28 Twelfthmoon. Illmythil Outpost. Amarthiel Eldasilquendil.

The first thing I wish to report is the apparent safe return of our constructed friend Tolipincë. They did not recall what happened to them, but were glowing slightly green. I identified them, and learned that they had gained the following abilities:

- Hexproof to Wild
- Passively Charmed to anything that is primarily green (as in the magic type) or Wild.

Notably, Tolipincë's hexproof to wild appears to not be as powerful as the imps and taluses we have been dealing with, who can choose to heal from any wild effect.

The presence of these abilities indicates to me that these imps and taluses are not necessarily from whatever world the Vraak are from. It seems likely to me that the abilities these creatures have is some sort of effect applied to them. Tolipincë is certainly not of the Vraak world and gained such abilities. It is likely, then, that the imps and taluses did not originate from the Vraak world either. We also ventured into what we believe is the Vraak world later, and the creatures apparently native to that place we encountered did not take the form of anything we had seen before. More on this later.

As is the case somewhat frequently, we began the moon by speaking with Maírion. He described that the weather was quite bad this month, and some landscape shifts along with such weather had resulted in economic damage to town. He also mentioned that various archmages from other schools were still here, and that he would appreciate us being as impolite to them as possible, since he could not.

He also gave us a batch of warped, passively magic items. They all had some sort of flaw connected with whatever color of magic had corrupted them. I, for example, ended up with a magic staff seemingly warped by wild/green energy that caused things like Earthbind to last extra long against me.

In addition to the missions themselves, I took brief notes on what Maírion said about each of them.

- > Guard entrance to tower of King's disappearance - intruders
    - Maírion had set up some magical wards that had gone off, indicating that people had tried to get into the tower where the king disappeared.
- > Problems at Brilliant Faces shrine - priests asleep, not waking
    - Priests there had gone unconscious / asleep and could not be woken up.
- >> Archmage of Nelenor doing ritual outside Illmythil
    - The archmage of Nelenor was doing some kind of ritual to go into the manascape. Our goal was to distract him. Maírion mentioned there were other mages around as well. The backwash from going into the manscape was allegedly causing problems in the area.
- >> Landscape shifting blocks several mountain passes to town

    - This impacted things like trading, materials for projects, as well as access to specialized healing from the school for people who do not live directly nearby
- >> Strange figures seen scouting in ring around Illmythil
    - Unsure what exactly they were, could be something along the lines of strange green vraak "demon" spotted last moon or forces associated with the Earthshaker demon[1].
- >>> Hunt elementals gathering across lower mountains
    - A group of Elementals of various kinds appeared to be warring or fighting over something. Maírion felt particularly concerned about this as they appeared to be laying the foundation for mana wells via their presence. This is particularly threatening to the Illmythil Outpost, as its main selling point as a school is its lack of connection to traditional sources of magic.
    - This mission was also the primary reason we were given the batch of magic items. Maírion wanted us to have them in order to be able to damage the elementals.
- >>> Track strange green demon, imps sighted in mountains
    - This was the "demon" that was encountered in the researcher rescue mission last moon. There were other unknown figures in addition to one that matched the description of the one from the cave. There were worries that this was some sort of greater version of the imps we've been encountering.
- >>> Village threatened by erupting volcano - evacuate!
    - Maírion believed this had to do with the increased elemental presence in this area.

After some discussion, we eventually settled on handling the elementals that were warring. We agreed with Maírion that the existential threat the presence of mana wells presented to our school was worrisome and needed to be handled.

I did not go on this mission. Reports from my party members indicate that it was mostly a success. There were some number of elementals of each type and they appeared to be battling for territory in a large area. Almost all of the elementals that had gathered were handled.

On the way to this mission, the party also found a group of miners running away from a tunnel that was in the process of caving in. There was some sort of shadow entity inside that was consuming people and things. Ari dueled and defeated this entity. My understanding is that this resulted in the whole group having some sort of vision, with Ari either receiving a different vision or additional details. I believe Min took notes on the contents of this vision. I meant to follow up with him or Ari later and subsequently forgot. The vision had some sort of image of the king's face and a hand (perhaps his?) reaching out. Something about this vision provided further support for the theory that the king is in some sort of duel. For additional details, I would reach out to Ari or Min.

When the party returned, we spoke with Samaníl. We gave him a brief report about how the elemental mission went then quickly moved on to group discussion. I spoke with Samaníl briefly during this phase, and they mentioned that retracting someone's footsteps and doing what they did

[1] Particularly attentive readers may recall that we made a deal with this entity a few moons ago to resolve our situation or be attacked. I must report, dear attentive reader, that we likely did not resolve our situation to its satisfaction. I do believe it will be coming next moon to ~~as they say, "fuck our shit up"~~ attack our outpost.

is a good idea when trying to figure out where they went, and is good practice as an investigator. I took this to heart and it informed my opinions about which missions we should do. We ultimately decided to investigate the problems at the shrine then, unless a new piece of information emerged that radically changed our ideas, head to guard the tower. We believed that there would likely be an opportunity to investigate the room where the King went missing while most of us guarded the tower's entrance.

In regards to Samaníl trust versus don't trust discussion structure, we opted to not play nice this time. Nobody wished to choose someone they did not trust. Samaníl was not happy about this, and claimed that it can be important to get ideas from someone you don't trust for a sort of completeness of information. That is, they described it is important in their practice as an investigator to hear rumors from untrustworthy folks to help inform their image of the complete picture. It seemed to me like they were interested in doing a sort of informational triangulation by figuring out what either isn't true or isn't being said. I think this idea makes sense for their line of work, but I feel that it does not apply to a team working on a singular goal. As I've previously noted, I do tend to be non-confrontational. Perhaps that tendency is informing my resistance to this exercise. I don't know. I still don't like it.

On our way to the group of shrines where the Brilliant Faces one was, we ran into a smattering of townsfolk. A few ones I remember included a merchant and an individual trying to get healing for their sister. They seemed to be having problems stemming from the mountain passes being blocked. The merchant was unable to complete some number of their transactions and the individual with the hurt sister was distressed at not being able to get the healing she needed. I spoke with a woman from the village we rescued from taluses last moon. She had baked some bread and brought it as a thank you to the adventurers for their help. I directed her to the inn.

It felt good to receive thanks for our good deeds. That being said, we did not tend to the volcano nor the mountain passes being blocked. I worry that what good will we have with the regular townsfolk of the region will not last much longer after this moon.

My experience at the Brilliant Faces shrine was notably different and incomplete compared to others who were investigating there. I wandered into the shrine, tried to think about what I could remember from my beginning priestly training, then immediately fell asleep. It is my understanding that some aspect of myself ascended through the scapes and up into the Vraak world and engaged in some sort of fight. Before I describe this experience, however, I would first like to briefly describe what I heard happened at the shrine while I was out:

- Tolipincë felt incredibly activated in the shrine's area (as if they had extra mana/energy) and could see the combat happening in the other world from here.
    - The specifics of by what means they could see was unclear to me (ie did they look into the shrine or simply look up). I would seek Tolipincë out if you are curious.
- Zhe Needle gave me a little tattoo while I was asleep and was able to determine my spirit(?) went "up".
    - This helped inform my previous description that some aspect of myself had ascended up.

- The shrine itself was vibrating with energy. The group discovered that the energy was coming out, not in.
- The group spirit buried one of the sleeping priests in order to return their spirit here. The priest was able to be woken up afterwards. The priest was worried, and described that they (the others who were asleep) were fighting, and the priest wished to return in order to help them.

When I fell asleep, I began to feel myself ascend. I initially thought this was some sort of oracle, but in hindsight this was definitely a spiritual / scape-related ascension rather than just a vision. I felt myself become lighter and lighter as I went up, and eventually found myself in a great darkness, with little pinpricks of light distributed throughout. I sensed a world beneath me (likely our world) and a world before me. This world consisted of a gray, stony landscape, with a thin layer of dusty, sand-esque topsoil gathered near rocks distributed throughout. I saw lights looming in the distance of various colors. I then felt/sensed a very direct message: Win or die.

At this point, I noticed some of the priests who were asleep and a few party members who had made the journey through meditation or falling asleep were also with me. Before us were a few humanoid creatures, around the same size as an average Human, with different colored skin (seemingly connected to mage colors), with horns that matched the colors as well. They immediately went to fight us. They seemed to be able to use magic that matched their color, and had the ability to regenerate like many outsiders do. They were at least as smart as a normal person and fought very well. Whether or not they regenerated I do not remember, but I suspect they were able to. I was immediately killed by the black (witch) one and was brought back to life only towards the end of the fight. It appears that we were barely able to win.

The next part was a bit more abstract, and my notes I took after were more jumbled than I would like them to be. Here's a few visions we saw and things that happened:

- We experienced being in some kind of tug of war.
    - We felt as though this tug of war was representative of many things. Possibilities included a hand, a sword, or bridge. It seems to me that there was a suggestion that we had a great opportunity to influence how this impending presence of the Vraak in this world goes.
- There was a rainbow bridge leading up from the tower where the King disappeared.
- There was a distant start above the tower.

Again, many clues seem to indicate that the exact relationship we will have with the Vraak going forward is malleable. This is further supported by our encounter with the greater demons last moon. They repeatedly referred to a big change coming. I also believe they explicitly said that how exactly the change went was in our hands.

When we returned we spoke with Mirion. I gave her a nice, mastercrafted wide hat as a part of our group's secret holiday gift exchange. She seemed to like it and also appreciated the vibe it gave her. She seems very adaptable and interested in figuring things out as she goes along.

I do not recall exactly what we talked to her about in the inn. I believe daylight was low and we opted to go as fast as possible and pick a final mission for the day.

The last thing we did was guard the entrance to the tower of the king's disappearance. On the way, we encountered Lamanil, the morganti researcher I had previously worked with when we found the morganti weapons on All Hallows. He could not describe why at the moment, but asked us for as much silver as we could give him, and that it was urgent. I spoke with him quietly, then opted to go with him to his research area. At this time and at his request, I will not be publishing what we discussed or what happened there to the public. If you wish to know, I would be happy to speak with you about it or perhaps provide a private written report (if one is available).

I spent the rest of my evening with Lamanil. As such, I know very little about what went on during the tower-guarding missions. I heard that some of us actually guarded the tower and some of us opted to use the opportunity to check out the King's room. It seems as though Ari was able to somehow send a Duel upwards and had an opportunity to go up and travel to presumably the Vraak place. She opted not to, but now it appears we may have a promising mechanism besides just falling asleep near the shrine to be able to travel there.

That was the end of our adventuring day. Thank you for reading. I look forward to the next moon.

Amarthiel Eldasilquendil