

STONES AND SHADOW, TREES AND LIGHT

Session Thirty:
13 Highsun 1479



Session 30
20 September 2009

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Points of note:

- *The ritual circle of blood requires a sacrifice of "life energy", but no one is sure exactly how much.*
- *The murals and Bengi's papers suggest that the party needs to make four sacrifices to reach the sanctum: life energy, a dagger, a mask and a bell.*
- *The murals adorning the walls of the Well hint that a fierce guardian must be defeated to gain access to the sanctum – a dragon!*

A Hall of Harsh Reflections

Turning back and pressing deeper into the Well, the Heroes of Winterhaven soon came across a bloody smear leading down a hall and through a closed door.

As they contemplated which way to go next, sounds of battle; screams, peals of thunder and the bestial roaring of a drake-like creature, rose on the other side of a nearby wall. Crippled by indecision, our heroes waited until the noise died down before pushing on.

Opening the door, they discovered a bloody altar, a ritual circle caked with burned blood, and the recently deceased corpse of the last missing villager, his throat savagely cut. Caelan's brother was nowhere to be found.

Pieter administered last rites to the villager while Bengi and Soveliss studied the circle. They soon confirmed that it was part of the ritual referred to in the papers the golem had earlier discovered and that it required a sacrifice of life energy to activate it.

The adventurers pressed on through another door and discovered a strange passage; its floor caked in a path of dried blood and the walls scored as if by the passing of something heavy.

Further investigation revealed that the passage encircled a central chamber containing a pit, two altars, and the scorched remains of two gnolls. A foot-long charred object caught Soveliss' attention and he retrieved it with his *mage hand*, discovering it to be a pre-spellplague wand.

They also discovered a strange area

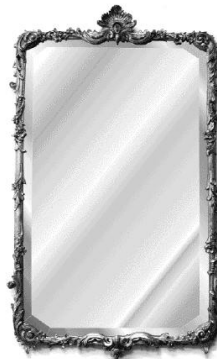
behind a half-raised portcullis, strewn with skeletons and ending in a door marked with the carved representation of Baphomet, demon lord of minotaurs. Tusky began to snuffle at another door, and the adventures moved to investigate.

Pushing open the door, they revealed a small vestibule ringed by heavy floor-to-ceiling curtains. Caelan gingerly pushed them aside and peeked through, promptly disappearing. Dek charged after him, and the dwarf vanished as well. Pieter followed more cautiously, but the same fate befell him.

The rest of the party hesitated. They were shocked when Caelan bolted back through the curtains, sorely wounded, and told them of a room full of mirrors. Studying the murals around the door, Bengi and Soveliss noticed depictions of worshippers covering their eyes to protect themselves from the mirrors' attacks.

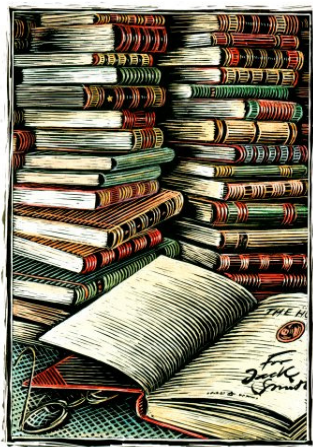
The remaining Heroes moved blind into the room and managed to defeat two exploding skeletons standing guard there. They discovered an altar bearing a wooden mask (the key to another part of the ritual), and found the trigger to release Dek and Pieter from the oubliette in which they had been trapped with a demented gnoll.

Hastily leaving the hall behind, the Heroes of Winterhaven reluctantly considered which of the Wells' other doors to try. Despite his grievous wounds, Caelan urged them to hurry. Time was no doubt running out.



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Rules Review & Party Matters



We didn't have terribly many rules questions this session, largely because the session was primarily spent exploring the Well of Demons and negotiating the mirrored hall.

There was a brief discussion about **healing surges** once we realised that the exploding boneshard skeletons had deprived Caelan of his last healing surge. Although healing sources will return you to 1hp if you don't have a healing surge to spend, they don't have any effect whatsoever if you are conscious at the time. So the party has no way of healing Caelan. Time for the kitty to hang back a little...

Other than that, there were no real issues that needed discussing during the session.

It would be remiss of me not to hog a little of this session's newsletter to wish a hearty welcome to our group's newcomers.

Welcome to the world, **Eve and Ewan**. Congratulations to their respective dads and a big thank you and congratulations to each of their respective mums. The next generation is on its way...



State of Play

Person	HP	HS	AP	Coins	Items	Other
Aleya	62/63	3/8	2			
Bengi	60/61	5/10	2			
Caelan	14/54	0/8	3		<i>Eager hero's tattoo</i>	
Dek	75/75	9/13	1			
Pieter	54/59	3/8	1			
Soveliss	46/46	4/7	3		<i>Pre-spellplague wand of chain lightning</i>	

Quote of the Session

"We head back and look for a gnoll, but otherwise boar's on the menu tonight"

- Tusky's fate hangs in the balance as the party ponders how much life energy must be sacrificed to gain entrance to the *Well's sanctum*.

Quest Tracker

Quest	Clues/Notes	Status
Gendar's Errands	Return the scepter to Gendar	Incomplete
A Dreadful Boar	Return Tusky to Ulthand Deepgem	Incomplete
Where's Paldemar?	Find Paldemar Spellweaver	Incomplete
Terrlen's Curse	Help Terrlen rid himself of Lycanthropy	Incomplete

