

The Last Star Cairn

Session 4 16-09-02 Stoneskin!

Next Session – Sorry don't know yet.

Chimneys

It is mid-afternoon in the fourth Star Cairn and as he casts CLW on himself Zeppo ruefully observes that he has no more battle spells available today. This catches Heme's interest and he asks hopefully whether they are planning any more battles today. The party continue searching the first level and as Andrea discovers Golem tracks Astra quickly casts Invisibility on herself. A lot of searching later and they still don't find anything interesting until in the kitchen Andrea remembers having found gold concealed in a chimney before. She asks Astra to search the two visible chimneys but she refuses so Andrea decides to take a look herself. As she is about to put her hand up the first chimney Heme wisely suggests she use a sword instead, so she pokes about with her non-magical sword and succeeds in dislodging a large mass of soot, grease and grime which covers her from head to foot. As Astra suppresses her giggles Zeppo gives Andrea some water and suggests that now she is so dirty she can do the second chimney as well. This she then does with the same amusing result.

Further exploration reveals a room with hypnotic patterns painted on the walls. Eventually they realise that that the patterns don't seem to be magically mesmerising, just a visual trick.

The Smoke Filled Room

They decide that they need to clear the smoke-filled area and Joe bravely volunteers to delve into the corridors. He ropes himself up using his Rope Use skills. He dallies with a brief theory of doing something to the smoke involving a lighted torch but Alvin sensibly puts paid to this rather dangerous experiment using a Dust Devil spell to blow out the torch. The door is swung open and clouds of smoke billow out everywhere as Joe plunges inside. Alvin uses his Dust Devil as a sort magical hoover operating in reverse managing to keep at least the area immediately around them clear. An alarming few minutes pass but eventually Joe emerges through the smoke announcing proudly that he has closed the door. They shut the outer door to contain the smoke as Zeppo brightly suggests "Lunch?"

Looking around topside they see a huge plume of smoke heading off toward the east and Zeppo also notices several small plumes of smoke to the east of the cairn. Investigating he finds narrow ceramic pipes that he presumes lead down to the chambers below, concluding they are probably for ventilation. Giving themselves a bit of time they return to the secret door and open it, finding a misty but visible passage beyond. Heading in they investigate the pentagonal rooms beyond. In one room they see a circle around a bed and a table with a book on it. Alvin decides, "I don't like circles" and using both Spellcraft and Religion concludes that it is either to keep something in or out. In another room they see a broken bed and two chests, also two skeletons. One is in the middle of a scorched area and one has a sword between its ribs. Alvin casts Detect Magic and runs it around the suite of rooms finding magic all over the place. Zeppo also casts a Find Traps and also discovers several traps. Looking into a room with a bed, covered with clothes they notice a scroll case sticking out. Astra sends her Unseen Servant after it and is impressed to see the scroll case skitter away from it to the other side of the room. Zeppo checks out the circle room and his Find Traps reveals the book is a trap that is triggered by reading it. He crosses the circle with no apparent ill effects and picks up the book, which Astra is happy to take off his hands, placing it in her backpack. Back to the chests and Zeppo discovers they both have magical traps on their opening mechanisms. Alvin suggests putting everything in the same room casting Dispel Magic and then testing with Find Traps however they won't be able to do that until tomorrow so what to do with the rest of the day?

Let's go downstairs

...is the popular consensus and led by Astra the party bravely descend to the lower level. Regarding the obligatory floating runes it finally dawns on Alvin that the L rune may be something to do with the famed archmage Lyzandred who lived hundreds of years ago. Exploring they find two corridors that seem to act in the same anti-magic manner as similar corridors in other cairns. They also find some large stone blocks that Andrea reckons would be the raw materials for Stone Golems. Exploring further they find a room full of bunks on each of which lies a decomposed corpse.

Why aren't they falling down?

Concerned with the plight of these lost souls Alvin wants to go straight in and immediately follows the words with the action. As the party enter the room the entire group of corpses rise in unison and lurch hideously toward them! In front Andrea and Heme rush into combat striking both of their targets however their weapons don't do any damage! They try again as Zeppo and Alvin try to get past but again their trusty magical weapons do no damage. Unsure of what to do they dither pathetically as Alvin shouts, "Get out the way!" Confronted by their bitter enemies, the undead, both clerics barge their way to the front. Gesturing with their holy symbols they call down the power of Rao and Trithereon and manage to cause chaos in the undead ranks as the front rows try to flee the good clerics over the advancing rear row. Joe lobbs an ineffectual dart over their heads as Alvin casts Magic Missile causing visible damage to one of the Zombies! "This would nice if I could just get a look at them for long enough to cast my magical attacks," thinks Astra.

Meanwhile the front line fighters dispiritedly again fail to cause any damage but Joe has his own idea of what to do. Removing a flask of greek fire he hurls it right into the centre of the room as he reaches for a torch. Zeppo casts Bless on his flail as Astra gets a long enough look at a Zombie to get off a Magic Missile. Zeppo and Alvin both hit their targets but are unable to inflict any damage either. It just feels like the Zombies have a skin made of stone. Joe's torch arcs gracefully over their heads right into the centre of the greek fire which goes up in a fierce conflagration as Alvin bravely takes the time to open one of the foot lockers hoping to find a way of disabling their opponents. Joe, in excellent throwing form, follows his torch with another flask of greek fire, which bursts into incandescent flame. The demoralised frontline fighters decide to call it a day and calling out retreat they move backwards colliding into Zeppo and ruining the spell he was casting. Alvin shouts out, "Come back you cowards!" as catching on to Joe's scheme, Astra hurls a flask of greek fire into the inferno while Alvin splashes holy water at the nearest zombies, burning them horribly.

As the temperature rises the heroes take some heat damage but not as much as the zombies, so what the hell, Joe tries another flask but his luck departs him and it flies off to the side as Astra lobbs another greek fire into the room. Eventually the fact that he is wearing fire resistant armour penetrates Heme's thick skull and he finally ploughs into the flames to do battle. Having had enough of "not being able to hit them syndrome" he lifts the nearest zombie high over his head and hurls it into the middle of the flames. Observing this and perhaps shamefully aware of Alvin's, "Come out and fight you cowards" Andrea ploughs into the outer flames grabbing her very own zombie which follows Heme's to its fiery destruction. Unfortunately for her she doesn't have any fire resistance and takes some significant damage in the searing flames.

Zeppo casts a prayer as it dawns on Astra that with this intensity of heat confined within a small place and with plentiful fuel (zombies, greek fire) to feed on it could just blow at any min.... At which point the whole lot goes up with a deafening "Whumpf!". Everyone in the room takes burn damage with even Heme (right in the middle of it) getting hurt despite his fire resistance (DM Notes). Fortunately the explosion finishes off the remaining zombies and anything valuable that might have been in that room.

As they retreat from the inferno to the relative safety of the downstairs hall Alvin casts CLW on Joe, Heme and himself as Zeppo casts CLW on Heme, himself and Astra. Heading up to the surface Alvin casts his last CLW on himself.

Reason for XP	Andrea	Astra	Alvin	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Joe
Opponents	400	400	800	400	800	400
Spells		70	190		210	
Proficiencies	50	30	60	20		40
Ideas/Plot/Clues	20	80	100	40	80	70
Problem Solving						
Role Play	90	30	110	70	100	70
Treasure						
Finishing						
Fun Factor	80	30	60	20	80	50
Bonuses						
Penalties						
Total (This session)	640	640	1320	550	1270	630
Grand Total	40321	13092/13092	11085/11085	36201	42196	18060

DM Notes:-

Hemegretham lost too many hit points in the fire explosion. His armour would have protected him rather better than I mistakenly calculated so Heme's damage should not have been any more than 5hp, and that was a remarkably intense explosion. So don't fear the fire Hemegretham.