

The Sepulchre – Session the Eighth 26 May 98

Meanwhile back at the evil temple...

Andrea and Astra claim the ceremonial dagger and the bowl respectively and the party, finding that the atmosphere of brooding evil somewhat less than it was earlier, congratulate themselves on a job well done. After a brief search for secret doors the group exit and retrace their steps to the black pool and the Northeast door. However since they were continuously searching for secret doors etc this takes about 1 hour.

Examining the door reveals a hand-sized depression on the right of the door about where a handle might reasonably be expected to be. As the party cover her with a frightening array of magical weaponry Astra tries placing her hand in the depression and pushing. There is an audible click and the door swings majestically open revealing an octagonal room, about 30 ft in diameter. It is featureless except situated in an alcove in the Eastern wall is a life sized, by now familiar, statue of the Evil Paladin God with the amusing name. Alvin rushes in and hurls Holy Water over the statue and succeeds in getting it quite wet. The others, apart from Galen and Cassandra who are guarding the door on the outside, join him and start to look around. After about a minute of the usual bickering and disagreement someone must have triggered something somehow because the great door swings shut with a crash and the sound of grinding and clanking machinery provides a grim accompaniment as the ceiling begins to descend!

Predictably, a small scale panic breaks out as a number of contradictory instructions are hurled around the party. At the current rate of descent it looks like they'll be jam in about 3 minutes and various party members are to be found pushing at doors and wall panels. It takes about a minute for Astra, Alvin and Andrea to conclude that the statue might have something to do with this. Alvin tries to move the statue and eventually (1m 30s from the start) discovers that the God's shield moves. There is a loud click and ceiling halts. After a brief pause the machinery grinds back into life and the ceiling begins to rise again. As this happens the statue swings through 90 degrees revealing a dark passageway behind. The large stone door also swings slowly open admitting an anxious Cassandra and Galen. Nobody seems to notice as Raven slumps against a wall seemingly rather affected by this experience.

Zeppo takes a look down the corridor and is able to see about 30 ft into it. He notices stone slabs set into the walls at his waist height. He goes in for a closer look and discovers that there are names chiselled into the stones. He sprinkles some Holy Water on the stone but only succeeds in getting them damp. A cautious exploration of the passageway is made revealing in total 14 stones. And a dead end 100 ft down the passage. Cassandra and Galen remain in the statue doorway.

As the party explore the passage Raven wanders aimlessly around, even strolling well ahead of the main group to the dead end where he detects a secret door but doesn't seem to give a damn. Zeppo notices his strange behaviour and mentions it. In fact Raven is looking rather pale and seems to be sweating rather more than is usual in this chilly dank tunnel. While Astra detects the Secret Door and examines it for traps Zeppo sprinkles Raven with some Holy Water which succeeds in getting him wet. A minute or so later Raven collapses unconscious. Zeppo, utilising his medical skills diagnoses clinical shock (as opposed to anything weird or magical) and casts CLW for 7hp. Raven is immediately his old self again. A chorus of moans is heard from certain other party members.

Alvin, using the helm re-reads all of the names on the stones but they don't look any different than when he wasn't wearing it. Astra meanwhile has discovered the Secret Door mechanism and is ready to trigger it. The party stand ready as she moves the small stone in the wall and almost the entire Eastern wall slides down, revealing a similar dark corridor which is identical in all respects to the one they stand in except for the large amount of animating skeletons armed with rusty weapons, that start to shamble towards them. Astra immediately tries to reverse the mechanism but it is jammed open and there is nothing for it but to run back up the corridor and let the tough guys take care of this.

Zeppo, with an uncharacteristic snarl, dives forward to attack as Raven starts to cast Magic Missile. Alvin, holy symbol and club raised high, strides forward commanding the hated undead to leave this place. Andrea swings her sword and connects jarringly with the nearest skeleton collapsing it into a heap of bones, Zeppo just misses his as Raven's Magic Missile streaks into the skeletons and destroys another. Alvin's Turn Undead is successful and 4 of the monstrosities attempt to escape the good cleric's influence and are crushed underfoot by their relentlessly advancing companions. As the next rank of skeletons closes to attack Raven unsheathes his longsword and rushes to the attack. Meanwhile Andrea is struck for 3hp, Zeppo for 1hp and Alvin manages to avoid the many bony hands reaching for him. An enraged Andrea swings but does not connect as Zeppo smashes his footman's flail into the nearest skeleton, totally destroying it. Alvin's opponent lurches out of range as his club whistles by its obscenely grinning skull.

Onward march the mindless skeletons as Andrea and Zeppo parry their attacks but Alvin is less successful. A rusty sword evades his defence and is plunged deep into his body. The blade is cruelly twisted as Alvin is thrown aside. Blood pours from his open mouth as he collapses on the hard stone floor. Andrea and Zeppo manage to buy some time as they smash into the wall of skeletons but both their targets are still standing. Astra, noting Alvin's condition, shouts to Zeppo to tend to Alvin as she advances, brandishing a skin of Holy Water. Raven rushes into the front line and dispatches the nearest skeleton enabling Zeppo to disengage and tend to Alvin. Andrea swings and smashes her opponent and suddenly all is quiet. The skeletons are defeated!

An anxious Zeppo, concentrating as never before, utilises his healing proficiencies but realises it is not enough. With a hurried prayer he casts CLW for 6hp and is successful in guiding Alvin back from the dark. (Alvin now has 1hp, is unconscious and his spells are wiped out).

Zeppo wants his patient out of this dangerous place. Galen offers his cloak to use as a makeshift stretcher. As Galen and Cassandra carefully lift Alvin onto the cloak Andrea stamps around crunching skeletons under her boots and smashing up anything that looks bigger than a wishbone. They travel down the corridor and back through the octagonal room. As they move into the dark pool chamber the large stone door swings shut behind them. They regain the foot of the shaft with no incident where Andrea has the bright idea of tying Alvin securely to the ladder and lifting him up the shaft with the ladder. This smart thinking is quickly translated into reality and everyone makes it up to the top ok. The party return to Sereen's wagon with Cassandra and Galen carrying Alvin on the ladder/stretchers.

Zeppo, Raven and Andrea head off into the woods to try and find some healing herbs, leaving Alvin with nurse Astra. Raven manages to find some suitable herbs and the scouting party return to the wagon where Raven prepares the necessary herbs for Zeppo to apply tomorrow.

The party spend a peaceful night.

Clarshh's Sepulchre

XP awards for Session 8

Reason for XP	Galen	Andrea	Astra	Raven	Alvin	Cassandra	Zeppo
Opponents		130		130			65
Spells					100		20
Proficiencies			20	10			50
Ideas		30	20		20		20
Problem Solving		10	20		10		
Role Play		30	20	30	30		20
Treasure							
Finishing							
Fun Factor							
Total (This adventure)	0	200	80	170	160	0	175
Grand Total	1090	875	895	1120	1040	390	925

DM's Notes :-

Zeppo's proficiency award is at a bonus level due to his spectacular use of Healing to save Alvin's life.

Clerical Turn Undead ability is treated as a spell (hence Alvin's spell XP) with a base standard of 100XP for a successful use. Bonuses will be allocated for spectacular dice rolling or clever use of the ability.

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.