

JOURNEY TO HARTSVALE



✧ DOWNTIME RP – 29 ✧

This transcript details a "downtime" role-playing session within the **Journey to Hartsvale** campaign, focusing on character interactions between PCs and also NPCs (controlled by the DM), securing a new location, and preparing for ongoing threats.

The events described here occur immediately after the events of **Session 29** and are set at the abandoned **South Trail Tower** on the 22nd of Kythorn. The structure sits outside of **Phandalin** city limits, in an "unincorporated" area. This RP session ends before 3 bells in the afternoon on the same campaign date.



I. Character Interactions and Immediate Concerns

- **Arrival at South Trail Tower:** The heroes, "looking pretty beat up," arrive at the tower. They are met by the gnomes (NPCs) of the **Garrick Nackle Mercenaries**, led by **Koy**.*
- **Eligor's Worries:** **Eligor Loom** expresses concern for his missing retainers, hoping, after they were separated, they returned to his ship, which is anchored near the **Mere of Dead Men**. Koy confirms he hasn't seen them in, or around, the town.
- **Ongoing Conflict & Threats:**
 - **Chay**, Koy's second-in-command, reports that trebuchets are still bombarding the town, possibly targeting **Tresendar Manor**.
 - The gnomes speculate that the **Heroes of Phandalin**** might have been identified as provocateurs. This is likely the casus belli that the **Wuggly Gang** can claim "legalizes" striking a private residence.
 - Eligor believes **Count Vesic Yadraya** is to blame for all of the recent troubles in Phandalin and the surrounding towns (which would include the gnome's hometown of **Autumntree**) but wonders if there might be an even "larger tapestry" of evil.
 - Koy also recalls feeling "creepy" and very sick near the **Tresendar Castle** ruin, which forced them to abandon the scouting mission there. He believes something altogether different is going on inside the ruin.
- **Mushin's Spiritual Journey:** On the bottom floor, **Mushin**, regretting "questionable killings," performs a prayer ritual, seeking purpose and guidance from his deity. A box (magic item) that he looted from a wizard's laboratory recently, vibrates and warms to the touch, offering him reassurance. In truth, Mushin knows very little about the box and how it actually works. His assumption may be erroneous.
- **Nock Knock's Lookout Duty:** On the roof, **Nock Knock** converses with **Chigger Greel**, a gnome mercenary. (NPC)
 - Nock Knock tells him he hails from **Mirabar**.
 - Chigger, from Autumntree, mentions his great-great-great grandfather helped establish the town of Phandalin and is buried in the cemetery right next door.
 - Chigger spots a "metallic animal" moving near the mausoleum, describing it as "odd looking" and "unnatural."

- **Figgbar's Broken Bow: Private Keef** (NPC) assists **Figgbar** in repairing his broken bow using a special "glue" solution.
- **Smoke's Claw Gloves:** Sergeant Chay attempts to inspect **Smoke Whispurr's** "false claws" while the tabaxi is sleeping but Koy warns him against being nosy. Opening one eye, Smoke explains they represent strength and are used for extra defense.
- **Chem & Regger's Conversation: Chem Mayhem** (tiefling sorcerer) asks **Regger Fogerhill** (a gnome war cleric of **The Shield of the Golden Hills, Gaerdal Ironhand**), about his deity and his staff. When Regger (NPC) replies, a humorous faux pas about the "size of his wand" leads to laughter among the gnomes.
- **Chem's Frustration:** Later, Chem becomes frustrated, muttering about a "she" who isn't cooperating. *"You would think if she wants this done so bad, she would offer a little bit of help!"* he speaks angrily to himself. He exits the tower for some fresh air. He stomps briskly instead of flying a few inches off the ground, revealing that he is quite upset.

II. Tower Exploration and Defenses

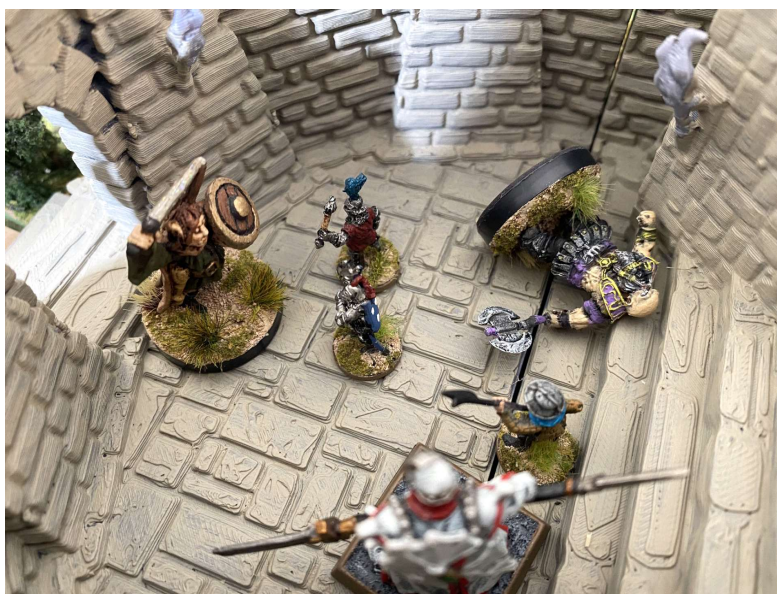
- **Eligor's Search:** Eligor and Koy search the tower's upper levels. They find the third floor dilapidated and discover "Cave Noctis" written in blood on the wall. Eligor casts "Detect Magic" and speculates it might relate to a portal.
- **Security Measures:** Regger and Chigger work to secure the tower, which they seek to take ownership of, via a type of land ownership award that can be granted by the town after a probationary stewardship:
 - They install a crossbow trap at the front door, triggered by a tripwire.
 - They plan to apply a contact poison (Oil of Taggit) to the exterior hatch handle leading in from the roof as a temporary measure, requiring extreme caution from the heroes, to avoid accidental exposure.
- **Cemetery Creatures Observed:** While on lookout, Chem gets a clearer view of the "metallic animals" in the cemetery. They appear docile, indifferent to their surroundings, and seem to be scavenging, never leaving the premises. Chem wonders if they are some sort of hybrid "guard dogs."
- **Absence of a Cellar:** Eligor and Koy search extensively, but find no entrance to a cellar in the tower.

III. Tyrone's Arrival and New Intelligence

- **Tyrone's Report: Tyrone Livingsley** (NPC) arrives, having snuck

through the siege line. He reports a vast number of enemy troops and confirms that trebuchets are now specifically targeting the manor and the Town Master's hall.

- **Historical Insight:** Tyrone clarifies the meaning of "Cave Noctis." (Beware the Night) He reveals the tower once belonged to **Elkeer Graybeard III**, a dwarf poisoned by his wife. Rumor says Elkeer returned as a spirit, killed his wife, and consumed her soul, although the elf doubts that a spirit can actually consume someone's soul. Tyrone believes the message was likely written by a tortured prisoner.



Tyrone enters the tower to update his comrades, while Mushin, using a stone step as a pillow, snores nearby.

IV. Lander's Discoveries

- **Constable's Office Papers:** In a quiet corner of the tower, **Lander Lackman** spends the day reading papers he acquired from the constable's office and finds two significant pages marked **"Evidence: Harbin Wester"**:
 - **Map:** A hand-drawn map of woods south of the manor with specific directions: "100 paces East, purple berry bush," "50 Paces North, tangled root," "35 Paces East, semi felled tree."
 - **Numerical Puzzle?:** A list of equations?: "13 = 6500" (checked) and "17 = 8500" (unchecked).

V. Conclusion of Downtime

- All downtime events are declared canon and may directly influence the ongoing narrative into Session 30.

** **Koy** wears the blue collar of a commander. 2nd in command is **Chay**. He wears the red collar of a sergeant. **Regger** is the War Cleric. He wears a knight's helmet adorned with light blue plumage. There are 8 members in Koy's detachment operating in Phandalin, pulled from the 200 member mercenary company.*

*** The **Heroes of Phandalin** are actually PC heroes from a previous D&D campaign (modified **Lost Mines of Phandelver**), and thus are now NPCs. None of the PC heroes from this campaign are members of that party. **Jannos bet Valnich** (one of the Heroes of Phandalin) named the current campaign heroes, The **Champions of Phandalin** but the name didn't stick.*

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