

# Listen Carefully

Cover Sheet

## Adventure by William Dymock

01/07/93 - 23/09/93

### Player Characters

Isil-Eth	Mind	Elf	Female	Leader
Antonio	Air	Human	Male	
Dramus	Necromancer	Elf	Male	
Haarn	Binder	Human	Male	
Flamis	Fire	Human	Female	
Basalic	Earth	Human	Male	Scribe

### Plane

Galatea, Zentradia

### Places visited

Mal-Nestra - Zelani city

Kelamask

Sequoia

Rejavik

Tower of Nephradio

### Employer

Nla Seiekela - Ambassador to the Solakon Empire

### Major NPCs encountered

Zelani Guardian

Lanark-mam-sara - 4th Marine Corp of the Zentradi Armed Forces

Jorruska --|

Makiko -|- members of the Zentradi Jaidani Chapter

Carathina -|

Moeg Khellec

Rye Keller

### Mission

To find out what happened to the southern cities in the Solakon Empire

# LISTEN CAREFULLY

## Summary

30/06/93

Introduced to our employer, Nla Sciekela, a Zelani from the Plane of Galatea. He told us he was the ambassador to the Solakon Empire and they had lost contact with the southern part of it.

02/07/93

Flew to the Galatea portal, located 180 miles east of Seagate, just north of Brasta. Was menaced by a wolf.

03/07/93

Challenged to a riddle competition by a woman who claimed to represent the wolf that had a grievance with me. She won so I ended up with a Doom (proved to be false later)

04/07/93

Entered the portal on the stroke of midnight and found ourselves in a very thick, hot, and humid forest. Firebombed by overgrown mosquitos with armour plating.

05/07/93

Haarn had a run in with a carnivorous plant.

06/07/93

Attacked by insectoid creatures. Found out they were natives from another continent who were enemies of the Zelani. They knew nothing of the disappearances down south.

16/07/93

After a hard slog, reached the edge of the jungle and saw a Zelani city in the distance. Reached a nearby town and discovered that the buildings were tall and spindly and seemed to be made of some sort of quartz.

17/07/93

Took transport to the city of Mal Nestra. Once there we met other Zelani who provided us with travel documents. The Southern area was originally occupied by the Huldar (The Young Ones), who were beings that looked like an egg on two legs. They are still in the hunter/gatherer stage which the Zelani were attempting to change. Also on this plane are the Hydrax (The Tutored Ones) who looked more like centaurs. These beings had already started developing a civilisation and had built cities of their own.

20/07/93

This was the day of the Conclave when the Guardians assembled. They wanted to know why the Elves had returned. Isil-Eth told them we were on a special mission.

The Guardian gave up a brief rundown of the history. There had been two races, the Zelani and the Calamari. But the Calamari had made a pact with the Powers of Darkness and tried to destroy the Zelani. First there had been a minor war first which lasted a year followed by a major conflict which lasted 3 thousand years and nearly destroyed all life. Some elves, led by Moeg-Khellec (Isil-Eth had already mentioned that name as an elf who had led a multiplanar quest

to battle the Powers of Darkness) helped the Zelani drive out the Calamari and banish them to an unknown place. This occurred on the Northern Continent. It took the Zelani another 3,000 years to climb back to a civilisation. All this happened 50,000 years ago.

Meanwhile Dramus had found out that the insectoids had come from the Southern Continent.

21/07/93

A boat had been arranged for us to go south. The first stop was to be Kelamask, three days away.

24/07/93

Reached Kelamask and went ashore for a while.

26/07/93

Reached Sequoia, the last major port on the coast before reaching the unknown.

29/07/93

Pulled into a bay with a fishing village on it. Both Zelani and Huldar lived there. The village was near of the nearest missing city. There seemed to be a strong level of hatred about. Even the things in the water hated the things on the land.

Sailed off. That night more insectoids with black wings attacked the ship. We managed to vanquish them. Afterwards we discovered that the chiton came off the corpses and there were humans inside. We had also captured a prisoner who told us his name was Lanark-man-sara, a member of the 4th Marine Corp of the Zentradi Armed Forces. He also told us that the Zentradi were a warrior race that had originally existed on another plane. However they had been driven from there by the Calimar who had appeared thousands of years ago. Now they wanted to make a home on this plane. Their portal was in the city of Regaveka, the first that the Zelani had lost contact with.

Isil-Eth composed a letter for Lanark to take back so that negotiations could be opened between the Zelani and the Zentradi. Lanark believed that the Calimar couldn't follow them through the portal but any Zentradi left behind are probably dead. The main Zentradi base is currently located in Mak-Thihrev, the Zelani southern capital.

02/08/93

Spotted the city of Drakthorn, the closest coastal city to the capital. Lanark had left a while ago with the letter. Then five objects flew in. Turned out to be two Zentradi warriors and three Council representatives. The portal that the Zentradi had used to get here hadn't collapsed and they wanted our help to close it before something really nasty came through. What they wanted us to do was to travel back and retrieve an artifact. None of their people could go as they were now too closely attuned to this plane. We finally agreed to go.

04/08/93

It had taken us two days to fly to the capital. Saw the Council and were dismissed while they deliberated.

05/08/93

The Council agreed that we should be allowed to recover the artifact, the Staff of the Archmage Leritha. We set off for the portal.

07/08/93

Reached the portal which looked like a big black disk and stepped in. It wasn't an instantaneous portal. Instead it was like a huge grey tube that we walked down. A while later there was a disturbance in the greyness and something huge with claws flew past. Close behind was a human sized figure with a spear who soon ran the creature through. He was an elf with white hair, an eyepatch and wearing a white cloak and black armour. As he introduced himself as Moeg Khellec, Flamis suddenly vanished. In her place was a human woman with long black hair and white robes as well as a large blue pendant. This was Rye Keller.

We continued on and soon reached the other end. A desolate landscape awaited us but we were able to determine that this was the plane of Zentradi. The staff was in the Tower of Nephados, not very far to the north-west. Also Isil-Eth believed that the huge dust cloud was an approaching army.

We tried flying but it took much longer to get there than we had originally estimated but when we finally neared there we could see that the tower was surrounded by bunches figures, some of which looked like shapechangers. So we landed and decided to fight our way through.

We fought through two groups before reaching the tower. More creatures were coming and there were others in the tower. The battle was going well for us until some Calimar showed up and started tossing magic around.

Just then the top of the tower exploded. When the smoke cleared, we could see Moeg challenging a very large red winged creature. Other things were charging out of the tower. Just then a portal opened next to Moeg and he, plus the winged creature, fell in it. At the same instance Rye turned back into Flamis but the blue pendant remained. In the ensuing mess Flamis was killed and I was unconscious.

Finally it was all over. The staff was found and we took the portal back to Galatea. The Zentradi used the staff to close the portal and our casualties were resurrected. We had to wait six days for Flamis's broken hip to heal.

15/08/93

Were presented with Medals of Bravery at a special awards ceremony.

03/09/93

After lengthy travel, arrived back in Alusia. Discovered it was actually the 23rd of September.

# LISTEN CAREFULLY

## (I will say this only once)

- Basalic

30/06/93

This was going to be Flamis' and my first adventure as a married couple. We had got married on the 1st of May, at the Guild Chapel. As for the honeymoon, we headed for a volcanic region down south.

We got back, finished training, then went to the Guild meeting to see what was going on. The unrest up north had erupted into something close to full scale war and most of the adventures had something to do with that. There was even a call for as many Healers as possible to deal to a plague in the area. Carzala was staying neutral but our Duke was already raising taxes hence the Guild rates had risen to ten percent of earnings. I just hoped that the war stayed confined to the Northern Baronies.

I allowed Flamis to choose the adventure as I wasn't really fussy. What she came up with was an adventure on a plane called Galatea which involved a couple of legions just disappearing with no trace (Flamis LOVES going off plane - I'd rather stick to Alusia). This adventure was introduced by a strange creature known as a Zelani. They looked like a fusion of bird and reptile and dripped some sort of black foul liquid. He introduced himself as Nla Sciekela, the ambassador to the Solakon Empire and they had lost contact with the southern part of it.

Once in meeting room #2, Nla was joined by two other Zelani. I presume they were his guard as they were carrying swords which looked like broadswords but had a serrated edge. He told us that when they had lost contact with the southern part of their empire, they had sent various forces down there to investigate but none had returned. Our job was to find out what was going on. We could be given some Hydrax bodyguards as well - they're large reptilian creatures. The other thing that he told us was that they had a complex honour system which disallowed offensive magic to be used in combat. Such things were frowned upon by the Guardians. The payment for this mission was going to be five bars of pure silver + salvage. According to the Guild, the valuation of the silver was 52,000sp per bar (less tax). This also had to cover reasonable expenses.

My fellow adventurers were:

Isil-Eth. She was a tall (6'4") slender elf with long wheaten gold hair. She wasn't wearing much but I did notice a dagger. She is a Mind Mage.

Antonio (nicknamed Herby). He's an air mage, currently covered in leaves because he has a talent which allows him to grow plants on his skin. 5'11" human carrying projectile weapons. He said his top spell was ice projectiles. Also he mentioned that some of those berries were explosive and some others were alcohol berries. He also had some mistletoe on him so I paid him a silver penny to harvest some.

Dramus - A necromancer. A 6'8" elf wearing 2 inch high heels. I couldn't see much of him, apart from the four skulls floating in midair, until he removed his cloak of blending. The skulls turned out to be hanging from his neck. He was wearing green leather and brown trousers and had very long blond hair. For weapons he was wearing two short swords.

Haarn - He was a Binder, a recently established College. He was 5'8" and skinny at 120#. A rather average looking bloke who was all 'angles' (elbows, knees, and nose). He was wearing a leather apron complete with a belt full of implements. He was also wearing leggings, knee high boots, as well as a small hat with a feather stuck in it, topping shortish, bowl cut brown hair. There was a crossbow and scimitar stuck in the belt as well. With him was a rag and string golem called Pierrot.

As for Flamis, she's cute, with shoulder length blonde hair and a freckled complexion. She's 5'6 tall and is a fire mage and mechanic, liking nothing better than banging on bits of metal on the forge. Also she's been spending a lot of time making Invested Fire College items recently. Being a fire mage she usually dresses in red. Currently she was wearing her 'flying suit' - a tight-fitting orange & red one piece longsleeved top and short skirt with a flaming 'F' on the chest. Completing the ensemble was a short black cape and knee high red boots. I reckoned it looked pretty. Isil-Eth didn't agree though. She wanted Flamis to cover the outfit up because she claimed it looked ridiculous.

As for me, I'm Basalic, 5'10" human Earth mage. I was wearing mostly greens and browns and carrying a broadsword and a crossbow. Mainly I'm a ranger and geologist.

It took a bit of discussion before we decided who was doing what. Isil-Eth became party leader while I became scribe.

The Guild Contract was handed around and signed. The stupidity clause was also added. Basically if any member of the party was charged with gross incompetence, and the Guild agree, then said party member is to lose half their treasure.

Once we had finished, Antonio, Haarn and Dramus decided to head to the pubs. Isil-Eth had a party to prepare for. Flamis and I decided to round up Aqualina and Kryan and go out for dinner with drinks afterwards.

1/07/93.

Flamis requested that the rest of the party report to the Fire College at 10am for Protections from Magical Fire which will last for 11 days. Dramus was the only one not to turn up. I made a quick detour to the Library and collected all the information that the Guild had on Galatea - which wasn't a lot. It's a hot humid jungle plane with LOTS of dangerous creatures. Even the plants are hostile. Also there were lots of bothersome insects so I went round to the Guild herbalist and got some plants to repel insects. These were planted on Antonio.

The next stop was the Earth College where we spent 600sp for a Lesser Enchantment, then Flamis and I went to see Logan Berry who was selling 12pt Greater. Flamis got hers in exchange for Investments and since she owed me monies I got her to pay for mine. We also brought mosquito netting.

The plan was to meet in the Guild courtyard at noon and fly to the Galatea portal which is 180 miles east of Seagate, just north of Brastor. Isil-Eth turned up with four men-at-arms. Our employers were also there.

However we ran into an snag. We were to go out of the Guild complex, to a secluded area, and

Flamis was going to fireflight the lot of us to a point near Brastor (the portal was slightly out of range), then we'd head into the forest where the portal was. But Antonio refused to fly. He hates fire because all the plants would burn and there was no way Flamis could protect that lot. So it was finally decided that they would wait until early the next morning (3am) when Lord Vance would cast shadowwings on them. Meanwhile Flamis and I would use fireflight and leave at 7am and, after a rest stop, arrive at about the same time (I wasn't going to let Flamis go on her own as she was insisting on fireflighting).

02/07/93

So that was what happened (sort of). Flamis double-effected on both of us, giving us enough to get to the edge of the forest in one hop. When we flew over there was no sign of the others so we attempted a landing.

The others soon arrived. Camp was set up and it was decided that we'd catch some dinner. Dramus went for rabbit while Antonio and I went for deer. The first one we found managed to get away but Antonio got the second one with icebolts. We were in the process of preparing it for transport when a wolf showed up looking very menacing. Thinking we were going to be attacked I put up Hands of Earth. When I tried talking to the wolf all I got out of it was threats but I decided to release it from the Hand as a mark of good faith. Unfortunately I backfired causing a nasty skin disease. So we left it, with some food. It should be safe there anyway.

Once we got back to camp Dramus healed the disease. I was just annoyed. Was this going to be an adventure where nothing went right?

.2.

After munching on venison steaks Dramus made an airtight box to seal the leftovers. Then we entered the forest. I got some berries off Antonio in an attempt to disguise our scent in case a wolf pack was on the trail.

The day passed uneventfully and finally we reached a clearing with a stream. Nla told us that the portal was another day away. Isil-Eth reckoned that it would be a really good idea if we didn't attack anything unless it attacked us first.

The tents were put up and we had a hot meal (with a slight addition of curry) and watches were set up. I ended up on the 10-12 watch with Isil-Eth while Flamis was on a later watch. Dramus also scratched out a circle on the ground and said that he'd be sleeping invisible in there.

03/07/93

The next morning we had a visit from a young woman with a wolf who said that she was representing the wolf who had a grievance with me. Great. Of all the wolves in the forest I had to meet up with! Anyway I was challenged to a riddle competition which I was supposed to win. Flamis offered to help but she had to answer a riddle first. She botched it so I had to do it myself. I managed to answer one correctly and got near-misses on two. I'm not very good at riddle games.

For the record here are the riddles and answers

I come before day but not after night.  
My nature is simple and part of my might  
Can be found in the aspects of men  
Still will friends elude me  
- Holy (don't get that one)

Alone in my room I stood weeping  
With every tear my life was seeping  
- A candle (that was the one I got)

King of moods, king unchanging  
Conquering in Spring, Humble in Summer,  
Extravagant in Autumn, Poor in Winter.  
- A tree (that was clever. I thought Nature)

What is the letter of Machiavelli and why?  
- S because moving an S changes WORDS to SWORDS

Head of Steel, Body of Wood  
Symbol of Law, Without flesh am not  
- Spear (I said arrow. She wouldn't allow it)

I saw an old man sailing, across oceans and waves did he go  
Caring not for time or supplies his haven in the mind's eye.  
- Albatross (that was clever too)

Flamis's riddle was:

I saw four men come together to a pass and one man walked out.  
What was in the pass  
- A tributary.

After that was done she pronounced 'Your doom is that you will finally die for no purpose, for a reason you will not understand, by people you do not know, in a place far from those you love.' Well if it's going to happen it's going to happen. She then stalked off with the wolf in tow. The others had ascertained she was an apprentice Guardian. And we hadn't even left Alushia yet.

We continued on. Finally we reached a clearing with a lone tree in the middle of it. This was the tree with the portal in it. Since it was late we decided to stop here and camp. We had to enter at midnight to compensate for the time difference between planes. Dinner was stew (with curry).

04/07/93

We were all woken up just past midnight and packed up. Once that was done we were told we had to step into a hollow in the tree and wish to be somewhere else. So we did and found ourselves in a thick forest. It was very hot and sticky. Flamis was wearing her leggings (in preparation for the insects) and a dark overtunic over the 'suit' and both of us were heatproofed. I did some spot aura checks and determined this was indeed Galatea. Dramus created an animation to carry the luggage. He wanted to time it with something called 'a pocket watch' to

determine when it would expire. I set up a detect aura to do the same thing.

Later on there was a loud low-pitched buzzing sound. It got louder. Soon we were being dive-bombed by things that looked like overgrown mosquitoes with armour plating. I got knocked over in the first pass. Flamis remained standing but she looked groggy.

I drew my sword intending to put a Diamond Weapon spell on it but figured I didn't have much time before the second pass. Soon several skirmishes were going on. One of them landed on Flamis and tried to find a chink in her armour (that flying suit is rather tough). I ended up using the pommel of the sword in an attempt to knock it off. Finally Flamis flung it away from herself. Isil-Eth, one of her men-at-arms, and I pounced on it leaving it in bits.

After some recuperation and healing we continued. However we still had about two hundred miles to go to get to the nearest Zelani city. At this rate, and given the violent nature of this plane, I wasn't sure that we're going to make it.

.3.

Antonio decided to create another of those insect things using an amulet he was carrying. Gave us a bit of a fright until we realised what he was up to. Also Dramus decided to animate one of the dead creatures. Blowed if I know why. Probably he wanted a 'pet'.

As we progressed I caught a fleeting glimpse of an insectoid creature in the bush but it disappeared before I was quite sure. I then noticed that Haarn was feeling very tired, I guess from all that mud-slogging so I threw a Strength of Stone on him.

About midday we reached a clearing with a brackish pool in it. We were also told that we were 77 leagues from Malnistra, the closest city. Flamis started using her 'spyglass' to look at the top of the trees to see what was in them and was promptly dazzled by the light (we had been travelling in perpetual gloom) and dropped the scope. She had to search around in the smelly muck to find it.

After another three hours or so, we found a bit of a knoll, which was a bit drier than the surrounding environment so we decided to make camp there. Hammocks seemed to be the order of the day. It was just as well we found this place as we had about one and a half minutes left on the skeleton carrying the luggage.

The wood for the fire was still a bit damp so Dramus warped it to turn it inside out. As he did, green stuff oozed out. Flamis pyrogenesised the wood. It still refused to burn properly until Antonio put an alcohol berry on it. Finally we had dinner - flambeed venison - using the rest of the berries.

05/07/93

There had been lots of odd noises during night but nothing actually attacked us. On the way Haarn's leg sank very deep into the mud and he started yelling. Something had got him. He grabbed at the luggage carrier (Dramus had created a new one) and attempted to pull himself out but failed. Dramus and I hauled him out. There was a carnivorous plant hanging off the end of Haarn's foot, which was now looking in a bit of a mess with blood and mud mixed up. As it

dropped off a few of us swiped at it with our weapons as Flamis dragon flamed it. I HATE carnivorous plants. I then prepared an Earth Healing for Haarn while Dramus soothed his pain and began the work of removing the infection and doing reconstruction.

After a while we found another knoll and decided to camp.

06/07/93

Nla showed us an edible insect crawling up a tree. A Nushka he called it. Dramus grabbed it, pulled the head off and tossed the rest of it at Flamis. She toasted it then gave it back. Nla was a bit taken aback as the Zelani usually eat them raw. It looked like we were going to have to live off the land soon as the rations were running low but we reckoned that the bugs on this place would never go down as fine cuisine - except maybe to orcish culture. And that was only because they were crunchy.

After a while Isil-Eth shouted 'INCOMING'. Soon we could hear a buzzing sound. At the same time several Hands of Mud (well Hands of Earth really but that's what they looked like) erupted from the ground nearby. Arrows flew into our group. The Zelani dived to the ground. I drew my sword and was about to put a Diamond Weapon spell on it when one of those arrows hit me. Flamis attempted a Web spell but it went awry hitting some of the party (it just missed me). More 'Hands of Mush' appeared nearby. Isil-Eth and two of her men-at-arms headed into the bush. Then an agony spell hit us and I was writhing on the ground. I could hear Flamis whimpering nearby but I couldn't see her. She must have gone Unseen. After a while the agony passed.

Meanwhile Dramus (wraithcloaked) and Isil-Eth were chasing three insectoid creatures, one of which had been injured. Dramus put up a Wall of Bones in front of them, causing them to drop their companion and flee around the Wall. As they caught up to the fallen creature, it died, however Isil-Eth was quite sure her Mental Attack hadn't done it. Dramus was equally sure about his Hand of Death.

They took the corpse back to where we were waiting and Dramus used Speak with Dead on it. Basically he found out they were natives from another continent who were enemies of the Zelani (this appeared to be news to Nla who didn't even know what race it was). They had wanted to kill the ambassador and his retinue but he also inferred they were defending their territory. He knew nothing of the disappearances down south. Once captured it had performed some sort of suicide.

We noticed it had some sort of elvish rune on its head part of which Isil-Eth identified as a number. She went into a trance. Meanwhile we determined that the insectoid's sword had a Diamond Weapon in it. After a couple of attempts I had created some Healing mixture for Isil-Eth as she was feeling rather weak.

The corpse had been split open and some black gunk had spilled out. Flamis used some of it for a FlameSight ritual. All she got was a blackened field with a door standing on it. As the door swung open the field disappeared.

.4.

From further questioning we were able to ascertain that we were attacked by 4 humans and five

insectoids. The numbers on them ranged from one to twenty and represented some sort of social level. These were of the third level. We also noticed, after comparing the sun to Flamis's pocket watch, that the days were a bit longer. According to the watch, nearly 36 hours passed between one dawn and the next. I reckoned there was something wrong with the watch. From time to time Antonio was bitten by native plants which had taken root on him.

16/07/93

Ten days of hard slog through the jungle finally brought us to the edge and our first sight of the Zelani city. We could see it, about thirty leagues in the distance. Between us and it were fields of some tall plants. It looked like maize but the aura said Geshuswurk. It also said the stuff was carnivorous. The ground was still damp and slightly marshy while the sky was overcast.

When asked if we could find transport, Nla replied that we could head west to a small town and obtain a carriage. So that was what we did. On the way it started raining - a real downpour. Flamis didn't like that at all and she huddled miserably under my waterproof cape. Dramus was amusing himself splashing in puddles.

A couple of hours later, the rain had stopped, just as we arrived in the city. The buildings were tall, spindly and looked like they were made of some sort of quartz. Unfortunately there weren't any bits lying around. It also looked like they had been grown. Finally we were taken inside one. It was a fairly bare room with a staircase leading up. While we dried off - with cantrips - Nla spoke to the Zelani who had been descending it and told us that this was where we were going to stay and a carriage will be arranged for tomorrow morning. We were taken upstairs to a room containing large marble blocks - the Zelani equivalent of beds. The blocks were large enough for two. Flamis began attempting to make one more comfortable for us. Food was brought in. It was a meat called Amarinth which was quite edible.

Dinner was something Dramus christened 'combat lobster'. Wasn't too bad. The wine was something black and syrupy.

17/07/93

After purifying for two hours I helped Flamis build a small fire so she could renew our Protections versus Magical Fire. Meanwhile Antonio managed to get bitten by something, with lots of legs, crawling among his plants. Isil-Eth fixed the resulting poison while someone else dealt to the bug.

Flamis reckoned she was drawing more mana than usual and some of it kept slipping out of control. I tested that by doing a Diamond Weapon on my sword but I didn't notice any difference. I wonder if it's that double fire aspect of hers.

The carriage turned up at about mid-morning so we set up. For once it was a fine day - a marked contrast from what we had been experiencing. I noticed that the sun was more orange in colour and a bit larger than our one and the sky was a bit more on the purple side. Still it looked ok. The carriage was pulled by two large reptilian creatures and we were moving at a fair pace.

Finally we reached the city of Mal Nestra. It was much larger than the town we had come from. The towers were taller and I could see gantries connecting some of them. Also they sparkled in the light. We were told that the city and district supported about a million inhabitants with five

thousand in the militia.

Once off the cart we were led into a building. There were quite a few Zelani in the lower floor. I could hear a couple arguing about the nature of reality, whether or not time was cyclic or continuous. Sounded like a couple of philosophers in full swing - a common sight around the Guild. We were taken upstairs to a room and given several documents and passes for transport.

The Southern area, where we were going, had originally been occupied by the Huldar (the Young Ones). Essentially they were still in the nomadic hunter/gatherer stages of civilisation but the Zelani were trying to change that. The Guild library records had already described the Huldar as 'unclassifiable' so naturally we were curious to see what one looked like. Fortunately there were some living in the city so within a quarter of an hour we found out. It was 4 ft high and basically looked like an egg on two legs. There was a large eye on the front of the 'egg' and a slit like mouth underneath that. Tentacles twisted around with each other on top. Around the back were vestigial wings. They also had two arms terminated with claws.

The Hydrax (the Tutored Ones) looked more like centaurs. They had already started to develop a civilisation and had built some cities of their own.

Another thing we discovered that the Common language had been developed here so they could communicate with creatures from Planes of Light - like us. Apparently this was a Plane of Darkness. Curious. I was later able to check the aura several Zelani, Hydrax, and Huldar and discovered that the Zelani and Hydrax were Dark Aspected. The Huldar were Light Aspected.

We went to the bathhouse for a few hours then we went to the Magic Guild. Once there we were given amulets to allow us to understand the native language. They were to be returned once the mission was completed. Flamis and I went to see the local Fire Adept. We discovered that they don't seem to have any combative magic. Flamis wanted to know why she was having trouble with the local mana flows. The Adept wasn't sure why that was so he suggested that she be divinated. They were surprised that she was Spring Aspected as they apparently don't have a Spring here and they were a bit taken aback with the Double Fire. He wanted to know where her Water was. Apparently they use the Aspect of Water to control the Fire. Most odd.

Later on we went to visit a building site. There was a half completed tower on the site with Zelani scurrying around. However there didn't seem to be any signs of building materials being used. Flamis used her spyglass to examine the top of the building. She reckoned it looked 'fuzzy'. So I had a look. Even with the spyglass sharply focused, she was right. I could only surmise that somehow they were 'growing' the building out of materials floating in the air. Flamis used her Mirror of Auras to see what Colleges the Zelani were using but she was getting some very odd readings. So I used my detect aura talent in order to 'calibrate' the mirror to this plane. What we got was: Green - Shaping Earth, Grey - Shaper/Binder, Blue - Mind, Black - Namer, Azure - Fire, Shady Black - Necro (we checked out their Fire and Necro mages later). Usually she gets: Red - Fire, E&E - Yellow, Water - Azure (blue/green), Necro - Bone white, Earth - Brown, Mind - Grey, Namer - White, Air - (sky/ice blue). The whole lot seemed to be opposites. Maybe it was because that we were on a Plane of Darkness, but I pointed out we would need to check it out on a few more planes before we could prove that hypothesis.

The fire mage also told Flamis that (1) this plane was created by the Eldar and (2) there is no spring or winter, just a wet and dry season (3) they've got spells we haven't got - and vice versa,

(4) they control fire by using water but earth is controlled by earth. Curious. Earth & Mind turned out to be the closest match to our own.

We also obtained some of their local currency at an exchange rate of 8sp to their silver, 6gs to their gold coins and 3 true silver pieces to one of theirs. They were calculating on the metal content. Apparently their coins use more pure metal than ours.

I also visited one of their mineralogists and obtained some samples.

20/07/93

This was the day of the Conclave where everyone met with the Guardians. They were the ones who resolved disputes and interpreted the Law. When we met with the Guardian (a Zelani) he looked at Dramus and Isil-Eth and wanted to know why the Elves had returned. He seemed satisfied when Isil-Eth replied we were on a special mission.

.5.

The Guardian gave up a brief rundown of the history. There had been two races, the Zelani and the Calamari. But the Calamari had made a pact with the Powers of Darkness and tried to destroy the Zelani. First there had been a minor war first which lasted a year followed by a major conflict which lasted 3 thousand years and nearly destroyed all life. Some elves, led by Moeg-Khellec (Isil-Eth had already mentioned that name as an elf who had led a multiplanar quest to battle the Powers of Darkness) helped the Zelani drive out the Calamari and banish them to an unknown place. This occurred on the Northern Continent. It took the Zelani another 3,000 years to climb back to a civilisation. All this happened 50,000 years ago. Isil-Eth told the Guardian about the insectoid attack but the only reaction was confusion.

Dramus tried asking the insectoid corpse more questions. He found out that the insects came from the Southern Continent. They did use magic to reach the north but it wasn't by portal or by a known flying spell.

Eventually we headed back to our room. Dramus wanted to do a long ritual so Flamis and I went for a walk.

21/07/93

A boat had been arranged for us to go south. The first stop was Kelamask, three days away. The weather was gloomy so Dramus tried his hand at fishing. Some of the sailors warned him about the 'big things' in the sea.

22/07/93

Today was bright and sunny. Flamis came out on deck dressed in her swimsuit and lay in the sun. I joined her for a while. Dramus was down below - apparently he doesn't like sunny days. Antonio tried his hand at fishing and managed to catch a squid. It went down well - especially with garlic butter (Antonio supplied the garlic).

24/07/93

Arrived at Kelamask and went ashore. It felt good to be on land again. Our first stop was the market place. Most of the stalls were selling forms of art. Isil-Eth was rather interested in the fabric they had but I wasn't keen as it was too flimsy and had a tendency to rip. Isil-Eth reckoned that was an advantage.

I went to a jewellers and spend 100sp on gem off cuts. Flamis bought a stone statuette of a Zelani and a smooth sphere.

Meanwhile Dramus was looking rather fatigued so I put a Strength of Stone on him. I watched as Haarn and him bought a statuette, Haarn copied it with Binder magic. Dramus wanted to sell them in Alusia. Meanwhile I spent 10sp for a sample of the local brew. OK but not as good as Bugmans.

26/07/93

After two days of near continuous rain we stopped at Sequoia, the last major port on the coast before we reached the unknown. Antonio had picked up an odd plant at Kelamask and he was having a bit of trouble with it - it was biting him. Isil-Eth managed to arrange for a smaller ship to be put aboard ours as a landing craft. The Zelani thought that was a rather novel concept so, between Flamis and Haarn, they figured out a way to haul the boat on board.

We sailed off. Antonio tried to conjure up a Mage Wind (he had been doing them all the trip) but backfired. Immediately his skin broke out in horrible red welts. It looked worse than the one I got. Dramus was VERY hesitant in doing the healing - but he did it. The next attempt at a Mage Wind was successful.

Earlier we had discovered that there was a village not very far north of the nearest missing city. It was decided that was going to be our destination. Maybe they had seen something.

29/07/93

Two and a half days later saw us pulling into a bay. We could see a fishing village in it with Zelani and Huldar wandering about. Some boats were in the bay fishing. We lowered the smaller boat and went ashore. As we stepped on the land I cast a Speak with Plants in an attempt to determine just what was wrong with his plant. I then followed Dramus who was following a Huldar in a pub. I tried talking to the plant but wasn't getting very far. Instead it tried to have a go at me. I stepped back and was preparing to have another go when Flamis decided to try and pacify it with pyrogenesis. It didn't like that. It bounced off Antonio and started hopping across the floor towards Flamis. Interesting. We managed to trap it in a jar then put it back in Antonio before subduing it with the local drinks. We were also told that some Huldar had gone up the river a few months ago but hadn't returned.

Isil-Eth had gone for a walk and chose that moment to arrive. She reported that there was strong hostility about - even more than usual. Even the water appeared to have a hatred towards things on land.

We went back to the ship. Once on board, someone noticed that something was crawling up the side. It looked like an octopus. Dramus managed to trap it by warping the deck rail around it then used Hand of Death on it.

After a short while we sailed off. Isil-Eth reckoned the antagonism dropped off as we left the shore.

That night the alarm bell went off. Antonio and Dramus were on watch and spotted some nasty black shapes coming. They looked like insectoids with huge wings swooping in. Down below, Flamis heard the bell and leapt out of bed ready for combat. Easy enough for her, she even sleeps in that flying suit armour of hers. By the time I had retrieved my sword, Flamis and one of Isil-Eth's men-at arms were already in the corridor. Just then some billowing white smoke filled the corridor and both of them collapsed. I was very worried for a while until I saw Flamis breathing. Then the man-at-arms started snoring. Sleep Gas! I was trapped.

.6.

Not for long though. Even though the access to the main deck was blocked, I remembered that there was a ladder going up to the poop deck down the other end. From there I could easily reach the main deck. Isil-Eth had just come out of her room, so while I headed off, she started dealing to the sleeping pair.

When I reached the poop deck, Isil-Eth's four other men were in a line blocking the insectoids from getting into the aft section of the ship. I was on my way down the stairs when I was hit by something short and sharp. Apparently these insectoids could fire darts as well. I managed to shrug that off but discovered that I couldn't get around Isil-Eth's men to engage the enemy. There was a chance of squeezing around but there was a good chance of falling overboard. I decided to wait.

One of the insectoids managed to break through the line so I charged at it, scoring a reasonable hit and stunning it. Just then I found myself enveloped in some sticky substance. Blasted spellcasters! Interfering in honourable combat.

Meanwhile Isil-Eth had dragged Flamis clear and woken her up. She immediately discharged her shockbolt ring into one of the attackers. Isil-Eth rushed off and managed to evade an insectoid that was on the poop deck. That left Haarn to deal with it. He backed off.

I had just managed to pull myself clear of the web when I heard Flamis's call for help. After taking a deep breath I dived into the sleep gas. When I got there I found Flamis being confronted by an insectoid so I rushed into attack. I certainly didn't want the same thing that happened with the rats to happen here. So I hit it, and got hit back. Ouch! Two of the men-at-arms rushed and helped us deal to it.

Finally it was all over. Antonio had been rather battered so I got Flamis to give him a Waters of Healing. We also had to extricate Haarn from under one. Apparently it had fallen on him. Also one of Isil-Eth's men had died so he was given a resurrection. Since he was also Indetectable I had to guide Dramus to him. Turned out I was the only one who could see him. Eight crew had also died. What we ended up with was four corpses and one live one. The rest (including the two mages they had) had fled. The runes on these were the elven symbol for water.

Once everything was all sorted out (the prisoner had been put unconscious and had wood warped around it in the hope that it wouldn't commit suicide) Isil-Eth ordered a course change to take us further out.

That night I attempted to purify but failed (told you it wouldn't work Isil-Eth, when I'm not in contact with Earth). By now we were another thirty miles off the coast. Flamis decided to have a look at the corpses and discovered that the chitin came off. Underneath was human skin. I got Haarn to help peel the rest off. What we discovered was a human male inside. The inside of the armour was covered in some sort of sticky stuff. Could have been some sort of glue. It turned out that the rest were the same. That implied that the black gunk that had spilled out had been what was left of a human after committing suicide. Molecular Rearrangement?

We woke the prisoner up, fed him, and decided to be rather nice in the hope we would find out more. We had a bit of trouble getting the faceplate open until he told us how. He told us that his name was Lanark-man-sara and he was a member of the 4th Marine Corps of the Zentradi Armed Forces. A round of wine later (very nice stuff Dramus) and he told us that the Zentradi were a warrior race, and had originally lived on another plane. However they had been driven from there by the Calamari, who had appeared thousands of years ago, and were finally pushed back. Now they wanted to make a home for themselves on this plane. Their portal was near the city of Regaveka, one of the first that the Zelani had lost contact with. Maybe the Zelani should have been more careful where they throw their rubbish next time.

The Zentradi astrologers had warned that we were coming. He wore a carapace because he was a spirit warrior, and the armour was grown and moulded for him at his Coming of Age. He also described the Calamari as tall, marine, squid like creatures. Yep. That sounds like them alright. He also mentions the Vagdar. Apparently that's their name for the elves but they were only known from their legends. They were known as being Warriors against Darkness.

.7.

Because of the differing length of the day, Flamis asked how many days there were in a year. She was told 200. Lanark also told us that the Zelani had surrendered as soon as they had arrived i.e. Do you surrender. Yes. Since then the Zelani had put up no resistance. Isil-Eth began composing a letter for Lanark to take back to his leaders so that negotiations could be opened between the Zelani and the Zentradi. Lanark also mentioned that he reckoned that the Calamari could not follow them through the portal, but any Zentradi left behind were most likely dead. They were the last survivors. The main Zentradi base is in Mak-Thihrev, the Zelani southern capital, Lanark reckoned it would take about five days for a message to get there and back - but it could take up to two weeks as well. Flamis wanted to use fireflight to deliver the message but gave up on that idea when it was mentioned that the Zentradi were likely to see a fast moving flaming object as hostile.

Isil-Eth gave the order to go south for a day then turn towards the coast. It was expected this would take us two days.

31/07/93

At 8am we saw the coast. Flamis had got the Zentradi design for a flag of parley from Lanark and was now hoisting it up the pole. Meanwhile Lanark handed his sword to Isil-Eth then flew off. She told him that we would sail away then arrive at Drakthorn, the closest coastal city to the capital, in three days. He also left with the translation medallion that the dead man-at-arms was wearing.

02/08/93

On the third day we reached the coast. Isil-Eth and Dramus spent the time playing chess - with animated pieces. I spent most of my time on deck keeping a watch. As we reached the coast, Flamis went down into the galley and did a Flamesight ritual. She saw a human female and some children and said that they were being fed. Dramus wanted to know who to. Flamis was MOST miffed.

An hour or so later, we spotted the city. Isil-Eth announced that she wanted 20,000 reimbursement for the Hellfires and men-at-arms used. It worked out to 2,000 sp each. Yeah, ok. Flamis decided to offer new investments when she had a chance to make them.

Suddenly the Zelani on watch spotted five incoming objects. They turned out to be two Zentradi warriors in white armour and three Zentradi in green robes. As they approached, Isil-Eth ordered an awning put up as it was raining rather heavily. Flamis went below to ensure the planned refreshments were ready.

They approached, one by one, and landed. First one of the warriors, then the green clad Zentradi, then the final warrior. I had by crossbow on standby but with the safety still on. None of the Zentradi were wearing a medallion so Isil-Eth gave one of the green robed figures another one. The Zentradi then introduced himself as Jorruska, the other as Makiko and the third (a female) as Carathina. Dramus chose that moment to appear with drinks while Flamis brought up the finger food. I got her to discretely use her Mirror of Auras on them. She did and discovered that Carathina was a Mind Mage (golden blue colour - also reversed as were the Zelani).

Isil-Eth gave a brief history of events. Jorruska said that they knew that an Alusian party were coming because of astrology readings they had got. Isil-Eth wanted to hire their astrologers as they seemed more accurate than ours. They were of the Jaidarne Chapter who wanted to talk to us. There were representatives of nine Chapters on the Zentradi Council. Four wanted to eliminate us, two wanted our assistance while the other three were undecided. There weren't too many Zentradi here - only about two million. Also he reckoned there wasn't much time as the portal was still up. They used something called a 'beacon portal' which could attract the attention of the Powers of Darkness. It was supposed to have collapsed but it didn't. Basically the Jaidarne wanted our help to collapse it before anything really nasty came through. Already some nasty horrible things had come through. Their own people couldn't return as they were now attuned to this plane. Also they had lost many of their Silvers (mages) getting access to this plane as there were many defensive magics protecting this plane.

What they wanted us to do was to travel to this original plane and recover an artifact. They know its a staff and it used to belong to the last remaining Golds (Archmages). However the main feeling of the Zentradi Council at the moment that they could repel anything that comes through. Arrogant, overconfident, shortsighted fools! Fortunately they have a safe means of travel to the portal. No rune magics though. They were all destroyed in transit (Isil-Eth picked up a wave of sadness from one of the spirit warriors at that point).

Dramus asked about remuneration for this mission as it was something extra, and he's a mercenary at heart. They weren't sure but we could be paid in pure silver and/or magic. They also had access to resurrections. Hence they will revive the four Zentradi corpses and Isil-Eth's dead man. When they mentioned they were short of fire-mages Flamis offered to teach.

We finally agreed to do it and they left. We sailed the ship out then came back in at 6pm - as agreed. Some flight warriors gave us an escort. We noticed that the Zelani were still carrying on their normal activities as if nothing had happened. Once we got on shore I DAed a random sample of the Zentradi. Three dark aspected, 9 light. More tests showed that their Plane of Origin was Galatea - this plane.

Their magi wanted to put a flying spell on us so we let them. It turned out to be something like a cross between wind-walking and shadow-wings - without the wings. Isil-Eth looked really odd flying along while sitting in a chair. Meanwhile Dramus was doing something he called 'surfing' the air i.e. standing up with a board on his feet. It looked fun so I decided to try it. Meanwhile Flamis struck what she called the classic Supergirl pose, horizontal with arms outstretched and one leg bent. Since she was wearing her 'flying suit' the effect looked rather good.

04/08/93

It took two days to fly to the capital. We saw the Council and get dismissed for the day. Flamis went shopping, buying some of the flimsy, and not so flimsy material (she wanted a dress in their style) some red and some blue - probably for her watermage friend. After that we sampled the baths.

05/08/94

Finally the Council agreed that we should attempt to recover the staff of the Gold Adept Leritha. Flamis also renewed all our Protections from Magical Fire. We set off.

07/08/94

Arrived at the portal near Rejuveka. We got a map of the area on the other side and were wished luck before we stepped through the big black disc. Just before we stepped in I put a Strength of Stone on Haarn.

It wasn't an instantaneous portal. Inside, it was like a huge grey tube, 1000' across. We plodded on. Two hours later there was a rippling and disturbance in the greyness. Suddenly something huge with claws flew past. Close behind was a small human sized figure with a spear. He ran the creature through. It turned out to be an elf with white hair, an eyepatch covering one eye, wearing a white cloak and black armour. He introduced himself as Moeg Khellec. He then looked at Flamis and said 'So glad you could make it my beloved!'. Suddenly Flamis vanished. In her place was an older, very beautiful human woman, with long black hair and white robes. But only one thought filled my mind. What had this bastard done with Flamis!

.8.

I drew my sword and advanced towards him threateningly. He reckoned that he wasn't responsible but reckoned that it could have been the person whom he was seeking, an entity called Catathric - one of the Powers of Darkness. Also the woman was attempting to restrain me. She was surprisingly strong.

Finally I calmed down - with the help of some of Dramus's alcohol stock. While the others introduced themselves and explained our mission I quickly scribbled out an amended Will and got

Isil-Eth and Antonio to witness it. I then gave it to Isil-Eth for safe keeping. Since Flamis was no longer here, I was quite sure that I was going to die on this plane. In that case I was determined to go out with bravery and honour.

The woman's name was Rye Keller. She didn't know where Flamis had gone either but five minutes ago she had been old and dying. Maybe Fate had stepped in to lend us a hand. I wasn't impressed.

We continued wandering. Soon the end was in sight. In case there was something waiting for us on the other side we prepared ourselves. Rye put Enchant Armours on all of us. Dramus followed up with NightSight. I put a Diamond Weapon on my sword while Antonio created a wolf. Rye then quickened us.

To my disappointment there wasn't a fight waiting for us. What we saw were hills and mountains. The ground looked like it had been hit by a rather large blast. There wasn't much vegetation about of all. Behind us the portal appeared as a large grey blob. I spot DAed what little there was and found out that the plane was called Zentradi. Also the sky was a light purple. In the distance Isil-Eth spotted a cloud of dust that she reckoned was an advancing army.

According to the map we were given, the staff was in the Tower of Nephradioa which lay not very far away to the north-west. The army was heading in that direction. We wanted to get the staff as quickly as possible then get out. That meant flying. Without Flamis all we had to rely on was invested shadow-wings. I used three of my Rank 8 wings on Antonio, Rye, and myself. The others were getting rank 1 wings from Isil-Eth and Dramus.

Flying seemed to take much longer to cover the distance that we had originally estimated. Had we made a rather large mistake or was there a distance distortion in effect. After a while we could see that the tower was surrounded by lots of strange creatures wandering around it. Some appeared to be shapechangers. Some of them had noticed us and took to the air on an interception course. I gained altitude so I could dive on them - sword first. There were four small ones and two large ones.

However it was decided to meet them on the ground so we landed. My landing was rather good (thanks Whisper) and triggered one of the four Self-Immolations I had before drawing my sword and charging. Just before I closed I was hit by some black stuff. It hurt, but I grimly continued.

Suddenly they seemed to slow down. Alexis went Undetectable while Antonio fired Ice Projectiles. I engaged the creature and was soon fighting furiously. I was damaged but after a while I felt really good. So this was what battle-lust felt like. Because of that, I soon vanquished my foe (Isil-Eth later commented that I should not rely on such things as it might not happen every fight. I then remembered about the Trollskin Kynn had put on me during a combat with giant rats. If it hadn't been for that, I would have died.

After helping to dispatch the last one we stopped to recover. Rye had to re-attach her ear. Just as she finished, a rat-person rushed towards us with a bundle while crying 'Save my baby, save my baby'. She then thrust the bundle at the nearest person, which turned out to be Dramus and fled. The 'bundle' turned out to be a human baby girl. Dramus decided he wanted to adopt her.

Alexis had broken both legs in the battle so it was decided to leave him Undetectable, asleep,

under a bush. Dramus left a gravestone marker in the hope that anyone that does find him would think he was already a corpse. Meanwhile we noticed that the 'army' was moving away.

Flying seemed rather slow so we decided to walk. After a short while Isil-Eth detected a bunch of minds ahead so we went around them. A short time later we were charged by a bunch of rat things. I attempted to put up a Hands of Earth to stop them but was knocked over. As I picked myself up to engage the enemy, I found myself enveloped by fire. That firemage must be more powerful than Flamis as some of it went through her Protection from Magical Fire. As I struck at the creature in front of me, I noticed Haarn bravely attacking one alongside. It managed to score a lucky hit and strike me rather severely in the side, somehow bypassing the armour. That really HURT. A split second later I was again enveloped in fire.

Shortly it was over. They had proved rather susceptible to Antonio's ice projectiles and had retreated. Two of them had surrendered. Another one got away. According to Rye, they were human but had been infected by Primal Chaos about 15 months ago. I picked up one of the discarded small round wooden shields that they had been using and carefully cleaned it. Maybe an extra bit of protection might be useful.

Two magical rings were found when we searched the bodies. A gold ring contained fear while a jet one contained fireballs (surprise surprise). Rye noticed that I was badly injured and bleeding (she was a Healer as well) so she bandaged my side. She said that I should stop acting so suicidal. I objected saying I had nothing left to live for. She replied that she believed that Flamis was not gone, that Flamis was still here, just in a different form, to perform a special task. She had been a lot like Flamis in her younger days, she added, and asked if Flamis had a lisp. I asked how she knew that, and she said that she had, when she was young. Perhaps she really is Flamis, somehow...?

.9.

After Rye did what Healing she could on me, I used Earth Healing to repair more of the damage. Darn shame Flamis was carrying all the Waters of Healing. I could do with some. (Note: Never put all the Healing on one person). I wanted to do another one but Isil-Eth said that there was no time. She wanted to get the staff and get out of here as quickly as possible. Fair enough. We could see the army battling six miles away. If they should turn in this direction ....

Finally we reached the 60 ft high tower. We could see rat and cow creatures on top. Coming around each side was a group of frog creatures. Dramus was waiting for Isil-Eth's men to charge in but realised we had only brought one and he was injured somewhere. He said we were cronie-less. As I put a Trollskin on myself, Dramus disappeared. Moeg charged the tower while Rye put a Quickness on Isil-Eth, Antonio, herself and me. Then she opened up with that Bow of Starfire. Soon some of those entities are falling off the tower.

Meanwhile the two groups of frog entities were rapidly advancing. A Wall of Bones suddenly surrounded one group while I got some of the others in Hands of Earth. What I didn't get, Perriot stunned with a Great Shout. Only one was left, so I went to intercept it. A few strokes with my broadsword and it was down.

Moeg had entered the tower by now with Isil-Eth close behind. After a short while a hole was blown out halfway up the tower. Antonio was using a Crystal of Vision to blast icebolts into the

guards on the ground floor.

For a short while the battle was rather one-sided - in our favour. But not for long. A little flying thing leapt out of the hole. At the same time a Diamond Tipped Javelin flew out. There's another Earth Mage up there. I could see four squid like things, wearing robes, with purple skin, ichor, and squid tentacles for a face. Calamari! A big flying thing leapt down and nearly landed on Rye. I turned to help her. Meanwhile Haarn was bravely attacking the little one. A commotion inside the tower indicated that Moeg and Isil-Eth were rather busy.

I was striking away at the thing when I was struck by the tail. Then I was enveloped in magical fire - again. Flamis's protection spell, protected me from most, but not all of it. The sooner she gets that to Rank 20, the better I'll feel. An ogre meanwhile, had steamrolled Antonio.

For some reason Isil-Eth rushed out of the tower door then soared into the air on Shadow-wings. She'd better not be abandoning us. Another fireball got me doing extensive damage. At the same time Antonio was transformed into a salt statue (Mind Mage Molecular Rearrangement - there should be a ban put on that spell). Fortunately that last fireball set the creature on fire as well.

In the next instance, the top of the tower exploded. When the smoke cleared we could see Moeg challenging a very LARGE winged red creature. Rye was attacking the ogre that had trampled Antonio and had succeeded in chopping an arm off. The ogre retaliated with it's shield and smashed her hip. Other things were also charging out of the tower. I was going to try and shoot the ogre with my crossbow but it was taking too long to load. So I charged it.

Suddenly a portal opened next to Moeg and the demon and both of them fell through it. At the same time Rye turned back into Flamis. The strange thing was that Flamis was still wearing Rye's amulet. Fortunately the ogre had just died so she wasn't in immediate danger. But she still had a broken hip hence couldn't move. We grabbed a Waters of Healing each and drunk them then Flamis attacked the advancing hordes with a Web of Fire (narrowly missing Dramus in the process - he had been busy with Spectral Hands and Hands of Death. That's what you get for being invisible in a battle).

The Calamari firemage hit me with a Bolt of Fire and I had to roll as my clothes caught on fire. Another ogre advanced on us. Before I could do anything about it, Flamis was hit. This was not a good place to be. Then I was hit by the ogre's club and everything went black.

By the time I came around it was all over. The Trollskin had saved me from dying but all around was carnage and death. Flamis had also died. I just hoped that the Zelani could do something for her. While I was rigging up some sort of stretcher for her and Isil-Eth's man, Dramus put a Preserve on Flamis then the temple was searched. The staff was found, as well as a tapestry, a set of candles and a short sword. All were magical according to Haarn.

I DAed the child that Isil-Eth and Dramus were planning to bring up - as stepmother and stepfather (Poor kid) and discovered that her Plane of Origin was Zentradi and her MA rating was 18. Dramus wasn't too pleased. I think he was planning on raising another necromancer.

The trip back to the portal was uneventful and soon we were back among the Zentradi. It took them two attempts to resurrect Flamis and it would take another six days before her hip was fixed. The only thing they couldn't fix was her sulk when she found out she was back to normal fire

aspect. Also she was weaker than before.

We watched the portal was closed but the ritual cost the lives of three of their copper mages as they absorbed the energy and incinerated themselves.

Flamis was stuck in the hospital for nearly six days as her hip healed. I spent much of my time visiting as well as running errands. I did try to get in a bit of weapon practise but their fighting style was rather unusual.

While this was going on, Haarn was rebuilding Perriot and Isil-Eth was conducting negotiations.

15/08/93

It was eight days after we had returned from Zentradi. We took part in an awards ceremony and were awarded magical medals. They turned out to be Medals of Bravery and helped with fear checks. Also we received 30,000sp for our efforts resulting in 5,000sp each. Dramus expressed an interest in the tapestry as it depicted several examples of battle tactics for learning Military Scientist however some of the scenes were rather obscene.

17/08/93

Flamis was out of hospital. She also went to visit a namer, to get herself divinated, a philosopher for further information on the results, and a mechanic for no apparent reason. Something to do with toys. It turned out that she is an incarnation of the Consort of the Eternal Champion. Great! What does that make me then? This also meant that she was able to do a special ritual to communicate with the other incarnations - and from what she was saying, some of them sounded really strange.

That night I discovered Dramus, Antonio, Haarn, and Isil-Eth having competitions with some animated hands. Chariot racing Dramus called it. I was getting rather good at it.

Much later on Flamis was woken up by the sound of Haarn yelling. It turned out that Antonio's killer plant was attacking him. It had already managed to bite off a bit of his ear. There was no sign of Antonio. Dramus managed to catch it in a hand then he and Isil-Eth went looking for Antonio.

18/08/93

Antonio showed up and Dramus told him that he should keep his plant under control. Antonio looked rather bemused and pointed out that he had it with him all the time. Sure enough it was there. But it looked smaller somehow. Dramus put the big one on Antonio and the two plants immediately fought each other. The big one won and ate the smaller one before settling back with a satisfied burp.

Soon we set off for the port city with the treaty and a deputation of 12 spirit warriors and 6 diplomats. We spent most of the day flying but stopped for lunch. During that stop Antonio tried to make a pass at one of the spirit warriors, a big tough woman. He was knocked unconscious for his trouble. Just before dusk, we arrived back on board.

24/08/93

It took us six days to reach the Northern Continent. Just as we were coming into port Antonio managed to backfire a Mage Wind with what Haarn diagnosed as a Creeping Senility. So, as soon as we docked at Mal Nestra, Antonio went to have the curse removed. Meanwhile Flamis went to see a Guardian.

26/08/93

We had to wait two days before Antonio was well enough to leave. This time we were escorted by the six spirit warriors who were very useful in helping to beat off the dangers in the jungle. So much so, that we were able to make it back to the Alusian portal without major incidents.

03/09/93

We finally reached Alusian soil after having spent 60 days off-plane. However when I tried to translate the Galatean day of 36 hours into the Alusian 24 day, it worked out that we were away for nearly 90 days. The next Guild meeting was either tomorrow, or yesterday. So we trudged out. Finally, at lunch time, we made it back out of the forest. Flamis was anxious to get back to the Guild so she could be checked over so we fire-flighted back. The others decided to take a boat and sail down the river. (The Sweetwater river, which terminates at Seagate, also goes through Brastor).

Once we arrived at the Guild, we discovered that it was the 23th of September. The meeting was next week. Both of us got checked out and I discovered I wasn't Doomed at all. I wandered out muttering something about women with warped senses of humour. Flamis was Doomed though and there was no shifting that. Looks like she's stuck with being the Eternal Consort.

28/09/93

I was having a drink at my favourite pub when an excited chap rushed in yelling something about a party on the river. So I grabbed a couple of kegs of Bugman's beer and went to investigate. It turned out to be the rest of our party. They had managed to obtain a couple of flasks of wine in Brastor and had consumed them on the way down. Dramus was looking decidedly pickled. Once they had reached Seagate, and had a near collision with the ferry, Dramus had sent a message to the inn to get everyone down to join them. It wasn't long before the Sweetwater was jammed with boats. It was even possible to walk from one bank to another without getting wet. If this sort of thing happened more often we wouldn't need the ferry - or the new bridge.

After the rest of them sobered up and were checked over we sorted out our pay. That turned out to be 47,805sp + 3cf (after tax). I paid 3600 to Isil-Eth as my share of her expenses and decided to stay with the money. No one objected to Flamis keeping Rye Keller's amulet so she did.

Most of my funds ended up going to help pay for our new house and servants, but there was quite enough left over for a comfortable lifestyle. Maybe it is time to retire and raise chickens.

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