I write from our new campground near Karakiri, and I am being specific when I say that: I do not write from the medic tent, or from the inn tent, but rather from outside beneath the stars, in the swampy ground that seemingly seeks to eat all furniture.

Rather than explaining why now, I will start at the beginning of the day (of yesterday, now, for though this chronicle is dated to the day these events occurred, I did not have any energy remaining after the... events. The mess.

We all knew days in advance that All Hallows promised to be eventful, as it is every year; last year [shit happened]. And this All Hallows we were all finally settled into our new camp and ready to explore the shards of the surrounding area, so we knew we would be busy even before whatever the holiday brought to us was considered. It even seemed appropriately spooky, as it were; reports of skeletons, or skeletal undead, deep in the swamp (theorized to be the natural black mana's reaction to the other colors of the shards, perhaps); a strange mist arising in the swamp; the shards, of course; and, what Xitli urged us to investigate first: a strange humming that had started around midnight last night and was extremely irritating to her sharp ears.

It was this last occurrence that we decided to investigate first. We wandered around camp, mainly around the armory and alchemy tents, trying to determine what this humming was. By that time, all could hear it, though it was still quite faint, and indeed it was quite annoyingly constant. But it was not unchanging. We quickly determined that it was louder near crystalline, and louder near enchanted items, like the tents, even if those enchanted items contained no crystalline.

We lost quite a bit of time as everyone wandered off and investigated things on their own, and I was not able to keep track of everything that everyone was doing, so a short list:
Harlow and Otli both independently spent quite a bit of time with the lanterns.
[Lucas?] disenchanted a lantern, which kept humming afterwards, because of the crystalline within it.
Loris speaks with animals, and said that the humming was not coming from an animal.
Ptolemae slept, with Zet'Ubar observing, guarding, or causing dreams, and they determined... something?
Leilani and Beau contained humming within themselves, as Leilani's bones are crystalline. We learned more about Beau later, so I will record that later.
[Jack], the rat, has extremely acute hearing, so was able to determine things about the pitch and tone which I do not remember right now. He also had a fantastic idea which led to our true discovery, which I will include at the end of this paragraph.
Echo, the mangrove, has crystalline embedded in his roots, and attempted to trace the threads around the camp. He determined that it was constant, not location based. He also was able to determine that it had the feel of a ritual, one without intent, but one gathering power regardless.
Someone, perhaps Aeliana? discovered that we could read magic on the air. When we tried this with different colors, we discovered that there was less blue than normal, some green, much black, and much red.

[Jack]'s discovery was that if crystalline dust was placed on a flat metal disc and left to the humming, to travel and resonate across its surface, it created a pattern. A line, with ripples emanating from it. This revealed to us the truth, though we did not fully realize it until much later, when Ptolemae shared what they had dreamed with us and with Zarai.

We discussed, and came to the conclusion that we had learned all we could at that time, and that we would continue to investigate and pay attention throughout the day. The only color of weaving that nobody in the party had yet attempted was white, and so we came to the unfortunate conclusion that we must first attempt to clear the white mana-infused area of swamp.

The first true clear sign of a problem we came across was a ritual - or the remains of a ritual. A circle for Summon the Dead, as it turned out soon - the usual circle, the usual runes, and a few small items in the middle: a gold coin, a few shells. The most unusual facet of the situation was that the ritual was glowing. It had the characteristic purple-black glow of necromancy, and seemed… active, perhaps. Every so often a wave of red would pulse through it, towards the ley-line. I will restate this, just to make it clear how odd and worrying it was to me: this was a ritual that had been completed, that had somehow reactivated all on its own, simply due to the force of the ambient magic in the area.

As we were inspecting it, Harlow unknowingly (hopefully) stepped a foot inside. Immediately, her spirit was yanked from her body and she fell down dead.

For clarity's sake, I will refer to the side to which the pulses were travelling as 'north' and the side *from* which the pulses were travelling as 'south', even though I do not know if those were the actual directions. Harlow had stepped into the circle from the north, and the mana-sensitive among us determined that the flow of red energy was both a push and a pull. It was theorized that putting Harlow into the circle from the south side, the opposite side, would rather than ejecting her soul from her body summon it back in, following the meaning of the ritual, and this was attempted. It was also at this point that I backed away from the circle, out of the potential blast radius, but it turned out that there was (probably) no need for me to have done so. Harlow was indeed eventually summoned back into her body, and then [Lucas] spellbroke the ritual. They said that the spellbreaking was harder than usual; rather than just ending the spell, they were forced to destroy and disperse the very components that made up the ritual, and even then they were not sure that their spellbreaking was permanent, and worried that the ritual would return to being over time.

If we had known better - then is the time we would have realized we had to return to camp and start preparing. But even with all the information, we did not realize the urgency of the situation.

We took Harlow's body with us, in the hopes that in the white mana shard we could find an elemental who would be willing to rebirth her. But it was in our next encounter that we found elementals - a whole swarm of white elementals, traveling north along the ley-line. They would not be paused in their journey, not even to interact with us. After that, we reached the swamp,

though we were not yet in the shard, and I am just now realizing that we forgot to check ourselves for diseases afterwards, thought Ptolemae was inspecting us and helping us clean ourselves off as we went along.

In the swamp there were skeletons - skeletal undead, I should say, as the majority were skeletons, but one or two were different; spectral and stronger than the others. We defeated them, though not without risk - they were trying to carry some of our downed party members off to wherever it was they came from, before they were stopped and our party members healed.

Then - the shard. It was bright, the very mud puddles near-blinding us when we got too close. There was no elemental, but instead there was a slime, easily defeated while I was distracted attuning to the white mana. Even just walking around put us at risk for being shocked still or stunned by the latent energy.

I did not participate in the unweaving, in order to help protect those who were, but it was unnecessary - it was perhaps the fastest unweaving I have seen yet. (Or perhaps my un-participation was helpful, if the curse on myself that I have speculated on in the past is true. I keep insisting that I am not superstitious, but I also keep only participating in unweavings that become knotted, tangled, and drawn-out.)

When we returned to the camp, the humming still constant in our ears, we finally spoke to Zarai, which I wish we had done sooner. And, too, Ptolemae told us of the vision or dream they had had: something like an Arc, the crack of a whip, a burst of energy.

We told Zarai, in our usual disorganized fashion, of what we had learned.

Have you ever been itchy, reader? From a mosquito bite, from an allergy, from a healing wound? There is some relief to be found in treatments, then, and more relief to be found in the knowledge that these are passing ailments, and that these are localized to certain areas of the body. It is exponentially more frustrating to be itchy throughout one's body - to try and shift touch away from the sensitive area only for that shift to make another patch of your skin start to crawl. I have scratched myself bleeding, once or twice, when I have had this overall itching before. It is, almost by definition, hard to ignore.

So let that paint a mental picture, how worrying was our news to Zarai, and her explanation then to us, that we all forgot about the itching white mana rash we had gained from the swamp shard.

A second arc - less powerful, we quickly determined, and thus less wide reaching, but still strong enough to be an incredible danger. We wasted precious time trying to decide what to do about it; we determined it was too late to run, too late to evacuate the area. Almost even too late to warn others, though we did get a messenger out to Karakiri in time to let them know it was coming, though of course there was little they could do about it. Xitli said, when we talked to her, that we could try to redirect the energy elsewhere, somewhere close, but it would obliterate that land, which was not something we thought was better. We proposed an idea to try and shunt it

back up into the mana-scape; Xitli thought that was interesting, and did some experiments with teleportation about whether we could try and have the energy 'skip' over the majority of Lakeshore, going into the mana-scape at the local leytap and coming out of it at the Teakiri leytap, that had just been repaired last month. But we were worried that, as it was all hallows and the boundaries between scapes thin, that the energy would just fall back out of the mana-scape back into our own.

Eventually we decided, rather than pushing the energy up, to try and push it *down*, possibly into the primal scape, possibly just into the earth to ground it. To this end, a large group of us, including Zet, Leilani, and Beau, set out to explore an old abandoned opal mine, to see if we could get deep enough within it to do a ritual there.

Beau and Leilani become stranger the more I learn about them. Their parents hunt monsters; Leilani's bones are made of crystalline; Beau has a crystalline sphere in his chest, which contains some sort of monster or demon, keeping it trapped and yet requiring him to consume energy to keep it trapped.

These crystalline body parts proved dangerous for them, in the coming mana wave. Leilani's very bones were humming, which I cannot imagine was comfortable, and Beau's chest-sphere-prison hummed deep and low, so I could just feel it on the edge of my hearing. The humming from both of them got deeper, as we got deeper into the abandoned mine, but it did not ever cease.

We reached the bottom of the mine, and found… a wall? A threshhold of some sort, but not one we knew how to pass. There was arguing and debate, at this point, about what was to be done. We tried all we could think of, to pass through, and get deeper, so we could take the energy and redirect it somewhere safe where it would not overwhelm people or the landscape.

Suffice to say, we failed.

Zet and I attempted something odd - we tried to key with the door, as one keys with a source of mana when unweaving a shard, but quickly realized that first we would have to attune. And not attune to a color of magic, but to attune to the Prime. We even discovered how to do so: to sing, at the same key, in tune. We told this to the group; there was argument. A group split off towards the rear of the cave to start working on a ritual. A large group of us (our first mistake) tried singing, but we did not know many of the same songs, and our feeble attempts at learning songs were badly out of tune.

Throughout our journey and exploration of the cave, there had been waves of mana coming and going, first draining us, then filling us up. Now, at this point, came the biggest filling wave yet; I lost count, and might well have lost track of my internal energy and exploded, had events not intervened.

Beau decided that we must try to get through the doorway by force. He could absorb the excess mana of everyone else; practically the whole group rushed over to him, in almost a split second, while I was standing confused by the door, and shared their own overflowing mana to him.

He used this to cast a fireball at the door.

I do not remember anything beyond that point; I do not know whether the fireball explosion killed me, or if I was killed by the cave collapsing in in the explosion's wake.

I do know that almost all of us were knowledgable to stay in our bodies after our deaths, until the mana wave had passed, for we had learned earlier that wisps caught in the first Arc had been torn to shreds. Even staying in our bodies was not enough to protect all of us - Zet'Ubar is dead, permanently, his soul ripped apart with the force of the energy that flowed through the land. And we were shielded from a great deal of it, in the cave; we were resurrected only with moderate red and blue mana rash (on top of the white rash many of us already had), not the five-colored rash those aboveground in the main camp have been stricken with.

I do not know if there is more we could have done - no, there is almost certainly more we could have done. But we did not do it, through foolishness and folly - we still tried our best.