

Session Three Summary (St. Patrick's Special)

The party awakens in Aiden's Pub after a restful night and steps out into the bustling city streets. Almost immediately, they spot a mysterious man standing in a doorway, bearing the crest of Stolgeheim. His eyes are clouded and smoky as he silently observes them. Shushuh approaches, asking why he's staring.

The man introduces himself as Bran, a deacon of the local church. He says he foresaw the party's arrival and recognizes from their demeanor that they've endured much. He invites them into his incense-laden home, adorned with the symbol of a two-headed eagle clutching a serpent. Bran inquires about the fall of Winenut, asking if the rumors of its wickedness were true. The party's reaction surprises him, and he cynically remarks that the Stolgeheim militia should make themselves useful there.

Bran warns of an impending war and unsettling reports of fairy sightings. He reveals that the court alchemist received a letter from Deckard Maymus, foretelling the party's arrival and their potential to aid the city. He urges them to meet High Bishop Peadraic, a revered yet merciful leader. Bran hands over a stamped letter of passage for the evening meeting.

Meanwhile, Othokent reviews his red-stamped passport, which grants him a small trading booth. He learns that alcohol is taxed at 10%, and failure to pay taxes is punishable by death—by being thrown from a high tower. The marketplace bustles with vendors, and non-human merchants are monitored more heavily by guards.

Attempting to ease surveillance, Othokent offers a guard a beer, who hesitates but ultimately declines. Joee notices the guard's polished armor, a sign of pride and professionalism. Tsemin sends a raven to distract the guard with blaring horn noises. The tactic works, and the guard accepts the drink—only to be immediately scolded and removed by a superior officer. Othokent's booth is now unguarded.

By day's end, Othokent earns two silver and four copper, dutifully paying two copper in taxes. He mischievously rigs the coins to emit a shrill, constant screech, leaving the baffled tax collector none the wiser.

While Othokent works, Shushuh browses the market, questioning vendors about their wares. Half-orcs peddle bones, while dwarves sell beer and ore. Joee and Tsemin plot a heist to steal a rare spell component—a gilded acorn. Tsemin wild shapes into a spider to sneak in while Joee creates a diversion. Shushuh adds to the distraction by feigning drunkenness and engaging the shopkeeper in an unusually compelling conversation. The heist succeeds.

That evening, the party climbs the tower at the center of Grey Keep, presenting Bran's letter to gain entry. They pass a grand door etched with the tale of a boy enslaved by pirates, who later returns to convert his captors to the faith of the new gods.

Inside, they meet High Bishop Peadraic, robed in ornate vestments and carrying a shepherd's hook. His part-elven features are unmistakable. He expresses sorrow over Winenut's destruction and asks for the party's account of the event. Before business, he shares his own story:

Once a farmhand, he was kidnapped by pirates and enslaved in a distant land. Over time, he learned their language and eventually escaped, guided by divine voices to the coast. After returning home,

he devoted himself to the new gods and sought to spread their message in Braelendr, comparing their trinitarian nature to the three leaves of a clover.

Peadraic asks what the party seeks. Tsemin explains their mission—to recover a vital artifact using ancient tomes. Peadraic agrees to help, saying a tome lies in a nearby elvish shrine, but asks a favor in return: to escort him safely to reestablish peaceful relations with the druids, whom many wish to attack. Peadraic resists violence, believing in conversion through diplomacy.

The party returns to Aiden's Pub. Aiden, noticing their visit to the High Bishop, offers them a free room. The local pimp from a previous encounter gives them a cold glare but does nothing more.

The next morning, they meet Peadraic at the city gates. He wears humble clothing for the journey. Though the carriage is uncomfortable, the party endures it, sharing stories and receiving the bishop's wisdom along the way. After a day's travel, they reach the forest's edge, where six druids sit in a circle around a fire.

One greets Peadraic: "Ah, old Peadraic. Have you finally come for us? It was not we who burdened you, but Orla, the witch-sorcerer of Cathbad." Peadraic affirms his peaceful intent.

The druids reveal troubling news: someone has broken into the crypts and awakened Cathbad's spirit, potentially using the ritual circle to resurrect the old gods. They ask the party if they serve the old or new gods. Neutrality earns the druids' trust—they hope the party can bridge both worlds.

The druids mention a weapon—the Stave of Poison, a rot iron spear that harms fae and lies atop the Tower of Vines in the cursed woods. If obtained, it should be cast into the eternal fire to seal away fae magic. The tower, however, is guarded by ancient magicians. The party, wary of the druids, listens carefully as the druids distance themselves from Cathbad, emphasizing not all druids are like him.

By mid-afternoon, they reach the tower. Two guards stand watch, clearly not of the same druidic faction. Joee throws "feel-good" darts to impair them, and combat ensues. During the fight, Shushuh is decapitated, revealing her warforged nature as wires and mechanisms spill from her neck. The party wins, sparing the guards' lives. Othokent reattaches Shushuh's head—barely functional, but enough to continue.

Inside the tower, vinelings swarm them. Fighting their way through, Joee reaches the top with the help of a sanctuary spell and retrieves the Stave of Poison. The guardians inform him that the weapon will not harm the bearer unless used with malicious intent. Joee passes the test, unaffected.

Two days later, the group returns to the druidic circle. The snake cult begins the ritual to resurrect Cathbad. Peadraic warns them to act quickly. As the flames rise, Joee leaps from a tree and plunges the Stave into the fire.

The results are immediate: the fire vanishes, the stones around the ritual circle crack and fall, and magic is banished from the area. Though Cathbad had been released, the ritual's disruption prevents his return.

The party escorts Peadraic back home. As they part ways, they notice a final carving on the bishop's door—Peadraic casting snakes out of Braelendr, a symbolic end to a long journey.