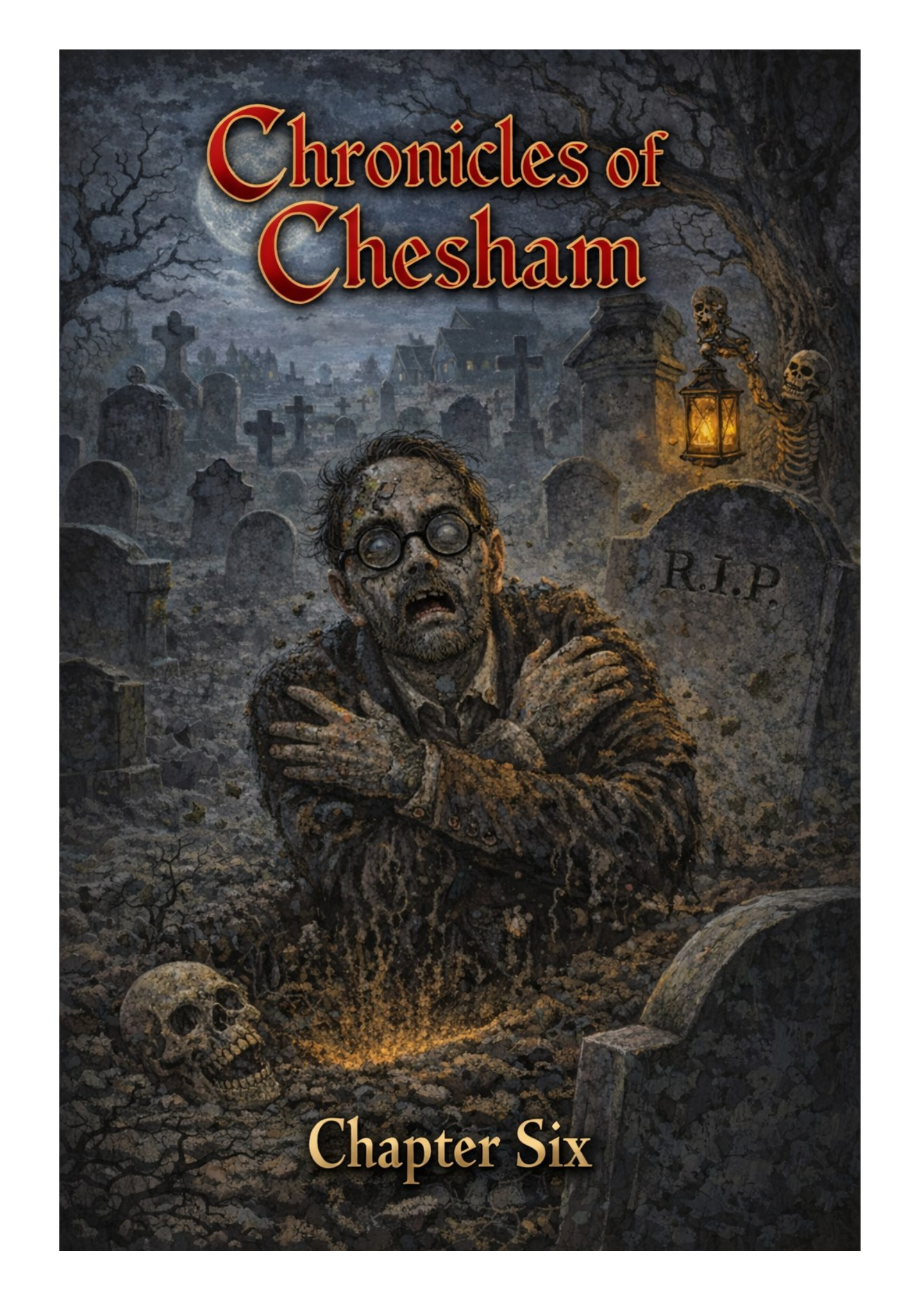


Chronicles of Chesham



Chapter Six

Chapter Six – Fur of Glis Glis

In the saloon bar, the group gathered around their favourite table to discuss matters so far, the blind was drawn to the windows, because this is what you did when there were matters to be discussed. More room had to be made, as their new accomplice Jake the Golem was now in tow.

The fire was roaring loudly in the darkness, to such an extent that everyone there suspected that DOB, the local pyromaniac, must be around here somewhere.

“What is a Glis Glis?” Asked Ben.

“I know!” From nowhere, DOB popped up, as if from under the table, seemingly having recovered from his previous ordeal.

“It is a furry animal, a type of dormouse but much bigger, people used to eat them back in the day, they can be found in the countryside but beware that they have evolved somewhat over the years, what with all the eating them and that kind of caper, it has been rumoured that a few of them got it on with the werewolves over by the curious stones and that now, if the moon is full and bright, they transform into an evil, nasty form of themselves.”

Mick slid the blind up slightly and a bright full moon shone into the saloon bar.

“Don’t you ever have any good news?” Moaned Tim.

“Oh dear,” sighed Ben finishing his pint.

DOB continued, "I've heard that they can be found in the church, on this very street, the Church of St Marys, hiding in the rafters, waiting waiting....."

"Waiting for what?" Said Ben, grimacing slightly that his mission was not likely to be as easy as it had seemed.

"Waiting waiting" DOB continued.

"Is it another premonition?" Asked Ben.

"No, he is just very drunk!" Remarked Richard.

"Well said Ian," Frank concurred.

The Church of St Mary's was a foreboding place, especially on a dark night with a full moon when you are looking for nasty, bity creatures.

None of the Shouty Wednesday crew were attendees of the church, and no-one but no-one went there at night. It used to be lit up with its spire and a Chesham flag flying high, but those days were long gone.

It was very spooky, an old building from an old age, with a graveyard of the very, very long gone. Rumour had it that the priest, and guardian, of the church was somewhat eccentric, and was rarely seen in public. A strange man, known as The Cleric. It was rumoured that he had fallen somewhat to the dark side of his practices and beliefs and was now a practitioner of witchcraft and the dark arts.

Pub Lore Fact

If you are not familiar with the concept of a roader, then please allow me to explain. A roader is your absolute last pint of ale before you leave the pub. This is the absolute law, until someone else says that they are having a roader and you are just about to finish yours. In those circumstances, you are entitled to another roader and that is it. Unless of course someone else is having a roader and you have not finished your roader after the roader. It is absolutely carved in solid stone pub law, that if you have had your roader and someone else proposes a roader then it is not your fault that a roader has been proposed, you were forced to accept and so were late home to whoever has the misfortune to look after you and are drunk. It is also absolutely carved into pub law, that despite having been in the pub for three or four hours, if someone has a brilliant idea five minutes before you are due to finish your roader, then a roader is required to discuss the idea, which absolutely no-one will remember tomorrow. Roader means one for the road, fortunately in this parallel universe of Chesham there are no cars, and the roads aren't that great either, but it can take a very, very long time to get anywhere when the roader rules are applied.

End of Pub Lore Fact

Six pints later, they left the pub.

And so, the gang left the Queens Head, with the short walk to the church, the dragons swirled and circled like shadows in the

night sky, sometimes to be seen clearly against the brightness of the full moon.

Eventually they paused at the mews leading to the path to the church, Ben was leading but there was a tangible atmosphere of apprehension, everyone had heard stories about this place, but no one had been, especially not at night.

They wanted to progress silently but even on his stoney tip toes, Jake was not able to walk quietly.

“Come here you,” said Bob, who produced a spare pair of Grocs that he had been carrying about his person. “You can wear these.”

A small tear welled up in Jakes eye, as Bob placed the Grocs on each of his stony feet. This was an act of kindness that would not be forgotten in a hurry.

Jake could now walk perfectly silently, but he knew that at some point someone was going to take the mickey out of him for his footwear.

Ben opened the wrought iron gates slowly, it was medieval and gothic with twists and turns of black painted iron and exceptionally pointy bits. Bob looked at them and was a bit concerned that his track record so far would mean he would end up on one of the points.

Ben pushed the gate open and ushered the group through, where he quickly assumed the lead again. There were grave-stones all around them of long forgotten Cheshamites, who had

the money to be able to afford a stone to mark their demise.

On through the gravestones, some as tall as a man (and all taller than Jake and Bob), and a mist was forming and swirling around the stones in a sinister manner.

The mist was now becoming a fog, and Ben raised his hand for everyone to stop, there was something that he had seen.

One of the graves began to start moving, the earth was vibrating and then all of a sudden amid a cluster of dirt flying up in the air, an undead man rose bolt upright from the waist, with his arms crossed across his chest, it wore ragged clothes, and had wretched dark skin but also quite cool glasses that made it look very clever indeed.

The group stepped backwards from this creature nervously,



Richard had his hand behind his back on the handle of his knife, Frank a hand just rested on the bow strapped to his back. Russ had unbuckled his double headed axe, and Timmy began to build up some momentum with his morning star, building up speed in a circle. Mick rested his hand on the heel of his sword. Bob, who kept a small knife in the back of his lovely hair, decided that this was not worth the hassle of having to put it all back

up again and moved slightly behind Mick.

This sorry creature was known to the group, this was Saurabh. Saurabh would occasionally come into the saloon bar at the Queens Head and would always just have half an ale. This was exceptionally annoying to the rest of the Shouters, and was gravely frowned up. Saurabh was a bookish and clever man, and was well known for his ability to help the wealthy residents of Chesham pay less tax to the treasury of Lord Jasper (the nobility of the town, keep up!) and it was for this reason, and only this reason that he was tolerated.

Saurabh seemed to have a particular knack of annoying DOB. This was because DOB thought that he knew every fact in every conversation that ever occurred in the Queens Head, and if he didn't then he would make one up and talk very convincingly about the fact until everyone seemed to agree that it must, in fact, be true.

Pub Lore Fact

This is an important part of pub lore, “anyone speaking with authority about something, even if they know absolutely nothing about the topic, shall be believed unless another person present is a greater authority and can demonstrate this, or at least speak as if he knows more than the other”.

End of Pub Lore Fact

This was the problematic part, Saurabh was clever, and he would consistently challenge DOB on his many “facts”, to the point that DOB became very annoyed (the beer didn’t help). It is rumoured that the last time Saurabh was seen at the Queens Head, some months ago, DOB had left shortly afterwards and Saurabh was not seen again.

“Do not go here,” the undead accountant wailed, “there is great peril, and evil in this graveyard.”

“Tell us of this evil,” ventured Ben, who was unarmed and walked ever so slightly towards him, who was still buried in the ground to the waist.

“If you stay here, you will meet The Cleric, and he will kill you if you do not pass his challenge.”

“Tell us of this challenge, undead one,” asked Ben, who felt that they were starting to bond now.

“Oooooohh, the challenge is dangerous, and The Cleric can call upon great evil powers to bring your greatest fears to life!”

“He’s going to stop us drinking?” Asked Mick, everyone nodded and looked horrified.

“Far, far worse than that, for he will”

There was suddenly a swishy noise followed by a sickening squelchy noise as Timmy had swung his morning star straight at Saurabhs head, that had knocked it clean off.

“What did you do that for?” Ben asked Timmy.

“He was getting right on my wick,” countered Timmy.

“But he was going to tell us about the challenge,” Ben protested.

“He’s talking nonsense, there is nothing worse than stopping us drinking.”

Jeff nodded his head sagely in a kind of “fair enough” kind of a way, and there were a few further nods and grunts to confirm that this was actually a fair point.

Saurabh’s head, which was now about ten gravestones away was making muffled noises, but was so badly damaged that no one could hear what he was saying, meanwhile his body remained rooted in the grave, waving its arms and wondering where its head had gone.

“Let’s get moving, shall we,” suggested Russ, and they headed off towards the church, leaving the stinking headless corpse to fend for itself.

On the approach to the church, slightly uphill in the darkness, there was suddenly a flash of lightening from nowhere. Everyone jumped back.

In front of them was what they knew must be The Cleric.

He wore a priestly mitre, and held a staff and looked exceedingly grumpy, colours of white, gold and green in his robes and a sceptre in his hand.

“I am The Cleric,” boomed The Cleric.



“Really?” Asked Ben, trying to discombobulate The Cleric.

He looked confused for a second, then retorted in loud order “Yes – I am!”

Sensing some disorder, Frank piped in “You don’t look like a cleric!”

Oh dear, oh dear – none were to know that The Cleric suffered from confidence issues, but sensing weakness, Mick piled in.

“What’s your real name?”

The Cleric was very much thrown, and rather timidly answered “Erm, Kevin actually”

Ben, seeking to gain the upper hand ventured “Yes, well we are here to get some fur of glis glis, so hopefully that will be okay with you?”

Jeff rolled his eyes at the sense of weakness, and then Kevin the Cleric realised where he was.

His eyes grew bright green, he started to hover slightly above

the ground and the lightening began to pierce the ground around them.

“Listen here you lot, if you want access to the church to look for the sacred glis glis, you will have to pass my challenge first!”

Timmy started to subconsciously swish his morning star and said “At last, someone who can tell us what the bloody challenge is!”

This took Kevin the Cleric back a little bit, he was not used to apathy like this and was one who liked to retain control, he was sure that he would shock them with the challenge.

“To pass, you must beat me in a round of Crackerjack!”

There was a gasp from the gang, as they realised the potentially heavy price that was to be paid.

Crackerjack was an ancient game, designed in a time where wit was low, and people really didn’t have very much to do.

The nature of the game was such that a coin would be flipped, and the first player must guess correctly whether a head or a tail had landed. If the first player guessed correctly, then they could kick the other player in between the legs without interference, and this whole process would repeat until one or the other gave in.

Bob immediately declared himself out, on the basis that his gentleman area had been antagonised enough in recent times, everybody nodded and agreed.

The terms of the battle were clear, the Cleric could battle anyone who had two testicles, this did not matter how the individual identified, a couple of testes was all it needed, no need to identify as anything else – everyone was happy.

“I shall smash the balls of any competitor who is stupid enough to challenge me!” Raged the Cleric.

There was a team conflagration, Bob, Ben, Frank, Richard, Russ and Timmy didn't fancy it. Mick was wearing full armour so volunteered.

He went forward towards the Cleric with some confidence, until the Cleric unrolled a scroll of rules and stated clearly: “No armour may be worn in this combat, it must be removed.”

Mick looked back at the others with his best “I don't want to get kicked in the balls” face and they accepted him for who he was, it was amazing.

Jake ventured forward with his heavy feet, and The Cleric surveyed his opponent with some scepticism.

“He is made of stone!” Protested The Cleric.

“Is that a breach of the rules?” Asked Ben.

The Cleric searched his scroll and then smugly declared “No, but he has to have some, you know, nuts.”

Everyone looked very intrusively at Jake's bare undercarriage and were starting to see the point being made until suddenly Jake declared “Wait! Behold my precious stones.”

Jake scrunched his face up and made several noises like he was trying to have a massive poo. Everyone watched as he strained with the effort until suddenly the most satisfying popping noise occurred, not once but twice.

And there, for all to see were two perfectly round (but stony) man pebbles, clear evidence that he was ready to pass the testes, er, test.

“What do you think of them?” Remarked Jake, proud as punch that he was able to show his manly crown jewels.

Kevin the Cleric looked at his scroll and began to sweat, “Erm, well, you see the thing is these rules were written a long time ago and er... er”

Ben interjected, “not against the rules though is it?”

“Oh bugger,” declared The Cleric.

Jeff produced a coin and asked (with some sarcasm it must be said) “Heads or tails Cleric?”

The Cleric, realising that this may be a life changing event, muttered “Heads, I am calling Heads.”

Jeff flicked the coin in the air, and it landed on the back of his hand, which he then concealed with his other hand, then had a peek. Jeff began to chuckle, “It is heads, off you go.”

Jake braced himself, pebbles out, hands behind his back, ready for the blow from the Cleric. The Cleric, emboldened, ran towards Jake and launched a shin of leg for all he was worth into Jakes gentleman area.

“Aaaaaagh, my leg,” screamed the cleric, as his bare shin struck Jakes perfectly smooth but stony hard groin. Jake blinked, he didn’t love it but it had been so long since he had felt anything in that area that a slight bit of action was quite welcome.

The Cleric was doubled over on the floor in pain, clutching his shin and ankle and moaning about outdated rules for a modern world.

This time Ben piped up, “Time for round 2.”

Jeff flipped the coin again, and this time asked Jake “Heads or Tails?”

“Tails,” declared Jake, and tails it was too.

The Cleric slowly dragged himself to his feet, and faced Jake. Jake kicked off his Grocs menacingly. Every man present apart from The Cleric, was absent minded holding their crown jewels in anticipation of the awful scene that was about to unfold. Frank sniggered nervously.

The Cleric stood, with his hands behind his back, braced. Ready for a full right foot of mini-golem stoniness to whack him straight in the scrotum.

The Cleric’s mind was racing, he had wanted children even though he was a man of the cloth now, he knew that this would not be possible after this. He said a small prayer under his breath and waited.

Jake scraped the earth beneath his right foot like a bull, and

then ran toward The Cleric, as he approached at speed he swung his foot as hard as he could and he made contact.

The Cleric collapsed in a heap, Timmy, Richard and Russ were all sick in their mouths, and for Jake this was the greatest accomplishment of his entire life.

“I concede,” wept The Cleric, “I am not doing that again” and the crew swept up Jake onto their shoulders like he had just won the World Cup, this was the greatest feeling Jake had ever had, and couldn’t wait to kick some other idiot in the bollocks to get this level of adulation again.

Defeated, The Cleric dragged himself off in the direction of Saurabh, and the group slowly approached the Church.

There were several trees outside, and then that is when they saw it, in the trees. The Glis Glis.



It hissed and growled, and the colour drained from Ben's cheeks as he realised that this was not going to be easy at all. It bared its teeth, hissing and was at least five feet from head to tail.

Then, unexpectedly, it dropped to the floor.

Bob, sensing that it would somehow know that he was the one to cause peril to, started to run back towards Church Street. The Glis Glis gave chase.



Bob ran for his life, the whole length of Church Street and then into the Queens Head, where he slammed the door behind him, the Glis Glis was shut out.

All of this had happened in such a flash that most of the group had been left behind at the church, where they were pillaging the holy water from inside of the church.

The Glis Glis was pawing and snarling at the door that Bob had slammed shut but even more unfortunately for the Glis Glis, Richard the Blacksmith had decided to stop off at the Queens Head and have an ale, or ten.

Madame Manuella looked out of the window and pointed at the Glis Glis, and within a minute or so, Richard the Blacksmith was out in Church Street to assess the situation.

Richard looked at the Glis Glis clawing the door to the saloon bar, and then the Glis Glis stopped and looked up at Richard, he could see it gulp slightly.

Within a nanosecond, Richard picked up the Glis Glis, broke its neck, skinned it and with his bare hands turned it into individual burgers, leaving the fur intact in a small rug type affair.

The crew had by now made their way back to the pub, and Richard the Blacksmith happily declared “All yours, hope you didn’t mind?”

“I don’t mind at all,” said Ben, “can I buy you a pint?”

“Well I was just going,” said Richard the Blacksmith.

“Well maybe just a roader?” Countered Ben.

Everyone knew what that meant.