

Bear Hunt

These are the scribe notes for our adventure, starting on the 1st Thaw 800.

Roster

Lead by me (Loxi), Earth Mage

Scribed by me again

Military Science by ... we don't have a military scientist but Anook, our Ice Mage says that he will give it a go.

Supported by ...

Brundar, Binder with Sally-Jo, Marybelle and Boris.

Rowan, Binder with Dolly.

Gok, Celestial of the Shady persuasion.

<< Brundar thinks that only an elf would be so stupid to volunteer for Scribe and Leader at the same time. I believe that the rewards are worth it. >>

Background

Our employer is Timmy the Border Collie Dog. All right – he's not really a dog. Tim is actually a Celestial Mage (Dark) from a small village in some mountains.

His people were being plagued by a train of gypsies. A necromancer in particular was stealing sheep amongst other things. Tim and his sister went to talk them out of their evil ways. Apparently push came to a lot of shoving and the necromancer died in the fray – leaving Tim the victim of his death curse (transforming him into his current canine shape).

Another gypsy, described as short and ugly, caught Tim in a net. <please note the lack of obvious dwarf jokes here>

Just as the gypsies were about to trade Tim away, for goodness knows what, they were washed away by a tidal wave.

The dog found himself in a small fishing village called Southpoint and in the care of the local Water Mage called Meg. It turns out that Meg is an astrologer and she told Tim of the ways of his curse removal.

The reading ...

was, as usual, very poetic however very unusual in its clarity. According to Meg – We five and Timmy the Dog must go – not under, not over but through these things –

Long wavy grass

A deep cold river

Thick oozy mud

A big dark forest

A Swirling whirling snowstorm

And a narrow gloomy cave

In order to find, kill and return with a bear.

It all seems very straight forward and simple. Of course we are adventurers and nothing is that simple – yet I feel that it is futile to try to plan for the multitudes of terrors that 'could' be out there for us. We will have to deal with each, inevitable, obstacle as we come across it.

And so we began our adventure ...

(2nd Thaw)

...with a 2 Day boat ride from Seagate to Southpoint care of Peter (a fisherman of Southpoint) and his son Ben.

Our voyage was blessedly under calm skies and peaceful.

Gok is learning the advantages of magedom and I think that we are enjoying the opportunity to teach him. The first lesson – cantrips. Drying oneself (after swimming) and fire lighting.

On meeting up with wildlife

Hopefully I have established our standard operating procedure concerning meeting animals in the field. Talk first – fight only if necessary. We were met by a boar on our first camp. I managed to talk to it and convince it to go on its way. So, Gok's next lesson – “Be careful with that axe.”

<< Brundar would like some recognition for Sally-Jo's 'watch' efforts. She alerted us to the presence of the pig. We appreciate her and her master for their contribution to our mission. >>

We have spent a night in the hospitality of the good people of Southpoint and look forward to talking with Meg in the morning.

(4th Thaw) A Day at Southpoint.

Margaret (Meg) the water mage...

was surprised to see us, at her cottage, this early. She is a sturdy woman of middling years who has the look of an adventurer – not long retired. As it happens she has lived near these fisher-folk for nearly twenty years. It took her some time to make the locals comfortable with her magical practises. It also seems to amuse her to stir up the belief, in the village children, that she is a witch (traditional nasty, child eating sort). I suppose it keeps them off her impressive herb garden.

Meg prepared another astrology reading for us.

Why is it that astrologers think that their first riddle is going to be sorted out by yet another riddle?

As it goes – this reading was done to answer Meg's curiosity about why we should go through all the obstacles, mentioned in the first reading.

*Where am I going? I don't know
down to the stream where the wild things grow.
Upon the hill where the pine trees blow
An'tham, Angelica hiding from the snow*

*Where am I going? Who says for sure?
Across the fields and down to the shore
Valerium, Symphytum, Ruta, rare lore
Mixing and making her smile once more.*

For once – being an elf was useful. The reading has plant names in the old tongue. They translate as follows ...

It looks like we must collect these plants. At the moment we think that they are part of a remedy –

“Mixing and making her smiling once more”

Meg has drawn a rough map of the area for us.

So far – the local area looks to have the necessary habitat for our quest.

Part of our payment came to us via Meg in the form of an invested ring and a potion of either healing or strength, each. The rings are generally ‘Keep me dry or alive underwater’ flavour and a ring of slowness.

In Dealing with Children.

During this day we have been followed by a troupe of children. They kept their distance for most of the morning. They have never seen anyone outside of Southpoint before. The folk here are all human and have strange ideas about the nature of other people. To wit, they thought that we elves were likely to eat the youngsters. (this seems to be a common theme amongst simple folk and I notice that the likes of Brundar don’t help matters much.)

It took a while and an impromptu game of “hide and seek” before our trail began to talk to us. I am afraid that I frightened one of the boys by tickling him. Okay – so I snuck up behind them, unseen and poked him (gently) in the ribs. It seemed like fun at the time.

Brundar stayed with Meg while we went to investigate the beach that Tim washed up at. It was our thought that the villagers may have missed some of the salvageables – no luck there but the children did show us their treasure hoard.

In their sack of treasures – we identified a couple of useful trinkets.

An’Tham.

Sunshine,
Grasslands.
Aniseed smell in
the leaves.



Dill

Angelica

Root & fresh seed.
Shady & sunny
woodland.



Angelica

Valerium

Banks of streams.
Root rhizome.



Valerian

Symphytum

Marshes, Stream
banks. Roots.



Comfrey

Ruta

Full sun, poor
soil (Mountains?).
Bitter leaves.



Rue

A string of amber beads with an enhance beauty enchantment on it and a circular rope with waterproofing cast on it.

We traded for these two things. I believe that the rope will be a useful swimming aide. As for the beads – frippery, but if Gok thinks that they are more useful than his bedroll then I shall not interfere. Speaking of trades – Anook gave over a Red Dragon’s tooth for the rope. I must remember to look up the alchemical uses for such things. That trade may have been a long-term blunder.

Another note: Maybe it is not a good idea to let certain adventurers expound the virtues of adventuring to ignorantae. Such phrases as “We get payed to get ourselves into trouble and kill people” may not have a good general effect on the guild’s public face. I am also bemused by Anook’s descriptions of wild and domestic animals – so far we have heard about ‘Seals’ – apparently they are water-borne pigs and his vision of a horse was along the lines of a ten-foot Timmy.

The Quest Begineth.

Through the Long Grass (5th Thaw)

Nick (the owner of the other large fishing boat) was kind enough to drop us off at the point of our quest. He said that he will come by at three in the afternoon each day so that we may ride back to Southpoint with him.

The grass in this plains stands at over two feet high. Alright for elves – not so for ‘stout’ folk. Brundar ... re-established Boris and so Anook rode on the golem’s shoulder while the rest of us could walk in his wake.

Fight

As it happens – Timmy and I ranged out of the path in search of the An’Tham that we eventually found. Not before we found a pack of dogs that took exception to us, being in their territory. More to the point – they took a disliking to Master Tim. I will note, here, that we managed to leave three of them alive. Hopefully they will have enough adults to keep the pack alive.

Spoils

Anook was kind enough to freeze some of the meat, which I carved and stored in dog pelt, for us. I noticed some measure of disgust in the party at the thought of eating dog. I say to that; if you have the mettle to kill an animal then you will use it for some purpose.

An’Tham

When we did find the An’Tham we found it in a high mana zone. We think that there is a relationship between the plants and the mana. I am hoping that they are the source of the phenomenon.

We picked up our pace and headed for the nearest woodlands – in search of Angelica.

Between us and the trees is the river. It flows fast and strong. At this place there is some forty feet to cross.

While we took this opportunity to seek out Valerium – Anook set up a campfire. You can always trust a hobbit to keep a meal schedule.

Valerium

Again – The plant was in a high mana zone. It would be extremely convenient if all of our collection could be found in such areas. Otherwise finding these wretched things is going to be jolly difficult – this being the beginning of the Thaw, so the plant life has only just started its' growth.

It took great care and an ice-shelf from Anook for me to dig out the Valerium. Now I have two plants to take across this river.

Brundar has started a design of rope-golem for us. These creations will be able to carry my plants. Who ever said that binders were useless?

River Crossing.

Anook has set up an icy 'bridge' for us. Rowan has a scheme to set up a rope handrail. I am unpacking our various 'keep stuff dry' magics and the coit of floating for ... Gok, I think. – Maybe we can tie a safety rope to Timmy as well.

With the help of a *Traverse* spell from Anook – I could cross his ice bridge with ease. Therefore it was up to me to take Rowan's rope across. With varying amounts of success we all got across the river. Some people got wet in the process and we learned just how long an ice bridge will last in a strong flow. Boris carried Timmy – I don't think that did any favours for Tim's dignity but it was, all-in-all safer.

Marsh Lands.

This is Symphytum country. We carried on our march at Boris's best speed – giving us a good chance to find this rare marsh plant. What we did find was that we were not alone.

This is also swamp beast country. Sally-Jo described them as moving logs. I don't know but they may be some sort of diminutive dragons. So far we have managed to avoid them.

We made our way over to the woodlands in search of a campsite.

Anook (being the military scientist) set our firewood out around the perimeter of our camp as a barricade, or at least a warning mechanism against the swamp beasts. Most of the people, during their watches, saw mysterious lights dancing over the marsh. They are still a mystery.

Base Camp (6th Thaw)

Brundar gave his attentions to making a rope golem today. He has begun all sorts of interesting speculations about how useful his creations could be.

We left Tim and Gok to watch over the site and our industrious binder.

The rest of us went off in search of Angelica. We found another high mana zone before returning for lunch.

In our afternoon search we found a hunters trap. It almost took Anook. We disapproved of this spiked pit and have dis-armed it.

Brundar presented us with a charming, if somewhat squat, golem. I believe that it will be most efficacious.

<<Note: Our Dwarven Binder took exception to my predictions. “My golems are no effa bloody anythin’” ... and so on. Some folk have no grace...>>

Tomorrow we will continue our search.

...

During the night we were hit by a freak snowstorm.

We (mostly I) were so focused on finding the plants around here, that we missed the cue from our astrology reading, about going through a storm. Master Tim put us on the right track there.

Of course he didn't speak before I cast a ring of stone for us to shelter in. A wasted and mis-timed effort.

We progressed up into the foothills behind Boris. He was forging a way through ever increasing drifts of snow. Anook was having a great time – in his element one might say.

Sitting in a tree, in the middle of this gale, we saw an owl. The same owl that flew over our camp during the day. Gok asked some questions for me, and Brundar did not shoot at it this time. We found out that it was spying on us, for the ‘person’ living in the cave up ahead.

<<This flummoxed my personal paranoia about being spied on by Cam-Din-Del (a long story – [see my notes in the library](#)).>>

It was strange – now I think about it that Tim was so anxious that the bird was not hurt in any way. We left the owl on its tree and pressed on into the snow.

So much so that Boris went off the track into a waist deep drift – plunging Anook from his shoulder, head first, to be buried in snow. The hobbit came up with uncanny speed and started to walk across the white powder as though it was mother earth herself. Ice mages are good at that kind of thing.

Into a Bear's Cave.

It took us nearly half the night to reach the cave.

At this point we were still not solid on what to do with the bear. I do not apologise for my position on killing The Mother's children needlessly and Tim was adamant that the creature should die. When I argued that the astrology reading was inconclusive on that point – he tried to use the same argument to support his view. The difference between his care for the owl and apparent blood lust about the bear concerned me. I began to believe that he thought that the bird was his sister. As for the rest of the team – they seem to think that their only purpose was to bash things. I wonder about adventurers some times.

It was time to get professional about our mission. Anook started his ritual of binding snow and Brundar helped me scout out the cave. I don't think that I will ever forget the sound of the high pitched - rough highland accent, coming from Marybelle as Brundar took possession of her. She(he?) did prove to be sufficiently quiet as we surveyed the cave.

It was fitted out for defence. There were rocks and logs set about the place – this would not have been alarming but for the way that they were stacked – ready to be thrown at invaders. I took this cue to look into the bear's aura. Not surprisingly, we discovered that this creature was in fact a shape shifter. This put a different light on our plans. Killing a bear would not be very hard, if abominable. Dealing with a shape shifter is another league of adventuring. Our count of magical and or silvered weapons came to the sum total of one – being Anook's Main-Gauche. And so – we came up with a plan ...

Actually we came up with three intermingled plans. I take this as proof that you don't need a military scientist to confuse a band of guilders.

We had a thought about creating a pit (via my tunnelling spell) and trapping the bear. That had merit apart from the using me as bait part and the extremely high chance of me failing to cast the spell.

I still wanted to go in and talk to the were-bear and try to convince it of our(okay – my) good intentions. It was a simple and naïve plan and may have worked if I had taken some precautions – like putting that ring of stone around the bear before waking her up. My thanks to Anook, for pointing that out to me, after my near death experience.

As I went into talk with the bear, the crew came up with a very clever idea – I would sooth the already sleeping shape shifter into a healers sleep then the binders would petrify and shrink her. We could deal with her when we got her to Meg at Southpoint. Brilliant! It is a pity that we forgot the plan as soon as we got distracted by the owl – sitting on a ledge, hiding, in plain view.

I managed to do the sleeping part and asked Gok to reassure the owl that we did not mean to harm its charge. Either Gok is not naturally persuasive or he did not try. The owl started to fly over us – making very loud calls. This did not help My efforts (helped by Anook's bound snow, now hanging above the bear) in gently waking the sleeper.

She woke up with a start and nearly ripped my arm off. I was trying to explain my intentions. She was intent on rending me apart. Thanks to the cooling effects of Anook's snow, falling on her, I live to tell this tale.

Her maw did send me into unconsciousness.

They tell me that they mobbed her with some effort and pinned her down.

Rowan had to tangle with the loyal owl and again Tim, again, displayed his worry for the birds safety.

Nicky.

By the time Brundar brought me round the team had the bear subdued. That is encased in a hardened blanket of snow and golem.

We found out that the shape shifter was actually Nicky Patterson – Tim’s sister. She is a born shape shifter that was stuck in her animalistic form during the fight that earned Tim his canine appearance. She is also a witch – capable of lifting Tim’s curse, once we have sorted her problem out. I believe that Meg’s second reading is about Nicky.

She has agreed to join us in our walk in the wilderness. Hopefully we can locate the other plants for Her cure.

We spent the morning of the seventh, mucking around – procrastinating over firewood.

Brundar and Anook had to go out and rescue Boris from a snow pit for his efforts in wood collecting.

We finally twigged to the fact that the snow storm was centred on our hill and only our hill while we were foraging for *Ruta*. It turns out that while it is impossible for a werebear to cast spells – she could perform the wicca ritual for summoning weather.

Mistrust and short tempers.

Despite our agreement – Nicky still thought that we were here to kill her. She also thought that was the best solution to her problem.

She provoked the wrath of Brundar and his golems by attacking Brundar himself. Anook cooled things down with a timely wall of ice.

When I got to talk to the frustrated werebear, I convinced her to try my scheme and come with us to visit Meg at Southpoint. (Here I admit to telling a strategic lie – She believes that we have absolutely no means of killing her.)

Ruta (8th Thaw)

On our trek down the hill – we did manage to find ruta.

Angelica

Within the same day we found the woodland herb. This one was more of a challenge to unearth – as it was wrapped around the roots of an oak. Brundar brought his binder spell of moulding elements to bear and helped me to free the Angelica plant.

We only have one plant left to collect – from the swamplands. It will be messy but hopefully not bloody. We are staying very alert for swamp dragons.

Symphytum

We elves traipsed through the swap while the ‘stout’ folk stood in the tree line. Barracking aside, they turned out to be very useful.

Gok managed to get the attention of a swap-dragon, who casually chomped through Gok’s wooden pole.

During the ensuing fight – I managed to *control* the dragon.

<<This brings me to a philosophical point. I did not think that dragons were mere animals – the spell should not have worked. I must make a point of finding out what the actual name of the swamp beasts is.>>

Anook showed, again, how useful an ice-mage is by freezing the water around us when another beast made to join the melee. This gave us time to back off while ‘my’ beast endeavoured to contain the other. When the beasts became exhausted we watched a display of Rowan’s archery prowess and Gok’s butchery skills as they dispatched it. Safe to say that we now know what swamp-dragon tastes like even if we don’t know what their actual name is. The boys have taken its hide to be made into armour.

I used ‘my’ beast as a scout until we found a Symphytum Plant.

We came across a mongoose that was being employed to spy on me. He was ‘not allowed’ to help us but did manage to dispatch a snake that could have been very bothersome. And so we collected the last quest-plant.

Pesky, Fool Humans.

Our night’s rest was interrupted by a hunter/trapper by the name of Harry. (Whom I will remember as singe-boot). He was folly enough to try to sneak up on us. Brundar payed his stupidity with a crossbow bolt through the bush, he was hiding behind and into his thigh.

After some ... persuasion, Harry told us that he was hired to trap a bear and that he should bring the pelt back to his employer in Edenvale. The employer was thoughtful enough to supply Harry with a silvered shortsword but not gracious enough to explain that the bear was a werebear and that there would not be a pelt to return.

We didn’t deign to tell to set Harry straight on this deception – indeed I remember becoming angry to know that he was the one responsible for the cruel bear trap, that we found. I left him to the mercy of Anook and Brundar.

Surprisingly they didn’t kill the idiot – just relieved him of some goods – including the silvered sword.

Nicky and Tim may require our further assistance in investigating the ‘employer’ in Edenvale.

It took us a further three days to reach Meg’s cottage outside of Southpoint.

I was wrong

The plants that we collected were the ingredients for a potion of resurrection. Hence Nicky had to die in order to be saved. The bonuses for us were ...

- 1) In keeping Nicky alive – we could walk her into Southpoint instead of lugging the dead weight of a naked human across hill and dale.
- 2) We could affect a ‘peaceful’ death for her and not engage in bloody combat. Well I think that it was a bonus – given Nicky’s demonstrated strength and our lack of tools for the job.

With the help of a sleeping draught from Meg and the assistance of Brundar (who anchored Nicky in the sand) I used our newfound sword to bleed the bear to death.

<<*I must note here that the task of killing her was sickening to me. It was also an extremely interesting experience to slay a being in order to save it.*>>

Meg used all of the plant matter to make her potion. (So much for starting an exotic herb garden).

We successfully revived Nicky in her human form.

Here is to Nicky removing the curse, inflicted upon her brother and to our rewards.

Nicky has managed to lift her brother’s curse. She has also taken care of Anook.

Thaw 15th to 30th

We have spent our time resting and training before we set off to Edenvale, in search of the mysterious employer. (We found out that his name was Matthew)

Under the full moon – we sailed into Edenvale. Gok and I walked *unseen* through the village and found Matthew at the inn. He was entertaining two women. I heard them talk about ‘the house’ and decided that we would catch up with master Matthew there.

We, each, set up position around the village and waited to see which house was ‘the house’. Rowan identified it by observing the returning women.

Gok followed the lone, drunken Matthew through the village streets and in a stunning manoeuvre – stole the man’s sword from its very scabbard. It was then that I decided to grab Matthew and take him down to the beach and away from the village.

On the Beach

Under the cover of darkness and the crashing of the waves, we had a little chat with the Necromancer’s assistant.

He told us all sorts of interesting things. The most interesting was that Isaac (the Necromancer) is alive and kicking.

Also

-It was the master that wanted Nicky’s hide.

-They have a meeting scheduled for Autumn time.

-Isaac has a way of sending messages to Matthew (Now redundant)

We have resolved to, and indeed taken Matthew’s horse and cart (He wont be needing it any more); and are on route - back to the mountain home of the Patterson family.

Nicky will figure out what she will do about Isaac and we will wait for Tim to teach Gok to fly.

<<We relieved Matthew of a signet ring – I wonder if it is unique and locatable. That question brings the question of – do we want Isaac to find us?>>

The road from Edenvale to ‘Castle Patterson’ (for want of any given name) was blessedly uneventful.

It took us three days to travel that route and two weeks of rest / training once we got there. At Nicola’s request I have not included any real details about their ancestral home.

Points of note :

- 1) The wagon had been stolen, from a family of gypsies, by the necromancer and his lackey.
- 2) There were two letters of some importance and a large iron key. They were in a draw with a ‘*sleep*’ trap on it. Nicola has possession of these things.
- 3) We may be called upon by the Patterson family when Nicola goes to meet with this black mage, for his autumn rendezvous.

Special Report for the Seagate Times ...

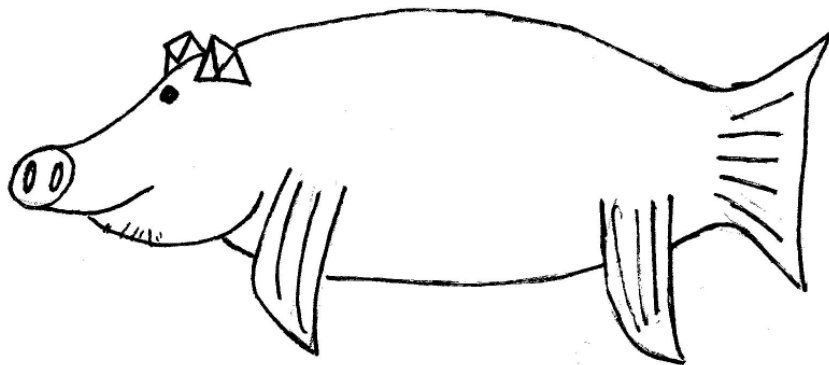
Going on a Bear Hunt.

Rochelle (Loxi) de Marques

We went out with our employer Timmy the Border collie to find and kill a bear. As it happens Timmy is actually Timothy the Celestial Mage and the bear is Nicola – his sister. To cut a short story even shorter – we traipsed up hill and down dale (across fields and through marshes) to find Nicola and collect some rare herbs on the way. The hapless siblings had fallen victim to a magic fight and a death curse – trapping Nicola in her bear form and turning Tim into a dog. We sorted the situation out – the usual way.

Along the way – we heard Anook’s description of various animals from his home country. Here is Rowan’s artistic impression of a seal.

A seal - a pig that lives in water
with fins and a fishy not
curly tail



Part of our adventure called for a special golem – to carry our special herbs around. Rowan draws Brundar’s Potbelly Rag and String.

Flower Potmen Golems

