

THE SCROLL OF HIMCULES.

GAME PLAYED FROM SEPT 1996 TO DEC 1996, GM = BRYAN HALDEN. THANKS, BRYAN.

CAST: SCORPION, HUMAN NAMER (ANNA) SCRIBE  
AXY, HUMAN NAMER/FIGHTER (?)  
DYLAN, HUMAN MINDMAGE (?)  
BRITAMUS, HUMAN CELESTIAL (NIGEL)  
MR. PINEFELLA, HUMAN MINDMAGE/FIGHTER (NOEL)  
SH'REL, HUMAN BINDER (SCOTT)  
SIR DONATALON, HUMAN E&E (PATCHES)  
DUNLON, HUMAN WICCA (CALLUM)

SUMMARY:

HIRED BY THE GUILD TO FIND, BRING BACK OR DESTROY A SCROLL ABOUT HIMCULES THAT CONTAINED WITHIN IT A KEY TO A PLANE OF PURE MANA. FOUND WITHOUT UNDUE DIFFICULTY AND GIVEN INTO THE HANDS OF ONE WHO COULD DEAL WITH IT CALLED THE MANA MONITOR. NOT THAT WE HAD MUCH CHOICE. SHANGHAIED WHILST RETURNING TO SEAGATE BY MANA BEING TRAPPED BETWEEN PLANES: OFFERED US NICE THINGS IF WE WOULD GO TO SOME OTHER PLAIN ON A SMALL, SAFE MISSION TO FREE IT, OR NASTY THINGS IF WE DIDN'T. WENT TO NASTY PLANE OF GREATER UNDEAD CALLED SEPHONE AND BATTLED DOWN TO THE LAST MAN TO FREE THE BASTARD. LUCKILY THE GREATER UNDEAD DIDN'T WANT OUR CORPSES AND SENT US BACK WITH THEM. RESURRECTIONS, HEALINGS AND CURSE REMOVALS DONE AT HIS EXPENSE ON PLANE CALLED PERCY, PAYS US PROMISED NICE THINGS, OFFERS US SOME EASY MONEY ON ELUSIA. PARTY AGREES. GO TO ELUSIA, FIND EASY MONEY, STICK AROUND LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE IT HARD MONEY (FUCKWITS) THEN GO BACK TO SEAGATE.

DIARY:

1 JAN, 1996: GUILD MEETING. SUBJECTED TO TELEPATHY TO DETERMINE TRUSTWORTHINESS (HA) AND GEAS NOT TO TELL ANYONE WHAT WE'RE UP TO UNTIL IT'S OVER BEFORE WE'RE TOLD WHAT WE'RE UP TO. HAVE TO FIND SCROLL ABOUT HIMCULES, APPARENTLY BEING HELD BY DOTTY HISTORIAN, GET INFO ABOUT IT'S DISCOVERY, RETURN IT TO SEAGATE OR DESTROY IT BEFORE AT LEAST THREE OTHER GROUPS GET THEIR HANDS ON IT. SCROLL CONTAINS KEY TO PLANE OF PURE MANA, GUILD RECKONS IT COULD DESTROY ELUSIA, DISCOVERY MAY HOLD CLUES TO HOW IT IS USED. WE TO GO WITH SAMUEL, MASTER THEIF AND SPY, TO THEIVES GUILD IN BRASTA, POSING AS THEIVES. GET THEIR INFO AND HEAD OUT TO NOVODON TO FIND CUTHBERT DELACY; CROTCHETY UNAPPRECIATED HISTORIAN. DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH OF A HEADSTART OR INFO THE OTHER GROUPS HAVE. BE PAID 8,000 SP EACH IF FULLY ACCEPTABLE JOB DONE, LESS APPROPRIATELY OTHERWISE. REASONABLE EXPENSES PAID. I GET SCRIBE, DON GETS MILITARY SCIENTIST, AXY GETS PARTY LEADER. DECIDE TO TRAVEL AS WANDERING TROUBLADOURS CALLED THE CAZALAN EIGHT. SH'REL, WHO'S A HOT PIECE OF ASS, GETS DOWN TO SEWING COSTUMES. SHE CAN TAKE MY INNER LEG MEASUREMENT ANY TIME. I GET A QUARTER-HORSE ON EXPENSES.

TAKE FIVE DAYS DOING MILITARY SCIENTIST PRACTISE IN THE MORNING AND ACT PRACTISE IN THE AFTERNOON. MY ACT IS WHIPPING THINGS WITH MY EYES COVERED, SO PRACTISE WITH WHIP. ALL GET THREE MONTH LESSERS, THEN DON DOES GREATERES ON EVERYONE AND GIVES ME A TRIPLE. WAHAY! NINE FUCKING MONTHS! I BUY HIM A DRINK.

6 JAN: LEAVE SEAGATE. GET TO ARMSFERRY. STAY AT TAVERN IN RETURN FOR ACT. GROPE BARMAID, GET SLAPPED, SO DESCRIBE HER FROM HEAD TO FOOT FOR ACT. DON'T GET LAID. FUCK.

TAKE SEVEN DAYS GETTING TO BRASTA, CAMPING OUTSIDE. WATCH ORDER = 10PM ME AND AXY, 11PM ME AND SH'REL (YEAH - SMART BASTARDS THOSE WATCH ORGANISERS), 12PM SH'REL AND BRITOMUS, 1AM BRITOMUS AND DYLAN, 2AM DYLAN AND DUNLON, 3AM DUNLON AND DON, 4AM DON AND PINEFELLA, 5AM PINEFELLA AND AXY.

13 JAN: GET TO BRASTA, MAKE A GRAND ENTRANCE, SAMUEL GOES WANDERING. I GET TO FLOOR A FAGGOT IN THE PUB THEN SPEND SOME TIME TELLING THE LOCALS WHAT SH'REL LOOKS LIKE UNDER HER CLOTHES. THAT NIGHT SEE WHORE OUT OF WINDOW AND CALL HER UP. DYLAN STOPS HER AND ASKS WHAT SHE'S DOING. SHE SAYS WORKING, HE SAYS: "AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?" AND PAYS HER TO FUCK OFF. FUCKWIT.

14 JAN: SAMUEL RETURNS, SAYS EMPLOYERS WILL COME TO SHOW, INQUIRY FOLLOWING. GO TO WHOREHOUSE CALLED THORNBIRDS, RECOMMEND IT. DO PACKED SHOW THAT NIGHT, MAKE 480 SP ALL UP, PARTY AFTER. I GET PISSED. ONE STRANGER HANGS AT END OF PARTY = THIEVES GUILD REP (D.A = RANK 10 THEIF, LUCK ENCHANTMENT). MEETING TOMORROW FOR LUNCH.

15 JAN: HUNG OVER TO HELL. FORMAL ATTIRE (FUCK) THEN TAKEN BY CARRIAGE TO MERCHANT HOUSE. MEET SIR DELEON. STUCK IN WHEELCHAIR (D.A = HUMAN, CRIPPLED, NO COLLEGE, GREATER ENCHANTMENT, WHEELCHAIR = MAGICAL, PROTECTION AND LOCOMOTION). SAMUEL AND HE START BARTERING. DEFINITE TWO OTHER GROUPS: GOBBOS WITH HOBGOB CALLED GRUFF, HAVE POSSIBLE PET HELLHOUND, SOME NECRO AND MIND MAGE MAGIC; 6 - 12 HUMAN BANDITS WITH NO KNOWN ALLIES OR MAGIC. CAN EXPECT BOTH TO HAVE ALLIES OR SPONSORS. THREE OTHER AMATEURS APPLIED FOR CONTRACT. TELLS US TO LOOK SOUTH. LEAVE. DISCUSS COVER AND TACTICS, LINK LIFE-FORCES. SET UP FOR SHOW AND CHECK PLACE THOROUGHLY FOR "SURPRISES". MAYOR COMES TO SHOW, THEN TO PARTY. MAKE 800 SP. RETIRE. 1.30AM, DYLAN HEARS NOISE AND GIVES CHASE, LOSES THEM. 2.30AM, DUNLON AMBUSHES RETURNING (FEMALE) SNEAK, THEN RUNS AFTER DYLAN WHO'S CONTROLLED, FOLLOWED BY PINEFELLA WHO GETS NARROWLY MISSED BY A DART FROM SOMEWHERE. DON STABILISES FEMALE THEN LEAVES HER WITH ME WITH ORDERS TO WATCH HER AND HER BELONGINGS. NO PROBLEM. THEN HE JUMPS ON A TABLE WITH SH'REL AND BRITAMUS AND FLIES OUT THE WINDOW TO FIND DYLAN ET AL. SEARCH FEMALE FOR TOOLS AND WEAPONS THEN TAKE WATCH. ALL RETURN AFTER AXY GETS HIT BY SOMETHING IN THE DARK BUT CAN'T FIND ASSAILANT. SNEAK IS MIND MAGE WITH TELEPATHY AND CONTROL PERSON. EVENTUALLY HYPNOTISED. SAYS SHE CAME LOOKING FOR ME TO GET ME IN BED AND TRY BRIBING ME TO GIVE HER INFO ABOUT WHAT WE'RE AFTER. MY LUCKY DAY. HER NAME'S XAVIER,

DOESN'T KNOW HER EMPLOYER, SHE'S A MEMBER OF THE THEIVES GUILD AND WILL GET 20 000 SP FOR INFO, INDICATES SUCCESS BY DRAWING A SHAMROCK IN SOME WINDOW. CHOSE ME 'CAUSE I SEEMED MOST CORRUPTABLE. DYLAN SEEMS TO THINK THIS IS A BAD THING. FUCKWIT. SUGGEST WE GIVE HER BAD INFO AS POSTHYPNOTIC, GET IGNORED. FUCKWITS. SAMUEL RETURNS WITH DELEONS AIDE, SAYS XAVIER HAD ACCOMPLICE = SABRINA, GIVES US DESCRIPTION. POSTHYPNOTIC GIVEN FOR CRAMPS, NAUSEA ETC, CHANGED FOR DON'S SAKE TO ITCH - AT LEAST SHE'LL THINK SHE SLEPT WITH ME. AIDE TAKES HER.

JAN 16: LEAVE TOWN, GO HARD OUT FOR WESTGATE, 30 MILES AWAY. RAIN. FUCK. RIDING ORDER = DUNLON, AXY, DYLAN, DON, SH'REL, CART, ME, THEN BRITAMUS WITH PINEFELLA RIDING UP AND DOWN BESIDE.

JAN 17: GET IGNORED BY 12 GNOMES. DA = GNOME, STONE CUTTING. GO 20 MILES.

JAN 18: FAIL TO PURIFY. FUCK. WHO GIVES A SHIT. RAINSTORM SO WE DECIDE TO SPEND DAY IN TENT. CONVINCED SH'REL TO FUCK ME FOR THE GOOD OF THE MISSION. GET ONE DAY'S TRAINING IN COURTESAN. AWESOME. EVENING SEE 7 GIANT HUMANOIDS APPROACHING. DA = HILL GIANT. DRESS, PROJECT, THEN TELL OTHERS. GIANTS FRIENDLY, TRADE INFO AND JOKES.

JAN 19: GREY DAY, HEAD OUT. OFFER SH'REL DOUBLE PAY TO CLAP BALODE IN MANACLES AND DO IT TO HIM. 3PM COME UPON LONE HORSEMAN WHO HALTS US WITHIN 30'. DA = HUMAN, MILITARY SCIENTIST, NO COLLEGE, HAND AND A HALFER. SAYS NAME IS AMBROSE AND TELLS US TO SURRENDER. AMBUSH COMES OUT OF TRENCHES IN THE GRASS. MAKE MYSELF SCARCE. AXY HURT IN ARROW STORM, THEN WE CREAM THEM. DON STABILISES ALL HE CAN, THEN WE TAKE THEM PRISONER. AMBROSE GETS HYPNOTISED: ONE BANDIT MISSING (BRIAN), ORDERED TO AMBUSH US. GEASED TO DIE WHEN FORCED TO REVEAL EMPLOYERS NAME. NEXT BANDIT: BRIAN PROBABLY BACK AT MAIN CAMP WITH 50 OTHERS, INCLUDING LOTS OF MAGIC USERS, PRISONERS HORSES IN THE HILLS WITH ABOUT FOUR GUARDS. HAWK FAMILIAR REPORTS THEM AS LEFT IN A HURRY. GEAS ON AMBROSE = RANK 12. LEAVE WITH GEAR AND PRISONERS, VIA PASS.

JAN 20: CRYSTAL BALL SHOWS GREATEST DANGER = 4 BUZZARDS. BIG FUCKING DEAL.

JAN 21: DIVINATION ON AMBROSE'S BODY BY CARDS SHOWS, BY PROCESS OF ELIMINATION: EMPLOYED BY A GRIFFEN THAT CASTS RUNE MAGIC WHO WANTED US BROUGHT TO IT IN A CAVE AT THE BANDITS CAMP TO FIND OUT WHAT THE THEIVES GUILD AT BRASTA WANTED US TO DO; GRIFFEN HAS EMPLOYED THE BANDITS PREVIOUSLY, ON A REGULAR BASIS, (EXCLUSIVELY FOR LAST TWO YEARS,) TO DO SIMILAR JOBS ON THE OTHER GROUPS; GRIFFEN HAS NEVER HELPED BANDITS WITH RUNE PORTALS, AND HAS NEVER LEFT THE CAVE (GUESS IT MUST BE CONSTRAINED THERE SOMEHOW); THEY WERE EMPLOYED AFTER BRASTA, BUT NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GIRLS AT BRASTA; DOESN'T KNOW IF THE GRIFFEN KNOWS OUR FINAL DESTINATION, OR IF IT IS PACTED, OR HOW IT FOUND OUT ABOUT US, OR IF WE'RE BEING TRACKED BY THE BANDITS, OR IF THERE WERE ANY CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR US, OR IF THEY'LL COME AFTER US; HAS NEVER SEEN GRIFFEN, GETS ORDERS THROUGH LEADER, WHO IS AN AIR MAGE, THOUGH NOT ALL MAGES ARE LEADERS; THEY HAVE A NECRO, AN EARTH MAGE, A WICCAN AND THE AIR MAGE, ONE OF WHICH MAKES POTIONS AND ANOTHER WHO DOES INVESTEDS, (MAGES

SOMETIMES ACCOMPANY FORAYS,) MORE THAN 30 COMBATANTS AND LESS THAN 50, AND NO OTHER NON-HUMANS AT THE BANDITS CAMP; BANDITS DO NOT DO SLAVING, AND DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE ANY PRISONERS; BRIAN WAS A NON-MAGE OBSERVER WHO WAS TO REPORT BACK.

JAN 22: TRAVEL.

JAN 23: SCARE OFF SUARIME, GET TO NOVODON FERRY. HATE BOATS, SO WATCH FISH UNTIL THE FUCKING THING CRAPS OUT HALF WAY ACROSS. PINEFELLA SUGGESTS PUTTING HOLES IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT TO FIX IT. FUCKWIT. SH'REL EVENTUALLY GOES DOWN WITH A WHOLE LOT OF SAILORS AND AXY AND COMES BACK WET BUT SATISFIED. GET A REFUND OFF THE CAPTAIN, THEN GET UNDER A BLANKET WITH SH'REL TO WARM HER UP. GET TO NOVODON, WHERE SH'REL DECLARES SHE'S WELL KNOWN TO THE GENTLEMENS EXPLORERS GUILD. GO IN AS TROUBLADOURS, GATES OPENED WITH ENTHUSIASM, AND THE GUARDS TAKE OUR PRISONERS. AXY GOES WITH THEM TO TELL THE CAPTAIN ABOUT THE BANDITS ORGANISATION. HE'S SURPRISED WE COULD TAKE 10 BANDITS, AND WASN'T HAPPY ABOUT THE IDEA OF MAGICAL QUESTIONING. WE GO ON TO THE BLACK ROSE, IN A NICER AREA OF TOWN, WHERE MISTER BLAST OF SANDBLAST PROMOTIONS WAS GOING TO MEET US SHORTLY. PINEFELLA STARTS A DEEP DISCUSSION ON LOGGING - FUCK! - SO I LEAVE TO FIND AXY. HE'S STILL IN CONFERENCE, SO SPEND PLEASANT HOUR BEING AVOIDED IN DOCKSIDE PUB BEFORE BEING PICKED UP BY SH'REL AND AXY ON THEIR WAY TO THE BLACK ROSE. MEET MISTER BLAST, ARRANGEMENTS MADE, HE GETS STEEP 80/20 CUT FOR PREMIUM VENUE = ORANGE GLOBE. GET ACCOMODATIONS, BATHE AND EAT. I GET ROOM WITH SH'REL. WHEE! SHE GOES OFF WITH PINEFELLA AND BRITAMUS TO GET AN UNFORTUNATE CURSE REMOVED. 1000 SP. MEANWHILE WE LOOK IN CRYSTAL BALL FOR STRONGEST GROUP DOING THE SAME THING AS US IN THE CITY. SEE A VERTICAL POND IN THE SKY WITH TWO DRAGONS BATTLING AT THE INTERFACE, ONE GOLD, ONE BLACK BUT OTHERWISE IDENTICAL. WHENEVER A BIT OF THEM IS DRAGGED ACROSS THE INTERFACE IT CHANGES TO THE OTHERS COLOUR. FUCKED IF I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS.

24 JAN: PINEFELLA SELLS BANDIT GEAR, GETS 3000 SP. MISTER BLASTS POOF SHOWS US TO THE ORANGE GLOBE. THAT NIGHT, SHOW GOES WELL, MEET DIGNITARIES AT PARTY. HAD 120 AUDIENCE @ 20 - 25 SP/ HEAD, RECKON WE'LL GET ABOUT 500 SP.

25 JAN: GET 480 SP OFF MISTER BLAST, CHECK OUT OF ACCOMODATIONS, SPEND 200 SP ON PROVISIONS, LEAVE NOVODON ABOUT 11 AM. CRYSTAL BALL SHOWS SUARIME PRESENCE. NO PROBLEM.

26 JAN: CLOSE TO HOUSE OF CUTHBERT DELACY. CRYSTAL BALL SHOWS GREATEST DANGER TO BE A SORT OF WHIRLPOOL IN THE AIR, GOING DOWN TO A HOLE OF BLACKNESS. HOBBLE HORSES, PUT UNSEEN ON ALL BUT PINEFELLA, DUNLON AND AXY. GO TO APPROXIMATELY 1 MILE FROM HOUSE THEN SNEAK UP. NOTHING ODD. E.S.P SHOWS ONE PERSON IN HOUSE. I COVER BACK DOOR, PINEFELLA KNOCKS AT FRONT. WELL PRESERVED ABOUT 60 YEARS OLD MAN ANSWERS DOOR. DA = HUMAN, NON COLLEGE MAGE, HIGHEST RANKED SKILL = PHILOSOPHY. SEES INVISIBLE AND INVITES ALL IN FOR TEA. BRITAMUS GETS SHOCKED ABOUT SOMETHING, WHICH HE EVENTUALLY TELLS US AS BEING THE LAST SPELL TO IMPACT IS TELEPORTATION. I TAKE POSITION TO WATCH KITCHEN AS ALL ENTER EXCEPT BRITAMUS AND PINEFELLA WHO GO TO GET THE HORSES. I JOIN THEM AS THEY RETURN.

INSIDE, DELACY FULLY AWARE OF MISSING MEMBERS AND RESISTANT TO ALL SPELLS CAST SO FAR. THOSE INSIDE PUT THEIR MEAGER MENTAL FACULTIES TOGETHER TO TRY TO SPIN SOME STORY TO GET THE INFO THEY WANT, BUT UNFORTUNATELY DELACY SPEAKS BOTH ELVISH AND ORCISH AND CATCHES THEM OUT. DOESN'T BUY TROUBLADOUR STORY, EITHER. PUTS ON A ROAST, SUGGESTS AREA FOR TENT (PINEFELLA AND DUNLON COME OUT TO TAKE CARE OF IT) AND SETTLES IN FOR SOME GOOD ENTERTAINMENT. DON TELLS ABOUT GRIFFEN, DELACY SUGGESTS IT COULD BE CAUGHT BETWEEN DIMENSIONS, IN WHICH CASE IT WOULD BE TOTALLY INSANE, AS ONLY ITS MIND WOULD BE ACTIVE, AND ITS ONLY GOAL WOULD BE TO GET FREE, WHICH WOULD REQUIRE LOTS OF MANA. RECKONS IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A GRIFFEN BUT ONLY A HIGHER FORM OF MAGICAL CREATURE, AND EVEN THEN THEY DON'T USUALLY LIKE TO PLANE TRAVEL, EXCEPT DEMONS WHO WOULD BE EVEN LESS LIKELY TO BE CAUGHT. PINEFELLA COMES OUT AND TELLS ME TO FUCK OFF OUT OF THE TENT, GOES IN, THEN COMES OUT A WHILE LATER LOOKING PALE AND SHAKY. RECKON IT MUST HAVE BEEN A GOOD WANK. DEIGNS TO TELL ME THAT IF WE DECIDED TO KILL DELACY REAL DEAD LIMITED PRECOG SAYS THAT HE'LL DISAPPEAR, TWO HELLHOUNDS WILL APPEAR IN HIS PLACE AND KILL US ALL. SAY I RECKON THE ONLY WAY WE'LL GET WHAT WE WANT IS IF HE GIVES IT TO US, AND MAYBE WE SHOULD PLAY ON HIS GOOD NATURE. INSIDE DELACY RAMBLES WHILE OTHERS DRIFT OFF OCCASIONALLY TO RAID HIS STUFF. SAYS HIMCULES WAS A GIT WITH A POTION THAT ATTRACTED WOMEN. BRITAMUS GETS INTERESTED. DYLAN EVENTUALLY GETS HIM TO BRING FORTH SCROLL FROM TRAPPED COMPARTMENT. PINEFELLA BRINGS ME SOME FOOD SO I OFFER TO KILL SOMEONE FOR HIM, SOMEDAY. ACQUIRE SOME GOOD BRANDY AND TAKE WATCH. INSIDE, DELACY RETURNS WITH 2 SCROLLS SOLD TO HIM IN THE LUNAR EMPIRE ABOUT 40 YEARS AGO. SELLER ADVISED DELACY IT'S BEST NOT TO KNOW THE INFORMATION IN THE SCROLLS. ARE BOTH WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR. DIVINATION: MAGIC IN EFFECT IS TO CONCEAL THEIR PRESENCE, IDENTICAL AURAS. DELACY WON'T SELL, BUT BRITAMUS ALLOWED TO COPY. DELACY SAYS HE HAS SPECIALISED MAGICAL CREATURES FROM OFF PLANE TO HELP HIM WITH HIS RESEARCH. BACK AT TENT THAT NIGHT, ALL CONSIDER OPTIONS. E.S.P ON HOUSE SHOWS ONE PERSON IN A COMPLETE TRANCE. IDEA THAT DELACY IS PACTED. DECIDE TO INVITE HIM, WITH HIS SCROLLS, BACK TO SEAGATE.

27 JAN: ASK CRYSTAL BALL ABOUT BEST POSSIBLE FUTURE FOR GETTING DELACY TO SEAGATE, GET NO ANSWER. GO TO PICK HIM UP AND HE ANSWERS THE DOOR LIKE A DODDERY OLD TWIT WITH NO RECOLLECTION OF ANY OF US. LAST MAGIC TO IMPACT ON HIM = MAJOR CURSE. HYPNOTISE HIM TO GET THE HIMCULES SCROLLS, HE REFERS TO THEM AS ONE OF HIS MORE RECENT ADDITIONS, FROM A FEW MONTHS AGO, AS HE GOES TO FETCH THEM. BRINGS THEM BACK AND SAYS HE'S NEVER BEEN TO THE LUNAR EMPIRE. WE HIDE THE AURA OF THE SCROLLS. DON RECKONS THE OLD PRICK WAS POSSESSED BUT DUNLON SAYS HE'S CURSED (MA 40, EXTRAPLANAR) TO CHANGE BETWEEN THE TWO PEOPLE AT MIDNIGHT. CAST LOTS OF STAR WINGS AND TRY TO LEAVE BUT DELACY GETS BOUNCED BACK. GET HIM TO FORGET WE EVER EXISTED, TAKE THE SCROLLS AND LEAVE HIM THERE. FLY LIKE FUCK TO SEAGATE, BUT I BEGIN TO GET UPSET WHEN I REALISE: 1) I CAN'T SEE THE GROUND; 2) I HAVE NO REFERENCE OF WHICH WAY TO GO BESIDES WATCHING SH'RELS TABLE; AND 3) MY WINGS WERE RUNNING OUT. FUCK. BRITAMUS GUIDES ME

IN FOR A LANDING. SEE BIG FUCKING DEMONIC EYE (FROM PLANE OF PERSEPHONE) OGGLING US ON THE GROUND SO WE SCARPER, WITH ME, SH'REL AND DUNLON ON TABLE. EYE DISAPPEARS TO BE REPLACED BY BIG BLACK HOLE IN THE SKY FROM WHICH POURS FORTH ABOUT 20 - 50 WINGED DEMONS WITH RIDERS WHO HEAD TOWARDS US. WE TURN AND HEAD BACK TOWARD DELACY, THEN GAIN ALTITUDE AND CIRCLE BACK TOWARDS SEAGATE HIDING THE TABLE IN A CLOUD AND USING THE OTHERS FLYING BELOW AS A GUIDE. SH'REL STARTS DODGING PHANTOMS IN THE CLOUD, WITHOUT ANY WARNING, AND WE LOSE SIGHT OF THE OTHERS SO THEY FIND US BY FOLLOWING THE SOUND OF ME SWEARING AT THE SILLY BITCH. SAYS SHE SEES AN EYE WITH A BLACK PUPIL AND A GREEN IRIS WITH A HAND COMING OUT OF IT WHICH IS CASTING. DROP BELOW THE CLOUDS SO THE OTHERS CAN FIND US, AND THEY SEE THE HAND. DA = MANA MONITOR, GUARDS AGAINST USE OF THE SCROLLS AND IS CURRENTLY TRYING TO STOP US MOVING THEM. SH'REL PULLS A COUPLE MORE HAIRY DODGES BEFORE THE EYE STOPS SUDDENLY BEFORE HER AND THE SILLY BITCH FLIES RIGHT IN. ME AND DUNLON FALL ASLEEP, OTHERS SEE US DISAPPEAR SO ALL EXCEPT BRITAMUS STUPIDLY FLY IN AFTER US, THEN THE HAND REAPPEARS AND DRAGS BRITAMUS THROUGH. WAKE ON THE TABLE ON A STONE FLOOR IN A RECEPTION ROOM. A THING ON A THRONE, WITH A THING ON HIS RIGHT AND A FEMALE HUMAN STANDING ON HIS LEFT. HUMAN GUARDS CLOSING IN, NO DRAWN WEAPONS. SH'REL STANDS AND BOWS. THING SAYS "ARREST THEM, LEAVE HER". THING TRUESPEAKS SH'REL AND SHE SPILLS THE BEANS BUT THE GEAS IS KEPT UNDER WRAPS. REVEALS ITSELF AS MANA MONITOR, WANTS TO SPEAK TO ALL OF US. WAKE UP IN MANACLES IN A CELL. AGAIN. FUCK. ALL STUFF GONE. FUCK. CAN'T PICK LOCKS. FUCK. PROJECT AND SET UP AMBUSH. LATER A PILE OF GUARDS WITH DYLAN, BRITAMUS, AXY AND PINEFELLA OPEN MY CELL AND SAY THEY'LL REMOVE THE CHAINS. GIVE IN TO GOOD SENSE AND LET HIM. PICK UP DON AND DUNLON, THEN TAKEN TO OUR GEAR. GET DRESSED AND PROJECT. FOLLOW PARTY TO GREAT HALL. FATUOUS LORD, SAYS PLACE IS NICKNAMED PERSEPHONE, THAT THERE'S NO TIME HERE, AND THAT HE HAS NO NAME. SH'REL ENTERS LOOKING HOT. THING SAYS THE SCROLLS CAN'T BE DESTROYED, THAT IT'S HIS JOB TO KEEP THEM OUT OF THE HANDS OF HIS OPPOSITE NUMBER (= BALANCE TO CONTROLLED MANIPULATION = CHAOTIC USE OF MANA, MASTER OF ILLUSION AND MANIPULATION), THAT SH'REL SPILLED THE BEANS, THAT THE SCROLLS BREED, AND THAT HE CAN HOLD THEM BETTER THAN THE GUILD. PINEFELLA ASKS FOR THE THINGS WORD TO BE GOOD. FUCKWIT. DON SAYS SO TOO, IN A NICER WAY. THINK IT UNLIKELY WE'D BE CONSIDERED AS AMBASSADORS OF REASON AND LOGIC, SO START SUSPECTING THING OF DUPLICITY. WHISPER TO DON OF UNLIKELINESS OF GOOD GUY CONTROLLING HOARDS OF DEMONS AS BRITAMUS CHIRPS HAPPILY ABOUT DOING THE RIGHT THING GIVING THE SCROLLS TO HIM. FUCK. THIS THING IS TOO NICE. DON CATCHING ON, FINDS OUT THE SCROLLS ARE IN THE VAULTS AND ASKS IF ADVENTURERS COULD BE GUARDS. FINDS OUT THING HAS NO TRUE FORM OR NAME AS IT IS A MANA BEING, AND ITS COLLEAGUES MANA CONSTRUCTS. SAYS IT ISN'T ALLOWED TO DIRECTLY INTERFERE WITH MORTAL RACES. DON SNEERS, NICELY. THING RECKONS HIS OPPOSITE MIGHT, BUT SAYS HE HAS NO DESIRE TO. SAYS HE CAN'T LEAVE THIS PROTO-PLANE, ONLY MOVE IT. MAKES US SOME ROOMS TO RETIRE INTO, SO WE CAN CONSIDER THINGS. DYLAN DISAPPEARS, SO TELL AXY AND DON I'M GOING TO

LOOK AROUND AND TAKE OFF. OPEN A DOOR AND FIND MIST BEHIND IT. STICK HAND IN AND LOSE IT. HAND TOTALLY GONE. FUCK. GO BACK TO DON TO GET HIM TO STOP THE BLEEDING. AXY ASKS SERVANT ABOUT DYLAN, TOLD HE'S OFF DOING SOMETHING HE WANTED, THEN HE TURNS ROUND AND TELLS ME I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL. FUCKWIT. TELL HIM BENEVOLENT HOST IS NOT SO OMNIPOTENT OR BENEVOLENT AS INTIMATED. THING REQUESTS OUR ATTENDANCE, HAS DYLAN WITH HIM. DYLAN OF OPINION WE ALL TOOK OFF IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. AXY AND DON TELLS THING ABOUT MY HAND, HE'S AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN, OFFERS TO TEMPORARILY IMPROVE THEIR HEALING SKILLS SO THEY CAN FIX IT. GIVE THING ARSEHOLES ABOUT THE WAY THINGS LOOK, SINCE NO-ONE ELSE HAS THE GUTS. PARTY LOOKS EMBARRASSED. THING NICE, AS EVER, AND HELPS AXY AND DON FIX MY HAND. THING TELLS US GRIFFEN IS MINION OF OPPOSITE NUMBER, IS A MANA CREATURE AND USES MAGIC AS A RACIAL TALENT, BUT ISN'T DANGEROUS OUTSIDE ITS CAVE. THING GIVES US A SCROLL, WHICH CAN ONLY BE READ ONCE, TO GIVE TO THE GUILD AS EVIDENCE THAT THE MISSION IS COMPLETED, AND THAT THE SCROLLS ARE EFFECTIVELY CONTAINED. THEN TALK OF DELACY: REMOVAL OF CURSE = REINTERGRATION, COULD BE TRAUMATIC. PARTY DITHERS FOR A BIT, BEFORE THING OFFERS PROTECTION TO VAULT DEVICES, THEN THOUGHT OF A FREE RAID ON DELACYS PRECIOUS SCROLLS ENOUGH TO CONVINCE WORTHY ADVENTURERS OF THE VIRTUE OF SENDING DELACY TO THE THING TO GET HEALED. THING PORTALS US BACK TO DELACYS AND SAYS GO GETTUM. UNSEENS, COROSCATES, WITCHSIGHTS AND A LIMITED PRECOG LATER AND THEY GO AND GRAB A SENILE OLD MAN AND STUFF HIM THROUGH THE PORTAL TO THE THING. PACK HORSES AND RAID HOUSE. MOST EXCITING THING TO HAPPEN WAS AXY ASKING DON IF HE HAD A MAGICAL OPENING AS WE WALKED THROUGH THE TRAPS. GET TO BASEMENT, FIND PORTAL. DIVINATE SHOWS IT'S A PORTAL BETWEEN PLANES, AS DESIGNATED BY THE USER, OR RANDOMLY IF UNTRAINED. OTHERWISE ONLY BOOKS AND SCROLLS. BIG FUCKING DEAL. BRITAMUS CHECKS OUT BED: MAGICAL TO PUT DELACY INTO RECEPTIVE TRANCE STATE TO WORK THE CURSE ON HIM. PINEFELLA TURNS BED TO MATCHSTICKS. DUNLON AND DYLAN GETTING THEIR JOLLIES CONTROLLING ANIMALS, BRITAMUS SPEAKS CHICKEN. I'M NOT SURPRISED.

28 JAN: CRYSTAL BALL SHOWS MOST DANGEROUS EVENT AS ME. DUNLON GIVES ME SOME LOCKPICKS. 4PM, PORTAL APPEARS. BRITAMUS THROWS ROCK THROUGH WITH NOTE ABOUT BED AND PORTAL. DELACY RETURNED IN BLENDED STATE, UNHAPPY. DECIDE TO TAKE HIM TO NOVODON TO PROTECT HIM FROM ANY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MANA THINGS. MOVE LIBRARY INTO VAULT AND LEAVE IN PORTABLE HIGH MANA ZONE.

29 JAN: GOING TO NOVODON. 4PM SEE LOTS OF LIGHTS FROM DIRECTION OF DELACYS HOUSE, RECKON IT'S THE MANA THINGS HAVING A GO AT EACH OTHER. DELACY MORE UNHAPPY. GET TO NOVODON, SEND DELACY TO GENTLEMENS CLUB. THAT NIGHT, FIND SH'REL HARD TO WAKE FOR WATCH. DA = SHORTER LIVED SENTIENT, BY ABOUT 10%. CHECK EVERYONE ELSE, INCLUDING ME = SAME. TELL AXY. WAKE BRITAMUS TO TAKE WATCH AS WE GO OFF TO DO A DIVINATION. SEEMS THE GRIFFEN CAN GET TO US AFTER ALL: HAVE A "LIFE DAMPENING" EFFECT ON ME THAT TAKES ONE YEAR OF MY LIFE PER YEAR THAT I LIVE, PLUS A SEVEN YEAR HIT TO START OFF WITH. FEILD SIMILAR TO THAT ON THE BED.

30 JAN: TELL OTHERS. FURTHER DIVINATION SHOWS CURSE LASTS UNTIL DEATH BY OLD AGE, MA 40. SOME OF THE OTHERS HEAR A RATTLING AT THE DOOR. TRANSPARENCY SHOWS (FOR SOME) A MIND MAGE INVISIBLE HELLHOUND. EVERYONE PREPARES, PROJECTS, OPENS THE DOOR AND CASTS. DOG SAYS HELLO. PINEFELLA HITS IT. DOG SAD. DROPS THE INVIS, SO NOW I CAN SEE IT, AND SPEAKS TO BRITAMUS. SAYS IT'S A MESSENGER FROM THE LORD OF THE GRIFFENS (WHO HE'S PACTED TO) WHO WANTS US TO VISIT OR BE EATEN. WILL REMOVE THE CURSE IF WE COME. BEHIND IT BY THIS POINT, BUT NO SUITABLE WEAPON. FUCK. IT WANDERS OUT OF THE COUNTER SPELL RANGE AND CASTS SOMETHING BACK. ALL ACTIVE RESIST AND WIN. WHEW. AFTER IT GOES GIVE THE OTHERS ARSEHOLES ABOUT NOT TAKING IT OUT. GET THE IDEA OF A SILVERED GARROTTE FOR JUST SUCH EMERGENCIES. EVENTUALLY FIND SOME SILVERED LUTE STRINGS THAT'LL DO JUST FINE PLAITED TOGETHER. CRYSTAL BALL SHOWS CONSEQUENCES OF NOT GOING TO CAVE IS A BLACK PORTAL WITH BEASTIES COMING OUT OF IT, LIKE LAST TIME. GO TO THE ADVENTURERS GUILD REP IN NOVODON. OFFERS US WATERS OF STRENGTH FOR 1000 SP AND TELLS US ALL ABOUT HELLHOUNDS. NOT GOOD. SEND SCROLL OF COMPLETION AND SYNOPSIS OF WHAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR WITH STRICT INSTRUCTIONS FOR DELIVERY TO THE ARSEHOLE WHO HIRED US, THEN LEAVE NOVODON ON FERRY. 3 PM LOAD TO FLY WITH ME AND AXY HAVING TO SUFFER THE WOMAN DRIVER ONCE MORE, THIS TIME ON A BED. GET ABOVE BANDIT CAMP (FIGHTING POPULATION 80 - 150 NOW) AND PUT UNBREAKABILITY ON SHEILDS, PREPARE, PROJECT ETC AND GO INTO CAVE. ARE EXPECTED, GET ESCORTED BY 2 HELLHOUNDS. PINEFELLA THROWS A BONE. DUNLON THROWS A SPANNER AND FLIES OFF. DYLON FINDS HIM CATATONIC WITH WHITE HAIR AND HYPNOTISES HIM TO BE BRAVE. DA HELLHOUND, NOT SUSCEPTABLE TO SYNTHETIC POISON. GO IN A WAYS TO A BIG GROTTO WITH A BLACK PORTAL IN THE MIDDLE, WITH THE FRONT HALF OF A DOUBLE SIZED GRIFFON WITH RED EYES STICKING OUT. RECKON NEGOTIATIONS COULD BE DIFFICULT IF IT WAS THE REAR. DA = LONG LIVED SENTIENT, MANA CONSTRUCT, HIGHEST RANKED DAMAGE SPELL = SPELL OF TORMENT, NO CIRCUMSTANCES OF DEATH, NATURE OF INSANITY = TIME OF ENTRAPMENT / OBSESSION. SAYS IT WANTS TO GET OUT, WILL REMOVE CURSE, IS MINION TO THE MANA MONITOR (WHOSE JOB IT IS TO MOVE MANA AROUND, ENHANCE ABUNDANCY, TO GIVE IT FREE REIGN), AND THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE. DYLON GETS CONFUSED AT THIS. FUCKWIT. IT WANTS SCROLLS, AND WHEN WE TELL HIM WE HAVEN'T GOT THEM HE SAYS WE'LL HAVE TO DO IT THE HARD WAY. GOT TO GO TO ANOTHER PLANE WHERE THERE IS A WELL OF MANA WHERE THE MANA MONITOR GETS HIS JUICE FROM. PLANE SOUNDS LIKE IT'S GOT THE BASICS FOR SURVIVAL. GRIFFEN CAN'T OR WON'T REMOVE THE CURSE BEFORE WE GO. DON GOES OFF ABOUT WORKING UNDER COERSION AND REFUSES TO GO. OFFERED A MANA-TYPE REWARD OF OUR CHOOSING. RETIRE TO CONSIDER. SEE PLANE OUTSIDE CAVE MOUTH: SEEMS SAME AS USUAL EXCEPT BLUE GRASS AND SUN, DA = PLANE OF SEPHONE. DON BOTHERED BY MORALITY, BUT ALL CHOOSE, FOR VARIOUS REASONS, TO GO AHEAD. DETERMINE TO MAKE UP A GUILD STYLE CONTRACT. RETURN, MAKE CONTRACT. GRIFF HAS CONTACT WITH MANA MONITOR TO PUT FORWARD OUR REQUESTS FOR REWARDS, AS WELL AS SEEING IF THE CURSE CAN BE REMOVED.

31 JAN: TRY TO PURIFY. WHO GIVES A FUCK. GRIFF APPEARS WITH SEVEN



RUNE STAFFS FOR CIRCLING THE WELL, AND TELLS US NOT TO TOUCH THE BEAM OF MANA. FUCKING TELLING ME. GIVES US A COMPASS SO WE KNOW WHERE TO GO AND A THING TO TELL THE RIGHT ANGLE TO SET THE STAFFS. WE'LL KNOW WHEN WE'VE GOT IT RIGHT BY AN EXPLOSION. SAYS THE CURSE HAS BEEN REMOVED. WARNS US OF LOTS OF ANIMALS, MOSTLY MAGICAL AND PROBABLY HOSTILE, IN A HIGH MANA PLANE. SAYS WE CAN TAKE THE HELLHOUNDS; WON'T GUARANTEE THEY'LL WORK IN OUR DEFENSE, BUT THEY WON'T HURT US. MAKES ME AN OFFER TO BE TURNED INTO A MANA CREATURE AND GO AND WORK WITH HIM FOR THE BOSS. SERIOUSLY INTERESTED. DOES SOMETHING TO MAKE US ALL PERMANENTLY PURIFIED FOR DURATION IN PLANE. GO TO SEPHONE. ME, SH'REL AND YOUNGER, BETTER LOOKING HELLHOUND ON BED, ALL OTHERS FLY. I SETTLE DOWN FOR A SNOOZE AS THE TERRAIN CHANGES TO FLAT PLAINS. DON: "SCORPION GOES TO BED WITH A CREATURE OF HELL. AGAIN.". PASS OVER ENCAMPMENT, THEY TAKE OFF IN PURSUIT. LAND AND TAKE ON 20 LONG LIVED SENTIENT SKELETONS. THINGS RAPIDLY START LOOKING BAD FOR THE GOOD GUYS, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE HELLHOUNDS BUY IT. I KILL ONE AND GET BLASTED. FUCK. AS PINEFELLA POINTED OUT: "SH'REL DIDN'T LEAVE THE BED FOR THE ENTIRE COMBAT." BUT THE COMBAT DID GO TO HER. I TRY TO COMPEL THE THINGS, TWICE, AND GET AMNESIA SECOND TIME AROUND AND GO BLIND. REST OF THE NOTES IS HOW I REMEMBERED IT IN RETROSPECT. CALL FOR THE PARTY TO SURRENDER, SO WE DO. DON IS DEAD. SH'REL, BRITAMUS AND AXY SEE A MINDMAGE INVISIBLE NECRO FLY IN. DA = SEPHONE DOPPLEGANGER, HIGHEST BINDING SPELL = BINDING GREATER UNDEAD. ME HIDING UNDER BED, FIND ONE OF MY MAINGAUCHES. ALSO FIND A LOT OF UNFRIENDLY FEELING DARTS, SO DECIDE NOT TO TRUST MY STUFF AGAIN. TIE DONS CORPSE TO BED, THEN NECRO TELLS THE SKELETONS TO TAKE OFF. THEY CIRCLE UNTIL DISTRACTED BY ANOTHER GROUP OF SKELETONS, AND TAKE OFF TO INTERCEPT WITH THE NECRO. WE SCARPER IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. OTHERS HYPNOTISE ME TO BE A BIT MORE TRUSTING, AS PARANOID SCORPION WITH BLADE DOESN'T MAKE FOR FRIENDLY SIGHT. GET SOME HEALING DONE ON THE WAY. DYLAN TRIES TO CONVINC ME I'M PARTY COOK. NO LUCK. GO THROUGH DONS POCKETS THEN SLEEP. PARTY TURNS DONS BODY TO STONE TO PRESERVE IT. DA ON ME SHOWS I'M AMNESIAC FOR 8 DAYS. FUCKERS THREATEN TO USE ME AS A GIRL 'TIL SOMEONE POINTS OUT I'LL REMEMBER EVERYTHING WHEN I COME TO. THAT NIGHT ATTACKED BY 3 SEPHONE WEREBATS, LONG LIVED SENTIENTS AGAIN, ENERGY DRAIN WITH KILLING BLOWS AGAIN. LATER A SEPHONE GHOST (LONG LIVED SENIENT) TURNS UP AND SCARES OFF DYLAN AND PINEFELLA. SAYS IT WANTS TO EAT US. SILVER DOESN'T SEEM TO BOTHER IT, EVENTUALLY TAKEN OUT WITH HYPNOTISM. PARTY MOVES OUT, FORGETTING ME, SO I FOLLOW THE NOISE AND EVENTUALLY CATCH UP. CRASH AGAIN AT 4AM.

1 FEB: MAKE THE STONE DON FLY AND I GET SLUNG UNDERNEATH. GET ATTACKED BY 13 SEPHONE WERE-PEGASUS - WINGED HORSE WITH NASTY TEETH. LAND AND PREPARE. I BLOW A WHOLE LOT OF PEPPER INTO A HORSIES FACE, BUT IT'S NOT MAGICAL, SO IT DOESN'T HURT IT. FOLLOWS A FIGHT WHERE I JUMP ON A HORSIE AND TIE IT UP, ANOTHER JUMPS AT ME TO KNOCK ME OFF, MISSES AND SKEWERS ITSELF ON THE OTHER SIDE, THEN THE ONE I'M ON BUCKS ME ONTO THE BACK OF ANOTHER ONE, WHO BITES ME THEN BUCKS ME INTO THE SPIKES. WHEN I COME OUT OF STUN I JUMP BACK

AT THE FIRST ONE BUT LAND UNDERNEATH, AND ON MY SECOND TRY I LAND UNDERNEATH AGAIN BUT FIND MY BATTLEAXE SO GIVE IT A COUPLE GOOD HITS FROM BELOW BEFORE IT GETS ME AND I PLAY POSSUM. OTHER THINGS TO NOTE: DYLAN PUNCHED ONE OUT, SH'REL DIED UNDERNEATH A BLOODY BIG STALLION, PINEFELLA DIED. WE MANAGED TO GET CONTROL OF ONE SO THAT WHEN THE OTHERS GOT BORED AND LEFT WE WERE ABLE TO LOAD IT UP WITH THE POLES, FOOD, WATER AND SURVIVAL GEAR, THAT WE LOOTED FROM THE BODIES, AND ME. LEAVING THE BODIES AND THE REST OF THE GEAR WITH DON AS A GRAVEMARKER, WE TAKE OFF AGAIN. AT LUNCH THEY D.A MY POTIONS AND TAKE A COUPLE OF THE HEALING ONES, WHILST RETURNING DUMMIES AND SAYING THEY'RE ALL POISON. SEE SOME SPECKS ON THE HORIZON, SO TAKE OFF QUICKLY IN THE OTHER DIRECTION. DUSK WE STOP FOR DINNER AND I TIE HORSIE UP. THAT NIGHT ATTACKED BY A SEPHONE NIGHTGAUNT (COLLEGE CELESTIAL) WHICH AXY EVENTUALLY HURTS ENOUGH TO SCARE IT OFF.

2 FEB: AXY FIXES ME UP AS THE OTHERS GET HORSIE UNDER CONTROL. WE TAKE OFF. GET TO A FORCE FIELD WHICH WE GUESS IS SURROUNDING THE WELL. BRITAMUS FINDS THAT IT ONLY EXTENDS 2' BELOW THE SURFACE. OTHERS CONSIDER DIGGING A TUNNEL AS I CHECK THE RIVER AND FIND THAT, YES, THE FIELD STOPS 2' BELOW THE SURFACE OF THAT, TOO. SUGGEST SWIMMING. A COUPLE OF LIMITED PRECOGS LATER AND WE WORK OUT A PLAN TO SWIM UNDER WITHOUT BEING TORN TO BITS BY SEPHONE WEREPIRAHNA AND WERESHARKS. DIVINATION ON WALL SHOWS TOTAL IMPENETRABILITY, CYLINDRICAL IN SHAPE. DO THE PLAN. HORSIE NOT HAPPY. FLY A BIT FURTHER BEFORE REDOING SPELLS. BRITAMUS RECKONS THE WALL IS TO KEEP THINGS OUT, I SUGGEST KEEPING THINGS IN, DUNLON AGREES WITH ENTHUSIASM. RISING TERRAIN. OTHERS SEE 7 GLOWING HUMANOIDS ON GROUND POINTING AND TALKING. TELL HORSIE TO ACTIVELY RESIST AND HOLD ON TIGHT. 10 MORE SEEN BEHIND DOING SIMILAR, AND 3 AHEAD. PASS IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES OF THE FLYING SPELLS AND LAND. LUNCH, TRANSFER FATIGUE AND CAST IN 5 MINUTES, THEN SEE TWO SMALL FLYING THINGS HEADING OUR WAY AT HIGH SPEED. BRITAMUS: "OH, WE CAN HANDLE..." TWO FUCKING VAMPIRES. MINDMAGE SPECIAL COUNTERS GO OFF WHILE I HOBBLE HORSIE AND HIDE BEHIND IT. BARRAGE OF SPELLS COMES IN, SO I TAKE THE POLES OFF HORSIE AND TRY TO TREAT WITH THE VAMPIRES, BUT THINGS LOOK BAD WHEN THEY CONTROL DUNLON TO ATTACK DYLAN AND THEN CONTROL DYLAN. I TELL AXY AND BRITAMUS TO FUCK OFF WITH THE POLES, WHICH THEY DO, THEN HEAD TOWARDS THE VAMPIRES DRAGGING HORSIE AND SAYING "TAKE THE HORSE" BUT THEY CONTROL ME AS I GO TO LEAVE. AXY AND BRITAMUS MANAGE TO GET TO THE WELL AND DO THE DEED. AXY NEARLY GETS HIMSELF TOASTED FORGETTING ABOUT THE EXPLOSION THAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THEY GOT IT RIGHT. THEN THEY HEAD BACK TRYING TO FIND US, AND SEE A LOT OF THINGS RUNNING TOWARDS THE WELL. MEANWHILE, VAMPIRE 1 UNHOBLES HORSIE AND LEADS IT OVER TO VAMPIRE 2 WHO IS TALKING TO US, AND CALLING US LUNCH. BOTH TAKE US TO A DUGOUT, WHERE THEY ARE JOINED BY SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE THE SEPHONE DOPPLEGANGER. THEY REMOVE OUR WEAPONS AND INVESTEDS AND BIND US INTO CHAIRS, THEN DROP THE CONTROLS. I GO OFF AT THEM UNTIL EVERYONE TELLS ME TO SHUT UP OR BE MAGICALLY GAGGED. VAMPIRES WANT TO KNOW HOW WE GOT HERE, SO DYLAN SAYS BY FORCE. I SUGGEST WE TELL

THEM STRAIGHT UP IF WE WANT TO GET HOME. VAMPIRES SAY THEY WANT TO CLOSE THE HOLE INTO THEIR PLANE FROM OURS. EVENTUALLY DUNLON TELLS THEM EVERYTHING. THEY TELL US ABOUT SEPHONE: IS A PLANE OF UNDEAD, WHERE LIFE FORCE IS UNLIFE FORCE; EVERYTHING HERE LIVES ON ENERGY, IN A FRAGILE BALANCE; EVERYTHING IS SENTIENT AS A SURVIVAL TRAIT; THERE ARE TWO LEVELS OF UNDEAD - GREATER AND NORMAL, THE VAMPIRES BEING THE FORMER AND THE ANIMALS AND US BEING THE LATTER; NORMALS FEED OFF EACH OTHER AND BATTLE AMONGST EACH OTHER WHEREAS THE GREATERS ARE RULERS AND FARM THE NORMALS (THERE IS SOME RUSTLING); WE ARE USELESS AS A FOOD SOURCE, BUT THE NORMALS ARE UNAWARE OF THIS. BECAUSE OF THIS, TO PROTECT THE FRAGILE BALANCE, AND TO AVOID HAVING OTHER PARTIES COMING INTO THE PLANE IN SEARCH OF US, THEY'RE GOING TO SEND US ALL BACK, WITH OUR EQUIPMENT. WHEN WE LOOK DUBIOUS THEY TELL US THAT ON SEPHONE, VAMPIRES ARE CREATURES OF HONOUR. SEEM QUITE OFFENDED AT THE BEHAVIOUR OF VAMPIRES ON OUR PLANE. HAVING TOLD US THIS, DYLAN AND DUNLON TRY TO ROPE THEM IN ON GETTING REVENGE ON AXY AND BRITAMUS FOR DESERTION. SUGGEST THAT THIS COULD BE CONSIDERED DISCOURTEOUS - ASKING A CREATURE OF HONOUR TO AID A PERSONAL VENDETTA. DULY IGNORED, AS USUAL. THE POLE BEING THE ORIGINAL SOURCE OF NOURISHMENT, SOMETHING HAPPENING AT IT GETS A LOT OF ATTENTION. GUESS THAT AXY AND BRITAMUS WILL RETURN TO WHERE THEY LAST SAW US. THE VAMPIRES GO AND FIND THEM DUG IN, READY FOR BATTLE. THEY ASK THEM TO FOLLOW, AND WHEN THAT FAILS, ORDERS, SO THE OTHERS CHICKEN OUT AND DO WHAT THEY SAY. DA = SEPHONE VAMPIRE, LONG LIVED UNDEAD, RK 20 PHANTASM, NO ASSASSIN, AGE 620 YEARS + 317 DAYS. WHEN THEY GET LED IN I TRY TO SCARE AXY BY PRETENDING TO BE A VAMPIRE BUT HE IGNORES ME, SO I TELL BRITAMUS TO FUCK OFF, TOO. DYLAN AND DUNLON SNOTTY AT AXY SO GO AND PLOT OUTSIDE. DOPPLEGANGER IS, IN FACT, A SEPHONE SPECTER. AREN'T WE KEEPING GOOD COMPANY? VAMPIRES COME BACK FROM ARRANGING TRANSPORT AND TAKE US ALL UNDERGROUND TO A SOPHISTICATED CAVERN WITH MINI FARM. THEY OFFER US HORSIE AS A MEAL, BUT WE ASK THEM TO KEEP HIM UNTIL WE'RE OFF PLANE. LOAD UP MORE DOMESTICATED HORSIES WITH THE GEAR WE HAVE. THEY INTEND TO ACCOMPANY US TO THE PORTAL. DYLAN AND DUNLON ARE DEFINITELY PLANNING SOMETHING. LEAVE CAVERN AND START FLYING. GET TO CYLINDER, WHICH THEY SAY HAS BEEN THERE FOREVER, CIRCLING THE POLE. IT'S A NATURAL BARRIER TO WILD SENTIENTS, BUT NOT TO THE GREATERS. THEY SAY THEY'LL GET US THROUGH, THOUGH THE WORST THAT CAN HAPPEN IS THAT WE'D GO "CLUNK" AND FALL OFF THE HORSIE. WE HAVE NO PROBLEMS GETTING THROUGH.

3 FEB: REST AND EAT AT AN OUTPOST BEFORE LEAVING AGAIN. FIND THE STATUE AND CARCASSES, MOL REC DON INTO SOMETHING LIGHTER, THEN SLING THE LOT BETWEEN 4 HORSIES AND CARRY THEM. GET TO ANOTHER OUTPOST.

4 FEB: GET TO THE MOUNTAIN CAVE. VAMPIRES UNENCLINED TO START TRADE WITH ELUSIA: IN FACT, THEY INTEND TO COLLAPSE THE CAVE AFTER US. SHAPE DON INTO AN EASIER TO CARRY POSITION, THEN I TAKE SH'REL, AXY TAKES PINEFELLA AND WE GO THROUGH. GET TO GRIFFENS CAVE AND HE'S NOT THERE, LONG ENOUGH TO GET EVERYONE WORRIED. ARRIVES ENTIRE, FREE, AND STILL A BIT MAD. IS SURPRISED WE LOST ONLY THREE.

BASTARD. TAKES US TO A PLANE CALLED PERCY WHERE IT'S EASIER FOR HIM TO GET US ALL FIXED UP. NICE PLACE. HE TURNS UP LOOKING LIKE A HUMAN AND TAKES US TO THE COLLEGE WHERE WE'RE MET BY A REAL HUMAN NAMED BRUCE. SAYS GRIFFEN BRINGS IN ALL SORTS, THAT SH'REL SHOULD KEEP THE BOYS BUSY FOR AN HOUR OR SO, SHOWS THE WAY TO THE LIBRARIES FOR THE LIVE ONES, AND SAYS THE COLLEGE GROUNDS ARE OPEN FOR US BUT THAT DISTANCE IS DECEPTIVE OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARIES, SO NOT TO WANDER. AXY OFFERS OUR MEAGER SERVICES AS TROUBLADORS FOR THEIR TROUBLES. GRIFFEN SAYS HE'LL BE BACK LATER, AND THAT HE HAS A BONUS FOR US: A NICE RUINED CASTLE IN ELUSIA WITH LOTS OF TREASURE, ONLY GUARDED BY GOBLINS, AND MAYBE SOME HOBGOBLINS. WHOLE ONES LED TO THE BATHS WHERE THERE ARE LOTS OF NICE LADIES TO WALK ALL OVER THEM, THEN THEY GET DINNER. BASTARDS. SH'REL GETS FIXED, AND THAT NIGHT DON GETS RESURRECTED.

5 FEB: I GET FIXED UP. GRIFF GIVES ME MY ABILITY AND BRUCE SHOWS ME TO MY ROOM. ALL MY GEAR IS THERE, INCLUDING THE POTIONS, SO BRITAMUS MUST HAVE RETURNED THEM. BATH THEN SLEEP. LATER GET UP FOR BREAKFAST OF BEER MADE WITH CREAM WHILE OTHERS FILL IN DON. STILL SOME UPSET AT AXYS AND BRITAMUS' DESERTION. WHILE OTHERS GET CALM, I START GOING STIRCRAZY AND HARRASS SH'REL. GET TO SPEND THE DAY PRACTISING MY ABILITY ALONE AND WITH SH'REL WHILE DON AND AXY GET INTO THE BOOKS. HEALERS EVEN FIX DONS SWORD.

6 FEB: AT DINNER THE GRIFFEN GETS BACK AND TELLS US OF A CASTLE IN THE WILDERNESS OF GILANI (ELUSIA). ALL DECIDE TO GO TOMORROW MORNING. GIVE THE STUFF BACK TO DON THAT I FLOGGED WHILE AMNESIAC, AND HE CELEBRATES BY GIVING PINEFELLA A TRIPLE GREATER ENCHANTMENT. MAKE MY WAY TO THE BATHROOM AND SCARE ALL THE GIRLS OUT. GREAT FUN.

7 FEB: GRIFFEN GIVES US DIRECTIONS TO THE CASTLE AND WE SAY GOODBYE. I TELL HIM NO TO HIS EARLIER OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT, AND THE OTHERS GET ALL SWEET AND SENTIMENTAL TO THE BASTARD WHO CURSED US AND SENT US TO BE BLASTED BY GREATER UNDEAD. FUCKWITS. GO THROUGH PORTAL TO LIGHTLY WOODED PART OF ELUSIA. GET TO RUINED CASTLE, DO PRECAUTION SPELLS, LEAVE SH'REL WITH THE GEAR AND GO FOR A SNOOP. FIND SOME FUR, DA = DIREWOLF, SUMMONABLE, E&E. FUCK. PROBABLY STILL ON PLANE, DO SOME E&E COUNTERS. PINEFELLA FINDS A CHEST AND I CHECK IT FOR TRAPS. DON'T FIND ANY SO OPEN IT AND GET HIT BY A DAGGER. FUCK. BIG FUCKING JOKE. CHEST FULL OF DIRTY LAUNDRY. FUCK. TAKE DAGGER TO STICK IN GOBLIN. PINEFELLA FINDS A BAG OF GEMS IN THE BED PALLET AND TOSSES IT TO ME THEN BLUNDERS INTO THE NEXT BUILDING AND GETS BITTEN BY 3 BLACKWIDOWS, BUT HE'S RESISTANT. HE SQUASHES THEM THEN OFFERS THEM TO ME. FUCKWIT. GET INTO THE KEEP, GO THROUGH FOOD ROOM (GRAB SOME DRIED MEAT AND FLOUR) INTO TREASURE ROOM. DYLAN AND DUNLON EVENTUALLY KILL OFF THE 5 GUARD RATS. LOTS OF SP, PEARL NECKLACE, MAGICAL SACK AND A POISON NEEDLE WHICH I STOW FOR A RAINY DAY. FIND TWO DEAD PEASANT GIRLS IN A SHED, THROATS SLIT. PARTY MOVES TO PROTECT THEM FROM MY ATTENTIONS, AS THOUGH I GIVE A FUCK. TAKE THE TREASURE BACK TO SH'REL THEN DON, WHO HAS BEEN GETTING UPTIGHT ABOUT THE DEAD GIRLS, SAYS WE'RE GOING TO STAY AND WIPE OUT THE GOBBOS WHEN THEY RETURN. EVEN BRITAMUS GIVES IN. FUCKWITS. SHIT. AS THOUGH WE HAVEN'T DONE ENOUGH FIGHTING ALREADY AND DESERVE

AN EASY BREAK. BACK AT CASTLE THAT NIGHT, MY WATCH, HEAR DIREWOLF HOWL. FUCK. THROW WATER OVER THE FUCKWITS AND DO E&E COUNTERS. DEFENSE SPELLS CAST. MAKE CONTACT, THROW INSULTS AND PIN A COUPLE TO THE GROUND WITH ARROW FIRE. ONE OF THOSE HAD MINDMAGE INVISIBLE, SO WE DO SOME MINDMAGE COUNTERS, TOO. DON GETS ATTACKED BY A PHANTASM, DEAL TO IT. PARTY FINALLY GETS TIRED OF SITTING THERE RESISTING SPELLS AND DECIDE TO ATTACK. QUICKNESSES ETC GO OFF AND FIGHTERS ADVANCE, WE FOLLOW. PINEFELLA GETS HIT BAD BY AN ARROW. HA. FIGHTERS ENGAGE 14 GOBBOS AND A HOBGOBBO RIDING A DIREWOLF. PINEFELLA GOES DOWN. HA. AXY SAVES HIM. SUCKER. ANOTHER PHANTASM GOES OFF, SO I GO LOOKING FOR MINDMAGE. FIND MORE GOBBOS AND ANOTHER HOBGOBBO. MANAGE (FINALLY) TO COMPEL THE HOBGOBBO AND 3 GOBBOS TO CIRCLE AND POINT AT THE MINDMAGE. DO A MINDMAGE SPECIAL COUNTER ON THE AREA AND THE DIREWOLF WITHIN DOES A RUNNER AS THE CONTROLLED ONES ATTACK. MOP UP THE OTHERS AND STICK THAT DAGGER INTO HOBGOBBO #1. KILL MY SLAVED TEAM. GO BACK TO CASTLE, GRAB SOME VENISON FOR AL. SACK = IF YOU PUT TREASURE IN IT AT THE CASTLE THEN LEAVE THE CASTLE WITH IT THE TREASURE WILL BE DESTROYED. PARTY GIVES IT TO ME. YAY!

8 FEB: GET TO SEAGATE IN THE EVENING.

HAVE 52 DAYS TO 31 / 3, AND 12 360 SP AFTER TAX.