

THE DOOMGRINDER

Session 40 23-1-01 Fort Lehman and beyond

Next Session Tuesday 6-2-01 At Brian's place.

Day 5

Zeppo casts a Continual Light on Avon's dagger, which the Elf conceals in his clothing as a chorus of Wolf howls break out to the North. They move out cautiously but a little loudly in Andrea's opinion as she rushes back from her scouting position ahead of the party to shut up Natch's latest story. Leaving the Wolves far behind they make Fort Lehman by midday.

Fort Lehman is a small defended keep surrounded by a sturdy wall, currently being used as a staging post for two large merchant caravans that are taking the opportunity to trade in relative safety. The Adventurers are spotted and descended upon as the benefits of all manner of goods are cheerfully explained to them. Andrea gets a tinder-box and a winter blanket and is pleasantly surprised to note that it is cheaper here than Greyhawk (75% book). Joe buys a tent, some sheaf arrows as Andrea very wisely arranges new shoes for their eight horses. Gossiping with the merchants, who are mainly from Ket, they are interested to hear a strange story concerning the mysterious Rary. Evidently the Archmage lived in Ket's capital, Lopolla, in an imposing tower. Since the merchants have come via Greyhawk City they are able to tie up events in the two locations. It transpires that one week after the villainous murder of the Mages Tenser and Otiluke, in Greyhawk city. This man claims to have witnessed the astonishing disappearance of Rary's entire tower from Lopolla! They consider this information as Avon haggles over the price of a fine fur cloak, eventually deciding that the price is too fine for him.

The Fort

They approach the gates and Avon chats with the two guards. After a short time their senior officer turns up, an experienced looking human who introduces himself as Watch Commander Crann. After a short conversation he invites the party in to meet the Commander of the garrison Captain Narl. The Captain is currently in conference with a Greyhawk messenger so the party are shown into the officer's mess and offered simple food and wine. Crann leaves on his duties and after a long pause Captain Narl a handsome half-elf enters with Crann following. They discuss the group's eventful journey. Narl is particularly interested in Orc movements and asks if the party know anything about the Jagged Blade tribe. The party find the Captain an engaging and charming fellow who eventually reveals that both he and Crann are ex-Adventurers themselves. A pleasant hour is spent recounting stories over a few drinks during which Avon enquires about the availability of a high level Mage for a spot of training. Narl admits to being of this persuasion and even to having most afternoons free for the usual fee. This means that training time will be doubled, i.e. two weeks instead of one. Avon is delighted and promises to return for this, should he survive. They all laugh at this dark humour as Narl and Crann make their excuses and leave allowing our friends more time with the merchants.

They notice that a lot of Inn and Hotel signs have recently been erected above various tents and taking the hint manage to secure pleasant enough accommodation for 2GP per head, per night in one of them. When they think to check their possessions Andrea is annoyed to find 4gp missing! They bathe and eat well and Joe holds forth about the joys of civilisation, much to Ranger's annoyance. On his watch, Alvin has prepared a little test for our friend the Gnome. While the little fellow sleeps soundly Alvin takes the opportunity to cast Know Alignment and Detect Charm on him. He mentions to Joe, who is sharing his watch, that the Gnome appears to be no threat to them.

Day 6

They rise early on a cloudy and breezy morning. Alvin casts an armour spell on Avon and they pack their gear quickly and depart, leaving the fort behind them. After some time on the road, they pass the fertile Janaquil Valley to the south and leaving the now southbound track strike out due east over the hills. It is in this wild upland country with clumps of coniferous trees that they are ambushed by four hungry Ogres, two from each side. The Ogres, being Ogres, squander their surprise by rushing the group by which time weapons are just ready enough to strike. The fighters fumble as Natch jumps from Joe's horse and Alvin, Avon and Zeppo cast spells. Alvin's Magic Missile attack strikes one Ogre as Avon's Colour Spray hits another. Zeppo casts Continual Light on the optic nerves of his nearest

Ogre, which stands wailing as it is dazzled by its own eyes, which now shine brilliantly with the full light of the day. Avon's target stands confused, apparently also blinded by the brilliant multi-coloured fan of light, which leapt from the Elf's hands. After this inauspicious start it perhaps unsurprising that the monsters manage to miss everyone. In the middle of this Alvin, assuming his usual support role notices Natch fall over. Avon dismounts and draws his sword, attempting to use his horse as a shield as Joe, Heme, Zeppo and Andrea strike their foes; Andrea finishing hers in one blow! Avon's Ogre manages to regain its sight and forcing past the shielding horse is able hit him hard with its club as Zeppo's blinded Ogre heads slowly off to the south pursued by an enthusiastic Joe. Zeppo tries to CLW on Avon but the Elf has had enough toe-to-toe with Ogres and runs away, avoiding Zeppo's outstretched hand. Joe, whistling a merry tune, strikes his blinded Ogre as Alvin rushes into the melee to rescue the inert form of Natch, who is in danger of being trampled underfoot. There is a flurry of blows where nobody hits anything as Heme and Andrea manoeuvre themselves into one on one's with their respective Ogres. Another round of Ogres 0, Party 1 breaks out as the unfortunate creatures are hit by Heme and Andrea, with Zeppo finally catching up with Avon and managing to cast CLW on him. Joe pokes his blinded Ogre with his sword, as perhaps enraged by pain the brutes strike back hard, injuring Heme and Andrea. Zeppo completes an Aid spell as Joe amazingly misses a blinded wounded Ogre, laughing too much probably. As Alvin examines Natch, noticing that the Gnome has fainted, Heme and Andrea kill their opponents (twice over). Joe is surprised by a lucky attack from his Ogre. Zeppo casts another CLW on Avon as Joe, concentrating a little more, slices the monsters head off. (DM note 1). Alvin takes the time to cast 2 CLWs on Andrea and one on Joe. Zeppo casts CLW on Avon and Andrea as Avon searches the bodies, finding nothing. Heme wants to bury the brightly shining Ogre head but can't find a shovel. Avon prises out the two eyeballs, as the others observe the grisly scene, and by cutting them in half causes them to go out. Avon rounds on Natch and accuses him of merely being baggage. Alvin points out that Avon requires support from those higher than himself (Narl at the fort for example) and as such should be more considerate to those weaker than himself. There is a chorus of support for this and the Elf scowls as the little fellow recounts his story.

Natch is indeed an Adventurer, he is a trained Fighter/Illusionist. However he is a terrible coward and despite desperately wanting to stomach combat, is unable to prevent himself fainting dead away if overcome by fear. (DM note 2). Andrea was right. He was thrown out by his previous Adventuring group and just desperately seeks the chance to redeem himself. Please, please, pretty please.... Over Avon's objections the Gnome is allowed to remain with them but he is sternly warned of the deadly danger probably lying ahead. Despite this the little fellow seems to be driven by his purpose – to overcome his fear at any cost.

As they ride on, Alvin catches sight of a dark tower to the east. Andrea estimates two hours to reach it. Alvin reminds them of the rumours of Derro in the area. Zeppo's Direction Sense keeps them on track as Heme and Avon make some amusing comments about Natch's heroic prowess as a fighter, which the Gnome, good-naturedly goes along with. As it is late afternoon the party decide to camp here for the night, proceeding to the Doomgrinder the next day. Zeppo casts CLW on Avon and Alvin does the same on Joe. Natch is given the continual light dagger as Alvin talks to the Gnome about magic. The Gnome seems to trust the kindly Priest of Rao (Lucky for him he's not evil) and allows him to see his spellbook – he admits he doesn't yet understand all of the spells, or even know what they all are. He allows Alvin to cast Read Magic on his book and The Cleric/Mage discovers the spells therein.

Day 7 – The Doomgrinder

Next morning they ride to the east reaching a large upland valley which they are surprised to find contains thick lush vegetation. Perhaps a mile into the valley standing on a central ridge is an 80ft tall black stone tower, resembling a windmill. Even the sails are made of the same black stone. They note that the topmost sail is a few degrees from its Zenith. Evidently some of the tales are true at least. They discuss likely options, Avon wondering if there might be a door in the other side. As Alvin and Avon attempt to disbelieve the whole thing Zeppo and Andrea discuss the unusually lush vegetation. They notice several types of plants and herbs that wouldn't normally be found together in the same area. Alvin and Avon ascertain that the whole thing is indeed real as Andrea decides to go in and get some of these herbs for closer inspection. She retrieves them with no incident and Herbalist Zeppo confirms that they look and smell correct. Joe feeds a horse a handful, annoying Andrea, but the animal seems to be perfectly ok.

Hit Point Situation

Don't know – Forgot to ask.

Avon (17), Zeppo (26), Alvin (20), Heme (43), Andrea (41), Joe (23), Raven (25)

Reason for XP	Andrea	Avon	Alvin	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Joe	Raven
Opponents	220	220	220	220	180	180	
Spells	10	10	90				
Proficiencies			10				
Ideas	20	20	40				
Problem Solving							
Role Play	80	120	80	40		80	
Treasure							
Finishing							
Fun Factor	20	20	10	30		50	
Bonuses							
Penalties							

Total (This session)	350	390	450	290		350	
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Grand Total	10120	10440¹	8090	7825	8440	6190	5010
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1. Career total, not Adventure total.

DM Notes

1. A very poor showing by a bunch of hungry Ogres against the almost disciplined response of F-Troop.
2. If he fails a morale check he faints. Morale checks are made at the DM's discretion for all NPCs including Monsters. (Hint - Natch was a *bit* unfortunate with the morale dice in the last two combats)