We knew of the coming Arc weeks in advance, due to a warning from [Charles]. In light of that, as I gathered the data on the past few months' events had by local villages and holdings, I also warned them of the coming storm. Many were able to evacuate, as Sybil also had the thought to warn people of what was to come, and I have high hopes that many made it to safety before the wave hit.

First, I should say that last month's expedition into the swamps gained us only some information - information about how to proceed there. I suppose we also gained a teleport point, studied by Gideon, to return there much faster, though now as I write I realize that we are not sure if teleportation is even safe where we are. For, as we discovered last month, now that we are at the edge of the Shimmerglass Sea we are *inside* the mana well, which has expanded past its borders and spread to become this fog that tinges everything with hints of blue mana.

Either way, my mind still rests on the strange statue we spoke to, which we gave gifts to and riddled with, and told us a story we did not really end up understanding, as it was told through gestures. But according to the bards, the answers to the riddle were part of the story: in order, Fish, Hourglass, Anchor.

And the strange stone golems we fought, which I died to twice, old relics reactivated by the arc… we almost lost Ix'nali to them, as they reanimated anyone left dead on the field for too long, and it proved tricky to try and summon those who had become undead, though Lux managed it eventually, through song. Past them, the river, where I found a strange little jar I have yet to investigate, and then past the river (and its annoying but manageable river-snakes) the shimmerswamp itself. Alluring pitcher-plants, strange colorful salamanders, swarms of mosquitoes, and everything sparkling of crystalline… deeper in the swamp, our bards were able to sense it woud take a full day's worth of effort to find whatever it was we sought, and we knew we did not have that kind of time, and turned back.

Xitli told us of a delegation from the colorwoods, with an Elemental Speaker; she also told us of a large group of elementals, gathered by the shore of the lake, of many colors - though not orange, she specified. We decided it was of the utmost importance to see what the elementals had to say, as it might lead to a deeper understanding of the arcs. In retrospect, I am not sure we asked the right questions, but what's done is done. In any event, after an… interesting duel with [Lucas] that was the Colorwoods' visitor Jorje's way of introducing himself to us ([Lucas] fumbled their necromantic sorcery and killed the both of them) we made our way out to the shore of the lake.

On the way we fought… I do not know. It horrified me. It was a mudcrab… but not just one mudcrab? Or it *was* one mudcrab, but… it was so large. It had so many claws. I am glad that it is dead.

We also (separately) encountered some elephants with blue rash; Ptolemae, Leilani, and myself tried to see if we could do anything to draw the rash out of the elephants and cure them, and I think we made it better, but we could not spare the time to deal with it properly. I do feel bad

about leaving the elephants suffering, but learning more about the Arc is more likely to help them in the longer term. Leilani did get a very muddy friendship bracelet from the elephants, and was so excited about it her voice achieved a high pitch I had never before heard coming from a human.

The shore was filled with elementals of all colors - all base five, at least at first, that we could see. Our group spread out, unfocused, and began interacting with them as individuals, and I think we all mostly forgot our longer-term goals in our distraction and fascination.

Several notes:

- One of the elementals was not of the normal five colors, per se, but was in fact prismatic - an illusionist, I think? but I am not sure. Obb spent some time interacting with it, with his small slime friends; think perhaps one of his slime friends became prismatic?

- The red elemental somehow agreed to help Beau deal with the thing in his chest; it tore his chest open then reforged it. I do not know the outcome of this arrangement, other than that Beau seems to be fine now.

- One elemental started using sorcery to trade spellstones with our party, and many people's spells got scrambled. I believe this effect wore off later, but am not sure. I got traded some sticks for a friendship bracelet.

- I gave the prismatic elemental a friendship bracelet, which it draped over its 'head', and an ammonite fossil, which it ate. Ptolemae gave it one of their earrings, which it also ate.

And the actual relevant information:

- The elementals referred to the Arc as "the flood." They had gathered at the shore because it would be safe from the flood, for them at least, and possibly for us; they weren't sure. They said something about how it would dissipate/get spread out/something? by the blue fog/mana well/lake/something?

- The impression I got was that of a flooded river and a wetland, where the wetland can absorb much of the overflowing water and thus the flood does less damage to the surrounding landscape.

I decided to remain at the shore, to observe the elementals and see what happened after. I swiftly lost track of the prismatic elemental, as it could change its color to appear like any other color. I saw two gray elementals, several opalescent ones, and three that were a darker shade of blue than the diviner elementals, and seemed to have something of an element of lightning to them.

I spent the rest of the time working with my cube. It has been some number of months since I have finished the yellow side, and I have made no progress since then, for fear of scrambling what I have accomplished thus far; I keep telling myself I must let go of that fear, and seek progress forward no matter of what it disrupts, but I find myself still doing nothing. Frustrating. I frequently became distracted by the elementals, anyways.

Five of my party members arrived, shortly before the Arc. Obb, with his slimes; and Joy, Sybil, Calix, and Elrad. Those four - I realize I have not chronicled of this, so I will now - last month had done a seance, to try and learn what they could. The lake swept in, and they reached out to it; and they died, and it intervened for them as a divine being would, and brought them back to life, but changed. They now have forms made entirely of water, and blue mana rash that cannot be lessened (and it seems cannot be made worse either). They felt the shore of the lake was the right place for them to be, and they sang; I cannot fully recall the words of the song, but perhaps Calix will write of them, as I believe it was he who taught the others.

The Arc came, then. Or the Flood, as the Elementals call it.

The first we knew of it was the sky darkening; the sky covered by the blue fog, impossible to see through, and yet dimming. And then, as the elementals all turned to face it, the energy, bright and burning even through the impenetrable fog, pure light, so bright I think I still see it now. And then a wave of mana, too much for me to handle - fool that I was, thinking that my experience with the ley-taps was enough for me to handle an overflow like this. I died, of course. Even in death I still percieved, though, the energy surging back, and forth. A strange… wobbling, at the end? It mostly faded with my resurrection, yet I still had the sense of it.

Though I died, the others did not, save for Elrad, and save for Greg and Alan, Obb's slimes, who were yet too small to handle that level of mana. Obb is quite upset. And, under the questionable aegis of the blue fog of the mana well, I believe few to none have gained further mana rash. Interesting indeed.

Later I will do my best to spend some time making notes on the winter months, when the sun was too dim for me to truly gain the energy to write, and instead I slept more than half the day away, and dragged myself out on missions and returned exhausted rather than revitalized. Now that the weather has started to turn - we will see.