

The Star Cairns

Session 1 23-3-99 Now what were those clues?

Next Session 30-3-99

It's early morning at the Adventurers' Guild and as the city begins its usual reluctant rise from slumber we find our weary friends discussing the events of the past few days. Andrea heads for the temple to see if they will be kind enough to patch up her war wounds and indeed after a donation of 100gp they are more than happy, CLW'ing for a total of 11hp. (DM note 1) As Hemegretham, Astra and Raven head off to the market to sell their loot a reluctant Alvin takes his leave, summoned on urgent temple business. Looking forward to a shower Astra alarms Hemegretham who claims to usually just stand out in the rain for a while.

Returning to the Guild they break their fast and catch up on their outstanding expenses of 60gp, which Raven pays. Hemegretham heads off to the butts for some archery practice, dropping off his Bastard sword at the blacksmith's for its monthly maintenance (5sp). Raven and Astra go to the Jewellers and Gemcutters Guild to convert their loot to gems. Astra gets 1 500gp and 4 100gp gems while Raven goes for 24 100gp gems. Thanks to the affair of "The Heart of Al Rakim" where Raven, Astra and Andrea were duped into testing the Guild's defences (and well rewarded for their trouble) they get a very favourable trade rate for conversion from a grateful Guild. Raven persuades a reluctant Astra to smile prettily at a certain charmed young fellow during the transaction.

Andrea heads back to the guild for some rest as Astra and Raven head to The University of Magical Arts. They are teleported in and this time meet their usual instructor, the somewhat more modest Anton. Anton's extensive and sometimes dangerous spell research has led to a migratory Northern Ketish accent which he is quite sensitive about. A studious, bespectacled fellow, Anton favours a traditional research wizard garb of robes and pointy hat, both of which show signs of wear. He has even had to sew some leather patches on the elbows of his robe. Astra and Raven enquire into the cost of learning the second level spells Tasha's Uncontrollable Hideous Laughter and Alter Self and are told to return the next day for a quote. Astra drops off the vials of poison for analysis at the Thieves' Guild and it is quickly apparent that her status with that august institution has risen abruptly following the events of the past few days. They return to the Adventurers' Guild for some much needed sleep.

In the meantime Hemegretham has been to the weaponry market and was unable to resist a rather fine mancatcher, a bargain at 30gp! He returns to the Guild proudly brandishing his new acquisition which somewhat surprises the others as he bangs into the walls and furniture with it but they settle down when it is agreed that he doesn't expect anyone else to carry the thing.

Over dinner they discuss their plans. Following up on the secret message from the haunt courier in their earlier adventure, Bladestar, they manage to locate the Abor Alz, a range of mountains south of the Domain of Greyhawk. They note the large port town of Hardby, which is the last civilised point before the mountains and the Bright Desert beyond. They decide to research what they can in Greyhawk and then head for Hardby on the trail of the mysterious Star Cairns. Astra is convinced that they will be contacted by the city authorities and commissioned to retrieve the mysterious three part object, after all that government fellow Celdon Fallow knows at least some of what they were up to since they reported the Iuz spy ring. She would prefer to avoid this situation, instead keeping whatever they might find for themselves. The party agree that they should head off as soon as possible but realise that it will take a couple of weeks for Astra and Raven to attempt to learn their new spells.

They also realise that they have no Clerical healing in the party since Alvin's departure. They discuss hiring a Cleric but Hemegretham points out that any priestly healer that they could buy would probably not be up to much. Astra hits on the bright idea of seeking out Keswick in the Gnarley forest. She points out that the Druids have no interest in the Greyhawk political hierarchy and also traditionally send their young Druids out adventuring in order to improve their skills. Maybe they could get hold of a low-level Druid to accompany them. The party are impressed by this imaginative idea and Hemegretham and Andrea volunteer to head off to the Gnarley to make contact with Keswick. This also fits in rather well with Andrea's as yet undeclared interest in the Gnarley Forest Rangers. (DM note 2).

The next day Raven and Astra head off to the University where they will spend the next 15 days in intensive study. They pay 200gp each and both of them successfully learn their spells.

Into the Woods

Three days travel from Greyhawk, Hemegretham and Andrea reach the edge of the Gnarley Forest. Andrea is riding her, as yet unnamed, horse but Hemegretham is happier jogging alongside. No mean feat in the sort of heavy armour he's wearing. They head into the dark greenery and Andrea keeps an eye out for any Ranger signs. They spend an uneventful night in the forest, despite the sound of howling wolves. The next day they proceed deeper into the forest. Later in the day Andrea discovers some subtle Ranger signs which they follow to a lush clearing. There is a wooden structure in the centre, perhaps an altar of some sort? Andrea wisely decides against lighting a fire here and they settle down to wait. After a short time a man, obviously a Ranger, steps from cover and greets them. They notice a silver insignia around his neck. He is a member of the Gnarley Forest Rangers. They hear a wild shout from behind them as Keswick breaks cover and rushes over to greet them. He is very excited by his new Druidic skills, honed to perfection since the adventure of The Sentinel, which he insists on demonstrating, enthusiastically hurtling through thick cover at full movement rate. After a while he settles down and they get on to business. Keswick does indeed know of a young 2nd level Druid that is keen to go Adventuring and introduces them to Ash, a beautiful woman with stunning green eyes, short dark blonde hair and a quiet calm about her. She will accompany the party on their forthcoming mission. Andrea is told to return to Gnarley after settling the current matter. She will then be considered for induction in the Gnarley Rangers. Spending a further night in the forest, the three of them return to Greyhawk, Ash now riding a rather nice medium sized horse called Star.

Back at Greyhawk they meet up with Astra and Raven and prepare for their journey. The City is buzzing with the announcement of a major diplomatic initiative to end the so called Greyhawk Wars with Iuz and establish the current borders between nation states.

They decide the best route to Hardby is by boat and after much complaining they persuade Andrea onto a Rhennee barge on which they have bought passage for themselves and their horses and equipment for 30gp.

Hardby

After an uneventful voyage the party arrive at the port town of Hardby and put up at the New Inn. Asking around, gossiping and delving into whichever town records they can get access to they discover some idea of approximate locations of the two nearest Star Cairns. It is generally held that the next two known locations are to the south of these. The fifth Cairn has never been discovered and probably doesn't exist. They also hear the following rumours...

- Bandits with magical weapons and humanoid allies have been attacking caravans and travellers in the southern Domain of Greyhawk area. Sometimes the bandits just take the cargo and let the caravaneers go on their way. Some caravans have just disappeared entirely.
- Stone statues of animals and humanoids have been found in the Southern Abor Alz.
- A metal man has been seen striding through the Abor Alz.

In the morning they set out for their best guess at the approximate location of the nearest Star Cairn.

Reason for XP	Andrea	Astra	Alvin	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Raven
Opponents						
Spells						
Proficiencies						
Ideas	40	80		40		50
Problem Solving						
Role Play	50	40		90		20
Treasure						
Finishing						
Fun Factor	20	10		30		20
Penalties						
Total (This session)	110	130		160		90
Grand Total	110	130		160		90

DM's Notes:-

1. Standard AD&D rules for recovery of hit points state that a character recovers 3 hp per night of rest if in a comfortable situation. ie. Bed at an Inn. 1 hp per night is the standard recovery rate while in the field. ie. A comfortable cave. These rates may be modified by magic or healing.

Due to a rather loose tongued DM, the players know about Andrea's interest in the Gnarley Forest Rangers. Please be aware that only Hemegretham knows of this and he doesn't seem the type to tell.