

Unsanctioned mission report: Leafy Greens & the roots of evil

This will be the first, but hopefully one of many, report I make for the heroes' guild. While unofficial, the actions we have taken and the discoveries we have made, are deemed of enough importance to me, Russel Sprout, to be worth reporting.

I will try to document our experience as accurately as possible. Notes found during our mission have been handed to the librarians. In this report you will find copies of what has been written down. The report is based on the experience of my fellow heroes and myself.

Initial meeting

While we were planning to head off together with Leafy Greens for the mission, Leafy Greens, a small sentient piece of shrubbery, had departed before us from the citadel. Even worse Ramiel Lightningstruck, for personal reasons, could not join us on our mission.

Being an unsanctioned mission, we could not look for another member to join us through official means. Luckily for us, Rain, an owlin walking on stilts, had managed to convince Rirra, a tabaxi, to join us in our endeavour by goading her into a bet. Claiming see would not last the night in the manor and betting 17 gold pieces for it.

Departing with Cain Enoch, a calm and collected human, Kaider Battle-Singer, a fully armed and armoured tower of a goliath, Rain, our most experienced member and owlin, Rirra Swiftrunner, a tabaxi of baffling swiftness and myself we headed out on the road towards Killtop Manor. Infamously known throughout Ausburg as one of the most haunted buildings. It was near sunset as we departed.

Leafy Greens and the wheelbarrow

It took not long for us to catch up with Leafy Greens. While I had heard stories of him being a long-standing member that had never completed a mission, I refused to let that cloud my judgement of his capabilities. That quickly changed though.

His species is completely unknown to me so far. None of the books I have read covered something similar to his liking.

Appearing to be a sentient piece of shrubbery standing at around 90 centimetres with glowing yellow eyes. How he sustains himself is currently a mystery to me. Be it through photosynthesis, taking up nutrients through his appendages or eating.

I must study him further to improve my current application of combining liveness and magic.



He was found in a complete state of awe by a flower. Debating to himself whether it was a common one in found locally or a poisonous one. Rain, however, had seen it before and was quick to inform that it was neither. Being a snowdrop flower instead. This answer had not sated Leafy though. As he quickly got distracted by a rock laying right next to it.

After some convincing we finally managed to get him to go towards the haunted manor. Running towards it while Kaider, Rain and Rirra followed. Cain decided it would be best to bring the wheelbarrow along in which I aided him.

Unwelcome greeting

We arrived at the entrance of the manor. The courtyard was a beautiful mess. The enormous tree in the middle of it had roots reaching all over and various species of plants covered the walls. I originally wanted to plan the most efficient way of searching the building in hopes of finding The Tomb of Foul Magics. The librarians wanted it recovered and indexed before anyone else finds it. Rirra was eager to explore the building and jumped ahead instead. Her infectious enthusiasm got the better of me and I followed.

Upon stepping into the courtyard, the roots and vines of the flora sensed our movement and grasped for our ankles to no avail. Upon close inspection, I realized it was devil's snare. Not necessarily a species of flora by itself, but a state plants get into after feeding off corpses. It is known for grasping its prey and holding onto them till they suffocate and die. Dropping the corpse on the ground to take in the nutrients.

Moving past the Devil's Snare and into the nearest corridor. A loud booming voice was heard throughout the entire manor. "GET OUT". I must admit, I initially didn't expect the house to be actually haunted, merely being rumours made by bored locals. This confirmed their story though. Preparing myself for the worst, I casted false life. Shoots began to sprout out from my wooden armour, protecting my most vulnerable areas. Throughout our stay, we were demanded on multiple occasions the leave the premises through various means of haunting.

Once I looked behind, it seemed that only Kaidar, who carried Leafy on his shoulders for safety, had followed us. Rain and Cain decided to check out the outer premise of the building before joining.

While we slowly passed through the corridor, Rirra heard a rustling noise coming from a room to the left of us and a girl's voice arguing from the floor above us followed up by a loud thump. Kaidar, seemingly unbothered by the frightening situation, asked if anyone was there. The only response was that of a door being slammed shut from upstairs.

The workshop with the mirror

Rirra, wanting to check out whomever or whatever was making those noises, quietly went up the stairs in the blink of an eye. The rest followed.

Passing through the hallway, we arrived at a small workshop. Looking around we had found a small note left behind on top of the forge of sorts. The following text is translated from Elvish:

Jasper, I have taken the book downstairs to the library. Please make sure I am not disturbed.

-Fuck off

While I was reading the note, Leafy had become engrossed with a mirror standing in the corner of the room. Seemingly being a big and fancy, but otherwise ordinary mirror, I decided to take a closer look. In it I saw a vast library, a garden filled with all the flora I could think of and a laboratory to top it all off. Excitedly I shared Leafy's discovery. A mirror that would show your deepest desires. This might have been my mistake though.

Once Kaidar had taken a look, he became entranced. A single tear streamed down his face as he fixated on the mirror. I tried to snap him out of it to no avail. Were it not for Cain holding a hand over his eyes, he would have stood there for far longer.

Just as I left the room, not wanting to leave Rirra alone in a haunted house. I heard screaming in a language I had not heard for years. One I had heard in the woods while demons chased after Merry and me. I could not hear a word from what was said though. Rain having seen a, what I can only assume to be terrible, image in the mirror, tried to shatter it to pieces with her dagger. The mirror merely got scratched though. Magical items have always been known to be way sturdier than their ordinary counterparts.

A mere physical touch from Kaidar shattered the mirror though, blasting him and Leafy with magical energy, wreaking havoc in their minds.

Doll ambush

At the same time as Kaidar was patching up Leafy from the psychic blast. Rirra our scout of the mission, was clearing out the room from which she heard the girl voice. Behind a curtain were 7 cribs containing dolls.

After further inspection, Rirra noticed one was empty. From above, the missing doll jumped down from the ceiling as 3 other dolls, since now identified as carrionettes by The Inquisition, started moving as well.

Hearing the commotion, the rest of the party ran into the room only to see Rirra surrounded by dolls with sewing needles trying to stab her eyes out.

It was a rather chaotic fight. Through grit and teamwork, we managed to come out on top. As Kaidar finished off the second last one with a mighty battle cry, Rirra managed to capture the remaining doll for interrogation.

From the doll we learned that they were created as experiments with little memories of their past if they ever had any. Their creator had made them deep underground. Nowadays he spends most of his time in the library downstairs,



the accuracy of that statement was rather unreliable. The dolls had not moved out of their room since they were put in there.

While we patched up our wounds from the battle, we could hear the booming voice again.

“The biggest regret that I have, is that I had not made my daughters from flesh instead.”

Using this information, we convinced the last remaining doll to point us towards the library downstairs and took it with us. Promising to find her old body if we found it.

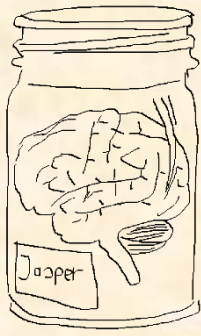
Books, brains and fur

As we went down the stairs towards the library. Kaidar saw something odd at the hearth in the hallway. A loose brick. Behind it was a key and a small sum of gold which we stashed away.

Upon trying to listen in on the door, the doll confirmed was to the library, all of us heard a loud noise that pierced our mind. From the looks of it, the door was enchanted so that whenever someone touched it, it would activate.

To avoid having that terrible noise blocking out our own thoughts again, I proposed to break the door down instead. To which Kaidar happily accepted. Smashing the door from its hinges with his warhammer.

To my disappointed, the library was not what I expected. It was filled with only children's stories and certainly not The Tomb of Foul Magics or any book of magical nature.



Who we did find or better what, was Jasper. A brain in a jar labelled Jasper with a note on top reading:

“Jasper, I have gone to the basement to test something with the strange new book I have found. I will be there for a few hours”

As we were about to look around for a way downstairs. A cat appeared from the hallway. Casting speak with animals, I crouched down to the cat's eye level in hopes of finding out any information about the basement.

Which appeared to be fruitful, he had been the housecat in the manor for at least quite a few years. Informing that his lousy owner went down the basement years ago and never bothered coming up again. Another thing of interest were the comings and goings of crimson cloaked figures who visited the basement regularly at night and leaving after about an hour had passed. The cat was also kind enough to point at the hidden basement trapdoor that we were standing right next to.

Fowl magic indeed

Leaving Leafy upstairs to guard the cat, we went down the rickety stairs one by one as we entered the basement. Just as Cain was last to go in, the stairs collapsed. Thankfully through his quick reflexes and acrobatics, he jumped down onto Kaidara's shoulders and remained unharmed.

Following strange clucking noises, we ended up in front of a locked door. Peeking through we discovered the dead body of the presumed house owner. Holding onto the book we sought to recover. The problem was that he was surrounded by undead chickens.

Kaidar wanting to leave the door closed till we explored the rest of the basement, put the key in the keyhole for later use. What we were not aware of then, was that the key he had picked up was of arcane nature. Dissolving and opening the room before we could react.

Rirra, ever the initiator, sprinted into the room with feline agility, picked up the book and left the room again in the blink of an eye. Together with Rain, I tried to follow up on her. Closing the door and jamming it shut with a wooden spike I had grown out of the doorframe.

The door did not hold up for long though, breaking down and releasing the undead chickens. With his massive shield, Kaidar managed to stop them going past him while the rest took pot shots at the chickens. While he did buckle under the flurry of blows from the undead, he did not yield nor show any fear. Thanks to him, the rest managed to stay relatively unharmed from their attacks as we finished them off.

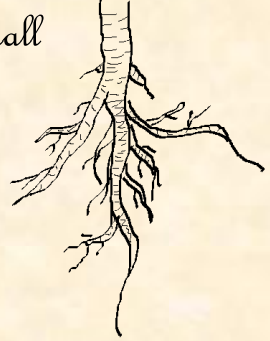


Once the last undead had been slain, the magic of the place calmed down, the carrionette stopped moving and the haunting stopped altogether. I can only hypothesize that by damaging the madman's experiments, we had weakened the haunting energy from this place enough to let it fade away.

Finally, we had obtained the Tomb of Fowl Magics. I warned the other party members that we should not read the book before it had been indexed by the librarians. Upon closer inspection I realized that there must have been a communication error. The title of the book was "The Tomb of Fowl Magics" instead of Foul. Containing spells to summon chickens, make cocking sounds, create a rooster alarm and summon a heroic feast consisting of chicken and even more chicken.

Roots of evil and the morning dawn

Skimming out the rest of the basement, I noticed a small hole from which a pulsating red light came. Squeezing through the tiny entrance, I saw the roots of the devil's snare. Their extraordinary way of grasping their victims and drawing energy from their corpses fascinated me. I cut off a small part of the roots. With enough experimentation, I might be able to apply their properties to my own livewood gear.



Returning from the small cavern, I joined up with the party and explored the last room remaining in the basement. It was a large room that was mostly empty besides a few pillars. From the looks it, it might have been used as a gathering room in the past. Thinking back about the crimson cloaked individuals the cat mentioned, it wouldn't be unlikely for them to use it for secret meetings. With the racket we had made in the house, they probably would have avoided the place tonight to avoid getting compromised.

We went up the stairs to regroup with Leafy and the cat, waiting out the last hours before the sun went up again. As we gathered at the entrance of the manor, Rain tried to push Rirra out of the Manor in order to win the bet. She should have known better than to test the reflexes of a cat as Rirra managed to dodge out of the way. As the sun slowly set, Rain gave the coins to Rirra, and we headed off back to the heroes' guild.

