

# Return to the Fastness- Part 1

## From DQWiki

**Return to the Fastness** GM Jono Bean (Not to go to employers because I don't want my head cut off)

### Dramatis personae

- Michael: A hero and all round shady character. Wields light weapons and magics.
- Lucius: A depressed elf. A powerful mage.
- Clemintine: A chaos warrior and shapechanger who will tear your arms off.
- Ben: A warrior with heavy weapons and odd demeanor.
- Bart: A mighty and mighty ugly wizard.
- Erzabet: A fearsome Namer shadowed by a vengeful spirit.
- Sormina: Bart's heavy and the brains of the party. Also an orc.
- Boulder: A giant of perverse habits and an inspired tactician.

Day 1: It always seems so easy in the meeting room. The Employer:

Nobles from a ruling family in Kin Lu. They need their ancestors (or remains) returned quickly. They've been missing for 300 years but the current family heads have announced that they'll return soon. Since Kin Lu is a 'heads cut off for sneezing' type of society, they're under some time pressure.

They give us some cash and a sliding scale based on how quickly the ancestors are returned. And a time frame of 2 years, which is how long we've, been hired for.

They insisted on secrecy (or else heads come off) and no making of ancestors into remains if found alive.

Astrology is bloody useless as always and the Ancestors were last seen in the Fastness of Gwillion. For the uninformed this is a charming high mana zone nominally in Carzala where things with big teeth, claws, talons and magics lurch about devouring the unwary, And that's just the houseplants.

We get 8,500sp ea to start with and buy stuff and head off for the Fastness.

Day 3: Adventurers really are cheap.

We get to Venture a community built on a big rock. Since our party has deviants like Chaos Warriors and Elves we are only let into the underside. We run some errands for the local witch in exchange for some widgets (four tine nuts, some runed bowls and a restorative or two). The Witch wants a Harness of Elemental Control (don't we all) and in return will give a Wand of Adventurer control (must be made of gold).

She gives Ben a bag to give to Catherine in exchange for an amulet.

In the pub we find an orc who has captured two adventurers and so we buy them from him. I won't mention names because the circumstances of the capture and more importantly the price wanted for them is embarrassing.

We also learn of many of the charming denizens in the Fastness.

The Harpies: Ever popular and still going strong after all these years. The harpies work with necromancers and orcs to enforce a reign of terror and seem to have a spot in their dear twisted hearts for Seagate adventurers.

The King's Rapiers: Still out of work and being an annoyance. They wear tricorn hats and are skilled with a rapier. Apparently an excess of tricorn hats will keep them away.

Elementals who are uncontrolled guard the entrance to the Shaper's City. They still attack people using flying spells on sight. Do not fly in the Fastness unless your wings are au naturel.

Some depraved centaurs that smell of cinnamon. As we learn these are actually Chimeras. Bad news.

A dark coven of Wicca running weapons and stuff out of Gugnir's hope.

Feldo and Gros are still at large.

Katherine the Witch and slug breeder is still being her creepy self.

The Elven Necromancers (the one's that don't join the Guild) are at the land of the Geysers with their slathering undead minions. Working with the Harpies.

The Son of Ernie is at large and resentful of his dad being used as a gargoyle portable weapon. He doesn't restrict his foul temper to Feldo and Gros though. For the less knowledgeable Ernie was a basilisk.

Day 6: We get to Candlestone farm and enjoy our last civilized meal. Jedburg, a retired adventurer fills us up on current events. Everyone's zooming about looking for shaper eyes which if assembled will help make the Girdle of Elemental control which will get rid of the Elementals stopping entry into the Shaper's City.

Day 8: The insanity begins.

We reach the village of Amba, a prosperous village due to the fact that adventurer's pay in hard currency and are overcharged more than an Engalgon. Desperate to start our quest we speak to the Muffin Monster. To those who think I've been hitting the mushies it is a house spirit that can be attracted by fresh muffins. It advises us to see the Wise Owl, which can be summoned by scattering pine needles at the river fork while holding a bowl of air. It also tells us that if we want to get the necromancer we'll need the Sword of Necromancer Slaying from the 7th floor of the broken tower which naturally is broken at floor six. He advises us of the traps set by Katherine

(don't step on 3rd or 9th rock) and gives us all a magical turnip. Bite it and you have resistance from poison for a time.

Day 9: Here we are at Camp Grenada

Go to see Catherine the Witch. She informs us of the location of all the eye fragments. We have some, she has some, and Orson Wells has some, as do the harpies and the hydra. Because she's such a good friend and has *Damnum magnatum* we agree to get them for her. It's that or develop an appetite for insects and snogging princesses.

To help she gives us 10 potions which add to your fortitude for a season (+12EN). We use 8. Lucius also gets a slug to stick in some bodily orifice, which protects against mental backfires.

We then return to Amba and look for our eye fragments. This is fortunate because the harpies and their playmates came looking too. A big fight with a chimera with goblin riders ensues and Lucius dies, as does Boulder before Bart ensorcelled it and we win.

We then spend some time in the time-honoured pursuit of looting.

A small wooden case with rabbit feet inside. Some broken glass and eye frags. 7 copper waters (heal FT) 6 blue waters (heal EN) 4 gold rings (x6 invested R18 Dragon Flames) 3 Silver bottles with corks in them 2 Gold Balls (banish elementals) 3 green and sticky waters (aids casters)

We use one of the Gold balls to pay for resurrections and keep the rest.

11th Good goblins? Bad goblins? I'm the guy with R18 Dragonflames.

We go see the goblins as part of torturous plan to release Clemintine the water sprite. These goblins know all sorts of magical recopies including hero sandwiches (+6 EN/FT) and other more disgusting things. Gobbo is one of their best shaman and so we basically gobnap him and cart him about as a reference guide and odd job gob.

One of the first things they do is stick a crown of mage control on me (cursed), which we remove after some pain. Our next step is to visit the 7th floor. Why? I don't bloody know. I'm just the scribe. Since getting there involves drowning in a pool we go get some water breathing caps from Saurime and a Trident of speaking to Aquatics.

We then go to the 7th floor avoiding the big tentecled thing in the pool. There we meet Feldo and Gros. They are the ancestor dudes we're looking for. They (now) explain that the crown of control was so that a death curse wouldn't affect me when I kill the first King's Rapier. It's about now that they turn up, much fighting ensues, I get controlled and Lucius dies, again. Somehow we win and the remaining Rapiers say it's all right now and can we be friends since we were cursed. We agree to meet them in a few days but promptly forget about it.

Feldo and Gros, having spent the battle rolling cigarettes or something inform us that on the 15th a magical fish will swim up the river. If you eat a bit of it you become more powerful. The harpies plan to steal the fish (which is why they have Clemintine). Feldo and Gros want us to stop them. They can't come right now, as they need to do something for the shaper. Since he's cut off by all those elementals it looks like we should do that too.

13th Happily running on restoratives

We go see some cat people for a day for reasons unknown and then go see the Naga. Unfortunately she's been kidnapped and the bad gobos were waiting for us. We slaughter them to a gobbo and rescue the bait. Her name is Elizabeth an Aquilan nob. We then charge off through the portals to the ruined keep where the lesser harpies live. This is to prevent the Harpies from recruiting. We kill one and get away after being chased by undead through the tunnels. With the harpy bits and bobs we make a magic dust that will blind the harpies and sow distrust among them. The harpies also had some magical loot, which they got off some true devoes.

14th We must have slept at some point

We then decide to capture the fish and with the beaver's help make a fake fish that we stick the poison in. We skin change the fish into a duck so that it cannot be summoned. We zoom all over the damn place until we catch the magic fish and then endeavor to get it to the pool so it can die and we can eat it.

Of course everyone, their granny and their granny's cat is up at the pool waiting for the fish and burninating any enemies. After a brief but hectic battle with a patrol of undead we decide on sneaking down to the grove by the pool. We sneak almost all of the way until spotted by some guys who let off Blackfire in our vicinity. Boulder being the colossal imbecile he is yells out, revealing our position so that the harpies, minions and undead all learn where we are. We head underwater dodging gargoyles (who swim like rocks), kraken and other wonders of fresh water pools.

We summon Clemintine and rescue her in addition to getting the damn fish where it wanted to go and eating some of it and feeding most to the Kraken. We then leg it to Seagate using Clemintine's wave riding ability and fall asleep, secure in a job truly fouled up.

16th You'd think we were safe now.

We meet with our employers after getting dressed for the occasion and they say we have to help Feldo and Gros. Having decided we could travel through the lands of the dead to get to the shaper we politely ask our employers for a necromancer to cast Petite Mort on us in an area (standing stones), which will send us to the LOTD.

17th We want your spring onions, bowl of squid, help.

The necromancer turns up with his escort. His 1,200 strong escort of insane Kin Lu cut off your head by way of polite greeting warriors. After sorting out local problems we all jog to the Fastness. Fortunately Erzabet speaks the lingo and we don't get our

heads cut off, just the Necro's prime bodyguard. The escort kill a harpy, which ran across them.

18th Were off to see the wizard, dimity, dimity da.

The necro sends us happily to the LOD. We fight some bad guys and the recently dead harpy. We then leg it by a torturous series of encounters fleeing the rest of the dead harpies. We eventually get to the Shaper who explains things and that he'd really like some healers to come resurrect his wife and once the minor elemental problem is fixed then Feldo and Gros will be able to help him and everyone can go where they want to. The shaper then sends us back, the army goes home and so do we for a brief rest before the next bout of insanity.

19th Most of the party head to Kin Lu for training for many weeks.