

Session/Game: Eldritch Earth: 5 Hacks Deep
Episode 21: Darker and Deeper

Date: February 28th, 2021

Campaign Date: September 1st, 1130 AD

Characters

Sean the Irish Bastard Irish, Templar - 3 (Bob)

Templar sergeants Pierre, Raymond, Enri, and Jacques (NPCs)

Wulfric of Ascalon, English Knight - 3 (Dave N.)

Young Penda (NPC)

Retainers Edward, Ethelric, and Osmund - Sentinels of Shepherd's Hollow (NPCs)

Father Calen Kildare, Irish Cleric - 2 (Quinton)

Welshie (aka Tom Jones), Welsh Ranger - 2 (Jason)

Lady Rousel Adele Osouf, English, Knight - 1 (Marlon)

Cai Tysilio, Welsh, Assassin - 1 (Toby)

Judge: Andrew Smith

September 1st, 1130

Father Kildare continues to struggle to keep a congregation which limits the amount of tithes the church may collect. This looming threat and lack of enthusiasm has prompted Kildare to do a little snooping. He has found that there is at least one family who seem to be incorrigible ringleaders and demonic servants. The White family have recently done their best to make it clear that the church is the enemy. In one case, they beat the youngest son of the Walker family for attending church. In another, the two White sons threatened to burn all the property of the Icelandic Einar family to cinders. Their barn is located near to the "Wet" cave in the Eastern hills and features a barn that is clearly built on top of a crumbling Atlantean foundation. Reeve McNasty directs his housecarl and his men to investigate.



In the village, they meet Chonk. He directs the party to some folks who have some good gossip on the Whites. Mildred, the matriarch of the family is a true martyr for her children Hugo, William, and Ella. Hugo is a bully, while William is more of a schemer. Ella is a lovely young woman who has broken the hearts of some of the young men of the village. The elder White himself is a miracle. A few years ago it was thought he would never walk again following a freak accident, but he's managed to get on his feet again. They have two servants Birch and Shaw who help tend their flock along with sheepdogs Lightning and Thunder.

Led by Sean the Templar and Wulfric son of Wulfric, the group approaches the White farm. There is a barn and a farmhouse. A young woman works outside hanging laundry. The group detain the young Ella White, a lovely young woman with creamy skin and long, dark hair. Father Kildare determines that she is infected with corruptor demons. After an impromptu exorcism, Ella is led away by the Sentinels of Shepherd's Hollow.

Sean directs the templar sergeants to inspect the barn. Inside, thousands of sets of beady eyes stare back from the shadows. The sergeants leave, but later they would find a suspiciously abundant number of milk jugs and paraphernalia for a shepherd. One would think that they run a dairy farm.

Leaving the sergeants behind to watch for any of the shepherds' return, the Reeve's men enter the farmhouse. It appears to have been deserted quickly. Daily chores are discarded and left. Moving a rug reveals a trapdoor. The heroes climb down a ladder led by Cai, but immediately hear the scuttle of little feet as if insects or rodents were fleeing the light. The assassin immediately identifies these monsters as Atlantean rat-scorpions, compound-eyed vermin with a poisonous stinger.

They descend, and find a worked stair that leads farther down. In the darkness in the passage to the North they see the reflection of thousands of tiny, beady eyes shining back from the darkness. The group continues down the tight, worked staircase that winds down another twenty-five feet or so.

They emerge in a natural cavern about thirty feet across or so. The walls are pockmarked with mouse-sized holes. Tight passages extend three ways, one of which is half-collapsed. An open pit in the floor curves fifteen-feet down. The group believes that the White family may have just slid down this vertical passage into the pool of water below. The chittering of the rat-scorpions grows. As the heroes flee back up the stairs, they begin to emerge from the tight passages and pockmarked walls. Their cacophony crescendos as the group flees from the house.



Next, the party descends into the “Wet” cavern. It is little more than a collapsed stone spring house in a nearby hollow, but the party realizes that there is more to it than they realized. The rushing water reveals a wooden altar to some sort of nature spirit that grows in the trees amongst a tall obelisk. They move on and fight a number of undead skeletal corpses. Once destroyed, the party sees a statue that depicts a goat-footed beast with several mouths topped by branch-like tentacles. The stone door beyond is locked, and features a giant keyhole. Sean manages to locate a secret passage, and the party continues on.

They destroy a few more mindless undead before encountering a larger statue. This time, it appears to be an insectoid monstrosity, emerging from an egg while cracking its own bloated corpse open to reveal a horde of bloodthirsty young of its own. The group continues to a passage that features six demented columns. Cai touches the Column of Aging which appears to steal years off of his lifespan¹. Father Kildare touches the Column of Blindness². Sean begins to break the facades off the columns but not before Lady Osouf touches the Column of Fortune³ and the Column of Death⁴.

The party proceeds and finds a large, shallow pool filled with a purplish-white kind of milk⁵. Father Kildare collects a sample and the party continues on. They are confronted by two monstrous demonic forms. They look similar to the tentacled beast with hooves and mouths, but more streamlined and predatory. They manage to shake Wulfric before being crushed to paste after a close battle.

Four more undead warriors, decked out in the mouldy rags that once were perhaps Atlantean finery attack. They too, are dealt with easily. The Reeve’s men find the discarded skin of Elder White. It is odd, and they determine that perhaps the being they thought was White is not at all what they think it is.



¹ Column of Aging - You instantly age twenty years. This is a permanent one-time effect.

² Column of Blindness - You lose your eyesight in light, but gain darkvision in pure darkness. You return to normal after six months.

³ Column of Fortune - You are blessed by the hand of fate! You gain 2 points in a randomly determined ability. This occurs immediately, and is a permanent one-time effect.

⁴ Column of Death - You see your own death. For the next six months, you gain +1AC against all attacks except those from undead. Against undead the effect is instead -4AC and you must make a save or be Frightened. After six months, both positive and negative effects fade.

⁵ The Dark Mother’s Milk - This white-purple liquid cures the drinker of all non-magical diseases and physical ability damage and penalties. The drinker gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength and Constitution for one week, but accepts 1D4 corruptor demons in the process.

The heroes begin to hear chanting from deeper within the underground passage. They proceed with caution. They find a fleshless man, clearly the creature that once was or posed as Elder White calling forth a formless demon from a huge greenish pool of slime. He exclaims "Iä! Shub-Niggurath!" There is the roll of thunder, and a massive creature of hooves, mouths, and tentacles emerges from the amniotic basin. The fleshless man begins to milk this beast. He pulls at the teats below the hooved legs, thick as mossy tree trunks and collects the purplish milk in a wide basin.

The heroes attack. Already shaken by the monstrosities, Wulfric is frightened by the hideous beast. Father Calen's magic affects it, and Sean's attacks drive the skinless conjurer from the summoning chamber into a secret chamber. Cai and Lady Osouf are knocked unconscious by the unholy beast's tentacles and magic from the skinless conjurer. Wulfric manages to cut off the conjurer's escape and kill it, and against all odds Welshie hits the tentacled monster with hooves the size of stumps twice through its center of mass. The arrows tear through the beast and it collapses. Nearly as quickly as it was summoned, it begins to decay just as if it had never been more than a collection of logs, brambles, and vines.

Epilog

The heroes then recover a number of treasures from within the cave complex and below the house. They never find any sign of Mildred or William White. Father Kildare performs an exorcism on the farmhands Birch and Shaw after killing a furious Hugo White. The Whites' entire flock and the two sheepdogs Lightning and Thunder are put down when it is discovered that they are naught but rabid beasts. All the bodies are burnt to cinders in a massive pyre overseen by Sean. Father Kildare's church services begins to grow naturally from that day forward.

Treasures

An Almanack of Practical Mortis
Pleiades Fragments
Revelations of the Kharon Cult
Splendid Shadow
The Hyperboread

Ten Arrows of 1000 Barbs
Mace of Fear
Corselet of Venus

Atlantean Prosthetic Eye
Illumination Rod x 30
Bar of Olichalcum - 2500gp
4 x Spill-Proof Cup
12 x Heated Spoons
8x Folding Stools

4,000 gp in coins

250 gp art objects:

Brass mug with jade inlay

Silk robe with gold embroidery

A small wall painting of the sister of El-Cid and a solidly-built youth. The predominant colors are light grey and green-brown. It is in excellent condition.

A small drawing of a horse and a crossbow on the road. The predominant colors are

pale gold and grey. It was done in a very plain style. It is in great condition.

A rather small drawing of a magpie. The frame is made of teak. It was done in an exotic style. It is in good condition.

A small redwood statue of a lynx.

500 gp art objects:

A medium-sized fresco of an oak tree and a ship. It was done in an archaic style.

A somewhat large mosaic of a raven and an eagle. It was done in an old-fashioned style.

A small painting of a child bleeding from the stump of their arm. The predominant color is dark red. The frame is made of black pine. It was done in a gloomy style.

A rather small pastel painting depicting a message involving a tall bandit and a hammer. It was done in a gloomy style.

A very small painting depicting a mystery involving an arrogant sculptor.

A rather small wall painting of a dagger. The predominant colors are blue-violet and grey-green.