

Bladestar

Session 3 2-3-99 Follow the Leader

Next Session 16-3-99

18:15 Outside the University of Magical Arts - The detectives discuss their options while bringing the recently arrived Raven up to date then deciding to head for Alvin's temple for some Priestly advice. They meet up with the mildly irritating Priest, Alphasos and Andrea describes the events of the past few days. He is able to offer some more information about Haunts and because of the party's general good alignment and magnanimous attitude, notwithstanding Andrea's generous donation of 100gps, he also provides them with some magical assistance. Andrea gets two gems, which have the power to cast Know Alignment and Speak with Dead a limited number of times.

The group discuss what sort of alignment would be most suitable for possession without triggering the self-strangulation reaction. Andrea comes out strongly in favour of True Neutral and there are mutterings about "Some damn Druid, who's never there when you need him." Andrea and Raven both think, "go to a rough pub and get some Neutral sucker involved" is a good idea but Astra and Hemegretham aren't too happy about the ethics of this. As they stroll down the Processional discussing their dilemma Astra notices that they are being followed by a figure in a dark cloak and cowl. Their pursuer is not particularly expert and Astra is able to slip away and don her cloak of Elvenkind. The now almost invisible Thief watches and waits in the shadows as the figure passes. She slips out of the shadows and follows the black cloak rather more expertly than it followed her. Meanwhile up ahead, Andrea also notices their tail and they turn off the main street into the foreign quarter. A few turns later and they disappear into an alley. Black cloak waits at the end of the alley as Astra glides up behind and pressing a dagger into the figure's ribs whispers, "Walk down the alley or you're dead!" They comply and the others rejoin Astra as she whips off the cowl revealing the distressed features of James Peveril! (DM note 1) Evidently the fellow had wanted to check on the party's actions, hoping to be in at the denouement. He states most clearly that he cares nothing for the law and only wishes to see the balance restored. Light bulbs go off above Andrea's head as she realises that James could be a Neutral. Raven confirms this courtesy of The Sentinel and James is eager to assist in dealing with this murderous spirit. It is getting late and the party want to get the dagger away from Greyhawk before "you know what" happens again. They know the main gate will be open so they head down The Processional towards that exit. As they walk they discuss the Haunt/Dagger relationship. Astra is convinced that it is the Haunt that emanates evil and that the dagger is not evil in itself. This rather interesting observation is not a popular view with the rest though.

Into the Woods

The party find a clearing in the woods about half an hour's walk from the City. They light the area with several fires and place a well trussed-up James Peveril in the centre. A kindly Astra has ensured that the bonds aren't too uncomfortable but that they will be able to prevent him from strangling himself. As the burly figure of Hemegretham keeps guard, the dagger is placed beside him and our friends retreat to a safe distance to watch. At midnight the black cloud rises from the dagger and seems to pass into the figure of James Peveril. They rush in to investigate and it appears that the possession has been successful. Peveril is not attempting to strangle himself. Andrea uses the first gem to attempt a Speak with Dead on the Haunt. She manages to get three questions out before the gem turns to dust in her hand.

"What is your mission?"

"I am Aliar Daraan and I am a messenger of Iuz. I am to contact a secret cell of followers of Iuz in the City of Greyhawk. I have been programmed with a message which will only be revealed when I contact the correct person. I was murdered by bandits before I could complete my mission."

"Where do you have to go?"

"My master is clever. The route will be revealed to me in two parts. I only know that I must go to a certain sewer entrance in the Thieves' quarter. I will then know how to proceed."

"Who do you have to meet?"

"The name is Wyvernthorn. I will know him when I see him."

Andrea uses the other gem to know Daraan's alignment. He was Chaotic Evil.

The party rig up a sort of a lead for Daraan/Peveril but still rather paranoid about self strangulation they do not release his hands. With Hemegretham's grip steady on the rope, the Haunt sets off at a steady pace straight for Greyhawk City, however after they enter the city he collapses and the black cloud dissipates into the night. At this moment Astra realises that if the Haunt is possessing a body it is not resident in the dagger and therefore would not interfere with any type of identification magic used upon it. Unfortunately she also realises that nobody picked up the dagger from the clearing. (DM note 2) Back they go and fortunately it is still there but the group are up rather late and will have to sleep in to be in good enough shape to learn spells.

A bit of a Lie-in

The next morning over breakfast they discuss the case and Raven and Andrea are particularly astute in their analysis of the Haunt's behaviour. They consider that they should repeat the possession tonight within Greyhawk and follow the Haunt to its destination. The team spend the day getting various odds and ends and visiting Scriborus at the University. He is certain that the Haunt is confusing his readings from the dagger and is confident that he will be able to analyse the obviously magical weapon when the spirit has departed. He is particularly interested in magical weaponry and will analyse the weapon for a reasonable consultancy fee at the mid-level wizard rate. Astra visits the Thieves' Guild and rather recklessly asks if anyone has heard of a guy named Wyvernthorn. They haven't.

It is six in the evening and the party return to the comforts of the Guildhouse to meet up with Alvin and Zeppo.

Player's Information - How it all happened

The Assassin spy Aliar Daraan was enroute for Greyhawk when he was ambushed and murdered by caravan bandits. His spirit, charged with an important task from Iuz himself, could not rest and so became a Haunt and took his own beloved magical weapon, Bladestar, as his domain. Later that day the bandits attacked a caravan but were wiped out as this particular caravan was a Domain of Greyhawk military patrol in disguise waiting for just this sort of thing to happen. Thus the dagger came to Greyhawk the next day with only one mysterious death in the patrol. The dagger was then stolen by Faros, a young Thief who "acquired" it from one of caravan guards. That night the Haunt attacked him but unable to possess him caused his death by self-strangulation. The body was discovered by Hugh Peveril, a Lawful Good Watchman with a passion for weaponry. Unable to resist the temptation Hugh kept the magnificent dagger, after all he could hand it in tomorrow, couldn't he? Unfortunately not, for as Hugh, on patrol that night was examining the dagger in a quiet back alley, that he knew had a rather convenient light, the Haunt struck and caused him to strangle himself. The next day Roger Daventry of the Watch discovered Hugh's body and the dagger. Hard, taciturn and somewhat bitter that he is, above all else Daventry is honest. He turned the dagger in and is alive today. Our heroes, having solved the mystery can now tackle the next stage of the Adventure, rooting out the spies in the sewers!

Reason for XP	Andrea	Astra	Alvin	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Raven
Opponents						
Spells	40 (gems)					20
Proficiencies		40				
Ideas	60	50		20		20
Problem Solving						
Role Play	130	130		140		120
Treasure						
Finishing						
Fun Factor	30	20		20		10
Penalties						
Total (This session)	260	240	0	180	0	170
Grand Total	650	690	450	320	70	170

DM's Notes:-

1. This little operation was a pleasure to observe. The improvement in the level of teamwork since Clarshh's Sepulchre is noted. You all receive a 100 XP bonus allocated to Role Playing. Well done!
2. Dumb!

House Rules :-

- Treasure XP is to be equally divided between all party members unless there are circumstances where an individual is wholly or mostly responsible for recovering the treasure. In this case the character will receive a larger proportion of the XP than the rest of the party.
- Creatures killed or defeated in battle earn XP for the character. In the case of a group action where the group as a whole is responsible for the defeat the XP will be shared.
- Standard CLW's cast in unremarkable circumstances score 10XP. CLW's cast in combat get more according to how sweaty the situation is.
- Clerical Turn Undead scores a base 100XP as use of a power, however bonuses can be awarded for spectacular dice rolling or cunning use of the ability. The XP is recorded as a spell.
- Mages may learn all of the first level spells available to them regardless of Intelligence limit.
- Spell Training is 100 gp per level of the teacher teaching the spell. The teacher must obviously be able to use the spell well, and must be at least two levels above the student. A teacher should also be minimum 5th level to have the necessary experience to teach anything, but this can be waived for simple or common spells like wall of fog.
In addition to money, learning takes time. One week per level for simple spells which can be practiced in the lab, and either work or don't work. At higher levels charge per week of learning, as this is what the instructor would charge. Base number of weeks is spell level, modified by such factors as saving throw allowed, options allowed, reversible or not, etc, and then charge, per week. This makes high level spells very expensive to learn, which is how it should be.