

We have had another uneventful rest in another of these bone-encrusted hallways. In front of us lies yet another T-junction.

Darnit, feeling reenergized, looks at the others and says to the group (Limerick excepting)--
“Can you tell me about these beams--why are you connected to them.” (Darnit, Limerick, and Hiare do not have beams.)

Ego: “The beams connect to the clew that we got in the temple of Thiton.”

Izar: “It was like a dark blue egg that Bruno told us was a clew. We brought it here and somehow opened it, and how these lights have tethered us to it. We don’t know if they mean anything else though.”

Hrothulf: “They don’t seem to affect us though, people can walk through them and they don’t become entangled.”

Ego: “There’s been some thought that maybe they are why we get resurrected once we all, but that is not clear.”

Izar: “Limerick--you don’t know if you died to get in here, right? Or why you came to the labyrinth?”

Limerick: “Ahm... Yeah I think I was kinda sent. To... help you guys.”

Izar: “Oh, ok. But you don’t remember from whence.”

Limerick: “I don’t remember from whence. No, I don’t. I guess.”

Izar: “Ok. Well, we appreciate the help.”

Limerick: “I feel like it’s not really a choice rather than it just is.”

Meanwhile, Klutch is both physically and emotionally very distant from us.

Ego: “Limerick, where were you before you were here?”

Limerick: “I was there, but you just couldn’t see me.”

Ego: “Where?”

Limerick: “In this world. In the labyrinth.”

Ego: “For how long?”

Limerick: “I don’t know.”

Ego: “What about before that?”

Limerick: “I don’t know. As a bard, I’m connected to songs that are ancient. That bring in space and time, and bring in space and time as melody.”

Izar: “Were you around when the gods were around before? Or do you remember?”

Limerick: “I don’t remember, but I think I was.”

Izar: “But you believe you’ve been in the labyrinth a long time. Or somewhere else in the realms?”

Limerick: “Time is such a hard question to answer. And I think that time also leads to death.”

Hrothulf goes to talk to Klutch

Hrothulf: "Hey y'all. How you doin'?"

Klutch: "I just need a moment to collect my thoughts and pull myself together."

She keeps her back to him and he can see that the scar on her neck is larger and is still glowing.

Darnit also walks over, and asks Klutch about her scar.

Klutch: "I just need a moment to collect my thoughts!"

Darnit pulls out his soul blade (to show it to her).

Klutch whips out her battleaxe and trips Darnit, and she stands gloating over him with blade at the ready.

Darnit: "It's a soul blade! I was going to offer it in case you thought it would help."

Klutch, too proud to be embarrassed, takes the soul blade from Darnit and says, "Give me a moment," and she walks away from him.

Darnit, to Hrothulf: "Well, are you going to help me up?"

Hrothulf: "Indubitably," as he helps him up and, not all so gently, leads him away from Klutch.

Izar: "It would be good to have her opinion, though I suspect she would say to go to the water room again. But perhaps a battle would do her good and let her know she won't be left alone."

Hrothulf: "Yeah, I think we need to wait for her to be ready before we go, but I'd rather go water than go up against seven heads."

We discuss what it could be with seven heads.

Limerick: "So, you guess have gone right before and it's been a water room, and left and it's been a creature?"

Hrothulf: "Yeah, water rooms, and a creature with one more head each time to the lefts."

Darnit tries punching the wall with his new golden hands. It feels like punching a wall with thin gauntlets.

Hrothulf examines his chestplate, and notices that the beam is still glowing, unsuppressed, and the light from the beam reflects a lot, so he's glowing all the more. There are no markings on it. Chest pouches are still readily accessible, as the chestplate is like a layer of skin. It looks almost like hot wax has been poured on his chest and has been cooled, so it almost pools a little too, like it's dripping down.

[This is true for each of our golden parts.]

When any of us touch our own metal parts, it feels like ourselves. It's almost like a hide, or like calluses. Still self, but a little tougher.

When Ego changes form, the golden helm remains. When, say, she changes to a medium sized ettin, the head that she can actually perceive through has the golden helm. When in native form, it expands with increased head size.

Izar asks what Limerick thinks about where we should go.

Limerick answers, and beginning to gesture behind as he mentions 'once Klutch is ready', sees Klutch right there who says, "I'm fine" with the sort of look that says don't talk to me.

Hrothulf pats a reassuring hand on her shoulder, causing her to wince, but also give a knowing nod and sigh.

We ask whether Limerick has any insight again, but he defers to our experience.

Izar wonders if anything has changed now, with the golden parts, etc.

Hrothulf says when we go to the right, it seems we make progress and find our way to other places.

Ego reminds that that is after making it through a room and Ego immediately running by herself and taking a turn, but that has only been tried with a right turn into another right turn.

Izar worries that our shell uses in water rooms are not limitless, but she's willing to do either.

Limerick favors facing a monster, worrying that swimming with gold would be difficult, but that it could help as added armor of a sort.

Darnit suggests that the gold could actually peg us as representatives of the goddess.

Izar is more confident in creature rooms now with Darnit back with us, and Limerick around.

Ego, reaching into a pocket, tells the group that the shell's symbols are all lit up, replenished after our rest, so maybe it's a replenishable resource in this place.

Ego: I'm almost more interested in what we do after the next room. I mean, I can just make a choice in the moment running forward, but if you want to talk about it...

Izar: "Yes, we should definitely discuss such things ahead of time," she says somewhat scoldingly.

Limerick: "In my mind, escaping out of water is okay, but defeating evil is surely better even if we don't see results."

Ego: "Who said they were evil?"

Limerick: "Well, that's a good point. They are the adversary, if they're attacking you."

Izar: "And they did attack us, even when we tried not attacking them."

Limerick: "I think the most important thing is confronting adversaries."

Ego: "Okay, I'm good with left. What do you want to do after?"

Izar suggests right.

Limerick: "How can we think so far in the future? How can we know what'll happen after the monster room? I don't understand it."

Izar: "Well, I think because what has happened after every monster room is another left or right hallway choice."

Limerick: "It just seems like a self-fulfilling prophecy that after the monster room there'll be two options. My mind is struggling to confine myself to that prison. Think that's what's going to be. Really, we confront the monster room, and then whatever happens next is what happens next."

Izar: "Or maybe the monster room isn't a monster room, but who knows."

Limerick: "Yeah! See I like that kind of thinking, where there are more options. Like remember when the hallway melted and turned into a golden away."

Hrothulf: "Ego, do you want to run up to the monster room?"

Izar: "What? No."

Ego: "I'd be delighted!"

The group continues talking, but Ego's already running ahead.

Ego runs, taking a left, after when the rest whoosh! into the room all of a sudden.

There we meet three gargoyles and two ettins (Chirchee and PoundZone, not that we know that)!

We can tell by their positioning and the giant clubs that it would be very difficult to run by unscathed.

Ego fires upon Chirchee, and hitting, angers Chirchee, who has responded with a roaring "ouch!" who peels some flesh and takes out the ammo, then looks up in anger at Ego.

Limerick moves forward a little.

Darnit asks Hrothulf whether creatures before have attacked us or if we attacked first. Hrothulf said we've usually attacked first, but at times have also attacked us first. Darnit says the only one that's appeared aggressive is the one who's been hit, and asks whether that's the same as before, seeing as there was talk of seeing whether they respond differently to us now.

Darnit moves forward next to Limerick, wielding Barkamena and the golden shield, and ready to dodge any attacks.

Izar casts *sleep* in the midst of the creatures, a smoky cloud going out, though only she notices. Nothing seems to happen. Wait!... One of the gargoyles yawns.

Klutch runs up beside Limerick, setting up a blockage of sorts, and pulling out her battleaxe, spinning it with two hands and loosening up her fingers a little bit.

Chirchee the ettin charges at Ego, golf swinging and hitting Ego, sending her flying and hitting the wall. Fortunately, she isn't bleeding anywhere, managing to avoid the spikes in the club. But the damage is significant all the same.

Limerick and Darnit (make charisma saves), not interested in the ettin's attempt to taunt them into a one-on-one.

Hrothulf comes between Chirchee and Ego, and hits Chirchee with his railgun. Chirchee recoils, and holds the club over his head roaring.

Ego gets up and moves herself out of the corner. She begins reloading the railgun from the bony wall, and very much does not want to get hit like that again.

Limerick begins whistling a little, casting *dancing lights* a little above PoundZone's head and moving away, in hopes of distracting him and turning him toward the gargoyles. The ettin (aforementioned PoundZone) is swatting at the lights.

Darnit holds up his golden hand, and proclaims, "We are servants of the goddess of death and time!" The creatures seem uninterested, or just can't understand. Hard to tell. Darnit readies an action. If any gargoyles come close enough to attack any of our party, Darnit magic missiles the three of them.

Izar moves over away from the corner, and in front of Ego. He casts *chill touch* on Chirchee, choking up the ettin, who stumbles against the wall a little dazed from what's happened.

Klutch swings her battleaxe and strikes Chirchee, taking advantage of the daze. She trips up, and so doing, has sliced him a good bit. He is lying on his back clutching his calf.

Chirchee stands, and Klutch hits again. Chirchee is none too happy with the minotaur, and he blasts Klutch with an epic uppercut. She flies, landing between Limerick and Darnit, and sliding in front of Darnit, now unconscious.

The gargoyles swoop onto Limerick, triggering Darnit's attack, who slams down his axe, whence flies three magic missiles, each hitting a gargoyle (even if not for that much damage). Meanwhile, Limerick is lifting up by two of the gargoyles as the third gargoyle comes at him, trying to shred. But clearly the magic missile distracted, as the gargoyle is unable to do damage.

Darnit also takes an attack of opportunity on the near gargoyle.

PoundZone comes at Darnit, who uses his shield to great effect.

Hrothulf drops Yesterday and takes out his greatsword saying, "Hey y'all, let me show you what's for lunch today!" Hit strikes the ettin (Chirchee), completely lopping off its left leg. The ettin passes out and seems to die in front of him. But he doesn't fade into goo.

Izar gives Chirchee a long, hard look, still feeling her wounds, but convinced he isn't a present threat, she fires upon one of the gargoyles holding Limerick aloft, hitting and turning it into a puff of smoke. The other gargoyle holding him up does manage to keep him in the air though, with much strain.

Izar turns on his jetpack, ranseur already out, and comes at the gargoyle holding Limerick. Izar's ranseur thrusts into the gargoyle, and the gargoyle drops its quarry.

Limerick casts *hold person* on the gargoyle that was holding him aloft, but the gargoyle shakes it off. Limerick throws his *dancing lights* over to where PoundZone is in an attempt at distraction.

Darnit whips Barkamena at PoundZone, getting in a solid hit on his knee, which is instantly coated in ice.

With a second attack, Barkamena strikes the other leg. PoundZone flinches a little but does not fall, but its frozen knee prevents it from moving much now, as it's looking up at the lights and swatting at them.

PoundZone continues swatting at the lights, swinging and swinging, pretty sure he hit them several times over. Two of the lights do go out, which is weird. Though it's not uncommon as an illusion, that when something makes contact with it it may cease to believe that it's there.

Chirchee becomes a puddle of goo and melts into the floor, as does Hrothulf's prized severed ettin leg and club.

One of the gargoyles gets its claws into Izar, rending Izar's flesh. The other gargoyle attacks Izar too, but isn't able to get any good blows in.

Limerick takes an attack of opportunity with his scythe at the gargoyle that clawed Izar, slashing up at its calf and pulling down. The gargoyle pulls back and is dripping black blood onto the floor that, when it hits the ground, immediately turns to ash.

Hrothulf picks up his plasma rifle and takes a shot at PoundZone. But he misses (critically), and his gun is jammed. It'll take probably a five-minute cleaning routing. He flings it back onto his

back. Activating his forcefield, he moves into the mix with chef's knife out. He has a purple-y glow about him now.

Ego runs into the mix too, leaping into the air and attempting to grab a gargoyle and bring it down. But instead she briefly grabs hold, then loses her grip and lands on Limerick, leaving both in a heap on the ground.

Izar casts *chill touch* on each gargoyle, eviscerating both in one fell swoop! He deftly descends from his jetpacking heights.

Limerick moves his *dancing lights* in PoundZone's face. Crawling from under Ego, he tumbles over to Klutch and casts *cure wounds* on Klutch.

Klutch gasps awake, looks up, gives a kind of knowing glance to Limerick as she sees his hand glowing on her leg. Limerick notices as he pulls away that her leg is kind of burnt where his hands were (which has never happened before). But Klutch hacks away at PoundZone's ankles, and the beast falls onto his back with his frozen knee up in the air and his club swinging wildly.

Darnit swings Barkamena right in PoundZone's 'pound zone', covering the... region... with ice. With a second swing he cracks open the ice. And with a howl he melts into the floor. And it appears all the beasts have been dispatched.

Hrothulf dives forward grabbing Ego's ankle before she runs off! He has her in a single grapevine leglock.

Ego says, "Hrothulf, what are you doing?!"

Hrothulf: "Um, as much as I appreciate your energetic disposition I thought we might pause before going forward into the next leg of our adventure."

Ego: "Yeah, obviously I was going to do that!"

Hrothulf: "Indubitably."

Izar: "This is why I was saying we should decide..."

Limerick: "Yes, I agree," Limerick says, as he looks around for the monsters bodies and weapons to loot.

Limerick tries to talk to Klutch.

Klutch: "I am indebted to you. I don't know what happened there, but I know I owe you thanks.

Limerick: I love you, Klutch

Klutch: Let's not be too hasty, she says, but Limerick is pretty sure he caught a bit of a smirk there, which from a minotaur is rare.

Limerick: "You just mentioned the word debt, and I would consider the debt paid if you told me a little bit of your story.

Klutch: Let's not press your luck too much, but what do you want to know.

Limerick: Well, whatever you want to tell, but you mentioned your mother and I feel that's a huge part of your healing in order to get that out.

Klutch: We... are in the middle of the death trials. And so, a brief story. My mother was a slave, regularly beaten within an inch of her life because she was not a very good slave. She was defiant. She refused to do a number of the things she was asked to do. And I don't know whether it was for my protection or her protection or there was nothing she could do about it, but we were separated, I was sold into another house. I fought for freedom, found the riders, and once I heard of the branch of Teresias I immediately knew I was a member, the scales on my eyes were lifted and I saw the truth, and I thenceforth sought the gods.

Limerick: So, why did you ask if I bewitched you

Klutch: Because you made me speak of this in the midst of combat in a way I never would have done voluntarily, and you were holding a magical candle. So I suppose, I may have invaded you by checking the powers that were around you, but I needed to know. Your candle coerced you.

Limerick: It was a candle of truth, friend.

Klutch: It manipulated me nonetheless.

Limerick: (laughing) The truth did? The truth is the truth.

Klutch: But I think that's enough sharing for the day. Whatever day is. Where to?

Hrothulf: Um, does anybody want a heal.

Klutch shrugs it off: "Whatever."

Ego is up for it.

Limerick: "So I'm pretty weary of this prospect of going through this loop of two options. I know that's historically what's happened, but is there anything else we can do in this moment that can help change this transition."

Hrothulf: We can't go back. And we can't go up. We've had fifty years in here. There's a solid mist above us and the walls continue. We've tried tunneling through the floors. We've tried clawing through the walls."

Limerick: "Have you tried waiting?"

Hrothulf: "We have. And nothing happened. We weren't assaulted by wandering monsters. If we bled onto the ground, mushrooms came up and we could eat those. We tried to kill ourselves. With a narwhal. It was a dark time."

Izar: "We literally stacked ourselves together and made a narwhal to skewer us. So..."

Ego: "Well, we haven't always had the same two outcomes. Each time I've immediately run forward and taken a turn, everyone's suddenly been there and we've been in the golden hallway."

Limerick asks about directions we've taken before, combinations, etc.

Ego: "I say someone goes in either direction, and if we don't all wind up together, the water group will navigate the room quickly and take a left, and hopefully all will wind up together, and maybe even a room will be skipped."

Klutch: "And you're sure you'll be in the water room?"

Ego: "Well, I'll go right."

Klutch: "Still. Seems presumptuous of you."

Horthulf: "Well, we've gone into a monster room and the gold didn't seem to help, but we could try a water room and see whether it helps there?"

Izar: "Indeed. So we could try all going to the right."

Ego: "Or one of us could, and then we either wind up in a water room or in the golden hall!

The group is not convinced.

We talk about the gold parts. We have most of a full humanoid between us, but no right on.

Ego: "What do you guys think about the line, 'You gotta know...'"

Horthulf: "I just took it to be encouraging."

Limerick: "You won't always be right... and we're missing a right arm?"

Ego says, "If we're not going anywhere soon, Horthulf, let me see your gun."

Horthulf, "You've got your whole life ah... oh to fix it?" He hands the plasma rifle to Ego.

Ego fixes the plasma rifle, after which Hrothulf has to field strip the weapon and it should work fine again.

We take a short rest, and people get some healing in.

Ego crushes an *extreme machine* check for +2 damage, which given her nat20 check will last for five minutes starting at first use or five shots, whichever comes last.

Klutch spends some time in the corner for some *physical* healing, she says emphatically to Limerick.

Izar suggests going in line, with golden parts in order as we go.

Limerick suggests the line of the knights that servants thrive in this place could prove helpful.

Izar: "Do we go head first or feet first?"

Izar: "To Ego's point, like if we were to divide... would we just default to whoever got to the next room first?"

Hrothulf: "That's a great question. I would like to try to go into a water room with our goldness, and then go from there."

Ego: "Do you think running has anything to do with it?"

Hrothulf says he'll run on his own to the right.

Izar says that Hrothulf or Limerick, since he's the feet, should be the one who should go to the right first this time.

While we expect to be teleported, Limerick still suggests we line up by golden body part.

We decide to line up golden-feet to golden-head and go through that way, taking a right.
[Limerick, Izar, Hrothulf, Darnit, Klutch, Ego] If that goes as in the past, Hrothulf will try to sprint to the next room from there.

We enter the hallway, see a door at the end of the hallway through which gushes gallons upon gallons of water.

