

Session/Game: Starkpool-9 **Date:** March 2, 2025

Game 9: That Scorpion Made Me Pee Myself

Campaign Date: June 7-18, YN 1025

Characters:

Eagle Fletch, Scout/Fighting-man-3, Elf, Neutral, (Craig)

Squishy, Magic-User-Learned-4, Lawful (Bob)

Hektor of Sinxth, Man, Fighting-man-4, Lawful (Andrew)

Constance, Woman, Cleric-Militant-4, Lawful (Andrew)

Nymeris of Brant, Woman, Magic-User-Learned-5, Neutral (Quinton)

Balthazar, Man, Magic-User-Learned-4, Neutral, (Quinton)

Sven, Man, Scout-4, Neutral (Pete)

Mercenaries: Crossbow-A x40

Judge: Dave N.

LOG:

June 7, Starkpool City to Mountains

Earl Ronstudd of Sinxth was keen to uncover a route into the Land Unknown and decided to finance an expedition under the command of one of his trusty vassals to make an exploratory attempt. Therefore, Hektor of Sinxth gathered a band of six other adventurers in Starkpool City: his fellow Sinxth vassal Bishop Constance, Sven of Barlburg, Nymeris and Balthazar of Brant and two members of the Bortastic Company Eagle Fletch and Squishy, all supported by a band of mercenary crossbow men. They had heard rumors of a "Grand Gallery" somewhere in the caves, and even got some information from a blind beggar named Roast Beef, who had been there several months earlier (he lost his sight on the expedition from taking too many risks with Owlbear Punch). On the 7th they march up to High Shadow Cave (C11).

June 8, High Shadow Cave

The seven adventurers entered the caves. They took 3 of the crossbow men with them (more would make the party less likely to be able to move quietly), and left the remainder to guard their camp.

In the nicely tiled entry chamber of the caves were a band of 12 rock baboons, Nymeris, using her Staff of Command, and Squishy using an animal control potion gained control of 8 of the baboons, and the remaining 4 were quickly killed.

Sven crept forward to scout and traveled quite a distance down to chamber guarded by 4 wights, with a mystical set of tiles along the far wall. Sven, having approached unnoticed, returned to the main body. The wizards sent the baboons to charge the wights. While the baboons were unable to injure the wights, and 1 of the baboons was killed by them, their attack allowed Constance to get in position and turned the wights by divine power. The archers in the party managed to kill one of the wights as they fled. They scrupulously avoided the mystic tiles the entire time. The party waited for the wights to return and meanwhile found 3 +1 arrows in a pile of dungeon garbage. When the wights return, the party was ready for them and wiped them out quickly.

However, it was about this time that the control magic over the baboons expired and they turned on the party. Between cold steel and sleep spells, the baboons were quickly destroyed, but there was some seriously bad examples of sword-play in the fighting. Hektor dropped his magic sword twice and Sven damaged his sword in the fighting.

Collecting themselves, the party traveled deeper into the caves, sending Sven ahead to scout. At one point Sven spotted a giant scorpion in a room. Since he had arrived unnoticed, Sven thought he could easily kill the scorpion by surprise arrow shots. This turned out not to be the case, and although he wounded the beast, the scorpion managed to rush up to him. Nymeric saved the day by using her staff of commanding again to control the bug.

They sent the scorpion ahead of the group and proceeded farther inward. They found a treasure chest and a shaft leading downward. Everyone was getting all creeped out by the scorpion's antics and so Nymeris just had it leap down the shaft, landing with a distant but satisfying crunch. They retrieved 1500gp and a scroll of invisibility from the chest and then examined the shaft. Squishy determined that the shaft was more than 30' deep and there were peg holes from some rotted-away ladder system along the wall. They couldn't quite determine how deep it truly was. Hektor declared that there was no way they were going down the shaft and so they moved onwards.

Sven surprised 2 more wights in a corridor and withdrew, drawing the wights closer to the party. Constance turned the wights, who were then destroyed during their retreat. Thinking things over, the party decided to return to the surface to rest.

June 9, High Shadow Cave

They traveled into the cave again, finding a chamber with a locked door. This was the first actual door they had found in the entry level. When Eagle Fletch got the door open, they discovered that there was some sort of shrine behind it. The shrine was guarded by 2 huge, mystical ravens. The ravens were threatening to everyone except Fletch, Sven, Balthazar and Nymeris. These 4 entered the chamber, where Fletch and Sven each made a sacrifice on the altar, which the ravens eventually revealed to be in honor of the Earth Mother. Sven then stepped onto the dais behind the altar where the voice of the Earth Mother bade him ask any one question. He asked how to get to the Grand Gallery and she revealed that it lay at the bottom of the shaft that they had discovered already. At this point, the party decided to withdraw from the caves and go get supplies and equipment to explore the shaft.

June 10-12: Starkpool City and the Great Outdoors

The party traveled back to Starkpool City. There they purchased various pieces of equipment, including some rope ladders. Thereupon they returned to High Shadow Caves.

June 13: High Shadow Caves

Back at the shaft, Squishy cast a levitate spell and then an invisibility spell on himself and traveled down the shaft. He discovered that the shaft was 80' deep and there was a band of 17 Sleestacks camped out, eating scorpion meat in the room at the bottom.

Nymeris cast a Haste spell on the party and Hektor and the 3 crossbow men led the way down the shaft. They cut a hole in the sleestack lines allowing Balthazar, Squishy and Sven to drop down too. Hektor, under the haste spell was a rampage machine slaying many of them, despite himself taking a volley of crossbow bolts at one point. Balthazar used 2 sleep spells to hasten the Sleestack defeat. Two of the crossbowmen were critically injured, one requiring several weeks' recovery and the other losing a foot.

Pushing forward, the adventurers reached a long, broad hallway that clearly was the Grand Gallery for which they were searching. They spotted a Stone Giant named Biggums coming up the Gallery toward them. Despite Hektor's preference for leaving, the rest of the squad demanded to fight Biggums. It was Hektor who had to stand face to face with Biggums during the battle, unfairly enough, but Biggums may have been hung-over or suffering from Chuggins disease or Finster weevils, since he barley lay a hand on anyone. They killed Biggums at last, without serious casualties. The party searched Biggum's satchel which contained a further 1500gp and a magical crystal skull. At this point, they considered that the mission was accomplished and decided to head home.

June 14-18 Down to Starkpook City and beyond.

The expedition struck camp and returned to Starkpool City. Hektor paid Squishy and Fletch their signing fees (the rest of the adventures were acting at the orders of their liege-lords and so did not get a special fee). The 3000gp was split among the crossbowmen and all the adventurers except Hektor and Constance (who were arranging and financing the trip from their liege-lord's instructions). Hektor claimed the Crystal Skull and brought it back to Zap Hannigan in Port Sinxth. The party disbanded, returning to their homes, but Hektor offered to finance a return trip, hopefully to reach the Land Unknown, in July.

2 crossbow guys 1 out for weeks, 2nd lose foot
Find gallery and Biggums Hektor kills him
1500gp and crystal skull
Sven advanced