28 Ninthmoon. Illmythil Outpost. Amartheil Eldasilquendil.

Before I describe what occurred on the adventuring day, I would first wish to record some information gathered by myself, Elethir Eroval, and a third member of our adventuring party whose name I was not able to ascertain. Over the month, the three of us ventured into the town to follow up on the mission to gather rumors. We were successfully able to gather a few new clues as well as some hypotheses about what may have occurred regarding the king's disappearance.

Anything written in italics is my commentary. The rest is summarized from accounts given to us by various townsfolk.

Firstly, a few facts we learned:

- The day the King disappeared he was dressed in an understated manner for a King. There was a lot of subtle emerald studding in the embroidery on his clothes.
    - *We later learned from the King's friend, a diplomat to Eldar, that this may not be as unusual as initially assumed. More on this later.*
- There was a tussle in the marketplace between the King's Guards and a thief attempting to steal something from him.

Next, a few pieces of information that are closer to theories or hearsay:

- The outpost being locked down indicates that whoever is in charge of the investigation believes what/whoever made the King disappear is still inside the outpost.
    - Some wondered if a mage from another school is trying to sabotage the Illion Mage School, and it is not about the King himself.
- The King allegedly had a knack with people and may have had some involvement with fey around Illion.
    - Some wondered if the King may have promised something to a high fey who came to collect.
- The King allegedly was a diplomat to Coradel before being recalled to Illionor.
    - *This was later confirmed by the King's friend / diplomat as well.*
    - Some wondered if the King may have been swept up in Mafia-related business.
- A greater demon would certainly be powerful enough to make someone disappear without a trace. There are a nonzero number around as well.
    - A retired demon hunter mentioned that demons often have subtle calling cards.

The most interesting piece of information to me was the assertation that demons have calling cards. I connected this to the diviner Min encountered coming out of the tower last month who was repeating "The Key and the Empty Cup". Perhaps those symbols were a sort of calling card for a demon.

The theory that this has to do with Mafia business seems unlikely to me. Given the lack of physical evidence we have found thus far I doubt that this was a kidnapping or something. I would expect the Mafia to use mostly mundane means for accomplishing their goals. It is not impossible, however, for the Mafia to have access to powerful magic, so I cannot entirely rule this out yet.

The fey theories seem entirely possible as well. I imagine that something as powerful and having as much magical prowess as a high fey could easily make someone disappear just like a greater demon could.

Now, for the day in and of itself..

We began by speaking Maírion. He described that the investigators had finished their initial checks (things like baseline identifies, initial questioning, etc.) and are moving on to larger investigations, as well as that there were several formal visits from the Illion Mage School and Celenrion over the moon. It seems as though the investigation is growing complicated and large quickly.

Additional details regarding initial news can be found in Elethir's ninthmoon issue of the Illmythil Inquirer. I would also like to thank him for writing such a detailed and consistent report. It helps my record-keeping greatly.

Maírion also mentioned that last moon we prioritized the town over the researchers and the outpost. He suggested that they could become discontent should we choose to continue ignoring them. I took his urgency with a grain of salt. After all, Maírion is the Archmage's Apprentice and is likely to prioritize the needs of the researchers over other things. I ultimately concluded, however, that serving the needs of the researchers this month was a good idea. It is best to keep our resources open and not burn any bridges, especially this early on into our duties.

The missions were as follows, as well as few extra details as relevant/remembered:

- >Escort visiting Diplomat through town to Illmythil shrines
    - This person wanted to make a sacrifice to Dragons
- >Help Illmythil Outpost researchers with project trouble
- >>Gather enchanting ingredients, restock outpost supplies
- >>Negotiate winter grounds use with nearby ice fey
    - The sense I got is that there is a deal we have with a nearby ice fey to keep it out of town during the winter months that needs to be renewed or renegotiated every year. Without our intervention this fey could become quite bothersome.
- >>Check underground passages, projects for source of quake
- >>>Guard shipment of spellstones bound for villages
- >>>Check scrying orbs around Illmythil region
    - This is essentially a mission to make sure our tools are still calibrated and able to make readings. We were told this would be important for the longer-term stage of the investigation
- Other
    - Follows taluses and/or gnomes
        - This was suggested by Deluhel later in the day.

Maírion had us go through a similar discussion exercise as last moon. We spoke with a few people near us, then a few of us spoke and described what we wanted, then cited arguments from the

people we spoke with. It went better than last moon. I think we are slowly getting the hang of Maírion's academic debate structure.

A lot of the discussion surrounded what we felt we were capable of doing. Some felt that we were not experienced enough yet to tackle something as serious as the underground passages or protecting the diplomat. We settled on helping the outpost researchers with their project trouble.

When we arrived at the place where the researchers were completing their projects, we found that it was quite a mess. I think it would be simplest to present this as a list rather than a long paragraph.

- There were a few different containers to dispose of waste in the middle.
- There were slimes loose that a researcher was scrambling to contain.
    - I believe the colors included were Iron, Steel, Silver, Brown, and Shadow. The Iron, Steel, and Silver ones were a bit difficult to distinguish at a glance because they were so similar. We were able to grab a few big glass jars, trap them within, and return them to the shelter they were originally contained in.
    - Reflecting on these slimes taught me that they seem to reflect the environment that they are in. That is, this outpost is somewhat distant from the regular five colors of magic and is more aligned with divine or primal energy, hence the unusually-colored slimes.
- There was a big, seemingly alchemical spill that needed to be carefully cleaned.
    - I admittedly did not tend to this situation as much. A few party members were already dealing with it and I thought it best to avoid a situation involving too many cooks.
    - Notable items included syringes, vaguely explosive substances, and a silver wyvern scale.
- There was a researcher who had spilled some crystalline ritual components that needed cleaning up. He was also looking to complete a ritual involving transferring 50 mana quickly to a piece of crystalline to study its reactivity.
    - The components had to be disposed of one at a time by walking them to the containers. It was vitally important we didn't get attacked or they could explode.
- There was a researcher working with imps whose containment structure was breached.
    - There were imps running around everywhere. This was the biggest problem as they interfered with every other mess that had been occurring. This was particularly scary for those of us who were disposing of the crystalline.
    - The slime jar technique worked very well on the imps too. I also attempted to distract them by saying actually I didn't care about the trouble they were causing and that the ritual areas were very, very lame. They usually stared at me blankly and continued doing what they were doing anyway. They were particularly antagonistic to my mother, who is unlikely to have ever met these imps.

Once we cleaned up the mess and returned the imps to their containment procedure, we went to help the crystalline researcher complete his ritual. It was inside a small building. There was a spiral structure with nodes that you needed to touch in order as you walked towards the center where

there was a piece of crystalline attached to the spiral. There was a lot of math and figuring out how much mana each individual was able / willing to provide. We ended up developing a system where those who were not going to contribute enough mana to go unconscious would go first, put their mana in and leave. Then, the people who were going unconscious would go in, put their mana in, and be carried out by an available person. The crystalline melted a little bit. The researcher told us we were a bit slower than they originally intended but they were allegedly able to gather some good information regardless. Whatever works.

When we returned to the inn we spoke with Samaníl, who ran us through their trust / don't trust discussion procedure again. I described that for the purposes of this exercise I found fellow party member Tsuné Envar less trustworthy. He is a Lizardfolk royalty from up in the Halhars. I figured he could be prone to external political motivations and was thus a little less trustworthy than everyone else. I personally still have a problem with this format, as I really think leading with trust when working with others is the best practice. For the record, I do not find Tsuné untrustworthy and I did apologize to him afterwards.

I also heard rumblings that this format is actually a test that we are failing by choosing not to trust our fellow party members and engaging with the premise. I wouldn't put it past Samaníl for this to be the case. After all, the first time we met them while guarding the tower was a test. I wish they were a little more forthcoming but there is some validity to the idea of forcing us to learn skills through actually doing them rather than being told things.

In terms of the subject of our discussion, me and Tsuné agreed that escorting the diplomat was a good idea. He was primarily motivated by a belief that maintaining political relationships is an important priority. I was primarily motivated by the idea that this could be a good opportunity to pick the diplomat's brain regarding the disappearance and the political situation while we were taking him throughout town. As a party, we ended up voting to do that mission.

I unfortunately was not able to catch the diplomat's name. I admittedly stayed a little more uninvolved than I would have liked to be. There were many individuals asking him questions and I thought it would be best to avoid overwhelming him and see what I could absorb through listening. Min and Elethir appeared to be taking notes on what he was saying, so they would be good people to speak with for more details.

A few things I was able to pick up during the escort:

- He was a friend of the King's, even before the King was recalled to Illion. The King was in fact a diplomat to Coradel while the individual we were escorting was a diplomat to Eldar.
- The King made a sacrifice to the emerald aspect of the brilliant faces the day of his disappearance?
    - I unfortunately was not able to catch the significance of this, but this seemingly explained the emerald-embroidered clothes he was wearing. I also likely got the name of the entity he made the sacrifice to incorrect. I plan to ask a fellow adventurer in the inn about this when I have time.

- The King wearing understated clothes was always kind of his thing. The diplomat had been on him about that for a while.
    - This struck me as a more personal detail and perhaps less important to the investigation at hand.

Walking through town was tense but mostly uneventful. Goldy, a guard type from Eldar in our group, did a good job clearing the way for our escort by being loud and assertive. I encountered two adolescents, a boy and a girl. They both spoke of being musicians and being hampered by their parents. The boy had his guitar taken away and was attempting to sell me his father's antique sword. A little while after I ran into the boy's father and told him where his child was and what he was doing. The father stormed off after him. I hope they worked their relationship out.

I wish to speak very little of the next mission. I went out to collect enchanting ingredients for the outpost. I did not make it there. There was a gnome-related distraction.

It has been well over a week since I wrote the rest of this. At this point I have finally overcome my embarrassment and am willing to discuss that mission. As I described, I did not make it out there. On the way, we encounter a big talus with many small taluses following it in a line. Nibs and Deluhel were very interested in following them away. I was sort of on the fence. Then a gnome came in and followed them. I was overcome with excitement and followed them all out. We followed them to a sort of cliff face that collapsed and I died.

I really need to figure out this whole gnome thing.

Other than that, I am not exactly sure what happened during that ingredient collecting mission. The sense I get is that it was successful but a few people were killed by some creatures out there. I would search for additional records for a better report on what occurred.

I look forward to the next moon. Thank you for reading.

Amarthiel Eldasilquendil