

Kill Basilisks

Location: Gilshoot Mine and related facilities

Content: Kill the basilisks that have appeared in the vicinity of the Gilshoot Mine

Estimated Danger Grade: Level C+

Shea, I and Elemia leave the margraviate's capital Meltart, heading north on a one-horse carriage called Hunter's Wagon. The freight area is stuffed with our provisions and smithing tools. As for the passenger space, the carriage provides sturdy-looking benches. Those are cushioned and comfortably broad. A customization for hunters that sure lives up to expectations.

It's going to take three days to reach the Gilshoot Mine with the carriage. I hear it's famous for its yield of high-quality malachite, despite being a rather small mine. The mine itself is situated halfway up a steep mountain, meaning we'll need to get off the carriage at some point, and climb the rest on foot.

We'll have the carriage first take us to the Mauser Village, located at the foot of the mountain.



Although it's called Mauser Village, it barely qualifies to be categorized as a village, going by its scale. It's a settlement with several families that lead a poor life based on stock-farming and dry field farming.

What welcomes us as we get off the carriage is a plea by an old man who introduces himself as village chief.

"Kind hunters, please, save our village! Please drive the ground spiders away!"

The wooden fence surrounding a meadow is broken and has its stakes pulled down at several spots. Moreover, half-eaten sheep heads still lay in the grass, obviously not having been cleaned away yet.

"Wait...we're in the middle of another quest."

"I'm well aware of that. It's the basilisks up at the mine, right? The ground spiders have descended the mountain because of the basilisks' appearance. The spiders kill our sheep and cows while also devastating our fields. At this rate, all sheep in our village will be gone. Once that happens, all those living here will be doomed to die from starvation. Please help us somehow..." The village chief bows very deeply while holding a big sickle in his hands which he has been using to reap grass. "Oh, we've stopped letting the cows graze. Now we're feeding them grass after having locked all of them away in the shed. Just how long is this going to continue..."

I'm sure it's quite the heavy labor to harvest enough grass to feed a big number of cattle. Exhaustion is clearly visible on his face.

"That sounds like a tough chore..."

In response to my words, the village chief turns his tired eyes this way, "Please. Of course, we'll reward you, although it'll only be a small amount..."

The chief's face is fairly haggard, and his thin arms look like they are unsuited for swinging a sickle, too. And when looking at the ruined pasture land, I actually feel bad about getting a reward from them.

"Shea, can't we drive the spiders away for them?"

Shea's crimson eyes are fixed on the old man.

"How many spiders?"

"Ten or fifteen...it's the first time in my seventy years that such a number of spiders has come down from the mountain. Moreover, basilisks have shown up at the mine. I wonder whether all of this is some kind of omen for something terrifying being afoot."

"Fifteen ground spiders, huh? That's definitely unusual."

"Please. If this goes on, we'll die as well."

Pity kills hunters - those words mentioned by Shea the other day cross my mind. Decisions based on pity and friendship directly lead to death. I'm sure, just like last time, Shea will...

"No choice. We'll help you."

She easily accepted the village chief's plea!

"That's fine with you? Pity kills..."

"...hunters. I know. But...ignoring an old man in need of help disqualifies one as a person."

"For Lady Shea, known to be an aloof cursed tool user, to help other people...that's unexpected." Elemia frankly spells out her surprise.

"My grandfather raised me as a foster parent since I was little, so I'm somewhat weak when it comes to the requests of the elderly."

"Well, I'll take what I can get, so count me in. But, the problem will be whether we can count this as a supplementary side-quest."

"Supplementary side-quest?"

Elemia is completely flabbergasted by my question.

"Argh, this is why newbies are such a pain. Look, it's not said that you'll only kill the targeted demonic beasts during a quest, right? If demonic beast A is the target, and demonic beast B shows

up around A, you must kill B as well. That's a supplementary side-quest. If you petition it with the guild and they approve of it, the reward will increase accordingly." Elemia carefully explains while drawing a figure on the ground with a twig.

"So far as it goes, this village lies at the foot of the mountain. Village chief, you're not in contact with the folks up at the mine? They are not buying stuff at your shops, or recruiting miners down here?"

"Well, rarely, or rather, very rarely they come down here to buy sheep or chicken. Once or twice a year, I'd say."

"Hmm, okay. Let's treat this place as being barely a part of the mine then."

"Elven lady, this here is the Mauser Village, and the mine is..."

"I know, I know. But, us hunters have been dispatched on a quest at the mine."

"Hmm, but this place is..."

"T-h-a-t's w-h-y. Village chief, we'll only get paid for the subjugation at the mine. Our destination is the Gilshoot Mine and its related facilities, got it?"

The village chief looks confused. But even he cannot escape Elemia's pushiness.

"Umm...the village will pay your reward."

"It's pointless for you to reward us. I mean, at most you'd give us the healthiest calf of your farm, or some such, right!? But that's of no use to us. I prefer getting paid by the guild. With money, and not calves. And with a proper record for my career and a written report."

"Haah..."

At this point the village chief has given up any resistance, obviously shrinking away from her.

"The ones who are going to defeat the ground spiders are Lady Shea and Morning Mist Shooter Elemia. I'll now teach you how to fill out the documents for the guild, okay? First up is a written application, followed by a report after the spiders are dead. You'll write down that you requested the help of Morning Mist Shooter Elemia and two others, and that your people's lives and assets have been saved after we've completely annihilated the spiders with our magnificent skills."

"Haah..."

"Next you'll tell them that we were polite, conducted ourselves well, and that we didn't break any of the village's property."

"...Understood." The village chief's face clearly shows that he's resolved himself to his fate at this point.

Elemia looks like a bill collector who's come here to extort money rather than a hunter who's come

for rescue.

"Okay. With this, a supplementary side-quest has been established. It's a great opportunity for me to show you, Lady Shea, my skills. Ah, and while I'm at it, you as well, newbie. Ground spiders, come and get me! I'm ready for you at any time!" Elemia adopts a daunting pose with the village chief following like her servant.

Given a little bit more time, this vigor would likely lead to the inauguration of a new village chief. Morning Mist Shooter Elemia - even though her archery skills still remain a mystery, her overwhelmingly eager drive and vitality have no equal.

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We take a short break after being invited over to the village chief's home. Meanwhile the village chief draws up the written application for the subjugation of the ground spiders under Elemia's strict tutelage. Just when he's almost finished writing the application...

"They're here! The ground spiders have come!" A middle-aged man rushes into the village chief's house.

"So they've come, eh? How many?"

"Umm, fifteen, twenty...a lot!"

Contrary to the man with his ghastly pale face, Shea has remained completely calm and collected. She immediately pulls Corpse Eater and Breaking Bone Mask close.

"Very well, village chief, you and your people are to evacuate to a safe location."

"O-Okay."

"Take care of the report, okay?"

Elemia shoulders her favorite composite bow, and attaches the quiver to her belt. Unlike moments ago, an intense tension hangs in the air.

"We leave the rest to you then..." The village chief bows and hurriedly leaves the house together with the man who's reported the appearance of the spiders.

Shea watches through the window how the two men gradually become smaller as they run away. Once she's confirmed that the villagers have evacuated safely, she heads over to the opposite window, and throws it open.

I feel like the thicket ahead of the broken fence is shaking. I can hear a faint, repeated screeching - a revolting noise as if hard objects are rubbing against each other at a very high speed.

A black shadow jumps out of the thicket with a rustling. A spider! A big one at that!

The spider is far bigger than a hume. Its size looks close to that of a horse. It crawls across the ground at an astounding speed while furiously wielding its long, thick legs.

"I'm heading out." Shea whispers.

Picking up the mantle she had messily thrown on a chair's back, she hides her face by lowering her Breaking Bone Mask. And then she slowly readies <Corpse Eater> in front of her. Violet-black miasma with a slimy viscosity streams out of its blade.

"Teo, there's a lot of spiders. Moreover, it's an unplanned subjugation. I'll have you earn your reward." Shea leaves those words without looking back before running outside.

"Lady Shea, don't you have anything to say to me as well!?" Elemia follows Shea while complaining.

I shoulder the field smith set I've just recently bought, and chase after them.

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