

# Questing For ADVENTURE!



By Jean Marie Romana

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Hello, young adventurer! My name is Darren. Darren the Dark Elf. I once took part in an adventure so incredibly epic it reaches past the scope of human imagination and understanding! But I will try to put it into words you can understand.

It all started this one night when I was sleeping in a tree. Down at the base of the tree slept my traveling companion, Gary the Dwarf. His arms were curled around Smitey, his trusty Battle-Hammer. Paprika the fairy was curled up in his beard.

It was just me in the tree. Me and the snake.

“Where did that snake come from?” I thought frantically. It slithered closer.

And closer!

Then I gave it a swift kick with my black leather boot. Whump! It landed below.

Gary let out a shriek.

“Ahhh!” He yelled. “Ohmygod, ohmygod, it’s a snake!”

“Here I come, Gary!” I hollered, and jumped swiftly and nimbly to the ground like some kind of elven ninja. Which I was. Only around here they call us “Rogues.”

I landed softly and pulled out my daggers with a flourish. I waved them around in front of me a few times to show the snake who was boss. The snake growled in return and bared its teeth.

“Take THAT vile snake!” I yelled, and slashed a zig-zag pattern into the snake’s skin.

“Hiss!” yelled the snake, and lunged straight for my throat!

“Oh no!” yelled Gary.

Just then Paprika woke up. Quickly, she pointed her fairy wand at the snake. “I cast fireball!” she shouted, and cast a fireball at the snake!

Poof! Went the snake, and became nothing more than a line of ash.

“Phew! That sure was a close one!” said Gary.

“You got that right, Gary!” I agreed. “What a close call! I bet this is just a taste of what awaits us in our travels!”

“How do you know that?” asked Gary.

“Being a Dark Elf means more than just looking awesome and wearing cool black leather armor,” I explained. “It also means being sensitive to things. Like when the forest is crying out in pain!”

“And is it crying out in pain?” Gary asked in wonder.

I listened for a moment. “Yes,” I nodded.

“Goodness gracious!” said Gary.

The next day we set out for the heart of the forest to see what was making it cry out in pain so much. When we got there, the sight before us was so shocking that if I had been a regular elf and not a Dark Elf, I would have wept.

“Oh no!” cried Gary. “What happened?”

Where the heart of the forest was supposed to be, there was a large clearing with a big stump in the middle.

“I’m searching for clues,” Paprika said, and started searching for clues.

“Here’s a clue!” she called over to us. “There’s a stump where the big tree used to be!”

“You’re right!” I exclaimed. “What happened to the big tree that used to be here?”

“It was cut down,” said a voice from the shadows. A mysterious robed figure with a beard and hood that obscured his face, stepped out of the darkness.

“I am Gorgoblax the Elden,” the mysterious figure said. “And I bid you tidings.”

“And what sort of tidings would those be?” I asked.

“Dark tidings,” Gorgoblax hinted darkly.

Everyone gasped, except Gorgoblax.

“The forest is in pain,” said Gorgoblax.

“I suspected as much,” I confessed.

Gorgoblax continued. “You must find out what is causing this pain.”

“We were already doing that,” I explained. I had a sneaking suspicion it might have something to do with the tree being cut down.

“You must find out who cut down the tree, and for what purpose,” stated Gorgoblax firmly.

“Will you help us?” pleaded Gary.

Gorgoblax shook his hooded head no. “I cannot. You must use the skills you already possess.” Then he lifted his arms into the air, and his voice boomed: “You must venture forth to the Caverns of Treachery and find the source of this evil! That is your QUEST!”

Then, with a puff of smoke and a shrill whistling noise, the man was gone!

“He’s gone!” shouted Paprika.

“He sure is,” I agreed.

“Well, I guess it’s time to get to the Caverns of Treachery then!” said Gary. “Last one there’s a rotten egg!”

We arrived at the Caverns of Treachery, but Paprika couldn't fly fast enough to keep up so she was the rotten egg. "That means you carry the treasure," I said.

"Well darn," shrugged Paprika.

"I'll scout out ahead of you guys, using my stealth ability," I said, and turned kind of invisible.

I tiptoed up to the entrance. The cavern mouth was shaped like a monster mouth with pointy rocks instead of teeth. It was really spooky.

"Yikes!" I thought.

I poked my head around the side and peered into the cave mouth.

"It looks good from here!" I shouted to the others. They both gave me thumbs-up.

Then I checked for traps. Picking up an acorn, I tossed it inside. A squirrel ran out from somewhere and snatched it up, then ran over to a rock and started eating it.

One thing about adventuring is: you can't be too careful. I checked the squirrel for traps too.

I turned visible again. "It's all clear," I said. "Paprika, you go ahead. Gary, you cover the back."

Gary and Paprika nodded, then all three of us marched in solemn formation into the cave mouth.

"Gosh, it sure is spooky in here," said Gary

“Shh!” I said. “Did you hear something?”

Just then a loud rumbling noise started up.

“Is that coming from inside the cave?” I asked.

“N-n-n-n-no!” stuttered Gary, pointing a shaking finger at the forest we had just come from.

Scampering out from the trees at full speed came five more squirrels!

“It’s an ambush!” I shouted.

Then the squirrels did the strangest thing. They lit up with a blue light and rose into the air.

“Darn it!” yelled Gary. “Magic squirrels! Now we’re really done for!”

The squirrels started chittering and shot blue lightning bolts from their eyes. The bolts hit Gary full force in the chest!

“Youch!” he yelled.

“Nooooo! Gary!” I yelled, and fell to my knees.

“It’s okay, I’m only about half dead,” he said. “I’ve still got a lot of fight in me!”

“Then fight on, brave friend,” I said, wiping a single tear from my eye. “And I will make sure you do not fight in vain.” I got back to my feet and pulled out my daggers. “It’s showtime,” I said darkly.

“I cast Woodland Explosion!” yelled Paprika excitedly. She waved her wand and cast Woodland

Explosion. All the squirrels exploded in a shower of sparks.

I smiled victoriously and slid my daggers back into their sheaths. Then I patted them softly.

“Hooray! We did it!” Gary shouted.

I put my arm around him. “Yes we did, my friend. Yes we did.”

“Hooray,” said Paprika.

We decided to make camp for the night at the cave entrance. When we woke up the next morning, Gary had healed. However, we suddenly discovered we no longer knew where we were!

“Where are we?” asked Paprika.

“I don’t know,” I muttered darkly. “But it’s not where we set up camp last night.”

“Then that must mean...” Gary trailed off, waiting for me to finish his sentence.

“Someone, or some thing, must have moved us!” I concluded.

We all gasped, including me. Sometimes I surprise even myself.

“But who – or what – could have done this?” Gary mused aloud.



“Perhaps I can answer that,” said a figure from the shadows.

We gasped and turned toward the figure. “Gorgoblax...?” I ventured?

“No. I am Gorgoblax’s brother, Charlie the Elden. And I must tell you that my brother is evil! He sent you here to your DOOM!”

“What? Gorgoblax? Evil????!!” I threw up my hands in despair. “How can I know who to trust anymore? How do I know I can trust you?” I asked savagely, turning to Gary.

“What? Me?” asked Gary. “C’mon Darren Darkevil, it’s me, Gary Thunderstone. Your best friend!”

“But how can I know?” I wailed, with tears streaming down my face. “How can I know anything anymore?”

“You must trust what’s in your heart,” said Charlie the Elden, and disappeared.

“He’s right, you know,” I sniffed, wiping my face with my gloved hand. “I guess I knew it in my heart all along. How could I have doubted you, my brother-in-arms?”

“Best friends again?” asked Gary.

I nodded. Then we hugged in a manly way. I thumped him hard on the back with my fist.

“Never again will I lose faith in my companions,” I vowed.

“Yay,” Gary and Paprika cheered.

Now it was time to get my bearings. I looked around for a sign of some sort. Then I saw one. “Hey guys, check out the sign under that giant mushroom there.” I pointed. It said ‘Elemental Plane of Fungus’.

“Is fungus an element?” asked Gary.

“I think so,” I said cautiously. “Don’t let down your guard. Anything could happen in a place like this.”

I squinted my eyes suspiciously in case any monsters were watching. ‘I’m on to you, monsters’ is what that look said.

Little did I know then who was actually watching us!

I found out a few minutes later, when some guy stepped out from behind a mushroom.

“Hi guys,” he said. “I’ve been watching you. My name is Dave.”

“Hi Dave,” we said, and waved.

“So what brings you three to the Elemental Plane of Fungus?” he asked.

“We don’t know,” I said darkly. I could tell Dave was impressed with our mysteriousness. I slowly

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