

Searching Sol for Paradise

By Roderigo the Scribe (Michael McFadden)

(GM: Helen Saggars)

Forward (by way of explanation in regard to the late arrival of these):

Sneaked out through the privy window I did , 2 x silver(ish) candles sticks, a cold pork chop, 3 iced cakes & a large pickle stuffed in my breeches for safe keeping, my black mask snugly in place ...then next & most important - to stow the fruits of my labour in my secret hidey hole & leave a clean set of heels for the city watchI sneaketh & skulk through the shadows of the avenues & alley ways till I got to the paupers graveyard where after just a little serch I find my secret spot. I pry up the headstone of one “*****
*****”, Tinker” lately deceased,scrabbling away some rocks to where my horde lyeth in a locked strongbox (& for those that wonder - set with deadly undetectable traps & smeared secretely with invisible & incurabel poisons) ... inside there be coins from the realms, a velvet hat with a feather, a bottle of sailors grog, an old cheese that hath not improved with age & there be the sack that holds my collection of pickled orcish ears. So I open it up to gloat just a little & there they be my prized..... SCRIBE NOTES!!!! what the devil???..... But the big question be – what be filed in the guild library one year previous?

Our Adventure

1 Meadow

Our party gathered together at the guild be some I have met before and some that is new to I - a mixed bunch as always to be sure. The names of our cast of heroes and they that be more of the scoundrel sort shall be recounted for the records and for whosoever should wish to . There be:

Brigetta McLeod (Jaqui Smith) - a damnedly noisy red haired Caledonian she - bard who is swathed in a small armoury & and the chequered clothing of her race. She is related to Robert McLeod who I know. She will be our military scientist...& official poet. They say she singeth in such loud voice to take attention from her clothes,

Brother Phaeton - (Keith Smith) her clean living friend dressed in white - who aint amour'd of the normal adventurers tastes in pleasure, but is damnedly sharp with the bandage & blinding rays of white light (that I do my best to avoid). He be constantly taking of notations and gazing in an interested manner at the skies...

Serra Angelis (Michael Scott) - she be a tall elf & hath the skill to twist her body right around and look from behind & to eat anything...some say humans. She will be the Leader because her prominent golden breast plate which will evoke friendly thoughts among strangers..... who are men... otherwise she be a surly wench but grim with weapon in hand & useful with a spell...she be druidic by profession.

Saute or Sooty as some call him (Bernard) - a burned and singed fire mage elf with friends they whisper (depending on how much ale has been supped) (extremely)low places (allegedly)...and I don't mean the local cut price cat house during leftovers half price hour...not that I'd know about that personally, but a bargain is a bargain.... Anyway he be not a beauty..

Sau Rus (Ian Anderson) the former lizard man & friend of the dead, who previously had scales & a tail but now beith a man. He too hath frinds in dark places being of the college of Necromancy - & by way of endorsement, if there be graveyard retrieval required, he be a willing assitant .

& I the scribe, **Roderigo, Goodman** (Michael McFadden) a clean living halfling, an e& e magician of modest habits, but mind keen for a few spare sheckels if they be available for acquisition...

Our employer be represented by Owen Livingstone, a human 5'11" wearing worn out clothes in his early 20s I be guessing. .Another fellow called Fred is with him - a bit shorter wearing bleached linen and a worn out waist coat. By the looks of them they be struggling to afford our guild rates, but I guess that is what guild security be for.

Owen Livingstone and other families - Pilgrims they be (grim stern looking folk in rough spun garments with buckles on theyre hats) want to go to paradise and they want us to send them there& no it aint a simple matter of slitting their gilletts for them or even looking where right thinkin' guild folk would normally enquire - i.e. the Rose Court, the Gilded Lilly, or even the Blue Badger tavern at happy hour where they serve free boiled pigs trotters, (less then three days old - guaranteed!!!...),but we will have to travel by boat (unjoy) & go down a number of magical portals through the planes that will lead them to their destination, They want us to guide them there and to help to protect their wagon train from those that they encounter on the way.

The first portal is on an island called Rangifero in Old Pacifica. Phaeton says he has friends there (bookish theoric types I'll be bound). We will have to travel there by ship - three weeks by approximation from Seagate.

The other pilgrims have already passed through there and are travelling on a plain called Paeololithica. Once we pass through the Rangifero portal our first job will be to find the caravan. Owen has traded with a certain archaeologist? called California Smith and has obtained some journals written about 100 years ago by Owen's grandfather that shows how to get to Paradise...

His grandfather owned a portal finding device & did much travelling.

We will need to pass through six portals on four planes and will have to locate them by looking at the notes since we do not possess the same trinket as Owen's grandfather.

Owen he says that the trip will take about two months. His grandfather's notes are brief and do not give descriptions about geography and the like.

In the caravans there will be some mages. Magic has been taught in family circles and is kept secret and will be different in each family. Magic is not very popular where they come from because of the

church. Because magic be treated so secret like, they are not sure exactly what skills each family possesses - although Owen is a Namer and Fred is a Water mage.

We will leave the next day with the tide and stock up with the usual healing potions and enchantment spells.

The boat we shall travel by be called the "Sea Dragon" with Captain Masters who shall command she.

From Meadow 2 to 17 we travel by sea to our destination in upper Pacifica. We arrive at a city known as Gordonia or Rangifero. It is covered in Scoria rock. There are ruins everywhere including several pyramids. The portal is half days walk away, but it will take a day to unload all of animals from the ship. (We have been taking pack animals to meet with the other Pilgrims)

Watches are set as we stay the night there. 1 Serra Angelus & Saurus. 2 Saute & I. 3. Brigetta & Phaeton. Phaeton warns of undead living in the ruins. Brigetta the Bard entertains the party with tales - disappointingly clean I must state. Phaeton spends his time observing the stars. I sleep, sharpen my knife & dream of ... lucre, filthy & the other sort, the more clean sort of lucre - of this I remember not.

18th Meadow

We travel through the lands, barren they be, down a winding trail toward the centre of Rangifero for about half a day. It turns out that Owen and Fred are only slightly more skilled at Ranging than a one eyed blind beggar, so we take over. (Or at least Brigetta & Saute do) with the assistance of a spell from Phaeton, they fly ahead and find the enormous stones in a circle that marketh the portal entrance. We be cautious before entering the portal. Phaeton confirms that it will go to Paeleothica, it will take only minutes to travel and it will not harm magical items. He tells us that the portal was manufactured at the other side.

We will eat and go through. The caravan is told to follow us by minutes.

WE enter the portal, there is a flash of light and we pass into a land full of long grass that goes on in all directions for as long as we can see. Mana is normal. The rangers in the group they see that there has been another party pass through here.

Phaeton, who hath a portable planetarium (he calleth it), tries to determine the correct direction. It appears that the next portal is six days travel away - from the diaries of Owen's Grandfather it will be a great pile of stones by a river.

Brigetta uses a crystal o vision that she hath in her possession & sees the other party travelling slowly ahead of us. She creates a simple map by using her crystal ball.

Our plan is that the next day Saute, Phaeton and Brigetta will travel as long as they can by flying & scout ahead. Phaeton can recast the spell if needed.

We camp & the next day set off travelling.

20th Meadow

Throughout the plains we see animals that include, a herd of buffalo (endless it seemeth) rabbits, hawks and other birds.....they are of an indecently large size all..... & we discovers there be large hunting predators with big teethwe discover this as we are attacked by 4 giant she-lions springing from hiding places in the long grass. They fancy a taste of off plane horseflesh & thinking they have a

free lunch as they climb aboard some of our mounts. But they aint ever seen the likes of the guild afore in these parts and we show 'em that there aint no such thing and they are soon sautéed, slept & javelined courtesy of the Seagate Adventurers guild. I chop off a lion's paw & Brigetta skins the same one & she know has a three legged lion skin. A few horses have been scratched which Serra & Phaeton swathe them with healing herbs.

We camp the evening & Phaeton spends his time stargazing. They aint sleeping cos we be hearing them but they've tasted our steel or could be the influence of Brigetta who sings strange ditty called "the Lion Sleeps tonight which sees them off....

21st Meadow

We organize a riding marching order:

Brigetta

Saute, Phaeton, Saurus

I, Serra,

It's grass, grass and more grass. The highlight is a scorch mark which is a week old - the pilgrim party is ahead. It gets even better as Brigetta telleth us a story about a monkey... it is disturbingly clean...

Sauté flies off ahead to scout. He sees the caravan and we decide to catch up - marching through the night. When we get there, there are 36 wagons - 16 of 2 horse wagons the rest 4 horse. There are 126 people and 2 pregnant women - all hungry & tired. Owen introduces us. They stop for the night in the ring with the animals in the middle. I be noting' a conspicuous lack of weapons and they look about as smart & streetwise as Lisette Summers when she be seven sheets to the wind with her best bonnet pulled over her eyes & her shoe laces knotted together - ripe for the plucking if some likely dogs of war armed to the teeth (like we be) should happen along - it's enough to make me tear up the guild contract & take up banditry...but on the other hand a bunch of scrawny chickens & mangy hogs aint exactly loot no wonder they need our help... maybe slavery be an option?

The chief Pilgrims are Cornelius Livingstone a grey haired fat old cove - who it is said is a namer, Samuel Kirby be a water mage & Ronan Travers who has a white beard & hair. He be an ensorcerer.

Magic is something you got to do discrete about around these folk or they're liable to choke on their cornbread & start prayin' to their harvest god ...

They say that the namers were traitors.

22nd Meadow

We stay in camp for the next day & give the Pilgrims a few basic tips on how to survive such as which part be the front of the horse & how to travel in a straight line etc...

After this get too dull for even Phaeton the Philosophic, he casts a fly spell on us all and the whole party fly about 30 miles ahead to observe that they be about 30 miles off course. It be a new experience to I, but to my liking...

Brigetta will communicate if needed by sending messages form afar back to the pilgrim leaders by her bardic spells.

We find that the portal be in an oxbow lake like it be on an island. The portal is in a ring of large stones, being 13 like in Dr Livingstone's diary. . They will need to cross the river & it be wide & deep with a fast current & no natural crossing...

I spot a woolly giant beast with a big horn on its nose like a unicorn with stumpy legs & with extra fur... hmmm I be knowing certain apothecaries who be paying a premium for the like of such

We fly back & tell them the good news and that there be two days to go....

23rd Meadow

We head back to the river to wait on their arrival. & scout the portal area. Phaeton DA spells the portal. Its destination be Frigidia.... It will be wide enough even for the pilgrims ox carts Brigetta the bard determines through a Legend Lore Spell that it was made many generations in the past by non humans -faeries elves and the like with the purpose bein' for transportation... she say it broke contact with its original destination...

The pilgrims build a ford/ causeway bridge to cross over the river by cutting down trees. We sit about pondering and looking at the fish... wonder at slaying the hairy unicorn but am outvoted by the party... Phaeton he say it be lackin' in merit, but I, not knowing him too well at this time, be figuring he hath plans to sneak back after dark and keep the proceeds all to himself

The crossing is easy for the skilful pilgrims despite much discussion by us on how they are to do it.

We decide to enter the portal first thing in the morning. Phaeton, tries to read secret messages in the stars to see what messages they reveal. He is told it will be cold and full of snow next door & even death ...hmmm with a name such as Frigidia who would be guessing this. He be with out doubt a true genius & possessed of great powers...

We go through the portal and arrive in a place that is dark and full of echoes...we are in a very large cave coated with ice. Around the portal there is a black stone ring covered in strange inscriptions of languages that I be not understanding. The portal is at the back of a cave 100 m to the entrance.

A magic aura cometh from the inscriptions on the portal. As best we can we check the cave for falls or collapses and so on. Phaeton checks for magical traps. It seems however to be a non-manna zone.

The notes indicate there be a way out of here & eventually we notice a peek of light comes from a crack in the icy wall up high in the cave. I climb up and look outside - a blizzard, well I know about this having been in Flugelhiem of recent times, but this is a really bad one. The wind is blowing the snow horizontal like & it seems like it won't stop ever. The ice is determined by spell to not be magical. A fire is built for warmth. Brigetta considers the legend lore on the portal of this side & decides that it not be as old as the other - it was used as a means o escape by humans and other races. We will spend the night back in Paeleolithica.

In the meantime Sauté summons some creature of fire who he will use to melt a path for us will return back to Paeleolithica. When we return there be no icy wall but a big hole showing a blizzard and ice. We travel for about a mile until we come to a cliff. We travel up a ramp to a cave entrance. Following this up we find the second portal on Frigidia - a freestanding vertical ring. The portal was last used some time last year by a hunting party.

24th Meadow (This portion be written by Phaeton)

Spikes were added to the horse's hooves and we blazed a trail across the glacier. Once over the ice, we went ahead. Our intention was to go down as far as the side passage and scout out the way to portal #3. The caravan could not go that way because it was too

small, however, according to the diary entries, it would serve as a short cut back from Paradise on the Plane of Sol.

One of the reasons we needed to go there was that we needed to determine the destination symbol to get us to portal #3. On the copy, it had been obscured by a blot. However, Sooty got hold of the original and looked at it with elven witchsight. With that, and when the light reflected off the blot, he was able to see the symbol underneath. It was a i

So we travelled on down the main tunnel, past Portal #2 then reached the side tunnel. It started off as wide as the main one but abruptly ended at a cliff, 30ft high. At the top was a ledge and a smaller tunnel carrying on. This tunnel wasn't big enough for the wagons. We couldn't even travel two abreast. And even if they had somehow manage to solve that problem, there was the matter of the large cavern cut in half by a seemingly bottomless chasm. Two pairs of rock pillars were located on either side with a rope bridge bridging the gap. Some of the rope looked suspiciously new and made out of vines. I Daed it and it's Plane of Origin was Sol and it was at least some two years old. Some old horse dung had also come from Sol.

Sooty, being the lightest, went over at the end of a safety rope. He believed it was cold down the bottom of the chasm, could be water. Once the safety rope was secure, the rest of us crossed.

A few miles on, down another narrow passage, we entered another cavern. Inside was a red stone square platform which was inlayed with silver. Four pillars at each corner supported an identical red stone square. On the underside of the ceiling was engraved the symbol for this portal which matched what Sooty had discovered. The pillars are engraved with twenty golden runes, each representing a destination in this network. According to the notes we wanted (destination 5). That would lead us to Sol, somewhere near Paradise.

There was a spot of blood near the portal which came from a plane called Omega. It was about eighteen months old and marked the death of a sentient. Also nearby was a collection of assorted bone bits, dwarves, human, elves and other species, mostly sentient.

Brigetta's ritual told us that this portal had been constructed by the Guardians to ward the worlds. Raiders had used it last and the plane last used matched the plane of the blood. That was • (destination 18).

We decided to go through. This one was operated by someone touching the destination rune and saying the phrase "Great Mithros. Bless us and grant us safe passage to our destination". Once that was done, anything on the platform would be transported to the platform on the portal corresponding to the destination rune.

Destination 5, took us to a portal on the plane of Sol. Thos one also had a full set of symbols on it. We were located in an area of rough terrain. Brigetta used her crystal ball

to discover that we were on a peninsular and big river valleys could be seen to the north. One of those was the Paradise the pilgrims sought.

However, we knew that we would have to use another portal to get the caravan here. This was portal • (destination 14), which was also on Sol. So we blinked on over there. When we arrived there the first thing we noticed that several of the runes had been obliterated. Only three were left, •, •, and • (destinations 5, 11, and 20). Also there was a very large camp of people nearby. A group was only three hundred metres from the platform.

While we 'discussed' what to do next, we were noticed. So Sera went out and attempted to greet them. A dwarf clomped out from between the line of horsemen and came up the slope towards the portal. He called out in dwarvish so Brigetta stepped down to talk to him. He told her that he represented Red Beard, the head trader and wanted to know if we had come to trade. They knew of the Guardians who take care of the worlds and they came here through the portal from Dwarfhome to trade with the local nomads. Both the GTN of the dwarf and the horsemen was Sol. We also discovered the local nomad chief was annoyed because the dwarf beat him to us.

We were led to Red Beard's tent. Also there was a nomad wiccan shaman. We were told that Dwarfhome was across the desert and they use portal (destination 11) to get here. Portal (destination 20) is the place of the Guardians.

The shaman then took us to the nomad chief's ornate tent. We had to leave our weapons outside before we were brought into the presence of the Great and Mighty Kahn, the leader of the Horsepeople. The portal was on their lands that the Guardians had brought them to.

Once we had told him why we had come and negotiated passage for our caravan, we headed back to Frigidia finally catching up with the caravan near Portal #4.

The entire caravan came out of the portal into the sandstone canyon. It was night time now so everyone camped here. There was a pillar of stone nearby with more of that strange writing on it so I noted that down.

25th Meadow

We head to the place known by rangers as South. The caravan will follow slowly behind us. Strange but every country or plane I have ever visited has a South and a North- a true mystery of manna. A road has been cut through the sandstone canyon. We take the left path at a fork. A trail is marked. We follow the trail along a steep cliff side. By noon we come to a place where the canyon goes (Ranger talk here) South West/ North East rather than North South. I know not what it mean but record the words truly as bespoke. There is another pillar with markings in a T-junction. We explore the South west way (ranger talk). The wagon maketh slow progress behind us.

26th Meadow

Our party be mortal tired of this slow trudgery & debate flying as a speedier solution. We decide to wait until the sun be at its highest in the sky & the pious Phaeton is at the peak of his power for the casting of flying spells. Then we fly single file, out of the canyon & bespy what lyeth below. After

several hours we spy an abandoned ruined village by a river that from Livingstone's journals should have a map painted on the wall of an old Inn. We find this as in the journal and fly back to the pilgrims to show them a better route to abridge to cross the river. We meet the pilgrims and provide instructions that even they could follow.

27th Meadow

By day we head back to the village this time on horseback. Brigetta uses her crystal ball to observe from afar a building with an onion-like top to it... a good news thinketh I - the richest building in the village, there be loot surely. We travel up hills around windy trails.....

28th - 29th Meadow

To pass the boredom of travel, Serra teaches me rangering skills. Ahhh! we spy ahead the ruined village & the building with the onion-like top to it. The onion dome hath collapsed and turned greenish age. We search. The building was once a library which sends waves of excitement through the bookish Phaeton. There are a few scroll cases with waxy seals in the end hidden in urns...hmm thinks I perchance there might be some of those artistic type of elvish etchings... you know the style.....elvish maids of indiscrete charms bathing in streams with hairy Satyrs skulking in the bushes & leerin' away - that might fetch a few silvers at the the right manner of tavern. The scrolls inside be made of copper and damnedly heavy - not an elven etching in sight.. dissappointingly they be only about religion & the philosophic & mostly a waste of the written word. Brigetta, she cast a spell of legend lore and tells us the town were called Timbuktoo and that this was a university and was thought to be the town's treasure....hmm no wonder they all left think I, if a University be indeed the town's treasure...

The party votes against the excavation of the graveyards - even though there be several large ones with intricate-like stones on top.. "there be gold buried in there for sure" I say, "it be a guarantee", but they be not interested. I half heartedly talk to Saurus the Dark about returning alone under the cover of night, but then the pilgrims arrive with their wagons & I consider this no more - even I laketh the pluck to loot graves in front of 200 pilgrims searching for paradise. We secure the books.....

30th Meadow

We travel ahead of the pilgrims & by the end of the day see the bridge that crosseth the river. Brigetta useth her crystal ball to draw a map of the city. We are a mile and a half away from the city. We careful watch by night for signs of life or lights inside. We will sneak in in the morning

1st Heat

I cast walk unseen spell on all but Serra Angelis & Brigetta. We walk in looking around carefully into the city. Our horses are in the hills. Rubble be everywhere. It seems that a past flood has ruined much of the city. The main road be 60' wide with side roads 10 to 15' wide. Eventually we find a Black stone Ring Portal. There is a ramp going up to it with six-foot walls on the side. It is Da'd by Phaeton who writes down copies of the silver marks on it. Everything in the city is sandy colored. The walls seem to be designed to stop sneak access to the portal. We decide to search the city building by building, but everything seems to have been looted or taken. There are remains of inns, court houses, bathhouses, all abandoned and ruined. We search all day. Serra finds the bones of a dead cat that a DA spell shows was 18 mths dead. There is nothing of note. We go and camp with the horses in the hills.

2nd Heat

By night Phaeton casts a read night sky spell and determines that there are living, dead (undead?) and magic in the city-

3rd Heat

So the next day we go back to search the cross roads in the city. An ambush is sprung on us by creatures that Phaetons DA spell shows are called Ogrin and look like fierce hairy Ogres but damnedly smarter, They pin us in a clever scissor attack & it be a close call, aye back to back stuff with the party in the middle & the Ogrin surrounding us, tooth nail & claw...& worst of all absolutely no chance whatsoever of sneaking off and later pretending to have been fighting in the room next door or to have been knocked unconscious....there be spell casters among them.., we see them off & I take two ears as trophies. Our progress is not helped by Sauté being cursed by a backfire & Phaeton too having spell problems....

We end up capturing one of their party but three get away. A DA spell shows it be from the plane of Frigidia. By tracking them we uncover their loot pile in their lair. There be a magic quarterstaff, rings, a claymore of fine quality from Frigidia and a number of trinkets of value... We try to get the live Ogrin to talk but he wont...

The portal is DAed. It has not been used for years. It is portal 7 from Livingstones' notes to the plane of Thar. We pass through it and come out in a jumbled pile of rocks. The portal is in a depression with palm trees and water. There is a cloudless blue sky. It seems the rocks may have once been in a gigantic ring. It will be 60 to 100 miles to the next portal through the desert. There are some palms in what the Desert folk call an Oasis. The manna levels are normal. We return back through the portal and go to our camp.

The caravans catch up with us. Fred's father can remove the curse on Sauté. We are told by Serra to remain on horse as we escort the caravan through the portal in city. We have our eyes very carefully peeled for attacks but the Ogrins have tasted our steel & spell give no sign of wanting more of it stuck up 'em. The caravan passes through the portal to the oasis. We will travel by night & rest by day it be decided.

The caravan head toward the next portal. We ride half an hour ahead. Sauté cast a fireproof spell that protect us from the heat. We do 15 miles per day.

A storm of sands slows our progress one night and it be damned uncomfortable.

7th Heat

On the fourth day we came to an oasis where there be another portal. It be a two way portal to Sol, where the pilgrims want to be. So we pass through. It be an archway and the destination be in a cave in a solid cliff. From there we can see tress done in a valley looking over meadows. There be rabbits which make an appropriate stew.

The next portal be 100 miles away so the party will fly ahead and scout it for a route. We see some sheep. From the air we see a probable route & we return to brief the pilgrims of our progress.

We head off early riding ahead of the caravan leaving markings for them to follow. It is rocky and mountainous. We head down a river valley. Bear tracks are seen.

10th Heat

We decide to ford the river and there are no real problems. We mark the spot. The party is bored so we discuss cannibalism, (to the horror of Phaeton) and who be the last one to be eaten by the party,...we never reach a conclusion on that one, but I'm not so sure I'd fancy eating Saurus a Necromancer who used to be a lizard...

We fly thanks to Phaeton's spells and scout from the air. We conclude that rafting could be a good idea. It is noted that there are cattle and horse tracks - apparently there are some sort of nomads or tribes people living here & we see an area that they obviously use to cross the water. It is decided the best solution for traveling is to raft the people down the river and while we drive the animals. We set watches and sleep. The pilgrims conveniently have water mages in Fred's family who will be able to create us boats.

11th Heat

Fred's family disappeareth into the forest with axes - this is their disguise for making the boats - remember these pilgrims are damnably suspicious of the magical arts. They reappear with several 40' barges which they have allegedly made from scratch in about 3 hours...

12th Heat

We set off droving the cattle & horses with the pilgrims tucked away safely in the barges. We will travel in a slightly round about route to avoid some marshy areas.

The weather becomes poor - a storm arises- there are blustery winds. Lightning and thunder scare the animals and we are barely able to control them - it be looking like a stampede. Then we hear Briegetta the Bard singing a spell song (sooth the savage beast - it be) Saurus is forced to cast a wall of bone to protect he and I - who have fallen. Phaeton casts wings to head to the sky but eventually the beasts be calmed and the rain and storm stops. Eventually we get to the cattle crossing place that appears to have been much used. Sauté in particular appears much relieved to be dry. We meet up with the caravan by evening.

14th Heat

We stay here to rest a day. We will need to negotiate passage with the denizens of the plains. By sunrise a number of horsemen appear on the horizon - 50 or more. A big shifty eyed villain mounted on a horse with greasy moustaches - apparently their leader comes down to where we be. Brigetta - using her bardic gist of the tongues speaks to him using their own lingo. It be awful hard to tell if they be friend or foe but Brigetta does introduce us. They be some form of Tarterous nomad horse folk from the plains, . We offer to trade wood from the boats - there be not so much wood in the plains we guess. Yon man on horse be more inscrutable than a stone and we cannot tell what he think. There be eating and drinking & making merry with the leader & his cohorts until the wee hours.. he disappeareth to the night - up to no good I'll be bound so special watches be set lest he turn treacherous...it be unnatural to spend to long on a horse so high from the ground - even more queer than boats....surprising the night pass & nothing happens...

15th Heat

The next morn we head off. A number of the horse folk appear with oxen drawn wagons & still more to load the wood. They will be our guides through the plains (& try to slit our throats first chance they get I'll be bound - I would too if I were from but a race of penniless highwaymen & brigands like they) 15 to 20 miles we travel till we set up camp by night.

16th Heat

We make the portal by the end of the day. There be many broken bits around the portal. Brigetta divinates that there 200 years before - ancestors of nomads they were who tried to prevent it from being used. There be three destinations left - including to Sole.

We go through the portal, weapons at the ready. There be ferns, rocks, hills gorse bushes, berries - the usual footprints of those that have been here before.

Phaeton checks out the codes of activation for the portal. It seems we must stand on a red block to use it. We look at the diary notes to try and work out the best way. Brigetta uses her crystal ball to make a map. We ride, and talk of things back in Seagate - Brigetta tells me of small horses from Caledonia magicked to be suitable for short folk like I. After a days travel we reach a bundle of trees. Where there be brooks and ponds. We be able (or those of the ranger persuasion that is) hunt for ducks and fish. During the last watch, (Brigetta and Phaeton's watch - she see a flash of a white creature - about pony size.)

17th Heat

The next day tracks are found by Brigetta accompanied by Saute and I. She determines that they be hoof prints with a cleft which seem to me to prove two things - it not be a pony & it probably be a unicorn - the white flash the night before.) though' Brigetta, she say it might be a deer. The going rate for unicorn horn be 40,000 silvers & we decide it be worth a look by air. Phaeton casts wings of flying upon us - nothing be found but some sheep.

We look up a river which cutteth through rolling hills trying to find a route for the grim pilgrim folk. By clearing gorse and bracken they be able to clear a path we decide. The river is salt and there be a marsh that head eventually to the sea. There be a shingle beach on the coast. The water is cold.. There be a fertile river valley that from the descriptions appears likely to be paradise/

24th Heat

It takes the pilgrims 5 days to get there, & we travel with them. They declare it paradise. (low aspirations I suggesteth) They are happy and provide us with a number o gifts..

25th Heat

So through use of Phaetons flying wings spell we travel back to the portal. We have at tight schedule to keep.

26th Heat

We prepare spells and go through the portal with weapons drawn - it be cold dark old Frigidia (Brrr!!!).

We travel through the narrow passages over the rope bridge toward where the portal (#2) be. Camped there be about 30 Ogrin around two large fires. We sit down & carefully prepare a plan before we all skulk forward and take the hairy villains by surprise. Potions of strength are quaffed. I use a fire arc scroll & then we unleash spells upon them - firebolts, invested items, lightening bolts, fireballs and some dragon flames. Brigetta shoots arrows. I sneaketh & my magic pervert coat triggers - shocking an Ogrin who hath never seen a nude Halfling a-quiver with lust before*- (he be so surprised he not notice my dagger ready to slice him which it does) - Phaeton & Saurus create magical walls - funneling the Ogrin so they cannot attack us. They flee our wrath leaving many dead.

We leave, taking a portal to Paeleolithica & camping over night.

27th Heat

We fly back to the portal to Allusia, following the marks from the pilgrims tracks on the grass beneath. We travel through the portal arriving in Rangifero where there be a ship awaiting.....then it is a sea journey back to goode olde Seagate - relief - there be only so much of the company of pilgrim folk you can take!

The End

*[reference to magical effect produced by item acquired from the Rose Court - blame Anna]

Appendix Livingstone's Diaries

2nd Day of Aries, 1443. The unending plains, Palaeolithica.

After Six days of trekking North West across these unending windswept plains we have reached the Third portal. The gateway itself is a gigantic arch of massive stones within a ring of 13 equally huge widely spaced stones. The whole structure stands on a flat plain beside a river.

Tomorrow we will scout the far side of the portal. From the strength of the readings I have taken with the diviner, I believe this gate is another that links planes as was the Alusian portal we found on these plains last year, hopefully the far side will be dryer this time as we can not afford to loose another pack horse this early in the expedition.

24th Day of Aries 1443. A cave, Plane unknown.

This side of the portal was dryer than Alusia, if you count all the water being frozen as snow. We have taken shelter in a cave. Ben found it or else we all would surely have frozen to death. Normally we would not have attempted to travel in a blizzard, but the diviner shows three portals to be within a few miles of the Palaeolithican gate.

On this side the Palaeolithican gate is a large blackness surrounded by a circle of black stone set into the lighter stone on the rear wall of a large shallow cave. The black stone ring is carved with runes that are inlayed with silver.

We have decided to remain here in Bens cavern until the blizzard ends.

25th Day of Aries 1443. The Cave system, Frigidia.

This morning having warmed up somewhat from the blizzard, which still rages outside we investigated more of this cave. Close to the entrance I found a part of the cave wall carved with symbols similar to those on the Palaeolithican gate.

The cave also goes far deeper underground than we first suspected and there are tool marks in places where it appears to have been widen into a tunnel.

28th Day of Aries 1443. The cave system, Frigidia.

We have found two of the three other portals I detected within the cave system, and suspect that the third may also be linked to these caverns. By following the wider caverns and the tool marks we found the first portal, the nearest one to the Palaeolithican gate.

The first, portal 2 is a black stone ring with silver runes inlayed, it is set upright in a large cavern; the air within the ring appears to shimmer. Small native stone ramps lead up to it from both sides. Initial divinatory readings suggest the portal links to another on this plane.

From the portal 2 we again followed the wider tunnels, at one point there was a branch where both tunnels had been widened but after about half an hour the right tunnel came to an end in a large cavern split by a cliff. There is the start of a ramp at one side of the cavern, and Kirby found a smaller exit tunnel at the top. This we suspect may lead to portal 3 as the whole tunnel runs with some deviations in that general direction.

The left branch continued with the same, large wagon wide tunnel as before, all the way to portal 4.

This portal is another black stone ring with silver runes inlayed. Like the other it is set upright and stone ramps lead to it. The air inside the ring shimmers slightly. This portal too appears to link to another on this plane.

We have returned to the entrance in the hope that the Blizzard would be over and Astrid could get some kind of star reading before we explore further, but the storm still rages.

8th Day of Taurus 1443. Cold Cannons, Frigidia.

At this end of portal 4 is yet another of the black stone rings inlayed with silver runes. There is also another of the stone ramps leading up to it though this time its made of sand stone, probably quarried from the surrounding cliffs.

We have detected another portal to the south of us within a hundred miles and one far to the east in the range of several thousand miles.

Traces of an old road lead off in the general direction of the nearer portal. We shall follow this road in the hopes that it will lead us though this maze of cannons.

12th Day of Taurus 1443. Ruin by a river, Frigidia.

The road once crossed the river by a bridge, but at some point in the past the bridge has been washed away. We are camping in the ruins of a village, it appears to have been abandoned for sometime. The trees in the orchard are long dead, sparse grass grows in sheltered corners of paved courtyards and the only living trees we have seen on the whole plane are the few stunted pines behind what Jon believes was the old inn. It was there he found a map painted onto the wall representing what we think is the local area showing another bridge further down river by a city. A black ring is among the landmarks shown there, this may be a depiction of the portal we are looking for.

Astrid was able to get a good reading of the stars last night, and we now believe the single portal far to the east to be Frigidian portal 5, the one that we explored last week by the old harbor, if so these are portals 6 and 7

19th Day of Taurus 1443. Ruined city, Frigidia.

A great paved road leads over the river across a stone bridge that is showing minor damage on the upstream side, it goes on straight as an arrow though the heart of the city to another great black stone ring inset with silver runes. The center of this gate is blackness like the Palaeolithic portal 1, readings taken with the Portal Diviner suggest it is another planer portal.

We plan to spend several more days exploring the city and doing further star readings before retuning to the other portal. In the hope of confirming that these two portals are indeed portals 6 and 7

28th Day Taurus 1443. Cavern system, Frigidia.

Portal 3 appears to be another inter planer portal however it is not another of the black stone rings.

This one is different it has four, eighteen inch square white stone pillars inlayed with golden runes. The pillars are set one at each corner of a twenty foot red stone square inlayed with silver set into the floor of a carefully hewn room. The pillars support a second silver inlayed red stone square set against the roof fifteen feet above.

Early indications are that this is another trans planer portal now all I have to do is work out how it works. That however can wait until tomorrow as even though it was only a few miles it took the best part of a day to get from the wider tunnel to the portal.

The injury that Jon got in that nasty little fight last week back in the ruined city has really slowed him down, particularly in the climb up the cliff and over the rope bridge.

29th Day of Taurus 1443. Portal 3, Frigidia.

Portal 3 has multiply destinations, there are 21 different portals linked together. To open the portal to a destination you lay you hand upon the rune of your destination and say, "Great Mithros bless us and grant us safe passage to our destination."

Then everything on one on the red stone square goes to the appropriate portal. The symbol for this portal is given in the inlay on the roofing square it is,

The other 20 symbols are:

1 6 11 16

2	7	12	17
3	8	13	18
4	9	14	19
5	10	15	20

Our task now is to explore these destinations.

13th Day of Cancer 1443. Destination 5, Plane of Sol.

Like each of the previous four portals this is another of the 2 red rock squares held apart by four white pillars. Also like the previous four portals the destination symbol is inlaid in silver into the underside of the upper red stone square.

Using the diviner I can detect five portals one just over 3 thousand miles to the west, the others much farther away.

Even though the portals are much to far to try reaching, we have decided to stay a while and explore the area around this portal as we are running low on supplies. The previous four portals where in more inhospitable places than this, and as Frigidia has had so little for us to forage, if we can not find a good supply of fodder for our animals soon we well have to finish this years explorations early.

15th Day of Cancer 1443. The river valley, Plane of Sol.

We have found paradise.

To the north of the portal we found a wide river valley. This is a bountiful, fertile land, with rich grasslands and forests that are abundant with game.

Herds of wild sheep and cattle graze meadows, between ridges covered with trees.

With this Sol portal as a supply post we should be able to remain in the field until the end of the season as planed.

14th Virgo 1443. Destination 14, Plane of Sol.

The portal at this end has been damaged we will be unable to return to frigidia directly.

Like the other portals in this system this gate is two red stone squares held apart by four white stone pillars, however on this gate most of the 20 destination symbols on the pillars have been broken away, it looks as if someone has deliberately defaced the pillars. Fortunately the symbols right at the top and bottom of the pillars remain. Destinations 5, 11, and 20, are the only portals that can be reached from here.

The portal itself is sighted among low hills, to the northwest is a forest covered mountain range, to the south and east rolling grasslands.

I have detected 5 other portals the closest is roughly 100 or so mile into the mountains to the northwest the others are thousands of miles away. Some of these far away portals will be ones we have already visited on this plane.

Astrid will be attempting to confirm which of the sol portals this is over the next few nights.

21st Virgo 1443. Portal 4, Sol.

At first this portal has the appearance of a cave mouth, however on closer inspection an arch of different kind of stone can be made out a foot or so back from the cliff face.

The cave looks to be only 10 or so feet deep but it is hard to be sure, as you are transported as you pass though the arch. Readings taken with the diviner

5th Taurus 1445. Portal 1, Plane of Thar.

Portal 7 Frigidia, a portal ring in a ruined city surrounded by a landscape of frozen canyons, connects to this portal. It consists a great stone arch, surrounded by a jumble of huge time worn stone blocks. These blocks are set to one end of a shallow vale, an oasis in a desert of white sand and rock. At least here for the first time in weeks I am warm.

From this portal I have detected only one other active portal, within possible reach. It is between 50 and 100 miles east.

8thTaurus 1445. Portal 2, Thar.

After three days of heat, dust and sand we have come to a second oasis. Here to the portal is a great stone arch amid a jumble of worn stone blocks. Early signs are that this portal leads to yet another plane.

9thTaurus 1445. Valley by a cave, Plane of Sol.

We believe we have return to a portal we discovered two years ago if we are right we are now at portal 4 Sol. The Diviner's locations match the maps from the 1443 expedition, Astrid needs only to sight the stars tonight to confirm our location.

*If we are indeed at portal 4 it will be wonderful as we will not have to retrace our steps across the desert or though the city on *Frigidia*.*