the mean, the shabby, and the overlarge. Why Xarvrax alone-



Travis Meacham: it feels like we can give chorizon a miss, the only question is if we care that all our spies know we're headed for snakesrule



Placidus: "We stopping in Chorizon?" Placidus asks the group. "It's a bit of a hole... I'd soon as not. We can make better time skipping it."



Ghol, Going East: "Didn't we just come from Horizon?" grumbles Ghol. "How's there already another one?"



Travis Meacham: "The only thing is that this" Travis gestures to his orb "is about to go off. Do we want to misdirect our spies by detouring to Chorizon, or just keep our heading?"



Placidus: "Horizon is a city. Chorizon's more of a cyst."

A gaggle of lambs, less afraid than their keepers: baa



Ghol, Going East: "CH-orizon?"

Now that he thinks about it, he does remember seeing that on the map.

"Not making a great argument for cities, here."



Xarvrax: "Presumably our spies aren't so terrible as to lose us that easily, and if they are, we've probably lost them already."



Placidus: "It's an interesting proposition... the question is this: do you think we could lose our spies in Chorizon? It's possible we just pick even more up, somehow."



Kalira: "It might be better to just... get our spies over with."

"And Placidus is right. We acquired most of these in Horizon. Cities are how you catch spies."



Ghol, Going East: "I guess that's the question, isn't: whose spies bother us? All of 'em? Some of 'em?"

Is that cat still hanging around?



Skeleton: "I haven't got any... business or something there, that I'd be missing out on. I don't see any reason not to sail on past."



Ghol, Going East: He looks back to find Kon. Last he checked the little guy was riding shotgun on the warg.



banana (GM): The little orange cat is enjoying being on a high place that moves around, sitting up and watching sleepily.



Skeleton: Good cat.



banana (GM): Whether that constitutes spying on you...



Placidus: On whose behalf, would be the question.



Ghol, Going East: "So, given the cat, and given that a number of us have acted as if we're going to keep the cat -- we're choosing sides."



Travis Meacham: All cats are evil. That's just a fact.

"Straight on to the lake, then?"



Ghol, Going East: "We can't just, walk around with a cat and not have that mean something."

Ghol's fine with that plan.



banana (GM): The imperials are gone, the geasgeese are gone, the demons are gone, the orc is gone - or at least Ghol has his measure. Things are way less crowded for sure.



Placidus: "Works for me." Placidus is not impartial on the matter of the cat and will thus remain silent.



Skeleton: "Well... it doesn't have to follow us forever, I suppose. We could just, drop it off somewhere?"



Placidus: He's not NECESSARILY daydreaming about drowning the cat, but, suffice it to say that a wet cat is a very funny mental image.



Ghol, Going East: "That too is a statement."



Skeleton: "That said, we've already got Person with us."



Ghol, Going East: "Person's at least told us what its goal is."



Xarvrax: "I'm not choosing any side with the people following us, the only side I'm on is that of The Five."



Ghol, Going East: "Maybe Person's lying -- no offense, Person -- but at least we've got a statement to evaluate."



Kalira: "Perhaps that means the lie is just that much more convincing."



Ghol, Going East: "Be that as it may, if it was one of those shitty little imps we adopted, we'd immediately be concerned about what the people we meet would think about us for having an imp. About what trouble it could bring us. All I'm saying is, maybe extend some of that same thinking ahead to the cat, too. I'm not saying toss the thing by the wayside, but...you know. We shouldn't treat it like a pet. Or part of the team."

Ghol's said his piece. "I'm gonna scout ahead a bit."

Person: "If I am lying, I should have chosen a better lie."



Placidus: "I've often had that same thought, when lying."



Ghol, Going East: "Yeah, Ronald thought so too," Ghol mutters as he walks away.

Ronald?

Whatever.



Xarvrax: "If someone tries to kill us because of a cat, then they probably aren't people we care about."



banana (GM): Keeping southeast, you're on back roads - not that it matters much with the hull that cuts through earth. The wind is only getting lower, unfortunately - barred by the edge of this hill country. The place is made for hooves, not sails.

Kalira: "Maybe that's why they don't work. If you can't even pretend to believe it, how can you really



sell it?" Kalira looks over Ghol. "We've got an orc and a dragon already. How much more trouble could we get into based on appearances?"



Placidus: It's astonishing, frankly, that the designers and engineers of the ghostly landship didn't take things like this into account.



banana (GM): In fact, there's a sign on the road ahead - BLACKSMITH 3 KCLICKS, VILLAGE OF MOURD. You're slowly encroaching on the part of the world where horses are a thing.



Skeleton: "No one's got the power to talk to cats, do they?" Skeleton turns sker hood to look around the group.



Placidus: "I believe Ghol was contemplating patrons rather than appearances."
"If the cat is a spy, it's a spy *for* someone."

Person: "Who?"



Placidus: "I don't know."

Person: "Oh."



Placidus: "Do you have any guesses?"

Person: "No, I don't know either."



Placidus: "Do you like cats, Person?"



Kalira: "So drive it off, kill it, whatever, if you're so concerned about being spied upon. But the more powerful or notorious you become, the more it'll happen. Perhaps it's better to know who the spies are now."



Skeleton: "Or know much about them?"



Ghol, Going East: The land this far south, this far east, is...softer. It's been getting gradually so, since Ghol came down from Axis, and its certainly had its rough spots here and there, but it rolls more often where in Ghol's homeland it would have jagged, and is green more often where he'd expect it to be brown or gray.
It's...not unpleasant. Ghol wonders what the Queenswood is like.

Person: The being in the blue hood contemplates. "They're very fast and accurate. I think they're a good animal, and they work efficiently. Someone did well, with cats."



Ghol, Going East: Well, whatever She calls the woods that are her home.



Placidus: "Someone?"



Xarvrax: "Also, talking about spies, none of us are really blameless there either."



Ghol, Going East: Sure, the floating ship indirectly powered by the Gods of Darkness puts a bit of a damper on things, but less than you might expect.



Placidus: "The question of whether we deserve it is quite apart from the question of whether we'll suffer it."



Xarvrax: "I could be a spy for The Five, " he points at Ghol, "He could be a spy for the Orc Lord or the Elf Queen."



Travis Meacham: This cat mutual admiration society is really a bit too much.



Xarvrax: "Travis is a wizard, they're basically all spies anyway."



Ghol, Going East: "I am not a spy for either the Orc Lord or the Elf Queen. Spies hide their allegiance. I am proudly and openly willing to tell you that I serve both."



Travis Meacham: "I'm actually literally the most likely to be a spy, given the circumstances of our meeting."



Skeleton: "I COULD be a spy for the Wizard King, but I've got that COMPLETELY under control at the moment."



Placidus: "All I'll say on the matter is this: *I'm* not going near the cat. Allergies aside, the last time I confronted one of our spies they beat me into unconsciousness."



Ghol, Going East: "Kon, are you a spy?"



Kon: *woof woof*



Xarvrax: "See? Everyone is secretly a spy, so why are we so worried about what a cat is, when we could literally step on it if it tries to attack us."



Ghol, Going East: "Two barks means no. Wargs don't usually lie."



banana (GM): 'Mourd' is a village only due to its resident smithy. The rest is just a few outlying houses and tracks out into the fields.



Placidus: "If you can't trust a warg, who can you trust, I ask you?"



Kalira: "I would have thought geese not to be dangerous, but..."



banana (GM): Sadly, during this whole conversation, the cat hasn't made comment or done anything interesting. It's just, lying down some more on the warg's back.



Placidus: That's because cats are stupid and boring.



Ghol, Going East: Of course it hasn't. It's a spy.



Skeleton: "Well, there were like twenty and they were at least impelled by magic if not empowered by it."



Placidus: "They were very coordinated geese, too."
"And geese are already fairly coordinated animals - they fly in formation."



Skeleton: "Those wings are real strong."



Travis Meacham: "I don't want to talk about the geese."



Skeleton: "Hell, same."



Placidus: "Let's defer to Travis here, and also just avoid thinking about the stray cat we've decided to keep."
How far off are we from needing to make camp? What time is it?



banana (GM): There's one kid - must be about 15 - who sits up from the bench where he's grinding

nail-points and waves. "Well met on the road, adventurers!" Enthusiasm not shared enthusiasm by the other residents of the 'town' you're passing through.



Placidus: Has the moon risen yet?



Skeleton: Skeleton waves cheerfully back, sinister as ske looks.



banana (GM): It's not that late. You could get quite a way, albeit slower than before, if you want to press on.



Travis Meacham: "Well met!"



Placidus: Placidus, whose head barely rises above the steering wheel, will wave at the child as well.



Ghol, Going East: Humans?



banana (GM): This whole country is humans and a few gnomes, yeah.



Ghol, Going East: Well, hope springs eternal. Ghol will just nod.



banana (GM): OK, let's assume you travel for the rest of the day or until some super-convenient shelter presents itself.



Travis Meacham: Yeah

Make Time



Ghol, Going East: Ghol will go about his usual duties once they do stop: clearing a site, securing the perimeter, setting up a firepit -- unless they've run across an inn or some such.




banana (GM): The hills rise just a little bit. Enough that there are caves - one's just off this semi-road you're following, and it looks like travellers have used it to rest before. There's rubbish and remnants of firepits around the outside. No people, though- in the higher country past Mourd, the only shepherds you've seen are on the road itself, many hours behind you in a large trading group.

Gimme a scouting roll, why not.



Ghol, Going East: rolling d20+11

(

= **13**

christ.



banana (GM): And also answer this: who's carrying the stones sacred to Green Morco?



Kalira: Definitely not Kalira.



Placidus: Didn't Skeleton keep those?



Skeleton: Skeleton could be, though ske'd shy away from doing so because ske still feels vaguely guilty about not actually fixing the problem on the road.



Xarvrax: I was pretty sure I grabbed it.



banana (GM): Okay, the rock is glowing with power. It started weak, but now that you're near the

entrance of a big dark cave, it's pretty noticeable.



Ghol, Going East: "Looks like someone fought here, once," Ghol says, looking around. "See? This chipping here. Not natural -- that's metal on soft rock. And this..." Ghol reaches into a pile of questionable refuse that's collected down near a rock over the years. "...this is an arrow shaft. Part of one, anyway." Specifically, the back part; most of the fletching's gone out.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax, being the completely sane person he is, starts waving it around, "Guys?"



banana (GM): banana: rock | Sorry, I mean the sacred summoning stone promised to you in trust of the gods of light, as would have been your just reward.

It looks like a glowing rock, though.



Skeleton: "Hey, cool. I guess we're far enough from the thing."



Kalira: "Oh, neat, a glowing rock. That's good."



Travis Meacham: "Anyoner else feel uneasy about using it despite not having fixed the road?"



Skeleton: It doesn't look like it's glowing more and more by the second or similar, does it? It's primed more so than in the process of going off?

"Me."



banana (GM): The juvenile cat hops down once Kon stops moving and goes to poke around somewhere.

The glow's constant now - just the slight, ostentatious aura of divinity.



Placidus: "I'd have just as soon told the halfer to keep his trinket. But, well, adventuring is a bit of a pack rat life."

"How recently is 'once', Ghol? Is this the site of a recent battle, or an historical one?"



banana (GM): If you recall correctly, it was to summon Morco's sacred guardians to aid in a battle.



Xarvrax: "I guess that guy wasn't crazy, it isn't just a rock."

"It's a glowing rock."



banana (GM): -lobster,



Ghol, Going East: "We're talking months ago. Maybe years."



Placidus: These are the sort of insights that make Xarvrax an invaluable member of the team.



Ghol, Going East: "Hard to get more specific though, with just the one arrow."



Placidus: "Any bones?"



Ghol, Going East: "Kon, keep an eye on that cat."



Kon: Kon's on it.



Ghol, Going East: Ghol frowns. "...No. No bones."



Kalira: "Maybe they didn't hit their mark."

Travis Meacham: "Or they were fighting against horrific boneless abominations!!!"



Placidus: "Maybe the bodies got dragged into that cave there."



Travis Meacham: "Gruesome slug-monsters! Rock elementals! GHOSTS!!!"



Skeleton: "Augh!"



Ghol, Going East: "This here--" He indicates a rust colored spray across the wall. "This could be blood." He chips a bit off with a survival knife; there's soft rock of the color of the rest of the wall beneath. "Or it could be a thin, dead fungus of some kind."



banana (GM): It's grown dark, which in a twist of fate increases your vision - you can see a tiny spark of light way to the west, lower down the hills. That'll be the party of shepherds, making their own stop. The cave isn't very deep. Nowhere to hide a body.

Person: "There's nowhere to hide a corpse in this cave."



Ghol, Going East: "Certainly looks the right pattern for what happens when your throat gets opened up, though."
"



Placidus: "That's unpleasant."



Ghol, Going East: "Dying often is."



Xarvrax: "Dying's not that bad."



Ghol, Going East: Ghol will leave it at that. Given circumstances.



Xarvrax: "It's the part before it that sucks."



Skeleton: "I wouldn't recommend it."



Kalira: "I'm going to try and avoid finding out for as long as possible."



Skeleton: "Speaking of," Skeleton says, assuming Xarvrax's cultists are currently out of earshot, "Person: PLEASE don't mention, in general, that I can perform necromancy! Very important."
"Maybe less so as we travel farther from Axis, but still."



banana (GM): The cultists have been having trouble keeping up. They're struggling in now, but conveniently not until after this conversation.



Kalira: "I knew there was something off about you."



Skeleton: "Well, I'm actually quite good at papering it over but those geese put us in dire straits."

Person: The cat's come back from hunting or shitting or something, and it's in a staring contest now with Person's dark hood. Without turning: "Wouldn't they only mind if you DO perform necromancy?"



Skeleton: "So, like you saw... I'm very responsible though so don't worry."
"I think the potential and implications would concern them."

Person: "It might be okay. They're pretty stupid."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax chuckles, "Whatever, don't worry too much about it."



Travis Meacham: If travis can hear this is he is going to roll his eyes EXTREMELY hard at skeleton calling skerself responsible.



Skeleton: "I'd prefer not to risk it."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax turns to his cultists, "Hey, you two, do you care about Necromancy? Because I can do it, so if you do, you can leave now."



Skeleton: "Huh, can you?"



Xarvrax: Xarvrax shrugs, "Little bit?"

Issuriel: Van keter is a bit less winded from walking throughout the day. "I.. assumed you could do any kind of magic, actually."

"Necromancy is evil of course, but just being ABLE to do it sounds fine?"



Xarvrax: Xarvrax nods, "It's true, basically."

Issuriel: "I mean, if you're a dragon it's probably fine anyway."



Ghol, Going East: Ghol has always appreciated the dragon's directness. Even about, you know, necromancy.



Skeleton: "I mean, most of the wizards we met back in Horizon probably COULD use necromancy."



Xarvrax: "Well, I probably will end up doing it eventually, since well, I don't get much choice."



Skeleton: "If, hypothetically, it was your only means of self defense, though, people might think differently."

Issuriel: She hesitates, not sure of whether this is a topic for local adults. "Isn't there.. hasn't dragonkind declared it total abomination, due to the dracoliches? Like, our first master taught us that if we met a necromancer, we were to throw away our lives if that was what it took to kill them."



banana (GM): *for the local adults

Mirchin: Mirchin's caught his breath. "He was definitely talking about *human* necromancers, though."



Kalira: "Maybe so. I bet the Great Wyrms know some necromancy, from before they hated it so much."



Xarvrax: "No no, I'm by all rights a necromancer, and a wizard, a cleric, I'm a terrible mess of magical power."



Kalira: "As long as you use it to put down the One-Eyed King, why not? That'd really stick in his craw."



Skeleton: "It seems like you're properly none of those things if you can't actually do any of them on purpose."

"I mean, you wouldn't call someone a pyromancer just because they were on fire at the time."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax chuckles again, "It would be fairly entertaining to see the look on his face about that."



Placidus: "But..."



Travis Meacham: Travis joins Placidus in preparing the evening meal. "If civil war breaks out in the camp I want you to know I'm leaving."



Placidus: "Isn't that basically how your necromancy works?"
"You don't *do* necromancy. You just... are it."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax raises a hand, "I'm technically both always on fire, and a pyromancer."



banana (GM): The stars are rising, although the moon is not.



Placidus: One of these nights.



Skeleton: "I DO do it! I have to figure it out and so on."



banana (GM): Issuriel: "You what!"



Skeleton: "Uh, set things on fire incidentally if I am myself burning."



Xarvrax: "I'm a dragon, we're made out of fire?"



Skeleton: "Long story."



banana (GM): The cultists nod, long ears nearly brushing the cave top. That makes perfect sense.



Skeleton: "Actually, probably a short story, but nevertheless I'm only using it as an example. Consider someone who's just on fire versus someone who's on fire and the fire doesn't go out and they carefully learn to throw it, shape it, etc." ('ets')



Placidus: "That's not how you pronounce etcetra."



Skeleton: "Sorry."



Travis Meacham: "It was originally 'et caetera,' which meant in the language of the 9th age "and others." Pronunciation shifts have dropped the diphthong."



Skeleton: "Anyway, the moral is, Person please be careful who you call a what. Um, in lowercase m mixed lowercase c company."



Travis Meacham: "And softened the hard 'c', of course."



Xarvrax: "Yes yes, we got it."



Skeleton: "That's interesting."

Person: Person's still staring at the cat, and vice versa. "I won't tell anyone about the burning geese or the burning bodies or anything."



Placidus: "Person, what's the first place you remember seeing a cat? Were there always cats, or did they come after you?"



Skeleton: "That's great." At any rate, Skeleton helps finish setting up camp, pokes around the cave to make sure that nothing's going to spontaneously animate or haunt the place come sundown, and then maybe plays with the kitty.

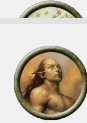


banana (GM): Give me some sort of night watch status. This place is juuust spooky enough that I'll make you roll it.




Ghol, Going East: Ghol will take a shift.

Placidus: As will Placidus.



Ghol, Going East: rolling d20+11

() + 11

= **19**



Placidus: **16**



Travis Meacham: It's not one of Travis's days on watch so he's gonna sleep. Peace.



Kalira: Kalira takes a watch, as well.



Placidus: Kalira is a thief.



Skeleton: **10** this wisdom check recommends Skeleton staying up to help with the watch, and **18** this necromancy check will warn us of marauding ghouls or whatnot



Kalira: rolling 1d20+4 not very observant though

() + 4

= **15**




Xarvrax: Xarvrax lays against a wall asleep, but split off from reality.



banana (GM): Person spends a while telling Placidus about cats from earlier and earlier years of the Age. They seem to have always been there, which from Placidus's point of view is ominous and sneeze-threatening, though they've changed a bit over time. Apparently, tail-less ones used to be more common in some land he visited, but then: weren't. It's a bit of a pointless story.



Xarvrax: rolling d20 + 5

() + 5

= **18**



banana (GM): There are no ghouls, nor any intruders. Ghol's snares would have warned him, but it doesn't come to that. However.



Placidus: Every story is pointless until it isn't. Placidus chews on dried fruit as they talk and wishes he had something a little more substantial.



banana (GM): It's well past midnight and the cold night air - not that cold, they're low hills - is keeping Kalira up easily enough. A little while before she's to go off watch, she stops seeing something.

The fires of the encampment down at the base of the hills, where the shepherds were - they'd been kept banked, burning steadily at a pinprick (from your point of view). It just went out.



Ghol, Going East: Ghol's a light sleeper. If Kalira wants to wake him up to investigate, he's fine with that.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax is keeping an eye on it, and will only actually wake up if needed.



Kalira: Kalira definitely wakes Ghol up. "Hey, Ghol. We might want to take a look at this."



Placidus: Placidus, even after his watch is up, is reluctant to sleep. He's lying on his back looking up at the sky. He overhears Ghol and Kalira. "What happened?"



Ghol, Going East: Ghol rolls over and rises without a word. Walking out to their watchpoint: "Where?"
He nods at Placidus as he rises.
"Wait..."



Placidus: Placidus has his sleeping cap off, replaced with his (indistinguishable) walking-around cap. The wand is out.



Skeleton: "Oh, you're right, it went out, didn't it." Skeleton, sitting nearby, proves to have been awake all along, again.



banana (GM): Fair warning: the other group caught up with yours a little since they made camp later, but the location where the fire suddenly went out is more than an hour's walk away.



Kalira: Kalira points out the fire that's been put out. "I can't really get closer without giving it away. The armor makes it a little hard to sneak up."



banana (GM): Travelling there at the dead of night would be, if not exactly unsafe, boring.



Ghol, Going East: Ghol nods. "It's a bit far off to go investigate where they were...but we can at least sweep our own perimeter."



Xarvrax: A sigh is heard near the group, before Xarvrax gets up, "Is it really important what's going on down there? Maybe it just went out?"



Kalira: "Check it out, would you? Whistle if something's up and I'll come running."



Travis Meacham: If nobody has woken Travis then he is peacefully sleeping.



Ghol, Going East: Ghol nods. He and Kon will have a quiet look around.



banana (GM): Fires *do* go out. They could have just decided to douse it, at third glass of the 'morning'.



Ghol, Going East: rolling d20+11 dice

(16)+11

= 27



banana (GM): A look around as in, travelling all the way back down, or patrolling a closer perimeter?




Ghol, Going East: The latter.





banana (GM): The remaining hours of night are a bit tenser than before, but you're safe. Ghol strains to see through the darkness; nothing approaches your cave, but there *are* movements on the west edge of the hills. Figures, faraway and in the darkness, moving - quite a few of them, maybe. They're leaving the shepherd traders' camp, heading vaguely-toward you - but they drop out of sight behind hillocks, and although Ghol waits for them to reappear, they never come closer than that.





Ghol, Going East: Sounds like bad luck for the shepherds.


 **banana (GM):** If there are bandits in the hills.. nobody in Mourd said a thing. But they specifically *didn't* speak to you.


 **Ghol, Going East:** He and Kon slip back into camp a short time later. "Someone's out there. And they're organized."


 **Skeleton:** "How many?"


 **banana (GM):** Well, better them than you, sort of. The idea of it rubs at Ghol's tired mind for a moment, like there's some significance to the idea of the other travellers being overtaken.. it's not obvious what it might be.


 **Ghol, Going East:** "Don't know. They're keeping away from us, probably on purpose. I think they snuffed out the shepherd trader camp and moved off west into the hills, right on the ridgeline."


 **banana (GM):** *east into the hills
(you're further east than the other camp was)


 **Ghol, Going East:** He gestures at the stain on the wall that could be dead fungus. "Good chance we know what happened to the last people who stayed here overnight."


 **Kalira:** "Well. Bad luck for them. I'd say that they know we're more dangerous... but how?"

 **Skeleton:** "Wait- the shepherds weren't secretly spying on us or anything, were they?"


 **Ghol, Going East:** "No idea. And we also don't know why they're not attacking us. Could easily be they don't want to take two camps in one night."


 **banana (GM):** Sun'll be up soon, and the cave floor was rocky. Apart from Travis with his thick linens, it was not a good night's sleep.


 **Skeleton:** "It just seems like... should we check if they're okay?"


 **Ghol, Going East:** "Absolutely not."
"Not until it's light out."
"And even then, I'd advise against it if it's not on the way."

 **Skeleton:** "Well, alright."


 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax shrugs, "By then they'll be gone, and you know it."


 **Ghol, Going East:** "That's what we're hoping for...isn't it?" Ghol looks around the cave. "Are we picking a fight here?"

 **Travis Meacham:** Travis stretches. "Whooooo... alright. Gotta take a piss."

 **Kalira:** "I don't mind fighting, but I thought we had a more important one to get to. Your necromancer... friend?"

 **Skeleton:** "Foe."

 **Ghol, Going East:** "I'm fine with a fight, don't get me wrong. But if we're going to do this, we should look for a more defensible position."

 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax's face hardens, "Ah right, have to murder that guy, so let's get going."



banana (GM): Question: are you having this conversation inside the cave, or out?



Ghol, Going East: Ghol will have returned to the mouth of the cave where the watchpoint is, so probably there. Unless someone has strong feelings. Ghol at the very least will want to have one foot outside to keep an eye on the perimeter.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax is leaning against a cave wall.



Skeleton: Skeleton isn't venturing out alone, certainly.



Kalira: Kalira will leave the cave first, if people are worried about an ambush.



Ghol, Going East: Ghol's already got one foot outside. He should either see any ambush coming, or take the first arrow out of the darkness.



banana (GM): So when the orb Travis left by his bedroll explodes in soundless, honeyed light, it only forces a couple of you back into the cave and up against the inner wall.

Skeleton, the sleeping Placidus, maybe Xarvrax, and Person - who was already up the back. Could be worse.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax grunts, "God damn it, why do we keep that thing with us?"



Travis Meacham: sorry, im black

*back

had to clean up a ktichen spil



Kalira: was it oil. is that why you're black



Travis Meacham: it was egg. in whats happened to me 3 times now, i've tried to remove an egg from the carton and it's completely shattered inside the cell

because, presumably, it was wedged in there super hard



banana (GM): The golden colour spills out and around, rising, pressing against the ceiling and briefly threatening to pin some of you up against the walls- then it finds the cave mouth and release, settling into its usual column. A twisted cylinder of light now comes from the bedroll out the mouth of the cave and straightens, though it's smoothing itself.

lol



Ghol, Going East: So. We need to leave. Complication: wherever we go, there they'll know we are.



Travis Meacham: Travis comes racing back (after fastening back up) "Oh shoot sorry! I should have taken that outside!"



Ghol, Going East: Is there any more defensible position in the surrounding area that Ghol can recall from his scouting within, say, a half-glass (ugh) hard march?



Xarvrax: Xarvrax growls, "Yes, yes you should have."




banana (GM): There's a hilltop which is largely surrounded by rocks, a little way south. Then again, nobody's attacking you right now.





Ghol, Going East: Yeah, well, things change when a magical beacon goes off.





Kalira: "At least keeping it in the cave kept it a little more... muted?"


 **Ghol, Going East:** How long until morning?


 **banana (GM):** It's nearly as bright as day for yards around.. the real thing is still a glass off.


 **Skeleton:** Skeleton goes "Agh-gh-gh-gh for a little while as ske's pressed back against the cave wall by a continuous, slow-motion explosion of light and force, but eventually falls a few feet to the ground and manages to stand and steady skerself.


 **banana (GM):** Person makes no noise whatsoever. The cultists, having learned to keep out of the way of most people who aren't Xarvrax, were outside in the first place.

 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax sighs, "Let's go. We need to move somewhere better to fight the idiots who are no doubt going to try to kill us now."


 **banana (GM):** The beacon's light has reached the night sky now, piercing clouds that scud away and reveal the greyed hint of eventual dawn.

 **Travis Meacham:** "It IS cool how it always finds clouds to pierce."


 **Ghol, Going East:** "We've got a glass until dawn. Now we've got to gamble: we can bet whoever's out there isn't on their game enough to get their people together and get over here within the next half-glass, in which case the smart play is get ourselves packed up and on the road NOW." Ghol is already throwing camp things together. "Or we bet that they're either professionals or goddamn monsters, and they're pouring over the hills towards us as we speak, in which case the smart play is a hilltop ringed with stones a little way south. We can defend that point."


 **Skeleton:** Once outside, Skeleton says: "Should we check the shepherds' camp, then?"


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


 **Kalira:** "Well. Flip a coin then, really. We don't know."


 **Skeleton:** "Alright, alright." How many minutes of labor ARE we from just setting sail immediately?


 **Ghol, Going East:** "If I had to bet...I don't like things moving in the hills. I don't like being on the road right after they've killed another group of travelers. I'd want the hilltop."

 **banana (GM):** Actually, you've never really tested your abilities to get going quickly..
I'd like one of two things:


 **Kalira:** "Then let's do it."

 **banana (GM):** either a dex roll from everyone, or a cha roll from someone to Manage everyone else. coordination

 **Ghol, Going East:** "And at the very least -- I wouldn't want to be moving in the direction I actually wanted to travel, with something like marking not just where I am, but which way I'm going."
*something like that

 **Skeleton:** i'd trust one good cha roll over everybody's dex roll

 **Kalira:** rolling 1d20+9 let's do this. breaking camp method


()+9

= **15**


urgh

 **Ghol, Going East:** Yeah. Are they exclusive


 **Xarvrax:** rolling d20 + 11 Dragon yelling


() + 11

= **16**

 **banana (GM):** Nah, I'll take whatever's better out of the cha roll or the lowest dex roll

 **Ghol, Going East:** yeah Cha seems smart

 **Kalira:** well i don't know if anyone else has cha but we've fucked it up so far

 **Skeleton:** neither of those are that great. i actually have a +4 cha bonus, but it might be too late? **17**
charisma, **19** dexterity


 **Ghol, Going East:** cool dice

 **banana (GM):** the dex one is cool, the cha one is illegal.

 **Travis Meacham:** rolling 1d20+5 this is dexterity

() + 5

= **19**


 **Kalira:** rolling 1d20+2 here's my terrible dexterity

() + 2

= **4**

 **Ghol, Going East:** no


 **Xarvrax:** rolling d20 + 4 Dragon dexterity

() + 4

= **5**

 **Ghol, Going East:** we got a success on both cha rolls, we should take that

 **Xarvrax:** Well, that happened.

 **banana (GM):** Okay: the Mixed Company have fairly different morning speeds, but with the chivying of

Kalira and Xarvrax, you can get going without too much fuss. Kalira can dole out tasks to those best able to accomplish them quickly, and Xarvrax has, as always, presence.



Ghol, Going East: And two unfailingly loyal and obedient...workers.



banana (GM): Has Travis ever lifted the beacon while it was going off before? It's an odd sensation, since the light bathes your arms and threatens to gel them in place, and the whole thing is steadily getting lighter as it 'empties'.



Skeleton: Skeleton proves very adept at getting chores done. It's probably sker bone-deep reanimated minion instincts.

Actually, ske should've added the Skeleton background to sker roll for that reason, IMO.



banana (GM): "Rrw." The cat's just returned to camp from wherever it was.



Travis Meacham: he had never lifted it before while it was going off. "Well that was interesting."



Kon: Kon was watching it, so it presumably slipped off when they investigated the perimeter.



Ghol, Going East: Ghol gives it a glare in passing.



Travis Meacham: He's also done packing in a jiff. It's all about having a plan in place beforehand for where everything goes.



banana (GM): Off the road, then. It wasn't much of a road, up here.. but it was a path to follow. Now you're just walking - and barely sailing - where Ghol directs, following a rubbly route toward one of the higher hilltops.

A column of light makes the way easy to see, and you easier.



Kalira: Kalira pokes and prods everyone into packing quickly. Her own packing is slow but all she's got is her bedroll, so she's ready quick.



banana (GM): Of course there's movement out there, on the far edge of the radius it casts. Vanishing shadows in the clefts.



Ghol, Going East: It was the right bet, at least. Ghol's weapons are in hand.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax glares down at everyone from the mast of the ship.



Ghol, Going East: He looks around. Person, the dragon elves -- are all the non-combatants safely aboard the ship?



banana (GM): The movement of the shadows behind is steady but their numbers are growing, as if more people are drifting in as they follow you, called by some command or simply by the light.



Skeleton: Skeleton's constantly twisting sker hood to and fro, watching to see what detaches from the darkness first, but is as likely as not to get blindsided.



banana (GM): I don't know if it's reasonable to call Person a non-combatant per se, although he's evinced a dislike for fights under many circumstances..

(yes)



Kalira: Kalira cuts a dramatic figure, standing on the prow of the ship, sword drawn. "We're definitely about to have company, I'd say."

Ghol, Going East: Can we get the ship inside the hill's defensive perimeter?



Travis Meacham: "It's too bad this thing isn't moving faster."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax spins on the mast to the direction of their pursuers before letting out the loudest roar he can manage.



banana (GM): You can, because it simply drifts through a mound of rocks like they weren't there. One should have risen above the bow, but on the spirit vessel's deck, there's nothing at all; Kalira feels a chill as she passes through where it would have been.



Ghol, Going East: Let's hope the rocks are more effective barriers to anything else trying to get through them. Otherwise, this is going to be a real short last stand.



Travis Meacham: "On the other hand, maybe it's good this isn't moving faster. It might carry us to our graves."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax leaps down off the mast, landing next to Travis, before punching him in the shoulder, "That was terrible."



banana (GM): The hillock is surrounded by jagged, outward-pointing basalt. They're not exactly sharpened stakes, but it's much easier to go down than up, and you can see for a long way... there! On the edge of light: ragged figures, men and and elf- shambling forward, fear on their faces, driven by what..?
The boat halts. The beacon goes out.



Ghol, Going East: "We need light!"



Skeleton: Skeleton hasn't got a torch or anything. Ske looks to Travis, who can surely ignite his wand or something.



Ghol, Going East: How long to dawn? What color the sky in the east?



banana (GM): Half a glass. It's the thick grey that comes before colour.



Ghol, Going East: "Xarvrax, light some shit on fire!"



Xarvrax: Xarvrax breathes into his hands, the lightning flashing brightly against his scales, before leaving them glowing brightly.



banana (GM): Noise, now: you can't hear them any more, but you can hear them, stumbling around rocks and banging into things. The force is large but oddly uncoordinated.
*can't see them anymore
You *can* see each other, thanks to Xarvrax's light. Everyone's here and intact, even the cat.
Placidus is still asleep.



Ghol, Going East: Great.
No Placidus. But at least we have the cat.



banana (GM): There's no way he should have slept through this and the movement, but after all, there is no moon in the sky.



Skeleton: Well, nothing for it. "WHO'S OUT THERE? HEY!"



banana (GM): Noise stills, a little. They're gathering but keeping away.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax roars again, quieter as to not blow out everyone else's eardrums, "Show yourselves now, or I'll tear your throats out myself when I find you!"



Ghol, Going East: Ghol just grips his weapons and waits.



Travis Meacham: back again



banana (GM): There's an answering cry from a few throats. Just yelling, a response in aggressive kind, but abruptly it cuts off. You hear a thumping noise in the darkness down the hillside, and gasps of either anger or fear. More boots on the ground, as well.



Kalira: "This is going to get weird, isn't it."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax blinks at her, "Look at us, and tell me it wasn't already weird."



Kalira: "Well, I know you're weird."



Skeleton: "This- I'm not sure what to- I guess get to the top and wait for sun?"



banana (GM): Minutes of muffled movement pass. The sky in the east acquires a tinge of grey that begins to colour. Some say that the Great Red Wyrms flies off the edge of the Realm every night, the earth unable to bear his presence for more than half a day, and that when he returns from the sea, his fire is visible as the sun.

It's barely enough light to make out silhouettes against the rocks, even for you who're looking DOWN the hill, but they charge. Roll initiative.



Ghol, Going East: rolling d20+4

(5)+4

= 9

pfeh



Kalira: rolling 1d20+2 init

(12)+2

= 14

rolling 1d20+2 init again

(12)+2

= 14

lol




Xarvrax: rolling d20 + 4

(6)+4

= **10**




Travis Meacham: rolling 1d20+5

() + 5

= **7**



Xarvrax: rolling d20 + 4 again

() + 4

= **14**

Woo.

We're missing a spooky scary skeleton.



Skeleton: **10** init



Xarvrax: Uh, I'm on there twice?



Skeleton: don't TELL him! just take your extra turn!



Kalira: xarvrax and i should both be at 14



banana (GM): gimme sec to move things

ok!

[d20+4 init]

[d20+4] init

i've forgotten how to roll dice.

14 init



banana (GM): **8** other init



Ghol, Going East: Kalira's token seems not to have green/blue bars
for me



banana (GM): permissions adjusted

ok, can everyone see everything?



Xarvrax: Yep.

Though we're not on init anymore.




banana (GM): what!


omg is it your tokens on the other map whicha re on init.

i will fix this.




Travis Meacham: the sad man silhouette lol

 **Skeleton:** nobody knows what it's like

 **banana (GM):** Somewhere in the Ourdlines, days south of Chorizon, past the blasted wood and the sheep farms: a battle.


Silhouettes are rushing you from as many sides as they've been able to reach. They're not well nourished figures, but they are armed, and there are many of them.

 **Xarvrax:** Oh right.

rolling d6


(4)


= 4

 **banana (GM):** Hanging back, behind the mass of bandits, are people who look different- differently sized, or shaped, or something. You can barely see.

 **Xarvrax:** Grrrr.

 **Kalira:** cHaOs


 **banana (GM):** Everyone's on edge, but Xarvrax and Kalira are on the cutting edge. Of initiative. Because they rolled the highest, and can act first.

 **Travis Meacham:** "You all should stop this. Many will lose their lives to no gain."


 **banana (GM):** A bandit: "You'll bleed like the shepherds and yield us the magic ship!"

 **VoxPVoxD:** whoa hey

 **Ghol, Going East:** Placidus awakes, just in time


 **banana (GM):** Others: "Yeah! Rargh! Hey!" ..but they DON'T sound enthusiastic. They sound afraid, and they hesitate to rush you.


 **Placidus:** "Gah?!"


 **banana (GM):** Placidus, at the final sinking of what would be the moon, wakes.


(roll init)

 **Placidus:** 20 initiative


 **Ghol, Going East:** lol

 **Travis Meacham:** Can we just ... give emt he ship?

 **Xarvrax:** Well you go first then.

 **banana (GM):** He's been moved in his sleep, to a hilltop surrounded by jagged rock. It's the moment before dawn. Shadows are attacking.

There's Kalira drawing her sword, about to act..

 **Kalira:** No, we can't. Mottle gave it to us, not them. They don't deserve it.



Xarvrax: "Welcome to the land of the living and soon to be dead!" Xarvrax laughs.



Placidus: focus go



Xarvrax: rolling d20

(14)

= 14



banana (GM): The bandits furthest back seem inclined to let their colleagues go in first, do the hard work of the rush up the jagged rocks.. but it's causing some sort of dissent. There's a cry from down there, and blood.



Skeleton: "You guys should REALLY quit it! I'm serious!"



Placidus: Placidus slept poorly, having been up late looking at the sky. He fell asleep with wand in hand, though, after Kalira and Ghol roused him with their watch-conference. His gaze settles on the first of the shadows. That is sufficient. "Hmmm. Hmmmmm. Hmmmmmmmmmmmm."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax roars, a second set of scales shimmering over his briefly. +2 AC bonus until I get missed with an attack that targets it.

rolling d6

(2)

= 2



Placidus: Placidus's 'hms' dissolve into a steady humming.



Xarvrax: rolling d6

(6)

= 6

Hmm, that might come in handy.

rolling d100

(69)

= 69



banana (GM): probable



Kalira: so what's the deal with the hill. how do i move down here



Xarvrax: rolling d8

(6)



banana (GM): ok: the contours are lines of elevation. Moving uphill is difficult, and you can only cross one line upwards in a turn
or in a move action, rather



Placidus: when considering the bottom of the hill from the top, are the shades 'nearby'?



banana (GM): i'm going to say that anything within TWO lines is nearby (e.g. a projectile can cross one and still be Near). beyond that is far



Placidus: ok



Kalira: Kalira's just going to brace up then, and get ready to fight anyone who comes up the hill at her.
incidentally i still have four floating command points from Destined to Lead, all from demigod



banana (GM): are you delaying for a triggered action or anything like that



Kalira: (ready action, attack anyone who enters melee. you can do that in 13a i think?)



banana (GM): you can yeah, there's a sidebar



Xarvrax: Xarvrax suddenly shivers after the scales lay over him, shrinking considerably, his features morphing into something not quite draconic.



banana (GM): The bandits come. They don't come willingly. but in terror as much as rage. Whatever's at their backs, they might hate it more than you- but they DO want your money, and your food, and your treasure.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax looks himself over, "A halfling? Really? Some days I hate chaos."



Travis Meacham: lol



Skeleton: "Uhh."



banana (GM): The good news is none of them have bows. The bad news is that they're tough men used to living by violence and more than half a dozen are almost upon you.
The other good news is that it's Skeleton's turn~



Skeleton: are these mooks?



banana (GM): no



Skeleton: problematic. well, i'll use chant of endings on whoever's got lowest hp and is nearby



banana (GM): They have knives, whips, clubs... and moxie. Moxie enough that if you want to aoe them you'll have to do it properly.

That's a whole bunch of people, pick one!

you can click and hold on a point to signal



Skeleton: **28** vs. will for **21** negative energy on... whoever ghol wants to attack, basically, assume he's clearly preparing to strike

Placidus: nice



Ghol, Going East: He is



Kalira: Kalira looks Xarvrax over. "I'd say this will probably be humbling, but who am I kidding?" She laughs. "Maybe you should throw that rock away. I think it's contagious."



banana (GM): A deluge of something horrible sends the hillman staggering almost onto the rocks.



Skeleton: Skeleton twists around, looking at the oncoming brigands or murderers or whoever these are. Ske searches and searches, but can't find that short-lived, collective soul that tends to stretch between members of a platoon or army - these people don't seem to be weak or cohesive enough to produce one that's exploitable. Time for an old standby, then - swaying on sker feet, clacking and chanting, Skeleton causes a nimbus of silver-edged black to stretch out from around sker body in tandem to one that collapses onto the chest and heart of the nearest bandit.

Bandits: The time-honoured cry goes up: "KILL THE ONE IN THE DRESS!"



Ghol, Going East: "Fuck this. Witness the star before morning." And suddenly, Ghol's eyes blaze green.

hammer of faith as a quick action
moving to the guy Skeleton tagged



banana (GM): Ghol's in a narrow cleft, there- nobody can get past him without difficulty, fyi



Ghol, Going East: attacking
good.

rolling 1d20+9

(9)+9

= 18

rolling 3d12+6

(11 + 6 + 2)+6

= 25

ON MISS: 3 DAMAGE
even



Ghol, Going East: rolling 1d20+9

(5)+9

= 14

rolling 3d12+6

(11 + 5 + 4)+6

= 26

ON MISS: 3 DAMAGE; damage caused by the Knife takes twice as long to heal.



Skeleton: brutal



banana (GM): a strike
not quite two



Kalira: i have a reroll



Ghol, Going East: for the second attack?



Xarvrax: That was a 9 though?



Kalira: but does ghol want Dark Blessings...



banana (GM): the first hit gets him



Kalira: yeah i can spend 2 command points to let you reroll it



Ghol, Going East: oh does that fell him



Kalira: guess not in that case



banana (GM): yeah, he dies of the first hit for 25



Ghol, Going East: in that case Kon moves next to Ghol to block the chokepoint, done



Skeleton: that guy already got negged,i doubt it'd have been worth it



banana (GM): Weakend by the LOSS OF A SOUL THAT SKELETON TOOK, he crumples under your assault.



Skeleton: Hey, Skeleton doesn't, like, make a PRACTICE of soul-reaving. Ske just sort of reminds people and things that they're mortal.



Travis Meacham: Skeleton is definitely crazy immoral.



Placidus: But sanely immortal.

Smaller figure: "Forward and around the rocks! Take them from the hill top and remove tactical advantage! Move as one with your pack!"



Skeleton: The afflicted generally go cold and pale and withered before crumpling softly to the ground.



Xarvrax: I mean, no one here can talk, least of all captain head exploder.



banana (GM): You can't really see them in the bare sliver of dawn's light, but the figures behind the bandits inspire as well as terrify - and they're delivering sound tactical advice. While they still rant, the bandits have +2 to attack and damage per driver.



Kalira: Well. We need to take care of that, then.



banana (GM): Travis is best placed to for a moment.



Travis Meacham: This seems like a time to use my second cast of Force Salvo

Person: Person is sitting in the shadow of the boat, arms round his knees, sheltering the cultists - and the cat. "I'm sorry," he tells them.



Travis Meacham: so i get 6 bolts



banana (GM): coincidentally, there are six people Nearby you



Travis Meacham: it can reach near OR far



banana (GM): :o



Travis Meacham: so im gonna target the 2 drivers, the 3 guys within 1 of us, and just to mix it up, the guy to my west



banana (GM): got it
i'll take your rolls in that order




Travis Meacham: all vs pd



Skeleton: unfortunately, skeleton has no way of delivering pinpoint damage at long range. once we get to escalation 3+ something exciting might happen, though




Travis Meacham: rolling 1d20+10

() + 10


= **20**

rolling 1d20+10

() + 10


= **24**

rolling 1d20+10

() + 10


= **17**

rolling 1d20+10

() + 10

= **25**

rolling 1d20+10

() + 10

= **17**

rolling 1d20+10

(**19**)+10

= **29**



Skeleton: holy moly



Placidus: noice



banana (GM): vs?



Xarvrax: I have a way of dealing with it.



Travis Meacham: PD



Skeleton: you should use double brackets to do neat lil rolls like this **5** riidi



Travis Meacham: do i roll separatre damage or one damage roll?



Placidus: trigger on one of the ones tagging a driver, btw



banana (GM): miss, hit, hit, hit, hit, hit, hit

one damage roll

ok, only one of them hits a driver



Travis Meacham: **28**



Placidus: oh wait no I can't, those are far



Travis Meacham: Pretty solid damage roll too. Get some.



Xarvrax: Hmmm... Now I'm really tempted to blargh...



Placidus: aren't we all



banana (GM): are you triggering on a bandit?



Placidus: are there any that aren't dead?



banana (GM): yeah, travis didn't kill any!

he just, very badly hurt all of them



Placidus: oh, then yes

md or pd lower



banana (GM): md





Travis Meacham: That's what we call a nonlethal barrage.




Placidus: **12** vs md on the one due north of travis then


no!!


 **banana (GM):** dang, it actually almost misses

 **Placidus:** lmao does it still hit


 **banana (GM):** literally yes

 **Placidus:** **14** travis's spell does this much more damage to that guy then

 **Skeleton:** i guess if you're the bandit minion of some little shouty guy you don't have much will


 **banana (GM):** i would not describe these ragged hillsmen, coming out of shadow to your beacon at the behest of some darker threat, as 'high level'
someone flavour that!!
while we


ESCALATE


 **Placidus:** the beauty of it is, because I rolled a 3
even though I hit
I retain focus
so, top of the turn, rebuke attack on the one east of xarvrax
17 vs md


 **banana (GM):** hit

 **Placidus:** **14** psychic

 **banana (GM):** There's no space for pause after the arcane barrage; Placidus's noise follows, invading minds with great white round visions. Two already-charred men topple down the steep hillock.


 **Placidus:** and focus go obv


 **banana (GM):** Xarvrax is up. So far their assault hasn't been too effective, so presumably you're going to be fine no matter what

 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax sighs, before suddenly blinking out of existance.


Person: "Kelly skeleton."

"Is necromancy evil because it kills, or for some other reason?"

 **Xarvrax:** Suddenly he's between the two larger groups, swaying slightly, "I'd say you guys should back up, but I'd rather you didn't."

 **Placidus:** Placidus holds his wand up like he's testing the air. The noise isn't as bassy or profound as normal - it's coming from Placidus's own throat now. The effect seems to be the same, as one of Travis's missiles shatters and shreds a bandit where he stands, and another bandit falls to his knees clutching the sides of his head before lying still.

Bandit: "A dragon! We'll dine on rare flesh!"

 **Skeleton:** "Well, that's"(EEEEEEEE, OOOOUUUARRRRRGH, etc. go the echoing, half-real howls of the dead) "a complicated and somewhat political question-"



Xarvrax: Because he's feeling a bit BLARRRRRGH today, "Actually, I'm a halfling right now, sorry."

Person: "This is incredibly important."



Placidus: Ugh. Revolting. You need to cook dragon to at least medium rare.



Xarvrax: rolling d6

(6)

= 6



Kalira: good.



Xarvrax: Well hello beautiful.

Person: "When is it ok to fight? IS it ok to beat people and become them, in death, in life, in personhood?"



Travis Meacham: "It's evil because it is the tool used to enslave souls for eternity."



Xarvrax: rolling d20 + 8

(4)+8

= 12



Travis Meacham: That is the doctrine of the dragon empire.



Xarvrax: Mother fucker.

Do I roll individually, or am I just boned?



Kalira: well you roll an attack for each person



Skeleton: "Necromancy's, er, UNPOPULAR and dangerous to wield on a practical level because it's the domain of the Wizard King and therefore opposed to the Conqueror's empire in Axis and so on."



banana (GM): individually



Xarvrax: Oh good.



Kalira: and then damage is the thing you roll only once



Xarvrax: I guess we'll start from the far left?

Person: "So the problem - " men scream and crack whips toward Xarvrax -" there is a political element, but it's because you dominate people unfairly."



Xarvrax: rolling d20 + 8


(8)+8

= **16**

rolling d20 + 8

(**20**)+8

= **28**

 **banana (GM):** where's the far left + how many people are you attacking?



Xarvrax: rolling d20 + 8

(**9**)+8

= **17**

rolling d20 + 8

(**9**)+8

= **17**

rolling d20 + 8

(**1**)+8

= **9**

Son of a bitch, the one guy I wanted to make sure got murdered, and I roll a one.



Skeleton: "Separately, I suppose people object to the quickening of their inevitable deaths, the twisting, reaving, or domination of their souls, and such. But I'm just doing the first one presently!"



Xarvrax: That's the far left, and it's 6 people.



banana (GM): ok i'm guessing the attack is vs the three to your left and the three to your right



Xarvrax: Yeah.



banana (GM): you've hit all but the driver, then even the first guy



Xarvrax: rolling 6d6

(**2** + **1** + **2** + **3** + **5** + **3**)

= **16**

Person: "This is _not about you_."



Xarvrax: They all take 16, except for the crit guy.

Is he dead, or no?

Urgently: : "So if a fight would be a foregone conclusion- if you would certainly win, and the consequence of victory is domination, enslavement, the subordination of the will- an eternal memory of failure locked within! A self-improvement that is the consummation of all who came before, a taking-that-never-ends! Is it wrong to accept that fight!"

Person: Urgently: "So if a fight would be a foregone conclusion- if you would certainly win, and the consequence of victory is domination, enslavement, the subordination of the will- an eternal memory of failure locked within! A self-improvement that is the consummation of all who came before, a taking-that-never-ends! Is it wrong to accept that fight!"



banana (GM): crit is double damage? yeah, that kills



Kalira: "What?" That's a hell of a speech.



Xarvrax: Okay, so everyone else takes 16, the driver takes 3, and fun times begin, from the left again.



Travis Meacham: Be careful how you answer Person here, lol



banana (GM): It's a bit hard to pay attention, too.



Skeleton: "Oh. Well, either way, that's the main thrust- what? Um. ...let me think."



banana (GM): Timing could be better.



Xarvrax: rolling d4

(1)

= 1

rolling d4

(1)

= 1

rolling d4

(2)

= 2

rolling d4

(2)

= 2

So the left two are dazed, and the right two are weakened.

And now for fun end of turn things.



Xarvrax: rolling d6

(5)

= 5



banana (GM): unfortunate (for them)



Xarvrax: Woo

rolling d11

(11)

= 11

rolling d6

(1)

= 1

rolling d11

(4)

= 4



banana (GM): Power's coming down the hill at these people. They asked for it, near literally. As you probably could have guessed, Xarvrax has decided he doesn't need the shelter of the hilltop.



Xarvrax: rolling d100

(75)

= 75



Travis Meacham: *chaos mage just hurls all kinds of dice all over the place*



banana (GM): Kalira's up, with Person raving distractingly behind her.



Placidus: Placidus's humming bubbles into words that rattle Skeleton's sternum and Person's whatever-Person-is-made-of. "What if whoever wins the fight is in the right by definition?"



Skeleton: "Do you mean... is it wrong for YOU to, erm, prosecute a fight that YOU would win, if the result is you'd sort of consume and enslave the loser, and so sort of carry their loss around forever?"
"Just to - to make sure I'm understanding you."


Xarvrax: Xarvrax shudders again, before a cloud of smoke explodes from him, and he's a dragon

again.

Person: "Is that not okay?"

Xarvrax: Xarvrax looks around, "That was weird.

Kalira: rolling 1d20+8 vs AC

() + 8

= **10**

ah yes. well. 3 damage, and that's my turn

Kalira starts to advance down the hill. Got to take out those drivers.

Person: To Placidus: "There are a lot of definitions just on this hill."

Placidus: "Each of us needs only one."

banana (GM): Bandits fall back before her, which is gratifying, but they don't just drop dead of fear or anything, which is less so.

Whipped into a frenzy of fear and greed now, they fall upon the presented targets.

Kalira: i'm briefly afk but if ghol wants it, i have a command for Charge! that will let him move + attack as a standard

Skeleton: "I'm not, you know, I'm not a philosopher or anything, so I don't know if I can speak with authority on questions of morals...? But I think eternally enslaving someone's wrong, and PROBABLY most people would agree unless the someone being enslaved was, I don't know, really deserved it, or that was the only way to stop them doing something worse, or they weren't a person, or something. Small p person."

banana (GM): The two nearest Xarvrax break away to prevent him from getting to their master - he catches a glimpse in the strengthening light, a much shorter humanoid crouching in a fighting stance. Kalira's surrounded, and one has crept all the way around to get to Placidus at the top of the hill.

Placidus: "How many Persons are there?"

Person: "There's another way to stop them, it's just somewhat impolite."

Xarvrax: Oh man, don't kill that one on the inside.

banana (GM): bandit attacks - vs xarvrax they use whips, so as not to spoil the scales. they grasp and clutch..!

Xarvrax: He's going to get a very nasty surprise.
The one right above Kalira, that is.

Skeleton: "Well, what is it? Because off the top of my head what people are probably okay with enslaving might include, I don't know... demons you can't banish, or mindless golems, or."

banana (GM): whip: **22** vs PD, **10** damage and knocked prone

whip: **12** vs PD, **10** damage and knocked prone



Xarvrax: Of course they target PD.

The second one misses.



Placidus: My PD? 3D, of course.



banana (GM): vs placidus also, a whip - note that if they make OAs while you are prone, they get a bonus, so Consider Spells Wisely. **15** vs PD, **10** damage and knocked prone



Travis Meacham: Placidus: My PD? 3D, of course.



banana (GM): for Kalira, they go straight for the knives. she looks like she could hold off a man with a sword, but three?



Travis Meacham: i hope the impolite way is utterly annihilating them



banana (GM): sword: **11** vs AC, **10** damage

sword: **16** vs AC, **10** damage

sword: **27** vs AC, **10** damage



Travis Meacham: and our advice to eprson makes him, once he fully highlands every other Person, a brain damaged lunatic



Kalira: one hit



Placidus: my pd is 14, so that's a hit, so trigger

27 vs md



banana (GM): hit



Placidus: extra trigger

[] BITTER REVELATION (1/Battle Racial Power) No Action

- Trigger: I roll a natural 16+ on an attack

- The target is dazed until the end of my next turn.

Person: "It turned out the mindlessness was a matter of degree."



Skeleton: alright, still no applicable dailies here so skeleton's just going to repeat chant of endings. this mandatorily targets the nearby enemy with the least health: **28** for **25** negative energy damage

Person: "Like I said, it's impolite. I apologise."



banana (GM): He turns and bolts.



Placidus: **26** psychic damage

"Well done."



Skeleton: also, if whoever i just hit is different from whoever placidus hit, i'm ALSO going to use my racial pwoer to daze them until the end of my next turn



banana (GM): well, placidus kills the guy next to him BEFORE skeleton can so skeleton, then, gets the next

Skeleton: (unless that's sufficient to just kill them, i mean)



Xarvrax: Aww, that was the one I was hoping to do mean things to, oh well.



banana (GM): It is. They're doing some damage, but starting to run out of numbers.



Ghol, Going East: Do we have enough of this situation under control that Ghol should head bottom left or right, or should he stay home and help Kalira/Xarvrax...



Placidus: The guy who goes to whip Placidus finds himself staring in horror at the little gnome before falling to a kneeling position, mumbling a string of nonsense syllables, and collapsing. He's stone dead.



Kalira: Ghol should probably charge the dude all by himself that's giving them attack and damage bonuses.



Ghol, Going East: can i reach + attack him with my move plus your charge
the charge you grant me, that is



banana (GM): yes



Xarvrax: 1Go right.



Skeleton: "What? Hey, where are- hey!" Skeleton holds out a hand in the retreating Person's direction, but is too busy killing people to do much else. A chilling, suffocating pall is descending across the battlefield, pressing down on the shoulders and in on the chests of all the approaching bandits. Each can feel death closing in... but each can feel, too, that they don't have to outrun the bear, just their frailest friend.



Ghol, Going East: ok



Skeleton: After a moment's pressure, the weakest of the bandits gasps and desaturates.




Xarvrax: I'm bringing our friend to the left in fro a little chat on my turn.






Ghol, Going East: Ghol's not paying attention to the rest of the combat, not anymore -- he's glimpsed the actual enemy leader. Or something...approximating that.

rolling 1d20+10

() + 10

= **14**

rolling 3d12+6

( +  + ) + 6

= **22**

ON MISS: 3 DAMAGE



Kalira: Kalira points with her sword to one of the leaders. "Now, Ghol! While he's alone!"



Ghol, Going East: even, so




banana (GM): even is reroll?




Ghol, Going East:

rolling 1d20+10

() + 10

= **30**

rolling 3d12+6

( +  + ) + 6

= **27**

ON MISS: 3 DAMAGE; damage caused by the Knife takes twice as long to heal.

indeed it is

er

off hand roll



Ghol, Going East: not reroll



Xarvrax: So I think that guy is probably dead now.

Because that's at least 54 damage.



banana (GM): Ghol rushes downhill with the rising sun at his back. He swings at a robed figure about the height of a dwarf, arms and waist bound in leather wraps that go around the robe.



Placidus: ghol killed the shit out of that dude



Travis Meacham: so did person run away because he wants to go snarf up some more persons or because it wouldnt be fair for him to kill us



banana (GM): He cuts away the garment and runs his sword clean through at the neck, bringing it down through the chest. The blow would carve entirely through a man. It does.

Beneath the riven garment is a creature of gears and shafts, piston-arms attached at crazy angles to a sharp-smooth tangle of machinery.



Ghol, Going East: "YOU FEAR THE SUN? YOU FEAR THE LIGHT? FEAR ME."



banana (GM): It approximates humanoid, and its face is a wondrous mechanism, chromium lips twisting into a snarl. Bolts and parts fall from its center where the heart should have been.

Then it strikes with incredible speed.



Ghol, Going East: Kon still hasn't moved..

though he probably can't reach this guy anyway



banana (GM): ah shit, i didn't have healthbars on before did i


well, trust me, the green one was half full before your attack just now





Travis Meacham: you did not have health bars




Ghol, Going East: is he at 1 HP or is this a death animation

 **Skeleton:** yeah there weren't bars

 **banana (GM):** he is at 0 of the green bar, but is not dead


 **Ghol, Going East:** I see

 **banana (GM):** (feel free to have kon act though)


The mechanical being had a weapon, but Ghol's precise strike has already disarmed it- so it tries delivering a blows to his throat with one metal arm, and a knee to the chest. It's fast enough that it might even work.


apex kata, **27** vs ac, 8 damage and slowed

 **Skeleton:** ooof

 **Kon:** Kon moves after his master, and--
Ow.


 **Ghol, Going East:** hit

 **Xarvrax:** That's actually a crit even too.

 **Ghol, Going East:** actually he goes there and attacks this guyh

 **Kon:** Kon, that is

rolling 1d20+9


()+9

= **11**


rolling 2d6


( + )


= **12**

 **banana (GM):** The blow's harder than an arm should be able to manage, leaving Ghol bruised - but the real oddity is in what happens to his body as it lands. Everything seems to slow down, all muscle movements and thought struggling, like the presence of the creature is impairing the passage of time.

 **Kon:** teh

 **banana (GM):** kon does not hit, however
Maybe he's distracted...

 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol's mouth won't work, but even though he can't speak -- this thing will pay.

 **banana (GM):** Its moves and blows are completely silent. Travis, Skeleton and Placidus can only see *shapes* from the hill - but that makes their recognition easier.

Parts of it are still falling to the rough soil. Ghol's original blow seemed lethal. How it's still moving, or what the consequences are, you're not certain... but the other one is rushing to its side.

(since it had its init also just then)

it's travis's go though



Placidus: "Ghol!"



Ghol, Going East: "GAH"



Travis Meacham: and you said you can cross ONE line and itll still be a "near" attack?



banana (GM): yes



Travis Meacham: well i actually dont have anytrhing that can hit Far
so ill come down off the hilltop
and then shoot a frost ray at ther north guy on xarvrax



banana (GM): he won't appreciate it.



Travis Meacham: 27 vs PD



banana (GM): hit



Travis Meacham: for 10



banana (GM): enacted
if that's it, then we're Placidus



Travis Meacham: well dang i hoped he'd die.t hats my turn i guess.



banana (GM): vov he went from 14 to 4

plus two



Placidus: how many of these contour lines can you move at once



banana (GM): across one upwards or two downwards
per move action
hence their somewhat pathetic initial rush



Placidus: minor, focus, then I'll move down three with two move actions



Skeleton: pathetic initial rush achieves nothing



Travis Meacham: this



Placidus: go

Placidus skids down the hill, his boots kicking up gravel as he descends. The rising sun throws his shadow on Ghol and the little Person, and the shadow gesticulates furiously even as Placidus's arms are held steady for balance.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax gets up, dusting off his scales before smirking at the two now clear Persons, "Sorry boys, but I'm feeling a little legitimate today, " and then snapping his fingers as the shadows of dawn wrap around the one rushing at Ghol, and the bandit between Kalira and Kon.

rolling 2d6

(3 + 6)

= 9

The clouds then suddenly disperse, showing that the two have swapped, and look a little worse for wear because of it.



banana (GM): The one facing Ghol is falling to bits, but the other's coming up behind it, flinging open its robe - less belts on this guy. Similar but not identical metal gleams in the dawn light, rivets and welds and bends of many mechanical pieces forming an elegant whole.

wha?!



Xarvrax: No no.

Not those two.

The not hurt one, and the dazed guy.

Yeah, there we go.



banana (GM): The clothes-shedding person gives a cry of rage. "My prize! My legacy!"



Xarvrax: Xarvrax chuckles a little, "No going to save your friend now,"



banana (GM): The moment the light fades it's turning away, searching for a way back.



Xarvrax: rolling d6

(1)

= 1



Kalira: i'm gonna chop him one now that he's arrived



Xarvrax: rolling d6

(6)

= 6



Kalira: rolling 1d20+8 come on. vs ac

(17)+8

= 25

well, at least it's not a miss for once



banana (GM): hit



Xarvrax: rolling d100

(86)

= 86



Kalira: rolling 3d10+5 damage

(1 + 6 + 7)+5

= 19

rolling 1d4 command points

(1)

= 1

person: "Born person. A sword that isn't even you."



banana (GM): It reels under the blow, but stands firm. Its eyes burn like lamps, glaring contempt.



Kalira: "Maybe not. But it'll do."



Xarvrax: Xarvrax suddenly takes on a ghostly quality, fading slightly from view, "Hey! I didn't separate! What the hell is going on?"



banana (GM): *stands firm



Kalira: "We've met before. I think that I'd like to not meet again."



banana (GM): "You kept your promise to find another. Where is he? Where did he go?"

skeleton's up unless kalira has more - no wait it's the bandits turn

their token got lost



Skeleton: on my turn, i wanna move so i'm Near all our enemies in preparation for next turn, so tell me where that'd be. next to xarvrax maybe?

but yeah, glhf bandits



banana (GM): One goes for Ghol - but approaching, he stumbles. Whatever field of surcease the unmasked, damaged person is shedding, the same thing that afflicts Ghol's body is now encompassing the bandit too. Slowly, he strikes.

11 vs ac (the damaged person no longer provides him +2), 8 damage



Ghol, Going East: miss



banana (GM): Is Xarvrax still prone?



Xarvrax: Nope.

My move action was getting up.



banana (GM): then they try and put you back on the ground

27 vs pd, 8, prone

27 vs pd, 8, prone

whoa

uh, take 32 damage i guess



Skeleton: ._.



Placidus: is xarvrax staggered
yes? then trigger



Xarvrax: Wait.



Travis Meacham: Blam! Blap!



Xarvrax: Those guys are weakened.

People: "The dragon falls, as did the White. We will-" They start speaking in unison, but the last word is different from each polished mouth. The one that's fighting Kalira says: "-triumph." The one that's falling apart says: "-continue."



Kalira: i think that just means a malus to attack rolls, which unfortunately doesn't help when they double 20'd you



banana (GM): so they are



Xarvrax: I guess it doesn't matter, yeah.



Kalira: not sure though



banana (GM): but yes, weakened is -4 to hit



Travis Meacham: i guess the white dragon being the moon would make mythic sense



banana (GM): and they eeach rolled 20



Placidus: okay so, trigger here

28 vs md I believe



banana (GM): More bandits are storming up the hill toward Kalira and Xarvrax - they WERE guarding a person, but he left them behind with sheer speed.

One is already next to Kalira, so just keeps fighting.



Placidus: **15** psychic damage and vulnerable (save ends)



banana (GM): **16** vs ac, 8 damage



Placidus: idk which one of them staggered xarvrax, but that's the one that gets hit



Kalira: nope



banana (GM): 15 kills that guy
a fair penalty, imo





Skeleton: the guilty pay the price.

Damaged person: To the other: "You're pressed. The leadership might be mine."


Surrounded person: To his brother: "No, it won't."

 **banana (GM):** actually, it's skeleton that pays the price, of having a turn


 **Placidus:** Placidus hums, and the shadow that threw itself over Ghol vanishes. It pools at the feet of the bandit who drags Xarvrax to the ground, and he finds his own position unsteady. His whip winds around his own wrist and he falls to the ground with the dragon's momentum. His eyes are glassy and vacant as they stare up at the sky.

 **Skeleton:** am i Near every enemy, here?

 **banana (GM):** actually, yes

 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax turns to the person to his left, eyes glowing white with rage before roaring at him, "Even if I fall here today, you will be ended! Do you hear me? My kind will hunt you to the ends of the earth, and rend you into innumerable pieces!"


 **banana (GM):** the battle's moved to this side of the hill


 **Skeleton:** cool. that sets me up for NEXT turn. this turn i'll chant yet again
31 vs md of lowest hp enemy, **16** negative energy damage


Surrounded person: "It's been done." It's hard to tell whether it's a joke. It SOUNDS like a joke, like Person occasionally sounds like he's joking, but the humour is esoteric at best.


 **banana (GM):** Xarvrax's other assailant is slaughtered.


 **Travis Meacham:** "It has, hasn't it?"


 **banana (GM):** The last bandits are sweating in fear- you can smell it. They glance down the hill, at the dark valleys, where there might be safety - at the creatures who drove them to attack you who grin in warning.


 **Skeleton:** Skeleton draws forward, sker animus boiling a silvery blue around sker and the pool of shadow ske walks in oozing forward to follow. The persons and people both begin to feel their tendons tighten, eyes dim, and metabolisms wind down. The black wind howls, and one of them, ONE of them, will surely - ah, that one.


 **Travis Meacham:** "Why are you persons attacking us?"


 **banana (GM):** Ghol faces a person collapsing but still lethal.


 **Ghol, Going East:** "Slow" means he can't take a move action, right?


 **Placidus:** "You won't overcome us, you know."


 **banana (GM):** Both of them: "Give us the other person like us. Let us past to achieve."
ghol: that's right


 **Kalira:** "No. Leave or be destroyed."


 **Travis Meacham:** "That one fled because you were beneath him."


 **Ghol, Going East:** Is there any mechanical point, whatsoever, to continuing to attack the guy at 0
I assume not

 **banana (GM):** you can deal damage to him


 **Ghol, Going East:** I see.

 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax cackles madly, "You two think that after what you've said and done here, I'll give in, or even let you live?" The cackling gets even louder now, "You're even funnier than our Person is!"

 **Ghol, Going East:** Ghol will hit him first and transition to the other one if necessary.

 **Placidus:** maybe they've got the same death threshold pcs do
but, get to keep going
until they're dead-dead

 **Ghol, Going East:** rolling 1d20+11

() + 11


= **12**

rolling 3d12+6

( +  + ) + 6


= **24**

ON MISS: 3 DAMAGE
jesus


 **banana (GM):** that's a very good guess


 **Placidus:** no!

 **Travis Meacham:** Good one.

 **banana (GM):** they are incapable of unconsciousness, essentially
like 4e revenants

 **Placidus:** Die Hard

 **Ghol, Going East:** I don't have a reroll, so that's my turn

 **banana (GM):** The face of the one Travis can see clearly goes utterly blank- the emotions that had been displayed by such finely-made actuating plates wiped away. Being called inferior has enraged it. Ghol swings and it ducks impossibly fast under the blade.

The less-damaged one gestures. Things whirl inside its chest- the parts which Ghol broke in the other.

There might have existed a possible Placidus, in some realm of madness or sanity, who could comprehend this - otherwise it's going to be difficult. Devices inside him engage with the world and turn it, taking a grip on something, dragging, holding...

Everyone engaged with the less-damaged person (Kalira, Kon, and the bandit, which it's deliberately engaged also) is slowed *and* cannot use the escalation die.

Well, it can be used to trigger powers etc

but not to actually add to attack rolls



Skeleton: oh, now that's a fuck



banana (GM): this is, by the way, a totally by-the-book enemy



Travis Meacham: it seems epic



Placidus: can I make an occultism roll to figure it out?



banana (GM): The other one can't emit the same level of control, but it punches Ghol in the head.



Placidus: brb though



banana (GM): yep!



Xarvrax: Ah yes, good old head punching.



banana (GM): 24 vs ac, 8 damage and slowed for a turn



Placidus: 24 unnatural philosophy



Ghol, Going East: lmao



Placidus: brb



Ghol, Going East: hit



banana (GM): travis up



Travis Meacham: so which of these enemies
if any
are "in a group"



Skeleton: seems like the two fighting ghol, and either three or all four sort of enmeshed with kalira/kon,
are arguably grouped



banana (GM): yes, i'd say the three on the far left are grouped
as are ghol's pair
actually, no
one of those three is on lower ground
so there are two groups of two each



Travis Meacham: i kind of want to crack ANOTHER daily on these guys
but maybe itd be better to just use a cyclic



Skeleton: this is battle no. 4
i'd use a cyclic and then a daily and then the cyclic again, though, because i LOVE sustain



Travis Meacham: yeah ill color spray the 2 guys fighting ghol
4 hopefully not a 1
okay

31 vs person [[1d20+12] vs unperson

26 vs unperson

thats MD



Xarvrax: Well.



Travis Meacham: and its **11** damage, and if they have 10 hp or less weakened



Kalira: three... time to go ham



Skeleton: ham_goer



banana (GM): sent pms for explanation as placidus would have once seen it and as he presently might
travis hits
specifically, he hits twice



Placidus: "My goodness."
"I KNEW it."



banana (GM): The bandit is weakened, and also terrified. That last isn't a status effect though

the situation escalates



banana (GM): Dawn breaks. A long thin arc of red fire hangs over the hilltops, casting long long shadows from the rocks and from the becalmed spirit vessel.



Travis Meacham: "What?"



Placidus: focus go



Travis Meacham: i hope



banana (GM): Every movement and blow of the fighting figures sends crazy skitterings of light and dark on the opposite cliffs. Spurting blood, too, seems shadow.



Travis Meacham: i EXPECT
that the person is also weakened
EVEN IF they're at - hp



banana (GM): yes, they are both weakened
it's on -14
which is less than 10



Placidus: "Machine-men... with machine-minds and machine-hearts. The clockwork demons... they hold the wheels of heaven and drag them to a halt."



Travis Meacham: ok whew



Placidus: "I know you! I've always known! I know you and name you! ZORIGAMI!"



Xarvrax: Xarvrax roars again following this.



Kalira: "So what does that mean, exactly?"



banana (GM): Two machined but dissimilar heads, assembled from parts and plates, swing in unison to face the gnome on the jutting part of the hill.



Xarvrax: rolling d6

(2)

= 2

Persons: "Is that what-" "-so that is what we are."



Xarvrax: This is at both persons.

rolling d20 + 10 vs PD Left

(15)+10

= 25



Placidus: Placidus's shadow quivers and splits, dividing into a series of incoherent smears of darkness, each one geometrically smaller than the next. They grow smaller, increasingly, relative to each other - a careful eye will notice that the proportion of each shadow to the next is roughly halved.



banana (GM): hit



Xarvrax: rolling d20 + 10 vs PD Right

(4)+10

= 14



banana (GM): miss



Xarvrax: rolling 6d6

(2 + 1 + 2 + 6 + 2 + 3)

= 16

rolling d4

(3)

= 3

So the left one takes 16 and is hampered.

And the right takes 3



Kalira: i wonder if hampered turns its power off?



Xarvrax: "I told you two I would end you, and I intend to make good on that promise!"

rolling d6

(4)

= 4



banana (GM): The one struck by most of Xarvrax's force cries coherently - a burr of oscillating noise, nothing that could be produced by a throat. It swings about, scrabbling on things not quite like feet or shoes, to face *away* from Kalira.



Kalira: in any case, since it's escalation 3 i activate Swordwork as a free action



Xarvrax: rolling d6

(4)

= 4

rolling d6

(3)

= 3



banana (GM): Whatever she's about to do... it doesn't care.



Xarvrax: Barf, the most boring of numbers.



banana (GM): (probably a mistake)



Kalira: do i get the escalation die restored



banana (GM): nah



Kalira: damn.



Skeleton: "...Zorigami?"



banana (GM): unless you disengage
Zorigami.




Kalira: rolling 1d20+5 vs AC

(12)+5

= 17





Travis Meacham: +5?


 **Kalira:** rolling 3d10+5 damage, or 3 on a miss


$$(\text{8} + \text{6} + \text{5}) + 5$$


$$= \mathbf{24}$$


 **Travis Meacham:** do you only have a +2 stat mod or soemhting?


 **Xarvrax:** What that means is that is doesn't get to do anything but normal attack.

 **Kalira:** i'm currently being denied the escalation die

 **Travis Meacham:** yeah but you still have your LEVEL

 **Kalira:** oh. right
duh
so that's a 20 then

 **banana (GM):** this is extremely relevant
hit

 **Kalira:** rolling 1d4 fight from the front


$$(\text{2})$$


$$= \mathbf{2}$$

rolling 1d20+8 swordwork attack

$$(\text{13}) + 8$$


$$= \mathbf{21}$$


 **banana (GM):** again hit
(assuming ac. its ac is 20, pd is higher)

 **Kalira:** rolling 3d10+5 have some more damage

$$(\text{4} + \text{8} + \text{8}) + 5$$

$$= \mathbf{25}$$

 **banana (GM):** The first blow breaks its clockwork and the normal course of events resumes with haste. The second, seeming to travel at twice the speed to Kalira's eyes, drives it to its knees. But the zorigami are FAST, and it wards away just enough of the blow to survive.
The other one gives a shout.

 **Kalira:** Kalira raises her sword up. "I don't care what you are. But with Mailer's aid, I'll take you apart." Her two-handed sword flashes once, twice, hurling mechanical parts in two directions... but it's not quite enough.



banana (GM): The bandits, at least, interpret this cry as a call to action.
Although... Charisma roll from Ghol, please
i'm not sure a guy on 2 hp wants to keep standing next to both you and the thing that attacked him EARLIER tonight



Ghol, Going East: rolling d20+3 ?

(6)+3

= 9

great, cool



banana (GM): Nah, maybe he'll get lucky and get rewarded. Honestly, the zorigamis' impending destruction heartens him.
23 vs ghol ac, 8 damage



Ghol, Going East: hit

Kalira's enemy: "Cover for me and you'll see what happens."



banana (GM): The bandits nearest him rush in. They're going to try and break Kalira and Kon away from it.
An attack with the whip: 17 vs pd, 4 damage and forced disengagement, vs kalira
An attack with the whip: 7 vs pd, 4 damage and forced disengagement, vs kon
An attack with the whip: 10 vs pd, 4 damage and forced disengagement, vs kon



Ghol, Going East: miss



Kalira: first one's a hit



banana (GM): Kalira is forced to back up the hill or be tripped.. but have you ever tried to trip a warg?



Ghol, Going East: miss
on both



Kalira: oh do i have to roll for disengage or get proned?



banana (GM): nope
you're just forcibly disengaged





Kalira: or just choose between them
oh okay





Skeleton: Placidus is broadly right about the core of Skeleton's power. Just casting the death out and letting it corrode the weakest link in the chain - that's entirely artless, pure instinctive flexing of ephemeral muscle. But while it's will and spiritual power that form the bedrock of Skeleton's magic, it's active focus and clarity that drive and hone the stuff, harnessing the raw energies of decay and embellishing and elaborating on them to work some real black miracles.


Ghol's enemy: "Actually, we'll see who sees what happens." He's not talking to Ghol.

 **Skeleton:** Skeleton throws sker arms wide. The eerie moans, howls, and whispers that have been emanating from the air around sker still. The sky darkens, and the sun seems to shrink to a distant pinpoint. The great pool of shadow the robed figure's been standing in flares outward to encompass the entire hill - but it doesn't actually gain any AREA. It's like when you fold up a piece of paper, cut it a lot, and then open it again to reveal a loop wide enough for a man to step through - the blobby disk of undifferentiated shadow's been flensed apart by silver-blue fire a dozen times over, extending into an elaborate mandala.

 **banana (GM):** Now that you've had time to study each person, they're quite differently shaped, and both less humanoid than is, say, Person. Mismatched arm and leg lengths, protrusions and engines from their outer parts, odd attachments.. no wonder their robes were bound up.


 **Placidus:** They're pretty tough, though. Stopped clocks and all that.


 **Skeleton:** we're at escalation 3+, so i cast CIRCLE OF DEATH. this is an attack that targets every nearby creature, enemy and ally


 **banana (GM):** :o


 **Placidus:** but


 **Travis Meacham:** CIRCLE OF DEATH


 **banana (GM):** i hope that's how it's spelled
C capital I capital R


 **Ghol, Going East:** Seems legit.


 **Skeleton:** enemies, left to right, vs. PD: **32 26 23 23 31 16**

 **Placidus:** oh wait phew, I'm not nearby skeleton
there's two lines between us


 **Skeleton:** allies, left to right, vs. PD **30 32 22 31 16 22**


 **banana (GM):** "allies"


 **Skeleton:** i definitely made sure i was nearby all eemies on my last turn. the good news is that the damage to allies is pitiful


 **Kalira:** you hit literally everyone
i think


 **banana (GM):** nope

 **Kalira:** probably not the right Person, actually













 **Travis Meacham:** a 31 definitely hits me.


 **banana (GM):** he's literally missed the far right apex zorigami


 **Skeleton:** damage to every enemy i hit: **41** negative energy (miss half)


 **Ghol, Going East:** a 16 ties my pd


Skeleton: damage to every ally i hit: **2** negative


| | |
|---|---|
|  | Ghol, Going East: idk if that's for me though |
|  | Xarvrax: You literally just missed knocking me out. |
|  | Placidus: well, trigger |
|  | Ghol, Going East: i think i'm the 22 |
|  | Skeleton: for every ally i missed, i take half that much damage, so 1 |
|  | Placidus: - Trigger: An ally attacks a nearby enemy and misses. so this is at the last zorigami |
|  | Kalira: you didn't miss anyone actually |
|  | Xarvrax: I have 1 HP. |
|  | banana (GM): lmao |
|  | Skeleton: cheers, xarvrax |
|  | Kalira: the 22 was ghol's, i think placidus probably has less than 16 pd |
|  | banana (GM): reducign your ally to 1 is some GOOD SHIT |
|  | Placidus: I do, 14 anyway, is the zorigami's md or pd lower |
|  | banana (GM): md |
|  | Placidus: cool |
|  | banana (GM): it's incredibly fast, but not really magical at all |
|  | Travis Meacham: Except in that sufficiently advanced technology..... |
|  | Placidus: then placidus is casting Inevitable Fall, 28 vs md. on a hit, 34 psychic, plus 10 ongoing psychic. on a miss, just 10 ongoing psychic |
|  | banana (GM): As one creature comes finally to pieces in the throes of Utter Death, things spewing forth on springs and clattering, the other turns its head hungrily. A mechanical mockery of nasal passages <i>sniff</i> at the air. It readies itself to bound over regardless of its own encroaching doom- but what's this? It's hopped the mandala! Dodging the Death Hole with sheer grace, the intact apex skims through the air, leaps one footed toward its collapsing other, hungering for.. something- |
|  | Skeleton: Skeleton breaks the silence with a weird little giggle before the mandala of necrotic power fountains upward into a plume of killing force. The entire battlefield is transmogrified into an all hallow's eve nightmare of itself - rocky outcroppings are tombstones, clefts in the earth are hewn-open graves, dust motes are swirling phantoms. Everyone's visible as their own skeleton, Skeleton included, except that unlike Skeleton everyone's flesh is still vaguely apparent as a silvery, translucent sculpture around their jet-black bones. Then it's over. |
|  | Placidus: man attacking the lowest defense isn't as cool if I just consistently roll 15+ on all my attacks I feel cheated. |


 **Kalira:** fuck off

 **banana (GM):** there was that one where you hit on a 3.
flavour hitting it so hard that its hp bar goes out the other side of 0 and stabs xarvrax


 **Placidus:** Placidus is staggered, winded by the storm of necrosis. "You."
"YOU."


 **Travis Meacham:** "That was cool actually."

 **Skeleton:** "Eeeheeheehee! It worked. It WORKED! That's so hard to set up!"


 **Placidus:** "You clacking, clicking, ramshackle thing."
"I see every cog of your being. Can you? Can you even fathom the size of what you're supposed to be?"


person: "I am not a *thing*-"

 **Kalira:** "And you lot worry about -me-."


 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax looks between the two persons, gathering up breath for a roar, but instead a cloud of smoke is all that comes out, before Xarvrax flops backwards onto the ground like a fish out of water.


person: Wait, maybe it is. It doesn't actually know. It *hopes* it's a person, but it doesn't have enough.. enough intelligence, enough memory, enough parts. It needs *more*.

 **Placidus:** "You are a devising beyond your own comprehension. You mark a time that hasn't come, from a moment that none know how to remember." A rivet pops loose, ricocheting up the hill. "You scavenge and you consume. You replace and upgrade. You iterate. And you're always one step short of understanding."
He walks up and places a vibrating hand on the zorigami's torso. "Let me show you what you are."

 **banana (GM):** Its leap toward the pile of parts ceases as it braces against Xarvrax's falling body, skids on one leg, turned toward Placidus. "What do you know-"

person: "I see! I see the way!"

 **Skeleton:** Skeleton's still standing with arms outstretched, gloved fingers curled into claws. The immense upswell of power, having manifested in part as a great gout of wind, just plain blew both of Skeleton's hoods back all together - it's a bare, off-white skull, its eye sockets burning with pale ghostfire, that watches Placidus step forward.

 **Placidus:** The machine freezes, gears grinding and jamming. Violet sparks fly off from the joints. Placidus, still dripping necrosis, looks at the clockwork man with eyes that reflect a foreign sky. "And yet."
"You-" the machine's torso wrenches apart-
"Are-" the machine's limbs splinter and scatter, falling to scrap-
"INADEQUATE-" the machine's head bursts, and a shower of glittering mechanisms spray out from the ruptured chassis, digging into Xarvrax like shrapnel.
Panting, pale, and sweaty, Placidus speaks to the wreckage like an old friend. "You should have found a better way. You should have... you should have seen."

banana (GM): There's a blinding glare from the corpse. The sun has risen.



Xarvrax: Xarvrax shoots up, "Holy shit, ow! Could you all please stop doing that?!"



banana (GM): The battle is definitely over, so they should be able to.



Travis Meacham: "This was illuminating."



Skeleton: "...hooo! Wow."
"So Zorigami, huh? What's that from?"



Xarvrax: Xarvrax grumbles, "Don't care. Going to sleep. If any of you wake me up I'll kill you."



Skeleton: "...oh, gosh, is everyone okay, though? That last spell, you know, it was a bit."



banana (GM): It was clearly, imo, necromancy.



Travis Meacham: "Oh! Person! Hello again."



Kalira: "Like I said. And to think, you lot were worried about me. Anyone not transforming into other races, wielding the power of death recklessly, or exploding heads, feel free to judge. Everyone else..."



Placidus: Placidus is looking at the wreckage. Is there any component that remains of these persons that is notably strange or beautiful, such that it'd merit keeping either for study or just as a nice souvenir?



Skeleton: "That wasn't reckless! You know how hard it is to do? REAL hard."

Person: There he is, on the hill behind yours, as Travis saw. "That was clearly necromancy. It was really evident!"



Skeleton: "Yes, well, that's why I made sure no one would get away. ...oh, I hope the cultists were hiding under something, though."



Travis Meacham: Travis makes eye contact with Kalira. Just so she knows he COULD judge, but won't.



Placidus: "I've never blown up a head I didn't mean to."



Skeleton: "It doesn't matter, though, because I've just realized I have the perfect excuse at all times, going forward." Skeleton points at the near-dead Xarvrax. "Just assume that anything untoward, he triggered by accident."



banana (GM): For a moment, the clockwork componentry reminds Placidus of his gizmo - the one which he was told the dwarves gave them, in the fable of San Meat - but it's an illusion. All these are clearly parts of machines, flexible and recombining though they are, and his is.. entire. Or more than entire, overstuffed with meaning and so on. But there must be *some* link; a common technology, if not an actual maker.



Travis Meacham: "The thing is, Person, Skeleton is probably evil."



Skeleton: "I'm not."



Travis Meacham: "You probably are, on balance."

Person: "I mean, who isn't, though."

Skeleton: "No!! I'm not enslaving anyone!"

 **Placidus:** "Person."

 **Kalira:** "You just tried to pawn off blame for your black magic on an ally, after nearly killing said ally. Sounds pretty evil to me."

 **Skeleton:** "And, and, hey, I don't even know who you're talking about, being that my name is-" The wind whistles loudly enough through Skeleton's eye sockets here that ske realizes sker hood's down. Ske taps on sker own skull with sker knuckles just to make sure.

 **banana (GM):** Something moves under Person's hood. Chromium lips? He responds to Placidus. "Thanks for being able to beat those guys!"

 **Skeleton:** "Oh, no, I mean, WE all know what's up, obviously."
"I'm just saying, in the future, perfect excuse."

 **Placidus:** "If you'd beaten them, what would you do with these pieces?"

 **Skeleton:** "Haha, let's keep this our little secret, though."
Ske carefully raises one hood, then a second, until her skull's shrouded once again in generic mysterious cultist darkness.

 **Xarvrax:** A transparent copy of Xarvrax appears in front of Skeleton, "I'm asleep, not dead you know."

 **banana (GM):** He runs an eye (a lamp? a lens?) over the piles. It's a considering look, but not at all the same acquisitive stance the others had. "I didn't, so they're just.. metal. You could make a sculpture."

 **Skeleton:** "Well, what?" Skeleton says, spreading arms placatingly at the image of Xarvrax. "You said yourself, you've got every kind of power rattling around in there. It's the perfect alibi."

 **Placidus:** "But if you had, which pieces would you prize most?"

 **Xarvrax:** Xarvrax snorts, a thin mist forming, "Okay, but keep in mind how I react to normal insults."

 **banana (GM):** Baited, Person comes over to sort through and set aside most of the componentry. "These people were barely apices," he says after a minute. "This brace would not hold for a fight longer than five minutes.. melt in a candleflame.. this thing is like a horse's shoe but with no purchase on ice."

 **Skeleton:** "It's not an insult! It's not SHODDY necromancy. And anyway, it'd just be anything I couldn't sell as a generic illusion."


 **banana (GM):** "Only the bellows and cords are particularly good. I like the harness that the younger was using to contain gearsets."


 **Kalira:** "Wouldn't that cause him issues? If he was known for his necromancy flareups? Dragons aren't too fond of it, as was pointed out."


 **Xarvrax:** Another snort, "The Five don't care what I do, as long as it serves their purposes, and any other dragon that gets in my way will be dealt with."


 **Placidus:** "What grade of zorigami are you?"
"If this is an apex... what is the word for you?"

Person: "Twilight." The sun's above the horizon now, but you're still in the lingering chill of Skeleton's mandala, which stamped darkness on the land more or less permanently.


 **Placidus:** "Do you know what you'll be next?"


 **banana (GM):** "No!"

 **Placidus:** "But you're greater than these were."
"Right?"


 **banana (GM):** "Yes."

If there are any bandits left in the hills, or creatures attracted by the beacon, they won't attack in daylight. You've passed through the worst of it.

 **Placidus:** "So, twilight..." Placidus points to the western sky, and then raises his hand up. "Apex." Then winds it east. "Are the least of the zorigami 'dawn'?"

 **Skeleton:** "What's Zorigami mean? Did anyone in specific come up with it?"

Person: "That's right. From the start of the age, we were.. piecemeal. Fragmented, learning, coming together. Few dawn remain, now, or none at large - only in special purposes."

 **Placidus:** "And when the sun sets..."

Person: "Of course I shouldn't tell you about any of this, but what I *should* have done was dismantle and consume these apices."


 **Placidus:** "...the moon rises."


 **Skeleton:** "Ooh."


Skeleton looks down at the pieces, then over to Person. "But persons you consume... they live on inside you literally? Trapped or enslaved?"


 **Travis Meacham:** "Or consumed."


Person: "All of that." The zorigami rises abruptly from his crouch by the pile of parts, holding only a bundle of fibre-like cables woven together into cording. "Will there be wind for the boat, today?"


 **Kalira:** "So to speak."


 **Placidus:** "There may be, once we're quit of these barrens."

 **banana (GM):** Hopefully it's the hills doing it, but it might just be that you're inland - at least from here on it's downhill, and every klick closer to the coast of Lac Butler, which might as well be an ocean.

 **Placidus:** It's a long ride, and waking before dawn without any breakfast... Placidus is feeling peckish. One of the dead bandits had some dried meat in his pack, it seems, so Placidus finds that and starts gnawing on it.

 **Travis Meacham:** Do they have anything else good? Like maybe a trinket from their family that we could pawn for a measly piece of silver after MURDERING THEIR FATHER.

 **Skeleton:** **1** i can cast speak with dead this many times over the coming day
COME ON
that's true, we should loot the bodies for stuff to pawn

 **banana (GM):** There probably is some stuff on the bodies that's moderately valuable, given you're not quite as cash-flush as you once were. We'll find out what it was... in the twilight of the eleventh age of

