

The Star Cairns

Session 7 25-5-99 Monsters!

Next Session 1-6-99 (Remember your Army group character sheets)

As Hemegretham drags the wild boar off to the kitchen for Gerald to cook, Andrea heads topside to keep a lookout. As she leaves, Raven gives her the mysterious ring to play with. Andrea and Astra continue to hint at how much nicer life would be with a Cure. Hemegretham heads off for a snooze and the rest wander up to enjoy the sunshine. Astra's Detect Magic on the ring reveals that the gem is a Gem of Seeing and some dedicated seeing breaks out as various party members take the ring and stare at doors, walls, each other and the horizon. Interestingly if Astra uses her Cloak of Elvenkind she is visible if observed through the ring. "It's a ring of Astra finding," quips Ash. Round two of "Looking at things through the gem" ensues with the floating runes and the runes on the tables included this time however they look just as they do normally. Ash's theory is that the ring sees through illusions and takes it off for a look at the Cleric's room. It looks like the Cleric's room.

It's early evening and Gerald brings up a large platter loaded with delicious Roast Boar closely followed by Hemegretham bearing a large cask of Ale. Various wines are also opened and the group settle down to a delicious picnic on top of the cairn. This delightful scene is somewhat spoiled as Ash, looking at Raven through the gem, sees a hideous monster reaching out with vile, putrid tentacles to attack her. Dropping the ring in alarm she sees Raven staring at her in a rather strange way. Not one to believe in a single uncorroborated observation, she retrieves the ring and does the same thing again this time perceiving an even more hideous monster. None of the others have seen anything other than a slightly more paranoid than usual Raven who can't understand why everyone is staring at him. Ash is by now quite off her food and doesn't object when Andrea grabs the ring and boldly stares at Raven through the gem. She sees Raven through the gem. A squabble breaks out whether to destroy this obviously tainted object or to keep it. Astra wants to hang onto it but a few of the more magic shy heroes, led by Hemegretham, want to smash it here and now. Bribed by food and wine Hemegretham is persuaded to let Astra keep the ring against his better judgement. (Which of course he doesn't possess in any great amount).

The watches are organised and Ash finally notices the many hints and CLW's Astra and Hemegretham. Astra takes the first watch as the increasingly paranoid Raven tries to convince the party that he isn't some vile shapechanging creature or a helpless twisted thrall of the Sentinel but simply a rather annoying Magic-using Fighter. The night passes peacefully apart from the, by now familiar, screams and growls from the North. Bright and early next morning our friends arise and as the fighters limber up and the Mages and Priests go about their spell memorisation a few hours up the coast two cloaked riders led by a local guide depart the village of Fishton and head toward the SouthEast - The direction of the Star Cairn.

On the Road

Ash prays for CLW * 2 and Astra memorises Sleep and Armour, immediately casting Armour on herself. Raven learns some spells. They load three horses carefully with the chests and the rest of the booty goes on another horse. They are ready to leave but Hemegretham wants to torch the entire place. It is pointed out to him that what with all the evidence of burning in the place and the fact that it is still here today tends to suggest that fire isn't a very good way of destroying it. They decide to move the large stone plug into place thus blocking the entrance. Hemegretham and Andrea lift it reasonably easily, they are both exceptionally strong though, and it fits neatly into the entrance and they head off in a North-Westerly direction toward the coast with Andrea slowing them down by attempting to cover their tracks.

Somewhat later in the morning Ash, leading the horses sees a flash of white in the grass and is surprised (even for a Druid) to see a weasel scamper fearlessly up to the party and stand on its hind legs chattering in a self-important fashion. Closer examination reveals a note tied to the animal's neck which when removed causes the creature to scamper off at top speed. The note reads...

*Andrea et al,
Zeppo and I are leaving Fishton and are going towards the Cairns. Should be there around lunchtime.
Alvin*

A bit further up the road they notice two cowled riders approaching them and take the usual "ultra-paranoid-party-in-the-wilderness-even-though-we-have-the-combat-power-of-a-small-army" precautions. Fortunately for the two riders, they turn out to be Alvin and Zeppo who have followed the party as far as Fishton and then used their own initiative. Much pleasant chat is had as the friends fill in the events of the past few days. Suddenly a hideous shriek is heard far to the North. Ash tethers the horses in a single pack line and uses her Animal Handling proficiency to calm them. Scanning the horizon they see a black dot in the sky describing a slow zig-zag as it grows nearer and nearer.

Missile weapons are unslung and aimed as the dot grows large enough to observe a hideous creature with the wings of a Dragon, the body of a Lion and a slaving human-like face. It swoops to attack as a volley of missile weapons are launched. Alvin hits with his sling, Heme lands one of his arrows but both Andrea's shots go wide. Raven's longbow scores and even Zeppo thwacking on tip-toe manages to hit it a glancing blow. He cannot however prevent a cruel claw tearing into Ash as the beast speeds by. Astra, safely cloaked at the back, throws a couple of daggers managing to hit the monster once before it rapidly gains height and then abruptly dives and lands 100ft behind the party.

The creature flicks its tail and three spikes fly from it toward the party. None of them hit. And a rain of counter missile fire follows from the the heroes. Alvin and Andrea hit but Raven's arrows fly wide. Hemegretham and Astra run to either side of the beast in an attempt to out-flank it and as Zeppo begins to cast CLW on Ash the creature rushes the main body of the party! Dead-eye Alvin hits it with yet another sling bullet but Andrea misses as the beast claws Zeppo and a horse. Ash is cured but now Zeppo could use one himself but Andrea's two arrows bury themselves in the monster's head bringing it crashing down... dead. Andrea wants Zeppo to cure the horse which he does, just as another scream is heard from the North. Another dot is approaching them and begins to circle them outside of missile range. Hemegretham retrieves the three tail spikes and the party head off as fast as possible in the direction of Fishton. As the creature gains the Western point of the compass it shrieks and turns toward the party at a height of about 100ft. Several of the party are unsure whether to fire and Alvin gives them his "don't attack until attacked" spiel until they decide to wait and see. However Raven, "Never trust a Monster even if you are one" opens fire with Magic Missile. Both hit the beast apparently causing it much pain. It gains height rapidly and heads toward the North. Ten minutes later it returns at too great an altitude even for Magic Missile and for a while it flies above them. Suddenly a rapidly enlarging shadow causes the party to scatter as a huge boulder crashes down upon the horses. Only Ash's Animal Handling proficiency stops a complete panic but two horses are dead (Astra's and Alvin's) and the clothes chest is smashed. The creature is seen a few more times but does not approach again. Eventually around early evening the party limp into Fishton which they are informed is defended from those nasty beasties by Ballistas.

They find accommodation at a modest Inn/House and are charged a few gps overnight stay for the lot of them. The Ale is ok though and although not up to Astra's standards the accommodation is still quite clean and reasonably comfortable. Hemegretham and Andrea feel positively pampered!

Astra finds out that Donyer has indeed passed through yesterday morning while Alvin and Zeppo Cure the party up to a reasonable strength. Unfortunately there are no Horses for sale. They spend an uneventful night and next day head off to Hardby. Astra learns Magic Missile, Alvin learns Colour Spray, Sleep, 3*CLW, Hold, Withdraw, Spiritual Hammer and Sanctuary. Zeppo receives some spells.

They arrive in Hardby with no further adventures and use Zeppo's map to find their way around. Asked about a particular street name Zeppo replies "If you can't read this you're lost", causing some merriment. Alvin spends the day at the small local affiliate of the Wizard's Guild researching the various runes discovered by the party. Zeppo goes to the local chapel with a copy of the runes while Andrea drops both Gerald and Sullivan at a branch of the Henway business empire. For some peculiar reason Gerald is very keen to look up Astra in Greyhawk and a mischievous Andrea is more than happy to comply with the address even passing on the alias of Rowena de Ville to the enraptured young man. Astra is offered 800 gp for the flute but decides that she can get a better price in Greyhawk. Two replacement horses are purchased and the Lyre is sold for an unremarkable book price. The party settle down to a slightly less exciting life taking rooms at the New Inn and enjoying the relatively cosmopolitan life of a bustling port town.

Reason for XP	Andrea	Astra	Alvin/Ash	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Raven
Opponents	360	260	260	260	260	
Spells		20	30		30	
Proficiencies	20			10		
Ideas	30	30	30	30	20	
Problem Solving						
Role Play	30	30	50	50	20	
Treasure						
Finishing						
Fun Factor	40	30	20	20	30	
Penalties						
Total (This session)	480	370	390	370	360	
Grand Total	2810	3035	2420	2875	360	2010

DM's Notes:-