

The Last Star Cairn

Session 7 21-10-02 Sit!

Next session – Treasure share out

Here Boy!

Bored with the distinctly non-combat situation Heme hauls on the rope dragging the somewhat surprised looking metal dog out of the room. The moment it crosses the threshold it leaps snarling at the big warrior. Off balance Heme tries his best to defend himself but doesn't do too well as the dog snaps at him. Andrea ploughs in, unfortunately just as Joe attempts to lasso the dog. Tangled in the rope with the dog she is incapable of doing anything other than try to free herself as the determined metal mutt takes yet another bite out of Heme. Meanwhile Alvin slips quietly into the dog room. Andrea struggles free of the rope as Joe hits again with the lasso and proceeds to run around the staircase column with the rope, trapping Andrea again! Flailing all over the place Heme again fails to hit the creature as it claws and bites him for even more damage.

Good Doggie

At this point some sort of divine foreboding overcomes Astra. "Where has Alvin been all this time?" she wonders. Creeping stealthily around the large, gyrating ball of string that is Heme, Andrea and the metal dog she peers into the room and finds Alvin sprawled motionless on the floor! "Cleric!" she yells at the top of her voice but Zeppo is busy trying to land a CLW on Heme who is bleeding rather excessively by now. Desperately Astra rushes to Alvin, while holding her breath, and noting his ghastly pale colour immediately drags him from the room. The ball of string rapidly unwinds as Andrea slashes through it with her dagger and Joe joins the melee as Heme backs away... right into Astra dragging Alvin. (The Marx brothers could have learned a thing or two from this melee - good job nobody was carrying a plank!). Joe smacks the metal dog good and proper as Andrea, taking a large backswing, is almost knocked from her feet by Zeppo shoving past her to attend to the rapidly fading Alvin. Joe swings his sword and misses as the dog picks him as its next target taking a large chunk out of him in the process. Andrea has had enough of this and with great agility leaps onto the dog's back, unfortunately Joe has already started his downswing and he is thus unable to avoid hitting Andrea a nasty blow. (Laurel and Hardy will soon be writing in for advice). Zeppo does his best for the rapidly fading Alvin as Astra takes a look around the room finding (by triggering it and fortunately saving) a poison trap protecting a hidden compartment. Outside the fighters have finally decided to hit something rather than just get in each other's way and a torrent of well-placed blows finally rain down on the metal hound.

A Divine Bargain

Unfortunately for Alvin the poison has taken a deadly grip and Zeppo realises that he is in a desperate situation. Calling upon his deity Trithereon, Zeppo appeals for all he's worth and is amazed when his call is heeded. Around himself and Alvin, time seems to stand still as Trithereon's Servant converses with a tiny facet of his mighty master. As time restarts again the poison miraculously vanishes from Alvin's body leaving him almost dead but at least curable.

Back at obedience school Heme and Andrea land massive damage on the dog golem, smashing it into a hundred pieces, unfortunately Joe lies on the floor in a pool of blood (most of it Heme's) at death's door. Zeppo rushes over and binds his wounds leaving him just about conscious. Meanwhile Alvin is recovering at a suitably divine rate and as Astra skilfully breaks the trap mechanism that got him, Alvin regains consciousness. Astra manipulates the secret panel mechanism which opens revealing a small space with nothing in it at all! She returns to the others as Zeppo explains the price for Alvin's recovery.

Seeing that there was no hope and that Alvin would last at the most for a minute more he appealed desperately to Trithereon and his call was answered but at a price. Effectively the entire party has been contracted to perform a task for the god, which will soon become apparent to them. Should any of the party renege on this agreement then Alvin will be returned to his state before divine intervention (loaded with deadly poison and dead in 30 seconds) and the rest will be in the little black book of the god of VENGEANCE! Zeppo explains that they will carry the mark of Trithereon on their weapon hand until their quest is completed. Nervously they examine their hands finding a small sword symbol in the shape of a "T" marked on each of their hands. "Bugger!" thinks Alvin, "I wonder what Rao will make of this?" as he covers the symbol with some red plant dye. There is a long silence broken only by Zeppo's words as he jauntily casts CLW on Alvin.

The Next Day...

is heralded by several cures as Zeppo and Alvin patch up the battered party. While Alvin is busy curing, Zeppo opens his backpack and examines the book they found. Sitting himself in the corner he opens it and begins to read. The others quickly realise that Zeppo is in some sort of trance and the more magically knowledgeable of the party advise leaving him alone until he finishes. In the meantime Andrea leads a scouting mission to check on the horses unfortunately finding a sorry scene back at the cave. The horses have been attacked and the four warhorses, nobly refusing to surrender have paid with their lives. Blood is spattered all around the cave and the corpse of a large Ogre lies with its skull split open. A furious Andrea picks up tracks of a large group of Trolls and Ogres but manages to contain her bloodlust as she returns to the cairn. Enroute she tries some experiments with the metal bird, which seems to have extended its mental range to 200ft. She decides to name the hawk Sooley and feels the mental bond grow stronger with the name. Another day is lost while Zeppo absorbs the magical tome awakening from his trance early in the morning as the book mysteriously vanishes. Despite having had no sleep for 24 hours the cleric feels refreshed and ready for action. Andrea wants to track the rustlers immediately but the others want to plunder the last of the cairn's treasures first. Exercising considerable restraint Andrea accompanies them to the first level where they successfully open the repelling scroll case and recover and stopper the ever-smoking bottle.

Rustlers

At Andrea's urging they set off to track the Troll and Ogre party. After following the tracks for a few hours Andrea estimates that they are following 20 – 30 creatures. After a few more hours this group splits up, so they follow one of the tracks. This also splits up so they decide to follow one of the tracks with horses. Towards the end of the day they come upon the grizzly site of a barbeque of horsemeat feasted upon by many humanoids. Eventually, following one of the split up groups they come to a large marshy area. With the weather worsening and their supplies running out the group decide to call it a day and return to Hardby. As they leave, Andrea swears a solemn oath that these creatures will suffer for their crimes. Binky will be avenged! Somewhere out in the multiverse the god of vengeance grows a little stronger.

Hardby

After spending an uncomfortable night in the open in vile weather the party return on foot to Hardby. They are surprised to be checked by Hardby militia guards as they enter the town but soon find out that a mysterious series of murders has the town on edge. For five nights running up until two days ago a citizen has been brutally murdered with every bone in their body smashed! The only tracks found were those of an average size man. "Oh Gods, not Xaxes" they think. And who knows, maybe they're right. Since the serial murders seem to have finished they decide to carry on with business as usual as Joe enters 5th level training and Zeppo is delighted to discover his new book-induced powers. Alvin's Remove Curse and Dispel Magic allows Astra to read the scroll, which contains the spell, Improved Invisibility. She reads her travelling spell book and discovers some spells. (To be diced for at the treasure share-out). They rest up at the New Inn.

Reason for XP	Andrea	Astra	Alvin	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Joe
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Opponents	150			150		150
Spells		40	150		90	
Proficiencies	40	30				10
Ideas/Plot/Clues	30	40	60	20	40	20
Problem Solving						
Role Play	60	40	50	40	50	40
Treasure						
Finishing	500	500	500	500	500	500
Fun Factor	80	50	60	80	40	100
Bonuses			20		37024	
Penalties						

Total (This session)	860	700	840	790	55720	820
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Grand Total	43651	14102/14102 28204	13000/13000 26000	39680	82250	21880
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DM Notes:-

1. All spells etc have been taken into account for XP even where not explicitly written up.
2. Zeppo read a Book of Exalted Deeds. For a good Cleric the effects are:-
 - a. Gain 1 point of Wisdom permanently.
 - b. Gain XP sufficient to place him halfway up the next level – see bonus.
3. Eversmoking bottle – A small bronze bottle with a lead stopper attached by a short chain. If the stopper is pulled out a 50,000 cubic ft area is filled in one round. Left open the bottle will fill another 10,000 cubic ft of space until 120,000 cubic ft is fogged. The area remains smoked until the bottle is stoppered when it disperses naturally. (No command word required).
4. Current levels:-
 - a. Andrea – Level 6 Ranger
 - b. Astra – Level 4 MU / Level 5 Thief
 - c. Alvin – Level 4 MU / Level 5 Cleric (Wedding present – see 20xp DM bonus)
 - d. Hemegretham – Level 6 Fighter
 - e. Zeppo – Level 7 Cleric
 - f. Joe – Level 5 Fighter (in training)

Congratulations to Joe for 5th level Fighter, Alvin for 5th level Cleric and Zeppo for 7th level Cleric!