

The Star Cairns

Session 12 21-9-99 You're Fired!

Next Session Monday 27-9-99 At Brian's

Columbus is looking rather rough as Alvin and Zeppo exercise their healing powers. It will be 12 hours before Columbus is capable of taking a CLW having been clinically dead twice in 2 minutes. While they wait they discuss the Will O' Wisp. Astra wants to talk to it, Andrea wants to release it and Alvin leans on the wall sulking. Astra helpfully lends Andrea a couple of sacks to make up for her somewhat reduced wardrobe. While Astra tries various methods of communication with the thing including some odd messing about with her fancy sword, Andrea appeals to Zeppo for a CLW and gets cured a bit. She then explains her idea of using Unseen Servant to carry the chest into the room and trap the Will O' Wisp. Astra gives the chest a thorough once-over and returns with it floating obediently behind her. A game of "Chase the high-speed, ultra mobile monster with a big clumsy box" breaks out which the Will O' Wisp wins hands down. Astra leaves the chest on the top stair below old Sparky. She then drops a lead bar down the stairs and is able to confirm that there are still the same number of stairs as there were earlier. Back to the old drawing board. There is a prophetic conversation between Alvin and Astra regarding the merits of the Protection from Evil spell, which Alvin notes is only really effective against Planar or summoned creatures.

Giving up on the impossible for a while Astra examines the armour that Columbus was wearing. She tries Spellcraft but gets nothing from it. Alvin notices that the armour is very old, even archaic. Astra wonders what the Golem might have been guarding, surely it can't just be a box of lead? Zeppo toys with the idea of casting a Wyvern Watch spell on Zappy as he is now "affectionately" known but decides against it. They decide to wait until Columbus is back with them and settle down for some rest and food. Alvin examines Columbus' armour and using Spellcraft detects that the armour is cursed. Zeppo and Astra take a look topside and note that it is evening. They return without incident and Astra spends the next 2 hours examining the gold-plated lead bars. They are gold-plated lead bars. Zeppo CLW's Andrea a bit and Alvin CLW's Andrea a bit more. Alvin casts Detect Magic on the armour and reads a magical aura causing the armour to be less effective than it would otherwise be. Astra concludes that the armour is a trap designed to trick an intruder into wearing a cursed item. They all rest for a while, carefully organising a watch rota. 12 hours later Columbus regains consciousness, Zeppo casts CLW on him and Astra casts Armour on herself. Soon after Columbus is rather puzzled to see Astra trying to steal the breastplate of his excellent new armour. "Put that down right now", he insists, and is even more surprised as the rest of the party side with Astra, explaining how the armour is actually no good and that they know best. To add insult to injury, Andrea even cuts the leather straps from the rest of his armour, rendering it useless until serviced by an armorer or leatherworker. Astra blarneys on about some sort of well upstairs but Columbus doesn't buy this. He didn't see a well, thank you very much, "Now give back my armour!" An indignant and disappointed Columbus is restrained by a combination of brute force and threats and sits miserably in the corner complaining that, "I'm sitting here with only 3 hit points and no armour." Since Columbus has been clinically dead his spells are also wiped from his memory. It's not one of his better days. Zeppo persuades him to take 6 hours rest and casts another CLW on him – He will guard him while he sleeps. Muttering something about having fallen into a den of thieves Columbus reluctantly agrees to Zeppo's suggestion and is soon asleep. During this exchange Astra takes the opportunity to hide Columbus' breastplate in one of the first level tombs.

The others decide to explore the rooms where they heard the foreign language. They discover two largely identical rooms, the main features of which are a large stone table covered in runes, a hook on the wall and a wire mannequin of the sort that perhaps a dressmaker or tailor or armorer might use. One of the rooms also contains a rusty old shield. Astra casts Unseen Servant and uses it to drag out the shield and one of the figures. Convinced that these figures must have been used to create flesh golems Andrea examines the mannequins carefully but finds no trace of any flesh. Bored with this she and Hemegretham tramp around the two rooms searching for secret doors and pushing and pulling hooks. Nothing happens. Astra joins them and examines the rune-covered tables. Her Spellcraft is able to identify magical symbols but she doesn't understand the language. Astra notes that the mannequins were obviously designed to be hung on the hooks in the walls.

Back in the Black Pudding room - if Andrea could remember it she'd probably have shuddered. While the rest of them wonder how they will open the two secret doors Andrea helpfully points of the magical fire floating above their heads. Alvin casts Unseen Servant and opens both doors, briefly resting between them. The doors are spiked open and Heme, Andrea, Alvin and Astra enter the room, which carries the heavy scent of fire and metal. Three great forges are set in the wall with a large anvil near each. A magical light burns above each anvil. It is warm here.

Astra detects a secret door in the south wall and Alvin uses his Unseen Servant and a magical fire to open it. They just manage to spike the door open when a dense cloud of smoke bursts from the nearest forge reaching Astra and Andrea. They both collapse as with a roar, a tongue of flame blasts across the room, forming into a vaguely humanoid shape in the centre of the room. As it turns to face them Alvin rushes to his fallen comrades and after a snap examination starts kicking them – hard! Heme squares up to the living inferno and is seriously burnt as the thing lashes out at him in fury. Bravely ignoring the searing pain of his wounds Heme plunges again into combat and is smashed to the ground by the creature's blazing arm. Astra begins to stir from her sleep as Alvin rushes to aid Heme and is dismayed to find the big man barely clinging to life. Showing no fear Alvin heals and binds Heme's wounds and luckily is missed by the fire creature. Astra groggily regains her feet as Zeppo rushes into the room flailing wildly. He draws the creature's fire long enough for Alvin to cast Protection from Evil upon himself. As Zeppo ducks and weaves the creature turns to attack Alvin but incredibly recoils in fear from him. "Fire Elemental", hisses Alvin through grimly clenched teeth as Astra steps quickly behind the only thing in the room that the monster is frightened of. Zeppo manages to thwack the monster with his flail apparently doing it some damage. Alvin gets a CLW on Heme stabilising his condition to a mere serious, as Andrea stirs groggily and Astra points her fancy sword at the Elemental. "Don't harm it!" she cries as it slams Zeppo against the wall.

Alvin drags the fallen Hemegretham from the room shouting at Zeppo to just defend himself. Somewhat pre-occupied, Zeppo quickly manages a CLW on himself as Andrea gets to her feet in the far corner of the room. Zeppo takes a huge burst of Elemental flame and goes down with massive damage. Alvin's second Protection from Evil spell completes at this time, protecting Zeppo's collapsing form from the monster. Andrea charges the thing from behind as Alvin gets his heal in on Zeppo and manages to stabilise his condition. As Andrea goes toe-to-toe with the terrifying thing from the planes there is the sound of running water from the next room. Whatever Columbus has been up to in the last few minutes he has now blocked the drain hole with the old shield and using a couple of lead bars jammed the water supply open. Area 22 starts to slowly fill with water, which we all know Fire Elementals can't cross. Andrea makes a run for the corridor and is flattened by the things' fiery fist. Again, Alvin using his Protection aura as a shield for his patient attends and brings Andrea back to unconsciousness. Columbus leaps into the room and hurls a lead bar at the monster hitting it right between the eyes. The creature immediately attacks him with such fury that he is smashed to ground with severe burn damage. Fortunately for Columbus, Alvin gets to him before the Elemental and manages again to bring a fallen comrade back from the dark road. Truly, Rao is smiling upon his servant this day. There is a general surge into the corridor as Alvin and Astra drag Columbus and Andrea from the room. The spike is pulled and the door swings shut imprisoning the mighty creature even as it reaches out toward Astra. The party collapse into the freezing water and Alvin is heard to growl, "Will someone please get rid of this water!"

Reason for XP	Andrea	Astra	Alvin	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Columbus
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Opponents						
Spells		80	90		70	
Proficiencies		10	130		10	
Ideas	50	70	30			40
Problem Solving						
Role Play	30	60	30	50	30	120
Treasure						
Finishing						
Fun Factor		20			10	100
Penalties						

Total (This session)	80	240	280	50	120	260
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Grand Total	1880	780	1330	1940	1910	1350
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DM's Notes:-

Despite the players being aware that Columbus was up to some stuff while they were battling the Elemental, the characters; except for Zeppo, wouldn't have had any time to notice whether he was there all the time or not.