

# Much Ado About Thieving

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*Gather round, my lovelies. Have a seat and listen to your Auntie Grub impart some boggart wisdom. Since you all have nothing better to do than loiter around and make a mess of my hut, I will tell you a tale. One story, after which you all must leave, yes? Okay. Today's tale is the story of four enterprising boggarts and how they raided a giant's lair—Nitwik, come down from there! Goodness, you'll break your neck hanging out the window. There's a good boggart. And return that rabbit's foot to where you found it. Don't think I didn't see you.*

*Now, where was I? Ah, yes. Four friends—Flib, Lugg, Ygril, and Naance—were faffing about one morning, as young boggarts do, as you all do ...*



Art by: Karl Kopinski

The four friends perched on the lip of a massive bat-shaped hill, surveilling the vast landscape below. Past the rolling meadow with its dizzying spiral formations, past the clusters of standing stones to the east, through which a stream wound like a silver ribbon, stood what looked to the eye to be a giant's dolmen. Indeed, it was a dolmen—Boeb of Boldwyr's dolmen—and the gargantuan stone archway was unmistakable from this distance. It loomed, forbidding and terrible, warning trespassers away. Saner minds would take the warning and give the dolmen a wide berth. But when did warnings ever stop boggarts?

“I still say we go to Bre’s lair,” Naance whined. “We can find a way. Or, or—”

“Shut it, Naance,” Ygril snapped. “The entire pass has gone into Shadowmoor. And I ain’t crossing the barrier. Not without a Reliquary of Dawn.”

Every boggart worth their salt knows of the riches in a giant’s lair. Every boggart worth their salt has imagined raiding a lair for such trinkets. Few actually try. And when Ygril had gathered them to plan this heist, it was Naance who’d told them of the giant Bre of Clan Stoutarm, whose lair lay on the far side of the Blessed Nation. *She’s a milder giant*, he’d said, *and often away from her lair for long periods of time.*

Imagine, then, their dismay when they found that the barrier to Shadowmoor had shifted, blocking their path and stretching for miles and miles as far as the eye could see. Bre of Stoutarm’s lair was now firmly in the darkness of Shadowmoor. While Flib and Lugg and Naance had stood there looking sorry for themselves, Ygril’s face lit up with a mischievous smile.

“Look alive, chums,” she’d said. “I know a giant who resides nearby!”

But what she hadn’t told them, what she’d neglected to say because she knew they were cowards and wouldn’t go for it, was that the lair belonged to Boeb of Clan Boldwyr.

“I’ve heard terrible things about Boeb,” said Flib quietly.

Legend had it that he was a very old and very territorial—not to mention terribly foul-tempered—giant, and that he feasted on boggarts and made flutes of their bones. Worse, he sprung traps on would-be raiders and tortured them mercilessly.

“We’ve all heard terrible things about Boeb,” said Ygril a tad too dismissively. “Don’t mean it’s true.” But when the others shifted uneasily, unconvinced, she said, “Don’t be cowards. Come on, think about it! We’ll be the first boggarts to successfully rob Boeb. We’ll be as famous as—no, *more* famous than Horp.”

That was, admittedly, a tantalizing prospect. There was nary a boggart alive, old or young, who didn’t know Horp. Or indeed know of his greatest feat—the giant hornet he’d wrangled and now rode about (pridefully, I might add) as a mount. Aye, Horp’s name was spoken with awe, and the four friends considered for a moment the fame that would accompany their names should this endeavor prove successful. That finally tipped them over.

Ygril turned to Lugg. “You go ahead and scout the surroundings. Report back what you find.”

“Now wait a moment!” Flib leapt forward, blocking Lugg’s path. The fur around his left eye had been singed off in an experiment gone wrong, exposing the wrinkled gray skin beneath, which he now squinted at Ygril in suspicion and indignation. “Why does *he* get to scout?”

“Cause I’m quicker on my feet, you dolt,” said Lugg.

“I’m quicker than you.” Flib turned to Ygril. “I’m quicker, tell him.”

Ygril sighed. It was a tired argument, an old argument, and not an argument she was about to endure at that moment.

“Now that I think about it,” said Ygril. “You both should go. Two is better than one, and you can look out for each other.”

Lugg, of course, opened his mouth to protest, but Flib had already shot down the hill, so Lugg took off after him, shouting—

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*Yes, Nitwik. Shouting would have alerted Boeb the Terrible. Yes, they made for very poor scouts. What was that? It would be dreadful for them if they got eaten by Boeb the Terrible? Aren't you full of original insights, Nitwik? That wasn't a compliment, but you're welcome nonetheless. Now, if you stopped interrupting me, you would know what happened next!*

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Upon their return, Lugg and Flib reported that the coast was clear, and the group set off carefully toward the giant's lair. Ygril and Flib took the lead, with Flib guiding their mount Marrja—a large and ferocious eagle—by her harness. They had brought her specifically to help cart their loot and to aid in robbing Bre (now Boeb). Lugg and Naance flanked her, casting here and there as they readied themselves to bolt at the slightest sign of trouble. Having decided that if they raided the lair with Boeb inside they were practically asking to be killed (not that the boggarts feared death, oh no, but they agreed that death without reward was a waste), they elected to lure him out. Flib was to set off galivanting around the cave on Marrja the eagle, making a ruckus and taunting the giant, who would emerge boiling with righteous rage at the gall of this trespasser. Flib would take off, hopefully before Boeb snatched him out of the sky. While Flib engaged Boeb in a chase, Ygril and Lugg and Naance would then loot as much as they could from the giant's lair. A brilliant plan. What could possibly go wrong?

*(Thank you, Nitwik, but that was a rhetorical question.)*

They were now firmly in Boeb's territory, and if they doubted that fact, just up ahead were seven dead boggarts hanging from the low branch of a tree.

"Oh," Flib whimpered, shuddering. "Oh ..."

The dead boggarts hung from the tree's limbs in varying stages of decay. On the far right was a boggart with yellowed bones poking through the flesh. The lower half of his face was gone, exposing his teeth in a grim smile. Some boggarts hung by their necks, others by their hands or feet. There was neither rhyme nor reason to the manner of their hangings, as though Boeb (for who else could it be?) had strung them up as quickly as he could before hurrying off to some other important task. All of them wore that grim smile of death, and it unnerved the friends to regard such a wicked sight.

Marrja tossed her head and stamped at the sight of the corpses.

"We should go back," said Naance to Ygril. "I *told* you Boeb is the worst of them all."

"Yes," said Flib, trying to steer the bird around. "Let's go back—"

"Shh!" Ygril held up a hand, and three pairs of frightened eyes turned toward her.

"What?" Naance hissed. "What is it?"

"Do you hear that?" asked Ygril.

They listened. There came a deep rumble, as if the land were in the throes of an earthquake, that was followed by a whoosh of wind. Rumble and whoosh. Rumble and whoosh.

"He's sleeping!" cried Ygril with excitement.

When the others merely cast her perplexed looks, Ygril went on to explain that giants sleep differently from boggarts, that a giant's slumber was something called name sleep, triggered only by a sudden change such as trauma or abundance. Ygril very much hoped it was abundance, for that would give them plenty to loot. In either case, she finished, the odds were perfectly in their favor, for it was quite difficult indeed to rouse a giant from name sleep!

*(And if you wonder how Ygril came to know so much about name sleep, it is because she is smart and listened to her aunties and did not question their wisdom. You hear that, Nitwik? She listened to her aunties.)*

“Are you sure—” began Lugg, but Ygril was already bounding out of the woods and toward the lair. The great cave loomed into sight, etched into the bottom of a small bushy hill that was alive with red and blue and yellow hanging vines that draped artfully over the sides of the cave. From a fat chimney billowed a column of black smoke that curled into the floating standing stones that hovered above the cave. The single opening to the cave was a vast and round wooden door that presently hung ajar and from which wafted the snores of the sleeping Boeb. Five weed-choked steps led up to the door, but each step was about six feet high, so Ygril had to jump onto each one as if scaling a wall. She cast a glance over her shoulder to find her friends scrambling after her.

“Come on!” she called. And you might call her foolish, how loudly she called, how readily she threw caution to the wind to venture with abandon into the cave.

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Ygril skidded to a halt before Boeb of Boldwyr. The giant was stretched out in his cot, looking like a small mountain. Upon entering the cave, Flib, Lugg, and Naance stopped next to Ygril to regard the giant. It wasn’t so much his size—for he *was* massive, and indeed this was the first any of them had seen a giant—but that instead of the formidable and hateful creature they were expecting, Boeb was ruddy and plump, with a face that could only be described as genial. And, as if he were in the throes of a happy dream, a most contented smile was playing on his lips, which they could only see when he exhaled and ruffled apart his forest of a mustache.

Boeb the Terrible did not look quite so terrible.

Once the friends had ascertained that Boeb was fast asleep and posed no threat to them, they turned their attention to the lair. Oh, what a wonder it was to behold! The stone floor was covered in a rich and colorful elemental pelt, and the fire that danced merrily in the hearth caused it to wink and shimmer with iridescence like sunlight on a bubble. A giant lute with strings as thick as ropes and tuning pegs wrought of bone rested against the far wall.

“I wonder if those are boggart bones,” remarked Ygril to a chorus of groans.

Behind the door was a gargantuan copper bucket, and the four friends caught their harried and delighted reflections in its scuffed surface—delighted, for at last they laid eyes on the loot they had dreamt of.



Art by: Jorge Jacinto

Ygril was particularly astounded at the mighty sieging shield hanging from the wall. It would take a wielder as strong as the bark that made it—bark from Doran’s trunk. Since it was too large to steal, she turned her eyes to the other treasures the cave had to offer, like the Reliquary of Dawn, the bronze giantcraft helm, the many phials and bottles of potions on the low table, and skeins upon skeins of giant gold thread strewn everywhere! Naance all but squealed in delight at the balls of dried mollusk dung spread out on a mat, which as you know are particularly potent ingredients for a spell of temporary forgetting. Flib rushed over to the corner, gibbering and nearly salivating over a mound of crushed beetle powder. And so on and so forth, the cave yielded its many riches to the friends.

They set to work immediately, fashioning four pouches from their meager clothing, which they tied to Marrja’s saddles.

*(Yes, Nitwik, they went without clothes, and all their bits were showing, but that’s not what’s important here.)*

Working in tandem, they filled the pouches to the brim, and Naance and Lugg flew Marrja to an appointed place near their home where they offloaded and hid their loot. Back and forth and back and forth they went, emptying the cave of all they could find.

Meanwhile, crafty Ygril had now scaled the low table where she had glimpsed the phials and bottles of potions. The friends had agreed to evenly share the loot, but Ygril wanted the choicest potions for herself. And how did she go about selecting the choicest potions? By their colors, their luminescence, and how badly they stank. The stinkier the better, of course. The phials and bottles, while tiny for Boeb, were just the size of a boggart’s ear, so Ygril stole as many as she could, squeezing them into the pouch around her neck, and was already dreaming of the riches she would make from selling them when something flashed in the corner of her eye. She turned to see a golden potion suspended in a phial labeled “Thousand-Year Elixir.” Curious. Was it a thousand years old, or would it make the drinker live for a thousand years? Quivering with excitement, she reached for it ...

There came a yelp of surprise. Ygril whipped around, heart leaping to her mouth, mind racing. Had Flib seen her keeping some potions for herself? Worse, had Boeb awakened and seized him? But as

she looked down, she saw that the giant was still asleep, the mountain of his belly rising and falling steadily. And Flib was nowhere to be found.

“Flib?” Ygril whispered.

From Ygril’s vantage, she had ample view of Boeb’s monstrously large and unshod feet and could barely see the giant’s face over the mound of his belly, but it was precisely because she was looking at Boeb that she saw the moment a figure appeared on his chest.

It was Flib.

“Are you mad?” hissed Ygril. “What are you doing? Come down from the giant!”

But Flib was smiling, tongue lolling from his lips. *Oh, this idiot!* Ygril thought. *This idiot is going to kill us all!* She had just opened her mouth to admonish Flib when he hefted a giant shimmering scale over his head.

“Look!” Flib called. “Look what I found!”

Shaped like a curved triangle, with soft sloping edges and a spiral fanning out from the center, was the scale of an eternalisk.

“Grennel’s long tail,” Ygril swore.

This, without a doubt, was priceless loot. Not because eternalisks were extremely rare—which they were, being that they dwelled so high up in the mountains it was impossible to hunt them down, a problem that did not exist for giants—but because they were immortal. And any part of them, but particularly their scales, could be used to make the most potent healing charms. They could regrow lost limbs or heal even the most hopeless ailments! Ygril stood there, salivating as she imagined the endless possibilities.

There was only one problem. The scale hung from a rope-thick string around Boeb’s throat.

Flib, as if reading her mind, produced his axe and began to hack at the rope.

“No!” cried Ygril. “No, just—wait a moment!” A wrong swing, a swing wide off the mark, and Flib would chop straight into Boeb’s flesh. “We have to remove it *together*, and we must be careful!” She began to get down from the table—

At that moment, there came a loud and terrible bleating, and both Flib and Ygril turned to the door, which had now darkened with the monstrous form of a cloudgoat—impossibly large, with horns twisting from its head and wings sprouting from its back. It was Boeb’s mount, the only creature large enough for a giant to ride.

“Where in *infernal bogs* did that come from?” squealed Flib.

What they couldn’t know was that the cloudgoat often flew out to pasture, and when they had stolen into the lair, it had been abroad. If they hadn’t rushed in, if they had carefully surveyed the surroundings, they would have seen her empty shed and better prepared themselves. Boeb often milked the cloudgoat, but he had suddenly (for a reason I shall soon elaborate) gone into name sleep, so for months he had been unable to milk her. Now her udders were swollen and painful, and the poor creature came every day to bleat at her sleeping rider, hoping to wake him up. She beat her vast wings as if to take flight, causing the flames in the hearth to leap and burn hotter. And though she hadn’t seen the boggarts but was only bleating in pain, tossing her head and stamping her hooves as she edged closer to Boeb to nudge him awake, Flib thought she had seen him and was in fact coming to gore him with her massive horns. His hands, which had been raised up to swing at the string holding the scale, now

dropped in fear, but not before the wickedly sharp axe fell from his grasp, spinning and spinning, to bury itself, just as Ygril had feared, firmly in Boeb's flesh.

It stung like a needle.

Yes, it took some effort to rouse a giant from name sleep, but they *could* be roused, and the combination of the cloudgoat's mad bleating and stamping and Flib's sharp axe sinking into his flesh jolted Boeb awake. He twitched, slapped his chest, and crushed poor Flib.

Ygril, who had been in the middle of rappelling down the table's leg, panicked. She let go of the rope and fell head first into the nearby copper bucket. She screamed as she fell, and if the cloudgoat's bleating had not masked her screams, Boeb might have heard her. It was just her luck that the bottom of the bucket was filled with some two feet of old milk, which she splashed into. The milk muffled her fall and spared her a death as gory as Flib's. Oh, poor Flib was dead. Foolish Flib was dead. But Ygril could not spare him much thought, for she was caught in a nightmare of her own. However was she going to escape the giant? Desperate, Ygril cast about, seeking a way out of the bucket. But the walls were too high and too steep for her to clamber out. She was trapped.

At that moment, Naance and Lugg came flying back on Marrja the eagle. Imagine their shock when they saw that Boeb was awake and sitting up in his cot! Lugg yanked on the reins, bringing the eagle to a screeching halt at the threshold (nearly strangling her in the process), and Boeb looked slowly from the surprised boggarts to the smeared remains of Flib on his chest to the rest of his home, which was now missing several of his possessions. Then that genial face of his, that ruddy and chubby face which in sleep had looked harmless and loveable, contorted with rage.

"Thieves!" he thundered, flying to his feet. "Filthy boggart thieves!"

Lugg pissed himself, the hot stream soaking Marrja's feathers (who would peck mercilessly at him much later for that offense). He whipped the reigns and screamed, "Fly! Flyyy!"

Marrja did not need to be told twice. With a frightened squawk, she took to the skies, narrowly missing Boeb's grasping fist.

*(You say they're cowards? Well, you wouldn't fare any better with a rampaging giant, particularly one who has been so rudely roused from name sleep.)*

Boeb took off after them, but Marrja flew higher and higher, until she was out of his grasp. He might have chased them on his cloudgoat, but she was in no condition to fly. And so, enraged, Boeb traipsed back to his cave and sank into his cot.

"It will be better for you to come out," he said after some time. The hollow of the copper bucket amplified his already deep voice so that Ygril felt it rumble in her chest. "Boggarts always hunt in packs. Boeb knows there are still more of you here. Boeb can smell your stink—"

*Now that's just rude*, thought Ygril.

"—So come out now, and don't make Boeb find you."

Ygril seriously considered it, but common sense got the better of her. What did she think would happen if she surrendered herself? That Boeb would simply send her off with a warning? Perhaps rap her on the knuckles for being a naughty boggart? No. She would end up another of those boggarts, strung up by her neck or feet outside the cave. But Ygril decided that if she must die, she would make the giant work for it. So, she pressed herself against the wall of the bucket and kept quiet.

"No?" said Boeb, staring about the cave. "Very well. Boeb will wait. If there is one thing Boeb is good at, it is waiting. Boeb is ... very patient."

Boeb this, Boeb that. Ygril had never met someone so enamored with the sound of their own name!

“When Boeb finds you, you will tell him where you have hidden his things. Then Boeb will pluck your arms from their joints and suck the marrow from them. He will carve your eyes from their sockets and suck the jelly from them. Then he will hang you up in the tree for all to see. He will find your friends and hang them up, too.”

The image of the dead boggarts hanging from the tree came to Ygril with alarming clarity, and she trembled with fright.

*(Is dismemberment a better death than being crushed, you ask? I can't say. I have neither been dismembered nor crushed.)*

But Flib had died quick, which Ygril supposed was much better than having her limbs plucked like an insect in the hands of a petulant child. Her mind turned to Lugg and Naance, the lucky bastards. They had fled and left her all alone. Not that she could fault them, for if she were in their shoes she would have bolted and never looked back.

Boeb was still speaking. “It was very foolish of you to try to rob me. Very foolish and very disrespectful. Nobody steals from Boeb of Boldwyr. Definitely not some filthy boggarts.”

If you looked, then, at Boeb and watched the firelight play on his face, you would have seen not rage, not anger, but sadness. His bushy brows furrowed with sorrow, and the corners of his wide, wide lips sagged. Now that the excitement of the chase was spent, he remembered why he had entered name sleep in the first place. He had lost his father, and he was so overcome by grief that he had fallen into name sleep. The eternalisk scale about his neck had been a gift from his father, who had hunted it many, many years ago when Boeb had been but a boy. And when Boeb had smiled in his sleep, it was because he had been dreaming sweet dreams of his father, who for a moment had been real and alive again. And grief and pain had been at bay.

The cloudgoat nudged him, bleating pitifully.

“Fine. fine,” rumbled the giant, stirring from his musings. “Boeb will milk you. Boeb is very thirsty.”

Ygril, who was still trapped in the bucket, felt it move as Boeb dragged it toward himself. When Ygril looked up, she saw, to her horror, the gargantuan swinging udders of the cloudgoat, the wrinkled skin now stretched pink and threaded with veins. Before she could think, Boeb grabbed an udder and squeezed. A great gush of milk splashed into the bucket and knocked her off her feet. It was like a flood, a great torrent from the heavens that swept all in its path. Ygril floundered beneath waves and waves of thick white milk, and when she kicked to the surface, coughing and spluttering, she had only a moment to breathe before she was sucked down by another wave. On and on and on it went, and just when she thought she would drown, Boeb finished milking the cloudgoat.

Ygril floated on her back, gasping but grateful to be alive. From what seemed a great distance, she heard the cloudgoat give a bleat of thanks, heard Boeb mutter something, and then came the clop of hooves, the groan of the door, and the beating of wings as the cloudgoat, milked at last and free from pain, took flight.

One good thing came from the milking of the cloudgoat. Where before Ygril had been trapped at the bottom of the bucket and unable to climb out, now the milk had buoyed her up so that she was close enough to reach the lip of the bucket. She could escape. She could finally escape this cursed place! Hopeful, Ygril flipped onto her belly and swam toward the edge.

Boeb's hand appeared, and Ygril shrank into the milk. Then the bucket was lifted, milk sloshing, Ygril tossed around like a log in a turbulent stream. There came the unmistakable crackle of flames as Boeb settled the bucket over the furnace.

"Oh no," Ygril said. "Oh no no no no."

Within moments, the bucket began to grow warm. The *milk* began to grow warm. Boeb began to hum good-naturedly as he waited for the milk to boil.

Milk boils hotter than water. Should you find yourself in a bucket of boiling milk, it will scald you and peel the flesh from your bones as it cooks your insides. Ygril was only too aware of the fate that awaited her in that bucket, and she sloshed and thrashed, hooting with pain.

"I'm here!" Ygril screamed at last. "I'm here. Please get me out!"

Ygril's skin was already raw, fur falling off in matted clumps. In her desperation, Ygril reached into her pouch and emptied her loot of phials and bottles into the milk, where they bobbed like corks. Surely one of them had to be of help; surely one of them could stop her cooking or heal her skin. With raw hands she grabbed the nearest one, a thick, clumpy green potion, and chugged it the same moment Boeb's curious face peered into the bucket.

"Aah, *there* you are," said Boeb, smiling with relish as Ygril thrashed about in agony. "This is even better than Boeb imagined! Boeb has never cooked boggart before—"

Boeb broke off, frowning.

Ygril was no longer thrashing in pain. She was growing like a tree, rapidly *expanding* as though she had been pumped full of air. It seemed to her everything around her was shrinking in size. The bucket, which had seemed so vast and deep, crunched underneath her feet like a flimsy tin can; the table, which she had had to climb, was now no taller than her waist; Boeb's cot was now the perfect size for her! Ygril raised her head and banged it into the top of the chimney, sending a great cascade of rocks falling, which quenched the fire. Groaning as she extricated herself from the debris, she stood to her feet ... only to notice that her limbs felt heavier and her movements clumsier.

Ygril realized then that she was a giant.

"Whaaaaaa," she mumbled, and even her voice was deep and slow, like Boeb's.

And where was Boeb? When Ygril exploded from the bucket, the giant had been thrown backward and lay buried beneath the broken west wall. He stirred from beneath the pile of rubble. Boeb did not seem so large and formidable. He looked at Ygril, then around the cave.

"My home!" cried Boeb. "Look what you've done to my home!"

And before Ygril could speak, the giant threw himself at Ygril, who, still clumsy in her new and oversized body, was too slow to dive away. They went down in a tangle of limbs, grappling and snarling and exchanging blows. They tumbled out the door and down the hill. Ygril's flesh, raw and scalded from the hot milk, stung as they tussled in the grass. She twisted from Boeb's grip, made to dash away, but the giant closed a fist around her ankle. Ygril tripped and landed hard on her jaw. Lights exploded in her eyes and pain spasmed through her chin.

"Wait!" cried Ygril. "Just wait—"

But Boeb was long past reasoning. He was enraged. All he wanted was to dwell in peace, to mourn his father in peace. To have the sanctity of his home so callously violated, his home destroyed ... Oh, he was implacable! He gave a great roar as he snatched floating standing stones from the sky and began

hurling them at Ygril, who ducked as the stones went whizzing past. One smacked into her and sent her flying. She landed in the meadow, cutting a track in the green before finally coming to rest beneath the tree with the swinging boggarts.

Then Boeb was upon her. He closed his fists around Ygril's neck and began choking her. Ygril struggled, beating against Boeb's arms, but she might as well have been pounding into a rock, how ineffectual her blows were. Worse, the potion was spent, and she was starting to shrink to her normal size.

"Ghhrag!" she garbled.

At that moment, there came the screech of a bird, and Ygril saw Marrja the eagle bearing down on Boeb. Boeb turned just in time for her to rake her claws across his face, opening several deep and bleeding gashes. Boeb bellowed in pain and fury.

He let go of Ygril to try and snatch Marrja out of the sky. But that was time enough for Ygril to catch her breath, to see that Lugg and Naance were atop Marrja. *They came back for me! The bastards came back for me!* Ygril leapt to her feet and grabbed Boeb from behind, pinning his arms behind him so he couldn't move. But Boeb was strong, terribly strong, and it took everything and more for Ygril to hold him long enough for Marrja to swoop down again upon the furious and frothing Boeb, to sink her talons into his eyes and tear them out.

The shriek was terrible. Boeb howled. He floundered, trampling blindly as he knocked into trees and standing stones, until he tripped and sprawled to his knees, where he wailed in fury and humiliation.

"Filthy boggarts! Filthy thieving boggarts! Boeb will find you! Boeb will find you and make you pay!"

For miles and miles around, everyone heard the anguished wails of Boeb the Terrible.

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*What happened to the friends? Well, Nitwik, they gathered their loot and went home, where they shared the loot with the rest of their swamp burrow. They celebrated Flib—who died foolishly, yes, but in service of something greater. And they basked in the experience and shared the tale of how they robbed Boeb of Boldwyr. Boeb the Terrible. There is a very clear lesson here. Can you tell me what it is? No, no! That is not the lesson. Goodness, have I just wasted my entire afternoon? Don't laugh, Nitwik. I worry about you.*

*Now, away with you. Away with you all! Auntie Grub has things to do.*