## The SeaGate Times

30 September 1993 Issue I

### Martin's Sword # 5 - 'Game (Bber!!!

By Bleyze

Over the last three months one of the greatest quests undertaken by any guild member was completed, The recovery of the fifth sword of the Sword of Sif by Martin completed five years of questing to recover the pieces of this mighty artifact.

The final sword was found in the continent of Terranova. It was located in a dragons lair in the centre of the Sea of Silt, a vast dust bowl 500 miles across in the middle of the Great Desert.

Crossing the Sea of Silt the party had to contend with the forces of nature as well as the unnatural fauna. The dust in the air caused frequent lightning strikes making flying dangerous. At one stage Bleyze was incapacitated in flight by a lightning strike. Rendered unconscious with severe muscle strains and a broken leg it was only the quick thinking of Martin that stopped him crashing into the ground, with potentially fatal consequences.

Later when the party was stopped doing spell preparation a mana worm invaded Bleyze's brain. Feeding on the mana drawn in during spell casting the worm rapidly grew to a dangerous size. The only way to kill the worm was for Bleyze to walk through a Wall of Starlight. Bleyze was able to pass harmlessly through the wall but the worm was killed. It's death throes however gave Bleyze serious concussion, which the party were unable to completely c u r e ,

The party went under an enormous Windstorm that surrounded the lair and flew over a 25 mile wide lava moat that protected a city in the middle. A brief encounter with Drow militia where Bleyze was again knocked unconscious, this time by successive mental attacks, prevented any hope of negotiating

The party then flew for the centre of the city where a huge life draining force field protected the inner lair. Using effective barrier magic's the party where able to penetrate this layer before more guardsmen arrived.

The Lair was a garden dotted with stands and statues. At the centre of the garden was the fifth Sword of Sif. Protected by Spheres of Annihilation and the force field. Martin overcame these obstacles, combining the swords into their original whole and disappeared from view. Bleyze, on lookout circling above the party saw the Ruby Scourge approaching from the east first. The Ruby Scourge is a 50' Tall Red Dragon Defiler. The party were now in serious danger the dragon was approaching far faster than they could escape and the defiler when it cast magic would suck the energy for the spell from those around it. Tales of the creature spoke of dried husks and bare skeletons left in its wake.

Realising the situation was hopeless Bleyze yelled a warning to the rest of the party and looked for a weapon with which to head off the beast. If only to buy time while the others escaped and prevent it casting. Using Infravision he located a large spear with a potent magic aura surrounding it. Ignoring the protective field surrounding the spear Bleyze swooped down and grabbed the weapon. Turning to face the beast he took to the air. Sabrina called out to her *Continued on* 

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patron and a Rainbow bridge started to appear behind them. Bleyze charged the beast, rising rapidly to meet it head on, as the bridge behind started to solidify, the rest of the party were moving towards it. On the first pass Bleyze missed the beast drawing its attention away from the party. Then the beast breathed. Bleyze had been expecting this and had every protection spell the party could cast in preparation He felt the heat of the blast wash over him and was unaffected, then the sand that the beast also breathed struck flaying him alive. His bones stripped of their flesh falling in a gleaming heap at Serendipity's feet. Serendipity scooped up the bones and ran for the bridge with the rest of the party. The beast paused to mind probe Serendipity and let out a roar as she entered the Rainbow Bridge. The words were "Other Lands!!!"

Because of the intervention of the bridge the party were able to escape. At the other end of the Rainbow Bridge lay the city of Midguard where the Lady Sif resides. Martin was already there awaiting the arrival of the party and after questing for the sword for so long gave it back to it's rightful owner, the Lady Sif.

#### Mork Manted

Two oddly clad men have recently been seen around Seagate asking for "Heros from beyond the Dead". We suspect they may be hiring a Guild Party.

Bold adventurers to EXPLORE newly discovered alternate PLANE. Search out and map the immediate environs, Locate good site for DUCAL CAPITAL. Apply Guderian, Runemage Extraordinare, Villa located some 7 miles North of Seagate. Employer ex-adventurer, hardy souls required.

Fairies have been spotted in the bottom gardens south of Seagate again. Last time a guild party investigated a similar occurrence, the party reported "Major Opposition". This latest occurrences of the Fairies, is undergoing further investigation. The auguries are at present unclear.

An anonymous person wishes to "encourage" a party to steal a crown whose owner doesn't want it any more. This is for the good of Alusia, to avoid it falling into the wrong hands (Don Carlos De Calatrava) AKA The Duke of Destiny. This adventure may take the party off plane.

A person close to the Guild has said "A group of Undead Drow, may be hiring a guild party". The person would not say what this party would be doing, where they are going, or the amount of pay involved.

The Guild is entering teams into the annual ARENAKAOS game. This year the competition is expected to be extremely intense, with an estimated prize pool of 1,000,000 SP. Teams will be coming from as far a field as the 9th plane, to settle old scores.

A small party of Guild adventures are reportedly going to be heading south to Griffin Valley, in search of Griffins It is expected that the party will be away for only a few days.

#### The Silken Meh

Guess what? AMBER is out of the closet! Was he ever in it you ask? Apparently there is a dwarf in a very deep mine up north who didn't know! "At last I can fulfil my hearts desire." sobbed the Big Guy. "I always knew he was camp as arow of tents. "scoffed SABRINA.I guess it's party time at GARTH'S house tonight!

DIDO (The Little Strumpet) has been seen dancing naked around the alter AGAIN - can nobody get her to keep her clothes on?

LYSANDER is on the prow1 for a new hunk. "I just want to settle down and raise a family." she purred to me. Hang onto your trousers boys -This one's a man-eaterRroww!!!

That old reprobate NEROC has been tossed out of another flophouse after neighbours complained about the foul stench emanating from his room, "Everybody needs a hobby." he whined. Phewww...

Meanwhile over at the Fire College, BLAZE and FINBAR have been cooking up a conflagration of passion! These two are Hot, Hot, Hot!!!

SF and DILLENGER to wed!!! Yes, these two go back a long way and have finally decide to make it official. "Really it just seems to be the right time." gushed an obviously thrilled DILLENGER.

#### Question of the Week:

Is YAZMO a man? How many times can you go into the wrong toilet and retain credibility? Eye witnesses required, send depositions to this column.

Well, gentle readers, that's all for now. Watch this space for titillating tit bits on what's down and dirty at the Guild. (Apart from UGH-BASH that is!)

Last Word - Is that SILVERFOAM a Major Spunk Rat or what!!!

### How To Make Dwarben Armour

Take 3 plump dwarves, skin &cure the hides (as you would with cows or hobbits). For breastplates, remove head, arms & legs cut around neck and arms until comfortable. Boil in oil for 3 hours. With 'Fireproofing' cast upon yourself don hot dwarf torso, fit comfortably and allow to cool. Dwarf hide will cool rigid. Repeat for arms and legs (this is what you need the other two dwarves for). Engalton

# Amarf Bait-A Scribes Notes.

Our party, led by Engalton, a Namer of muddling ability, were contracted to remove from this valley a small army of Dwarves. The valley is owned by a deviant form of Necromancer, but then there is nothing new in that. We were told that some 6 months previously the Necromancer had paid them something like 50,000 SP to go away. The Dwarves had taken the money and used it to raise a small horde that we are suppose to evict. The Necromancer has a henchman who appears to be some sort of Dark Celestial/ Assassin, who has calculated the numbers of Dwarves at being between 100 and 200. I would have expected more from a person so devoted to skulking and looking so menacing but that is another cross it appears to be my lot to bear in this Valley of Tears.

Allow me to introduce myself, gentle reader, I am Blackrod, Rune Mage, and I have the honour to scribe this humble journal for the greater edification of the Guild and all those who may follow me in the the study of that most glorious subject, Runes. Our party contained Shoka, a doughty warrior Orc, Seidarr, a Necromancer Orc, who apart from having odd plates of bone covering his body, was that rarity, an Orc with a plan. He also possessed the cleanest pair of haels I've ever seen. You can shave with them. Engalton's servant, a Shadow Weaver, was also with us, but I fear his name escapes me. I find it so hard to keep track of the lower orders. Nevertheless, if one waves imperiously, and keeps one's request simple, using sign language where necessary, he seems an adequate servant. Shinji, a Wiccan mage, also attended us and seems quite useful if a little abstracted. A Solar mage was with us, for those who care for such things. Oh, and so was Stoat.

The Necromancer kindly gave us a skeleton and a bone with which to point it. I determined through mighty and arcane magic that that the Necromancer and the Nightblade had unusual aspects. The Nightblade was death aspected and the surprise nearly killed me. The Necromancer however managed to defeat my detection. This raises the questions of why anyone would care to do so and how they managed it?

Stoat whom I have mention before, and probably at too great a length, decide to proceed to ask endless questions on ground already covered and passed off those minor snippets he may have gained as mother lodes of information. I gradually aged, waiting for it to end. Eventually he did something, we all climbed aboard a carriage made of bones, and it whisked us over the lake from the island drawn by skeletal horses. We enter the forest and moved towards the plume of smoke we had spotted.

When we found a likely looking camp, we set up for the night. As we did so, Stoat kindly donated his time in instructing us in "Silent Tongue". Apparently, this is a sign language developed for those interested in subterfuge. I was immediatley struck by the irony of Stoat being so skilled in something that revolved around keeping ones mouth shut. At any rate, he proceeded to instruct us in various symbols until he struck upon one which seemed to indicate no other thing than affirmed involvement in the "Solitary Vice." Engalton and I strived mightily to repress ones convulsions but it was to no avail, he and I collapsed upon the earth, laughing. At odd occasions I remember this moment and begin laughing again. Usually when I look at Stoat. Stoat merely galnees around with haughty distain.

Later on that night I set up a Rune Ward. Stoat decided he didn't want to be within the warded area and said he would sleep outside in the forest. I could care less, but now that I think on it, it seemed to me that he leapt on the Rune Ward too quickly, almost as if he were looking for an excuse. Could our harmless and mirthful suggestions of the "Solitary Vice" have a foundation in truth. I must see if I can get a look at his palms.

Without going into embarassing fol-de-rol, I will briefly note now what took Stoat two and a half hours to relate, but let me say right now that he is without doubt a burden to our race, and if he should die it would be of immeasurable benefit to our gene pool. I only pray he has not yet bred.

- He has the ability to send mental messages to anyone who contributes an Endurance Point.
- He has a breath weapon. (Fire, believe it or not, not tedium as I expected.)
- He has a Cloak of Blending.
- He suffers from sporadic impotency. When not impotent, he suffers premature ejaculation.

I don't know why this was shared with us, gentle reader, but believe me, you got off lightly.

Engalton, Shoka and oh blast whats his name the servant decided to be part of this mental network. I refused to be part of such a thing with Stoat. Over the days, I had noticed that the wildlife was becoming scarcer, and what I did see had a traumatised look in its eyes. I hoped they have been frightened by large preditors or even Dwarves. I resolved to keep an eye on Stoat and not let him get too close to me.

The next day we walked to the edge of the forest where we would wait till nightfall. Then a Witchsight spell would be cast on me and Shinji would Instill Flight on his carpet and we would reconnoitre the Dwarven encampment. This didn't happen. Instead Shinji flew ahead to reconnoitre for the reconnoitring party. Don't ask me why, I'm just the scribe! He returned somewhat later, badly wounded. He had found the place! It was fortified by wooden palisades with a hundred meter killing ground cleared around it and nestled up against a rocky escarp-

ment. There was a trench running outside the wall. Oh and a very large Eagle had attacked Shinji while he was flying about, greviously wounding him. He fled into the forest to escape and then flew away from us and then doglegged back. He collapsed upon landing.

Sometime later Shoka and Stoat discovered that the scarp above the mine opening was defended. We decided to move closer. We found a small hillock and set about fortifying the place with traps and my illusionary pits, rocks and scrub.

While Shoka and Stoat were off scouting we were attacked by a Troll. I am still at a loss to understand why this happened. In theory, when we saw a troll, or indeed any big nasty thing, we were suppose to hide in the illusory brush. However, for reasons known only to himself, Engaltons servant stood up and said - in Trollish "Hey Troll, Fuck-Offski!!!". Surprise, gentle reader, could be said to be the least of the emotions passing through the minds of the rest of us. Nevertheless, we just managed to fight it off and it fled us. Seidarr showed us his heels during this time, and Shinji ended up as a mouse. Stoat, returning, somehow managed to kill it when it had been dropped, with a dagger about which he said little, but attempted and miserably failed a mysterious elan. In any case the recce party told us that the Dwarves had dogs with them, which filled us all with dread. Well, just me actually.

We returned to our camp and I set up a Rune Portal back to the Guild. This was actually specifically forbidden us by our employer, however I decided we wanted a quick way out. Then I went to Engalton, taking him aside and told him that I had not created a Rune Portal and even if I had the Rune Portal would not be that particular Runestick, innocuously stuck in the ground there. Engalton thanked me for this full and frank disclosure of my activities. Long did we argue about what we should do. Stoat wanted us all to move into the forest where we could hide from the Dwarves for we had seen the large Eagle and believed they would soon know where we were. However I believed that a move away from our fortified position and the Rune Portal would reduce our escape chances and play into the Dwarves hands. In the end we stayed on the hillock and I set up a Rune Ward.

Here ends the Scribe notes of the late Rune Mage Blackrod.

Scratch's Scribe Notes

I have taken over the job of scribe, because I'm sick of peeling potatoes. Join the Guild, they said, see the world, they said.

The party returned in dribs and drabs to the Necromancer's Castle. Apparently the party had been attacked by a Dwarves in a pincers movement, and a Fire Mage providing artillery support with Fire Storms spells. The Rune Portal was inoperative for some reason, however every-one except a Solar Celestial mage were Unseen, after the first attack Seidarr fled exhibiting a degree of courage for which he was famous. Stoat was in the forest, lurking they say, although I did hear someone whispering

something about the "solitary vice". The hillock was defended by Engalton, his servant, Shoka, Shinji, and Blackrod. Shinji backfired badly while trying to cast a spell and Engalton's servant was killed by a crossbolt. Blackrod killed one, feared three and was killed by a crossbow bolt. At the same time that Blackrod died, Engalton who had been dropping Dwarves like it was a hobby, used an item that summoned extra-planar assistance. The result was that when Bathin, the lessor of Blackrod's soul arrived, so did a minion of Hargenti. The dwarves, who had everything their own way until then decided that if discretion wasn't the better part of valour, it was a reasonable biggish bit and not to be sneezed at. They retired from the field muttering about bathing in holy water. Engalton and Shoka didn't want to talk about their conversation with the demonic entities, which makes you think, doesn't it. Stoat bravely poisoned some dogs.

When everyone turned up, the plans suggested were:

- 1) Lets go back to the guild and get someone really tough to help us.
- 2) Lets observe the dwarves.
- 3) Lets try and find their supply line and cut it off.

Stoat wanted to be released from his contract and rehired at of the rate as a mercenary. Which, when the legalistic bumph is cleared away means; at a cost 2,500 silver he would be exempt from the contractual limitations everyone else operated under. I strenuously objected debating long into the night and expressing my passion in this regard by throwing myself to the ground and kicking my heels into the carpet.

My feeling was that if we were contracted to preform a job all of us should be equally obligated, and if he felt it too dangerous, he should leave. Interesting, when it looked like this might happen, the Nightblade moved to restrain Stoat. I think we may have severe difficulties serving the conclusion of our mission.

Engalton's servant was resurrected back at the Guild and seemed none the worse for wear. However Shinji seemed not to know who he is. I had best mention that Engalton had been laid low as a result of some sort of mental network. This happened when his servant died and he was engaged in combat. Stoat had forgotten this trifling effect when suggesting setting up his network.

May fear were realised when the Necromancer told us that he had insinuated a subtle poison into a potions of protection from magical fire we had taken. Since he was the only one who could provide us with the antidote it behooved us to fulfil our contract or die expensively. Stoat, who had once again wandered off to do whatever it is he does by himself returned and brought with him news. He told us that he had spoken to the Nightblade Shadowspawn about wanting to end our employment. When he was rebuffed he was attacked, his soul was ripped out of his body and placed in a gem. (Here, dear readers I was put to the test of keeping a straight face). Stoat demanded that we return to the Guild and mobilise the full force of the Guild strenght against our employers. Not even my powers of self-control could prevent gales of laughter (admittedly. slightly hysterical) from erupting at the thought.

We did decide to return to the Guild, anyway, to buy such magical ordnance as we could, and I believe Engal ton wanted to resurrect Ptolemy, his servant. We returned, making use of a Rune Portal, and once there, had ourselves examined by the best Healers and Namers we could find. (Lysander). Apparently no antidote could be provided in time, and so we resolved to buy as much magical ammunition as we could, with the high and selfless aim of blowing the pojees out of the Stunties, with the secondary goal of taking out that unshriven meddler with the dead if we got an opportunity. At the Guild Engalton was invaluable to our cause. Was it his winning good looks and personal charm, was it his air of quit competence, was it the way he shot people with a crossbow at the drop of a hat. No, dear Reader, it was his apparently boundless hoard of cash.

After filling up a trolley with adventuring necessities, we returned to the Necromancer's valley. Stoat decided to sulk at home. I gave him the name of a good undertaken and offered my services in drawing up his will, but he gratefully declined my generous offer.

Know, dear Reader, what we only discovered through dangerous investigations. The dwaves would require reprovisioning in five or so days and the only reasonable way they could enter the valley was through a narrow pass. At least that's what Shadowspawn said when we asked him.

We created a safe place above a small river in the pass itself, and camouflaged it carefully. There, we set up traps and an ambush of horrifying dimensions.



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To sow confusion on the bearded little runts, we planned to attack the dwaves at their encampment by means of a dawn raid on their position on the scarp. Shadow wings were cast on all members of the party and we flew in battle formation against the barbarian dwarfs menace. I, naturally, led the party, with Shoka and Engalton at my wing. Seidarr and Ptolemy were somewhat to the rear. No, they were at the rear. They, may even have been flying away.

Soon the party all the party, came into sight of the ridge where the evil little buggers had dug themselves in. Alusia itself seemed to shimmer when the party acting as the highly trained unit they had become over the course of this adventure, triggered invested trollskins. Of course the shimmering could have had something to do with the horrible wine Engalton bought really cheap at Seagate. In any event, my trollskin failed to work. This only slightly discomposed me, and once I stopped screaming, I calmly looked for the softest pile of rocks I could see on the onrushing rocky scarp, wondering all the while if I would ever get to the point where I could clear the Shadow-wings spell.

We could make out two ballistae on the scarp and while we were wondering if they were dwarfed, the question was resolved for us. The first ballista bolt went horribly away and landed in the fortified camp below. We indicated our sympathies with our middle fingers. Engalton was slightly grazed by the second bolt, but the enormous forces with which it flew was such that although it skidded off his armour, he was thrown across the sky in a tangle of limbs and wings. For a moment we believed he would pull out, but he went into a tailspin, and when he started to trail only black smoke, well we know it was all over. I believe the seventy foot long shallow trench he crested has become something of a tourist attraction, administered by Space god cultists.

Shoka, Joshua the Start mage and I landed together. Shoka wanted to know why I was kissing the ground and I explained that it was a ritual of great personal and religious significance and that I wasn't at liberty to discuss it. Ptolemy landed next to Engalton and forced healing potions between his jaws. This was not as hard as it sounds, since each jaw was three feet apart. Seidarr landed so far behind everybody else that there is some doubt that he was in the same geographical location, a matter we intend to take up with the cartographers Guild. Shinji had been flying a large heavy rock thanks to an instilling flight spell, and dropped it above an elevator arrangement the dwarves had rigged up, smashing it to kindling. I triggered a Wall of Stone to give us a secure position from which to fire, while Shoka shot at the dwarves on the ballistae. Then I triggered a Quickness covering myself Shoka and Joshua. Not wanting to bore you with tedious detail, dear Reader, and however much you tug at my sleeves for stories of the glorious feats of Scratch, and his useful assistance, I will pass on to the latter phases of our engagement with the dwarves on the scarp.

We had managed the dwarves and Engalton had been healed by the ministrations of Ptolemy and Seidarr. At this point, three more dwarves under the effect

of Fireflight spells flew up to the scarp. Somewhere in Alusia a hat was dropped, because Engalton shot at one, eventually these dwarves were taken out, however before much looting could be done there was heard an ominous rumbling. On looking around we saw an eighty foot tall Earth Elemental in a place where the ground itself had split. Bravely did the party stare at it, their lower jaws agape in a stern and aggressive fashion.

Forgive me, gentle Reader, if I gloss over this part of our adventure as well, but I fear my memory of these events is not clear, although I sometimes wake up from dreams remembering some further small detail of this encounter. (In a cold sweat, screaming.)

When we finally got the bodies off the bloody thing we tallied their injuries and here are the results. Engalton had his bowels ripped out, and crocheted into a becoming scarf. A lung was deftly threaded though an ear and his kneecaps had been turned into castanets. Joshua had his head and left arm pulled off and then put back, each in the wrong place and facing. His heart had been exposed, and someone had written "Kilroy was here" on it, and his ribs were a finely granulated powder. Joshua was deemed to have won the party sweepstake because although Engalton's injuries were more artistic, Joshua's were unquestionably more severe.

We decided that the elemental, which I believe I said was ninety feet tall, was an interesting problem and one that might best be considered at the Guild in Seagate. We proceeded there expeditiously, but I could not restrain myself when I heard whimpering on the way back from curling my lip contemptuously. Mind you it, could have been a tic.

When we got to Seagate we took our friends to the healers. They encouraged us by telling us they considered healing Joshua & Engalton a real challenge. Shinji and Seidarr were injured badly as well, but their wounds just didn't have the same kind of scope and I have my doubts about Seidarr's anyway.

While the crawling wounded were treated by the healers, Shoka, Ptolemy and I went back to our ambush position in the pass. There we waited for the supply train. Unhappily, the Dwarves sent out an escort party to guard the supply train. We were only slightly discomforted as we believed we could just as easily ambush these Stunties. Unfortunately they brought along their Earth Elemental which was 100 feet tall! Shoka and I thought that information of this sort was best shared with the rest of the party. We didn't bother asking Ptolemy what he thought, because he had been caught by the elemental, and 110 feet of aggressive earth doesn't give you much time for thought. When it had finished with him, we folded him up and put him in Shoka's backpack and retired into the forest.

We had hired some mercenaries and they were defending our Rune Portal in the forest. When we went back, however unused as I was to Shadow Wings, I got lost and had to make my way back on foot and spent the night in the forest. Not being a ranger it took me sometime. In the meantime, my associates at Seagate had managed to hire some reinforcements. There was Lysander, about whom no more need be said, Bash, about whom no more need be said

and Pym, about whom no more should be said. When Engalton and the rest had fully healed they brought back these three to swell our ranks. Bash being a Cloud Giant did a particularly good job at swelling.

We all met at the Rune Portal and we explained what had happened to us. When we told of the 120 foot Earth Elemental Lysander just shrugged explaining that she had Banishment, a common Namer spell available at the Guild. Into the silence that followed Engalton declared an urgent interest in inspecting the picket arrangements, Strangely, many wanted to do that very thing, with big pointy objects.

I feel, dear reader, that I am in somewhat of an invidious position if I am to relate what passed between Lysander and myself, As you know I am not one to brag, but I cannot deny that an understanding grew between us, unspoken, but true nevertheless. Many are the time I would find her staring at me in yearning. In loathing, some of the less sensitive would rejoin, and admittedly Lysander herself was of this number, yet as I record for the reader these adventures in a manner unswayed by personal feelings or emotion, I swear that there were moments when our souls touched. I live for the day when our love can be proclaimed to the world.

With the others we made short work of the supply train. Although we didn't capture everyone we managed to capture a large number of mules. Shinji and Ptolemy took them back to Seagate via the Rune Portal along with the Dwarf bodies and prisoners.

In the meantime the rest of us attacked the Dwarven camp and tore them apart. In the fight however, Shoka, Engalton and I died, but the rest of the party forced the Dwarves to surrender as waves of Dwarven blood forced the enemy into a position from which no profit could be gained.

I like to think that as I lay in Death's cold embrace, I felt Lysanders gentle touch calling me back to life. When consciousness was restored to me however, there was no one around. Ah, she such a shy, delicate flower.

Here endeth Scratch's notes, being an accurate and true record of those events that transpired in the Valley of the Necromancer, including bits that happened at Seagate

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