

## NOTES OF THE JOURNEY TO DELF AND THE PLANE OF INGAL

LEADER: Joplin  
SCRIBE: Isil Eth

DEPARTURE: 5-5-1988 AP  
RETURN : 27-5-1988 AP

### THE GROUP:

Joplin  
Isil Eth  
Kym Eastern Elf, lady, fighter  
Tawm thief  
Camellia yuppie female, Mind  
Frank fighter  
Pym hobbit withdrew at Delf  
Diandra E & E Withdrew due to death in family

### INTRODUCTION

At the Guild Meeting of January 1988 AP, a Lizardman of the Isle of Delf delivered a written message.

The Oracle of Delf requests the services of a party of Adventurers, for a short mission off plane to retrieve a magic item. Party has full rights to any other treasure found. Please report to the Oracle of Delf within one month.

Later that day the Captain of the galleon upon which the lizardman travelled to Seagate was invited to the Guild for discussions. He was able to furnish us with the following data:

Two galleons ply the Delf-Seagate trade route, his -the SEA TURTLE- is presently in harbour and due to depart after seven days.

The Captain is religious, describing the experience as "seeing the Truelight", and adding that many Delphians share such beliefs. Joplin and I believe this to mean the True God has been resurrected (IE. either the Godmind or Oracle is in full swing). The Captain wears on his neck a symbol of an Eye.

Life on Delf has been good since we last visited. Good harvests and a down turn in the Military's popularity means more food all round. Not to mention a goodly number of visitations.

Luxuries on Delf are Grain and other dry growing foods, Silks and cotton, good metals.

The Desolation of Oorts is becoming vegetated, and soon should be fully recovered.

The plane Railia, or railway, is known to be through the porthole at the top of Delf's mountain. Each plane connects to Railia, the terminals being denoted by runes: Gothic "A" is the Rune for Alusia, and "The 42 Plane" is for Arabia.

#### THE VOYAGE SOUTH

The Party boarded the Sea Turtle on 5/5/1988 AP. The Mate, Smith is a Water Mage and knows Wind Sail, Wave Riding, Waters of Healing.

The new adventurers seem, well, rather naive though entertaining and willing to learn.

For examples:

Camellia went begging to gain money. Noting that her dress was far richer than any urchin's, she rolled in fresh Night Soil. This caused the beginnings of a following, and possibly a new cult.

On our first day at sea, Frank not to be out done by an intelligent looking albatross, suggested that we run a lottery for first travel nausea.

Camellia suggested we wear clothes to dinner.

The voyage took fourteen days, allowing me to teach Camellia and Kym Healer 1, whilst learning ritual of curse removal. Seven days out we can no longer see land, though fortunately the weather is good. Tawm is often seen in the company of the Cabin boy Bob. They are usually deep in conversation with Bob staring idolizingly at Tawm. Meanwhile the crew are very interested in Frank, whom they follow if at all possible. Whilst the crew are very fond of stories, and Adventurers are known for their economy with the truth, it would appear that Frank's entertaining nature has won their hearts.

About twelve days out Joplin and I spied a distant peak reaching above the clouds. This is the mountain of the Oracle-Godmind, being one the better land marks I know.

Two days latter we sailed into a thick fog. Captain Zark explained that this is the season for fogs, though normally they lift by noon. Being a prudent man when profit is not involved (he is on a religious type quest) the Captain hove-to. By mid morning the fog had turned to a warm wet drizzle and we continued toward the coast. Eventually, with a lead line checking the depth of water, the beach was seen and the breaking of waves heard. By dint of luck the Master could tell where we were and turned toward the river, arriving at dusk on 17/5/88AP.

There we anchored for the river is dangerous to navigate at night. The air was rather unpleasant here for the heat and evaporation push the humidity up alarmingly and a stiff gale would vastly aid civic relations.

The rising sun revealing a river in flood, allowing an easy crossing of the bar, and full of tree trunks. The (true) left bank has palm trees and wet-lands, whilst to our left are grasslands and bogs. Off to our right at some distance are a group of primitive tree dwelling people.

Their speech may have been one of the earlier Penjaree derivatives. They were very wary and mainly worried that we would invade their land. Why we might wish to is beyond me, for it was not very inviting. They wore fur cloaks, and have

mammalian skin.

The next day we arrived at some sort of trading/customs complex consisting of a few huts and a wharf. Since we were "On a Mission from [their] God", huts were made available for our use. Food for this place is reprovisioned weekly.

That evening we had a visitor: a lizard; a green, four foot long, floating in the air type lizard. He was very cute, with a cultured air and a refined sense of decent humour. His mode of communication was by mind-speech and transportation by belt. Namely the gold magical one he was wearing. He told us that transport to the Oracle had been booked for eight o'clock the next morning. Seems the Godmind uses these gents as and when required. They are really rather ornamental yet practical: the type of being one may give to one who believes they have everything.

The ship meanwhile had anchored for the night in mid-stream, continuing on to Prophecy, the main city of Delf, in the morning.

Next morning our vehicle arrived. A whirlwind descended from great height with blue aura and lightening, complete with rumbling sound and wooshing noises. The youngsters appeared to be impressed and rather awed. Fortunately Joplin and I had experienced this all before and hence the most extreme jitters as experienced by the others were calmed. Surprisingly there were no storm currents and the trip up was quite calm, even relaxing. Some had difficulty waking up upon arrival at the mountain peak, so comforting was the aerial journey. The date was May 21 1987AP.

The air is apparently thin, though there is no snow, a gentle wind and some mist. "You are on a square slab 100 feet aside with a ladder on a side" came to our minds. The "voice" had a neutral tone one associates with elevated fountains, it certainly was not overtly inspiring.

"God and Priestess are melded together and speaking together. Follow the ladder and find us"

I'm not for questioning Gods but one would think they could contemplate giving more reasonable instructions: follow a ladder? They go down or up. Or does this one walk? Close.

The ladder is stationary and one hundred feet long. Yes, it is an artificial cube built on top of the mountain. At the base of the ladder is a platform. The mist has cleared giving a spectacular view of Delf, the sea and some clouds. Pity the sky is so dark, almost black, and the sun so harsh. One could have realised the highest and most exclusive penthouse on Alusia. Two large, ostentatious, and slightly ajar doors are set into the wall. To complete the setting, the doorward is an ambulatory mannequin of the whitest porcelain and, like all good servants, no distinguishing features. The Guild's Butler should come and study this.

Inside the doors is a predictably cubic room with a wide circular stairwell.

"Please excuse the poor decor. Follow the creature and nourishment will be provided. I shall join you there."

The mannequin moves without joints, but more importantly without noise nor expression of enforced servitude. The Guild must get one of these for its steward training courses. I was to learn that this being can carry fifty kilograms, has a TMR of 3-4, will not harm living things, is mindless and must be directed at all times, came from another plane and is of enchanted porcelain.

Some depth later we took a level platform, though the stairs continue down, leading to a corridor with two empty chambers on either side and one at the far end. The latter is illuminated by candles placed on a large table. The walls are bare, the table and chairs plain, each emphasizing the meats and fruits upon the table. Seated at the far end is a girl with long hair and wearing a grey diaphanous gown gathered at the waist with a silver clasp belt. Her well groomed fingernails identified their owner, if any could not guess. We had met the Rank 11 Astrologer and Priestess Assia. She is formal, kind, and like all considerate hostesses serves no processed foods.

#### THE QUEST EXPLAINED

As the party finished the refreshments Assia spoke of the reason for her request.

Many years ago a group of knowledgeable Penjarree mages arrived on Delph to investigate the manufacture of a god. Just as they were approaching the concluding phases, the Penjarree wars caused such a major flux in the mana that most of the researchers were doomed. To save what they could of their studies, the collective put forth their collective might and deified the Godmind. Of his original name, Assia did not say, though she was his wife at the time.

Unfortunately this was too much for the others and they perished. Worse still, the race of the Oorts was created and Assia trapped alone on the mountain top.

Simultaneously a portal appeared through to Railia. This is at the bottom of the spiral staircase, and since He is now able to converse through Assia, the Godmind has emplaced a sphere of negation over the portal, so as to keep out that which is not within. Over the years however Assia has allowed a few interplaner travellers through, as much to pass the time of century as to learn of the (various plane's) weather.

Assia told us "The nature of our power, whilst strong here, decreases with distance. We cannot move, [and thus] the stone would be very useful in our comfort of our followers."

Then, as if concerned that this would not sufficiently move us, Assia told us of the recent change in the Godmind's power base from mana to psionic. With it came the awareness of an extra-planer living stone. Utilizing this stone they could be reunited after two thousand years of body sharing. It is termed the Mindstone.

The natural bi-product of an human-sized insect Queen's life cycle, the Mindstone stores considerable psychic power.

When a Queen approaches death she lays a Queen-larva. As she pupates her dreams cause psionic disturbances, the main ramification being the growth of a crystal. Only one stone is produced at a time, and as these dissipate after a short period, they are quite rare.

A Mindstone is presently being pupated on the Ingal plane. We can get there via the portal to Railia and thence via portal to Ingal.

To aid us Assia provided the party with cold weather yeti-fur lined coats, darkened eye glasses and snowshoes for Railia; way-bread; a list of portal runes [attached]; an astrology reading [attached]; and a Pathfinder. This last glowed red at one end and blue at the other. The red was brightest when pointing at Assia, and hence would show us the way home, and the blue would guide us to the Mindstone.

#### INTERPLANER TRAVEL

At the base of the staircase is a quadrant of no light, the dissipation of which reveals a twenty feet diameter circle, within which is the Railia rune. On stepping in the circle a portal appears, looking for all the plane like a rectangular prism of thick fog. Moving through this blurring of the vision one steps onto an Alusian rune within a circle.

This side of the portal is within an unlit corridor, examination of which showed it to have 100 feet zig-zags, and no side passages. By the light of the pathfinder, one easily can see one's breath condensing. At the end of the tunnel we saw Railia proper: a bleak snow swept landscape covered with slush and little atmosphere. It is dotted with barrows similar to this. Both the sun and sky is grey, muting even those colours we brought with us. As we watched, the sun descended below the horizon, allowing the temperature to drop to below freezing. There was a good three seconds twilight.

Five hours later at dawn we set out. Above the lintel to this barrow is the Alusia rune. The pathfinder pointed about thirty degrees to the right of the entrance. Assia had told the group that it took but seven days to walk from one place on Railia back to that place. We were surprised then to find the Ingal barrow in about three hours, the days being of five hours duration also.

The entrance has no aura and is not trapped. After about 100 feet we turned right down a side passage, leading to many 100 foot zigzags and eventually warmer, fresher air, an Ingal rune and a high mana area.

#### INGAL

On stepping through the party arrived in a grassed glade surrounded by life filled forest. This too was high mana and whilst attempting to determine the extent of the HM area, we found a set of isoscelian triangles with their long axis parallel their direction of propagation. Assuming these to be a path (centipede etc), the pathfinder wants us to follow it.

After lunch we heard a tapping/rumbling sound, as in that of a cart coming from the direction of the tracks. As we

took up defensive positions a wagon came into view. Its beast of burden was a large spider and its cargo seven insectoids in combat order. These warriors are erect-bipedal of human height and four working arms. Each is armed with a spear and short sword, and wears leather armour.

Not surprisingly they attack, giving Joplin the opportunity to discover their reaction to heat as delivered by Greek fire grenades. Not good: they crinkle. Meanwhile Tawm fought one in single combat. They are about as good as he is, though this one used only one weapon. Their spears are unusual, being crystal and on hitting cause the recipient to see fearsome beings.

The following was deduced about the insectoids:

Generic true name	:	Insect name
Primary sense	:	Smell
Life Cycle	:	Insect type; several metamorphisms

Those that died of fire smell of formaldehyde.

The cart has footed spokes, as opposed to the usual wheel, thus affording a greater cross country mobility, in forested areas especially.

The spider is docile and happy to be fed foliage. Kyn questioned the beast and learnt:

The types of insectoid in this colony are:  
Queen; soldier; worker; drone.

Hairy things attacked the insect home and burnt the grass.

Visitors are taken inside.

They patrol this glade daily and it will take about a third of the day to reach the home of the insectoids.

The spider rarely meets other spiders whilst on patrol, only during emergencies. The Insectoids seem to attack the Hairys on occasion. The last war was against another hive, though these were more like bees in their social order.

Meanwhile we have been averaging ten miles per hour on the cart, which even at this speed, is of considerably more comfort than a horse. There are many paths leading off and merging with this one, though all seem to parallel this one and none cross it.

After about two hours we left the trees and "entered" tall grass. Twenty feet tall high grass. Pym thinks we have shrunk. After testing the grasses resilience to trampling at high speed, we concluded that the track is well used.

Three hours later we met a group of thirteen soldiers on guard duty at a guard post. They had just been ordered to not to attack strange peoples; we are expected. The guards are in a thirty foot clearing and very wary, though they do not attack. From their placement it became apparent that the insectoid soldiers operate in threes.

X X  
X [leader]  
X X X X  
X X

cart

The Insects display, quite extraordinarily, a number of human characteristics, right down to one adolescent reading a dime novel full of violence and food.

About quarter of a mile away is the structures of a small town, towards which we are escorted. It is probably a guard's quarters, for it marks the entrance to a wide open area, within which we can see four small volcanoes. These are their four hundred feet high cities with a narrow path going up the side. The date is May 24 1987AP.

At the rim of the crater we were met by an insect with a larger head and a blue-glowing crystal instead of a spear. We had been having difficulty in visually distinguishing one bug warrior from another: one seems much like another.

This chap asks us to follow and leads down a spiral path within the crater to a vertical shaft in the bottom, around which the descending stair continues its spiral. He explained that the crystal naturally grows to be light emitting.

A further hour later, having passed many side passages, we came to a level whose avenue was lit from above, the shaft ofcourse continued on down. As we proceed along the avenue we passed soldiers and messengers, these latter being smaller than the soldiers and subservient. The walls are made of paste, ie. excreted by the insects, rather than the expected rock. They are previously living and 120 years since last change of aura. Our guide is of higher standing than soldiers as is only proper.

After a short walk we entered a large, well lit chamber where our guide asked us to proceed to the centre. The place is similar to a honey comb, with workers regurgitating something to produce the hexagonal walls. The chamber was about 1200 to 1400 feet across, with a large slightly glowing cell opposite to entrance.

Once we reached the centre I noticed that there were a number of big-heads about us, with soldiers and workers milling around. This is apparently their way of organizing the city. They appear to be linked telepathically together and to the glowing cell.

I was able to speak with them for the group, saying that we wished the mindstone for a God. While they know it is only temporary, the stone gives an expansion of thought, though you can get lost in these. The big-heads traded the stone for knowledge, especially of mana.

A grey robed humanoid, named the Grey Traveller, taught them the basics of mind magics. This obliging fellow can cast light, grant wishes, has black skin, bald pate, is tallish and carries a staff of life. So far the Insects have three

beginning mind mages with rank zero generals.

As it will take a further week for the Queen to finish her metamorphosis, we shall be escorted to a chamber for rest. They offered us food: ten inch candied bug wrapped in leaf. Frank said they are quite nice. In our guest quarters we were brought spring fresh water and spider eggs. The eggs are eaten, and taste, much like a chicken egg, admittedly a nutty, herbed one.

To one side is our formerly living bedding. It is a type of vegetation of unknown specific origin. Spores show it once lived. It can be used as a weapon against mammals. The Insects offer to provide animals, or even live animals if that is what we wish to eat. They also gave us an eight inch glowing crystal. It is never living, with a faint magical aura, the source of energy being the crystal. It has a hexagonal prism with bevels on top: this radiates the light.

As I meditated the day's events in the course of composing and memorising this diary, I came to the sad conclusion that Camellia is quickly becoming a rather pushy, money grabbing, trader type nuisance.

Tawm had a rather vivid nightmare, Camellia was stranger than usual, though Frank was merely weird. Some time later my concentration by Joplin as the room exploded. A store room below our chamber had been breached by sword thrust and thus a dangerous mixture formed. Tawm's nightmare became worse leading to gross paranoia. Seems something other than death affects mortals, something psychoactive. We were housed elsewhere and served stewed venison for breakfast. This room had a four feet two inch diameter shaft to the surface, with a fan at the top to provide circulating air.

#### THE CONCLUSION

Though Isil Eth did not scribe the last few days, for continuity here is a brief synopsis.

The next day we were told details of how to give the insects information. They have a type of mind meld which is usually quite safe, though you can get lost. Each of us will meld in this manner the following day.

Two insectoids died due to the melds. Joplin and Kyn gained their light crystals, as these are individual bug oriented.

A further two days later, the Queen hatched to a full dress ceremony. It was quite simple yet apparently laced with tradition. We were escorted to one area of the grand chamber, affording us a good view. As the Queen passed she presented us with the Mindstone, much to the surprise of the onlookers. We were then escorted up the stairs and out.

A cart was provided and the pathfinder showed us the quickest way, back the path we had taken getting here. The glade was still high mana, complete with portal and Railia rune.

We were able to cross Railia without difficulty. Back on top of Alusia's highest mountain we gave the crystal to



Assia and then followed her outside. The Mindstone glowed to beyond the sun's brilliance and wafted the combined Godmind/Assia thirty or so feet up into the air. After a brief flourish, they removed themselves from the constraints of the planes of existence, being truly together as never before. Another whirlwind appeared and took us back to Seagate. Joplin has a cute name for the whirlwinds and an arrangement that allow travel to the mountain top.

Under the pen of  
Featherfax,  
Scribe.

By commission to,  
And from the notes of  
Isil Eth,  
Princess of Elfheim.