

The Village – Session the third 20 April 98

Morning has broken and as we find the party bustling around the camp preparing to move on, a rider approaches in an obvious hurry. He is Zeppo, an acolyte who has studied at the same temple as the party's very own Alvin who is able to confirm his identity. Due to a filing error at the temple (obviously not using AS400's) Alvin's research on Nergal was incomplete. Zeppo passes on the additional information and informs Alvin that due to the now obviously more dangerous nature of the mission he has been asked to accompany the party. He wears good leather armour and basic kit and brandishes a serious looking footman's flail.

The usual arguments break out as the party move out. Astra accuses Andrea of Dwarven ancestry, Galen glares at Andrea while he warms up with a few sword thrusts etc etc etc...

Off they go in the usual configuration. Andrea well ahead, skulking in the bushes and playing with her squirrel.

After an hour or so Andrea becomes aware of (Hunting & Tracking rolls succeed) a group of creatures tracking them. Further investigation by the Ranger reveals approximately 12 large canines. As they begin to close in the party begins to get quite jumpy and Andrea even suggests tactical moves against the "Wolves". Raven nocks an arrow and Galen unsheathes his sword as Zeppo suggests that maybe these creatures aren't necessarily hostile (sanity at last, and from the newest player who's never played D&D before!). Tooroot flies off to scout and returns insisting that the creatures are of mainly Lawful Good alignment and ruffles his feathers in pride at having cast Know Alignment - again...). The creatures move in and prove to be a pack of Blink Dogs. Lawful good, intelligent wild dogs.

For the price of a couple of biscuits and the odd bunny they reveal that they have recently (last sun) chased off a large wolf pack that was intruding on their range. It was probably part of this pack that the party encountered last night. Questioned by the party the Blink dogs talk about an evil place to the north of here where some of their number have mysteriously disappeared. Pressed somewhat further the leader of the Dogs tells of some of their pack that have disappeared while in that area. One Dog corpse was discovered drained of blood, a single puncture wound in its neck.

The dogs part company affably and say they will be in the area for the party's return journey. (Looks like you've made some useful friends here).

About an hour later Andrea spots some sort of stone obelisk (4 feet high) on the side of the road. Zeppo notices her heading toward it and rides up as well. The rest of the party draw nigh and discover a milestone with a design of a man in full armour with a shield and his hand on the hilt of his sword. The area about a 4ft radius around the stone is barren of any vegetation. To cut a long story short, a lot of time is spent pacing out human size paces, consulting the transcript of the scroll etc etc (Zeppo digging) until Andrea gets bored of the whole silly affair and kicks it! With 18(45) Strength the rock has little choice but to crack along the centre and do its best impression of gravel.

Pleased at defiling an unholy shrine, Alvin goes the whole hog and sprinkles some holy water on the ground, which causes a putrid green smoke to appear. He casts bless for good measure and the smoke dissipates. The earth seems healthier and cleaner so Andrea plants some nuts and seeds.

Astra and Andrea scout ahead. They notice that it is deathly silent - quite out of character for this type of medium to heavily wooded landscape. They spot a hill (rise) ahead and Tooroot is asked to take a look by getting as high a possible from this point. He returns and reports a 200ft across basin, containing the overgrown ruins of a small village. Tooroot agrees to fly ahead and reconnoitre the place. He will communicate the details to Zeppo who will draw a map (using his read/write proficiency on someone's paper - can't remember whose). A reasonable looking map is produced over lunch (of course) and the party separate from Sereen and Tooroot and head for the brow of the hill, Andrea and Astra leading about 500 yards ahead. They notice again that it is eerily silent.

As they come over the rise they see a shallow basin shaped depression approx. 200ft across containing a derelict, overgrown village. They approach the ruined gatehouses (one either side of the road) and examine the left hand one of the pair. Inside there is the corpse of a rat, drained dry of blood presumably through a single puncture wound in its neck. The rest of the party arrive and in a gesture of welcome to Galen, Andrea chucks the rat at him. He doesn't get out of the way quick enough and it bounces rather embarrassingly off his head. Amidst much muttering and quarrelling they take a look in the other gatehouse and find nothing. Continuing to mutter like a group of demented gumbies they move off to investigate the nearest building to the south... apart from Zeppo who thought it was time to poke a medium size tree with his flail. The snake missed its to-hit roll so fell to the ground after which a bout of synchronised missing broke out. Raven and Galen joined the fray just in time to see Zeppo finally put the nasty serpent to sleep. Andrea quickly stepped in and swiped the nasty thing, stashing it in her rucksack, prompting Raven's demand, "Give me that snake", which she ignores. The arguments died down a little and Greyhawk noise-making team continued to root around in the rocks of the first building. They soon tired of this and decided to try and get a bit of an overview before taking every stone apart.

Moving onto the next building and rounding the southern edge they spy a faded old sign "The Inn of the Five fingers" - "The hand!" they chorus. Andrea ties a rope to herself and Raven and Alvin grab the other end. In she goes and lights a torch. There's nothing much there apart from a caved in floor in the South East corner. Andrea drags the others in and they lower her down to the floor. At this point Alvin realises that the party is rather dangerously split and at his instigation Galen grabs the rope and is lowered down just as the group of winged creatures that they have disturbed attack! Both feel a creature brush against their faces, Andrea reacts predictably and tonks the nearest flying shape for 2hp. As the others above spread out around the rim of the cave-in and Zeppo conscientiously guards the door, Andrea grinning dangerously cleanly chops the next creature neatly in half, an action which splatters her with blood in the fashion of a Quentin Tarantino movie. For some

inexplicable reason Galen chooses to parry evidently suspecting that these creatures may not be hostile. (after what Andrea has done to them it could be rather unlikely now). An increasingly alarmed Astra works her way around to where she can see as much action as possible and starts to wind up her sleep spell. A brief moment of concentration and a wave of somnambulism ripples out from her outstretched fingers. There are loud thuds as four of the vile creatures fall senseless to the basement floor. By now Galen has got the idea and starts to wave it about a bit successfully missing two of the monsters. Andrea has a go at one with the same result. Fortunately for the terrible two, the Stirges (yes, it's them) mess it up as well. Raven switches to his magical bow and nocks a sheaf arrow as a frowning Astra grabs the rope and pulls it up??!!

The nasty beasties swoop for their next attack and frustrated, Galen heaves mightily with his magical sword and tonks one so hard that it explodes in mid air, splattering blood everywhere. Perhaps due to this Andrea fails to connect with anything including Galen. Andrea is clobbered by a screeching Stirge, which scrabbling at her face with its claws manages to sink its barbed, blood sucking proboscis into our frantic heroine's neck. As she struggles with the beast a very concerned Astra (who has been counting under her breath) is quickly lowered into the pit by Alvin and Raven. (Ah, that's what she wanted the rope for) As the melee continues, another Stirge narrowly misses Galen, distracting him for just long enough for its companion to gash him badly at the neck. They struggle as the Stirge forces its loathsome claws into his neck. Andrea is meanwhile trying to tear her Stirge from her face but she is rapidly weakening as she loses blood. Meanwhile Galen with a roar of revulsion hurls his Stirge across the room with enough furious energy to turn it into a blood pancake as it slams into the wall. More red goo everywhere.

An increasingly worried Alvin is lowered down the rope by Zeppo as Andrea begins to collapse. Astra is surprised from behind and one of the remaining Stirges rakes its vicious claws deep into her neck and face. The damage is enough to severely injure her and she collapses into a pitiful heap bleeding copiously. This particular Stirge would have had cause to regret its actions had it known what hit it. Raven had been trying to get a clear shot at the creatures for some time. As Astra collapsed and the shrieking blood sucking creature turned for the kill, Raven loosed a magical sheaf arrow with such power and accuracy that the creature was plucked out of the air and nailed to the opposite wall scattering gouts of blood everywhere.

Galen attempts (quite carefully) to stab Andrea's face hugging Stirge but misses. Alvin quickly casts a Cure Light wounds on Andrea recovering 5hp which causes her to resume her struggle against the Stirge, unfortunately unsuccessfully. Galen tries to stab it again but misses again.

Raven manoeuvres himself into a better position and takes a bead on the sleeping Stirges and quickly despatches two of them. Alvin hurries to Astra and binds her wounds which stops the worst of the bleeding. Andrea again fails to remove her Stirge just as Galen finally stabs the wriggling thing with his dagger. He pulls it away from her and swiftly finishes it off before kebabbing another of the sleeping monsters. As Alvin tries to bind her wounds, a furious

Andrea bursts into action and slices the last sleeping (and now just waking) Stirge into blood sausage. Alvin completes his work and manages to restore 2hp to Andrea just as flapping noise is heard from the dark North West corner of the basement.

Galen lobs the torch onto the corner revealing 3 more of the loathsome creatures hanging from the rafters, bloated by recent feeding. They are however starting to shake off their torpor. A quick melee involving Alvin, Galen, Astra, Andrea and the dozy Stirges breaks out resulting in 3 dead Stirges courtesy of Galen (2) and Astra (1). By now everyone except Raven and Zeppo are covered in blood.

Andrea has a root around finding a half buried skeleton and digs out 1pp, 15gp and 12sp. Alvin has a dig and discovers a thick clear potion. Astra takes a look and finds 1pp and 20gp. While various party members dig around the most difficult area of the basement (under the cave-in) Andrea notices something unusual about the ground, er, four paces west of the centre of the floor. Raven runs back to Sereen's wagon and returns with a trenching tool. Galen digs carefully where Andrea indicates. About a foot down he finds a solid object and (dex checks) very carefully removes it. Astra pulls the wrapping away to reveal 1ft high gold statuette of a familiar figure. An evil Paladin in full armour with a shield on his left arm and his right arm resting upon the hilt of his sword.

Clarshh's Sepulchre

XP awards for Sessions 1 - 3 (Final revision 4-5-98)

Reason for XP	Galen	Andrea	Astra	Raven	Alvin	Zeppo
Opponents	480	240	80	240	80	175
Spells	-	-	80	-	180	-
Proficiencies	-	30	-	20	30	10
Ideas	-	-	10	10	20	10
Problem Solving	-	-	-	-	-	-
Role Play	30	30	10	10	20	-
Treasure	50	70	25	-	-	-
Finishing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fun Factor	80	80	50	50	20	25
Total (This adventure)	640	420	255	330	410	220

Rules Notes:-

Stirges are 1hd+1 creatures with bonuses (+1hd Blood suck, +1hd Flying) = 2hd+1 = 120-xp each

The Snake was a 2hd+1 creature (Yes I know! Sorry I should have told you it was five feet long) with bonuses (+2hd poison) = 4hd+1 = 175 xp (Well done Zeppo!)

Killing sleeping creatures gains no XP

Steve's rules appeal for fighting XP's is approved and results in the following house rule:-

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. The 80 XP each for Astra and Alvin in this case are due to having been in direct melee with the creatures despite not managing to kill any of them.

Standard CLW's cast in unremarkable circumstances score 10XP. CLW's cast in combat get more according to how sweaty the situation is.