

Runesmith 123

[Chapter 123 Long corridors.](#)

The party of three and a wolf rested for the night. Roland's sleep resistance skill had been maxed out after pulling so many all-nighters and after he reached his tier 2 class, it evolved. Now it was called Sleep immunity and he would be able to function for up to a week without needing to sleep.

Due to the nature of this predicament, he chose to remain on guard. The lava pool in the middle of the cave was dangerous as more of the volcanic salamanders could appear out of it. Then there were the smaller holes in the walls through which the centipede-looking monsters and slugs came out.

They had no tents so sleeping would be hard, mostly for the noble lady as she was clearly not used to extreme conditions like this. It was quite stuffy to begin with but the lava pool only made things worse.

Luckily for Robert and Lucille, they had a craftsman with them. There were also many various metallic ores in this place along with crystallized mana giving fluid that could be used as fuel. Lucille still had the plate that she used to control ice with, with some modification Roland was able to use the crystals to power it.

Thanks to this an area with purified air was established and they could rest. Lucille could barely sleep in Roland's backup sleeping bag that didn't really add much softness to the hard ground.

Roland on the other hand continued to examine the cavern. Besides Mithril and Etherium he managed to find various other metals and minerals. Some could be sold off to the alchemist guild while others he could use directly for his own wares. He did not have a pickaxe nor much space in his traveling bag.

It pained him to leave all of these resources behind but they needed to move. The longer they stayed here the more danger they would find themselves in. With his hammer and chisel he managed to snag a couple of the rarer materials but if he could return here alone remained to be seen.

He would need to convince these two nobles to not mention this cave when they got back. Then he would also need to be able to return here in one piece. Going down the chasm would be quite hard unless he brought some climbing specialist along.

The slug-like creature collapsed after being frozen by an ice arrow. The monsters continued to appear after intervals which meant that this place was not safe to stay. It was time to leave, the edible monster salamander had been gutted and the meat had been roasted over the lava pool already.

"Where do you think this will lead us to Sir. Wayland?"

Lucille asked while Roland opened up the secret passage.

"I don't know... but it could be a way out. Some dungeons like this have secret passages, they mostly take you to a treasure or are a shortcut to other sections of the dungeon. It could even lead us to where our companions are staying."

This place was already a trove of treasures, these many magical crystals, and precious metals would make even tier 3 class holders salivate. Roland hoped that this passage would take them back outside into the main dungeon area.

“Fascinating...”

Lucille’s eyes sparkled with naive wonder. The girl was still quite chipper and didn’t realize that they could very well be walking into a trap.

“Are you sure that it’s safe? Wouldn’t it be better to wait for Lord Percival to organize a rescue?”

Robert on the other hand kept a cooler head. Even though they were stuck here it might have still been safer than to venture into the unknown. Roland turned to the two people here, he wanted to move into the secret passage. He did not want to put his faith in other people too much.

“You have two choices... either you can stay here and wait, or you can come with me. I won’t force you. I will go in alone if I have to...”

He had already made his decision, he would go explore all the possibilities. These two could wait here if they wanted, the monsters weren’t that strong and with Lucille’s ice magic they would go down rather fast.

“You intend to go in without us?”

Robert looked a bit surprised by Roland’s proclamation. Apparently, he still thought that Roland was working for them and was obligated to listen to their orders. Unbeknownst to them, this was not what was written on the contract that he signed. There was no clause specifically forcing him to take orders from the nobles, he was there more as a support than a defender or a fighter.

“Yes, the volcanic salamander meat should last you for some time. Lady Lucille also seems to know water magic, you won’t even need my water bottle. You can remain here if you deem it too dangerous. ”

“Remain here...”

Robert turned his head towards the cavern that they rested in for one night. After thinking for a moment the brother turned to the blue-haired lady that when their eyes met just smiled.

“Isn’t it fine?”

“My Lady?”

“I think we can trust Sir Wayland!”

“Ah... if the lady says so...”

Robert awkwardly turned towards Roland and his face instantly became stern. He nodded to indicate that they were ready to move.

“Agni.”

The Ruby wolf wagged his tail around while turning on the light-giving gem on his forehead. After activating the runes the passage opened up and all of them quickly squeezed inside. The door soon closed behind them, it was time to move on.

“Not much space in here, I’ll lead the way.”

The corridor was about two meters in width and three meters in height. It was wide enough for Roland and Agni to go in the front while Robert remained at Lucille's side.

Just like before, there was no light anywhere. Without Agni, the two people behind him would have a tough time moving around. Roland thanks to his helmet was able to see clearly but the path was long and winding.

They continued walking and it took them quite a bit to finally reach a fork in the road. Two paths stood before them.

"Which should we take..."

Asked Robert while Roland took out his mapping device. Regretfully it had limited range and only showed more winding corridors that somewhat intertwined with each other. It was hard to make out where they were going.

'I don't see any traps... no runes either...'

Agni moved forward as well, he used his wolf nose to sniff for potential clues but he also came out short. With a whine, he looked up to Roland that just patted him on the head.

"We'll have to depend on luck with this one..."

Roland said while looking at Lucille and Robert. He knew that his own luck stat was abysmal, it would be better if one of them chose.

"How about you decide..."

He pointed to Robert as he wasn't sure how Lucille's luck stat looked and Robert's was above his by some points.

"Hm... how bout we go right?"

Roland nodded but before heading inside he moved his finger towards the wall. From his fingertip, a slight blue hue escaped that crafted a runic symbol above the path they were entering.

"Sir Wayland?"

"Just marking the way...I hope that I'm just being paranoid but it will help us if this is what I think it is..."

They continued forward and as Roland had presumed they came across another fork in the road. After putting a symbol above the path that they took they ventured forward into a corridor that one of the noble youth's pointed them in.

Ten minutes turned to thirty, then to an hour as they continued walking into multiple paths. Then finally they came to a path that they had traveled through before. The symbol above the pathway was clear.

"This is the first path that we entered through... then that path would lead us back to the chamber with the mana crystals..."

"Oh... is that why Sir. Wayland put those symbols above the pathways?"

Lucille clapped her hands as she finally figured out what Roland intended with the markings. Thanks to his good memory he would be able to remember which path they had already tried.

They started to retrace their steps, now they entered the unmarked passages to see if they guided them to an area that they weren't in before. With the help of this trick and Roland's good internal mapping skills they finally reached a larger cavern.

"This one looks different than the rest..."

The entrance they were looking at was different by having two lit torches on the sides. It was clear that this was the exit from this mini labyrinth that took them a few good hours to go through.

"Sir. Wayland is that a door? Could it be the exit from this place?"

"We should be careful... It could be a trap..."

Roland replied while activating his debugging skill but there was nothing out of the ordinary on this door. He couldn't feel anything magical on it either. After scanning the surroundings with his map once more, he could only see a long straight corridor.

"Agni, can you smell or sense anything?"

He asked his tamed monster as he was the only person with trap detection and tracking skills in this party. Lucille regretfully also didn't know any trap detection skills so she wouldn't be of much use.

Agni perked up and started sniffing while moving closer to the door. The three humans followed slowly after the Ruby Wolf but it didn't seem like there was anything out of the ordinary.

"Okay, I'll open it, stay vigilant."

Robert and Lucille nodded while Roland grabbed the door handle. He pushed the door open and just like his magic item showed, it was a long wide corridor.

"Why are there so many tiles?"

Lucille asked after peeking over Roland's shoulder. The room was quite well lit with torches on the walls. The peculiar thing about this corridor was the floor, it looked out of place as it was composed of symmetrical square tiles. They had various designs on them, some had pictures of monsters while others of people.

"I can feel the mana, it's concentrated on the ground..."

Roland nodded at Lucille as he could feel it too. The whole floor was magical in nature, from what he could tell it was dangerous to move forward. This was probably some kind of puzzle that they needed to go through. If they stepped on the wrong square tile something deadly could occur.

'Let me see...'

After activating his debugging skill a little smirk crept onto his face. He could see it, beneath those drawings there were runic structures. After getting a good look at them he took out a small rock from the outside.

“Step back for a moment...”

He threw it on one of the tiles and the moment the rock connected with the ground a burst of heated energy shot up. Robert took a step back as he saw the column of fire reach all the way up to the ceiling. It was clear that whoever stepped into that trap would be roasted alive.

“Magical traps, fascinating... and so many of them... did someone create them in this dungeon...”

The girl raised a good question as to how the traps in the dungeon appeared was unknown. No one knew if the dungeon core somehow created these here or if they were created by some other being entirely.

“If we take the wrong step we will activate the traps and die...”

“How is anyone supposed to reach the other side?”

Robert asked.

“Probably in another section of the dungeon there is some sort of map that guides you through this place or some kind of riddle...”

This wasn't anything out of the ordinary. To get past traps like these you sometimes needed to solve a riddle, find something that guided you through it, or have someone versed in these contraptions in the party. Luckily for the two, Roland could do this.

Roland went down to his knees and looked at the first square tile. On it was a drawing of a dragon along with some runes. His fingers glowed with magical energy as he touched it. This task was not hard for a runesmith like him.

He only needed to disable the runic structure to make the whole trap useless. If this was something like a pressure plate trap then he would be unable to do anything. Luckily it was magical in nature.

“Sir. Wayland... how did you do that?”

“These runic traps, it's easy to disable them if you know rune smithing...”

He replied to the curious noble lady while moving forward slowly.

“I'll disable the traps now.”

This long and also wide corridor was covered in square tiles. Even with his large mana pool and high skill levels, it was hard to disable these many traps at once. His armor was also not made for crouching but after about an hour they were through the corridor as he disabled the path in the middle.

‘Hm... If I ever return here I could reactivate them...’

Roland wanted to return here later as he was leaving a lot of precious metals behind. What better way to keep the secret stash hidden than leaving some traps behind. He could customize the traps so that no one could disable them, rendering this room a deathtrap for anyone that wasn't a runesmith.

The designs of these runic traps were also different from the ones that he knew of. They were also etched onto these strange stones, if he could he would take one to examine it later. Maybe he could stop using the scrolls for the mines and instead use this technology that was quite reusable.

Alas for now they needed to move forward, first, he needed to get out of here and rejoin his original party. After that he could think about the treasure, he also would need to somehow get these two to not talk about the mass of minerals.

On the other side of the corridor was another door, after pushing it open they came out in another section filled with long passages and more pathways. It took another couple of hours to get past this small labyrinth once more only to end up at another exit. One that was hidden behind some runes and impossible to access without Roland's skills.

"I think we should take a break..."

Robert called out to Roland that was scanning the hidden door for runic traps. He nodded as the time spent would amount to almost a day. With the bad ventilation that this place had, the noble lady was not looking all too great. They were in a smaller lit area that looked somewhat safe.

He nodded at Robert and a strange scene unfolded. Three people were seated around a plate of metal that gave out refreshing air. This was not the strange part, as it was the Ruby Wolf that was sitting right next to it and acting as the room light.

Robert was used as a pillow as Lucille placed her head in his lap. Roland could tell that his older brother cared for this young girl. It was a bit funny to look at his blushing face that was more awkward than cute. Robert was similar to his father and had a very masculine look to him, thus such scenes came out quite comedic.

"What are you doing?"

Robert asked while glancing at Roland's hands. He had removed the scaly hide of the volcanic salamander or at least a large chunk of it.

"Scribing some runes on it, it could be of use in the next room."

He had his scribing kit with some magic ink with him but some of his things remained with the porter. Some of his scrolls were in there as well, so it was good to prepare more firepower. The lack of proper scroll paper could be countered with monster hide and a tier 2 monster would work.

Robert looked in wonder at the magical ink seeping into the badly cut-out monster hide. Roland inserted it on the other side as he could not place the runes on the scales. After a few minutes of scribing, he glanced up to Robert for a moment before speaking out.

"You should get some rest, you didn't sleep yesterday either, the next chamber might be dangerous..."

"What about you?"

"I'm fine, I have sleep resistance, I'll be fine even if I don't sleep for a few days."

Robert nodded at the answer and the awkward silence between the two young men continued. Neither of them seemed to be good at talking and Lucille was mostly the one that initiated the conversations

with both of them. Now with her fast asleep, these two introverts had to somehow cope with each other's presence.

"...Can I ask you a question?"

"Go ahead?"

Roland answered while putting the finishing touches on the salamander pelt runic scroll.

"Do you ever take that helmet off?"

His hand twitched at the question, almost making him bring the scroll quality down by a grade.

"Uh... I have a rare skin condition... I need to keep it on at all times... even more in this hot dungeon..."

"Rare skin condition? ... is that some kind of illness?"

"Something like that..."

Roland quickly evaded the question while Robert stared at his helmet. He wasn't sure what his old brother was thinking but he needed to keep his identity hidden. If his father found him out it would just add to his problems.

Baron Wentworth was someone strong, he would not be able to resist him if he decided to drag him back to the Arden estate. He did not know what his 'dad' would do, put him under house arrest? Force him to craft armor for the noble families? He did not know and he did not want to find out.

"When the lady wakes up, we should contact Lord Percival, tell them that we are doing fine... but it would be better to not tell them of this place, he might not appreciate us forcing the lady into this labyrinth..."

"We shouldn't?"

Roland was still hoping to keep this place hidden, if they reported about the long corridors the cave with the costly minerals would be revealed. Convincing Robert and the lady would be hard though but they also needed to make reports. They also needed to know what was happening outside and when the rescue party would arrive.

"I'll have to consult with the lady..."

"Yes..."

The awkward silence continued, how long they would be stuck here remained a mystery. For the time being Roland showed off some of his bombs and scrolls to Robert while thinking that maybe later they might have to use them. Time continued to pass, how long these four would be stuck here remained unknown.

[Chapter 124 Going in reverse?](#)

"We have sent two of the adventurers along with two knights to deliver a message to the adventurer's guild. Lady Lucille, I'll have to ask you to remain strong!"

Roland and Robert were to the side and looking at the crystal ball. In it was Lord Percival who was now talking with Lady Lucille. Two days have passed since they had become trapped in this series of underground caverns.

They were all now before a hidden door that could lead into another trapped room. From what his mapping device told him, it looked to be quite an open space. It was even larger than what this device could show him.

From his previous experiences, it could mean a few things. One it would be similar to the Troglodyte cavern. When they entered the doors would close and monsters would start piling on top of them.

The second option was a more tame one. It could very well just be the exit into the larger volcanic dungeon. The large space that he could not map fully could be the lower dungeon. He did not believe that this was the case, as it would be far too easy.

It could also be a room filled with more traps, maybe some puzzles, and then finally the thing that he was afraid of the most, a hidden boss chamber. He only had two party members that he was not very familiar with.

They have also sheltered nobles that didn't have experience in fighting against monsters bigger and stronger than they were. Even though Robert had trained in a similar way as he did, there was a difference in fighting goblins than large hobgoblins that out leveled a person.

"Thank you, Lord Percival, tell Charlene that I'm doing fine."

After a bit, the magic sphere went out and the talk was over. Lucille didn't disclose much after Roland asked her not to tell the noble commander that they were moving deeper into the dungeon.

"Are you sure it was the right thing to do, Sir. Wayland?"

"It's better to not make them worry, they can't really help us here and the rescue party won't be arriving for at least a few more days..."

Lucille was not a person that liked to lie. He had to convince her that it would be unwise to make her friends worry, after this, she changed her tune. Roland felt bad about using a person that had a more rosy outlook on life like this girl but he needed to look at his own wellbeing.

"Lord Percival would have told us to return if he knew, I think you made the right decision Lady Lucille."

It seemed that Robert on the other hand saw it his way. He wasn't sure what his reason for it was though. More than likely he just didn't think that sitting around and twiddling their thumbs would help with anything. He had always been quite headstrong and someone that pushed on forward even when many things got in his way.

"What do you think is past that door, Sir. Wayland?"

"It could be another trapped room..."

Roland was a bit suspicious about this place as after entering these corridors they had not come across any type of monster.

“Can your device ascertain such a thing?”

Lucille asked while glancing at Roland’s orb that she did previously get the chance to use.

“Regretfully no, but I’ve been meaning to add that function.”

This item was still a work in progress, getting it to detect monsters and other living beings was the most he could do for now. He had used part of the golem code that he had bought not that long ago.

The golems came with a function of recognizing people, animals, and monsters and that’s why his device could do it as well. To come up with a trap analyzer he would need to be a bit more original but with the help of some of these new runic books that he studied recently he had been given some new ideas.

“I won’t lie to you, I have no idea what could be behind that door, it could be a swarm of volcanic monsters, or maybe just a room filled with treasure. We won’t know until we enter it and I won’t force you to come with me.”

He wanted to move forward as waiting for other people to help him was not really his style. Depending on others was something that Roland did not enjoy. Even though there was a noble lady here that everyone wanted to save, this didn’t mean that he would be helped.

The rescue party could very well climb down and only take Lucille with them. Then Robert would be next in line while he, a regular adventurer could very well be used as an expendable resource. They could even say that he died down in the cave and not bother with him. Thus he would rather try his luck in these unknown caves. His high level and gear gave him some confidence in being able to survive.

“Sir. Robert... what do you think we should do...”

Lucille looked to her knight, if she told him to stay he would stay. It seemed that Robert did not know how to go against people in a higher position than he was. He just looked at Lucille with a confused look without knowing how to answer.

“If Lady Lucille thinks that we should wait, then I will remain with her here!”

Roland wondered if the years of subservience to his father had shaped Robert to be the perfect soldier. Which was the one that didn’t ask questions and followed orders while striving to be stronger.

The girl pouted slightly after seeing that Robert wouldn’t give her a straight answer. He was probably unsure which option was the safer one.

“Sir. Wayland, you’ll continue without us if we stay behind?”

“Yes, I think that this should lead to some kind of exit, the dungeon monsters should not pose a big threat to us.”

They were all at the tier 2 level and the lack of tier 3 monsters was well documented. Even monsters above the hundredth level were quite rare. With his prestigious class and an assortment of runic weapons, Roland did not think that he would suffer a defeat.

“I think... we should follow Sir Wayland, he seems to know this dungeon. We would have already been dead if he wasn’t here in the first place!”

The blue-haired lady proclaimed while looking at Roland with those big eyes. He was taken aback by how much faith this girl was putting in him. They met about a week ago and now he was trusting him with her life. If the roles were reversed he wasn't sure if he could do the same.

Roland nodded while feeling a bit of pressure being put on his shoulders. This girl was putting her trust into him and even his older brother that liked to bully him in their youth was somewhat doing the same. Even though he was putting on airs, if he really didn't trust him he would probably say it. Endangering the noble lady that he fancied would come first.

"Okay, check your equipment before going in, there could be monsters inside, the area is suspiciously spacious."

Roland had his arming sword on his hip and the magical rod. He also possessed various spell scrolls and his magical armor. Robert was limited to the shield that he borrowed from his younger brother and an enchanted longsword.

While they were talking yesterday, to break the silence he had asked his older brother to show him his sword. Regretfully the enchantment on it was not a runic one so he could not enhance it. It had the usual sharpening enchantment on it which would have to be enough.

Lucille only had her smaller magical rod along with some magical trinkets that enhanced her mana regeneration and spell potency. She would remain in the back with Agni as her role was backline support. Robert would be in the very front along with Roland that would also use some spells to aid him.

"Let's go!"

The three humans nodded at each other while the only wolf in the party wiggled his tail. Robert pushed the door open and all of them glanced inside.

The cavern was large with a lot of similar rock formations everywhere. There didn't seem to be any small openings in the walls through where the bug creatures could crawl from. There were also no lava pools through which lava-resistant ones like the volcanic salamander could go through either.

It was a wide area with quite the high ceiling, it was actually hard for them to see it.

'Doesn't look that anything is in here?'

Roland thought to himself while they all inched inside. He even threw a sizable rock as far as he could to see if any traps or monsters would react. There was nothing here so the party advanced while looking around.

"Look, Sir Wayland."

Lucille pointed into the distance. There they all saw a larger closed gate, it was clearly the only way that was leading out of this large chamber. Roland could also not spot any secret doors but his debugging skill had a limited range so he would have to examine them quite closely.

"Is there really nothing here?"

Robert asked while they all slowly moved towards that large gate. Roland also didn't like it, it seemed strange for nothing to be here. Unless someone cleared this room out there should be a trap or some monster to beat for them to advance.

"I've read that some Dungeons have dummy rooms! They expand too fast and can't always fill them with traps or monsters, maybe this is one of those?"

Lucille added some of the knowledge that she learned at the academy. Without seeing anything out of the ordinary Roland would have to agree to this theory. Even after getting to the middle of the room and arriving at the larger gate, nothing was happening.

"Is it fine to open?"

Robert asked while glancing towards Roland and Lucille.

"I can feel magic around this area but that could just be the dungeon..."

It was hard to make out magical traps in dungeons that were created through magic as well. Only when a trap was obvious, or when people had specialized skills for magic trap detection would they be alerted to them.

Roland used his ball to scan what was further inside but this time around he was getting a lot of interference. It seemed that this door was blocking his sphere from scanning what was behind it.

Robert slowly pulled on the large chain that was attached to the door while Lucille prepared a spell. A monster could be waiting for them on the other side and with nowhere else to go they needed to open this large door.

The door was about four meters in height and quite wide as well. Even Robert with his tier 2 strength had problems in pulling this door open.

"Hey... watch out!"

As the gap in the door opened wider Roland saw something. An elongated hand with four claw-like fingers extended while trying to claw whoever was there. Robert was lucky that he was opening the door while protecting his body with it at the same time.

Roland was quick to fire off an ice arrow spell that connected with this hand. Robert quickly closed the door by pushing on it which caused the now frozen monster hand to snap and fall to the ground.

"What was that?"

Lucille lost her composure slightly but luckily they had Roland to pick up the slack.

"Why are those monsters so close to the door..."

Roland asked while finding this dungeon area a bit odd. Soon he would have his answer as after closing the door they heard some kind of strange sound. This sound was coming from above, it was as if something was falling down.

Then with a resounding roar it appeared, a monster fell down from the high ceiling as if it was some kind of trap waiting to be triggered.

The creature was quite large as well and was somewhat similar to a theropod. It had dark red scales covering its body. Two rows of dark blue, bony plates running along its back, going from the eyes to the tail.

It had a large mouth, very similar to the popular predator from the Jurassic world. The main feature of this dinosaur-like monster was its huge, sword-like tail. The moment it landed it started swinging it around while trying to home in on its prey. This would be the blue-haired noble lady that at this moment was the closest person to it.

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“My lady, get behind me!”

Robert shouted out loud while also tapping his shield with his sword. This was enough to move the attention from the panicking ice mage. The monster gave out another loud scream as it charged towards its new target. Each time its large feet took a step the whole cavern rumbled and pebbles rained down on them.

Roland was not far behind, while the monster took the bait he activated his magical rod. It gave out a chilling sensation before a large ball of ice was created. This ball traveled at high velocity and collided with the large monster’s side.

Crystals of ice started to appear on the monster the moment this spell connected. The monster turned its large T-rex looking head towards Roland while stopping its advance. Lucille had since recovered her composure and followed Roland’s example by hitting the monster with one of her own ice spells.

“Frost ball!”

They were lucky enough to be on the other side of the room as the beast fell right into the middle. Roland circled around it from one side while Lucille along with Robert stayed on the other. Both of the magic casters utilized their freezing spells to slow down this dinosaur-looking monster.

Just like the other creatures in this dungeon, it didn’t seem to be able to contend with the cold. Most of these monsters were cold-blooded, this meant that their temperature varied depending on the environment they were in.

They required high temperatures to make their bodies operate. If these temperatures dropped for some reason these creatures would start to slow down. Their metabolism would be halted and they would go into something similar to a coma or winter sleep. At that point, it would be easy to kill even a big creature like this that was unable to move.

“It’s working!”

A cone of snow along with sharp ice crystals was released by Lucille as she followed Roland’s instructions. The monster was slowing down but it was also able to take quite some of this freezing energy. The icicles that would normally shred any normal skin were just bouncing off the Xornotaurus’ hard plate-covered body.

Roland could also see it, without the freezing advantage it would be hard to damage this monster. It out-leveled everyone here and it was even armored. Their swords would have a hard time piercing

down to the fleshy bits. After freezing it, on the other hand, they would probably be able to jab them through its eye sockets to get to the brain.

It was a bit strange that this monster appeared after they opened and then closed the door. Roland could only attribute this to the way they entered here. It almost seemed like they were going through a dungeon in reverse.

That would explain why there were monsters in close proximity to the boss chamber. They were probably meant to kill them from the other side before going inside of here. Then the monster would come out after they closed the door.

If they had that knowledge beforehand it might have been better to not close that door. The monsters on the other side didn't seem to be as strong as this one here. Luckily they had two ice mages working on disabling this monster and it seemed to be over.

Roland shivered slightly while looking at the giant ice statue before him. Most of this monster's body was covered in ice with just a part of its head sticking out. Its eyes were now closed and it was not moving.

"Did we do it?"

"Good job Lady Lucille!"

Robert and Lucille rejoiced while Roland slowly moved closer. He was the furthest from the creature while his brother and Lucille were a lot closer.

"Hey, what are you doing? Quickly kill it!"

Roland shouted as he felt something, this was all somewhat too easy. Was putting this monster on ice enough to kill it? He shouted at Robert to deliver the killing blow as he was too far away to sink his blade between those armored plates.

Then before Robert could realize, the monster opened its eyes and gave out a strange high-pitched screech. The whole party had to cover their ears while backing away.

"Argh... what is it doing?"

His vision became blurry for a moment and when he looked up he could see a big cloud of steam. The monster started glowing red with energy and the ice it was covered in started to thaw.

Soon it burst free, now covered in red lava-like energy that slowly dripped down those thick-looking plates. The sword on its tail was ignited as it swung it towards the ground. This attack after connecting with the hard rock sent a barrage of flaming earth straight at Roland who quickly activated a magical shield to protect himself.

It didn't seem that the battle was over yet, it had only just begun...