

THE ECLIPSE

GAME PLAYED FROM JUNE 1997 TO SEPT 1997, GM = NOEL LIVINGSTON. THANKS, NOEL.

CAST: SCORPION, HUMAN NAMER (ANNA) SCRIBE
AXY, HUMAN NAMER/FIGHTER (DARYL)
ROTHGAR, GREATER WEREWOLF FIRE MAGE (SCOTT)
BALODE THE GOBLIN, GREATER GOBLIN MINDMAGE/FIGHTER (PATCHES)
GUSTAF, HUMAN FIGHTER/RANGER (?)
AQUALINA, MERMAID(?) WATER MAGE (KEITH)
GALAND, ELF ILLUSIONIST (?)
GIDEON, ELF EARTH MAGE (MIKE)

SUMMARY:

HIRED BY THE GUILD TO GO TO THE FILGISO AND OBSERVE THE COMBINED SOLSTICE/ECLIPSE AT THE 13TH MINUTE OF THE 13TH HOUR OF THE 15TH DAY OF SNOW. LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED WAS PANJARI. GOT TO DESIGNATED AREA AFTER DETOUR TO FIND ROTHGAR WHO GOT SNARED BY A DEATH CURSE AIMED AT FLIERS AND BATTLE WITH THE HUNTER: DEVIL WITH ATTITUDE SENT BY THE DROW. WHILE THERE, MANAGED TO GET G.T.N OF DEVIL, DRACOLICH(?), DIRETREES AND AVATAR, AND LANGUAGE OF PANJARI FROM A RATMAN WHO IS IN FACT A MUTATED HUMAN. WAS ADVISED TO LEAVE BY THE GUILD AT APPROACH OF A MANA STORM PRECEEDING ECLIPSE SO WENT TO NOVODON TO WARN PRINCE. REWARDED HANDSOMELY, SO RIDE SUCCESS INTO THE STUPIDEST OF ALL PLOTS TO CATCH A SPY (HAD BEEN OBSERVING AND RECORDING ALL SHIPPING IN AND OUT OF SEAGATE FOR OVER A YEAR, PROBABLY FOR PIRATES) WHICH FAILED HORRIBLY AND PROMPTED SLINKING HOME WITH TAILS BETWEEN OUR LEGS VIA UNFRIENDLY TERRITORY.

GUILD MEETING: HIRED BY THE GUILD, SPECIFICALLY FREDERICK TOADSWORT, HOBBIT OF THE ASTROLOGERS GUILD, TO GO TO THE SOUTH FILGISO AND OBSERVE THE COMBINED SOLSTICE/ECLIPSE AT THE 13TH MINUTE OF THE 13TH HOUR OF THE 15TH DAY OF SNOW. EXPECT NEW STARS TO BE VISIBLE, NAVIGATORS TO CHECK. UNFORTUNATELY CAN'T WORK OUT THE ASTROLOGY FOR THE AREA AT THE TIME. IN FACT, CAN'T GET ANY READINGS AT ALL FOR 13 HOURS AND 13 MIN AFTER ECLIPSE. LAST TIME SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENED WAS PANJARI. FUCK. ALSO WILL PAY US 1000 SP FOR EVERY MAP WE CAN MAKE (BUT WE DON'T HAVE A CARTOGRAPHER, SO THAT'S FUCKED), PHILOSOPHERS AND LINGUISTS WANT LANGUAGES, AND THE NAMERS WANT NAMES. DON'T HAVE TO KEEP ANYTHING SECRET. PARTY IS ME, THE GREENSKIN, THREE ELFIES, ONE OF WHICH HAS A STAINLESS STEEL SPINE STICKING OUT OF HIS BACK (GIDEON) AND ANOTHER (ROTHGAR) TURNS INTO A WEREWOLF AND SCARES THE CRAP OUT OF ME, A BABE CALLED AQUALINA WHO WANTS TO SCRIBE BUT IS CONVINCED TO BE BACKUP TO ME - SHE CAN DO IT ON MY LAP ANY TIME - AXY, AND GUSTAF WHO WANTS TO BE PARTY LEADER AND MIL SCI AND SINCE HE'S A SWAMP RANGER AND THE BIT OF THE FILGESO WE'RE GOING TO IS SUPPOSED TO BE A SWAMP, WE LET HIM. WILL GET PAID 200 SP/WEEK, PLUS 10,000 SP GUILD SERVICES AND THEY'LL GIVE US GREATERS FOR 4000 SP, AND ALL SALVAGE IS OURS. TOADSWORT OFFERS INVESTED STARWINGS AT 750 SP PER SO WE CAN FLY PARTWAY IF WE WANT. FILGISO IS FUCKING BIG AND NASTY: NORTH IS GIANT SPIDERS, CHAOS WORSHIPPERS AND A DRACOLICH, MIDDLE IS VERY, VERY, VERY HIGH MANA AND LOTS OF DROW, SOUTH IS A SWAMP (WHERE WE'RE GOING). YAY. EXPECT NO COMPETITION, BUT COULD BE INTEREST IN THE ECLIPSE BY CHAOS WORSHIPPERS, DROW, BALROG AND DRACOLICH. YAY. DECIDE TO BOAT TO NOVODON. FUCK. EIGHT AND A HALF DAYS ON WATER, PLUS TWO TO DROP OFF POINT. FUCK. NO RUNE PORTALS IN FILGISO. TARGET ZONE 80 MILE IN FROM THE COAST = 20-30 MILE INTO FOREST. COULD BE STANDING STONES PRESENT. ALLOWING 10 DAYS TO GO 30 MILE INTO FILGISO WE'LL LEAVE 16 FROST. GET GREATERS DONE.

SPEND TWO WEEKS TRAINING AND DOING MIL SCI STUFF. 13 FROST, FULL MOON-1, THE STARS GO OUT AND THE MOON IS BLOOD RED. EVEN I CAN SEE IT. ASTROLOGERS AND CELESTIALS NOT AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT. HEAR IT ALSO HAPPENED IN THE LUNAR EMPIRE. 14 FROST, FULL MOON, SAME AGAIN, ALL ASTROLOGY SAYS DEATH AND DESTRUCTION, LUNATICS GO BERKO. 15 FROST, FULL MOON +1, SAME AS 13TH. SPEND NIGHT GETTING PISSED WITH BALODE.

16 FROST: STAGGER DOWN TO SHIP 5 AM PISSED AS A NEWT AND AVOIDING KIDDIES AT THE SOUP KITCHEN. AQUALINA TAKE A BIT OF A DIP AND GETS ALL PERKY. NICE. HEAR A ROAR FROM SOUP KITCHEN DIRECTION. BALODE TELLS ME IT'S A 30' TROLL WEARING SQUASHED INGOTS AS ARMOR AND CARRYING A FUCKING GREAT THUMPY THING WHICH HAS COME BURSTING OUT OF THE HARBOUR AND IS NOW GRABBING CHILDREN, DIPPING THEM INTO THE "SECRET HERBS AND SPICES" BAG AT ITS WAIST, PARBOILING THEM WITH ITS STEAM BREATH AND EATING THEM. WOULDN'T BELIEVE HIM (HE'S PISSED, TOO) EXCEPT I CAN HEAR THE NOISE AND I SEE THE MASONRY GET TRASHED AS IT TRIES TO HIT THE PARTY WHO HAVE STUPIDLY RUSHED INTO THE FRAY. FUCKWITS. YELL AT THEM TO COME BACK SO WE CAN CAST OFF AND GET THE FUCK OUT OF THERE BUT THEY WON'T. DRAGONFLAMES HURTS IT A BIT, BUT IT HEALS ITSELF WITH ANOTHER PREPARED KIDDY. FUCK: TROLL HEALING POTION. IT'S SMART ENOUGH TO TRY TO AMBUSH GUSTAF BUT MISSES AND SENDS A KIDDY INTO ORBIT. FIRE ON WHARF FROM WHERE SELF IMMOLATION WENT OFF SO ME AND BALODE DO OUR PART FOR THE BATTLE BY TRYING TO PUT IT OUT BY PISSING ON IT. TROLL HEARS ME RECOMMENDING THE FIGHT AND FUK FOR IT IF IT DECIDES TO JOIN THE GUILD. BALODE GIVES IT DIRECTIONS, AND THEN IS BLINDED BY A FLASH GOING OFF. HAH!. TROLL IS, TOO, SO HEAVES ROTHGAR OFF ONTO ROOF OF BUILDING AND DIVES FOR HARBOUR, SCATTERING AQUALINA AND GALAND. HAS A MAGICAL BLOWING THING ON IT CHEST TO GIVE IT AIR UNDERWATER. MILITIA ARRIVES AND STARTS CLEANING UP MESS. WE LEAVE ABOUT 6 AM WITH MAGE CURRENT AND SHIP STRENGTH. DOESN'T DO MUCH FOR MY PEACE OF MIND. GET TRAILED FOR A BIT BY A 26' SHARK THAT TELLS AQUILINA IT WANTS SCRATCH, CONSIDERS US AS SUBSTITUTES BUT IS CONVINCED TO SWIM OFF. GET TAILGATED BY THE WANDERING WASTREL, ELF SHIP, GETTING THE MOST OF THE MAGE CURRENT SO GET NERVOUS ENOUGH TO CUT A DEAL: WE PUT THE SPELL ON THEM AND THEY TOW US ALONG AT REALLY HIGH SPEED. RECKON WE'LL BE PIRATE BAIT. AQUILINA TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL HOW SHE WAS PICKED UP AND GIVEN A BLOWJOB BY A DOLPHIN. ELF CAPTAIN (STARSEEKER) OBVIOUSLY ENTERTAINED ENOUGH TO INVITE US ON BOARD TO EAT. GOOD FOOD. TELLS THE GREENSKIN OF A WHOLE LOT OF CUZZIES ON AN ISLAND WAY DOWN SOUTH. RECKONS HE COULD MEET US IN NOVODON ABOUT TWO WEEKS AFTER WE GET THERE, GIVE OR TAKE, FOR RETURN JOURNEY.

SPEND THREE DAYS HASSELING AQUILINA

20 FROST: GET TO NOVODON. BALODE AND ELF COOK SWAP SECRET INGREDIENTS. GET CHARGED 50 SP FOR DOCKING FEES, BARTER IT DOWN TO 45, THEN CHARGES DROPPED ALTOGETHER WHEN IT'S ESTABLISHED WE'RE FROM THE ADVENTURERS GUILD. DOCKMASTER TELLS US LATER, WHILE CHARGING US 10/DAY, IT WAS A THIEF TRYING TO RIP US OFF, BUT THEY DON'T DO IT TO ADVENTURERS OUT OF PROFESSIONAL COURTESY. GIDEON FINDS A CHALKMARK ON THE BOAT. AQUILINA TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT SHEEP RIDING. ENTERTAINING WENCH. DUMP STUFF AT THE BLACK ROSE THEN GO LOOKING FOR INFO ON THE FILGISO. ME, BALODE, AQUILINA AND ROTHGAR GO TO GENTLEMANS GUILD. THEY LET ROTHGAR THE PHILOSOPHER AND AQUILINA THE DECORATION INTO THE LIBRARY AND SUGGEST THE ARMSMANS GUILD TO ME AND BALODE. GO THERE AND MEET THE OTHERS. GUILD RECOMMENDS SILVER WEAPONS, AXY BUYS ONE. TELLS US OF SUARIME, THINGS WARPED BY CHAOS, BEASTMEN, SHORT LIVED SENTIENTS CLOCKING IN AT 2046 YEARS OLD, MINOTAURS AND OTHER CROSSES, GRIFFENS, DROW WITH T.K RAGE AND SOMETHING THAT COULD POSSIBLY SUMMON A FALLING STAR (SEEN THREE YEARS AGO), AND CREATURES THAT CRUMBLE TO DUST WHEN THEY'RE KILLED. FILGISO 20 MILES FROM HERE, ACROSS RIVER. COULD BE

SWAMP. GIDEON AND AXY GO TO PICK UP ROTHGAR AND AQUILINA WHILE ME AND BALODE GO TO LUSTY LADY. I GET A NICE ROUGH ONE FOR 50 SP WHO RECOGNISES ME FROM THE CAZALAN EIGHT. GET A CROWD OF ADMIRERS FOR MY CONTORTING SKILLS. EVENTUALLY GET BACK TO THE BLACK ROSE WHERE ROTHGAR AND AQUILINA TELL OF A BOOK OF PLANTS - THE MISTLETOE STAYS ACTIVE FOR A LONG TIME - RATMEN WHO HAVE WATER MAGES (AND THEREFORE DEHYDRATION), SNAKEMEN, MARSH SHARKS AND MARSH KRAKEN. BEGINNING TO SOUND BETTER IN A BOAT. ONE OF THE PATRONS THAT NIGHT D.A-ED AS HALFLING SPY.

21 FROST: GET WATER BREATHINGS ALL ROUND, GET ON BOAT AND GO. GET TO SUITABLE BEACH, DRAG BOAT UP, SET CAMP. BALODE GETS HIS NOSE STUCK IN A MAP, KEEPS GOING ON ABOUT SITH. SOUNDS NASTY. TRY TO ORGANISE WATCH FOR THREE PEOPLE AT A TIME, STAGGERED. ORDER = AXY, GALAND, ME, GUSTAF, BALODE, GIDEON, ROTHGAR, AQUILINA.

22 FROST: ROUGH TERRAIN OF FLAT, WINDY PLAIN CARVED UP BY FREQUENT DEEP OVERGROWN STREAM RIFTS. RECKON IT'LL TAKE 5-6 DAYS TO CROSS. MANA HIGHER: LESS FATIGUE WHEN MINUTE CASTING. MAKE ILLUSARY DONKEY TO PULL CART BUT A GRIFFEN COMES OUT OF THE SUN AND TRIES TO GRAB IT AWAY, SO REPLACE IT WITH AN ILLUSIONARY GORILLA. FIND A NICE CAVE AT EVENING. GET STIRRED UP AT MIDNIGHT BY AN EARTHQUAKE BUT NOTHING OBVIOUSLY NASTY HAPPENED.

23 FROST: PURIFY, MAKE GORILLA. GET TO DEEP RIFT (80') WITH RIVER AT THE BOTTOM. CLIMB DOWN ROPE. GET TO OTHER SIDE AND ROTHGAR DECIDES TO FLY UP AND TAKES OFF INTO THE FOREST, SURPRISING EVERYONE INCLUDING HIMSELF. PARTY DITHERS THEN STUPIDLY DECIDES TO PUT WINGS ON AQUILINA TO TEST THE THEORY. MANAGE TO TIE A ROPE TO HER ANKLE AND ATTACH IT TO BALODE BEFORE SHE GETS AWAY IN THE SAME DIRECTION AS ROTHGAR. PULL HER IN AND KILL THE WINGS. LAST SPELL TO IMPACT = DIRE OAK DEATH CURSE, DURATION UP TO 10 HOURS, DESTINATION = DIRE OAK'S GRAVE. SUGGEST SENDING SOMEONE ON WINGS LEAVING A TRAIL, BUT IT'S TOO EASY FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO FOLLOW. WATERS OF VISION SHOW ROTHGAR 15 MILES AHEAD, FLYING THROUGH ENORMOUS TREES AND TAKING NOTES. NEXT WATERS OF VISION BACKFIRES AND MAKES A WATER SPRITE NUISANCE LOOKING LIKE A MINI VERSION OF AQUILINA. WE LEAVE IT ALONE. NEXT VISION IS AT 20 MILES IN A DEAD STRAIGHT LINE PAST WHERE WE WANT TO GO, DEEPER INTO FOREST. MAKE ILLUSARY BIRD, IT FLIES OFF WITH THE SAME LACK OF CONTROL. NASTY. ANYTHING FLYING IS SUCKED IN. SEE ROTHGAR GET TO DESTINATION: BLASTED DIRE OAK WITH THE SKEWERED CORPSES OF TWO GIANT SPIDERS, SOME HUMANOID CORPSES, AND ONE DECREPID LIVING SPIDER WHICH APPROACHES ROTHGAR. HE TELLS US LATER IT MINDSPEAKED HIM, SAID IT WANTED MORE FOOD. BOTH TRIGGER INVESTEDS AT THE SAME TIME, ROTHGARS DRAGONFLAMES BLOWS THE SPIDER TO HELL, AND HE MANAGES TO RESIST NECROSIS. LUCKY. FUCKWIT FAILS TO COLLECT POISON FOR ME. WATERS OF VISION RUN OUT. HE TELLS US LATER HE RELEASED TWO POISONED RATMEN FROM THE WEBS, AND THEN SCROUNGED AROUND AND FOUND TWO RINGS ON THE SPIDER (WOUNDING MAGIC AND CELESTIAL WITCHSIGHT RANK 6, 10 CHARGES), SOME COINS, A BOX CONTAINING A SMUGGLERS NOTEBOOK DETAILING SHIPS FROM SEAGATE, AND TWO MAGICAL AMULETS (DIMENSIONAL DISRUPTION, RANK 20, 1 CHARGE: DROPS A DIMENSIONAL PORTAL, EFFECTIVENESS DECREASES OVER RANGE, AND NECROSIS, RANK 12). WE WORK OUT HE'S ABOUT 50 MILES IN WHERE WE WANT ONLY 15-20. PARTY CONTINUES DITHERING OVER WHAT TO DO WHILST POLING UPSTREAM: OTHERS ALL FOR RESCUING THE BASTARD, I SAY LEAVE THE FUCKWIT TO FIND HIS WAY BACK. IF ANYONE CAN SURVIVE ALONE, HE CAN. ANOTHER VISION SHOWS HIM HEALING HIMSELF FROM THE NECROSIS. YUK. SEE? BUT NO, THE FUCKWITS VOTE TO FLY TO HIM. ME AND BALODE HEAR DRUMMING CODE OUT IN THE FOREST. YAY. TAKE THE BITS OF CART WE CAN'T MAKE OURSELVES, TRYING TO SPREAD OUT WEIGHT. CONSIDER LEAVING BALODES FOOD BEHIND, EAT IT INSTEAD. GUSTAF RECKONS WE CAN EAT SWAMP FOOD, SIZE HIM UP. WE ALL GET UNSEENS THEN STARWINGS AT 15 SECOND INTERVALS AND TAKE OFF. ROTHGAR TELLS US LATER THAT DURING THIS TIME HE WAS CONTROLLED TO CHANGE SHAPE INTO HIS WEREWOLF FORM AND THEN APPROACHED BY TWO DROW DISCUSSING THE D.A. THEY GET ROTHGAR TO POSE AND FROLIC A BIT, AND THEN GET HIM TO

NIBBLE THEIR ARMS UNTIL THEIR D.A'S SHOW THEY'RE INFECTED. THEY LOOK AT HIS INVESTEDS AND DECIDE THEY'RE CRAP (ONLY RANK EIGHT), PAT HIM ON THE HEAD AND DISAPPEAR (PROBABLY MINDMAGE INVISIBILITY). THE CHANGE WRECKED THE FUCKWITS CLOTHES AND ARMOUR. HE LEAVES HIS MARK ON A TREE AND HEADS OFF IN OUR DIRECTION, MARKING OTHER TREES AS HE GOES. SHOULD EXCITE ANY LADY WERES IN THE AREA. FUCKWIT. WE TURN UP AT THE TREE, CAUGHT IN THE WEBS, AND IT HURTS TO GET OUT. FUCKWITS. PLACE FEELS LIKE A GRAVEYARD. FIND ROTHGARS TRACKS, SEE HE'S BEEN FUCKING AROUND IN WEREWOLF FORM. GROUND FAIRLY SOLID, SO MAKE A RAFT AND GORILLA TO DRAG GEAR AND LIGHT ADVENTURERS. GUSTAF SCOUTS AHEAD, BALODE AND GORILLA PULLS, REST OF US RIDE WITH AQUALINA LOOKING AFT. FIND SOME PARASITIC WORMS BURROWING UNDER SKIN ON ME AND SOME OTHERS. DEAL TO THEM. NOT HAPPY. GUSTAF RECKONS WE'LL CATCH UP TO ROTHGAR; HE'S NOT GOOD IN MUD. AT THE END OF THE DAY HE RUNS INTO BOILING MUD (STRONG SMELL OF SULPHUR) AND WHILE WONDERING HOW TO GET AROUND HEARS A NOISE AND RUNS UP A TREE. NOISE IS US. HE GOES TO JUMP ON AXY BUT I SEE HIM AND GIVE A WARNING. ALL PREPARE SO HE IDENTIFIES HIMSELF. TELLS US OF THE DROW ENCOUNTER. D.A SHOWS LAST SPELL TO IMPACT = MINDMAGE CONTROL, NO DURATION REMAINING, RANK 16. ALL GIVE HIM ARSEHOLES ABOUT THE CREATION OF DROW GREATER WEREWOLVES. FUCK. FIND RATMEN TRACKS GOING INTO THE BOILING MUD AREA. ROTHGAR SAYS HE SAW A BRIDGE IN THAT DIRECTION. LOOK AT THE THINGS HE FOUND. NOTE IN THE SMUGGLERS HANDBOOK: "J. BRING INFORMATION TO COURIER AT IMPERIAL OASIS BAR AND BROTHEL IN NOVODON AN HOUR AFTER DUSK ON THE 27TH OF SNOW. WEAR A YELLOW FEATHER. COURIER WILL BE IDENTIFIABLE BY PURPLE ORCHID." AT THAT POINT, AS I'M GOING TO PUT SOMETHING INTO MY SCRAP NOTES I SEE AN ALIEN ENTRY THAT READS "*OH PRAISE MIGHTY NIRGLE, MAY OUR BLOOD FLOW ON YOUR SACRED GROUND*" AND AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE "*THE BIBLE OF NIRGLE*" NOT MY HANDWRITING, IT JUST APPEARED. D.A SELF TO BE SURE, LAST SPELL TO IMPACT = UNSEEN. D.A GREEN "INK" = AVATAR, 3 MINUTES SINCE APPEARING. LETTERS MOVE A BIT AND TRANSLATE THEMSELVES INTO ELVISH FOR THE EDIFICATION OF THE REST OF THE PARTY. FUCK ME. HIDE OFFENDING PAGE OF NOTES IN MY FLINT AND STEEL CASE. BACK TO THE SMUGGLER BOOK: AT LEAST NINE MONTHS WORK FOR 3-4 PEOPLE WITH D.A ABILITY - 25 RANK YEARS. WOW. PARTY STARTS TO DITHER OVER THE HOTSPOT. GUSTAF GOES TO LOOK FOR A SPOT TO STAY OVERNIGHT. CHECKS BRIDGE, LOOKS STRONG, WITH RED GLOW UNDERNEATH. ROTHGAR GOES LOOK AND SEES THE BRIDGE CROSSES A RIVER OF LAVA 200 - 300 YARDS DOWN, WHICH WATER POURS DOWN ONTO AND ERUPTS INTO STEAM. CHECK MAGIC ITEMS, SET WATCHES IN THREES AND CRASH. HEAR DRUMS AGAIN AT MIDNIGHT, BUT NO ATTACK.

24 FROST: OUR GREAT LEADER RECKONS WE GO AROUND, AXY RECKONS ACROSS AND THE REST OF US AGREE. GORILLA GOES ACROSS OKAY, SO WE ALL GET FIREPROOFING, AS THOUGH IT WOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE, ME FOR 30 HOURS. BIG FUCKING DEAL IN A SWAMP. BALODE SEES THE CREVICE ISN'T NATURAL - HAS BEEN GOUGED OUT OF THE EARTH. D.A A TRAP/WARD OR CURSE AT THE FAR END. AXY CHECKS IT OUT = DEHYDRATE, TRIGGER = FIRST ELF/DROW TO ENTER. AQUALINA DOES THE COUNTER. LEAVE BOAT BEHIND, GORILLA LUGS GEAR. ALL CROSS. JUST HAPPEN TO NOTICE THAT AQUALINA LOOKS GOOD IN DAMP WHITE COTTON. FIRMER GROUND ON THE RATMEN TRACKS ON THE OTHER SIDE. CHECK NOTES AND SEE "*MAY OUR SOULS SCREAM FOREVER IN YOUR HONOR*". THIS TIME IT IS MY HANDWRITING. WRITE AFTER IT "LEAVE MY FUCKING SCRIBE NOTES ALONE" AND HIDE THAT SHEET WITH THE OTHER. SOMEONE D.A'S A RANDOM TREE, GETS GIGANTIA, AGE FOUR YEARS AND ALREADY 15' DIAMETER. D.A ANOTHER THAT'S HANGING OVER THE PARTY AND GET GREATER DIRE WILLOW, LONG LIVED SENTIENT. NO COLLEGE. WE MOVE. AQUALINA HAS A GO AT DOWSING TO FIND WATER. I'M SURPRISED THE RESPONSE DIDN'T BLOW THE SILLY BITCH'S HEAD OFF. I TRY D.A-ING THE DIRE WILLOW BUT IT ACTIVELY RESISTS. FOLLOW THE TRAIL FOR A BIT 'TIL GUSTAF FINDS A TRAP. PUNGY TRAP WITH STAKES WITH SOMETHING ON THEM. I CHECK IT OUT. NASTY - ROTS THE FLESH. NERVOUS OF IT A BIT, GIVEN PERSONAL TENDENCIES AND SWAMP PROBLEMS, BUT COLLECT THEM UP CAREFULLY AND STORE THEM IN A WATERPROOF SWAG. VERY NASTY. MAKES OTHERS NERVOUS,

TOO. REACH 30' STREAM AT END OF DAY. HEAR DRUMS FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE SENTIENT TREES. MAKE A BOAT, BATH AND DO A GOOD CHECKING OVER. AQUALINA CATCHES SOME EELS WHICH I KILL FOR BALODE TO COOK FOR DINNER. D.A SURROUNDING TREES, GET ONE LONG LIVED SENTIENT, HIGHEST RANKED MAGICAL EFFECT = WEATHER CONTROL. BALODE GIVES IT THE BLOOD AND BONE FROM THE EEL AND A LIGHT SHAFT COMES DOWN FROM THE CLOUDS AND FOLLOWS HIM AROUND FOR A BIT. IF IT'S A FRIENDLY ACT IT'S NOT VERY HELPFUL. AXY DIVINATES MY SCRIBE NOTES, SAYS THEY'RE POSSESSED BY NIRGLE, BUT THE ONLY POWER HE HAS IS TO FUCK WITH MY NOTES. IT'S VAGUE. AQUALINA OFFERS TO DO A DANCE TO LIGHTEN THE ATMOSPHERE BUT BALODE AND GUSTAF SAY NO 'CAUSE SHE NEEDS A DRUM. FUCKWITS. MAKE PLAN TO PUNT DOWNSTREAM OVERNIGHT, MOST SLEEPING. NOTICE THE TREE MAKING A BLACK CLOUD DONUT OVER ITSELF. GIDEON ASKS IT WHAT IT'S DOING AND IT SAYS CLEARING THE COMPETITION. SAYS WE'RE WELCOME TO STAY. ASKS IF WE'VE COME FROM THE DIRE OAK, IF WE FLEW IN. TREES AROUND THE TREE BEING DECAPITATED BY WHIRLWIND VORTEX. SAYS THE DIRE OAK CAST A SPELL TO ATTRACT FLIERS WHICH ATTRACTED A LIGHTNING WORM WHICH BLEW IT TO HELL. TOOK 100 YEARS TO DIE, SO IT CAST A DEATH CURSE. OUR TREE HAS BEEN IN FILGESO SINCE BEFORE PANJARI. DOESN'T SEE MUCH ELVES. TALKS OF AN ILLUSIONIST TREE A BIT AWAY THAT PUTS FALSE AURAS ON THINGS. RECKON WE'VE SEEN IT. SAYS THE RATMEN USED TO BE HUMANS, BEFORE PANJARI, BUT THAT THE POWER OF CHAOS WAS USED TO PUSH THEM INTO THE FUTURE AND THAT THEY CHANGED ON THE WAY. HAVE BEEN HERE THREE YEARS, AND THE DROW PUSHED THEM OUT OF THE NORTH. TREE SAYS THE RED MOON AND STARS DISAPPEARING HAPPENS EVERY FEW MILLENIA, USUALLY SOMETHING "QUITE BAD" HAPPENS, LAST TIME PANJARI, TIME BEFORE THE WORLD CHANGED SHAPE. ASKS GIDEON WHERE WE'RE GOING. WE SAY OUT. SAYS OF RATMEN DOWNSTREAM, ONE WITH DRUM. AND LOTS OF NASTIES, OF COURSE. SAYS ALL DIRE TREES HAVE DEATH CURSE, TAKES ABOUT 100 YEARS TO CAST, WHICH KEEPS THE DROW NICE. ALSO HAVE KNOCKOUT GAS AND TRIPPING UP ROOTS, BUT DOESN'T ADMIT TO DRYADS - CALLS THEM GHOSTS. WE PICK UP THE DEAD ANIMALS FROM THE VORTEX, EXCEPT FOR ONE THE TREE IS GETTING STUCK INTO, AND GET INTO BOAT. ME, BALODE, GIDEON AND AXY SLEEP. AFTER A WHILE GUSTAF SEES A TREE THAT RATMEN CLIMB AND SENSES AN AMBUSH. BALODE GETS DANGERSENSE AND LEAPS TO HIS FEET WITH AN ARROW NOTCHED. AQUALINA SEES SOMETHING IN THE TREE. BALODE WAKES ME UP, THEN THE OTHERS. I PROJECT AND HIDE MY IMAGE. SCOUT WELL PLACED. AQUALINA ACTUALLY MANAGES TO GET AN IDEA: COVER OUR PROGRESS WITH WALL OF FOG. BALODE TELLS ME OFF FOR RUDE COMMENTS. DECIDE THE RATMAN'S TOO SMART FOR THAT. SOMEONE SUGGESTS INVISIBILITY, MOST RECKONS HE'LL HAVE WITCHSIGHT. THE MORE WE THINK, THE BETTER HE GETS. MOST WANT TO TAKE HIM OUT. GUSTAF GETS INVISIBILITY AND CLIMBS TREE TO GET HIM. SEES ONE RATMAN WITH GLAIVE, BOW, POISONED ARROWS, DRUM AND ROPE. SNEAKS UP BEHIND RATMAN AND LOVETAPS HIM ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD. RATMAN STUNNED BUT RECOVERS. FIST FIGHT ENSUES. LUCKILY GUSTAF IS BETTER BEING GUILTESS THAN NOT. USES A POTION TO SAVE THE RATMAN, THEN LOWERS HIM UNCO TO US ON RAFT. HAS NO DISEASES OR INFECTIONS, VERY HIGH CONSTITUTION. I GET CALLED UP TO DEAL WITH POISON. D.A = NO AURA. TAKE IT TO BALODE, HAS SYNTHETIC CARRIER. POISON ITSELF TOO DILUTE TO HOLD AURA. D.A RATMAN = HUMAN, SHORT LIVED SENTIENT, NO COLLEGE, TIME DILATION CAUSES RAT MUTATION. NOTE THIS AND SEE "COOL HUH" SAME INK DIFFERENT HANDWRITING. EVERYONE HAS A LOOK. ROTHGAR TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPLY SOME FAILING ON BEHALF OF HUMANS, IS IGNORED. RATMAN TRUSSED AND SEARCHED: ALSO HAS BUNCH OF HERBS, D.A = MAGICAL, NATURE = DISSOCIATION, LEAVE BODY; POTION OF HEALING, RANK 12, 3 MONTH LIFE; WATERS OF STRENGTH, RANK 9. MOVE ON. FOUR HOURS LATER HAVE TO DRAG RAFT 200 METERS.

25 FROST: PARTY NICE ENOUGH TO LEAVE ME ON BOAT - NOT HAPPY ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF INFESTATION/ INFECTION. RATMAN WAKES UP. HYPERVENTILATES AS BALODE TRIES TO HYPNOTISE HIM. RECOGNISE IT AS A HIGH RANKED ASSASSIN SKILL - HE'S TRYING TO KILL HIMSELF. SIT ON HIS CHEST AND HE STOPS. NEXT BALODE TRIES TELEPATHY. MISSES AND AQUALINA GETS IT. HARASS HER MENTALLY

WHILE BALODE TRIES ANOTHER FEW TIMES, FINALLY GETS IT. GETS IMPRESSION OUR PRISONER IS TRYING TO KEEP CALM AND INTENDS TO OPEN OUR (ESPECIALLY MY) ARTERIES WITH HIS TEETH. EVERYONE TRIES TO TALK TO HIM, I FINALLY GET SOME RECOGNITION WITH VOLKSPRECT. HA. MANAGE TO GET ACROSS THAT THE ELVES IN THE PARTY ARE NOT DROW (HE RECKONS DROW WITHOUT BALLS), NOT ENEMIES, DON'T WANT TO KILL HIM, WANT TO TALK. EXCHANGE NAMES, HE IS COUGH. HIS POISON IS HYDRA, HE WORKS OUT MINE IS MAMBA. RECOMMENDS BASILISK BEAST. WILL SHOW ME NERVE STRIKES ON AN ELF (IN HIS TERMS, DROW SLAVE) AND THE HYPERVENTILATION TRICK WITH A HEALER NEARBY FOR IF I GET IT RIGHT. OTHERS RECKON WE'VE GONE ABOUT 20 MILES FROM THE TREE, WHICH MAKES US ABOUT 10 MILE FROM TARGET. PRETTY TIRED. AQUILINA STARTS DOING CONTORTIONS WHICH GETS DISTRACTING, THEN GOES SPEARFISHING. BLUDGE SOME VODKA OFF HER TO BETTER SOCIALISE WITH COUGH, AND BALODE GIVES ME SOME MAGIC MUSHIES BEFORE MAKING BAKED SQUIRREL STUFFED WITH FROG FOR BREAKFAST. COUGH SHOWS GUSTAF SOME GRUBS, SUPPOSEDLY EDIBLE. YUK. GET A WHOLE LOT OF VODKA DOWN HIM. ROTHGAR CASTS HEAT METAL ON THE POT, AND COUGH STARTS SHOWING SIGNS OF PAIN. WORK OUT HIS MANACLES ARE GETTING HOT, TOO. POUR WATER ON IT THEN TRY TO COUNTERSPELL. BACKFIRE. FUCK. ME AND COUGH EXCHANGE MINDS. THE HEAT HAS MELTED HIS (MY) ANKLES AND IT'S FUCKING AGONY. NOTICE HE'S COMPARTMENTALISED HIS (MY) STOMACH TO STOP FROM BEING AFFECTED BY THE ALCOHOL. HE'S BLIND AND STUMBLES AWAY. PARTY NOTICES STRANGE BEHAVIOUR, LOTS OF CONFUSION. DO HEALING SPELLS ON THE BURNT BITS TO STOP THE PAIN BUT CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE FUSING. AQUALINA GRABS MY BODY WHO GROPEES HER AND THINKS LUSTFUL THOUGHTS - SHE'S STILL GOT THE TELEPATHY. SURFACE THOUGHTS = WANTS TO JUMP AQUALINA AND WISHES HE CAN SEE AND SPEAK. PARTY BEGINS TO TWIG THAT I DON'T HAVE AMNESIA. START SEARCHING MY NEW BODY AND THEY STOP ME. COUGH KISSES AQUALINA'S HAND AND WONDERS IF HE CAN BUY HER. D.A OF MY BODY SHOWS IT'S NOT MY AURA, SHORT LIVED SENTIENT, DURATION REMAINING OF LAST MAGIC TO TAKE EFFECT = 10 DAYS, NAME OF LAST SPELL = BACKFIRE. HE'S THINKING AQUALINA IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING HE'S EVER MET AND HE WILL DO ANYTHING TO WIN HER AND HAVE BABIES BY HER. EXCELLENT SEDUCTION TECHNIQUE. I TELL THEM THEY'RE ALL FUCKWITS. THEY TWIG. TAKE COUGH BACK TO THE BOAT AND TRY TO GET HIM PISSED. FAT CHANCE. I'M GETTING PISSED INSTEAD AS I DON'T HAVE THE SKILL TO KEEP MY STOMACH COMPARTMENTALISED. STRIP HIM DOWN TO GET MY GEAR. SEEM TO HAVE LOST ONE LOCKPICK. ALREADY. TAKE STOCK OF NEW BODY: INFRAVISION, IMMUNE TO MOST POISONS AND DISEASES, FUR = MINOR ARMOUR - CAN'T WEAR MY OWN CLOTHES AND ARMOUR. ANKLES REALLY FUCKED, MANUAL DEXTERITY HALVED BY BURNS. AGILITY LOW AS I'M NOT USED TO THE BIG FEET. FIND A GARROTTE AND LOCKPICKS THAT THE OTHERS MISSED. AQUALINA PUTS PADDED MANACLES ON MY OTHER BODY. IF SHE FUCKS HIM I'LL NEVER FORGIVE HER. BOAT GETS COUNTERSPELLLED AND IT'S NOTICED WE'RE NOW IN A HIGH MANA ZONE. UNEXPECTED. WORK OUT THE MANA IS INCREASING WITH TIME. WALK ALL DAY. NASTY, BUT HEALERS KEEP ME HAPPY.

26 FROST: WALK ANOTHER DAY. PROPER NAME FOR RATMAN = MALBAR, GRAND MASTER OF FROSTS. WORK OUT THIS TIME DILATION THING THAT THE DROW SENT HIM THROUGH MENT NO SENSATION BUT CONSCIOUSNESS FOR 2000 YEARS. RECKONS HE'S NOT MAD, BUT HE'S A COMPLETE FUCKING NUTTER. NO THOUGHT BUT "KILL DROW" FOR 2000 YEARS. HAS WORKED OUT THAT THE ELVES AREN'T DROW. DAMN. HE'S KILLED FOUR IN HIS LIFETIME, WAS WAITING FOR A LARGE GROUP WHEN WE CAUGHT HIM. WANTED TO TAKE THEM ALL ON, THEN DISSOCIATE HIS BODY TO BECOME AN ASSASSIN SPECTRE SO HE COULD CONTINUE THE ATTACK. FUCKING NUTS. OUT OF HIS TERRITORY NOW. LIKED PANJARI - IT KILLED DROW.

27 FROST: WALK ALL DAY. THAT NIGHT, NIGHTMARE FOR ME. THE HUNTER, DEVIL, GIVES ME A SPORTING WARNING THAT I'LL BE NEXT THEN GETS OUT AN ENORMOUS FUCKING SPEAR AND RUNS THE RATMAN BODY THROUGH. FUCK! I GO BACK TO MY BODY AND IT GIVES ME A SCRATCH ACROSS MY CHEST TO REMEMBER AND FUCKS OFF. FIND MALBAR IN MY BODY WITH ME. WAKE WITH A SCREAM OF PAIN. THOSE ON WATCH SEE THE RATMAN BODY BE SKEWERED FROM UNDERNEATH WITH AN ENORMOUS GLOWING BLUE SPEAR BLADE AND SEE ME WAKE. BALODE GOES TO HELP

THE RATMAN (FORMERLY ME) AND THE BODY FALLS TO BITS. I'M GOING BALLISTIC BUT THEY WON'T LET US OUT OF OUR MANACLES: D.A. SHOWS TWO SOULS IN MY BODY, AND THAT MY AURA HAS CHANGED. WILL LAST UNTIL DEATH OR UNTIL I MEET A NAMING DEMON. FINALLY DECIDE TO LET ME GO. D.A ASH OF MALBAR, LAST SPELL TO IMPACT = DEMONIC SLAYING. STORY COMES OUT: THE HUNTER IS DEVIL, E&E WITH ALL SPELLS RANK 10, DEMONIC RANGER WHO IS SENT BY THE DROW TO HUNT WHATEVER THEY FEEL LIKE, IN THIS CASE RATMEN AND NOW US. FUCK. NEED SILVER OR MAGIC TO HURT IT, CAN'T BE BOUND, TOUGH AS SHIT, NERVE POISON IN ITS TAIL, SKIN LIKE ARMOUR, WINGS, HORNS, TOOL USE ETC ETC. FUCK. CAN LOCATE, TOO. PARTY CONSIDER DISFIGURING ME. PROJECT. FUCK THEM ALL. CIRCLE AROUND, LOOSENING WHIP. FINALLY AGREE TO AQUALINA DOING A MAKEUP JOB ON ME.

28 FROST: 3PM. GUSTAF FINDS A NICE FALLEN HOLLOW TREE TO HIDE IN. COULD FIGHT THREE ABREAST INSIDE. SEE ANIMALS FLEEING IN FOREST - SOMETHING NASTY COMING. DO E&E GENERAL COUNTER ON ME, THEN IN TREE MOUTH. SEE 6 BEASTMEN AND ONE HUNTER DEVIL FOLLOWING OUR TRAIL. FUCK. BEASTMEN NOT IMMUNE TO POISON BUT NEED SILVER. FUCK. THEY HAVEN'T SEEN US YET. TAKE WATERS OF STRENGTH, GOOD STUFF, AND GO TO CLIMB OUT A LITTLE HOLE ABOVE US IN THE TREE TRUNK. WILL TAKE A WHILE, BUT RECKON IT'S OUR BEST CHANCE. DEVIL RESISTS SPELL, SEES PARTY AND SAYS "KILL THEM ALL". RESISTS A WHOLE LOT OF SPELLS, INCLUDING DRAGON FLAMES. QUICKENS THREE BEASTMEN AND HIMSELF THEN E&E SPEC COUNTER GOES OFF IN HIS AREA. NECROSIS GETS THE THREE QUICKENED BEASTMEN. DEVIL MOVES FORWARD OUT OF COUNTER. FIGHTING BEASTMEN GET RAINSTORMED, DEVIL GETS A WALL OF SMOKE SO HE JUST DOES WIZARD EYE INTO THE LOG. GALAND GOES OFF WITH A FLASH, GETS FOUR BEASTMEN, MISSES THE DEVIL WHO CASTS AT HIM IN RETURN, BACKFIRES DUE TO ACTIVE RESIST, NOTHING SPECIAL. BEASTMEN GOING DOWN AT HANDS OF FIGHTERS AS I GET OUT THE HOLE TO TOP OF TREE. GIDEON BACKFIRES AND TRAPS HIMSELF WITH AN ENORMOUS HAND OF EARTH THAT GOES RIGHT THROUGH THE TREE. GIVES ME NICE COVER AND SOMETHING TO CLIMB DOWN OUTSIDE. THANKS. BALODE GETS CHARMED AND HAS A SHOUTING MATCH WITH GUSTAF WHO TELLS HIM TO KEEP FIGHTING. GET WITHIN 35'. D.A = DEVIL, CURRENT COMBINED FATIGUE AND ENDURANCE = 55. START PREPARING. DEVIL REANIMATES THE FOUR DEAD BEASTMEN. ROTHGAR, FLAMING WEREWOLF AND ALL, GETS GRABBED. TOASTY. BALODE HUGS TWO BEASTMEN AND AXY TO GET THEM TO STOP FIGHTING. GET THE COMPEL. YAY! INCIDENTALLY GET BALODE AS WELL. DEAL TO BEASTMEN, THEN INTERROGATE DEVIL. GET TWO DOSES OF POISON OFF HIM AND AN INVESTED RING OF 2x RANK 20 ANIMATE DEAD. DEVIL A MINION OF PALMON (KING OF DOMINATIONS), ABALIN AND LABAL. IF WE KILL HIM WE'VE GOT A MONTH BEFORE HE RETURNS. GET A LIMITED PRECOG: IF I SEND HIM AFTER THE TWO DROW WEREWOLVES HE KILLS ONE AND THE OTHER KILLS HIM. SOUNDS GOOD TO ME SO I DO IT. GET BALODE TO POLISH MY GEAR AS AXY TRIES TO DISPEL THE HAND OF EARTH. TAKES A BIT THEN WE SCARPER. GET BALODE TO CARRY MY GEAR. ALL TIRED AND WET BY EVENING AND IT'S GETTING DARK. GET BALODE TO GATHER WOOD SO AQUALINA CAN MAKE A RAFT FOR US TO SLEEP ON. SET NORMAL WATCHES. GET BALODE TO MAKE A NICE DINNER (FROG). AFTER DINNER PROJECT, ARM UP AND DROP THE SPELL. NO INSTANT REACTION. DAMN. FIRST WATCH, ME, GALAND AND AXY, HEAR RUSTLING ALL AROUND. NO IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS CAUSE. GALAND WAKES GUSTAF AND AQUALINA AS WE REALISE THE REEDS SURROUNDING US ARE OBVIOUSLY GROWING. HIGH MANA AREA. ALL GET WATER BREATHING. MOVE RAFT TO OPEN WATER SPOT. D.A REEDS = GTN REED, LIVING PLANT. MAGIC CURRENTLY IN EFFECT = PLANT GROWTH, COLLEGE = EARTH/DRUIDIC, RANK 20, M.A. 32. ELF TALKS TO PLANTS. I'M NOT SURPRISED. REEDS GROW FAST EVERY YEAR. GROW "REALLY TALL" (ABOUT 8'). DURATION OF PLANT GROWTH = 1 HOUR - ABOUT HALF AN HOUR TO GO. REEDS GETTING MORE MATURE AND WOODY. AFTER GROWTH IS FINISHED THEY CAN MOVE SOMEWHERE ELSE AND WITH THEIR SHARP LEAVES THEY CAN CHOP UP FLESHY THINGS. D.A LIFESPAN = MAX 1 WEEK. PLANTS GOING HUNTING FOR FLESHY THINGS TO USE AS FERTILISER. FIND WHAT'S FLESHY BY STABBING EVERYTHING. WE LOOK UP. BRANCHES 100' UP. FROGS GATHERING AROUND US. KILL ONE AS AN OBJECT LESSON. LEAVES NOW HARD AND SHARP LIKE

BLADES, FROGS STARTING TO BE SLAUGHTERED. WE LOOP A ROPE AROUND THE BRANCH AND START CLIMBING. REED FLOWERS START GIVING OFF A WONDERFUL SMELL. ME, ROTHGAR AND AQUALINA JUMP INTO THE WATER AND START SWIMMING TOWARDS THEM. BALODE GOES TO GRAB ME. WE WRESTLE IN THE WATER. ROTHGAR DRAGS AXY TOWARDS THE REEDS. BALODE GETS HIS JOLLIES BY HOLDING MY HEAD UNDERWATER. AXY LETS GO - FORTUNATELY FOR ROTHGAR THE LEAVES ARE NOT SILVER OR MAGICAL. BALODE GRABS AQUALINA AS WELL AND RUBS MY NOSE IN IT (NOT AQUALINA). DRAGGING US UP THE ROPE, I TELL ROTHGAR TO GRAB SOME FLOWERS. INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY. BY THE TIME WE'RE AT THE BRANCH WE'VE SNAPPED OUT OF IT, BUT I STILL WANT THE FLOWERS FOR THE MONEY. AQUALINA STARTS GETTING CUDDLY WITH BALODE. BASTARD. FUCKWIT. FUCK. GIDEON PLAYS GENERAL FOR THE PLANTS, INSTRUCTING GROUND MANOEUVRES. BALODE RECKONS WE SHOULD GET SOME SEED PODS.

29 FROST: DAWN, REEDS MOVED ON. ROTHGAR BACK TO NORMAL. WE GO DOWN. ME AND BALODE COLLECT SEEDPODS, GIVE TO GUSTAF. D.A. SEEDPOD, CONDITIONS OF GERMINATION = FLESHY THINGS, IN THE GROUND, HIGH MANA AREA, CYCLIC. GIDEON (WHO HASN'T SLEPT ALL NIGHT) TALKS TO PODS = BABIES. GIVES THEM TO GALAND. STARTS TO RAIN SO WE FIND A NICE DRY HOLLOW TREE (D.A = LONG LIVED PLANT) AND MOVE IN. ONLY THING INSIDE IS A NEST OF WEASELS MISSING MOTHER - BABIES WILL DIE SOON. GIDEON TRIES TO TALK TO THE TREE, BUT IT'S ASLEEP. BALODE, AQUALINA AND ROTHGAR GO OUT WOOD GATHERING. BALODE STILL RUBBING MY NOSE IN IT. START GOING A BIT STIRCRAZY. FROGS ALL GONE, SO FROGS EGGS AND EELS FOR DINNER. BALODE GETS STONED AND WON'T GIVE ME ANY UNLESS I APOLOGISE. GUSTAF WON'T LET ME GET STONED ANYWAY, SO I THROW THINGS AT THEM BOTH. GUSTAF CLIMBS THE TREE TO 250' AND TIES A ROPE ON. BERRIES UP THERE. HE DROPS ONE AT US, THEN BRINGS DOWN A CLUMP TO EAT. BALODE STILL BEING A SHITHEAD SO I THROW A HARD BISCUIT AT HIM. CLIMB UP TO THE FIRST HOLLOW BRANCH AND SET UP HOME AS BALODE AND AQUALINA DRY THEIR UNDERWEAR IN FRONT OF THE FIRE. TRY DROPPING THINGS ON BALODE, BUT THE TARPS GET IN THE WAY.

30 FROST: KICK BOWL OF COLD PORRIDGE INTO BALODES LAP. HE WON'T FEED ME. EVENTUALLY GET OLETTE AND CLIMB BACK TO MY HOLE. GIDEON, ROTHGAR AND GUSTAF GO OUT HUNTING, GET A PYTHON. SMOKED, HUNG, BAKED, COOKED. SPEND MY TIME TRAINING WITH MALBAR. OTHERS SPEND TIME RANKING.

7 SNOW: HUNTERS SEE LARGE FLYING SHAPE E.G ROC, DRAGON ABOVE TREE.

12 SNOW: DUSK. ROTHGAR GOES NUTTY, WEREWOLF FORM, UNCONTROLLED. HOWLING OUTSIDE. TURNS ON THE SUCKERS UNDERNEATH. COUNTERSPELLS SELF, TRIGGERS AGONY, THEN TROLLSKIN, WEAPON OF FLAMES X2, SELF IMMOLATION, NECRO SPEC COUNTER, WRAITHCLOAK AND WITCHSIGHT. MANAGE TO RESIST AGONY AS CLIMBING DOWN TO TARP HEIGHT. BALODE, AXY AND GALAND FAIL TO SAVE. ROTHGAR CAN'T GET THROUGH HANDS OF EARTH AND SHIPSTRENGTH ON DOOR SO STARTS CLIMBING TREE TO COME IN FROM THE TOP. I CLIMB BELOW THE TOP TARP AS HE COMES DOWN THE INSIDE. HE DROPS THE FINAL 40' THROUGH THE TARPS AND LANDS ON GUSTAF'S SILVERED GLAIVE. NOT HURT MUCH, HE STARTS LAYING WASTE. AQUALINA DOES SUMMON AQUATIC LIFE. SILLY BITCH. I FAIL TO COMPEL. GIDEON MANAGES TO TRIGGER A FLIGHT ON HIM AND HE GETS CAUGHT BY THE DEATH CURSE AND TAKES OFF. HE'LL BE BACK. NO-ONE LISTENING TO ME. BALODE HAS A PLAN TO DROP A GALLEY ON HIM. FUCKWIT. 3 HOURS LATER CAN FEEL MANA INCREASING. LOTS OF MAGICAL CREATURES AROUND - NOT LOOKING HEALTHY OUT THERE. FINALLY GET MY PLAN OUT: PIT TRAP WITH SILVER DAGGER STAKES. GHOSTLY IMAGE OF GUILD SECURITY GOON TURNS UP, BAD INTERFERANCE. SAYS "ASTROLOGERS SAY MANA STORM COMING. [SOMETHING] IS FORFEIT IF YOU STAY. GO TO NOVODON, TELL PRINCE [SOMETHING] ABOUT PREGNANT WOMEN. [SOMETHING] HAS GOT ROTHGAR. GUILD [SOMETHING]. GOOD LUCK." D.A SHOWS THE MESSAGE CAME FROM BELOW THE GUILD. AQUALINA GIVES OUT A WHOLE LOT OF WATERS OF STRENGTH AND WATER BREATHINGS, ALSO GET ARMOURS OF EARTH AND WITCHSIGHTS. AQUALINA'S NUISANCE SPRITE TURNS UP IN RESPONSE TO HER EARLIER SUMMONING. ASK IT THE WAY TO THE OCEAN. IT SAYS MAKE A BOAT AND JUMP IN. DO IT AS IT STARTS CASTING. GET HIT BY A FLASH FLOOD. ALL HOLD ON LIKE FUCK. GO THROUGH FILGESO LIKE PRUNE THROUGH A SHORT GRANDMOTHER.

HEAD TOWARDS PLATEAU RAVINES. NOT HAPPY. FUCK. GUSTAF STARTS TALKING ABOUT A SEA ANCHOR. TOO LATE. BLOW UP MY WATERSKIN.

13 SNOW: 2AM. I GET TO SEE ALL THE DEBRIS TORN UP BY THE FLOOD PASSING UNDERNEATH THE BOAT, INCLUDING MARSH SHARKS. NOT HAPPY. GUSTAF ENLIGHTENS US ABOUT HOW HE WAS KILLED BY A FLASH FLOOD. FUCKWIT. SEE OCEAN AHEAD. DROP OVER CLIFFS TO SEA. OH FUCK. BOAT KNOWS WHAT IT'S DOING UNTIL THE WAVE BREAKS. BOAT TURNS UPSIDE DOWN. WE GET DUMPED IN WATER. BALODE SINKS. TOUGH. I GO FOR SURFACE IN FULL PANIC MODE AND FIND MYSELF ABLE TO STAND ON THE SURFACE. NOTICE ALL BUT BALODE AT THE SURFACE HANGING ONTO DEBRIS, AND THEY NOTICE ME RUNNING FOR THE SHORE. GALAND GETS A SHARK TO TOW HIM ASHORE. AQUALINA GOES DOWN FOR THE GREENSKIN. FUCKING BASTARD. I GET TO SHORE AND THE SPRITE POPS UP AND SPITS OUT SALT WATER. TELL IT I OWE IT ONE AS IT HEADS UPSTREAM. GALAND SENDS THE SHARK AFTER GUSTAF. I WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME. AQUALINA TRIES TO CONTROL IT, FAILS. FOR SOME REASON THE SHARK DOESN'T KILL GUSTAF BUT TOWS HIM TO SHORE. FUCK. START CLEANING MY GEAR. STILL GOT ALL MINE, BUT OTHERS LOST A LOT. GALAND SENDS THE SHARK AFTER FLOATIES. FINALLY DECIDE TO WALK A MILE TO THE GUILD BOAT. REFUSE TO GO ON ANOTHER BOAT. BALODE GIVES ME A MUSHIE TO KEEP ME WARM. FIND THE BOAT AFTER MOST OF AN HOUR. ALL EXCEPT ME SAY TO LAUNCH NOW. FUCKWITS. AQUALINA THREATENS TO DO WAVE RIDING. I THREATEN TO WHIP HER. BOAT GETS SHIPSTRENGTH AND MAGE CURRENT. GET WARM, DRY AND CLEAN AND THEN SLEEP. RED SKY IN MORNING. STILL HIGH MANA AND CLIMBING. 10 AM SEE STORM COMING. RECKON WE CAN MAKE NOVODON. REDO MAGE CURRENT, GET TO NOVODON 2.30PM. PRINCE SUPPOSEDLY FRIENDLY TO GUILD SO DON'T BOTHER GETTING DRESSED UP. GO FOR NOBLE SECTOR. RUN INTO CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD WITH 8 SOLDIERS. GUSTAF DOES THE TALKING AND ODDLY ENOUGH THEY BELIEVE HIM ENOUGH TO SEND A RUNNER. SAY WE HAVE TO HAND OVER BIG WEAPONS. GIVE UP BATTLEAXE. SOMEONE D.A'S US SO I ACTIVELY RESIST. HA. RUNNER RETURNS, SAYS CHANCELLOR IS COMING. CARRIAGE ARRIVES, BALODE CAN'T FIT. HA. WALKS BESIDE WITH GUARDS. GO TO PALACE. CHANCELLOR NOTICES ROTHGARS ABSENCE AND ASKS FOR SOME NOTES ON FULGISO, AND NATURE OF MESSAGE. TELL OF MANA STORM, CONJUNCTION AND THREAT TO PREGNANT WOMEN DUE TO HIGH MANA. HE SAYS THEY'LL GET PHILOSOPHERS ONTO IT AND INFORM THE PRINCE. GET TO PALACE. NICE. PHILOSOPHERS ARRIVE AND TURN ROOM INTO A LIBRARY. FIND STUFF ABOUT MANA STORMS: PREGNANT ANIMALS AND WOMEN GIVE BIRTH TO MONSTERS ETC. DECIDE TO ROUND THEM UP AND GET THEM OUT OF CITY. ALSO MAGES CASTING DIED, AND SEVERAL TOOK TO CARRYING COLD IRON AROUND. TELL THEM TO BE CAREFUL OF INVESTEDS. THEY GIVE US NICE ROOMS, RETURN WEAPONS. FOR THOSE OF US WITH IMPLANTED MAGICAL STUFF THEY TELL US A SECRET ALTERNATIVE TO REMOVAL. ALL MAGES GIVEN AN IRON AMULET. GIVEN INFORMATION ABOUT THE RATMEN THE CHANCELLOR DECIDES TO CANCEL A PLANNED EXTERMINATION CAMPAIGN AND SENDS WORD TO THE GATHERED MERCENARIES IN THE CITY.

15 SNOW: PREGNANT WOMEN REMOVED BY SEA. OBVIOUSLY PREGNANT ANIMALS SLAIN OR CHASED AWAY. HIGH MANA IN THE CITY. CAN SEE AT THE FULGISO RAW MANA LIGHTNING ARCING TO THE GROUND. ME, AQUALINA AND GIDEON HIDING OUT IN A MANA SAFE PLACE WITH THE PRINCE. BLIND AGAIN. HE THANKS US PERSONALLY, AND SAYS HE'LL REPAY US WELL. A HIGH WASH OF MANA KNOCKS GUSTAF AND SOME GUARDS OUT. GUARDS ALL CARRYING SILVER GLAIVES. BALODE SEES A DARK MOON (NOT THE NORMAL MOON) GO ACROSS THE SUN AND ECLIPSE THE FULGISO. ALSO SEES FLOCKS OF FLYING THINGS HEADING TOWARDS THE FOREST. SOME MONSTERS ATTACK THE WALLS OF THE CITY. 4 HOURS LATER (5 PM) IT'S ALL OVER. STILL SOME NASTIES HANGING AROUND, CURFEW IMPOSED. GO BACK TO QUARTERS. AFTER DINNER 8 GUARDS (WHO WAIT OUTSIDE) + PRINCE + CHANCELLOR. LOTS OF THANKS, OFFER FOR US TO STAY AS GUESTS WHENEVER WE'RE IN NOVODON. RECKONS HE'LL TAKE US ON AS EMPLOYEES IF WE EVER LEAVE THE GUILD. HA. FOUR GUARDS CARRY IN A LARGE CHEST OF TREASURE AS THANKS. WAHAY! CHANCELLOR GIVES KEY TO AQUALINA SO GUSTAF PICKS THE LOCK. LOTS OF GOLD. 1000'S OF COINS. YES! GET TO FEEL IT. GET PROTECTIVE. OTHERS START TALKING ABOUT CATCHING A SMUGGLER. LOOK AT BOOK AGAIN: ALL BOATS FROM

SEAGATE, INCLUDING OURS. RECKON WE SHOULD MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE BASTARDS. MIGHT STOP PIRATES ATTACKING ME.

SPEND A FEW DAYS ENTERTAINING MAIDSERVANTS. COUNT THE GOLD = 10,000 = 120,000 SP. RECKON I'LL MAKE A POINT OF WORKING IN THIS PRINCE'S INTEREST.

25 SNOW: GALAND STILL WANTS TO GIVE THE SMUGGLERS BOOK TO THE PRINCE. ME, GUSTAF AND THE GREENSKIN RECKON WE SHOULD WORK FOR/THROUGH THE PIRATES. GOOD FOR HEALTH. BALODE WANTS TO BE A DIPLOMAT BETWEEN DUKE AND PIRATES. OTHERS DECIDE TO SPEAK WITH THE CHAMBERLAIN AND USE HIS RESOURCES TO BORE/SCARE THE COURIER INTO RUNNING TO BOSS. ME AND BALODE GUARD CASH WHILE OTHERS GO TO TALK TO HIM. GUSTAF SCARES HIM HALF TO DEATH BEFORE EXPLAINING WHAT THE "SENSITIVE INFORMATION" IS. FUCKWIT. CHAMBERLAIN UNDERSTANDABLY UNINTERESTED IN SEAGATE PROBLEMS, BUT DIPLOMATICALLY SUGGESTS THAT THE DUKE AND SOME MERCHANTS MAY BE UPSET IF THE PIRATES GET IT. REALLY? TAKES THE BULL BY THE HORNS AT OBVIOUS DITHERING AND TELLS THEM TO KEEP IT FROM THE PIRATES. MENTIONS CAPTAIN VASARIUS, CAPTAIN OF THE DOCK GUARD AS A POSSIBLE ALLY IN CATCHING THE BADDIES. BACK WITH ME AND BALODE A PLAN IS MADE TO ACT AS LOCALS AT THE IMPERIAL OASIS FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS THEN FOLLOW PURPLE ORCHID WHEN HE LEAVES, BOOKLESS. BALODE PLANS TO LURK AND CAST ESP'S, SINCE HE'LL NEVER PASS AS A LOCAL. ALL EXCEPT HIM (HE GOES TO A WHOREHOUSE AND GETS A NICE FAT LADY FOR 12 SP) GO TO MEET CAPTAIN VASARIUS. BIG GUY, UGLY, LOOKS COMPETENT BUT UNSUBTLE. GUSTAF SAYS HE HAS QUESTIONS FOR HIM. HE ASKS WHO WE ARE. GUSTAF SAYS WE CAME IN FROM THE FULGISO. HE SAYS WE FIT STORIES TOLD. GUSTAF TRIES TO QUESTION HIM WITHOUT GIVING AWAY WHAT WE'RE DOING. FUCKING USELESS. GIDEON STICKS HIS FOOT IN IT, TOO. DON'T GET ANYTHING USEFUL. DECIDE TO GO OFF AND FIND OUT IF THE STORIES ARE BAD ENOUGH TO IDENTIFY US WITHOUT ASSOCIATION. GUSTAF WANTS TO GO TOGETHER. POINT OUT THAT THE ELVES AND AQUALINA STICK OUT A BIT, SO GUSTAF AND AXY GO WITH ME. FUCK. ELVES AND AQUALINA GO TO MERCHANT QUARTER, WE GO PUBBING. GET TO IMPERIAL OASIS AT DUSK. FILLED WITH DRUNK HORMONAL YOUNG MEN WITH WEAPONS. NICE GIRLS - I WATCH FROM OUTSIDE PRETENDING TO BE A BLINDED MERC. BIG BEERS FOR 4 CP. NOT NICE, BUT DON'T NOTICE AFTER A WHILE. MERCENARY CAPTAINS TREATED WITH A LOT OF RESPECT. GUSTAF WANDERS OVER TO LISTEN TO THEM. NOT HAPPY ABOUT HAVING TO FIND NEW JOBS. HE DECIDES TO GO FOR A "PRIVATE DANCE" WITH CYNTHIA. 35 SP. SEES 2 BACKDOORS AND A SECRET EXIT, AND LOTS OF BOUNCER/PIMPS TO PROTECT THE WOMEN. GETS A GOOD FUCK. AXY GETS APPROACHED BY SOME MERCS TO JOIN THEM. ANNOYED BY BASTARD ADVENTURERS WHO PUT THEM OUT OF WORK. GUSTAF RETURNS. THEY STAY TO LATE. I MAKE 14 CP, 1 SP AND 1 BEER - THE MERCS TOOK PITY ON ME. MEANWHILE THE SQUEAKIES AND THE BIMBO LEAVE THEIR WEAPONS AT THE GATE AND ENTER THE MERCHANTS QUARTER. SEE A THEIF ON A STAKE, LEFT AS A DETERRANT. GIDEON POSES AS A WANDERING HEALER, THE OTHERS AS TRAVELLERS, AND THEY GO TO THE GREY GHOST, A REALLY SNOOBY PLACE WHERE AQUALINA IS WELL UNDERDRESSED. HA. GET TO ORDER WHATEVER THEY WANT - DUCK AND VENISON - AND FOOD IS PRESENTED AS A WORK OF ART. GIDEON AND AQUALINA BEGINNING TO FEEL OUT OF THEIR DEPTH. AQUALINA IS SENT A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO A LADY, ANTONA, WHO IS OFFERING TO SELL HER SOME CLOTHES. THEY GO DOWNSTAIRS TO A SOCIAL AREA FOR MORE CONVERSATION. MEET A GEM MERCHANT, LORD ARRAKAN, WHO THROWS A 100,000 SP ASSASSINATION FEE AT ANYONE WHO RIPS HIM OFF. NICE. TRADE IS EXCELLENT. IS THANKFUL TO ADVENTURERS WHO WARNED OF THE MANA STORM. IMPRESSED THEY WENT INTO THE FULGISO. SAYS CHAMBERLAIN IS A TALKATIVE CHAP: INTENDS TO INVITE HIM AROUND FOR TEA AND GOSSIP. FUCK. NOTE IT WASN'T MY IDEA TO TELL HIM ABOUT THE BOOK. THEY SPEND 500 SP. GALAND TELLS ARRAKAN THEY'RE STAYING AT THE PALACE, AND THE LATTER TWIGS THAT THEY'RE PART OF THE ADVENTURER PARTY. FUCK. INVITES US ALL TO DINNER. GALAND SAYS TOMORROW NIGHT. THEY RETURN TO CASTLE AND TELL US ALL EXCEPT THE INVITATION. THEY

EXPECT THE COST OF THEIR DINNER SHOULD COME OUT OF PARTY EXPENSES. GUSTAF UNHAPPY AT THE COST. TELL THEM OF MY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE IMPERIAL OASIS: RECKON COURIER WILL BE A WOMAN, EXCHANGE OUT BACK, ANY PROBLEMS AND THE ENTIRE PUB WILL BE SICCED ON US. NOT GOOD LOOK.

26 SNOW: BALODE CASES THE AREA DURING THE DAY, THEN GOES TO WHIP AND TONG. LOTS OF TALK ABOUT WHAT TO DO: ME STILL NOT HAPPY ABOUT PIRATES. THAT NIGHT GIDEON DOESN'T WANT TO GO TO DINNER BUT GALAND AND AQUALINA BULLY HIM INTO IT. GALAND SPENDS A LOT OF TIME TALKING ABOUT ADVENTURES, GREATLY APPRECIATED. LORD ARRAKAN HAS INVITED FRIENDS IN THE SOCIAL SECT. EVERYONE MAKES INVITATIONS FOR THE HARDY ADVENTURERS TO COME VISIT. BACK AT THE IMPERIAL OASIS I TAKE UP MY POSITION ON A WEAPONSMITHS DOORSTEP, AND HE GIVES ME A MEAL. APPARENTLY IT'S GOOD LUCK TO HAVE A BEGGER ON YOUR DOORSTEP. I TALK TO HIM ABOUT MY WHIP AND BATTLE AXE. HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE ADVENTURERS. AXY AND GUSTAF GO IN, DRINK CHEAP PISS AND GET LAID. 8 BOUNCERS, LESS PATRONS TONIGHT - A MERC COMPANY MUST HAVE MOVED ON. I SPEND TIME WATCHING THE PATRONS OF YUCKS FASTFOOD GET SICK AND THE EMPLOYEES RECYCLING THE DISCARDED REMAINS. RECKON SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE. GET BACK LATE, MADE 2 CP. STINGY BASTARDS. BALODE GIVES ME A MINIKEG.

27 SNOW: WAKE UP NEXT TO KEG. PURIFY. GET WATERBREATHING. BIG FUCKING DEAL. LATER GET ARMOUR OF EARTH AND BLENDING. AT THE VENUE. ME OUT FRONT, GUSTAF AND AXY INSIDE, BALODE, AQUALINA AND GIDEON OUT BACK. YUCKS URCHIN CHECKING ME OUT. FAIL D.A SO DO YUCKS INSTEAD = DOPPLEGANGER, HIGHEST RANKED NON-LANGUAGE SKILL = SPY, COLLEGE = RUNE. FUCK ME. WE'RE IN TROUBLE. INSIDE AT APPOINTED HOUR A NEW EXOTIC DANCER WITH A PURPLE ORCHID TATTOOED ON HER BACK GETS UP. D.A SHOWS SHE HAS AN INVESTED IRRESURRECTABLE DEATH SPELL IN HER EARRING. TELEPATHY PICKS HER OUT. SHE FINISHES DANCING, BUT IS HAVING NOTHING TO DO WITH AXY OR GUSTAF. AXY SO KEEN ANOTHER GIRL OFFERS HIM A FREEBIE SO HE TAKES IT. FUCK. YUCKS ACTING NORMAL SO I HEAD TOWARDS BACK OF BUILDING. GET THERE AS GIRL IS LEAVING. AQUALINA TRIES TO FOLLOW ON ROOFTOP, JUMPS ONTO THE ROOF OF A PLACE WITH PERMANENT GUARDS, MANAGES TO RESIST THE MAGICAL PROTECTION, ALERTS THE GUARDS, GOES UNSEEN. STUPID FUCKING BIMBO. GIRL LOOKS NERVOUS AT FRACAS. MOVES WARILY TO DOCK AREA WITH ME SHADOWING. ENTERS A ROADHOUSE DOCKSIDE AND GOES TO THIRD FLOOR. I CLIMB UP AND WATCH HER THROUGH HER WINDOW. SHE'S CRYING. DOWNSTAIRS THE TELEPATHY PICKS UP SHE THINKS THE EARRING HAS AN INVESTED WIND WALK. SHE'S JUST AN EXPENDABLE COURIER. THINKS SHE'S GOING TO CATCH A SHIP AT FIRST LIGHT. HUDDLES DOWN INTO CORNER WATCHING DOOR. I CLIMB DOWN AFTER 10 MINUTES HANGING AND TELL THE OTHERS ABOUT YUCKS. TELL GUSTAF TO GIVE ME A YELLOW FEATHER SO I CAN DRAW HER OUT AND SORT HER OUT. GUSTAF FLUFFS AROUND, TOO AFRAID TO TRY ANYTHING. FUCKWIT. WHAT DID HE EXPECT WITH PIRATES? FUCK. GIDEON TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION SLOWLY TO AQUALINA. MEANWHILE, IN CASTLE, GALAND GETTING DONE OVER BY DOPPLEGANGER / SPY / RUNEMAGE (YES, YOU GUESSED IT) GOING AFTER THE BOOK WHICH IT HAS CORRECTLY GUESSED, GIVEN DESCRIPTIONS AND BEHAVIOUR, THAT WE HAVE OR HAVE ACCESS TO. IT HAS A BIT OF TROUBLE PICKING THE LOCK ON OUR CHEST OF TREASURE (HA) GIVING GALAND TIME TO REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS. HAS TO TRIGGER WIND WALK TO ESCAPE GALAND PLUS LOTS OF GUARDS. GALAND GIVES THE BOOK TO THE CHAMBERLAIN TO PROTECT IN CASE IT TRIES AGAIN. GUSTAF FINALLY DECIDES TO RUN WITH MY PLAN TO TRICK THE GIRL DOWN. I GET A COME ON BY AN OLD CRONE AS I TRY TO ATTRACT ATTENTION OF THE GIRL. D.A = HUMAN, SO I'LL KEEP IT IN MIND. GIRL DITHERS ENOUGH AT WINDOW FOR HYPNOTISM TO WORK SO SHE COMES DOWN. SAYS THE EARRING TRIGGERS WHEN IT'S TAKEN OFF. SAYS THE SAME MASTER THAT TATTOOED HER GAVE IT TO HER. HER NAME IS ORCHID. D.A EARRING = WHITE FIRE. BALODE DOES THE QUESTIONING. NAME OF MASTER? SHE PASSES OUT. GEAS. FUCK THIS. SHE COMES TO. NAME OF SHIP = FLYING GULL. SHE WAS TO LEAVE THE BOOK BEHIND AT YUCKS - HE HAS A RUNE PORTAL THERE. YUCKS IS "THE MASTERS" FLUNKEY. FUCK. TELL THEM I TOLD THEM SO. D.A ORCHID = HUMAN, NOT PACTED. BALODE LEADS HER TO THE

GUARDHOUSE AND LEAVES HER THERE WITH SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS: NO TOUCHING EARRING. HEAD TO YUCKS, ALL WHO CAN PROJECT DO SO. E.S.P ON YUCKS SHOWS NOTHING SPECIAL, UNINHABITED. CHECK THE PLACE OUT. FIND TRAPDOOR, HASN'T BEEN OPENED IN A LONG TIME, LEADS TO CRAWL SPACE BETWEEN YUCKS AND TENEMENTS. IN "PANTRY" FIND DEAD RUNESTICK WITH A BLOODY CLAWED FOOTPRINT NEARBY, ABOUT 10 MINUTES OLD. FIND A CUP FOR DRINKING BLOOD. ASK THE WEAPONSMITH ABOUT YUCKS, SAYS HE'D BEEN THERE FOR ABOUT A WEEK, UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMOUR THAT HE CAME FROM SEAGATE. RETURN TO PALACE AND GET FILLED IN BY GALAND. SPEND A LOT OF TIME SAYING "I TOLD YOU SO, FUCKWITS". TRY TO DO AIR SPEC COUNTER. FAIL. GUARD ARRIVES, TELLS US THAT ORCHID HAS BEEN DONE IN - GRENADO THROUGH WINDOW. GUSTAF SUGGESTS RUNNING TO THE FULGISO. GALAND WANTS TO LEAVE THE BOOK HERE, ME AND BALODE WANT TO TAKE IT. CHAMBERLAIN FETCHES THE BOOK FOR US, SAYS HE WANTS US TO TAKE IT AS IT'S POLITICALLY SENSITIVE. GIDEON SUGGESTS SPLITTING THE BOOK AMONGST US. WE DO IT. GIVE BITS TO GIDEON, BALODE, AXY AND ME AND SEND THE COVERS VIA A HYPNOTISED GUARD TO CAPTAIN VASARIUS WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO CATCH ANYONE WHO COMES FOR THEM. AQUALINA'S FEELING OUT OF HER DEPTH. I COULD HAVE TOLD HER THAT THE MOMENT SHE MADE HER FIRST INDEPENDANT DECISION. DIVIDE UP THE GOLD TO CARRY = 11 LBS EACH. BALODE TAKES THE CHEST AND GETS UNSEEN. WE GO, ONLY AXY VISIBLE. I GO SCOUTING. GET TO GATE BETWEEN NOBLE AND MERCHANT QUARTER. AXY GIVES HIS NAME AS GODFRED. I TRY TO GO THROUGH AT THE SAME TIME AS HIM, BUT UNFORTUNATELY SO DOES EVERYONE ELSE. SOME OF THE IDIOTS APPEAR. GUARD GETS HYPNOTISED AS HE CALLS FOR THE SERGENT. SERGENT NOT HAPPY: PUNISHMENT FOR TRYING TO SNEAK GATE IS DEATH. OH YEAH. WANTS TO SEARCH AXY FOR STUFF STOLEN FROM PALACE. SPEECHLESS AT SIGHT OF GOLD. ANOTHER PATROL TURNS UP: NONE OF THEM RECOGNISE AXY. NOT GOOD FOR THE VISIBLE ONES. GUARDS DECIDE TO SEND A MISSIVE TO THE PALACE TO SORT THEM OUT. LOVELY. SO MUCH FOR SECRECY. GALAND PULLS ME BACK TO BALODE. HALF AN HOUR LATER A GUARD TURNS UP AND VERIFIES US. WE ALL GO THROUGH. LOOK FOR INN. SEE WERETOMCAT: NOTHING SUSPICIOUS. FIND OLAF'S INN, GET A ROOM. PAY 5 GP FOR ME, AQUALINA AND AXY. BALODE ACTING STRANGLY, PAYS 20 SP FOR SOME FOOD AND A STAY IN THE COMMON ROOM. [AFFECTED BY BACKFIRE HYPNOSIS] OTHERS JOIN HIM. 3 AM. GET SOME HOT MILK AND CRASH.

28 SNOW: DISCUSS OPTIONS OVER BREAKFAST. BALODE EATS A LOT. INNKEEP TELLS US OF EXECUTION OF THEIF DUE THAT MORNING: CAUGHT BREAKING INTO HOUSE OF MERCHANT. ME, AXY AND GUSTAF GO DISGUISED, MEET LORD ARRAKAN THERE. YUCKS URCHIN GETTING IMPALED - MUST HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO GET RID OF LOOSE ENDS. SUPPOSEDLY WAS TRYING TO STEAL SILVERED WEAPONS FROM A WEAPONSMITH. GO TO LORD ARRAKANS HOUSE. TELLS US HE WAS APPROACHED BY SOMEONE LOOKING FOR US, OFFERING TO HIRE US AS GUARDS FOR HIS CARAVAN TO BRASTA. HOW CONVENIENT. STAYING AT THE NORTH GATE INN. ARRAKAN CHANGES OUR GOLD FOR GEMS, GET 95% VALUE. SPLIT IT UP. MAKE GOODBYES. GET BACK TO PUB, DISCUSS OPTIONS. GET LIMITED PRECOG: SEES SHADY MERCHANT DEALING WEAPONS, DANGERSENSE GOING OFF. NOT GOOD, LOOKS LIKE EXPECTED TRAP. EASY TO ANTICIPATE WHERE WE MIGHT BE FROM. SUGGEST SENDING HIM OFF ON A WILD GOOSECHASE. PLAN: SEND BOAT OFF ONE WAY WHILE WE RUN ANOTHER. DECIDE TO TAKE THE BOAT ACROSS THE RIVER AND THEN WALK THE REST OF THE WAY TO BRASTA. AXY AND AQUALINA GO TO THE DOCKS TO HIRE CREW. SEE HAND FLOATING IN WATER. D.A = DOPPLEGANGER, DEAD 4 HOURS 25 MIN. ANYONE WHO WOULD KILL A DOPPLEGANGER MINION TO COVER THEIR TRACKS HAS A LOT OF POWER. FUCK. HIGH TIDE: ME AND GIDEON GO ON THE BOAT INVISIBLE, THE REST DO THE WATERBREATHING THING AND HANG ONTO A ROPE UNDERWATER. WHEN WE GET OUT OF THE HARBOUR THE OTHERS GET A BETTER FLAVOR OF WATER. YUK. WE GET DROPPED OFF ABOUT 6 K'S NORTH OF THE RIVER. TAKE SUPPLIES. AQUALINA PRAYS TO SEA AND FERTILITY GOD FOR SAFE PASSAGE OF BOAT. WHAT ABOUT US? DECIDE TO TRAVEL AT NIGHT, START GOING. FOG COMES IN AT NIGHT, GETS A BIT THICK. GALAND GOES IN FRONT, ME AT BACK. EAT RATIONS ON THE GO, TAKE A BREAK AT MIDNIGHT, MAKE ILLUSARY GORILLA TO CARRY STUFF.

29 SNOW: 1 AM. TIRED. DECIDE TO CRASH. GUSTAF FINDS A ROCKY BIT TO SET

UP ON. WATCH = BALODE + GIDEON, AQUALINA + GALAND, ME AND AXY, GUSTAF.
1:30 APPROACHED BY SKELETON WITH SYTHE. BALODE WAKES US UP. FILL UP A
SOCK WITH GRAVEL AND SAND. SKELETON JOINED BY THREE BOWMEN AND SEVEN
OTHER SKELETONS. FUCK. GUSTAF WON'T WAKE UP. GALAND CHECKS HIM OUT. IS
POISONED. NO WOUNDS. RECKON MIST IS POISONED, IS DRAINING FATIGUE, NOT
THAT WE HAVE ANY. FUCK. ANOTHER TWO BOWMEN AND TWO SKELETONS. FUCK. TALK
ABOUT RUNNING. THROW A ROCK AND MISS. BALODE SHEILD BARGES ONE. THEY CAN
SEE INVISIBLE. FUCK. GET HIT AND STUNNED. FUCK. SIX MORE TURN UP,
INCLUDING ANOTHER BOWMAN. AXY GOES DOWN, THEN ME. THEY TELL ME LATER
THAT GUSTAF WAS REVIVED WITH A RESTORATIVE. HE, GIDEON AND AQUALINA
REMEMBER INVESTED STARWINGS. ABOUT FUCKING TIME. AQUALINA FAILS TO USE
IT. STUPID FUCKING BITCH. THEN SHE GETS STUNNED. GUSTAF GETS OUT WITH
AXY. TRIGGERS STARWINGS ON BALODE. HE GRABS ME AND JUMPS. AQUALINA GETS
TAKEN OVER BY A NIXIE (SPIRIT PASSENGER = COLLARGE) WHO CLEVERLY TRIES
TO TRIGGER THE STARWINGS. FAILS. BALODE AND GUSTAF POUR HEALING POTIONS
DOWN ME AND AXY. COLLARGE MANAGES TO TRIGGER. SKELETON HANGING OFF
BALODES ANKLE STARTS TRYING TO BITE HIS TOE OFF. FAILS. SKELETON HANGING
OFF GUSTAF TRIES TO BITE HIS EAR OFF. FAILS. AQUALINA AND GIDEON TAKES
OFF. AQUALINA HEALS UP AND COLLARGE GOES AWAY. SIGH. BALODE AND GUSTAF
DROP US OFF AT THE RIVER, THEN RETURN TO GET BACKPACKS. COME BACK. ALL
BUT GALAND INFECTED, ALL POISONED. AQUALINA GIVES US ALL WATERS OF
HEALING. STILL INFECTED. GIVE HEALING POTION TO BALODE, PAYBACK. GIDEON
HEALS UP THEN STARTS CURING INFECTIONS. TAKES A WHILE. ME, AQUALINA,
GIDEON AND BALODE SLEEP. AQUALINA GETS TAKEN OVER IN HER SLEEP BY
COLLARGE AND EROTIC DANCES GUSTAF TO DISTRACTION. HE GETS A GOOD RIDE,
THEN AXY. TRIES ME BUT I SLEEP THROUGH. FUCK. MORNING, GALAND FEELING
BAD. POISONED. ATE BAD FOOD LAST NIGHT. ALL FOOD SUPPLIES POISONED - NOT
MIST. GET SAMPLES. LIMITED LIFESPAN. AQUALINA MAKES A BOAT. SEE TWO
COLUMNS OF SMOKE = VILLAGES. BODY WITH ARROW FLOATS DOWNSTREAM. LOOKS
LIKE DROW ARROW, BUT NOT POISONED. PARTY CONSIDERS INVESTIGATING.
FUCKWITS! BINT AGREES. GUSTAF RECKONS IT'S LOCAL LORDS HAVING A GO AT
ONE ANOTHER IN THE NAME OF THE TROUBLES. DECIDE TO FISH, I SPOT FOR THE
OTHERS. AQUALINA SUMMONS PIKE, WHICH SCARES ALL THE FISH OFF, THEN
SUMMONS THE FISH AGAIN. GUSTAF CATCHES ONE. I SLEEP AS BALODE COOKS.
FEED MY FACE THEN CRASH AGAIN. GUSTAF SEES 10-15 HORSEMEN ABOUT MIDDAY.
NIGHTTIME. EAT MORE FISH TEN HOP ONTO THE BOAT WITH WATERBREATHING AND
MAGECURRENT. I WATCH LIKE A BASTARD. END OF NIGHT: GUSTAF WANTS GO GO ON
THE SWAMP SIDE OF THE RIVER, I SAY THE TREE SIDE. I WIN. WEE.

30 SNOW: FOOTPRINTS OF HUNTER FROM YESTERDAY. NO PROBLEM. MONGOOSE
TRACKS. GUSTAF FINDS A LITTLE CROC AND SCARES IT OFF WHILE SNEAKING UP.
HA. CATCHES UP AND ATTACKS IT. FINALLY MANAGES TO KILL IT. LOTS OF HOLES
IN IT. BALODE COOKS IT. HEAR VERY DEEP VOICED SINGER ABOUT HALF A MILE
AWAY, NOT TOO SMART. OR TOO GOOD. LATER BALODE SEES A TREETOP MOVING
ABOUT 1 MILE AWAY. HEAR TREE SMASHING AND THE "SUARIME JAM" COMMENTS
DURING AFTERNOON. GETS DARK. TWO HOURS LATER SEE MASSIVE WHARF MADE OF
WHOLE TREES. SEE HOUSE WITH 30' STUD. DECIDE NOT TO STOP AND MEET GIANT
FAMILY. THEY SEE US BUT DECIDE WE'RE NOT EDIBLE. 11 PM. SEE TWO 30'
TROLLS DRAGNETTING THE RIVER AT A SHALLOW POINT UPSTREAM. THEY SEE US
AND SPEED UP. FUCK. BACK UP A BIT. DO WATERBREATHINGS. GALAND GETS A
TRIPLE. AQUALINA SHAPESHIFTS. GET HER TO SUMMON CROCS. SHE SUMMONS 7 TEN
FOOTERS, CAN ONLY CONTROL 4. FUCK. CLIMB BALODE. AQUALINA GETS THEM ALL
TO ATTACK THE NET. TROLLS ROUND THEM UP. WE CRANK UP MAGECURRENT AND
TAKE OFF WHEN THE TROLLS GET TO SHORE AND START BRAINING THE CROCS.

1 ICE: GET OFF WATER. GET BACKRUB FROM AQUALINA, FEEL HAPPIER. EAT. DO A
BIT OF WALK TOWARDS PASS IN MOUNTAINS. NO SWEAT. 4PM, STOP TO CAMP. SEE
SNOW IN PASS. FUCK. CONSIDER POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS. AQUALINA SOUNDS LIKE
GOOD BEDWARMER. SUGGEST SNOWSHOES. GET WALKING STICKS AND FIREWOOD.

2 ICE: AT MY SUGGESTION, CHANGE FIREWOOD INTO BOAT/SLED. LOAD SOME GEAR
ONTO IT, 3X2 DRAGGERS, GUSTAF ON POINT. HIT SNOW 4 HOURS LATER. AQUALINA
DOES RESIST COLD ON SOME: GALAND 16 HOURS (DOUBLE), GUSTAF 24 HOURS

(TRIPLE), GIDEON, AXY, ME, THEN AQUALINA 16 HOURS (DOUBLE). WOW. PASS LOOKS BAD, WINDY. EAT AND GO. AT HALF HOUR FROM PASS START FEELING BREEZE. MAKE WARHORSE TO HELP LUG THINGS. ELFIES AND AQUALINA GET BLOWN AWAY BUT MANAGE TO GET THEMSELVES BACK TOGETHER. GET TO OTHER SIDE. BOAT/SLED A LITTLE DODGY TO HANDLE. BALODE TEMPTED TO SLED IT, BUT LOOKS BAD. UNTIE ALL AND GET GEAR OFF AND LET IT GO. HITS BOTTOM AT AWESOME SPEED AND WIPES OUT. GO DOWN. SEE CAVE ON OTHER SIDE. NEARLY START AN AVALANCHE LAUGHING AT BOAT SO SNEAK TO CAVE. SOMETHING IN THERE GROWLS AT US. WHATEVER IT IS COVERS ITS TRACKS. ALL WHO CAN, PROJECT. ME AND GALAND SLINK BACK. SUGGEST WE MAY BE ABLE TO TREAT WITH IT. BALODE TRIES TELEPATHY, BACKFIRES, WEARS HIMSELF OUT. WE MOVE ON AND HOPE FOR SOMETHING BETTER. MAKE A SNOW CAVE. SET UP NASTY TRAP UNDER ROCK. WARN PARTY, AT LEAST THREE TIMES. AQUALINA DOES RESIST COLDS AS NECESSARY. COLLARGE COMES OUT AT NIGHT BUT IS BORED WITH US. WILL CHARGE 25 GP. FUCK.

3 ICE: RESIST COLDS. AQUALINA BACKFIRES ON ME, THEN DOES A DOUBLE. YAY. DISARM TRAP. CROSS NEXT PASS. CAN SEE BRASTA IN DISTANCE, OVER PLAINS. DESCEND TO CLOUD LAYER.

4 ICE: HEAD DOWN. GET TO TREE LINE. FIND TRAIL, LEADS TO CULTIVATED AREA. SLEEP OFF TRAIL.

5 ICE: GET TO GRASSLAND. WATCH FOR SPIES. UNSEEN ON BALODE. TALK ABOUT AVOIDING BRASTA. WATCH FOR RAIDING BARBARIANS - AXY HAS EXPERIENCE. SEE CAVALRY PLUME MID AFTERNOON.

6 ICE: WARM AND NICE. GET TO FARMLANDS AND VILLAGE. RAVENSEND. MOVE ON TO NEXT HAMLET. NO INN. FUCK. AXY WANTS TO CAMP OUT AND SEND ONE IN TO BUY FOOD. ANNOYED AT AXY: NO FOOD, NO DRINK, NO GIRLIES EXCEPT AQUALINA, AND SHE'S PARTY TREASURE. STARTS TO RAIN. ALL EXCEPT BALODE WET, COLD AND CAN'T SLEEP. AQUALINA DOES RESIST COLDS. I PACK UP MY GEAR AND GO TO FIND A BARN. GIDEON WANTS TO GO BUT CHICKENS OUT. SO MUCH FOR THE SECOND BACKBONE. I GO TOWARDS HAMLET. GET TO SHED. UNFRIENDLY DOG. BACK UP. DOG FOLLOWS, BARKING. JOINED BY OTHERS WHO HAVE A GO AT ME. WHIP THEM OUT. GET ATTACKED BY OWNER AND SHOT FULL OF ARROWS. FINALLY MANAGE TO PROJECT AND GET AWAY. SPEND NIGHT UNDER LEAN-TO WITH ARROW STUCK IN ME BUT AT LEAST I'M DRY. MY BLOOD KILLS THE GRASS FOR 3' AROUND.

7 ICE: AXY COMES IN FOR SOME FOOD, GETS SOME AND SEES ME. WAKES ME UP. TELL HIM I'M HURT AND INFECTED. PULLS OUT ARROW. GO BACK TO CAMP. AQUALINA GIVES ME A WATER OF HEALING. ALL FIXED UP. NICE BRAKFAST. TELL THE OTHERS MY STORY. GET PUT UNSEEN ON ME AND BALODE TO AVOID TROUBLES. GO TO HAMLET, GET MORE FOOD, SEE DOGGY GRAVES: SCAMPER AND SCRUFFY. HA. GET TO BRASTA EVENTUALLY. EVENING. MAKE A 20' SHIPSTRENGTH BOAT OUT OF OLIVE BRANCHES. BIT GREASY SO PUT SAND ON STRATEGIC BITS. MAGE CURRENT.

8 ICE: WATERBREATHINGS. 2PM 2 MILES AWAY SEE FOUR SMALL TORNADOES 200 YARDS APART MOVING IN A DIRECT STRAIGHT LINE DOWN THE BANK. TEARING UP TREES. SEE ORCHARIST COME OUT, WAVE FISTS, THEN CHASE THEM WITH A BIG CLUB. PROBABLY ELEMENTALS. AS AQUALINA SAYS "IT'S S.E.P".

9 ICE: GET TO SEAGATE. SEE OUR BOAT IN REPAIR YARD. PRETTY FUCKED - LIKE IT'S GONE THROUGH A BIG STORM. SAILORS SAY THEY WERE CAUGHT IN A FREAK STORM. DESTROYED ALL THE FOOD AND WATER SO THEY DIDN'T GET POISONED. LUCKY. WE GO TO GUILD, GET THE TREATMENT BY GUILD SECURITY. SEND BOOK TO DUKE. GET NOTE OF THANKS. AQUALINA'S SPRITE WILL TURN UP MORE OFTEN. SCRAP NOTES WITH THE AVATAR WRITING GETS BURIED IN A CHAINED LEAD BOX. SEEMS THEY'VE MUTATED TO A GREATER SUMMONING OF A GOD. CASH IN JEWELS. LOSE 5%, THEN 10% FOR GUILD TAX.