

The Star Cairns

Session 28 13-7-00 Civilisation – For a while.

Next Session Tuesday 18-7-00 At Brian's place.

Hardby

A pleasant night is spent in the New Inn at Hardby. Kalen, the Landlord, a respected ex-adventurer is very pleased to see them and the party become aware of their increasing fame in the area. As they enter, a polite hush descends over the crowd. The conversation resumes, "The Heroes that are cleaning up the 'Alz", is overheard more than once. Andrea disappears into the hills, seemingly unable to stay in a building for very long when she's paying for it as the others settle down to the 10gp per week luxury of the Adventurer's suite, hot baths all round and comfy beds in an easily defended group apartment. (You can tell that the Landlord used to be an Adventurer). Heme sends down for a keg of Ale and Andrea finally returns from her self-imposed exile and grudgingly takes a nice warm bath.

The next day a bout of buying and selling breaks out as the good merchants of Hardby are regaled with the latest of Adventuring treasures fresh from the dark mountains. There follows a précis of the next day's transactions:-

- Joe names his medium warhorse Luke.
- Andrea donates 50gp each to Rao and Trithereon
- Astra sells the spools of thread for 2600gp
- They decide to keep the Suel Gold pieces. One piece each and Joe carries the remaining 44.
- Astra sells Columbus' bracelet for 150gp.
- Astra is offered 1900gp for the fancy buttons but believes they are worth more than this, so No Sale.
- Astra sells the precious metal bars for a total of 3000gp
- The Chariot and Rug are stored in the good-aligned temple with the Trithereon group of Priests.
- Alvin donates 800gp to the Rao faction of the temple.

Alvin spends some time catching up on the latest news at the temple and finds that updates from Greyhawk predict doom for the city, some deadly danger that has long been predicted from the East! Andrea is convinced that the stone structure known as the Doomgrinder is the source. Alvin follows this up with the Mage, Derek, at the Hardby branch of the Wizard's Guild who thinks it would be well worth Alvin's time to investigate the library entries on the Doomgrinder.

Further investigations by Alvin reveal that Rary's Empire of the Bright Lands has sent emissaries to local towns and villages warning them to keep off his territory. The groups of mounted soldiers that deliver these messages are well armed and highly disciplined troops – not to be trifled with. Indeed a party of Hardy militia that travelled into the Bright Desert has not been heard of for at least three weeks. Alvin also notes that pirate activity in the Woolly Bay has increased of late with rumours of the old slave ships with their hated yellow sails being once again sighted at sea. "Adventurer's saw them off before!" grumbles an old man hopefully in the New Inn's crowded bar. In a quiet moment, Andrea notices that her Gnarley forest silver talisman has grown two small leaves.

They spend another pleasant and quiet night and decide to head out again in search of adventure as soon as possible. With this in mind they hit the town again with the following results:-

- All buy 2 weeks Iron rations
- Alvin buys 5 Healer's Bags. Enough dried herbs for a month of M.A.S.H!
- Alvin buys a 2m x 2m light, oiled tarpaulin and so does Andrea.
- Alvin buys 1 weeks worth of firewood, now wrapped in tarpaulin.
- Alvin buys 2 kilos of Basmati rice and a small barrel of pickled and salted fish.
- Andrea buys an oiled tarpaulin tent.

In the field

Where to go? Star Cairn 4 or 5? Alvin is convinced he knows where Star Cairn 5 must be - Obviously at the northernmost point of a pentangle. That may be so but Andrea however is convinced that it won't be found by any mere physical means. The party head for Storm Keep, a stronghold of the Greyhawk Mountaineer Militia that is near their intended destination. They are hospitably greeted by Lieutenant Dagmar and notice the Griffon mounted patrols that keep an eye on the Abor Alz and beyond in the service of the Domain of Greyhawk. After exchanging pleasantries they decide to head on for Freyl Keep, an advance observation tower manned by a small force from Storm Keep. On their way Andrea makes a spectacular feat of tracking and notices something amiss on the side of a ridge a couple of miles to the Northeast. Going to investigate they find the remains of a massacre. Evidently a force of Orcs, some twenty or so, stood in furious battle with some foe and were decisively defeated. There are severe burn marks visible on some bodies. Examining the corpses indicates, to the best of Andrea and Alvin's ability that this conflict occurred (very) approximately 3 weeks ago. Alvin identifies one of the Orcs' insignia as that of luz the Evil! Andrea makes her mind up. "It's us, Rary and luz all after the same thing!" she states.

After an exhaustive search of the area, which reveals nothing, the party decide to camp out overnight rather than head for Freyl Keep. Next morning Alvin remembers the other symbol they have observed in the cairns, the chevron pattern on the walls. This gives the comrades two more possibilities for Star Cairn 5 locations. The peak of a 'W' or the southernmost point of a 'V'.

Reason for XP	Andrea	Astra	Alvin	Hemegretham	Zeppo	Joe	Raven
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Opponents							
Spells							
Proficiencies	10		20				
Ideas	30		30			20	
Problem Solving							
Role Play	20		50			20	
Treasure	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
Finishing							
Fun Factor	40		30			40	
Bonuses							
Penalties							

Total (This session)	420	320	450	320	320	400	320
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Grand Total	5865	7435	5340	3780	4880	2080	4750
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DM's Notes:-

1. Congratulations to Andrea who made her fifth level and to Joe who is now third level.
2. Treasure bonus from finishing Star Cairn 3 is awarded here. Basically Joe needed another 320 to stop being cannon fodder (eg. Make level 3) so he, and the rest of you, got some treasure XP for a change.
3. Quote of the week from Alvin to an impressed citizen of Hardby. "We **are** that mighty party!"