

Down on the Farm...

We all shuffled into the meeting room, leaving weaponry at the door, oh well I suppose I won't need my battle axe in here, maybe. Around the room I spotted a lot of faces I didn't know however just as I thought that, besides my hobbit companion I wouldn't know anyone else I spotted Elan from my earlier encounter. We exchange pleasantries and wondered what we would be up against this time.

A man named Garamond entered the room and told us of some trouble a group of farms had been having and said that he would like to have a group of some sort check it out, he also told us of some strange circles that had been appearing around the area and that they may just be a coincidence. Yeah right and elves *are* likable sorts. Apparently we would all be flying to a group of farms called Geoff's Agreement, an Airmage known as Stonewind would also be helping with the flying side of things. We all agreed, sorted out the party things and prepared. We would be leaving early as for nearly the next two weeks we would be birds.

Over the course of the next 13 days of flying it appeared we had not finished learning, as Eidolon proceeded to what he called 'Drill' us in military tactics. It appeared the old charge at them with the weapon out front and ask questions later approach was right out the door. Towards the end of our travelling Stonewind departed, and we continued onto the high Pastures. Upon flying over the pastures we saw our first circle, in amongst a lot of scrub and bush, we continued onto flatter land. Setting down we came across our second circle and we began our investigations. Nothing was turned up however and the grass was pretty uncooperative to talk too, mind you it was also quite stupid.

We decided to investigate up here for a bit before heading into rivers end and then onto Geoff's agreement. We started a few tests on the ground itself, digging down into it, and found that all normal activity had been 'sucked' out of it. We couldn't turn up any magical causes but then again we couldn't also turn up any natural causes as to why this would happen. Since it was getting late we setup camp for the night.

The next morning we set off for a nearby lake to investigate around there, while on the way however we were to get our first piece of drama, namely in the form of a hobbit named Bob. Now if you know Bob or have read anything about him, believe me, it's all true! He is stupid at times, however this time.... It seemed that Garamond had been eating some clover on the way and Bob had asked him what it was and if it was nice. Garamond told him and said that he liked it and offered some to Bob and that's when all hell broke loose. Bob Apparently didn't like the clover and tried to go after Garamond, however before he got even close Eidolon grabbed and restrained him. Bob and I walked towards the back from then on, Bob so he wouldn't be near him, and me so I could keep a leash on him. (Not literally, although that's probably not a bad idea)

The lake was a crystal Blue, with the clearest water I've ever seen. The sun, shimmering off the surface, it was easy to see how people can be captured by such a sight. In the near distance we could hear the yapping of dogs, so we decided to investigate. It appeared we had come across a Hobbit wielding a crossbow and a couple of dogs, the dogs of course wouldn't be a problem. We introduced ourselves and he introduced himself as Ogre and he was up here minding the sheep. Some of the others had decided to relax by going for a dip, I decided to sit down and rest for a while, while having a talk with the dogs. We sat and had a lunch of fresh fish which was a

bit of a change from rations, and a welcomed one while deciding where to go next. The quickest way down from where we were was the cliff but that appeared to steep and slippery to climb with any ease so both Eidolon and Garamond decided to ferry us all down. Arkham and I were last and he refused to fly with Eidolon, something I should have learnt from, Eidolon carried me down with total ease, the landing however was something a little less to be desired. Oh well no permanent damage.

Looking around I wasn't the only one who had taken some damage, Reck lay on the ground in agony, Eidolon worked out she had a broken hip bone, instead of looking for a healer which would probably take time I offered my Potion of repair broken bone, at least it would soothe that pain. She also needed healing and so people proceeded to set about doing that however at the end Reck was speechless, utterly! Apparently a healing spell had backfired and she had become mute so it was off to Rivers End to have her Unmuted. On the way we noticed from the air a stone bridge, the strange thing being that it really had no roads leading to or from it, I guess we'd investigate it later however we flew on to Rivers End where Garamond suggested we stay at an Inn called The Blue Sail as he was known there. The next day we headed off to the markets splitting up to check out our own things while Reck was taken to have her voice restored. Kayseri and I headed off to do a little shopping, while it appeared that Eidolon had gone off and gotten himself invited to a party. Around noon we all met for lunch, it was nice but different and decided we'd probably better head up towards the farm, Garamond told us that we could Probably find Jackson who'd be able to take us by boat up to Geoff's Agreement so after eating we went out and found him. I was still taking in the sights, and probably not concentrating to much, but he was invited to dinner to talk more, although he did mention setting off tomorrow.

That night Eidolon had a guards party to goto, he decided to take both Galland and Elan with him. The rest of us had to stay behind and talk to Jackson. I'm not sure who got the better deal in the end, those going off with the elf in tow or us, staying behind to be petrified by boredom. If Jackson was a healer then he would have been preserving us with his talk, needless to say it was long and it was boring I think I excused my self slightly early, Bad leg an all.

The next morning, early we set off down to the docks, we were leaving at 10, ghods, another trip with Jackson! With a steady wind we left, Arkham was quite pleased to be leaving as Rivers End was a Low Mana Zone, oh I forget to mention that Arkham now has a pet, a small blackbird and he's teaching it to say curse.

We traveled up the river for most of that day, Eidolon related how the dinner with the guards went, commenting only on how Galland in his infinite elven wisdom had pointed out to them while passing a fountain "Now remember, thats a fountain, not a urinal." Always the Jolly Joker. The journey took most of the day as we had a steady wind and we arrived sometime around sun down. We were met at the jetty by Danno who knew why we were here. He greeted us and invited us to have something to eat, we gratefully accepted and decided that we'd probably make some headway towards Farm Danno. After an hour or so we set off, arriving sometime later at Farm Danno, deciding to see if anything would happen over night we camped outside on a small hill about half a mile away that gave a nice view of the farm. Watches were setup and some of us slept a nice rested sleep.

Not again! I really have to get an Amulet of restful sleep or something, why is it whatever

your looking for always chooses the middle of the night to attack, why can't they sneak up behind you in the middle of the day when your awake, how rude. Yes it appeared we might actually get to see what it is we were up against, Apparently someone in the party had heard movement, looking around we couldn't see anything. There was something though, a rattling in the grass here and there and looking for whatever it was provided us with nothing. It seemed to go away after a time and had us all puzzled, since we had witchsights and things and couldn't detect anything we ruled out Invisible entities. A careful examination of the sight revealed one of the backpacks had been interfered with and some food apparently unwrapped. Eidolon had also dropped 2 big walls of light looking for this thing, apparently they were going to be lasting a while. Since there wasn't anything we could do nor anything more to find out we went back to sleep.

The next day we headed into Farm Danno, the others already having arrived and proceeded to gather information on the area and form a rough map adding dates and places where the circles had turned up and where the other farms were. After a days sifting through information it appeared there might be some links to the Ordos Claim farm, not just the fact they had an Earth Mage named Damien. It seemed that at times the Ordos Claim farmers had been near the circle sightings close to or after their appearance, they moved to number one on the suspect list! We decided to get moving and check out some of the other farms, mainly to confirm facts and to meet the farmers. None of the other farmers had seen anything and we also began to learn whose who in the in community, they had a healer and a couple of magically able people. Also somewhere in the lot was a plains barbarian which meant in someway they were protected. It was decided to go and check out the Ordos Claim farm to see what we maybe up against.

It appeared as if they were a fairly diverse bunch, there was the Earth Mage Damien, a Werebear (!!) and we suspected at least another mage. All in all there were 5 people at the farm oh and that includes the Hill Giant who was almost 3 times my size. It was pretty clear we weren't going to learn much here so we set off back towards farm Danno however we wouldn't reach there tonight so we camped along the way. Sometime early in the morning we had yet another encounter, this time it had gotten Elan in a tentacled grip, Eidolon had cut about 3-4 feet of vine from around his neck and body. D/Aing it provided us with the GTN of Ken-Vine and apparently it was in some way poisonous. apparently this wasn't to be the end of it, it seems somehow that something had animated our Backpacks, while some of us were tending to Eidolon and Elan 3 of the backpacks 'inchwormed' their way towards the river. Kayseri all but bound her back pack to the earth and by the time we had recovered the other two packs it was getting into early afternoon.

We found some sort of plant spore residue so I attempted to talk to it and low and behold we had our first encounter. Its name was Ken Wart, I should say her name was Ken Wort, incidently that was what the Spores D/A'ed as. Ken said she was lost and that all she was trying to do was get home and that she had to get across the river. I conveyed that we wanted to talk more but she said she was sleepy so we managed to talk her into meeting us tonight. That night after we had arrived at the place we agreed for Ken to meet us we waited, myself somewhat eagerly. When ken came the others and myself wanted to see her so she raised herself from the ground, what could only be described as a cross between the Triffids Elan, Bob and I had fought before and a Brussel sprout appeared before us. She was about three-four feet with three whip like tentacles, one four foot shorter than the others.

Ken explained that the only reason that she had killed the various sheep was that they had

been eating her daughters and that when she fed she created these circles. She had come here as a seed, carried from her home by mistake and had gotten trapped. As far as she knows she's quite young. Damien had apparently tried to capture or trick her, she couldn't name him but did say "The one that could talk to me like you are" and seeing as this place isn't packed with earthmages it was a pretty safe conclusion. We decided that Ken must be wanted by Damien for some sort of EarthMage ritual, certainly nothing i've ever heard of, we decided that we should go and explain and clear everything up with the farmers, finding out that Ken also understood Common would help this along. While we were talking to Ken D/a's were done and revealed Ken had a college, the Worts and Boils I had on my head also told me she could do magic, seems that ken is a wicker, being only a baby she only seemed to have the general spells of the college, Arkhams eyes lit up for just a brief moment at the prospect of the plant being a Wicker.

Eidolon took Ken ahead to clear things up with Danno seeing as Danno was the representative while the rest of us followed by foot. By the time we arrived it looked as if Eidolon had explained our stance, Danno welcomed us and offered the Farm Cottage to us to stay in while some food was bought. While the rest went on a couple of us stayed behind to carry the food down to the cottage. Sitting around and eating all together we really started to notice how red Eidolon had become, its probably all the light that we've been having lately. Needless to say I went outside before D/Aing him, what I turned up was quite a laugh, in fact it wasn't even natural, I had my suspicions. Ken was settled in and we decided to do the same thing, only a lite watch was set.

It was in and around one in the morning when I saw something, quickly I woke up Eidolon then suddenly we were all in Agony, and Word is misspelled. Exactly what it was according to Arkham. I quickly spoke to Ken, to see if she was alright, she was being compelled to follow by Damien and there wasn't anything we could do about it. Eidolon had taken off after whoever was attacking us as had Elan and Reck, the rest of us trailed behind. After we caught up with the other three it looked like there had been considerably more fighting than what was said. The Ordos Claim people were responsible and apparently they also had which sights, wind walking and a host of other spells. It looked like we were up against and Earth, Necromancer and Air mage with the possibility of a solar as well. Things didn't look to good considering. Eidolon devised a plan whereby Kayseri (A volunteer) would go into the enemy territory unseen scout around and report back with the whereabouts of Ken while we drummed up the farmers and made sure they were safe.

We headed off to farm Danno to let them know that it would probably be best if they headed for Farlans Close as it was built on the site of an Fort Ruins.

While flying Eidolon discovered we were being watched, by a flesh golem of some sort, from what he told us while we were patching him up he managed to get above the thing and dived on it, it unfortunately was far to fast for him, but we managed to get the drop on it and after sinking Iron crossbow bolts and assorted other things its way. It ended up being bound in irons, Chain, locked in in a huge chest with an Iron Anvil attached to the chest. Oh and a piece of iron for good measure. We had to head off to a pre-arranged meeting point so we didn't stick around. A couple of hours later Kayseri returns and informed us the place was riddled with traps and also of yet another person, someone in assassins blacks or similar clothing. She appeared just to be scouting around the camp and Kayseri couldn't tell wether or not she was part of the Claim or if she was working against them. We decided that we may require reinforcements so a messenger was sent to Farlans

Close (Very handy these wings of Eidolons) asking for archers or anyone handy with crossbows and bows to come to

Delwyn's Rock. (A local monument, a huge spire where some woman threw herself off) The farmers agreed and we continued our scouting of Ordos Claim. Now that we were there and it was pointed out we could see this other figure, felt the hatred growing inside me for what they were about to do to this plant, what they may have done. Pity she wasn't a better ranked Wicker.

At around lunch time we headed back to Delwyn's Rock, more out of exhaustion than anything, we ate a quick meal and grabbed 6 or so hours sleep while the farmers looked over us for protection. Once we awoke it was decided to ransom off the Golem for Ken, if Ken was still alive. If not, well we'd cross that bridge when we came to it.

We sent the note to Ordos Claim and they opened talks with Eidolon. He came back with a dead Ken, somehow we knew this was the way Ken would come back. We then proceeded to bugger off back to Delwyn's Rock to tell the farmers what was going on, on the way though we noticed the figure in black following so we headed back and told her to bugger off, which she promptly did.

We set off again only to find Johnny Small the hill giant following us with a white piece of cloth tied to a big pole. He explained that the others had just left and that he really had nothing to do with the attacks. If we could negotiate something with the farmers he'd be most happy. He gave us a wind walking invested and 4-500sp for the trouble.

Reck and Eidolon had gone ahead to Farlans Close and told them that we had basically taken care of the problem but to actually get rid of the Ordos claim forces would require money and a slightly different party as they knew our skills.

We all met up at Delwyn's rock and proceeded to tell each other about both deals and then figured why not charge a commission for negotiating with Ordos Claim (to cover the costs of preservation/resurrection to Ken) for peace. They agreed. It seemed as if Damien had used Ken in a ritual to permanently give himself and perhaps Orion an earth spell as a permanent effect. Whatever ritual they engaged in it wasn't a standard earthmage one. It also seems that most of their magic was Investments based.

Reck flew over to Anyas farm and found out that she was the one who had giving the Ordos claim lot Witchsights, otherwise they would have harmed her family, all this time the number of their mages was decreasing from what we expected. We all decided to get some rest before heading back off to Ordos Claim and then off to Rivers End.

We stayed that night at Ordos Claim and Johnny Small told us to take whatever we like (except for a few items) as part of the payment as well. I don't think we found anything interesting. In the morning we'd be exploring the caves before heading off to Rivers End. Nice passed well and people seemed relatively recovered. Kayseri went down into the mines first and found a hands of Earth

trap, the hard way. We devised a method of breaking the hands and slowly got through them. Kayseri warned us before going down that there were still a couple more traps which she would disarm. At least I presumed she'd disarm them. Scouting further found two more crossbow traps, a ward trap of some

kind and finally the place where the sacrifice had been committed. All along the tunnels we

traversed were small planting boxes and large planting boxes full of the funny mushrooms. Arkham after he came in the back-door which we also found in the chamber said this to be a Place of power for Wickers, Go figure an Earth ritual and the wickers get the benefit, theres justice for you!

Since most people were willing to stay behind I volunteered to help Eidolon with Ken and the cash, we were set to head off to Rivers end having successfully explored every nook and cranny, if there was anything else the others would find it. We set off and got there with no hitches, seems Eidolons flight practise has been paying off as I managed to pull off the most spectacular landing, I could see that in Eidolons eyes. Once arriving we checked in at the same inn that we had stayed in before and immediately found out where the local healers and herbalists are and went out.

The town healer of considerable rank told us that she couldn't do it and that we would need to find someone who actually dealt with plants of this nature. unfortunately she didn't know anyone else who could do it either. We next went to the herbalists with basically the same results, however we did have a bit of better luck in that the Herbalist gave us a couple of preservative potions that should keep the body until it can be regenerated.

I went back to the inn as Eidolon had to have something done at the healers. tomorrow the others would be here and we'd be able to get back to the guild...

-The End-