

Dazed and Confused

Adventure by Scott Raymond

Duration 65 days (1st Thaw '03 - 17th Blossom)

Adventurers

Imelio de Juran	Mind	Male	Elf	Mil Sci
Sooty	Fire	Male	Elf	
Bainbridge	Necromancer	Female	Dwarf	
Thewar Rior	Non-mage	Male	Human	Leader
Grizelda Feldspar	Wiccan	Female	Giant	
Aurora Steelwind	Air	Female	Elf	Scribe

Employer

A King's Chancellor

Plane

Austranda

Places visited

An island somewhere containing a strange magical complex that we were lost in.

People met

Illara - the Queen

Mission

To check the security in the Queen's new summer castle.

Dazed and Confused

Aurora Steelwind

After the fiasco that was my last mission, which left me owing a lot of cash to the Guild, I really needed to go out again. The mission I selected was one announced by a King's chancellor. We were told that the Queen had a new summer palace but her life was threatened by assassins. So a team was required to check the security of the new palace. They did want us to leave it reasonably intact.

In the small meeting room, once the party was assembled, they told us that the castle had been built on the ruins of an earlier castle that had been there for 4000 years. They also told us that mages were distrusted, especially after an incident that created a sterile, glassy plain in the middle of their main continent. The trip to get there would take three to four weeks by sea, depending on the weather. It was located on a small island in an archipelago.

The rest of the party were:

Sooty. 5½ tall elf with dark robes and ornate gold trim. Carried a staff. A fire mage.

Imeleo 5'10" elf, with protruding pointy ears. Mind mage and mil sci. Sword called Harry.

Bainbridge. 4'8" female dwarf. Long grey robes, one red ribbon, one black, both with skulls. Carried a 4'5" long femur. A necromancer.

Thewar Rior. 5'8" human male. Darkskinned and bald with a symbol embedded in his forehead. Wearing chain armour and carrying assorted weapons. A non-mage warrior.

Grizelda Feldspar. A female hill giant 8'2" tall. Training to be a wisewoman. Wiccan.

Aurora Steelwind (me) 5'8" tall female elf. Air mage and SGT reporter.

During discussions, Sooty showed us a ladies handbag he was carrying. It could contain more than it looked, but occasionally, something other than intended would be produced. When he demonstrated, he got a live poisonous snake. It was quickly dispatched by Thewar and Grizelda but not before it had bitten Bainbridge. Sooty used a Cleansing Flame spell to burn out the poison.

Imelio became the Military Scientist, Thewar the party leader and I became the official scribe.

Once we were ready to go, the chancellor used a device to zap us to a rocky area which was a dead magic zone. It turned out we were in a crater, ringed by a single building. The Chancellor led us to the building where we were met by a squad of guards carrying unfamiliar weapons. Once the Chancellor spoke to them, they let us by.

Outside, we were taken to a floating platform that was pulled by the ugliest eight legged draft animal I had ever seen. We all climbed on the platform and had an hour long journey, being driven down to the harbour where a rather odd looking boat was waiting. It was 150 metres long and it turned out we were riding inside it.

We had to be strapped into seats as it quickly accelerated out of the harbour but, once it reached full speed, we were able to move about. One of the crew showed us around. It turned out this was the Royal Yacht and we were the only passengers. It had quite a few amenities on board, including swimming pool, weapons training area and archery range. We also discovered that this was a world where magic did exist but it was combined with technology. Basically magic was subtle, not vulgar like the way we practised it.

15 Thaw

We spent two weeks on this boat. I was practising my purification ritual as well as being taught unarmed combat by Sooty. Poor Grizelda wasn't adapting too well to the situation so I also spent some time with her as well. The others were doing weapons practise with the Master of Arms.

.2.

After the two weeks we reached a port with no drinking establishments and basically consisted of large stone buildings. I figured this was some sort of trading waystation. We were put on another of these floating platforms and taken across to another boat. On the way we discovered the plane was called Austranda, the Queen was named Illara but the King was simply known as the King. He had always been the King and the Chancellor seemed to have no idea what we meant by Royal Succession and Heirs. We were also told that the King didn't like the Calimar, instead he regarded them as food.

This boat was a cross between a bath and a longboat. There were no cabins, just open deck space, and we were told to put all non-essentials in the hold. Once everything was ready we set off.

It was hot and I was rather concerned I was going to burn. So Sooty kept me comfortable with Heat Proofings. After a while I was down to wearing a breastband and skirt along with a borrowed shirt over top. It was just too hot for anything else. Plus I was staying in the centerline. At least there the boat didn't rock so much.

22 Thaw

The weather was the same for the rest of the voyage, hot and dry. I was trying to use my blanket as a sunshade. I dunno how the others were coping but, as far as I was concerned, this wasn't fun. I spent the time practising my Purification Ritual.

However, this morning, the air felt prickly, as if a storm was brewing. For some reason, Bainbridge decided that 'killing' himself with a spell, and being stowed in the hold, was the best way of riding out the storm.

It didn't take long for the storm to hit. I don't remember a lot of it, except being completely terrified and being surrounded by water. I was so sure I was going to drown. Then there was a sharp blow on the back of my head and I remembered nothing more.

As an aside note, I found out later that Imelio was being pinned to the mast by Grizelda. When he discovered where he was, his response was "Oooh. I'm in heaven. Nice tits". *sigh*

The next thing I remembered was lying face down on a beach, with waves washing over me. I dragged myself up to the grassy dunes and just lay there. All I had was the clothes I was wearing and my Amulet of Luck. Everything else had gone down with the ship. The shirt was in tatters but the rest of my clothing was intact. I also felt very waterlogged, and had a headache.

The rest of the party, apart from Sooty and Bainbridge had ended up on the same stretch of beach. After we had sorted ourselves out, Grizelda went looking.

23rd Thaw

No sign of the Grizelda or the other two by morning but, after a breakfast of small pipis, I felt

I had enough energy to cast flight spells on myself and Imelio. While he flew along the beach, I went for height and scanned outwards, looking for wreckage and any signs of more survivors among the crew. However I found neither. However we did find Grizelda and Sooty along with Bainbridge. Sooty had landed by a stream so we decided to move camp there.

24th Thaw

More flying. I went for as much height as possible before bumping into the clouds. As far as I could tell we were on a large landmass. Beyond the sand dunes, for as far as I could see, were grassy plains. There was no sign of any civilisation. As I descended I decided to go inland a bit. That was when I saw a straight line in the grass, a line that did not seem to be natural. I went back to tell the others.

Just after I came in, Imelio also tried to land, however, the spell ran out a bit too early and he pratfalled into the shallows.

A while later, we were playing with Sooty's handbag trying to see if we could get something useful out of it. I got a hankie, Imelio ended up with pipe and a rather unusual pipeweed. We also got a few chilled cucumbers, a lit candle, a couple of soap bars, and some necklaces before Thewar drew a snake. We ended up having snake, pipis and cucumbers for dinner.

25th Thaw

I was lucky enough to succeed in flying the party inland and managed to find the straight edge again. When we cleared off the grass and sand on top, we discovered it was a large hexagonal slab of stone. In the middle was a brown circle with a handle. Thewar removed the door revealing a black hole with stairs going down. We prepared to descend.

.3.

We went through the door and discovered the last thing I ever expected to see. The room was an opulent lounge with comfortable chairs, a fire blazing in the heath and some mechanical device gliding along the floor. Was this the hideout of a mad Binder? There were other doors exiting the room.

“You're an elf. That explains the ears” - Thewar to Aurora.

Thewar opened another door and found a room with a large table, books filling a wall, and a body on the floor. Grizelda went to check the body and discovered he was alive, especially after he tried to stab her. Simultaneously, another person popped out of hiding and started firing arrows at us.

Sooty started casting Hellfires while I attempted to nail the bowman with Air Blasts but the spell failed to go off. Grizelda was busy pummelling the first person into unconsciousness while the others charged in. The bowman decided to do a runner and disappeared through the doorway into blackness. My next Air Blast went really warped and produced an orangutan. So the rest of the party had to deal with that.

Our captive refused to talk so he ended up dead. A search of the room turned up a backpack under the table. With it was a javelin, short bow with a quiver containing 20 arrows, and a short sword. In the backpack was a small glass vial containing a bubbly liquid.

We then searched the lounge and the attached library. There was a normal door between the two areas as well as one that was a closet containing a couple of leprechauns. They gave Grizelda a rather unusual club, a large smoked tuna. Unfortunately none of the books in the library were readable. Also in the lounge was a cold box containing unusual statuettes. We then rested for a while.

There were also openings that all we could see through them was inky blackness. In total, in this area there were four. When we stepped through one at random, we found ourselves somewhere else. This was a room with weapons on mounted racks on the walls and a pillar in the middle. There were two more black openings here. However, when we went back through the one had used, we ended up in a very odd room.

It was a small room but when we touched the walls we seemed to be pulled though into what we labelled the 'fantasy' room. This area showed you joy and everyone else seemed to be mesmerised by what seemed to be illusions. Somehow I resisted and I had to drag all of them out including the giant, leaving them in the alcove area again. Another visit showed us Hate and we suspected Lust as well.

The next room was a corridor with black openings and doors.

.4.

This turned out to be a two pairs of living room/bedroom, separated by the corridor. Bainbridge had woken up by now which was fortunate for Griselda as she was getting fed up with carting him around.

“Definition of necromancer - dead weight”

One door was barricaded on the other side but we burst through it anyway. On busting through we found a lizardman on a bed. Imelo got it in the face while the rest, hiding in the room, threw darts at him. The rest of us rushed in. After the battle, we recovered two short spears, two daggers, twenty darts and some lizard food. It was getting close to evening by then, so we rested here.

26th Thaw

Next morning, we went through a black door and found ourselves in a similar set of rooms. It was dark in there and when we opened one of the connecting doors, four crossbow traps fired. On the other side was the remains of a child's bedroom with children's murals on the wall. The last room in the group had a dead kobold and a note on a pole. A spectral hand was used to retrieve the note.

While I was trying to puzzle out the note, Bainbridge was interrogating the dead body.. From the answers he was getting, it was possible to map this place, which implied consistency. He also found out that the people who lived here were mages.

Between Grizelda and myself we puzzled out the kobolds bad spelling. The note read:

Master

We kept house nice since you've been gone. Kleko got sick and died. Me burnt body in oven. Me sick now. Not much

time. Golem in dining hall broke
Monne

.5.

The next room we encountered was taken up by a large dining table. A tatty pile on tapestries was heaped in one corner. As we entered rats fled from various places. So Griselda started chasing them. The chairs must have been fragile as they were breaking when Bainbridge sat on them.

“Thewar. Remember what happened last time you died?”

“No”

“Of course not. He was dead.”

We also found a magical metal jug and some reasonably valuable glasses that were on the table. We discovered later that five time a day, at a minimum interval of one hour, it was full with one pint of melonshine, a very potent brew. Someone estimated it was 150 proof, which meant, imbibe with extreme care.

We went back through the door we had come through but, we found ourselves in a circular room which contained exhibits. A sign said “Do not cross the line”. From what we could see from the signs, each of the four exhibits was a different form of a gingwhatzim, a concentration of magical energy. They were: Grazin - grey glowing ball of light with a shortsword and two dead hobgoblins. Tim - glowing blue sphere, amulet and plant. Packim - two green globes and a dagger and Ellison - a broken display cabinet

I was all for leaving these alone but no, adventurers being adventurers, they just had to poke it. Imelio fell over and Grizelda’s rune stone exploded.

Finally, Bainbridge’s animated rat succeeded in dragging out the shortsword. Imelio touched it and it turned into an imp called Fram, which attached itself to him. The plant became ambulatory and crawled onto Bainbridge. The dagger became a monkey which also ended up on Imelio. Grizelda got the amulet.

The next black door took us to the room we had started from. I decided to go poking in the sofas and discovered a couple of gold coins and a metal thing.

We slept here for the night.

27th Thaw

We tried the black door we had originally came though but, instead of leading to the outside that I had been hoping for, we ended up in another room that had a stack of furniture stacked up across one corner. There was also a foul odour and traces of blood.

Suddenly a hobgoblin tried to skewer Griselda as she investigated the barrier. She dispatched in but another turned up. Soon there were quite a few of them. I launched two arrows at them while the others fought. There must have been a spellcaster among them as we were sprayed with dragonflames. I retaliated with an Air Blast and ended up teleporting myself to the other side of the barricade where some more hobgoblins were waiting. So Sooty turned to flame and passed

through the barricade to help me while the others were tearing it down. Meanwhile Imelio tried to empathise Grizelda and ended up generating appropriate background music, in this case fight music. Fortunately, after a pitch battle, we were victorious.

.6.

I was down to eight arrows after that. We rested for a bit then tried to decide which door to go through.

“Rocks, scissors, paper?” - Aurora

“But you know dwarfs always choose rock” - Bainbridge.

The door we finally picked led us to the kitchen. So we searched the place. I salvaged a plate that might make a good one shot discus and a two pronged fork. The place had already been done over but the pantry was still full of supplies. So was the cold store, which contained meats and ice-cream. So we stocked up on food and stuffed ourselves with the first decent meal we had since we got here. It was interesting though. No matter how much we took, the racks were always full.

Once we were satisfied, we went through the door we had come through and found ourselves in the exhibit room. We then kept popping through doors while Sooty recorded where we went.

When we reached the pillar room we heard a click, a hum, then another click followed by a strange rumbling sound. We went to have a look and discovered a three foot tall bipedal hyena. It was bouncing all around the room until Grizelda hook shot it into a wall with her club. Five minutes later, the sounds repeated. This time we saw an ogre come out of an opening in the pillar. We ended up dispatching that as well.

.7.

Finally we worked our way back to the study where Sooty was puzzling out where we went. Meanwhile Bainbridge decided to investigate where the leprechauns were and had her magical doll pinched. This really annoyed her so she tried to do something about it. We discovered that annoying leprechauns was not a good idea, something that I could have warned them about if they chose to listen. I ended up looking like a pixie half my height with outstretched wings. Pity the wings didn't work.

One of the things that Bainbridge threw out of the leprechauns closet was a broom. However, when I picked it up it felt like a sword. It turned out to be Harry the sword under an illusion. Finally Imelio fed them all wacky weed. Bainbridge put one in cold storage.

Finally we spoke to the oldest one. He told us that the ship was upside down and up a tree with all our gear scattered around the area. I also ended up wearing something skintight in my normal form, while Grizelda was draped in a sheet. Of course, these clothes were illusionary.

Finally we checked all the doors and created the map. Unfortunately there was no way out of this complex of rooms. The door in the pillar was no help. But there was something nagging at me I had seen in the exhibit room. Just what was that circular patch in the ceiling?

.8.

Sooty had other ideas though. He wanted to know if going through any of the walls in the little square rooms with only one exit led out. So, me being the lightest and Griselda being the strongest volunteered to test it while the others waited in various strategic locations to see if I turned up anywhere else. I was going to be on the end of a rope.

First time we tried it I found myself surrounded by what I hated the most. I was dragged out kicking and screaming. The wall around I went straight in the middle and was surrounded by conflicting images of joy, hate, love, and despair. The next thing I remember was waiting up two days later with snow white hair watching Bainbridge doing a ritual. I was told I had gone into catatonic shock. During the intervening time, the others had been searching for secret doors and had found nothing.

“Can I have a new elf? This one is broken” - Griselda.

29th Thaw

The only one left was the round room. So we trooped there. On a hunch, since I didn't seem enclosed I tried a Fly spell. It seemed to work normally so I left it on standby.

What we had here were four exhibit areas marked out by painted lines with stern warnings not to cross them as previously described. There is a light glowing in the middle and the four signs formed a ring around it. So Bainbridge created a ladder and I climbed up. However, poking the roof with an arrow showed it to be rather solid. The floor was 30ft down but I had a featherfall on so I jumped down.

Meanwhile Imelio was talking to Fram and he was assured that the exit is in this room and that the lone occupant would fly up to the ceiling and vanish. Sooty was so sure the portal was in the ring of signs so we concentrated our efforts there. However, after much poking and touching, it was proven to be solid.

Finally, after Bainbridge asked for it, I put a Fly spell on him. He flew straight up, and smacked into the ceiling, very hard. Fortunately Griselda caught him. Finally Imelio sent Harry up to have a poke around. He did, and vanished somewhere above the broken cabinet. Fram then confirmed a wizard had been seen there from time to time

Sooty was the more experienced flier among us, so I put a fly spell on him. He was able to mark the outline of the hole, right above the broken display cabinet where Griselda hadn't been able to reach with the ladder, before disappearing through it. I then put Fly on the others and we went through.

.9.

... emerging in an L-shaped room. The hole had a safety fence around it and there was the inevitable four black doors and a mirror on the wall. I caught a glimpse of something moving in the mirror, then there was a blur of motion. Bainbridge drop-kicked a lettuce at it and it went for her leg but missed. I knocked it flying with an airblast and, after taking a few hits from various people, it vanished. While the rest were poking around looking for it, I was preening myself in the mirror. I had to admit, the combination of the snow white hair and the skintight maroon outfit looked rather nice. Was a bit of a shame it was an illusion in a way.

After being dragged away from the mirror we went through a black door and into a circular room. I could see a tower but I was more preoccupied with stopping by fall to unknown depths

below. Neither the featherfall or the fly spells were kicking in. Then I felt something grab me and throw me into another room. Turned out it was all an illusion and Griselda had done the throwing.

This room was a small hallway with a simple wooden locked door. So Bainbridge and Grizelda knocked it down. On the other side was an alchemical lab. So everyone went looking for useful stuff. Sealed potion bottles were taken as well as several alchemical components. Bainbridge was running out of empty containers so she proceeded to get drunk with the contents of the alcoholic beverages she was carrying.

The next room contained work benches and four floating spheres one of which was empty. More books and scrolls were on the workbenches. Imelio detected six really annoyed minds that none of us could see, one each in the closed spheres and three floating about. We decided not to antagonise them further.

We found ourselves back in the tower room. This time it appeared we were standing in mid air. Down below was misty shrouded depths and two small suns burned in the sky. We entered the door to the then climbed the stairs to the top before going down to the bottom. Down here was a room with the unconscious body of a wizard. Imelio probed his mid and determined he was fixated and determined on a purpose. That was after he went 'out to lunch' for several minutes.

The following room we found was full of cabinets, chests, and art objects of all sorts. An old man, who looked like the person at the bottom of the tower, was bending over a chest with a crow next to him. From what we could tell, he seemed to think we were the way out of here. Sooty knocked him out and, as far as Imelio could tell, he had done the ultimate backfire.

After that was the small room which was an ante-chamber to some sort of mechanician workshop. Here, somebody had been making metal golems.

Following that was a library with more cabinets and other stuff as well as another non-moving wizard. Also, for one reason, Imelio's imp decided to start climbing up me and wouldn't get off. It was also putting its hands in some places I object having hands put so, for a while, I was blaming Imelio for touching me by proxy. Finally I decided to put up with it, for now. We rested.

30th Thaw

We began mapping this level in earnest. When we reached the 'loot room' (where we had found the old man- he was with us by the way) some of us snagged some robes. We passed through the alchemical lab then into a new room. This had a bookstand, brazier and a table with a ring, wand and orb on it, resting on pillows. The wand contained a focused TK Rage, the ring allowed a temporary gain in potential while the orb contained cold effects. Also the pillows were very soft.

Finally we found the last room in the set. It was circular with a pool in the middle bordered by a low stone wall. Lying on the bottom of the pool of liquid was a collection of coins and other stuff including bones. Bainbridge sent in a Spectral Hand to get some of the treasure and an orange, nasty looking, elemental-like creature rose out of the pool. It wanted payment for answers and thwapped me across the room when I addressed it in pixie. Ouch! So we left rapidly.

However, after completely the survey we still had not found a way out. Guess we may have to risk asking the orange elemental after all.

We rested the night in the library.

1st Seedtime

We got to work searching the place looking for secret exits. Didn't find any but Banbridge succumbed to an Agony Ward then found the Petit Mort. Imelio found a second one which meant we had two pseudo dead people for Grizelda to drag about. We decided to leave after Grizelda also got 'bit' by something.

Nothing was found in either the trophy room or the room with the cup, orb, and wand. However, in the room with the hole, Grizelda leant on the wall by the hole ... and the panel swung way causing her to fall right through it. As soon as she did some sort of blob landed on her head and attacked. We fought it and won.

The room we were in looked like a messy bedroom, but there was no bed. Instead there was a pole with a magical belt attached to it. We also found old clothes, a large number of metal disks, bag of gems, jewellery and an ornately crafted stick. There was also another exit. We spent the night here.

2nd Seedtime

There was a corridor on the other side of the door with another door at the end. When we went through, suddenly the door behind us closed and we found ourselves wet, cold, and standing on a beach in front of a large featureless rock. Waves were splashing all around us. So we quickly moved up the beach where the sun had a chance of drying us off. All the illusions had gone and so had the imp & baboon etc.

After drying off I sent Sooty aloft. He found our ship, grounded on a cliff by a tree. I was carried over to have a look. Definitely our ship but there were no bodies and everything was gone. The ship was empty. Just then we spotted another ship in the bay so we headed back.

It was the rescue ship. They had found nearly all our stuff and I finally got reunited with some decent clothes. Our journey continued on towards the site of the summer palace. However, before we were due to arrive, Sooty and I flew unseen ahead with the intention of leaving a marker in the queen's bedroom. He planned to leave a scorch mark with a fire bolt. However when we got there, there was no palace, just a hole in the ground surrounded by a garden that was filling up with water. The guards barracks was next door so Sooty shot a bolt through a window and we flew off, completely undetected.

The next day we 'officially' arrived and discovered that the palace had been blown up by some overeager alchemists during final construction. Also one of the guards was singed. After reporting their security hole we headed off again.

Another sea voyage later and we arrived at the main castle. We met the Queen, a 14 year old girl, and also the King - at least that was what we were told as we couldn't remember it afterwards. So much for that interview. The 'metal disks' turned out to be old currency and we managed to exchange them for value. Also we were paid the agreed sum. We then made our way to the Guild via a hole in the ground. It took us a week to recover from that portal trip.

Basically it was two weeks before the Guild meeting, around the 17th of Blossom by the time we

were in a fit state to start training again. The treasure was split up and valued. All I was interested in was one of those really comfy ultra soft cushions. The melonshine jug we decided to keep as a party treasure as we could always sell the hooch to pay for living expenses. It produced a pint of hard liquor four times a day.

Now, with the proceeds, I could finally get those spells back.