



For Your Garden

The

Poodle Mulch

Progress Report

July 10, 2021

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Issue LIV

After arriving at Onthgeloom and discovering that the mysterious Tarkoff tower was nearby, the party decided to get some lunch before heading out. In the tavern where they had gotten a room, they found Kirishaam dead on the bed with a note saying that he had been recalled by his master because his presence with the party was causing them undue attention. Squirk shrugged and disintegrated the body. Bye Kirishaam.

The Misfits headed into the mountains with the intention of finding Tarkoff and asking for his help in transferring the consciousnesses of lycan-diseased people into non-tainted bodies, namely a Boreoan clone body before it had been infused with knowledge. Their second request was to help Andromeda get back home to Forestria. Thirdly, they wanted him to help transfer Dolly's consciousness into a real body.

On the road, they were passed by four robed and barefoot men hurrying back toward Othgeloom. Further up the road, they found a priest of Grothkele injured and down in the bushes. The man's name was Rocker, and he had been attacked by (whom he claimed were) Gharan-Dis followers. They had claimed that since his god wasn't listening to the warnings of their god Gharan-Dis, they would cut off his followers' ears, which they had done to Rocker.

Being the nice fluffy do-gooders that the Misfits are, they healed Rocker and helped him back to his temple in Onthgeloom. There, they were thanked by the high priest before being wined and dined. The Misfits had earned themselves some allies, and baby, they'll need all the allies they can get.

The next day, the party moved back into the mountains and eventually came to a sad shack. Out front rocked an old man named Rosco, a kindly gent who fed the party some apple pie and friendly advice not to proceed up the path and engage Tarkoff. The party politely declined his advice and went anyway. As if they would have given up. HA!

At some point on the path, a flaming blue skull appeared and announced that in order to meet with Tarkoff, they had to pass three challenges. The first was a chessboard. The skull greeted the knights and told them that they had to move across the board correctly. Noctis was the first to realize that he had to move as if her were a knight chess piece and made it across. The rest of the party followed and the first challenge was completed.

The second challenge involved a 5-line riddle and 5 androsphinxes. Each sphinx had to be defeated to get one of the lines. With all of them defeated, the party had to say the riddle in the correct order of lines and give the correct answer. They succeeded (eventually) and completed task number 2.

The final challenge involved moving across a field of swirling sand. Some of the party members fell asleep upon entering the mild storm, leaving the others to fight some angry earth elementals. Squirk did a great job of using her magical abilities to wake up most of those who had fallen asleep. Eventually, the battle was won, and the party earned an audience with Tarkoff at his tower.

In the tower, they met a white-haired gnome named Tarkoff and a strange man named Oloben Caz, whose face was streaked with a strange pulsing bluish color. The party explained what they wanted from Tarkoff, who became increasingly interested in what they had to say.

After swearing the party to secrecy, Tarkoff went on to drop the illusion covering him to reveal a mechanical, roughly humanoid construct. He admitted that, like Andromeda, he was from another world, one of many that exist in the prime plane. His world was called Corothka, a place with no magic and more of an industrial evolution than Irith.

Tarkoff explained that medical technology in Corothka allowed people with missing or damaged body parts to gain the use of mechanical add ons, powered by an element of power called Vaikirium. People with mechanical body implants were called Biostructs. Some people, whose bodies had failed them completely, were able to transfer their consciousnesses into fully mechanical bodies called Constructs.

Tarkoff said that his body had failed from a disease and was wasting away. Without the money to afford a completely construct body that resembled a normal person, he was forced to adopt a very basic and unappealing construct body. Determined to get a "normal" body, and with the help of his friend Oloben Caz, he broke into a military institute to steal some materials he could sell for the money he needed. He was discovered and had to flee to avoid capture. Desperate, he fled into a lab and dove into a big round portal. He found himself transported to Irith. Unfortunately, it was a one-way ticket.

Tarkoff went on to say that he began researching portals on Irith and how they worked. Along the way, he found information leading him to surmise that the gods are actually a race of eldritch titans who came from another world. They had come to Irith to shape it in their image. It seems that some of the titans were actually terraformers whose job it was to bring magic to Irith while establishing portals leading to the other worlds on the prime plane. He also said that the gods then betrayed their titan brothers and sent them through one of the portals and banished them to another world.

According to Tarkoff, there is a place nearby called the Labyrinth of Gates, where portals leading to each world existed. Each gate is ringed by 50 runes created by the titans. Each gate has a 25 rune combination that supposedly opens the portal to a specific world. But in order to activate the gate, the party will need a pentacontagon, a 50-sided key that will be used to activate the combination and open the gate.

Tarkoff showed the party the combination that he was able to put together for opening the portal to Corothka, but that's all he has. He told the party that they needed to find a lexicon that contains all combinations for all gates, including Forestria.

The professor indicated that if Lucieth could bring him a Boreoan clone body that had not been infused with knowledge and personality yet, he could do his work and test whether he could transfer a consciousness into it.

So, the party made their decision. First, they decided to head for Boreoa and seek the leader to speak with them about the clone bodies. Afterward, they would meet Oloben Caz at the Labyrinth of Gates. There, they would tour the labyrinth and then meet Voracianus, the demi-god son of the god Ardru. They would probably need to get past him to get the key and the lexicon.

Looks the lives of the Misfits just got a wee bit more complicated. Can they handle the challenge? Probably not.

