1 Thirdmoon. Illmythil Outpost. Amarthiel Eldasilquendil

Maírion began today by expressing a great deal of frustration regarding the visiting archmages. He described that dealing with them is becoming incredibly exhausting, and they have continued to hamper our operations. He mentioned that we are being listened to by them by some means, and that spells around the school are failing due to sabotage causing creatures from the mana scape to be released. Spell infrastructure around the school was also being impacted by imps. Scries in and out of the tower are ineffective, and any spell-based communication is potentially subject to interception. The good news, however, is that we seemed to have a tiny bit more space than usual from the visitors this moon. Maírion estimated that this is because the archmages stole many objects and documents and were reviewing what they found.

Maírion also explained that the outpost's main focus is rebuilding the tower that was damaged by the conflict with the Earthshaker demon. The main materials we need are plain old stone for the physical structure, and pure, untainted crystalline for the magical aspects. We would have to venture from the outpost to acquire these things, something that is still difficult due to the various terrain problems we have been having.

Maírion was quite exasperated regarding all of these loose ends.

Here's the missions, as well as what notes I took about each one:

- > Guard perimeter of tower rebuilding site from danger
    - The dangers ranged from manas scape creatures, to further archmage meddlers, to falling rocks.
- > Chase down manascape creature infesting spellwork
    - There were a few Illmythil mages tasked to this, but it would be considerably faster with our help.
- > Interview visiting mages from other schools about news
    - We can't get news due to the spell interference.
- >>> Travel to local quarrying village for stone order
    - Several of our requests for stone received no response. Perhaps something was wrong with the village or maybe the messages weren't being received.
    - We were also later given some additional tasks by the master stonemason in order to have our order fast-tracked:
        - Deal with Elemental Terrain (or Mana Well)
        - Protect Quarry Villages
        - Get Manarash Herbs
        - Clear Travel Route to Illmythil
        - Clear Out Deep Quarry
- >>>> Search for, gather uncontaminated crystalline underground
    - A lot of the crystalline around here became contaminated with red mana due to the big mana well. One of our researchers has been identifying some

deeper-undergrounded sources. This mission would be tedious since we would need to carefully maneuver a cart with us.

- >>>> Green Vraak'Shai fighting something in high mountains
    - The only sense we got there is that there is some kind of back-and-forth conflict going on, with signs of advancing and retreating. This would be a good opportunity for us to try to communicate with the creature.
- >>>> Help Amríen contain, reverse mana well
    - Follow-up from not finishing this last moon. As always, an existential threat to our outpost.

One of our party members, Laminiel, proposed that many of our physical problems could be manifestations of the divisions amongst us. Maírion proposed that researchers from the Mellion region may have more information, as they specialize in these sorts of metaphysical considerations. I think this is an interesting idea. Perhaps it would be worth following up on if our current path proves impossible to traverse.

Also, I am not sure when this exactly occurred, but we received information from Veil, the divinity researcher we've encountered a few times. They mentioned that there was some amount of divine attention we were receiving. The deities who were interested in us seemed broadly related to crafting.

We ultimately concluded that focusing on getting the tower rebuilt was a good idea. Our long-term plan is to go to the Vraak realm and see if we can find the king there, and the tower is currently our best way of getting there. This also struck me as a good opportunity to tend to some of the more mundane issues around the region that we have been ignoring thus far. We've been being asked for help from nearby villages for many moons. We headed out towards the village seeking 1400 measures of mastercrafted stone.

On the way out, we briefly spoke with some of the local townsfolk. We spoke with more than one messenger who complained about getting stopped by checkpoints on the way up the mountain. This was particularly concerning to us as it indicated that we are being subject to physical sabotage and interference as well as magical. There is a quite broad conspiracy brewing against us.

We found many taluses throughout our mountain travel. The first ones we encountered were all small, and were amongst thick brush that made it hard to find them. We also found an incredibly adorable group of gnomes rooting for their respective sides. I think we can learn a lot from the gnomes. There is always fun to be had. There were green taluses fighting black taluses with apparent witch abilities. This is a new development for the taluses.

The next group was in a large, plateau-like clearing. This group featured a number of big taluses as well.

When we got to the village, we found everything surprisingly normal. I had absentmindedly assumed that something extreme must have happened there, perhaps a big portal opened up or

some powerful outsider had slain everyone. Instead, we came upon the quarry operating under seemingly normal conditions. The workers there were not necessarily happy to see us. They had the thought process of "we've been asking for help for so long, and now you all expect us to help you?". This was honestly a fair assessment of our treatment of them. Many of my group spoke with the master stonemason. I felt as though we may have had too many individuals speaking with him at once, so I opted to stay off to the side and speak with the rest of the workers.

The good news is that just under the surface, the workers were not entirely hostile. They felt ignored in a general sense, but acknowledged our contributions to the mana well as well as previous villages we had interacted with. I was impressed with the good-willed nature of some of the workers. To be suffering so greatly and have your cries for help be ignored so many times then still find something to be thankful for from those who ignored you is… Touching.

Others in the group learned, in short, that other mage schools had stepped in to handle this village's problems in order to undermine us. No surprise there. I believe some combination of schools was responsible for patrolling the nearby village and keeping threats out. We also learned that a very, very large order of stone had been made to one of the other schools[1] that would take some time to complete. After much discussion, the master stonemason agreed to fast-track our order if we helped him with some local problems. These were mentioned earlier in the mission descriptions, but I will write them down again here:

- Deal with Elemental Terrain (or Mana Well)
- Protect Quarry Villages
- Get Manarash Herbs
- Clear Travel Route to Illmythil
- Clear Out Deep Quarry

Since we were close, we opted to clear out the deep quarry. We ventured into a cave entrance in the quarry and began our descent. I immediately felt a strange connection to something deeper. There was a strange ringing that got louder and louder as I descended. At one point I felt my morganti scar on my back start to get sore. Deeper still I felt something was very, very afraid. Out of the darkness came a few morganti weapons with shadow-like tendrils clinging to them, vibrating, terrified. There was a sword-like tendril and two dagger-like tendrils. They rushed out of the cave and began lashing out at what was nearby. My calming spirit seemed to have an impact on them, and they seemed to not lash out at me as much. I tried to treat them like a crying child or perhaps a baby animal, and this seemed successful. I held them, spoke softly, and attempted to comfort them with my words. The morganti would vibrate in my hands. I was impressed with the group's ability to remain calm, and am especially thankful to Maddia who was in the thick of it with me. Ari also heroically dueled one the tendrils and made it out unscathed without hurting it.

The child in our party apparently left for some time and came back with the Earthshaker demon's morganti flail, wrapped up in a cowl. The rest of the tendrils got spooked by this, but settled

[1] I believe the school in question was Celemrion, but I am utterly paranoid my memory fails me.

somewhat once the flail was placed on the ground and unwrapped. I asked the party to go back and ask Lamanil for help. I opted to stay behind with the weapons to keep them calm. Maddia asked me if he wanted me to stay, and I told him that he could go since I wasn't sure how long I would be out here.

I ended up staying with the weapons for many hours before Lamanil arrived.

For the most part, I was able to successfully keep them calm the whole time. I was actually able to suss out a little bit of personality about each one, and at the very least was able to tell that they were distinct. The flail liked to be wielded, one liked to be sheathed, one liked to simply rest there, and another tended to wander around. I hoped to figure out something about the memories the morganti had, but I was unsuccessful. I did notice that the flail, when moving, tended to take sort of long, sweeping motions, as it was being wielded by the Earthshaker. I was sort of moved by this. I thought it was quite beautiful that the thing that had wielded it for so long made such an impression. I could also sense that there was something more there with each of the weapons, but I could not quite… Figure out how to get there.

At one point I asked one of the weapons what was wrong. It did a big up then down sort of motion. I interpreted this to mean that the divine was coming down, or that the layers were being pierced. I don't know. I felt like I intuitively got what it was saying, but writing it down seems more confusing than it felt at the moment. Perhaps this kind of intuition-based feeling is important when working with morganti.

Later, there was a loud noise from outside the cave that spooked one of the more mobile daggers while I was trying to manipulate it. It lashed out and cut off the ring and pinky finger on my left hand.

Laminil carefully arrived towards the evening. I had been in the cave for around half a day at this point.. He brought a few silver boxes of various sizes. We were able to successfully coax the weapons in without additional issues, although there was a tense moment with the sword, which seemed to need the most convincing. It was sort of playful and energetic. My initial instinct was to meet it where it was at, and I tried to play a sort of chase game with it with my hand. I also hoped perhaps I could tire it out. It got more energetic as play continued, and Laminil stepped in and stopped me before it got any worse. Other than that, explaining to the weapons that they were safe and we were going to help them and take them somewhere safer seemed to do the trick.

From the process of moving the weapons, Laminil and I both got a few little paper cuts and nicks on our fingers.

I briefly asked Laminil about the relationship between divine and morganti on the way back, and he explained that they really do not mix well. Angels have almost never been seen wielding morganti. The interesting part of this to me is that morganti shrugs off magic imperviously but is seemingly terrified of the divine. I am surprised it is so scared. One would imagine it would perhaps be angry or combative, although I suspect some of this fear is some plain old primal fear of the unknown. I

feel sort of paternal towards the morganti at this point. I can't help but see it as a small child scared of an unknown situation.

Given how much time I spent in the cave, I do not have much to report about the rest of the goings-on of the party. They spoke with Samanil who communicated to them in an interesting way. They went to the mana well and solved it, which I heard was quite the epic feat.

I apologize for the somewhat anticlimactic ending. I was quite busy during this moon. Thank you for reading. I look forward to the next moon.

Amarthiel Eldasilquendil