

Session 09: Sunlight and Dragonfire

📁 Music

Placeholder for Session 9 music, theme track, or recap audio.

[Music / Audio Placeholder](#)

📁 Images

Placeholder image links for Session 9 artwork.

- [Image Placeholder 1 — Aeris and Thanlin](#)
- [Image Placeholder 2 — Sunlight in the Dwarven Mine](#)
- [Image Placeholder 3 — Battle with the Red Dragon](#)
- [Image Placeholder 4 — Sarith's Burial](#)

? Campaign Arc

- **Campaign:** Out of the Abyss
- **Dungeon Master:** Reuben / Rewrock
- **Session Number:** 9
- **Session Title:** Sunlight and Dragonfire
- **Date:** 2026-09-02
- **Setting:** The road toward Gracklstugh and a derelict dwarven mine and forge complex; flashback to Aeris's childhood training beside a surface lake
- **Player Attendance:** Aeris Nailo, Edric Faustin Valemont, Varang the Ash-Mender, Iragon Midsommar, and Vorgrath Kael

? Previously On...

The party had survived the Tomb of Brysis Khaem and returned to the road toward Gracklstugh carrying considerably more treasure than when they entered it. Four spectres and Brysis's wraith had been destroyed, Iragon had claimed the Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander, and the survivors had escaped the tomb with a collection of magical and mundane grave goods. Buppido, Eldeth Feldrun, and Prince Derendil had also left the tomb under a lingering curse.

Outside, however, the Underdark had offered no simple return to normality. A slow heartbeat had travelled through solid stone, a vast procession of mushroom-masked figures had chanted about the rot and an awakening crown, and an unidentified telepathic voice had begged the party for release from somewhere within the Tomb of Khaem. Across a later canyon, the group had also seen a singing myconid caravan travelling through the dark. By the beginning of Session 9, that caravan had taken another passage rather than the road toward Gracklstugh, leaving the fugitives to continue toward the duergar city with their old mysteries still unresolved.

? Overview

Session 9 opened in a memory from roughly eighteen years earlier. A much younger Aeris Naïlo sat beside a clear surface lake with Thanlin, one of his teachers from the Grove, and a group of young wardens. Thanlin's lesson concerned Sylvanus, the Oak Father, and the idea that nature was not simply life or greenery, but a balance between stillness and movement, light and shadow, growth and decay. When Aeris answered that the loss of that balance brought chaos, Thanlin showed him that imbalance could also manifest as sickness spreading from places that could not easily be seen.

Thanlin touched the lake and transformed its reflection into an illusion of the Underdark: twisting passages, strange fungi, and a world beyond the reach of ordinary sunlight. He told Aeris the story of **Ilarion Mosshart**, an archdruid who had once followed the call of Sylvanus into the deepest reaches below while carrying the **Wildwood Scepter of Sylvanus**. The relic appeared in the vision as ancient heartwood wrapped in twisting roots and blooming flowers, glowing faintly green. According to the story, it could awaken sleeping forests, calm storms, and commune with the oldest spirits. Ilarion never returned from the Underdark, and Thanlin said he was believed to still wander below with the scepter, seeking balance in a realm defined by hunger.

Thanlin's lesson ended with a warning that would become far more relevant years later: nature did not cease to exist simply because sunlight could no longer reach it. A warden's duty was therefore not merely to bring light into darkness, but to listen to what already lived there. He told Aeris to remember Ilarion, remember the scepter, and remember that balance had to be protected even in the deepest dark. As the memory faded, Aeris found himself once again in the Underdark, older and hardened by the journey. He touched the pouch of surface seeds at his belt and carried the lesson forward.

The party continued along the road toward Gracklstugh. A signpost placed the city approximately three days ahead. The journey brought more falling stone, including a rockfall that temporarily trapped Prince Derendil before the group freed him, as well as a wrong turn that forced the

travellers to double back. During the journey the curse from Brysis Khaem's tomb finally broke from Buppido, Eldeth, and Prince Derendil. Sarith's persistent headaches continued, while Prince Derendil remained visibly stressed and was occasionally heard speaking archaic Elvish under his breath. During camp, Iragon completed his attunement to the Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander.

Close to their destination, the party discovered a low stone entrance cut directly into the rock. Eldeth identified the construction as dwarven, with its roughly five-foot-high proportions providing an obvious clue. Varang questioned whether investigating an abandoned-looking mine so close to Gracklstugh was worth the risk, but curiosity won. A faint smell of smoke, fresh moving air, and old iron fittings for torch poles suggested that the passage extended much farther into the stone.

The group's caution paid off immediately. Varang cast **Find Traps** and identified both a trip-wire alarm and a pressure plate before anyone triggered them. Edric used **Invisibility** while scouting, with Aeris supporting the exploration through **Pass without Trace**. Beyond the trapped entrance lay the upper workings of an old, partially derelict mine with ramps, platforms, supplies, water, tools, and signs that the site had seen more recent use than its condition initially suggested.

Then the party found something almost alien after so long underground: **sunlight**. A narrow beam descended from somewhere impossibly high above and was redirected through the mine by carefully positioned mirrors. Eldeth explained that dwarven engineers could bore narrow shafts through thousands of feet of rock, allowing both sunlight and fresh air into deep workings. The shafts narrowed to roughly a foot across near the surface, making them useless as an escape route, but the light itself was genuine — the first true sunlight the party had encountered since descending into the Underdark.

The group pressed deeper. Workbenches and blacksmithing tools gave way to heavier industrial structures and finally an immense forge built around a huge smelting area. While investigating with Eldeth, Aeris caught sight of what occupied the chamber beyond. He immediately extinguished his light and moved back toward the others, quietly warning them that they needed to leave.

There was an **adult red dragon** inside the mine.

The attempted withdrawal came too late. The dragon noticed its visitors and the forge erupted into battle. Aeris quickly cast **Faerie Fire**, and the dragon failed to avoid the spell. Its body remained outlined in magical light, granting the party and its allies a vital advantage on their attacks. When Aeris briefly considered replacing the effect with Spike Growth, the group realised doing so would break concentration on Faerie Fire, and he instead maintained the spell while continuing to attack and support wounded allies.

The fight became the most dangerous confrontation the travelling group had faced since escaping captivity. Edric repeatedly struck the dragon with Magic Missile while using the mine's structures for cover. Iragon used his Steps of the Fey to reposition through bursts of Misty Step, fought with the newly attuned Dhauzimmer Blade, and added Divine Smite and Hellish Rebuke to the assault. Vorgrath entered a rage and met the dragon at close range with his greataxe while his World Tree vitality helped reinforce nearby allies. Varang moved constantly between wounded companions, stabilising the fallen and forcing people back from the edge of death.

The dragon answered with overwhelming force. Its Frightful Presence shook several members of the group, while a blast of fire rolled through the chamber for thirty-four points of fire damage before individual saving throws and reductions were resolved. Later, the dragon's beating wings smashed nearby combatants to the ground. Ront was left close to death, Buppido fell onto death saving throws, and Prince Derendil was knocked unconscious again. Varang and the other healers prevented the collapse from becoming a massacre, but they could not save everyone.

Sarith Kzekarit died during the battle.

Despite the loss, the dragon was finally driven to the brink. In the last exchange, Vorgrath's greataxe carved away part of one wing while Ront struck the dragon's front leg. After the final damage was recalculated, the Dungeon Master confirmed that **Ront had slain the dragon**. The mortally wounded creature attempted to launch itself away, failed, and crashed head-first into the stairs beside Edric. Standing next to the corpse, Edric immediately declared it the easiest dragon they had ever slain.

The aftermath mixed relief with grief. Varang began preparing Sarith's burial while the rest of the survivors treated their injuries and searched the dragon's hoard. Vorgrath later stood at Sarith's grave and marked the farewell in his own way, declaring Sarith part of his blood and promising to carry his memory while continuing to protect the others. Vorgrath and Edric also removed the dragon's head; after taking anything useful from it, Vorgrath cast the severed head into the mine's depths.

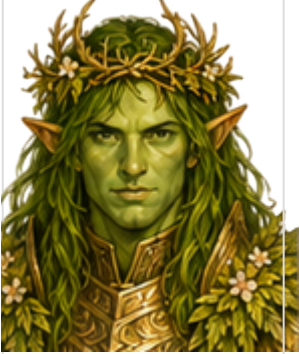
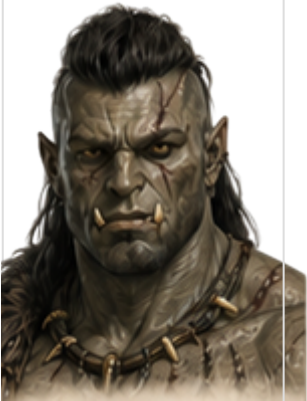
For the first time since the party's escape, survival had also made them genuinely wealthy. Thousands of coins, gemstones, artwork, potions, magical items, and useful mining supplies were recovered from the mine. Among the stranger discoveries was an arcane scroll titled **Translocation of Self**, a scholarly explanation of the magic adventurers knew as Misty Step. No individual claimed the newly recovered magical treasure before the session ended.

The victory brought one final milestone. The surviving player characters advanced to **level 5**. During the end-of-session vote, **Aeris Nailo won the Session 9 MVP award**, closing a session that had begun with a childhood lesson about listening to the darkness and ended with his Faerie Fire helping an entire company of fugitives bring down an adult dragon.

????? Party Members

Character	Player	Class / Role	Status	Notable Actions
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Aeris Nailo 	Justin / Slitzer	Druid / Circle of the Land	Alive; level 5; Session MVP	Experienced the opening flashback with Thanlin and learned the story of Ilarion Mosshart and the Wildwood Scepter of Sylvanus; supported mine exploration with Pass without Trace; accompanied the deeper scouting; discovered the red dragon with Eldeth; maintained Faerie Fire on the dragon through much of the fight; used Healing Word on Prince Derendil; and won the Session 9 MVP vote.
Edric Faustin Valemont 	BaconBuff / Rob	Wizard / Abjurer	Alive; level 5	Used Invisibility while scouting the mine, repeatedly struck the dragon with Magic Missile from range, used Detect Magic while the hoard was being searched, survived the battle, and greeted the dragon's corpse by putting his foot on its head and calling it the easiest dragon the party had ever slain.

Varang the Ash-Mender 	Ben / Moose	Cleric / Life Domain	Alive; level 5	Questioned the wisdom of exploring the mine so close to Gracklstugh, cast Find Traps and discovered both the trip-wire alarm and pressure plate, checked the mine for signs of the rot or unusual fungal growth, kept multiple companions alive through healing and stabilisation during the dragon battle, and began Sarith's burial after the fighting ended.
Iragon Midsommar 	James / Sicareus	Warlock / Paladin	Alive; level 5	Completed his attunement to the Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander during the journey, used Steps of the Fey and Misty Step to reposition throughout the dragon fight, attacked with the radiant blade, added Divine Smite to his strikes, and retaliated against the dragon with Hellish Rebuke.
Vorgrath Kael 	Mike / MikeKong	Orc Barbarian / Path of the World Tree	Alive; level 5	Fought the dragon at close range in a rage, used Vitality of the Tree to reinforce nearby allies, carved away part of the dragon's wing during the final exchange, helped remove its head after the battle, and gave Sarith a deeply personal farewell before casting the dragon's severed head into the mine.

? NPC Tracker

NPC	Role	Status	Notes
Thanlin	Aeris's archdruid teacher; flashback	Present status unknown	Taught the young Aeris about Sylvanus, natural balance, listening to the world around him, and the story of Ilarion Mosshart and the Wildwood Scepter.
Ilarion Mosshart	Archdruid of Sylvanus from Thanlin's story	Unknown	Entered the Underdark carrying the Wildwood Scepter of Sylvanus and never returned. Thanlin's account held that Ilarion still wandered below seeking balance.
Ront	Orc former prisoner and travelling ally	Alive	Continued warming to the travelling group. Was left near death by the dragon's wing attack but survived, then landed the damage that the Dungeon Master ultimately credited with slaying the red dragon.
Sarith Kzekarit	Drow former prisoner and Underdark guide	Deceased	His unexplained headaches persisted during the journey toward Gracklstugh. He fought alongside the party against the dragon but died during the battle. He was buried in the mine and formally mourned by his companions.
Prince Derendil	Quaggoth who claims to be an elven prince	Alive	Broke free of Brysis Khaem's curse, was temporarily trapped by a rockfall, continued speaking archaic Elvish while under stress, and was knocked unconscious during the dragon fight before being restored by the party's healers.
Eldeth Feldrun	Shield dwarf former prisoner	Alive	Broke free of the tomb curse, identified the mine as dwarven construction, explained the narrow ventilation and sunlight shafts, accompanied Aeris during the deeper exploration, and survived the dragon battle.

NPC	Role	Status	Notes
Buppido	Derro former prisoner	Alive	Broke free of the tomb curse. The dragon's wing attack dropped him onto death saving throws, but he was stabilised and survived the encounter.
Jimjar	Deep gnome gambler and former prisoner	Alive; with party	Continued his habit of making bets during the journey toward Gracklstugh and survived the events in the mine.
Stool	Myconid sprout and rapport-spore companion	Alive; with party	Continued travelling with the group. His goal of eventually reaching Neverlight Grove remained unresolved.
Fargus Rumblefoot	Halfling traveller rescued on the Silken Path	Alive; with party	Continued travelling with the fugitives after the completion of the Tomb of Brysis Khaem expedition.
Adult Red Dragon	Occupant of the dwarven forge and hoard	Deceased	Confronted the intruders in the forge, used Frightful Presence, fire breath, close-range attacks, and wing attacks against the group, killed Sarith, and was ultimately slain after Ront's final strike.

? Key Locations

- **Lakeside Grove — Flashback:** The peaceful surface setting of Aeris's childhood lesson with Thanlin, where the lake was transformed into an illusion of the Underdark and Aeris first heard the full story of Ilarion Mosshart.
- **Road to Gracklstugh:** The main Underdark route followed after Brysis Khaem's tomb. A sign placed Gracklstugh roughly three days ahead before the party made its mine detour.
- **Derelict Dwarven Mine:** A low dwarven-carved complex near Gracklstugh containing old traps, mine-cart routes, stored supplies, tools, fresh air, evidence of recent use, and passages descending into deeper industrial workings.
- **Sunlit Upper Mine:** A vast open section where narrow shafts and carefully arranged mirrors carried genuine surface sunlight through thousands of feet of stone.
- **Forge and Dragon's Lair:** The enormous lower industrial chamber occupied by the adult red dragon. It contained the old smelting forge, the dragon's hoard, and became the site of the session's major battle.

- **Sarith's Burial Site:** A grave prepared within the mine after the battle, where the survivors laid Sarith to rest and Vorgrath gave his personal farewell.

? Session Highlights

- Aeris relived a childhood lesson from Thanlin and learned the story of Ilarion Mosshart and the Wildwood Scepter of Sylvanus.
- The curse affecting Buppido, Eldeth Feldrun, and Prince Derendil finally broke after the party left Brysis Khaem's tomb.
- A sign on the Underdark road placed Gracklstugh approximately three days ahead.
- The party deliberately detoured into an old dwarven mine, where Varang's Find Traps exposed a trip-wire alarm and pressure plate.
- The mine contained genuine surface sunlight redirected underground through a system of shafts and mirrors.
- Aeris and Eldeth discovered an adult red dragon occupying the lower forge complex.
- Aeris's Faerie Fire outlined the dragon and provided a major advantage to the party throughout the battle.
- The dragon's fire breath and wing attacks repeatedly knocked allies to the edge of death; Sarith Kzekarit was the only travelling companion killed.
- Ront was ultimately credited with slaying the dragon after a final exchange alongside Vorgrath.
- The party recovered a substantial dragon hoard, including thousands of coins, magical potions, a +1 club, and the Translocation of Self scroll.
- The surviving player characters advanced to level 5.
- Aeris won the Session 9 MVP vote.

?? Key Scenes

Remember Ilarion

 *Image Placeholder — Aeris and Thanlin beside the lake.*

Aeris sat beside the still lake while Thanlin disturbed its surface with a touch. The reflected sky darkened into twisting caverns and unfamiliar fungi, and within the illusion walked Ilarion Mosshart carrying a green-glowing staff of roots, heartwood, and flowers. Thanlin's lesson was simple but difficult: even where sunlight could not reach, nature remained. A warden first had to learn how to listen.

Sunlight in the Deep

□ Image Placeholder — Aeris and Eldeth beneath the mirrored sunlight shaft.

Aeris and Eldeth stood beneath a narrow beam of genuine sunlight cutting through the impossible height of the mine. Mirrors caught the light and passed it farther into the darkness while fresh air drifted through the old workings. After so long beneath the surface, the sight was almost more unnatural than the Underdark itself.

The Dragon Falls

□ Image Placeholder — Ront and the mortally wounded red dragon.

The dragon tried to escape after the final barrage of attacks. Vorgrath had already torn through part of one wing, and Ront's greataxe struck the creature's front leg. The wounded dragon launched itself forward, failed to carry its own weight, and crashed head-first into the stone stairs beside Edric. When the damage was finally counted, Ront's strike had killed it.

You Are Now My Blood

□ Image Placeholder — Vorgrath beside Sarith's grave.

After the noise of battle and looting had faded, Vorgrath stood beside Sarith's newly prepared grave. The drow who had escaped Velkynvelve beside them would travel no farther. Vorgrath marked the loss in blood and promised that Sarith would remain part of him — a memory carried forward in every future attempt to keep the others alive.

? Ongoing Threads & Plot Hooks

- **Ilarion Mosshart & the Wildwood Scepter:** Aeris now carries a childhood story with immediate relevance to his present situation. Thanlin said Ilarion disappeared into the Underdark carrying the Wildwood Scepter of Sylvanus and was believed to still wander below. No evidence of Ilarion or the relic has yet been found by the party.
- **Reach Gracklstugh:** The party was close enough to find a sign placing the duergar city roughly three days away before making the mine detour. Reaching Gracklstugh remains the immediate practical objective.
- **The Heartbeat, the Rot, and the Masked Procession:** The heartbeat moving through solid stone, the mushroom-masked procession, the rot, and the references to an awakening crown all remain unresolved. Their relationship to one another has not been established.

- **The Voice Beneath Khaem:** The unidentified telepathic woman who begged for release inside the Tomb of Brysis Khaem was never identified. The ancient calendar and other unanswered details of the tomb also remain unexplained.
- **Topsy and Turvy:** The deep gnome twins remain missing. The magical fur recovered near their disappearance remains unidentified, and the party has found no confirmed trail explaining where they went.
- **Drow Pursuit:** The fugitives remain escaped prisoners of Velkynvelve. Nothing has confirmed that Ilvara's pursuit has ended.
- **Stool and Neverlight Grove:** Stool continues travelling with the group and still wishes to reach Neverlight Grove.
- **Iragon's Fey Bargain:** Iragon remains bound to the task connected to Titania and Versy Wood. The Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander is now attuned to him.
- **Sarith's Headaches:** Sarith died before the source of his recurring headaches was discovered. Whatever caused them remains unexplained.
- **Unassigned Treasure:** None of the newly recovered Session 9 magical loot has yet been assigned to a specific character. The party also still has unassigned magical treasure recovered during earlier sessions.

?? Quest Status

Quest / Thread	Status	Relevant Characters	Notes
Reach Gracklstugh	Ongoing	Party and travelling companions	The road sign placed the city approximately three days ahead before the party detoured into the mine.
Explore the Dwarven Mine	Major threat defeated	Party, Eldeth, red dragon	The party explored the mine's principal route, defeated the dragon occupying the forge, and recovered its hoard.
Protect the Former Prisoners	Ongoing	Ront, Derendil, Eldeth, Buppido, Jimjar, Stool, Fargus	The dragon battle nearly killed several companions. Sarith was lost, while the others survived.
Investigate Ilarion Mosshart and the Wildwood Scepter	Personal thread opened	Aeris, Thanlin, Ilarion Mosshart	Aeris's flashback established the story but provided no confirmed current location for Ilarion or the relic.
Understand the Rot and Stone Heartbeat	Ongoing	Party, Stool, masked procession	Both phenomena remain unexplained. No direct connection between them has yet been proven.

Quest / Thread	Status	Relevant Characters	Notes
Find Topsy and Turvy	Active	Topsy, Turvy, Edric	The twins remain missing and the magical fur associated with their disappearance remains unidentified.
Reach Neverlight Grove	Ongoing	Stool	Stool still wants to return home, but the party's immediate route continues toward Gracklstugh.
Distribute Recovered Treasure	Pending	Party	The new magical items, potions, scroll, art objects, gemstones, explosives, and other supplies have not yet been assigned to individual characters.

? Loot & Discoveries

Item / Discovery	Finder / Holder	Location	Description / Status
4,000 gold pieces	Party	Dragon's hoard	Recovered and taken by the party.
1,000 silver pieces	Party	Dragon's hoard	Recovered and taken by the party.
2,300 copper pieces	Party	Dragon's hoard	Recovered and taken by the party.
4 jade statues	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	Valuable art objects recovered from the hoard.
2 Potions of Greater Healing	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	Recovered but not assigned to individual characters.
Potion of Dragon's Breath — Fire	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	Recovered but not assigned to an individual character.
12 gemstones worth 10 gp each	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	Twelve individual gemstones, each valued at approximately 10 gp.
Several paintings	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	All of the paintings offered from the hoard were taken.
7 candlesticks	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	All seven were recovered and taken.
Translocation of Self — Misty Step scroll	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	Arcane instructional scroll explaining the working known as Misty Step. No individual has claimed it.

Item / Discovery	Finder / Holder	Location	Description / Status
+1 Club	Party — unassigned	Dragon's hoard	Magical club recovered from the hoard. No individual has claimed it.
2 sticks of explosives	Party — unassigned	Dwarven mine	Recovered from the mine and retained for later use.
Mining tools	Party — unassigned	Dwarven mine	Useful tools recovered from the mine and taken by the group.

? Noteworthy Item — Translocation of Self

The scroll recovered from the dragon's hoard was titled **Translocation of the Self** and identified by the Dungeon Master as an instructional treatment of the spell commonly known as **Misty Step**. The text was presented as an excerpt from the *Treatise on Subtle Traversal*, attributed to **Archmage Vaelith of the Silver Veil**.

The document described Misty Step not as true teleportation, but as the momentary dissolution of the caster's physical form into **aetheric mist**. According to the treatise, the caster becomes vapor, slips between heartbeats, and reassembles at a chosen point within sight.

The text divided the process into several principles:

- **The Principle of Vaporous Passage:** The caster temporarily abandons solid form and passes through an intermediate mist-like state rather than instantaneously vanishing from one location and appearing in another.
- **The Softening of the Form:** The caster relaxes the boundaries of their physical shape and allows the aether to seep between the body's structure. A brief feeling of weightlessness or cool dampness may accompany the process.
- **The Whisper of Departure:** The spoken invocation is described as little more than a breath or sigh directing the body to yield to the mist. The destination is held in the mind not simply as a place, but as a *moment of arrival*.
- **The Reconstitution:** The caster reforms at the intended destination after vanishing into pale vapor, with the mist lingering only momentarily around the returned body.

An accompanying diagram illustrated the sequence as **Release the Form → Fade into Mist → Slip Between Moments → Through the Veil → Point of Arrival → Reform → Emerge from the Mist**.

The treatise also contained a significantly stranger warning:

“Beware the temptation to linger between shapes, for the mist has its own desires.”

Vaelith was also credited with the line:

“To move as mist is to deny the world its grasp.”

The final visible portion of the scroll described the mist as lingering for only a heartbeat after reconstitution, “as if reluctant to release” the traveller. The remainder of that sentence was not visible in the recovered handout.

?? Existing Item Update — Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander

Iragon Midsommar retained the Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander recovered from the true Tomb of Brysis Khaem and completed his attunement to the weapon during the journey toward Gracklstugh. The blade was used extensively during the battle with the red dragon and remained in Iragon's possession at the end of Session 9.

?? Rules & Mechanics Notes

- **Tomb Curse:** Buppido, Eldeth Feldrun, and Prince Derendil successfully broke free of the curse from Brysis Khaem's tomb before the mine expedition continued.
- **Find Traps:** Varang's casting was explicitly described by the Dungeon Master as perfectly timed and revealed both the trip-wire alarm and pressure plate near the mine entrance.
- **Faerie Fire:** The red dragon failed its Dexterity saving throw against Aeris's Faerie Fire. Attacks against the illuminated dragon had advantage while the effect remained active and the attacker could see it.
- **Concentration:** Aeris considered casting Spike Growth during the battle but retained Faerie Fire after confirming that both spells required concentration.
- **Fire Breath:** The dragon's breath weapon required a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw and rolled 34 fire damage from 10d6 before successful-save reductions were applied.
- **Frightful Presence:** The dragon's fear effect used a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw.
- **Wing Attack:** The Foundry tooltip displayed DC 22, but Reuben corrected the live encounter DC to **20**. The major late-fight wing attack dealt 14 bludgeoning damage, left Ront near death, placed Buppido on death saving throws, and dropped Prince Derendil again.
- **Healing & Stabilisation:** Buppido, Prince Derendil, and other badly wounded allies survived because the party continued healing and stabilising them during and immediately after the battle.
- **Dragon Kill:** After the final damage was recalculated, Reuben explicitly credited **Ront** with slaying the dragon.

- **Level Up:** The five active player characters advanced to **level 5** after the dragon's defeat.

? Memorable Quotes

- **Thanlin:** “Nature is balance, stillness and movement, light and shadow, growth and decay. Sylvanus is all of these.”
- **Thanlin:** “Remember Ilarion. Remember the scepter. Remember that balance must be protected, even in the deepest dark.”
- **The Red Dragon:** “I see, I have visitors.”
- **Edric, immediately after the dragon died:** “Oh fuck, easiest dragon we've ever slain.”
- **Vorgrath, at Sarith's grave:** “You are now my blood. You'll be with me always. I will carry your memory for the rest of my days fighting to protect everyone.”

? Session Awards

- **Session MVP — Aeris Nailo / Justin:** Aeris won the final Session 9 MVP vote. His Faerie Fire was repeatedly recognised during the aftermath as a major contributor to the dragon fight, while his scouting, healing support, and opening character flashback made the session particularly significant for him.

?? Session Tags

- Out of the Abyss
- Session 9
- Sunlight and Dragonfire
- Underdark
- Aeris Flashback
- Thanlin
- Sylvanus
- Ilarion Mosshart
- Wildwood Scepter of Sylvanus
- Gracklstugh Road
- Dwarven Mine
- Sunlight in the Underdark
- Find Traps
- Adult Red Dragon
- Faerie Fire
- Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander
- Ront

- Sarith Kzekarit
- Dragon Hoard
- Translocation of Self
- Misty Step
- Level 5
- Session MVP

? Next Session Prep

- Advance Aeris, Edric, Varang, Iragon, and Vorgrath to level 5 and record their final level-up choices.
- Record Sarith Kzekarit as deceased and remove him from the active travelling-companion roster.
- Keep Ront, Buppido, Prince Derendil, Eldeth Feldrun, Jimjar, Stool, and Fargus Rumblefoot alive and travelling with the group unless the next session establishes otherwise.
- Remove the Brysis Khaem curse from Buppido, Eldeth, and Prince Derendil; all three broke free of it during Session 9.
- Record Iragon as attuned to and carrying the Dhauzimmer Blade of Lathander.
- Keep all newly recovered Session 9 magical loot unassigned until the party formally distributes it.
- Continue tracking the previously unassigned Necklace of Fireballs, Potion of Greater Healing, Philter of Love, and other treasure recovered from Brysis Khaem's tomb separately from the new dragon hoard.
- Keep the Translocation of Self scroll available as both a Misty Step item and a lore document, including its unusual warnings about the mist.
- Continue the route toward Gracklstugh after the dwarven-mine detour.
- Open Aeris's new personal thread involving Ilarion Mosshart and the Wildwood Scepter of Sylvanus without assuming either can currently be found.
- Carry forward the heartbeat in the stone, the rot, the masked procession, the awakening crown, and the pleading telepathic voice as separate unresolved mysteries unless future evidence links them.
- Keep Topsy and Turvy's disappearance and Edric's unidentified magical fur unresolved.
- Keep Stool's goal of reaching Neverlight Grove and Iragon's separate Versy Wood quest active.
- Remember that Sarith's recurring headaches were never explained before his death.

? Cliffhanger

The forge had finally fallen silent.

The adult red dragon lay dead, its hoard stripped into packs and containers while the survivors tended wounds that should have killed several of them. Sarith Kzekarit had not survived to share in the victory. His grave remained behind in the dwarven mine, marked by the rites of companions

who had once escaped the same drow prison beside him.

For the first time since Velkynvelve, however, the fugitives carried real wealth. Gold, silver, copper, gemstones, artwork, magical potions, explosives, and strange arcane knowledge travelled with them now. More importantly, the five adventurers who had begun the session at level four left the dragon's lair at level five.

Gracklstugh still waited somewhere ahead.

And for Aeris, the darkness had changed slightly. Years ago, Thanlin had told a young warden that nature survived even where roots feared to grow, and that an archdruid named Ilarion Mosshart had once carried a living relic into those same depths.

Aeris was now walking through the place where Ilarion had vanished.

The lesson was no longer a story told beside a lake.

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