25 Firstmoon. Illmythil Outpost. Amarthiel Eldasilquendil.

To begin this day, Maírion spoke with us about the missions and described that many of them were connected to likely sabotages by the mages visiting from other schools. I'll briefly describe details about each in my notes about the missions below:

- > Hunt down manascape creatures distorting outpost wards
    - This allegedly had to do with a ritual an archmage from Nelenor did last moon. Maírion claimed bringing forth such creatures likely requires a mastery of raw magic, something the Nelenor school is known for.
- > Search for source of scry blockage in Outpost
    - Maírion believed someone sabotaged our magical scrying equipment in some fashion, and that we are currently unable to receive messages from other places.
- >>> Passes from Illmythil into mountains blocked by disasters
    - Amríen believes that the earthquakes seem to be causing more damage than would be otherwise expected
- >>> Dragon sightings higher in the mountains - pursue?
    - There were three(including the one we saw before): A blue-ish one, a green/gold/orange one, and a silvery[1] colored one
- >>> Researchers report pockets of scape distortions nearby
    - I simply wrote "to Researcher pockets" in my notes for this one. Unsure what exactly I meant. We later encountered some of these distortions on the way to somewhere else, and it appeared as they are growing more squished by the moment. We found creatures from multiple different scapes in the same space.
- >>> Large taluses gathering in massive group in mountains
    - There were echoes of a big noise heard in the distance, it sounded like some kind of avalanche coming from them
- >>>> Slain greater demon found in area of "green demon"
    - The vraak creature we've been seeing went up into the mountains. It appears to have slain a greater demon, but not morganti, but still permanent. The greater demon perished in an unusual way.Researchers noted that demon souls don't usually PD because they don't age. Their current hypothesis is that the demon may have had some sort of key, fundamental feature taken away from it.
    - The greater demon was notably reclusive, and did not have any previous relationship with the outpost.
- >>>> Amríen working reverse new mana well - assist!
    - Surprise, surprise - this was the result of the volcano we did not tend to previously. A potential mana well is extra bad considering our magical protections were being attacked by manascape creatures.

The first thing we decided to do was head out to investigate the greater demon that had been slain by the "green demon" Vraak creature.

---

[1] I believe it was confirmed that this one was not knight-colored, but I am uncertain.

After heading out, we found Veil[2] and their research assistant out tracking. Veil is a researcher who I believe specializes in outsiders, and we had previously rescued them from a cave where we first encountered the "green demon". They informed us they had found tracks of what they believed to be angels around. This indicates that the world-colliding going on had piqued the interest of divine forces as well. It could also potentially mean that, in the same way the scapes are being squished together, the divine is being brought to us as well. My understanding of scapes is somewhat limited, so I am less confident about this hypothesis.

We then traversed a mountain pass that appeared to have been affected by the earthquakes. Interestingly, the terrain looked sort of bizarre, like a big crevice with pillar-like rocks of various heights dispersed throughout. There were also a few mundane sky beasts there. After struggling briefly traversing the rocks and fending off the beasts, the child in our group made it to the end and set up a rope for the rest of us to use. I was not sure what to make of the strange terrain.

Up past the crevice we found what I estimate to be a strange, scape-squished space. The key physical feature was a big, blurry, circular sort of gash in the space. The space was divided by this… Thing that made everything behind it appear like you were looking through glasses that were wrong for your eyes. In addition to the big blur, there were also little circles distributed throughout the space with similar properties. There were a few strange creatures in the space as well. I'll provide some descriptions I was able to remember below. These are almost certainly incomplete.

- A butterfly that was able to sense thoughts (mind scape?)
- A big ball of static electricity that attacked one's mana (mana scape)
- At least one humanoid dream scape creature that I cannot for the life of me remember anything about.[3]

I searched the area and found a little bit of transparent goop that was very difficult to categorize. I got the sense that it was closest to perhaps an ingredient, but also felt both spiritual and natural.

Further up the mountain was the corpse of the slain demon. It was quite large, vaguely humanoid, and was made of all sorts of different parts of animals. It had many slashing wounds visible on it that had become congealed with blood. As Maírion described, it had not been slain by morganti but was simply laying there, deceased, not regenerating. Most of the party continued upwards to investigate, and I stayed behind to complete an identify ritual on the demon. The demon seemed connected with nature and animals. It had a quite potent power to shift into various animal abilities. It was innately a Mercenary, Ranger, and Wild Mage. I was hoping an identify would reveal more about Maírion's hypothesis that some sort of fundamental trait was missing from the demon, but I was not able to come to any conclusion from what I learned.

During the time I was completing my ritual, the rest of the party encountered and even attempted to negotiate with more Vraak creatures. I unfortunately lacked the bandwidth to discuss the details about this interaction with my party, but I know that both Nibs and Elethir have chronicles from this moon that mention the interaction. The good news is that the Vraak we encountered here

[2]How this individual spells their name is unconfirmed.
[3]Do note I do not believe there is any sort of memetic or magical effect that impacted my memory. I do think this is simply due to my personal shortcomings.

seemed curious and at least vaguely interested in cooperation. At the very least, the situation did not become combative, which is an exciting development. The sense I got was that they were sort of like us. They seemed not really sure what was going on and were trying to figure things out. Even if we cannot really communicate with them yet, it is comforting to know that we have something in common with them.

Figuring out a way to communicate with the Vraak soon will be vital if we hope to have any sort of peaceful arrangement with them. It seems to me that their presence and arrival is inevitable. They are coming, and we have the opportunity to shape their relationship to our world[4]. I found Thônvainë's notes[5] and advice to be incredibly helpful and informative in this regard. It is important to understand that their literal perceptions of reality are based on an entirely different natural experience than our own. To that end, curiosity, observation, and openness are vital to cultivating any sort of means of communication.

When we returned we had a very serious discussion with Samaníl. They described that with the political pressures mounting as well as the Vraak presence continuing to grow, we all found ourselves at a sort of crossroads. Samaníl described a bit of a conundrum they had regarding their job as an inquisitor. Is their loyalty to the king as an institution or the king as an individual? Is their job to attempt to rescue the king from whatever otherworldly place he is in or protect the political sanctity of the position by staying in this world and ensuring that the king as a piece of the government continues to operate? Samaníl asked us what we wished to do and what we would have them do. We opted to lean towards having them stay here and having us go wherever we needed to go to find the king.

Samaníl then asked us directly and plainly if we trusted him. We spent some time discussing what trust means and conversationally flailed about a little bit as we tried to figure out our answer. I personally felt as though I trusted him. One of my party members privately shared with me later that it seems like they wanted to ensure our trust before doing something that publicly looks adversarial to us. The hypothesis was that in order for Samaníl to do their job, they may need to seemingly throw us under the bus in some way.

The exact conclusion we reached was a little hazy, as towards the tail end of this discussion a great earthquake struck the outpost. We quickly realized the Earthshaker demon was here to attack us, and many of us went out to face its siege. I was not one of the individuals who went to defend the outpost, so my description is once again incomplete.

The Earthshaker demon itself was attempting to destroy the tower where the king went missing. The party valiant fought through a swarm of imps and a few lesser demons before making it to the Earthshaker. They interacted with it briefly, and a huge, Vraak, demon-like creature with morganti arrived and began fighting the demon. The child in our party was able to sneak up on the Earthshaker while it was distracted and slay it. The group also briefly interacted with the greater Vraak creature, but, similarly to our earlier encounter, communication was fairly difficult. The feeling

---

[4] My opinion is that a peaceful coexistence would be ideal.
[5] *Out of game note: these notes are called "Tyson Chronicle" and was uploaded by Dylan*

I got from the group is that the enemy of our enemy is perhaps our friend. I do not know why the Vraak creature was adversarial with the Earthshaker, but I am grateful nonetheless.

Following this battle, we regrouped, caught our breath, and headed out to help Amríen deal with the volcano and mana well.

On the way out, we had another flyby encounter with a dragon. It was green, gold, and bronze. We heard it speaking in our heads, and it asked us about what we were doing. We briefly described our quest to rescue the king, and Elethir sang to it. Further description can likely be found in her newspaper.

A little ways through the mountains, we had to traverse a river of lava. I was very grateful to be a mage and to have a staff, as I was able to precariously but successfully lift people between rocks in the lava. There were a few red-aligned small taluses as well.

Further up, we found many gold, apparently divinely-connected slimes. I am unsure exactly how, but during this encounter a few of us were able to have an oracle and ask a question of Odin. We asked something along the lines of "how does divinity feel about this".

We received a vision of a bunch of gnomes wandering, chanting, and a crowd forming. There was something deeper going on but on a surface level they were there to watch. The vision faded into a child(us?) sitting on the shore of some kind of water, chucking stones out into it, and looking at the ripples. The child was interested in the funny way the ripples in the water distort their face. There was another sort of shift, again with a child but this time listening to their parents on the other side of the door. We had this feeling like we aren't supposed to hear this, like we're supposed to be in bed already. We couldn't make out much of the discussion but we were wondering what it was going to mean for us. The image then shifted into the child staring something grand and unusual in the face, a grey beast with huge ears and tusks and a long nose. We had a feeling of "what the hell is this thing?". The beast sort of shifted, as it was not only the aforementioned grey beast but also seemed like a large, ogre-sized blubbery seal with sharp teeth gliding under water, or perhaps it was a whale, or perhaps it was the deck of a boat. Regardless, we had a strange feeling of "woah... this is something I haven't seen before".

The next thing we encountered made me incredibly sad. There were a group of gnomes running at us, chanting and yelling, screaming about "go green team!" or "go red team!". The hardest thing I have ever done in my life was follow my group who insisted we run past them. They were so wonderful. So full of joy. So full of excitement. As I write this I wonder if it's all worth it. The adventuring, the thinking, the saving the king, the sacrifice. If I can't hang out with some gnomes and hear what they have to say...

Sacrifice is necessary in this life that we live.

Repairing the volcano with Amríen was a long, but successful slog. There were all sorts of elemental creatures there, and we were to carefully place ritual pieces along a lengthy switchback up. I spent

most of my time freezing and then running away from a red elemental large cat of some kind. I was so tired and winded by the end of that encounter I barely remember what specifically happened.

Thank you for reading. I look forward to the next moon. Please don't make me run away from the gnomes.

Amarthiel Eldasilquendil