

WHITE HAND

Source Unknown

My Dear Lord Gradion,

You had requested that I research the matter of that group of heroes known as The White Hand, especially as it is pertinent to our present situation. Such research is rendered difficult by the mass of rumour and spurilous detail which grows up around any popular tale. I have however, made a breakthrough.

I have, at personal risk and expense, been able to obtain a copy of the diaries of the group's personal bards, chiefly Lorac himself. Although I doubt the claim that these are the original manuscripts, I have reason to believe that they are an early copy. Although they surfaced in an entirely different part of the world, the early entries agree closely with a set of books which surfaced in Tareg. Although much controversy revolves around the authenticity of the Tareg Diaries, I am now convinced they are genuine.

I have instructed my most trusted servant, Hallon, to transcribe a copy of these diaries for you along with my notes.

Ever your servant,

Sydylus

FOREWORD

The White Hand has its roots in a group of adventurers from the country of Tyglas, which lies northwest of the Federation. Tyglas had been a part of the Federation, however had revolted. The split had its origins in religion. Tyglassian humans worship the Ukko pantheon and do not acknowledge the Dahgdha, whose pantheon predominates in the Federation. The first date recorded in the diaries is April 24, 1101 Year of the Federation. This puts events a few months before the outbreak of civil war in Tyglas between the Tyglasian ruler the Ri Lukra and Lord Rath the Hiissi worshipper.

The first diaries make reference to the cities of Iatanor (the Tyglassian capital), Port Corvor and Canvale.

It is difficult to find details on the lives of all the original members of the band, but some have come to life. The party grew up around two priests of Mielikki, Stenn Morgan Tremoth and the druid Bjonri Arik, who dominated the early leadership (such as it was) of the party, mostly because priests are held in such high regard in Tyglas. Both Bjonri and Stenn were half-elven and at least Stenn had been raised by elves. The two were soon to be joined by Stenn's half brothers Sven, the author of the first diary, and Prothus, the warrior elf who was at this, time, as yet an unknown. By the time Sven meets his brother, two more members have attached themselves: Throrn, a dwarven fighter and Grizelda the gnome warrior and illusionist, also at the beginning of her career. Lorac the Bard and Magnar the Ranger were not with the group at the outset.

DIARY OF SVEN

I am Sven Yahoo, priest of Ahto, student of Crux and apprentice to Arkelus and son of Tremoth the sailor. My mother died when I was 6. My father left me with Arkelus and Crux when I was 10. Crux left me last year. Arkelus died 3 weeks ago and I am

alone. I have a half-brother, Stenn, but I do not know him well. I have been told that he has become a priest of Mielikki

Since Arkelus died, Ahto bless him, I've decided to search for a new Father and Master. I'll head towards Iatanor on the East Coast, possibly finding a teacher on the way. I should be alright travelling alone. After all, Crux trained me as a warrior. I may be rusty, but I'll practice on the way.

Apr 24/01

I reached a halfling town, Boda. By Ahto they're short! I meant to spend by remaining few coins on a bed, but met up with Stenn. There were some other people with him. An unusually dour looking elf was introduced as Prothus. He is Stenn's half brother on his mother's side (Ethelia). Stenn and I are half-brothers through our father, Tremoth. With them was Bjonri, a druid and fellow priest of Mielikki whom Stenn met at their temple. Bjonri, like Stenn, is a half-elf. They also had with them two short individuals, a dwarf by the name of Throrn, and a gnome by the name of Grizelda. The only full human in the group was a fellow by the name of George. Alas my few coins I spent on brew drinking with them.

A portly halfling, Tom, asked us to assist him in some family problems. Someone, he thought, had been sabotaging his farm; a barn burnt down, wine stolen and his cows painted green! He wants us to catch the culprit. He suspects his neighbour is responsible. We're going to stay at his place. We're all in desperate need of money.

George, the human, is apparently the torch bearer for Bjonri. Odd that a half-elf, especially a Druid, would want a torch bearer.

Apr 25-28/01

We've been looking around the farm and some surrounding area, which is dreadfully dry, and figured out enough to get paid for our efforts.

A tower on Tom's property has long fallen, now he is using the stone blocks to re-build his barn. However, the stone giant (as big as halflings are small) moving the blocks was accidentally spilling dirt down an unused (dry) well centred in the tower ruins. The well, however, is the home of a leprechaun (a very short underground creature with an apparently playful disposition and a taste for wine) that painted the cows in vengeance.

The wine was stolen by Tom's daughter Berry who was trying to impress her secret love Sammy, the neighbours son. In turn, the barn was burnt down unintentionally by Sammy who had dropped his pipe in the hay while wooing Berry at their secret rendezvous point in back.

We've been paid 50 gold pieces and given a room for 4 days! I think I gained ten pounds with all the food provided.

May 1/01

We left today for Boda with the lovebirds. Bjonri helped them to escape since Sammy's father intended to ask for the stone blocks as a dowry, Bjonri felt it best financial matters shouldn't interfere with romance.

In Boda we met a minstrel, Telgray. He accepted our offer to travel together, his music is good but monotonous--no, aggravating, since his selection is limited.

We're heading East, to the ocean!

May 2/01 The Keep of Brandberg Ness

While preparing to bed down for the evening, a somewhat strange individual blundered into our camp. He told us that Lord Ness wanted us to play Spottle with him. Although both Ness and the circumstances are suspect, we accepted his offer to come to Lord Ness' keep.

We arrived and almost immediately were invited to the gaming table. Spottle is a dicing game. I was winning a bit, though the odds were against it, and noticed that any suggestion of leaving brought bribes from Ness to stay! There were two odd players, a man that turned into a boar at midnight--a wereboar I believe--and a lizard-man.

The lizard man took advantage of the 'formal challenge' aspect of the game wherein a gripe can be settled in combat. He challenged Stenn to single combat. Stenn was a trained fighter (he'd been taught by the ranger Morgan), but after awhile the lizard-man got the better of him. The lizard-man was poised to deliver a life-ending blow when Ness declared the combat at an end. A tense moment followed before the lizard-man acquiesced. The second battle took place between the lizard-man and the wereboar. During this fight a number of wild boars came to assist!

When we were, or at least I was, ready to leave some (3?) hobgoblins (tall, ugly creatures) came into the keep. From the ensuing conversation it became apparent that Lord Ness had intended to sell us as slaves, but the hobgoblin leader Lord Kooz referred to us as "Thoal Fodder." Lord Ness claimed that this was not part of the agreement and threatened to use his "statue" against the Hobgoblins. Apparently he needed a key to operate it and he fumbled vainly in his bag for it.

Battle erupted between us and the hobgoblins. Somewhat distraught, we smited them all. Although the hobgoblins were tough, there was one creature, the Thoal, an undead hobgoblin whose wounds healed even as we fought it. Quite the challenge, or so I hear, for I dropped early.

In thanks and apology, Brandberg Ness gave us treasure and to each of us a ring, which he said would identify us to his friends throughout Tyglas. Prothus received a sword. It looks very fine. It has a copper handle in the form of a dragon's head. Prothus almost drooled over it.

May 3/01

We're still recovering. I'm starting to train George to use his torch holder as a staff since he's willing to help us out in battle.

May 4/01

After leaving the keep, I remembered we still had the keys. I insisted on returning them. Prothus and Throrn scowled at me, saying it was a waste of time. Stenn seemed cross with us for arguing. After a heated argument and a period of chaos (back and forth to the keep) it turned out to be impossible to get in to give the keys back. Both the elf and the dwarf looked very smug. We left the keys by the keep.

May 5/01

We travelled a good distance today. I had it easy using a Mount for a while. While on watch that night we were attacked from the trees by four more hobgoblins using arrows. After everyone roused from sleep, Prothus, Throrn, Stenn and Grizelda (the idiots!) chased the hobgoblins blindly, singly. Bjonri hung back. We took more than a fair share of damage but came out on top, Ahto be praised.

May 6/01

We came accross a large fort, Fort Armak, and were admitted to the guest house. There are many elves, humans and dwarven mercenaries here.

We're enjoying the rest.

Grizelda showed off to the fort bigwigs. She claimed to be as strong as any of them. Grizelda has a high pitched voice and the soldiers scoffed at such boasts from the diminutive gnome--until she picked up one fellow with one hand. Thron followed suit by picking up Grizelda while she still held her erstwhile cynic.

May 7/01

Still resting, the bath is great!

May 8/01 The Battle of Fort Armak

That night, the fort was attacked by hobgoblins. They erupted in force from holes which suddenly appeared in the ground inside the fort. The elves, humans and dwarves retreated to their respective barracks. The elves fired arrows from the roof. The dwarves presented a front to the hobgoblins and fought valiantly, though sustaining heavy losses before being forced back into their barracks house. I'll never forget the eight of us trying to bar and shutter the windows and doors of our guesthouse. It took four of us to close one window against the press of hobgoblins outside. Stenn, his face white, slammed it shut. Sammy and Berry cowered in a corner. I think we all wanted to cower with them.

We held the guest house (barely) killing about twenty and capturing one. Grizelda must have handled five of them single handed. I think Stenn was jealous. He hates hobgoblins, but has had less luck with the sword of late. Credit for the capture should go to Bjonri. He tossed out a bottle crying: "Oh no! I've dropped my potion of fiery dragon breath." The hobgoblin bought it. When he picked it up and drank it, he fell into a drugged stupor. The battle turned in favour of the defenders when the fort's mage cast a spell and lit the entire central grounds with a carpet of fire, killing hundreds of hobgobins.

I took a cloak from a hobgoblin and tried it on, it was magically cursed and I became very weak and incredibly stupid, I'm told. Bjonri did better. He got a hat which allows him to transform himself into a completely different creature.

After the battle, Grizelda took our prisoner to the fort commanders. They turned him over to the interrogator. He asked a few questions of the hobgoblin who reacted only with defiance. In disgust and impatience, the interrogator sliced the creature's throat, moving too fast for Grizelda to stop him. Apparently this man is known for such behaviour.

May 11/01

Battle recovery. People in the fort were very down. There had been quite a few lives lost during the battle. Stenn has been providing healing and consoling those who have lost friends.

Bjonri befriended the fort druid. They communed together and with the spirit world through the agency of something called "peyote."

The hobgoblins returned to collect their dead. This was allowed by the fort commander even though it is known that the bodies will probably be turned into thoals. Apparently the hobgoblins and the Tyglassian military honour the right of the enemy to recalim their slain.

May 12/01

We were awarded with medals of valour for our success in battle. Grizelda received the Flaming Sword of Valour for killing SIX single handed, and I thought I was good, ha! Her grin has been almost as big as her nose ever since.

May 13/01

The forests surrounding the fort are still infested with hobgoblins. It's a virtual siege. We were summoned to General Norcap's office. He commands the fort. He asked us to get help for the keep so we're heading East again. Sammy and Berry are staying behind. Hopefully they'll be safer there.

May 14/01

We slept in a cave and Bjonri was attacked and subsequently possessed by a Haunt. The only things that would hit it were Bjonri's sickle and Prothus' sword. I had a chance to use the sickle but, damn, Crux couldn't teach me to use it, the weapon of Ahto's choice. There didn't seem to be much we could do. Once he was possessed he insisted upon "returning to the light house", so we simply accompanied him to a ruined tower which stood by the sea. Stenn is very concerned, but says he is not skilled enough to perform an exorcism.

May 15/01 The Lighthouse

Undead creatures came out of the ocean and attempted to kill Bjonri. It was an extremely unpleasant battle (only the sword worked against them). I fought using it for a while, but Prothus was whining for the sword and getting on my nerves so I threw it to him. He can't catch worth shit, and the sword fell off the tower. Eventually, we killed them all.

May 16/01

We stayed for recovery before continuing East.

May 17/01

We finally reached Port Corvor. The haunt was exorcised from Bjonri by a cleric here. I think we'll stay for a while now that an army has been summoned to help the fort. I made sacrifices to Ahto (two 50 gp gems) and feel much better for it. Ahto granted me a few powers: immunity to water and I can identify pure water. Ahto blesses.

May 22/01

Four of us got very ill, probably from the zombie things. The healer was able to cure one of us each day, so we're staying at least until we're all better. I tried to do some spell research and discovered its virtually impossible without a decent library.

May 23/01

We've been approached to go on a quest for the king. We've accepted to travel to Poll Dubh Dorocka to get the Cauldron of Plenty back from the giant known as The Balog Moor. It used to belong to a magician and they say it is bad luck to take it by force.

It's not going to be easy. The Balog Moor is known to set intelligent traps. He's also a powerful foe. What's more, Poll Dubh Dorockra lies deep in the Badlands

and we have to go through Hobgoblin territory. Stenn is sharpening his sword. My half-brother was raised by elves, in the same village as Prothus lived. When Stenn was young, their forest was invaded by hobgoblins. Apparently a ranger by the name of Morgan taught him how to use a sword. Morgan didn't like hobgoblin's either.

I managed to get a map here (I copied the one shown to us).

May 24/01

We're on a boat heading North along the coast to the Donlookra river, the northern border of Tyglas. Stenn argued with the ship's master for a while but he refused to take us into the Badlands, which is the local name for the wild terrain north of the Donlookra. We met a few travellers at night while docked.

May 25/01

Nothing exciting.

May 26/01 The Death of Sven (as recorded by his companions)

Our boat was attacked today by humanoid creatures who came up out of the sea. They resembled hobgoblins, but had gills. Sven dived in to the water to attack them, but was soon overwhelmed. Stenn, the only other person who could swim dived in to save his brother. He too was overwhelmed and only Bjonri's arrowfire saved the two. Stenn was able to get his brother to shore, but once revived, Sven valiantly and foolishly returned to combat. Unfortunately he was unarmed. Stenn was unable to effect a second rescue. Sven's body was recovered.

We and many of the sailors have survived, but our ship is wrecked and we are in the Badlands.

Diary of Lorac the Bard

Jun 1/01

I woke up today with no memory what-so-ever! I had forgotten everything! There were a number of people around me, dead. Although I'm not sure exactly, I pieced together the following from things around the camp.

I'm Lorac, a bard and I was travelling with Shotan, Reliantius the Paladin, Garth and one other. We were looking for Sven Yahoo, priest of Ahto, but I'm not sure why.

There doesn't seem to be much I can do for them so I'll bury them. I'm not sure, again, whose goose is here, but I'll take it with me. I'll call it Bob.

After leaving, I headed some direction and reached a road, which I followed. I met a large group of humans and demi-humans which I approached with a Phantasmal Force to judge their reactions. It seemed alright so I vaulted into the open. The dwarf didn't seem very impressed, pity.

Half this group is heading South, the rest, whom I'm travelling with, North. Apparently they're a group of adventurers. The party heading South were sailors. All of them were on the same boat, but it was wrecked off the coast of the Badlands. The adventurers escorted the sailors back to inhabited lands and are now turning north to resume their mission. They are Stenn the half-elf ranger/priest of Mielikki, Prothus the fighter elf, Grizelda the hobgoblin killer from hell (a gnome), Thron the dwarf, Telgray the Bard, Bjonri the half-elf Druid and George the torch bearer, a human.

We seek a cauldron, ooh, what fun. While travelling we came across a giants home. People seem keen on it, so I guess this is where the cauldron is. The giant came across us, and demanded a toll to pass. We paid it and now we're heading away, but will return soon.

Jun 2/01

While on the path we met some small, rather stupid creatures, Goblins I think, asking for directions. After a brief discussion, they attacked us, so we slaughtered them all.

That night while on watch a large creature, an ogre, was moving about in the woods. Bjonri attacked it for nor apparent reason with an entanglement spell. We decided that it would be best to leave since the ogre had done nothing to us.

When we stopped again, the ogre had followed us and tried to attack the camp. Grizelda bested it using illusionary magic pair. We tied it up.

Thorn and Stenn were attacked by a giant centipede.

Jun 3/01

We've headed out towards the Balog Moor's cave again. We knocked out the ogre, untied him and left. Hopefully he'll be alright.

Jun 8/01 The Lair of the Balog Moor

We entered the cave of the Balog. He should be sleeping. Although there are a large number of passages, the Gods led us almost directly to the room of Balog. We found a secret room nearby, an excellent hiding place and place of supervision since there was a small peephole into the Balog's room. It was apparently a sorcerers study room. Within it we found some texts on various things. He was evidentially wealthy, as a solid silver chandelier and a solid brass brazier revealed.

While entering, we found it necessary to climb down a wall, 60', George slipped and fell the full distance dying horribly. Gods bless him.

From the secret room we could see the Balog's sleeping quarters, within which was the cauldron we sought, and a vast quantity of gems, jewels, gold and so on. When the Balog left, we went in, took the cauldron, and all the gold we could carry, and returned to the secret room.

The Balog, upon returning, discovered the cauldron missing, and became very upset. He placed two wolves to watch over the room. Prothus, spoke the command word which fills the cauldron with stew. The wolves were alerted by the smell. We had to leave immediately.

We formulated an escape plan, a problem since it takes four of our strongest to lift the cauldron. Furthermore, we needed to lift the cauldron up the 60' we climbed down. We used two summoned Mounts to haul it up, and used them to carry it out.

As we were leaving the Balog returned. We hid in a side passage, which he luckily didn't take, and we escaped unharmed if not unshaken. Once out, we continued down the mountain trail, until we and the Mounts were exhausted. Fortunately we had lost the Balog by this time. Perhaps he was fooled by a false trail we constructed halfway through the day.

Jun 11/01

We're still heading down the mountain using the conjured Mounts to carry the cauldron. The Balog is not in sight.

Jun 12/01

It seems that none of us know where we are, nor which direction to go, so we're continuing down. We reached a river which will, hopefully, lead us to the ocean. The cauldron floats-- barely--which makes moving it much easier.

I've become very sick, I suspect as a result of a scroll I found in the study room within the Balog Moor's cave. It caused me to flash purple at the time, but has had no other obvious effect. Strange that Grizelda hasn't been similarly taken ill. She too flashed purple light.

Jun 13/01 Battle of the Sinking Hobgoblins

We were attacked by hobgoblins at the side of the river. We found ourselves in a triangle, with two fronts of advancing hobgoblins (about 20 in each) and the river at our backs. I was too sick to assist in the battle. We were terribly outnumbered and owe our escape to the druid. Bjonri read a spell off a scroll. The ground beneath the one line of hobgoblins turned into an oozy mess. The hobgoblins on that side sank to their deaths. Still outnumbered, we set upon the remaining front. Prothus displayed his fighting skill, his sword dancing between hobgoblin ribs. Stenn took delight in the fight. He usually doesn't display such battlélust. The gnome can add a few more hobgoblin skulls to her trophy room. All forty hobgoblins were slain.

Still bleeding, our thrill of victory was cut short as we spotted a veritable army of hobgoblins on the far side of the river. The group that attacked was the size of a mere patrol by comparison. Were it not for the river, they could have rushed us easily. They were looking for a way to cross. Ten Prothus' and ten Grizelda's could not have saved us. But one druid could. He rushed forward, crying out in defiance to the yellow eyed host: "This battle is ours!" In unison our enemies raised their spears and clapped them once on their shields in salute. They turned back and melted away into the forest which now looked a far morej threatening place.

Strangely, Bjonri is now being followed by a moose, though he doesn't seem to have any control over it. He refers to it as a friend. Stenn seems to understand. He has also informed me that the moose is a sacred creature to Mielikki worshippers.

Jun 14/01

We're still following the river.

Jun 15/01

We're continuing down the river. We're pretty much out of the hills.

Jun 16/01

The river we were on feeds into a larger river, which we're now following. There was a bridge of stone across the first river, fairly new according to Grizelda who claims that any respectable gnome would see that.

Jun 17/01 The Death of Grizelda

We met a caravan heading South to Iatanor. They've agreed to assist us in transporting the cauldron, for a small fee. I'm feeling even sicker.

After Stenn and Prothus had gone to speak with the caravan leader, these things, which look a lot like gnolls (were actually flinds) attacked us from the hills to our left. Stenn and Prothus returned to help, but half of our party was dropped: Grizelda, Stenn, Bjonri, Prothus, and both of the guards with us.

Grizelda is dead, and Prothus is in seriously bad shape, he's got blood coming out of his mouth. Hopefully, the caravans' priest can help us out.

He healed Prothus and tells me I should be better tomorrow. He's taken Grizelda away saying that her soul could not have journeyed far and that perhaps he could call it back.

Jun 18/01 Grizelda Returns!

The priest Devon, came by today and healed me. I'm all better. I paid homage to Dionacecht, and Devon gave me a wooden cross. Stenn and Bjonri seemed cool in their attitude toward Devon. I don't really understand this religious stuff.

Some merchants tried to sell us books and paintings. I tried to sell him my books. He offered 25 gp, so they're probably worth about 40.

Grizelda walked into camp behind Devon looking hale and healthy! Devon explained the ressurection.

Bjonri attempted to take credit (or rather give credit to Mielikki) for this miracle resulting in a confrontation between us. I insisted that Mielikki had had nothing to do with it. Bjonri became enraged. I could barely move, as I was sick, and he hit me then stabbed me! I've agreed to write a song in tribute to Mielikki. Stenn was not around to watch this exchange. I wonder if all priests of Mielikki are this violent.

Jun 19/01

We're heading South again, we came across Fort Armak. It seemed vacated but we were admitted with little difficulty. There are scant troops here and they were hungry till we fed them. It appears everyone else has been here before. This is where they received their medals. Bjonri went looking for a druid friend.

Jun 23/01

We've been travelling.

Jun 24/01

We saw the dreaded Lord Rath on the road. He caused quite a disturbance, everyone cleared off the road and averted their eyes as he thundered by on his charger. I saw he had a full set of plated armour, jet black, with huge horns projecting from his helmet. His horse was similarly attired.

Jun 25/01

We have entered Iatanor finally. The Ri Lukra now has his cauldron back so our quest is complete.

I attempted to sell the books I found by visiting the local mages Barnac, Siaric, and Yen. I sold two of them to Yen and the third was stolen by Siaric. I'm now looking for a hired hand to carry things for me. I didn't realize how little I can actually carry.

Grizelda and the others have gone to sell the jewellery they found at the Balog Moor's.

There was a great feast held at the castle by the Ri Lukra, and wow what a feast! We were the guests of honour. Stenn made a speech about how we killed Lord Cooz of the Hobgoblins. Stenn seems to have given himself most of the credit. Prothus was angry about this.

Jun 27/01

I found a job working at a bar for 10 gp for the week.

Our party has made a contract with Lord Randall to collect some spores from the mushroom people off to the Southwest.

Jun 28/01

During the day I've been working on the song (as by agreement with Bjonri and Stenn) for Mielikki.

Thorn was on his way to the jewelers with Stenn for company, when they were approached, out of an alley, by the ten city guard demanding to see in their packs. After some argument they complied and the city guard insisted they disarm (probably a result of Thorn's generally belligerent attitude). Stenn also complained about the way in which they were treating him, a priest.

The guard refused to believe the wealth of jewellery came from the Balog Moor nor that Thorn and Stenn had even gone on a northerly mission for the Relookra. The guards did not seem concerned with my friends threats to tell the Ri what had happened. The guard officer simply replied that the Ri did not run the city guard. Thorn decided to head for the Ri Lukra's palace, ignoring the guards, and a fight ensued.

Stenn was wrestled to the ground, crying out to passers by that he was a priest of Mielikki beset by brigands. People stopped, for it is no small thing to attack a holy man, but no one interfered.

Thorn is even stronger than Grizelda. Three times he was knocked to the ground and three times he forced his way through a pile of guards to his feet. At one point he was tied, but managed to burst his way out. On the third sequence, Thorn lashed out at the lieutenant with a wicked blow to the head, crushing his skull. Then he was taken from behind and this time he did not get up.

They were taken to the city jail.

Sol 1/01

We've noticed Thorn and Stenn are missing. Yesterday's events were related to us later. We asked Joe the jeweller and Prothus (who told us) about them.

Sol 2/01

Bjonri managed to have Stenn released for the collection of mistletoe, something about a full moon. Stenn's holy symbol was taken off him, quite the issue it seems.

Sol 3/01

I hired a guy to carry my stuff, a guy called Biff. He's a mute, but he's a big guy. He should be able to carry a lot.

Sol 4/01

What a boring day. I'm taking tomorrow off.

Sol 5/01

Rather than working at the bar today, I cast Find Familiar. I received a cat that seems to prefer the name Gwen. I can see in the dark now. Cool!

Grizelda's dog seems to be well trained now. I think she's more attached to that dog than to any of us.

Sol 6/01

I met up with Bjonri and Prothus today. They have a plan for revealing (discovering) the wickedness which resulted in Throrn's and Stenn's jailing.

Sol 7/01

We, Grizelda and I, tailed Bjonri and Prothus, to Lenny the Jeweller. They have some rocks in a pack instead of jewels. We noticed, and tailed, some guys listening at Lenny's door while standing outside. We followed them to a bar, where we overheard them talking about Bjonri, Prothus. Later they returned to talk to Lenny. We felt we had better not tail them further; it would have looked too obvious.

Sol 8/01

A couple of us went to see Randal to get a delay on our contract. He'll be in the city for another 5 days. We have to contact him before then. We seem to be at a dead end in helping Throrn. Bjonri and Prothus have returned to Lenny's this time with one of the Ri Lukra's 100 gp gems as a 'sample'.

Lenny and his men attacked them. Grizelda and I, backing up again, went in to help. All of Lenny's men dropped. After disarming them I checked for onlookers outside, attempting to casually distract them, circled around the block and went back in. Somehow, Lenny escaped. We're leaving. Bjonri and I will watch the front, Gwen the back. Prothus went to advise the Ri.

Some 'shady' characters entered a bit later.

Prothus returned with the Ri to discover the men we left unconscious (but bandaged) had all been slaughtered in cold blood. Prothus was subsequently detained.

Afterward, Bjonri and Grizelda left the city and I risked going to the Ri for assistance. However, he let me know that our situation was pitiful. He said he couldn't help at all and we should hunt down Lenny. He got me out of the city, magically. After but three paces I was outside the walls, and lost. Although I had planned to wait until nightfall, to see light from the city, I was able to follow Gwen back to the temple.

Sol 9/01

I talked to Dirtal to send message to Bjonri and Gwen. Bjonri, disguised went into the city and asked some questions of certain people. He discovered a link between Lenny and the city guard, some guy named Captain Pine. Bjonri seems in his element when he's doing something involving deceit. Thank the gods he's on our side--I think.

Sol 10/01

Bjonri got into the city guard through Lenny and had an uneventful first night. He's using his hat to disguise himself as a human.

Sol 11/01

Bjonri managed to get Sylar, the group leader, to take Peyotee. He also managed to confirm our suspicions about the guards corrupt behaviour. Bjonri really likes this undercover stuff.

Sol 12/01 Jail Break

Captain Pine has asked his guards to bust Throrn, Stenn and Prothus out of jail. The idea is to fake a battle, and kill all of the above as well as any incidental witnesses. Bjonri told them where they could find us, that we would have a good reason for being in the jail -- as prisoners.

So Grizelda and myself, looking glum, went with Bjonri (still disguised) and the guard to the jail. Although Bjonri called out the warning to the real guard a little early we battled them and managed to save one (possibly two) witness. We freed Stenn and Throrn. They looked pretty haggard.

Then Captain Pine appeared. Bjonri told me to hold him back for a minute and he'd cast a 'sure fire' spell on him. I held him for a while but the spell didn't work and as I was being cut to pieces. I faked dropping. Pine stepped over me to chase the others and I, a little hastily, attacked from behind. Pine dropped me. The others managed to get away--with one of the honest guards.

Our witness was taken to the Ri by Bjonri who after delivering the guard to the gates, left to hide. So did everyone else. I, unconscious, was locked in a cell.

Sol 13/01

All of the charges against us were dropped, so apparently, the witness' testimony was suitable. Now we will be able to pursue our quest for Randal the alchemist.

Hopefully, I'll be able to regain consciousness, escape, contact Ren (the mercenary eager to travel with me) and go with the rest on this quest.

Sol 14/01

We were talking to Randal again to confirm details of this quest. Throrn, it seems, has decided not to accompany us on this quest. Something about a city filled with corruption seems to appeal to him. However, we met with a human named Glendor, a paladin of Ukko who desires to come. I was not able to contact Ren before leaving. Before we left the city, Stenn purchased a hunting cat which he has named Link.

Sol 15/01

Prothus said in that offhand manner he usually affects, that there were some giant rats in the camp last night that ate our scraps. They didn't do any harm though and soon left.

We saw a few people on the road today, but nothing especially dramatic. Travelling is much easier now that Biff is carrying my stuff.

Sol 16/01 Trollbridge

We're nearing Canvale. Today on the road we came across a bridge with two dead humans on it. While looking them over, a huge green thing-- a troll if I remember

correctly the stories I've heard--attacked us from under the bridge. Although we were able to smite it quickly, it came back to life! We battled it a second time. Link proved a lethal pet. Eventually we stopped it by burning its remnants. I wonder if that cynical dwarf Thron would believe this.

Sol 17/01

We passed through a very small town today, Umville, and verified that we were still heading in the right direction. It seems that Glendor is a good guide for us. We stopped for the night at a ruined keep by the side of the road.

Sol 18/01

During the night, all of our equipment was repaired. In the morning a small man (recognized to be a Brownie) appeared, accepting our gift of thanks, some food and gold. He returned the gold, however, it not being useful to him.

At the point where the road turned south we left it, continuing our trek westward. Hopefully, we won't get lost like we did in the mountains. Glendor appears to be competent in these matters.

We did reach the foothills described to us by Randal. After a long search we discovered a doorway with a large Rune carved in the doorway frame. There is no actual door. Glendor suggest it is Dwarvish. Too bad Thron isn't here to verify. We'll go in tomorrow.

Sol 19/01

We've decided to wait another day before entering, we need to be more prepared to enter. While standing around preparing, and discussing possibilities, a giant horned beetle came over the hill at us. It gored me after I cast Grease under it, which didn't hinder it but severely inconvenienced the party. However, Prothus had (I'm told) an amazing hit and killed it. I recovered later.

Sol 20/01

When we finally decided to enter the cave we had some problems. The least of which was what to do with our menagerie-- the horses specifically. We finally decided to let Biff take care of them, though he was somewhat unsure of what to do with them himself.

Worse though, was getting through the door. Apparently, the Rune is one of fear -- our group couldn't get through without individuals running off in fear.

Once inside, we found a huge maze of passages which seemed to lead no-where. Some frustrated bickering has ensued. As usual, Prothus was in the middle of it. We argued for some time. Stenn and Grizelda also added their two cents. Stenn is not blessed with much patience. Glendor just stood there in silent disapproval. We returned to the start to try again but achieved as little.

Sol 21/01

The same drivel again today. People are becoming very angry with one another. At least Thron's not here to argue as well.

Sol 22/01 The Forest of the Myconids

The party still had a lot of trouble deciding on a plan of action. Eventually, we left the passages, did some hunting and returned. Grizelda lost her dog to the

fear Rune. It ran off. Some soot on the ceiling which had been noticed by some of us, but not all, marked the trail to our goal.

Inside we came across, but avoided, more flinds. We did eventually find the Myconids, they looked like huge mushrooms with legs. Though they had no visible mouth, they were able to communicate using some sort of telepathy.

They said it would be necessary to survive for six hours of their forest--a forest of gigantic mushrooms. We went through it, wandered around for while, were attacked by some very strange creatures and passed the survival test. We were taken by the Myconids and told to sit with them in this circle, whereupon a huge quantity of spores were released so that we might 'meld' with them. It was too much for me--it knocked me out.

They asked us to help fend off the flinds in exchange for the spores. After a reasonably successful battle, we collected the spores, as well as gems and gold from the flinds.

We are heading now to Canvale to meet Randal to collect our reward.

Sol 25/01

My calendar is a few days out according to Bjonri. The mind meld must have lasted longer than it seemed. This morning when we awoke, at the mouth of the cave, we quickly discovered that Bjonri and I have annoying rashes. Grizelda is in even worse condition with blisters. Bjonri says its a result of contacting so much fungus in the dungeon.

While on watch, Grizelda noticed a creature which at first looked like her dog but turned out to be a giant wolf, 10' at the shoulder, with a horn protruding from its head. It was quite hostile. After we killed it, Bjonri severed the head from the body. He wants to find out what it is.

Sol 26/01

We found the road today.

Sol 27/01

We saw some travellers on the road today.

Sol 28/01

At the end of the day we reached Canvale. After setting up camp, six mounted humans, five armed with lances, approached. They walked up to Prothus and drew Prothus' sword right out of its scabbard. He then said "Nice sword", turned around and walked off with it. Arrogant bastard! The five mounted men lowered their lances menacingly.

Prothus and Stenn followed them but their rode into the city and they couldn't get admitted through the city gates. Not until Stenn and Bjonri exerted the prestige of their priestly orders and threatening the disfavour of the gods, did we manage to gain access. By this time, the men we were chasing had disappeared.

We met up with Throrn here as well as a girl named Divain. They and Bjonri went to a bar of low repute and discovered the thieves. Throrn followed them when they left, but they noticed him and a battle ensued. Although temporarily single handed, Divain helped him defeat them, recovering the sword.

Jul 1/01

We saw Randal for our reward and headed to the temple of Mielikki.

Bjonri took the wolfhead to the temple. The mutation in the wolf, is apparently the result of its parents eating a plant called moon melon. This plant, though once common, had supposedly been eradicated from the land. Apparently, it causes many bizarre mutations in the children of the eater.

Jun 2/01

We are waiting for tomorrow night, such that Bjonri and Stenn can collect mistletoe.

Jun 4/01

We returned to the town to volunteer our services in the hobgoblin war but have been asked to head northwest to Sysak to investigate losses of herd animals, apparently by a large creature. Much suspicion has been laid upon Thadigran Dentiata, a local mage. A town mob 'attacked' his tower, but were invited inside kindly and offered a tour. Although he seemed nice, he did room with orcs, his servants. In any case, the townspeople have no idea what else to do. Thus outside assistance is necessary.

Jun 5/01

We reached Sysak by the afternoon. A desolate place, it is devoid of farm life. The only sign of life we saw was a man cursing as he tried to move his wagon through the ford. We assisted him and discovered some interesting things.

Recently, two townspeople's, Diater and Meekal's, mutilated bodies were found after they had headed out to Thadigran's tower. A third, Grigor, was dragged off by what appeared to be orcs. If so, they were probably Thadigran's servants.

Vladislav, the wagoneer, and his friend Nefald invited us to the bar. Grigor is their leader. Neffin saw a werewolf and says that a mysterious sleep came over him. Further, we are told Thadigran has strange visitors and a slave vampire girl.

We did a proper burial for Meekal.

Jul 6/01

We went to Thadigran's tower today, and were invited in, as had been the townspeople. As we were led through Thadigran's study, Bjonri happened to notice some papers, on which Thadigran had done some anagrams. We learnt little else.

We followed the trail of orcs from the site of the incident. They led back to the tower.

Inspired by the anagrams we managed to work out variations on Thadigran's name. We asked the town wise woman about NIGHT ADDER and DREAD NIGHT, the second elicited a strong response. In short, the Dread Night is the time when evil conquers the land, a group of mages follows this belief.

Jul 7/01

We figure that Thadigran is more than likely the werewolf. The smith who was killed, had been making a silver sword which led us to believe this was knowledge Thadigran did not want leaked out.

Jul 8/01

We are preparing an attack on the tower.

Jul 9/01

Thorn was able to coat the ends of my staff with silver. This ought to enable me to hit a variety of magical creatures, among them, the werewolf.

Jul 10/01

We couldn't find any entrance other than the one guard by the wolves. Thadigran observed us and tried to scare us off. It almost worked. Eight of him appeared by the tower to turn us away. We successfully released his wolves however.

Jul 11/01

We were attacked by huge cockroach things, Pedipalp I'm told, which did brutal damage to my arm, it had grabbed me while I slept. We found some gems and a scroll inscribed with a levitate spell in their nest.

Jul 14/01

We've been resting. We noticed a large group of hobgoblins which, on further investigation, seem to be heading to Canvale. We sent a townsman, Bren, to the city with a message of warning.

Jul 15/01 The Storming of Keep Dentiata

Last night, Thorn was enchanted to believe that Thadigran was actually a nice guy. After Bjonri cured him, we used Thorn to gain access to the tower. When the orc opened the door to admit Thorn, we charged from the bushes and forced our way inside. An intense room to room battle followed. Dentiata always kept behind his orcs. That didn't stop him from being hit by Thorn's arrow, the most amazing shot I have ever seen. It was shot from one end of a corridor past the battling orcs and party members to hit Dentiata square on. He retreated. Eventually we forced our way to the hatch which led to the roof, Dentiata's last place of retreat. Grizelda and Thorn charged through the hatch to be met by a painful bolt of darkness. Grizelda could go no further. Thorn retreated briefly, but joined the general charge through the hatch.

On the roof we found Dentiata, with his back to the battlements, preparing to cast a spell. His two remaining orc guards barred our path from him. Our swords carried the day.

Jul 19/01

We spent this time clearing out the tower, searching it for useful items. We found that the tower stairs led down to catacombs. There we found the people kidnapped from the town. Our biggest gains were a ball of crystal, a wand, a book of spells, a protective ring as well as some, in comparison, minor magical objects.

Stenn noticed a magical bag. He found it after entering a room from the center of which appeared a shadowy creature similar to one we had fought in the cave of the Balog Moor. Stenn, his holy symbol held before him, cried "By the power of Mielikki, begone!" The shadow fled. The bag turned out to hold a lot more than it should have been able to for its size.

Jul 27/01

We spent this time in Sysak to recover, to relax, and to allow Grizelda time to identify the various items we picked up. I learnt a spell out of the book called Read Magic. I met a nice girl named Annie in this town--I'll have to look her up sometime again.

Aug 7/01

Grizelda is still identifying things. Throrn has been spending his time learning how to smith weapons and can now, apparently do it with some proficiency. He redid my staff with much better looking silver tips.

Aug 8/01

We're trying to decide whether to go to Canvale for training and to check up on the hobgoblins, or to try to deal with the moon melons. Stenn and Bjonri are in favour of dealing with the moon melons. Stenn says they are abominations and must be destroyed. Others among us believe that checking up on the hobgoblin movements is more important. If they have forces this deep in Tyglas, the Re must be warned.

Aug 10/01

Stenn and Bjonri carried the day. We've decided to hunt for moon melons.

Aug 11/01 The Siege of Moon-Orc Lair

Not only did we find a large patch of these moon melons, (and destroy it), we discovered a lair of orcs who apparently eat the moon melons intentionally in order to strengthen their race. We entered the cavern to fight this evil we have dubbed moon-orcs.

After killing many of these creatures, right near the entrance to the cavern, as well as some boulder-like creatures we were weakened significantly. We left to recuperate. While inside we did notice one moon-orc casting spells and agree this is probably a leader.

Aug 15/01

We returned to fight and discovered that those we had killed had been raised again! Of course, they were expecting our return which made entry more difficult. After fighting the zombie-moon orcs, some spider-scorpion things attacked us, as well as more moon-orcs. We came under fire from arrows shot through slits in the wall. We had a job to battle our way down the hall and into this room. The mage also made an appearance, shooting darts of fire down the hallway at us. As we were in reasonable condition, we decided to barricade the arrow slit room and try to hold it. Further, all of those that attacked us appeared to be female.

This night we were attacked en masse, a magical fog surrounded the entrance and then some large moon-orcs in plate mail attacked. Thanks go to Grizelda, Stenn and his cat, Link, the only three to stand at the end of the battle. We recovered outside.

Aug 17/01

We were resting outside, attempting to fully recover. We noticed we were being watched, so we're going back to Sysak.

Aug 18/01

We met Bertha, Paladin of Ilmatar here, in Sysak!

Aug 22/01

We returned once again, briefly, and after another battle actually had the opportunity to talk with the mage. When we refused to stop our attempt, he empowered the stone statues to walk. Bertha and I wanted to make a stand, but everyone ran. We almost got trapped between the golems and more plate mailed moon- orcs, one of whom was armed with a sword which I recognized from descriptions I had read in Dentiata's tower. It was the Moon Sword, a weapon of great evil. Prothus was able to defeat this orc and seize the sword. The battle nearly turned against us, but we made it to the door and out again. We returned to Sysak after burying the moon-sword.

This night on Prothus' watch in the Inn, we heard crashing on the main floor. The golems had followed us here. I stayed in the room while some fought the creatures. When the first finally entered the room, it came straight at me and picked me up and threw me across the room. Bertha killed the other as it was entering the room and I killed the first, weakened one, shortly after.

Ania was, of course, upset with the damage to her bar. I assured her we would pay for the damages and leave the town, since we were bringing this evil upon the town. The party, however, especially Prothus, disagreed, so we stayed.

Aug 23/01

Later in the night, almost morning, the Inn was torched. We helped people escape the Inn but during the ensuing chaos, Stenn was kidnapped by the moon-orcs.

We chased them back to the dungeon and confronted four moon- orcs and the mage. However, while dealing with the moon-orcs, the mage escaped into the dungeon. We think he probably had Stenn.

We entered the dungeon again, meeting the weakest front yet. Luckily we had the foresight to look for traps on the door, and managed to disarm a trap similar to the blast of fire that hit us at Thadigren's tower.

It appears that Bertha will be a great help to our group, however, this attempt on the dungeon involves a hostage. Further, Stenn is not assisting us and Grizelda seems to be very uninterested in life. None of Stenn, Bjonri, Bertha, nor the physician at Sysak were able to help her.

We also received a reply from the temple of Mielikki. Bjonri had sent a message with his bird stating our situation. It returned carrying three scrolls, two of which are medical, more powerful than he can do however in curative spells, and the third is an extremely powerful spell he says he can't use as long as Stenn is being held.

Hopefully, we can save Stenn and finish the destruction of this evil lair.

When we reached the statue room, Grizelda did a Hide spell on Throrn who managed to get right in to attack the mage. After he was dead the rest of the dungeon was straight forward to clean up, although we had some problems. We found Stenn and freed him. With him was one other. A strong looking fellow who spoke little. He was not interested in any of the treasure in the lair except for a single sword. When he picked it up, the sword spoke to him! It called him by name and said it was good to be together again. We did not know how to react to this. The fellow simple turned and left.

Aug 26/01

We spent some time recovering outside before returning to finish off the plate mailed moon-orcs and collect treasure.

Aug 27/01

We're spending some time recovering since we've accomplished our mission. We also must deal with the evil sword we encountered. Hopefully, the priests will advise us.

Sept 1/01

We're on our way to Canvale. We came across a caravan that had been destroyed, apparently by hobgoblins. We can't be sure, but it might have been the group we saw near Sysak. Stenn now has an owl which follows him. He "met" it in the forest by the ransacked caravan.

Sept 4/01

I started training Biff to use the staff. Hopefully, it will be effective for him. We reached Canvale and managed to get Grizelda cured by the high priest.

We met with someone from the Iron Ring and discovered our party is both feared and respected. He wanted to know who we were working for and why we had attacked Dentiata. He refused to believe what we told him, which was essentially the truth. He says that we must be more powerful than we say we are to have accomplished what we did: rescuing Ft Armak, retrieving the cauldron, defeating Dentiata etc.. He says we're too often in the company of powerful people to be just a group of adventurers. They (the Iron Ring) intend to make our lives difficult.

Sept 5/01

We agreed to look for a merchant's Mastiff, a large dog. He suspects, strongly, that it was stolen to prevent it from entering into the fights coming up in a few days.

Bjonri and Stenn deplore the dog fights and are adamant about the attempted release of all the animals.

Sept 6/01

The party generally agrees that nothing anyone else says is relevant or accurate. The focus of the conversation seems to be what to discuss.

Finally, we are going to try to rescue the dog. The plan was that I should distract the owner of the boat (where we discovered it) while Throrn and Grizelda infiltrate the front end of the boat.

After leading off a number of the crew using a Phantasmal Force, we approached. As I aggravated the owner (who is the commissioner of the city guard!) this fantastically good looking woman hijacks the ship! I approached her and attempted to work out an agreement for the release of the dog. I realised this was Red Francis!

While in the captains quarters, a fight broke out-- apparently Throrn attacked the crew. Red Francis defended her crew, but departed before we were decimated.

It seems that Throrn released the commissioner. I'm not quite sure why. In any case, the commissioner told us to keep our mouths shut--or we would go to jail!

In general, the party feels that Red's 'crime' of stealing the boat is worse than the dog napping, and further, that she was imposing on our freedom.

I felt that she had done nothing wrong. She accomplished exactly what we intended to do, the liberation of the "commissioner's" property, without loss of life. Not only that, but she seemed to make the crew a whole lot happier. Is this evil?

Thorn never did explain why he untied the dog-napping, two-faced, lying, corrupted city official.

Sept 7/01

I'm staying at the Inn for the day. I'm considering whether I should continue to travel with these people of questionable morals.

Sept 8/01

I must remember to pick up the robe which I ordered to be made. I did remember to return to the weapon's shop to pick up my darts and am training to use them.

Later in the evening while at the Inn in our room discussing a plan of action, the pirate came into the bar. We went down and made it as difficult as we could for her to charm the men in the bar. It seemed as though she was looking for recruits.

She managed to charm Prothus and brought him up to the room where we had gathered again. However, she merely spoke to us, explaining that she was following the law of the sea, hadn't hurt anyone, and probably no one would have been hurt had we not attacked. She also mentioned she had difficulty believing our "dog" story.

Sept 9/01

Today, Stenn and Bjonri attempted to break the Mastiff out of its cage at the Mastiff fighting ring. It was a fiasco. Stenn almost got himself killed and as a number of powerful figures gathered there, we decided to abandon the effort. We will quietly finish our training and leave the town.

Sept 11/01

I hung out at the Inn's bar while Thorn and Grizelda were trained.

Sept 12/01

We've noticed a guy in the bar at the Inn that is extremely quiet that sits by himself. He carries a (poorly) concealed short sword.

I hired a crier to help me find a juggler.

Sept 13/01

Evidently, the crier was successful. A guy named Kane came to the Inn and agreed to teach me to juggle.

Sept 14/01

People are still training. I'm still learning how to juggle.

Sept 15/01

I can now juggle reasonably well. Training continues. Biff still isn't quite grasping the use of the staff.

Sept 16/01

While performing on stage I went completely and totally deaf. I continued to perform, except for the flute.

Sept 17/01

I went to the temple of Mielikki to get my hearing fixed. They told me it was indeed a magical affliction. It cost me 800 gold.

Sept 18/01

Since the cost for fixing my deafness drained all my funds, I went to Mage Edson for a pre-payment on the spellbook I'm selling him. He gave me 200 gp.

A Grease spell was cast against me while I was on stage. I called Grizelda over to me, knowing she wouldn't come if she had cast it. However, she did come and slid across the stage after falling on it.

Sept 19/01

We have been requested by General Banask to do a recon through Canamar to determine the extent of the hobgoblin attacks. Thron would prefer more specific details before tackling this assignment.

Sept 20/01

We returned to General Banask. He paid us 200 gold each and will pay the remainder of 800 gold each when we return.

That night, most of the party went to a different bar to determine whether the mysterious quiet guy was following us; he doesn't seem to be.

Apparently, the attacks made against me in the bar were not all hostile-- Grizelda cast the grease spell.

Grizelda is having charges added to her wand.

Sept 24/01

We are stocking up on heavy clothing for the quickly approaching winter. We have to wait for Grizelda's wand to be recharged before we leave.

Sept 25/01

Grizelda identified two of three magical potions we were carrying. They are curative.

At night, we investigated an odour and discovered four bodies in the next room.

Sept 26/01

We finally are leaving Tyglas. We crossed the bridge at Canvale into Fellmore. We had some troubles with the guard on the far side. Apparently, we are carrying a suspiciously large quantity of gems and gold.

Sept 27/01

We're still heading southeast on the road towards Duddle.

Sept 28/01

When we left our campsite, we were attacked by a gigantic humanoid spider creature (an ettercap) and a gnome-like creature (spirag). The attack started with two logs swinging down from the trees. These logs had some sticky material on them, effectively trapping various members of our party. We eventually won the battle and removed the logs from, among other things, Prothus' sword, Grizelda's feet, Stenn's hands and Thror'n's torso.

Although there appeared to be little of value here, we did discover various other creatures (quite dead) trapped in a spider web of massive proportion.

Furthermore, there are the ropes that were used to hold the logs which seem to be impervious to steel, even the magical blade of Prothus.

Oct 1/01

After an uneventful day of travel, we met with ogres, just after setting up camp. During the battle we were assisted by Magnar, a ranger that has agreed to join the troop. He's almost seven feet tall and carries ogre skulls on his belt.

He has told us of an evil temple nearby. We are considering searching it out to destroy it. Thror'n feels we are breaking our contract to scout for Hobgoblins. Stenn and Bjonri think that it is morally important to destroy the temple.

Oct 3/01

We rest, discuss, heal and train.

Oct 4/01

Some bizarre things happened during the night. A ball of light, much like the one Grizelda claimed to see out by the Balog Moor's, was seen bounding around in the forest. Divain attacked it, for no obvious reason, though she explained her paranoia was a result of the frequent attacks in the last few days.

We are heading to the evil temple today.

Oct 5/01 The Lost Temple of Inbindarla

Magnar knows the approximate location of the temple, but not exactly where the entrance is to be found. We came across a walking, talking tree. It seemed rather pleasant but attacked when we approached by trying to drop what can only be described as nooses on us. It surrendered when we used fire against it. We discovered that it was blocking the temple entrance we were seeking. It agreed to move in return for our promise to set it free from the curse which holds it here.

Beneath the entrance, we found a three hallways. One passage (which was unnaturally cold) led to a pit with spikes in the floor. The roof was a trap door. Apparently, this was a trap. Good thing none of us were caught in it. We went back to the main entrance and took the second corridor. There were some strange glass orbs afixed to the ceilings. They seemed to contain swirling mist.

After walking along for awhile, something moved into the hall in front of, coming from a side room. At first I thought it was a humanoid, but it was a walking corpse! It took some hard fighting by Magnar, who was in the lead, but we destroyed it. We continued along the hall, which turned a corner. A little further along, our torches were snuffed out as a cold, howling wind blew out of a side passage. We moved forward out of the wind and relit our torches. At the end of the passage we found what must, at one time, been a bedroom. There was rubbish everywhere in here.

Hanging on the wall above the remains of the bed was a large sapphire, shaped as an octagon. I took it down.

We set out to explore the passage from which the wind had come. This passage, also unnaturally cold, led to another room. There was a huge black statue on the altar at one end. Stenn through holy water on it. The surface hissed and stained as though the water had been acid. We now left to rest for a few days.

Oct 7/01

Rest and recover. Stenn is having trouble sleeping within half-day journey of the temple. Nightmares keep him awake.

Oct 8/01

We returned to the temple. We took the third passage from the entrance. It led past an old kitchen and storeroom, then led into an area of magical darkness. We felt our way to the right and entered a new room, where we could see once again. As we walked in a wailing arose and human figures appeared on the walls. They were emaciated, almost skeletal, but even where they should have been solid, one could see through them, as though they were ghosts. We feared attack, but the creatures were manacled to the walls, however immaterially and made no move toward us. They merely continued their pathetic crying. Stenn and I wanted to rescue them. Some in our group (Prothus and Throrn among them) thought we shouldn't even try! In the end it was no use. We couldn't even grasp their ghost-manacles, let alone cut them and no one knew of a spell which could help. We had no choice but to abandon them.

We backed out of that room, returning to the darkness. We found another passage out. It led to a long room. There was a large sarcophogus at one end. The room itself was lined, either side with skeletons. As we stepped into this room, the skeletons began moving toward us. Prothus, Stenn and Magnar met their attack. We won, but were now further wounded when the sarcophogus door opened. A huge skeleton walked out (Magnar said it was an ogre skeleton) brandishing a metal club. Grizelda stood her ground and traded blows with it. The thing nearly took her head off with one swing, but I,d forgotten just how strong that little gnome is. She deflected the club with her sword and launched an attack of her own, shattering several ogre ribs. By this time, Magnar, Bjonri and I were by her side. We followed Grizelda's example and added an ogre skull to the bones littering the floor.

We examined the sarcophogus from which the skeleton had emerged. The back was a wall with an octagonal shaped depression in it. When the sapphire was placed in it, the wall opened as a door to a passage, rough hewn from the rock. It led to an underground lake. There is a long, dark beach, and a single, dilapidated dock. On the beach was a skeleton with gems set in the eye socket. It proved not to be magical, but a feather, lying nearby was. The water receded into the darkness.

We turned back and went back to the altar room. On the altar, we found a book that was encased in glass. There was an octagonal depression in the glass. I placed the sapphire in it and the glass case opened. We took the book out. I opened it and read "Serpine Lexicon" on the title page. We left the temple once again.

Oct 9/01

After praying for new spells, Bjonri cast a "Detect Evil" and said the book was overwhelmingly so. I discovered it was magical, and Stenn decided to Bless the book. A huge skeletal creature rose from the book and almost destroyed us all, but mysteriously vanished.

Since the horses were still uneasy, (as well as most of the party), we decided to split up. Strength in numbers, I suppose. While Prothus, Bjonri, and Grizelda

were gone, I recalled the name of the book was associated with legends of evil. It is an ancient book able to summon creatures of evil. One priest of an old religion used the book until it destroyed him.

While the others were walking, the creature reappeared. They destroyed it.

After the party re-united, we decided it was in everyone's best interest to seek assistance from the Temple of Mielikki regarding the book. We will travel for 4 days towards the temple, then send a messenger of Bjonri's to the temple. Apparently Mielikki grants him the power to ask the birds to carry messages for him.

We had a long discussion regarding party organization, most of us appreciate the convenience of a large group but dislike the frequent quarrels resulting from a variety of opinion. I recommended that Stenn be made leader. He will have final say in settling these quarrels.

Oct 10/01

Last night, one of Grizelda's jokes set the group in an uproar of argument, as well as actual physical attack. She and Bjonri crept into some nearby bushes and hid. Grizelda cast an illusion of their dead bodies lying in camp. When the rest of us woke up, we saw our dead comrades. Magnar detected figures moving around in the bushes. Assuming they were the attackers he fired arrows at them. Stenn cast an entanglement spell. Grizelda was immobilized and knocked unconscious by an arrow hit. Bjonri managed to avoid the entanglement spell and came out into the open to explain the joke.

Unfortunately, tensions were now high. Stenn trained his bow on Bjonri, demanding that he stop where he was. Stenn had just seen Bjonri's body lying on the ground and he was unsure if this truly was Bjonri, or merely a monster in Bjonri form.

It took a long time to calm everybody down. Some comments were of particularly questionable nature, such as, "I think she [Grizelda] deserves to suffer for a while," "Go ahead, shoot, I dare you to," "I'd like to know who exactly you [Magnar] really are," and "Fine, I'm outta here." Such a shame after making such progress yesterday.

We continued on our journey.

Stenn is looking for berries as we travel. Magnar has suggested another Augury to clarify the one perviously done on the book. We would like to know if we can destroy it at all, without destroying ourselves. He also suggests the danger indicated by the Augury Bjonri did previously, was the beast still lurking about the forest that came from the book.

It's snowing.

Oct 11/01

Stenn performed the Augury this time, asking, "Will it cause us serious harm to try to destroy the book?" with the response, "No."

After some discussion we decided to try to destroy the book by dropping it into a bonfire. When we did so, Magnar saw something run out of the fire. Shortly after, we were attacked by a huge dog-like creature with glowing red eyes. After a brief battle, it disappeared, and the smaller creature re-appeared. Again, a short battle ensued before it disappeared, but upon guessing where it ought to be, I managed to hit the invisible creature. Magnar and Prothus managed to follow its tracks in the snow and kill it. The book was unharmed by the fire.

That night on first watch, a huge two-headed creature with a spiked club in each hand burst from the forest. I think it was an Ettin.

Oct 12/01

We sang happy birthday for Grizelda. We spent the day recovering. Grizelda cast a spell and determined that the wand from the temple will fire magic missiles. I will carry it.

In the meantime, Stenn has decided it will be safest to keep The Book in his magical bag. He doesn't think anything can get out that way.

Oct 13/01

We reached Duddle today and sent a message to the temple near Canvale about The Book.

We discovered from fighters in the local bar of this small town (about 60) news of the hobgoblins is common. They intend to sell their service in Tyglas.

One of them, who had been in The Isles, said it was a dangerous and dreadful place. He also mentioned "The Golden Empire," a place to the south of the Isles, he heard about while there. Furthermore, the Black Eagle Barony (to the West) is supposed to be the centre of the Iron Ring.

Oct 16/01

Stenn's owl arrived with a message instructing us to await Peath's (the high priest of the temple) arrival. This must be major!

Oct 17/01

Biff seems competent with the staff, finally.

Oct 18/01

Peath arrived today with an entourage of followers. He provided a lot of information about The Book, received from Edson.

The Serpine Lexicon's (aka Cripto-Chronus, Book of Horrors, Grimoire, etc.) first known appearance was thousands of years ago when Ezaria summoned The Book from worlds beyond. Sages agree Ezaria went mad using the Grimoire for his evil purpose: attempting to summon the ultimate beast of destruction to destroy the world.

For 500 years nothing was heard, until Adazat recovered the book and unleashed its powers. He eventually went insane and committed suicide by ingesting Green Slime.

His apprentice Elmorith inherited The Book and used it, once again, to summon creatures of evil. He managed to gain a lot of power as the leader of a religious sect. However, Elmorith lost the book in a Necromantic duel with his ally.

Only now has it turned up, for the first time in hundreds of years, in the temple of Inbindarla.

Edson suggests, the only way to destroy The Book is to return it to its plane, (the place from where it was summoned). By taking the book to Melnibone where the river Styx is said to "cross our world," and placing the book there.

We've decided to send Stenn and Magnar to Canvale to discuss either modification, interruption or cancellation of our contract to scout hobgoblins. Hopefully, we will be able to pursue the contract, sending messages to Canvale by hireling. Once we reach the West coast, we will continue our journey towards Melnibone to destroy the book, as Stenn and Bjonri are obligated to do so.

While in Canvale, Stenn and Magnar intend to gather information about Melnibone and petition Edson to identify the feather, ring and potion.

We will travel to the border with them.

Oct 20/01

We travel and reach the border. While Stenn and Magnar travel across to Canvale, we will wait here. They managed to cross without a problem and arranged the contract suitably with General Banask.

Oct 21/01

After speaking with Peath, we received a scroll for protection.

Edson relayed: The Melniboneans are very similar to grey elves and highly magical in nature, maligned in intent and known to have ridden dragons. It is within the Imperial City the river Styx is said to pass, thus giving the Melniboneans there heightened military power.

Oct 23/01

After waiting for Edson to cast Identify and receiving a mace, sword and hammer made from cold steel (apparently useful in hitting some of the creatures we've met) Stenn and Magnar returned. The feather is a magical device known as Quall's feather token. Apparently it turns into a boat.

We are following up first on the temple, as suggested by Edson, it may provide us with more information about The Book.

Oct 24/01

We met with a camp of ogres and, under Stenn's leadership managed to organize battle to destroy them all, efficiently. We continue on our journey to the Temple of Inbindarla.

Oct 25/01

We met with Bertha and continued travel.

Oct 26/01

We reached the temple site once again. While travelling, we had a long discussion about carrying the book back into the temple. It was decided the lesser risk was to bring it back into the temple rather than leave it unguarded outside.

Oct 27/01

We re-entered today and used Quall's feather token, which turned into a boat as promised, and set out into the underground lake. We could hear distant cries of pain coming from out of the darkness. The cavern continued for some distance slowly narrowing into a twisting passage. Our magic boat sailed noiselessly on past dead bodies floating in the water. As we sailed into their midst they began to move. Stenn organized a defense of the boat, steering it away from our attackers. I

attacked two of them with my staff as they tried to climb over the side of our boat. On the other side, Magnar was hacking them in twain with mighty blows from his sword. Grizelda and Prothus did the same at the back of the boat until all the water-zombies had been destroyed.

The passage opened up into a large cavern. In the middle there was an island, piled with treasure. In the centre of the island was a pale skull at its peak, apparently inert. We stepped onto the island to load the treasure. Breaking the silence, a vaguely human shaped skeleton rose out of the black water. It attacked and sunk its fangs into Divain. Flesh began to appear its the bones. Stenn swung at it with his sword, but although the blow ought to have sundered it of a limb, it had no effect. Neither did the blow which Magnar dealt it. Divain began to pale. Grizelda moved forward weilding the new club she had won from the ogre skeleton. This time the blow took effect, but did not shake the creature from Divain. Grizelda spoke the magical word inscribed on the club "Alumine" and it burst out in brilliant light. The skeleton reared up with a scream and dropped Divain, then splashed back into the water, leaving as suddenly as it had come. Shaking, we hurriedly through the treasure into the boat and made back toward the beach, looking over our shoulders the whole time. I don't think anyone spoke a word on the trip back, save for Stenn giving out terse commands to steer the boat.

We reached the beach and unloaded the seriously wounded Divain. Bjonri examined her wounds and applied some salve. She had lost an awful lot of blood. Both he and Stenn looked concerned. The rest of us examined what we had found in the treasure chest.

The next I knew, Stenn was crying out in alarm and fumbling for his holy symbol. The skeleton thing was back. It sped by Magnar who had turned to meet it, by Stenn and straight for Divain. Everybody rushed it. Once again most of our weapons had no effect. Only Prothus' sword and Grizelda's staff would damage it. It dug its fangs once again deep into Divain's neck. I could see blood leaking out around its newly forming lips. I could hear Bjonri casting a spell. Then Prothus' sword struck downward in a high arc, severing the now mostly formed flesh of the creature. Once again, it tossed away Divain and before our eyes it melted into gas.

With a cry of triumph Bjonri let forth his spell. The air before him began to swirl as his "Dust Devil" was called into being. He ordered it to attack the now gaseous bloodsucker. The combat that ensued was strange. The Dust Devil attempted to envelop its prey, but the creature managed always to slip from its grasp. The two combatants moved out over the lake into the darkness. Eventually they disappeared and the sounds of whirling winds died away. Bjonri didn't seem to think his Dust Devil was around anymore.

We got ready to leave. The treasure we had found was heavy so Stenn prepared to load it in his Bag of Holding. When he opened it the gas-thing came charging out of the darkness. It went straight for the open bag--the one that contained The Serpine Lexicon.

We were all exhausted and wounded so we were forced to spend the "night" here on this eerie subterranean beech. Although Stenn cannot sleep some of us managed to get some rest. I spent the time reading one of the books found on the island -- it discusses various aspects of health and some exercises to perform.

Oct 28/01

We searched the last corridor in the temple today. It lay behind a secret door in the altar room. We had to fight a skeleton creature in the passage (not like the skeleton-bloodsucker thing). After yesterday, this is beginning to seem like routine. The passage led to a mist-filled room. We could find nothing in there, though Grizelda said something definately brushed by her leg. Before we left the temple we

tipped over the altar-statue and destroyed it. The strange fire disappeared. The magical lanterns were extinguished and Stenn could finally sleep without being overcome by a feeling of dread. Our mission there was done.

Nov 1/01

We spent time studying and left the temple. The curse, we think, should be broken, so we told the Hangman tree it could leave.

Nov 2/01

At Duddle we sent a message to Peath to tell him about the creature in the bag and ask for advice. We think it is safely trapped within.

Nov 4/01

Grizelda identified things as we awaited Peath's reply. It came. "The creature you are dealing with is a vampire! Do not attempt to confront it under any circumstances. It will destroy you all!"

Nov 6/01

We're heading to Canvale to have our treasure changed. There was some consternation when we realized that most of our treasure was in the bag. Could we open it without letting the vampire out? Bjonri seems to think it will be okay as long as it is daylight. Stenn cast an Augury. The answer that came out was yes. We opened the bag with no ill effects.

Nov 7/01

We spoke to the High Priest at the temple of Ukko to return the cold iron weapons and try to have Divain healed. The vampire apparently weakened her greatly - and permanently!!! We'll probably be in town for a long while for the treasure changing. Hopefully, the Iron Ring won't be a problem.

Nov 8/01

I went into town with Throrn today. We dropped into a tavern called the "Red Hair" as recommended by Divain. While there, a group of Iron Ringers approached us. Their leader, after asking where the rest of us were, said they would have to come into town to find us. The leader left us to his men, whom we slaughtered (I drank the beer which they offered, which was poisoned, I passed out.)

Nov 9/01

Grizelda and Prothus have gone to see Edson and Roask. Although we have camped outside of town to avoid the Ring, we are considering movement to avoid troubles.

Nov 13/01

We've been travelling in circles. Grizelda and Throrn have gone into town to do Identifies with Roask.

Nov 15/01

Prothus, Grizelda, and Magnar went into town to retrieve magic items from Roask. He wasn't home so they returned the following day.

We tried to cross the border at the bridge. We were hassled for carrying skulls, money, herbs, and other things. Many questions were asked when they discovered The Book. We were turned back.

We had some trouble recovering Magnar, he had swum across with many of our possessions to meet us.

We will head west to cross the river where it is shallower.

Nov 19/01

We found a hobgoblin camp at the crossing Magnar told us about. We destroyed it and about 40 hobgoblins. Now, we're travelling South to avoid more hobgoblins. The ones that ran may get reinforcements. Although it is almost dusk, we'll travel until midnight.

Nov 20/01

While travelling, a manticore attacked. It was difficult to fight since it flies, but it succumbed, none-the-less.

Nov 21/01

While travelling West along a tributary to the Frontier River we came across a marsh. Unwilling to try to go around it to the North, we've decided to cross it. It seems to be safely frozen. Magnar says the marsh is large, large enough to be named. It is called "The Vales".

Nov 22/01

We travelled well into the night in order to find a rise of land suitable to set up camp.

Divain heard noises while on watch but nothing transpired. We'll continue west in the morning.

Nov 23/01

We looked for and found roughly humanoid tracks.

While travelling with caution, a group of lizardmen attacked us. I managed to break the ribs of one, rendering it helpless. After killing the rest, Bjonri determined the creatures were not evil, so we attempted to help out the remaining one by patching its wounds and leaving it with food.

Nov 24/01

We continued west through the marsh on the North side of the river until we reached a bridge. Although the bridge was safe, there were pits completely blocking the far side.

We're following the road South.

Nov 25/01

Finally, we left the swamp.

Nov 26/01

Grizelda levitated up to see our surroundings. She saw what appeared to be a small village further down the road.

Later, we encountered the village Rometh. They were surprised we survived travel through the swamp.

Nov 27/01

Although one days provisions were provided, further purchases would cause undue hardship on the small village. We came to a mutually agreeable solution. A villager will accompany us to a town west of here and we will pay for a guard to accompany him back to his home. Thus he will be able to restock for the remainder of the winter.

No sign or rumour of hobgoblins here.

Dec 1/01

Travelled South to the cross roads then headed West. The weather has broken finally, the clearer sky is nice. Later, we captured an orc (the 'pigface' the villager had mentioned.)

Dec 2/01

Grizelda rode in the wagon with the captured orc but it broke free so she killed it.

Dec 4/01

We reached Whiteheart. This "large town" has about 40 buildings.

Grizelda played one of her jokes while I was on stage. This time I broke my flute because of it. I felt I had warned her frequently enough about interfering with my profession, so I Shocking Grasped her.

In the meantime, the girl that was chasing Bjonri, gave up and dove for Magnar, then left with him to a private room. Her husband came looking for her, and knocked Magnar out. He tried to take Magnar's sword, but Bjonri heated it using a spell.

After the husband dropped the sword, Throrn followed him. He was invisible at this point, a result of Grizelda's spell. At his house, Throrn hassled him, became visible and was chased out into the woods. There he fought and beat the guy, and finally returned to town.

The town folk are now looking for Throrn. We discussed our possible actions.

Stenn healed Grizelda. I hope she learnt her lesson. It's not exactly a punishment I enjoyed handing out.

I finished reading that book. I feel quicker some how.

Dec 6/01

We arranged to pick up grain at the mill for our horses.

Throrn talked to the council and paid a fine of 5 gp. When we exited the town, we discovered Bjonri had stolen the oxen they'd suggested Throrn might be responsible for stealing.

Of course, I insisted it be returned.

Dec 7/01

This day passed while we travelled West. We heard more about a rider by himself searching for us, heading West ahead of us.

Dec 8/01 The Day of the Portal

We continued West. As night fell, a horse approached the camp -- it is apparently the rider that we've heard about. He says he is the Mage Stire sent by The Re, via Mage Yen with an important message for us.

He is very cautious, and requests us to accept a spell (Detect Lie) to determine if we are who we say we are. He asked us many question about Dentiata and our involvement. He didn't recognize Magnar. He had joined us later.

Well, we believed him and were attacked. He cast a holding spell on Magnar, Prothus and Throron then cast globes of force, balls of fire, and bolts of lightning. He was assisted by about 20 Draconian warriors. Link was killed at the outset by a draconian. All but Grizelda and Bjonri were helpless, but they too were soon under his wicked control.

They bound us and searched all of our stuff. Stile found the bag. We warned him not to open it, but he simply assumed we had something valuable in it that we didn't want released. He didn't heed our warning. He should have.