



MONSTER STORY: HOBGOBLIN

Patrol duty. Again.
No front line for me.
Shame. The battles, they
are becoming less and
less frequent.

It is as if the Khan is growing complacent of our territory, willing to share with the small filth and the wild brutes. It is not our way. Our way is war. Seeing the banner – proud, far and wide across these tunnels. That is our way. We were feared once; our banner was respected. The others knew their place, even if it cost lives. For what else is a purpose of a hobgoblin life if not to give it up in the service of the banner. I would do so. My brothers and sisters of the blade would do so.

But no. We idle and our armor rusts not seeing the battle it was made for. The battle we were made for.

These tunnels are vast. They could sustain a much larger colony. A guardsman in this crevasse, an archer post on that ledge and this cavern would be well-protected. More space for dwellings, perhaps some slave huts. We could harvest more of the food, we could subjugate the weaklings to take care of our armor as we would march on the larger ones. The orcs, the bugbears. Their ferocity is impressive, but they lack order, discipline, honor. Their rage would break on our shields like waves on the rocks.

But no. Patrol duty. Perhaps the defeat at the hands of the enormous obese monstrosity is the reason. I lost some fingers yes but it would be pointless to continue that fight. The cave he occupies is too close to the light, his armor is nearly impenetrable. Best left alone. Yet some say there is dishonor in that I live in my defeat. Let them. My life is mine to save so that it can serve as kindling on the bonfire of battle – true battle, line upon line of warriors, marching shoulder to shoulder.

The tracks betray a trespasser. Light steps, wears boots, dragging steps – probably injured. Yes, here is some blood. Seems to have rested and feasted on the mushrooms here. Not long ago. This is good. It may not be a true battlefield with the beating of the drums and the warcries filling the air. But a battle is a battle and this will do. They will know the banner. They will fear it once more.