

Dog Bothering

Spring 798

GM: Daryl Crosby

Players: Bridget, Michael Woodhams, William Dymock, Bryan Holden, David, Adam Tennent, Rosemary Mansfield

Characters: Lucius (Elf, E&E), Barth (Human, Monk, E&E), Sven (Nordman, Water), Dimagi (Elf, Air), Walks on Earth (Plainsman, Earth), Arkham (Human, Warlock), Kayseri (Woman, Illusion).

When: Spring 798, leave on 2nd Thaw and come home on 5th Seedtime

Where: on the Plane of Faeleph, in 'The Valley?', in the town of Tessali and places between.

What: Scubanub invites the previous party to return to the Valley for the Post-War Party. Only Dimagi is available, so he collects a party to join him at the Party. Scub also wants to organise a practical joke on Gwad Yitaped.

VIPs:

Scubanub, a Rabbitene (or Giant Rabbit) and employer of a previous party. A party animal, who loves practical jokes (and can't quite get the point about consequences).

Yaffid Kcud, a Giant Duck, and Scub's accomplice. A warrior.

Gwad Yitaped, a respected but stodgy lawman of the race of Giant Dogs.

Dan Iedo, Sherrif of Tessali.

Hugh Doo, Constabule of Tessali and assistant to Sheriff Iedo.

Prince Naeseem from Karnteal, a social butterfly and alleged Burglar of Tessali. He's also pretty good at clerking and counting taxes, etc.

Prior to leaving Seagate we shop for suitable joke supplies (itching powder, whitewash, aniseed, trap makings etc.). We leave on the 2nd of Thaw.

Barth, 'There should be sentries'

Dimagi (the elf), 'There's plenty, one every 100 years'

Watches: Walks; Arkham & Sven; Barth & Lucius, Kayseri & Dimagi.

We leave on the 2nd and travel through Stoneborro and forest. On the 4th we go through a tree to a forest and are met by Yaffid Kcud, a Giant Duck. It's Autumn here. At the nearest town, Najoro, we hire a cart and horses (from a Livery that ripped off the previous party - Dimagi & Sven hassle the proprietor to get a good deal this time).

Later that day we meet a Fortune Teller, who Walks mistakes for a whore. She sings our fortunes, Arkham is going to me a Gibbon. We camp near Gwad's house.

The following day we set traps & jokes in Gwad's house: itching powder in his bed and armour, whitewash in the flour, blight crops on his garden, aniseed all over. Then Sven does the ritual of Saturate Earth on the area of the house and garden. The house is now half collapsed. While setting things up a small fire starts in the thatch. We trace this to someone else's trap on the front door.

On the 6th we drive on into the Valley, arriving late afternoon. It's showing signs of the War, burnt houses and abandoned fields. They are just starting planting again, this late in the year they will have trouble feeding themselves this winter. There is a large area with people raising tents and pavilions, and a tall wooden tower. We are shown to a hill potted with many entrances. We are staying deep in the warren and we have been assigned young Rabbits as guides (one each). Good thing because the winding earth tunnels have few landmarks. We met the King and learn about Rabbit dancing. At the opening banquet we are seated as special guests and honoured. Party late.

The next morning healers help us recover. Today is the Fair with many side-shows. In the centre is a wooden tower. From this the Mechanician??? has apparatus and Walks volunteers to help demonstrate. Walks legs are tied to the apparatus and he is thrown off the tower. He falls and then close to the ground bounces high above the tower with fireworks. Extremely spectacular. Later on others jump off the tower with ropes around their feet, but they only bounce a little bit, not like Walks. We party late again.

On the 8th is the jousting. Barth does wonderfully for a young squire, winning his 1st two passes and loses his 3rd. On the 9th is horse racing, Barth wins his race. During the 9th and 10th we are also asking around for employment for after the party (actually we are bored out of our skulls).

'Why are we looking for a mouse? ?Cause he's smaller than the orcs'

The stories which surface during the party:

During the war one of the Mouse folk betrayed the Valley, selling secrets. No-one knows who it was and the Mouse folk are still looking askance at each other. The Mouse folk are about dwarf size.

The Orcs are stirring on the borders, as always. People here go fight the Orcs ?just ?cause?. Anytime a group of young men get bored and looking for trouble they get up a group and go orc bashing. No wonder the orcs aren't peaceable folk.

No one is hiring at the party but it is suggested that a few of the towns would have work for us if we go asking. We arrange with Tessali's sheriff Dan Iedo, to go to Tessali to investigate a string of tricky burglaries. We are also approached by Gwad's assistant Barthin, to investigate death threats & his demolished house. We agree to look but apologise for being pre-booked.

On the 11th we leave for Tessali. We pass Gwad's house on the 12th, and pause to check out the fire trap further, and met Gwad's gardener. The whole house has trails of 'fuse' powder everywhere. If the trap hadn't been set off in daylight it is likely the whole house would have burnt.

On the road we met Gwad, who is a very upright Dog. He also works for the Sheriff of Tessali, and he tells us 'behave' (but at more length) and to report to Hugh Doo when we reach town.

We pass by some orcs resting after a bashup with some other orcs. Another traveller warns about a tree down on the road. Investigate proves it to be an orc ambush. We sneak around through the forest and tell the guards when we reach town.

Arrive in Tessali on the 14th and the next morning identify ourselves to Hugh Doo and the Constables (what they call the town guard). During the investigation we are constantly accompanied by a Constable, and sometimes followed by one invisible as well. While they have hired us they don't entirely trust us, but it's mostly useful to have a Constable handy to identify us during the investigation. On the 15th and 16th we collect a whole lot of information about the burglaries, and visit a couple of the victims.

There have been 12 thefts in the last 2 months. The general pattern is that valuables go missing during the night while everyone is asleep, and frequently the theft is not noticed for several days. Other noticeable clues:

The stolen goods are always jewellery or plate, ie gems and or metal

Not everything is taken. In one house the dinner table was set but only four of the six settings and a couple of candelabra were taken. Frequently jewels are taken from jewellery boxes but the box is not emptied.

The burglar has never been seen or heard in the act, and nobody has been hurt.

Thefts are normally 5- 10 days apart.

The victims (and potential victims) are strangely confident that they will get their goods back, just as soon as the constables catch the thief. There is no expectation that the plate will be melted down, or the gems sold out of town.

There is an active thieves guild and they are getting their cut, but negotiations are being down at the highest level, and the thief is probably from out of town.

Astrology Readings: (courtesy of Arkham)

Who / Where / When (i)

A thief and a spy
Who it's hard to see
I tell you no lie
It's James from the sea

Sun for 24 hours
A Sun you don't see

2 days past
a night of plenty
2 days forward
night of empty

Who / Where / When (ii)

It may as well be
The Man in the moon
He won't be locking
Himself up too soon

Go to this place
Your thief to find
Along with his wealth
He'll broaden his mind

Jack be nimble
Jack be quick
No time for candles
Get over there quick

Other stuff we find out that has nothing to do with the burglaries:

Oran Meela, a local merchant, has been arrested for smuggling weapons to the orcs, after a bunch of cheap weapons were found in a grain cart of his. Later on they also arrest his two adult sons. Dimagi is sure that he is innocent and hypnotism seems to confirm this. The wagon was outside his house all night with no guard, so anyone could have hid stuff in it. There are political reasons why someone might stir up the orcs, but want a patsy to blame.

The local alchemist says the incendiary used on Gwad's place would normally only be available in small quantities, and wasn't made up in Tesssali. It would take about a month or so to make up the amount we found, but wouldn't be too hard to make.

We do some astrology readings to try and pinpoint the next burglary so we can stake it out. On the night of the 16th we stake out the Headmaster's house. But we've interpreted the clues wrong and another house (which also matches the clues) is robbed. We stay another night as this looks like a good prospect but no joy.

On the 19th we do more investigation in victims homes, looking for clues. We also check out the main gambling house. We notice that burglaries often follow a few nights after parties, so we start to take note of rich folk's parties. A foreign prince comes to our attention. He is invited to all the best houses and the younger rich widows are chasing him. Prince Naeseem of Karnteal is very fine sounding but no one has heard of his home country.

20th we go back on night shift, staking out a house that has had a party recently. Lucius has spell of locate on the Prince. During the night the spell showed him moving and then lost him completely for a little while (maybe a couple of pulses) and then found him again in totally different direction.

It is obvious that the Constables will not accept the Prince as a suspect, and some of the clues hinted that the thief is getting assistance from someone in authority. So the next few nights we stake out the block near the Prince's home, telling them we are not sure who will be robbed next, but this is the vital neighbourhood. A Constable accompanied us with keys to nearby houses.

On the 24th the locate spell indicated that Prince Naeseem had left his house by magical means, so we raced inside and waited for him to return. After 5 minutes or so he returned, appearing in the coat cupboard under the stairs; ie we didn't actually see him return.

We hauled him out of there and searched him, but he had nothing suspicious on him except a ring of teleportation. On searching the cupboard we found a concealed cupboard, with a bag of jewellery. There was a hell of a stink with the Constables with the Prince declaiming innocence, and us not actually having caught him 'red handed'. As we had suspected the local laws are quite strict about accusing nobility. The Sheriff interrogated us quite thoroughly and carefully, and came to the conclusion that the Prince was guilty but it couldn't be taken any further without concrete proof.

But he did put the Prince under house arrest.

We hung around for the next couple of days, mostly catching up on sleep and coming up with non-viable plans to get more proof. Eventually we gave up, collected our reward, and headed home.

We left Tessali on the 27th, arrived at the Warren on the 30th. We collected Scub and Kcud and returned back to Seagate, arriving home on the 5th of Seedtime. Scub and Kcud come back to Seagate with us (A friend makes the portal and I think they are one use in each direction).