28th of Firstmoon

Today was... a day. I think I'm feeling a little better, at least since last time I wrote. Of course, lots of bad things happened today, like always, but that's adventuring, I guess. I'm still having trouble remembering things. I have lots to think about. We're on the shore of the Shimmerglass Sea this month, about halfway between Crystal Town and Gemglass, and there's this blue mana fog thing coming off the lake. It's incessant and makes it impossible to heal blue mana rash, but it's not strong enough to make me glow blue. Weird!

Mission board today:

> Clear area surrounding the Shimmerglass Leytap
>> Investigate strange phenomenon on beach to the North
>> Travel to Crystal Town, speak to Bellmorn emissaries
>> Travel to Gemglass to provide relief, aid to townsfolk
>>> Clear escalated Blue Shards throughout region
>>>> Search old battlefields for Iron Slimes for Valen
>>>> Search the southern Greyfen for answers for Zarai
Written later:
Sail the Lake
Negotiate with Elementals
Spend time investigating in town

The first inn was with Xitli, and the poor thing was all frantic talking about how we needed to find demons and use them to fix the shards, or something crazy. Apparently she had a breakdown shortly after, had a screaming fit, a tent got burned down, and she hadn't slept in three days. Or that's what I heard. In any case, I felt bad for her, she was really freaking out. Our innkeepers seem to follow a pattern of overworking themselves and not sleeping... First Valen being super sleep deprived from working in the medic's tent 24/7, then Zarai getting all messed up from fixing shards by herself, and now Xitli. Not good :(Anyways, we decided to go look for Iron Slimes for Valen first. Iron climes are Mercenary slimes, and I think Valen wants to try to prevent mana rash with them, by making a sunscreen goop thing. Weird... I didn't go on this one, I wasn't really feelin it first thing in the morning, especially now that adventuring is one of the only times I spend a whole day around Beau. More on that later.

I heard that the mission went okay, not the best but could've been worse. Near the beginning they had what sounded like another dreamscape-bleeding encounter, giant fish that were walking on their fins and talking, who were taking water out of a well because "it was overflowing". They unwove it, like we do with the mana shards, and the fish and everything disappeared. There was also crystalline around, some glowing blue and some red... sounds all pretty symbolic and understandable to me! Later they ran into some "doomguard" things, and other undead, which sounded incredibly terrifying. Aside from the fact that I could have helped if I was there, I'm not sad I missed it. I heard that they also ran into some people on the way who were talking about Bellmorn, hunters or herbalists or something. And more crystalline crabs I think. And they found only a couple slimes, but they did find them! Not sure what the battlefields were from, but now Aeliana's having nightmares about them. Not a fan.

The second inn we had was with Valen, and this one was complicated and we kinda took forever. Someone brought a bone from one of the doomguards (I think) that was crystallized, and Valen took it and looked through it, and it sort of refracted the mana or made everything glow or something? I can't remember very well. And when he looked through it at the sea there was a super bright blue spot out in the water, and, as I am a genius, I was right in thinking that that was the mana well. But I haven't explained that yet! We spent a long time talking about leylines, we had a map of the leylines in the Halhars that was EXTREMELY interesting. It showed where all of them were, what colors, and it showed mana wells. Leylines flow into mana wells, rather than out of them, and mana is generated (I can't think of a better word) inside the wells. There is a giant leyline that flows out of the Halhars and lines up with the Old River. The Shimmerglass Sea is a blue mana well, and there is a big volcano in the Halhars that is a red mana well.

Those are the two wells at the ends of our leyline, but the volcano is running out of juice after a very very long time, and that tether for the leyline is weakening. It's like holding a rope tightly on each side, and then sending ripples down it. When the tethers are strong, the wave cancels itself out, or at least is contained. But when one tether is weaker, (the red mana well), a ripple can go dangerously out of control, snapping back and ripping itself loose from one side. That's what's happening with our leyline in these arcs. We think. You never know... Also, leylines often change color partway through, which I didn't know. Though that's probably obvious if you've read up to this point!

After a longgg time we ended up deciding to do two things at the same time. Huilotl suggested that now might be a good time to do an oracle and a seance, and we also

wanted to do more, so we split into two groups. One group stayed in town and did an oracle and seance, and all kinds of weird things, (more later), and the other, including me, went to try to clear some of the area around the Shimmerglass leytap.

First I'll recount what I heard about the oracle and seance, which I can't remember very well. I'll have to ask someone to tell me about it later. For the most part, I think it all fit in with what we've been thinking. At some point, a bunch of people "tethered themselves to the lake" while doing a seance, and Calix was apparently singing while they were doing this... I don't know. But. Calix and the others who were a part of it all permanently died, but got divine interventions - FROM THE LAKE. WHAT? I didn't know that was possible. I'm so grateful that they did, but they're a little different now. And by different I mean they are made entirely out of water. It is extremely strange. They are still the same people, just... water. Aeliana is having a rough time with it, and I cannot blame her. That feeling of not knowing if the people you love are actually themselves, it never stops being horrible. And on top of Calix being water, he's been having the same mood swing and weird memory problems, though I haven't heard that he's had any too recently. I don't know if there will be anything we can do to make them less... soggy. We'll have to see.

While they were doing the whole oracle-seance-get-turned-into-water-by-the-sea thing, the other group of us went out to clear some of the area around the leytap. This was pretty mundane adventuring stuff for the most part, we ran into more of those nasty giant wasps that were impaling and disemboweling us, but we took care of those pretty quick. There were also some of those little balls of electricity zapping around, some blue slimes, and I think that was it? And then the last thing was a big group of blue elementals, and we could not figure out how to deal with them. They kept charming us, one of them forced into oracles that we couldn't leave voluntarily, and all kinds of things. We fought them twice, and eventually decided to go back to town and maybe hire a diviner to help us deal with them later.

Beau and I had a talk in between those encounters. I saw Aeliana talking to him all serious so I asked her and she said she was trying to get him to talk to me, which I'm grateful for. I know I've been distant recently, but so has he, and with everything going on... I hadn't gotten to properly talk to him for a long time. He's going to go to Crystal Town near the end of this month to try to adopt the kids. He's so stubborn sometimes it makes me mad. I explained to him that I want to have as much responsibility for them as he does, and that if he's their sole guardian, what would happen if something happens to them? He always does the classic Beau thing though, "don't worry, I'll take

care of it, it's my responsibility". I don't know... I don't want all of that responsibility on his shoulders, as much as he says he can handle it, and it's the kind of life he thrives on, I still don't think it's good for him. The more I remember and think about the time before we adventured the more I feel this horrible guilt gnawing at my insides. He says that his "job", all he wanted, was for my life to be "perfect". All the times he overworked himself, hurting himself with exhaustion, all the pain of pushing back against mom and dad, all of it was to make my life perfect. And that's the part that makes me squirm. It was perfect. All that stress and suffering on my head, in my name, and if I'd known I would never have let it happen. But it all happened behind my back, and I let it, I encouraged it, even. I didn't know. Beau keeps saying that it's fine, it was his choice, but he doesn't seem to get the fact that it's pain under my name. I don't know... it's all so tiring. But I can't complain to Beau, or else it'll add another burden for him to carry with a smile and an "I'm fine."

Back to the missions. Our last thing for the day was to go search the southern Greyfen for Zarai, and she was in the inn. We tried to ask her what we were looking for, but she said something like "if I tell you what it is it might obscure your ability to see it". Thanks a lot :I Actually though, that makes a little sense, and I understand if it's true, it's just not the most encouraging instructions. She went on to tell us about how the Greyfen is weird and things are not what they seem to be, and how the caustic crystalline swamps will hurt us, so we all got face coverings so we didn't breathe too much of it. One of our innkeepers (I can't remember, I think Valen?) gave us crystalline boats, like the ones used on the sea, and we were lugging those around the rest of the time. We fought something, I can't remember what, and then we ran into this funny statue thing. At first it was hiding up in a tree, but someone got it to come out. It was a mossy statue, pretty generic looking, and it barely talked to us. Huilotl gave it a necklace or a bracelet - one finger up. Yuri gave it some rumors - two fingers up. And then we all gave our names - three fingers up. The three fingers were for three riddles, which I'll try to remember as best I can.

- The first riddle I can't remember at all, but the answer was a fish, and we got it right away.

- The second riddle went something like this: something something, twin bodies joined, something something, when I stand still I flow. Or something. I wish my memory wasn't all jumbled these days. After a while we figured out that the answer was an hourglass!

- The third riddle went something like this: what do you keep when you have no need of it, but throw out when the time comes? This one I remember the best, because we spent so long thinking about it! The answer was an anchor. We went through many other ideas, like trash, secrets, fishing line, grudges, things like that.

We're going to return to the shimmerswamp, hopefully we'll find whatever it is Zarai can't tell us about...

Beau and I are going to go to Crystal Town at the end of this month, I hope it goes well!

p.s. I wonder if Soleili would like a fish bone pattern....  