

# TO CATCH A FALLEN STAR

Cover Sheet

Adventure by Carl Reynolds

01/07/90 - 23/07/90

## Player Characters

Shinji Donetello	Wiccan	Human	Male	Scribe
Darian	Shadow	Human	Male	
Lady Carla de Beurgenac	Mind	Human	Female	
Spinner	E&E	Human	Male	
Sowlean	Mind	Human	Female	
Kilroy	Rune	Human	Male	Leader
Phaeton	Solar	Human	Male	

## Plane

Alusia/Akratz (an Alusian copy)

## Places visited

Gugnics Hope  
Village near Mt Brandon where meteorite landed  
Inside the meteorite

## Employer

Guild Rep

## Major NPCs encountered

John - villager  
Beatrice - village wisewoman  
A demon in the meteorite - The Guardian

## Mission

Investigate strange happenings near a meteor impact site

# CATCH A FALLEN STAR

## Adventure Summary

30/06/90

Our mission was to find out about a bright light that swept across the sky and impacted near Mt Brandon. There were strange happenings in that area, such as the dead were rising and villagers disappearing

01/07/90

Prepared to leave

02/07/90

Rode out of Seagate and arrived at Gugnics Hope. That night, at the inn, some members of the party were involved in a bar fight. The party is split up.

03/07/90

Manage to be reunited. Some party members captive of the Watch. The remainder head back to the Guild.

04/07/90

Go back to Gugnics Hope with a Guild representative. Arrive that evening.

05/07/90

Guild rep negotiates with the Watch. Manage to get all the party released except one. We all pay fines.

08/07/90

The remaining member is to receive a flogging for 'sinister habits'. The rest of us (except one) decide to leave.

13/07/90

Other two members catch up, on Wings.

14/07/90

Finally out of the forest and into the plains. Can see Mt Brandon in the distance.

16/05/90

Reach a village at the foothills of Mt Brandon. The wisewoman tells us that she saw the falling star land on the other side of the mountain and a couple of days later a man ran in yelling 'Flee! Flee!' Some people went to find the crash site but they never returned.

17/05/90

Head off to the village on the other side, near where the meteorite landed. An overfly shows it completely deserted. Crater is 300 metres from the village, in a patch of forest, and there is a dark rock, with purple and orange markings in it. Kilroy tries a visitation but, after a while his body vanishes.

Go to the crater and find a strange, yellow, tulip like flower. Can't see it in a reflection. Then manage to spot it and everything goes dizzy...

### Day 1

Wake up at dawn. Noone else in sight. No sign of the flowers or the meteorite. Discover I'm on the plane of Akratz. All the rocks are magical - Greater Illusion. In fact everything is a Greater Illusion. Find Kilroy who had also been zapped by a strange plant. Discover that spells have altered effects. Get selective amnesia. The others turn up. Someone managed to disbelieve one of the illusions and saw a sandy plain with giant worms crawling around.

Reach the original village - with inhabitants. Later on, Spinner manages to 'break through' to the sandy plain and sees a tower in the equivalent location of Mt Brandon.

### Day 2

We decide to head towards Mt Brandon then try to 'break through' to the tower. That night, get attacked by 'flying puffer fish'. I managed to get 'killed...'

### Day 3

Woke up in a cell surrounded by the bodies of my companions and those of the villagers. Everyone else in a very deep coma. Couldn't wake them up. On the other side of the bars was a strange desk with several coloured knobs and tags. A strange person with two horns on his head and wearing a tailored black coverall with red and gold filgree plus a black cape entered the room. He wasn't very communicative.

Kilroy then woke up. He discovered the stranger was some sort of demon and our spells were working normally. Started trying to bend the cell bars when the others woke up.

After I had left, the others returned to the village for resting then continued up the mountain. On the way Kilroy is 'killed'. Managed to reach the tower and discovered it was some sort of monitoring station. They also found out that the meteorite was some sort of vehicle and was able to copy planes. This copy wasn't going too well because of the presence of mana. There was a Guardian controlling the whole thing. Finally the party were transported to the Mercenaries Guild of Seagate.

This version is a lot more shabbier and unkempt than ours. Taken before Wogan (the equivalent of Wegan) then they are thrown in the cells pending execution. They try to escape and are 'killed'.

Kilroy did another visitation and discovered several other rooms full of strange wonderful things. Sowlean squeezes through the bars and manages to open the cell bars. Encounter the 'gentleman demon'. Tells us we are a threat and wants him and the meteorite left alone. He explains that the meteorite has the task of copying worlds but is having problems with this one because of the mana. He's trying to fix it but that will take some time. He doesn't want to attract the attention of the Guild. The villagers' souls have been dissipated. Decide to move the meteorite to a more isolated area.

19/07/91?

Leave the meteorite and end up just outside the crater. Kilroy flies off to the Guild to get help to move the meteorite. Unfortunately the 'help' is 'acquired' by a 'daffodil' leaving the body in a coma. Attempts to communicate with the Guardian are unsuccessful.

An incubus also turns up and is also 'acquired'. Looks like another demon has taken interest in the proceedings.

Suddenly we are all compelled to leave into the forest and are tied up. Once we're free, the bodies and the meteorite have gone. What had happened was that Shinji had contacted a very powerful entity who had first sent the incubus, then instructed Shinji to move the meteorite and drop it down a very deep hole in the middle of a mountain range. The hole was sealed over.

Find we've all got several curses and we make our way back to the Guild. Contact was made with the 'entity' that assured us that the meteorite is imprisoned and no longer a threat. Have the curses removed.

## TO CATCH A FALLEN STAR

This being the diary of Phaeton Tama, Solar Mage and novice adventurer.

30/06/90

We all assembled in the Guild meeting hall in order to find out what tasks awaited us. The one that sounded the most interesting was the story about a bright light that swept across the heavens and impacted somewhere to the west. Yes I'd certainly like a piece of that. So I volunteered for that mission and met my fellow adventurers.

Shinji Donetello - a person dressed in dark blue (it looked black in the shadows) and looking very mysterious. For some reason, he was wearing a face mask. He also had a falcon with him. He didn't give out much information about himself. I later found out (via the Guild Records) what he was but am not recording that information on his request.

Darian - Like me, he was a member of the Celestial College but he was a Shadow Mage. Medium build and tall with dark clothing & cloak and a large, thin, sword.

Lady Carla de Beurganac - a female, novice, mind mage. Tall and thin with wavy, blond hair and well dressed.

Spinner - an E&E mage. A weedy looking guy, short, cute and well presented.

Sowlean - another female mind mage. Brown hair, short and skinny.

Kilroy - this guy was obviously a rune mage as he was wearing strips of cloth with lots of wooden sticks in it. His pockets were also bulging with food items (I later found out) and there were food stains on his tunic.

I introduced myself as Phaeton, a freshly graduated Solar Mage from the new College. I thought I cut a striking figure in my bright yellow tunic, sky blue trousers & rainbow cape.

Anyway we met the Guild rep in meeting room #2. He explained that the local Star Mage had tracked the path of the meteorite and it had landed somewhere near Mt Brandon. A messenger had come in from that area telling us about strange happenings in the vicinity. Our job was to go and investigate the situation. I resolved to get a small piece of the object for a souvenir.

The guild contract was presented and signed. Kilroy was appointed party leader and Shinji was scribe. Spinner had adventured with Kilroy before and he proposed that if Kilroy played practical jokes on the party he would lose 5% of treasure earned. We were also told we would earn 200sp per week.

Our first act was to go and see the Star Mage. I knew him as he had lectured at the College. He remembered me too. He basically told us what the Guild rep had said as well as an astrology reading.

The astrology reading said:

The snare is set, the mice approach

Their shadows fly to shadowland.  
A land of dreams, not what it seems  
But how are mice to know.

Friends are changed and home is strange  
Believe your eyes or face the worms  
What would prevail if magic fails ...

The rest of the reading was undecipherable but there was something about an abyss. Another reading was done, as an attempt to explain the original. That said:

The image reflects the object  
The false reveals the true.

Yet another reading was cast to give advice to adventurers, what they should do, and how they should act in response to what they will meet. That said:

Fools! Get them to do what their ancestors did.  
Who do they think they are?

I hope my astrology readings, when I attempt some, aren't so cryptic.

The next thing we did was to find the person who had arrived from that area. He told us that strange things were going on, the dead were rising and villagers were disappearing. Strange noises were coming from the forest. He didn't hang around to find out more, but upped and left.

It was getting late by now so we retired to our quarters.

. 2 .

01/07/90

We spent the day shopping for our equipment and hiring our horses. I also put in an order for a portable telescope and got copies of the astronomical charts from the library. Shinji had a horse with a rather fiery temperament. I hired a rather quiet, light grey, palfrey. We also contributed 20SP each to general party funds which Shinji would hold. He also held many of the maps and a copy of the contract.

Anyway this took virtually all day. While at the library, staring out the window, I noticed that Carla was visited by a richly dressed middle aged lady. I suspect she is her mother.

Not much else happened that day.

02/07/90

I was woken up early that morning by Shinji riding his horse into the courtyard. So I went down to breakfast. Since most of the other adventurers had left, the cooks weren't as rushed as usual so breakfast was rather better. It isn't long before the others are down.

After breakfast we collect our horses and leave Seagate. It's a rather uneventful trip. I'm trying to stay comfortable on the saddle. Lunch is good. Kilroy is making cream buns from the contents of his pockets.

It is late afternoon by the time we arrive in the town of Gugnics Hope with the full intention of staying the night and carrying on. We arrived at the inn and reserved our rooms for the night. Carla and Sowlean retire to their rooms while the rest of us stay down at the bar. I was intending to stay for only a short while but our attention was grabbed by a rather loud, and large, drunk proclaiming that Seagate brew was definitely inferior. Kilroy had already ordered some and he decided to offer the man a drink of it - after spiking it with something very potent. However the man refused to take it. Kilroy made the mistake of calling the guy a wimp and it was all on from there. Spinner and I retreated to the bar as it seemed to be the safest place as the fight raged on. Kilroy tried to break for the door but was tackled by the other guy. Meanwhile Shinji asked me to keep an eye on the situation and get the ladies to safety if signalled.

The fight has now moved to the outside. Spinner and I tend a patron who is unconscious. Meanwhile Kilroy is still attempting to get away. He throws a rune stick and a shimmering force wall appears. However he is grabbed by the other guy. The fight is drawing a lot of attention and there are cries for the Watch. I get the signal from Shinji and go upstairs to fetch Carla and Sowlean. They had already retired for the night but they are quickly dressed and we go out the back to our waiting horses. Meanwhile Shinji, Spinner and Darian go to rescue Kilroy who is looking rather the worse for wear.

The three of us saddle up and leave quietly, making our way to the edge of town. Behind us the ruckus is still going on. The sounds of rapidly approaching men indicate the Watch have arrived.

We reach the edge of town and approach the outer guard. As we pass them we are warned to be careful and advised that it would be safer to stay inside as there are some crazy people on the loose tonight. We thank the guard and go on.

A few hundred metres onwards, we hear a commotion behind us and a voice yelling "Thieves, Murderers. Let me pass." It's Kilroy and he's gesturing towards us. Just what on Alusia is he up to? He is stopped by the guard post while a couple of guards ride out to intercept us. We are brought back to the guard post. As we are questioned, the more of the city Watch approach the guard post. Kilroy rides rapidly off and the Watch riders pursue. We are allowed to leave on the grounds of insufficient evidence and the fact that Kilroy is a fugitive.

We decide to stay the night in a small group of trees. I entertain the others by changing the colour of the fire's flames.

### .3. & .4.

03/07/90

I spend the morning up a tree, keeping an eye out for any of the rest of the party or Shinji's falcon. I have a mirror with me so I can signal them and let them know where we are. I was going to send up a beacon of coloured light to attract their attention but Carla & Sowlean vetoed that idea in case the beacon attracted other things as well.

After several hours it was decided to go into town and seek news on the others. We go back to the inn and discover Shinji's horse in the stables. The stableboy told us it had been brought in by a drunken sailor the night before. Upon entering the inn the innkeeper is rather surprised to see us and threatens to call the Watch. However we convince him that, even though we came in with the troublemakers, we were only travelling with them for protection on the road. The innkeeper

finally acquiesces and sells us a couple of rooms, including the one that the sailor had. He had left sometime during the night and had not returned.

Carla and Sowlean decide to go out shopping while I stay in the room and keep watch for the others. They would also use their talents to try to find the others.

So I sit and wait for several hours. It is virtually midday by the times the others return with the news that they had found Darian and Spinner. They had lost their horses and were going to report that to the Watch. They had also seen Kilroy, with the Watch, draped over the back of a horse looking unconscious, perhaps even dead. There was no sign of Shinji.

We decide to go back to the copse but we must acquire Shinji's horse as it has all our records and can be traced back to the Guild. So they manage to cause it to break out of its stall and run down the street with us in pursuit. Finally it is recaptured, with the help of the Watch. We take it out of town and Carla manages to tame it enough to ride. Meanwhile Sowlean goes back into town to see what further news can be obtained.

She comes back an hour later with disturbing news. The rest of the party are in holding cells in the Watch building except for Shinji who is languishing in a dungeon and is charged with assault on the Watch and resisting arrest. His falcon is lurking around looking rather worse for wear and rather frantic at being separated. They know all about us owing to the use of truth potions.

Sowlean decides to go back in, capture the falcon, and convince the Watch to allow it to go to Shinji. To keep our location secret Carla will hypnotise Sowlean into believing that we had already left for the Guild. She tries once and fails. I detect no after effects. The next attempt succeeds but since we're still there the hypnotism doesn't take as well. So Carla tries again and fails, badly affecting herself with total amnesia. She is badly shaken up but Sowlean and I calm her down. While I talk to Carla, reminding her of everything she should know, Sowlean goes back into town. If she is not back in two hours we are to leave for the Guild.

Carla is full of questions. I cannot tell her anything about her background as I don't know it but I can tell her what has happened since we met. I also reassure her on her skills but warn her not to try them out as she will need practise. I hope that this memory loss is temporary and that the Guild Healers can help.

After two hours Sowlean has not returned so I saddle up the horses and we depart. I lead Carla's horse alongside mine with Shinji's horse and the pack horse following on behind. On the way back she starts suffering from terrible headaches. I keep talking to her to help her keep her mind off it.

It is late evening when we get back to Seagate. Carla is taken to the Healers while I contact the Guild rep and tell him what has happened. He is not pleased. He tells me that we will leave for Gugnics Hope the next morning and sort it out. He also explains to me about some of the colleges that the other party members belong to, including Shinji's and refers me to Guild records. So I spend much of the night in the library looking up the Guild registrations on the other party members (which only give me name, description, college and any other facts with the Guild believes other people should know i.e if there is a price on their heads). I also read up on the skills of the other colleges.

04/07/90

Carla, myself, and the Guild rep leave early the next morning. Carla is a lot better today with her memory fully restored except for the knowledge of one of her spells. We make a fast trip back and arrive that evening.

05/07/90

The Guild rep starts negotiations with the Watch. Spinner and Darian are quickly released. Sowlean had been put under escort at the inn but is also released. Spinner, Darian, & Kilroy are all docked 60SP for the price of the truth potion. Kilroy still needs to stay another night in the cells. However Shinji is another matter entirely.

The Guild rep also chastises us for our conduct. We should have reported the whole thing to the Watch at the beginning instead of trying to avoid them. The Watch are our friends. We were lucky we got off so lightly. We are also docked a weeks pay. While negotiations carry on Carla, Sowlean and myself go shopping.

06/07/90

After breakfast Kilroy is released. Some of us wonder whether Kilroy should continue to be party leader. Carla is wondering whether or not to continue but I am still keen to go on. However the fate of Shinji is still to be determined. Negotiations carry on all day.

.5.

07/07/90

We decide to go shopping again. By now we've covered most of the town. However, when we reach the market square we notice a large crowd of people around the notice board so we go and have a look. A large notice announces a public flogging to be held in three days time at 2pm. Reading on reveals that the victim is Shinji. He's to receive 30 lashes for sinister habits. We think he got off lightly. I decide to go and see Shinji and see how he is.

When I get there I notice that the falcon is with him. I get him up to date with the news. Unfortunately he's standing too far away from me for my non-tactile empathy to work but it looks like he hasn't been too badly treated.

We decide that we can't really afford to wait around any more as the Guild may get a little annoyed at us. It is decided that Kilroy will wait with Shinji and heal him after he's had his lashing. Damos (that's the name of Shinji's falcon and has Celestial abilities) will cast Shadow wings on them and they'll catch us up. We work out approximately where we'd be and arrange some sort of signal.

08/07/90

We leave at dawn and travel into the woods. Nothing unusual occurs all day. We camp and I take the first watch, during sunset & twilight (I need the light for optimal spell efficiency). I also borrow Carla's spare tarpaulin to help keep the rain off while sleeping and resolve to get one for myself at the next stop. Nothing occurs during the night.

09/07/90

The land gets more hilly as we progress. My horse is a bit skittish and I'm having a bit of trouble - much to Lady Carla's amusement. Darian is muttering something about tigers and luck charms.

We camp the night. Nothing occurs for the first half of the watch but just after midnight something encroaches on the camp. In the light of the dying fire, we see it's a tiger, a rather skinny and bedraggled one. It attacks Carla and while she attacks from underneath, Darian and Sowlean launch into the attack. I manage to cast a weak light, just enough so they can see better. For some strange reason the tiger doesn't seem to be resisting our defence and shortly it is dead. Darian hacks off the head.

10/07/90

It's foggy and wet this morning. Darian starts removing the teeth from the tiger head as he discovered the horses did not like the idea of having a tiger's head in a sack on them. He says he wants to get some luck charms made from them.

Once the fog lifts we're away again. The morning passes uneventfully. After lunch Darian thinks he heard something so we stop and have a look. Sowlean attempts to get off her horse and slips, making a rather undignified landing on the ground. Nothing is found so we press on until late afternoon when we make camp. Nothing occurs during the night.

11/07/90

Well today is the day that Shinji gets his whipping. Hope he makes it okay. This morning it's cold with patches of fog. Brr! I hope I don't come down with anything.

We set off. The day is mostly uneventful. Spinner thought he heard something once but he wasn't sure. We also managed to wander off the trail. Mid afternoon we climb a ridge and see the edge of the forest. Wide open plains stretch beyond it.

We reach the edge of the forest a hour later and set camp in a clearing. I go looking for an easily climbable tree so I can be a lookout and maybe signal Shinji & Kilroy with reflected sunlight from a mirror if I see them. However there aren't any suitable about. I'll have to be content with this ridge.

We take an early night. Nothing occurs during the night.

12/07/90

Shinji & Kilroy are scheduled to leave from Gugnics Hope at dawn and I estimate that they'll take about a couple of hours to reach the edge of the forest. To help them find us Darian and I alternate casting a circle of Darkness. Each circle only lasts about 15 minutes. I also keep a watch out for two, rapidly moving, spots of darkness in the sky. Sowlean decides to cast a precognition to see if they arrive in the next two hours. However she suddenly becomes arthritic and enfeebled. Great! Another backfire! She tries again and tells us that she doesn't think they'll arrive in that period so we stop casting for a while to save fatigue. I lie in the sun for the duration, soaking up solar energy (and attempting to maintain my tan).

After two hours we resume casting. A short while later, we are able to get another rest as Carla does the same trick as Sowlean (without the side effects). Later on, one of my darknesses doesn't work but, after thinking about it, I am pleasantly surprised to get one that lasts three times as long. However that sort of makes me overconfident as the next three misfire.

There is no sign of the others all day.

13/07/90

Today is Black Friday. The weather seems appropriate with an overcast sky and black clouds. Darian and I resume the darkness signal.

Just then Carla spots them, just after Darian casts the darkness. I quickly conjure up a small patch of light and attempt to flash it off and on by shielding it.

Shortly Kilroy and Shinji land. Shinji feels healthy. Kilroy explains that they are a day late because the villagers wanted to do the casting out of the village ceremony as well.

We turn to the problem of what to do about Sowlean. Spinner does not have the necessary skills to fix her problem so we conclude that she must be taken back to the Guild. But how? We're just out of range of Damos' shadow-wings and it'll take a long time to ride back. What to do? Then Kilroy has a flash of brilliance (I resist the temptation to create a small globe of light above him). Damos and Sowlean fly to a point halfway to the Guild. Damos then recasts on Sowlean and returns. Meanwhile Sowlean, now well within range, carries on to the Guild and gets healed and should arrive back, using a higher ranked set of wings for one hop, about afternoon teatime. After a bit of discussion the plan is adopted, with one change, Damos cannot go without Shinji. We see the liftoff and Sowlean is doing aerobatics. Show off!

While we wait for Sowlean to return, Carla and I are discussing rune magic with Kilroy. It's rather interesting stuff. Late afternoon Sowlean is back, looking her old self again. She makes a rather heavy landing and tells us that the Star Mage has revised his calculations and that the meteorite impact site was on the other side of Mount Brandon. Great! The professor has got his sums wrong again.

The weather is looking rather threatening with thunderclouds on the way. So Kilroy proceeds to cast a runewall to help protect us and fashion it as a dome. He also decides to cast it with his eyes shut and standing on one leg - just to be silly. However he does very well at it. Maybe he's just invented an improved version of the spell.

Apart from the storm, the night passes uneventfully.

14/07/90

In the morning, there's more wind and some rain. It's a very miserable day. I think I am coming down with something.

.6.

We ride off, along the edge of the forest, then cut across the plain, keeping a watch out for hostile plains nomads. Damos flies an aerial lookout at point. Also Sowlean is watching for pygmies in the clumps of long grass. They would have to be very short pygmies I think.

Late afternoon we see our first sight of Mt Brandon. Shortly we camp for the night. No events disturb our rest.

15/07/90

We continue to follow the edge of the forest. The woods are thicker here and the plants are greener. Probably a result of all that rain we had. Soon we see the foothills of Mt Brandon rising

from the forest.

It is decided to find the village that the strange happenings had occurred at. Damos flies about a bit but cannot find it. Darian suggests that I summon a bird so we select on a hawk because of it's vision. Kilroy casts a light and I meditate in it while attempting to perform the ritual. Also there's a runewall runestick standing by in case the bird turns out to be hostile. I try it twice but nothing happens. Third time lucky? Yes one does appear but dives straight for me. Kilroy snaps on the runewall. The bird continues to rapidly descend then wobbles in flight, as if it had forgotten how to fly. It then barrel rolls into the runewall. Barrel rolls? Rather unusual behaviour for a bird. I start to wonder if one of the mind mages is responsible. The bird swoops over my head and drops to the ground.

However I have little time to speculate as I am now surrounded by a runewall with an enraged hawk for company. All I can do is attempt to curl up in a little ball as the hawk tries to get at me. Fortunately that soft leather, I was advised to buy, offers suitable protection from the claws and beak. At this stage Kilroy drops the runewall.

The bird then falls off me and flaps around. Spinner informs me that Sowlean is attempting to control it. I clip off my cloak, ready to throw it over the bird if necessary. Meanwhile Sowlean is concentrating very hard on the hawk, in an attempt to find out how to make it fly. So far she's having little success. A short time later the hawk staggers off.

I repeat the ritual, rather reluctantly, with the added precaution of a blending spell. This time a hawk does appear. It attempts to drop a deposit on me before flying off. I think I summoned the same hawk. I resolve not to try that ritual again until I've had more practise at the Guild. The other alternative is to try it on less dangerous creatures.

Carla is not very pleased with Kilroy. For some reason he called her a stupid bird. He then mentions elephants and now she's really steaming. My musings are interrupted by a pebble landing on me. It's that dratted bird again.

Kilroy asks Damos if he'll cast a shadow-wings on him so that Kilroy can fly up and have a look around. Damos tries, and small shadow wings appear on him. Shinji says that Damos has no desire to try again.

We progress onwards, paralleling the edge of the forest. A short while later, Spinner spots a path leading into the forest. At that moment a piece of rotten fruit lands nearby. Curse that bird! We follow the path, looking for a decent campsite and find a suitable clearing near a brook. Spinner catches an eel for dinner. It has an interesting flavour. Nothing happens during the night.

16/05/90

I get woken up, early in the morning, by that smegging hawk dropping more fruit. Persistent little bugger. If it doesn't stop that soon I'll have to ask Carla to shoot it down.

It's another wet morning as we make our way down the trail. Kilroy creates a tower shield - just in case. After a while the path expands into a large clearing. There's a village in it with children playing outside. As we get closer a man appears from one of the buildings and comes out to meet us.

He introduces himself as John and invites us in. We ask about the meteor and he refers us to Beatrice, the local wise woman. John also mentions something about goblin raids and that most of the men have left. I can hear hawk calls in the distance as that bird looks for me. I'm hoping that it will get fed up and go away.

Beatrice arrives and offers us tea and biscuits which we accept with pleasure. She tells us that she saw the falling star land on the other side of Mt Brandon and a couple of days later a man ran into the village yelling "Flee! Flee!". He looked in a dreadful state and didn't hang around long enough to get more information from.

Next day half the men ran off while the rest went to have a look at the crash site near the village on the other side. They never returned. Another, larger, group went in and only one person came back. He said that he had lost the others. The other village was empty, but when he turned around, they had gone. Nothing has happened around here yet but they are rather nervous of the goblins on Mt Brandon.

Meanwhile Sowlean is talking to John. He says he remembers someone talking about some strange flowers. We spend the rest of the day helping the villages with their chores then spend the night in an empty cottage.

17/07/90

There's no sign of that hawk this morning. Hopefully it's given up.

We lead the horses down the trail. Spinner has prepared some woollen nose plugs in case the flowers scent turns out to be lethal. Halfway to the other village we stop for lunch.

Great! Now Sowlean has got amnesia, like Carla had before. Carla tells us that Sowlean was attempting to do a precognition and must have missed. We spend a few hours catching Sowlean up with the news. Not sure what we can do for her at this stage. Hope she snaps out of it soon.

Kilroy does a precog (aren't rune mages versatile) and he reckons he is asleep with shapes around him. He asks Damos for some shadow-wings and Damos attempts to oblige. However small, dark, wings appear on Damos, just like before. He tries again and this time it works. Kilroy takes off and manages to clip one of the wings on a tree. The wing momentarily blinks out but Kilroy is able to recover and ascends to a reasonable altitude. I'm beginning to think that Star Wings will be a very useful spell to learn. We wait anxiously for him to return.

.7.

Kilroy is back after an hour or so. He makes a rather unusual landing by swooping low over the ground then suddenly shutting down the wings so he's falling. Just before he hits the ground he restarts them and flies under the canopy where he shuts them down and flops to the ground. I wonder if I'll be flying like that when I get my wings.

He reports that he overflew the village and spotted no one in it. It looked absolutely deserted. However he did see a momentary glimpse of something reflecting sunlight from the village. Carla reckons someone may have dropped a silver spoon but I'm not sure.

He also overflew the crater, which lies about 300 metres from the village in a patch of forest. He did see a dark rock, with purple & orange markings in it. However as he overflew the crater, at a

low altitude, he felt mana impact as if a spell had hit him but failed to go off. He felt dizzy but recovered enough to make his own way back. He did not spot any unusual flowers.

I attempt to DA Kilroy to determine what was the nature of the magic that caused the dizziness. It turned out to be a mana backlash. What's a mana backlash? A backfire? Raw mana? Anti-mana?

His next plan is to do a visitation. This meant he would go into a trance and project his spirit to the village and have a look around. He had flown low enough to select one. He would then return, report, and go back to the crater. If he wasn't back in two hours we were to break his concentration to cancel the spell. Also, by then, it would be almost dark.

Spinner and Darian wonder if it would be beneficial to cast witchsight and Walking Unseen on Kilroy in the hope his spirit form would also have these qualities. So, once Kilroy has set up the three runesticks around him, they cast the spells and he turns invisible. Kilroy then casts his spell and we see a ghostly figure leap from where Kilroy was and disappear in the direction of the village. So much for the Walking Unseen theory.

Sowlean is rather fascinated by the runestick pattern and wants to walk into the middle of it. However Carla tells her that would not be a good idea as that would disrupt Kilroy's spell. Carla then has to stop Sowlean throwing things into the pattern.

Meanwhile I'm watching the sunset. The colours are nice and pretty but I think I prefer sunrises. Sunsets look a bit gloomy somehow whereas sunrises are sparkly and alive.

Time passes and there's no movement from Kilroy. We're all starting to get rather worried. Carla asks Sowlean whether or not she still wants to investigate the circle of runesticks (if you can call three runesticks a circle) so Sowlean picks up a stick and starts poking around. She's rather surprised when the stick meets resistance, even though she can't see anything. She feels around with her hands and Kilroy appears. He's still in a trance like state. Spinner and I move up to check him out. My empathy isn't picking up a thing but Spinner reckons he's okay, just in a sleep-like state. I check his pulse and respiration and discover both are regular and slow.

Spinner tries to shake him awake but there's no response. Carla decides to try stronger methods so she pulls Kilroy to a sitting position then slaps him - very hard. She's probably getting her own back for the comments he made before. It's so hard it leaves a mark. I can sense the pain in Kilroy but apart from that - nothing.

I suggest to Carla that she tries telepathy in case Kilroy's mind is trapped and needs assistance to come back. So she gives it a try. The first time doesn't work too well and I feel the magic draining her - a minor backfire. She tries again and announces that there's no one home. She reckons trying to probe deeper could be very dangerous as her mind could be lost too.

Darian decides to take drastic action and picks up one of the runesticks. As he does so, Kilroy's body shimmers in a golden, sparkly, light and fades from view. I was taking his pulse at the time and suddenly found my hand going straight through him. I feel around but find nothing. We conclude that Kilroy's body has gone to where his spirit is. Hope he's okay - where ever he is.

Spinner casts a spell, and a large glowing arrow appears. He explains it's a direction arrow and

it's pointing at Kilroy. So we prepare to follow it. It's getting really dark now - moonrise isn't until 2am. Darian casts witchsights on the party members who can't see in the dark.

We ride the horses into the forest, in the direction of the abandoned village, following the arrow. Carla is leading Sowlean, who is on Kilroy's horse. I'm getting a bit concerned about Sowlean. She must have found the contents of Kilroy's saddlebags and she's stuffing herself with food. If she keeps that up she's going to be sick.

We find ourselves at the edge of the village with only one incident. Carla was knocked off her horse by a low hanging branch and had a rather undignified landing on the ground. She also took a bit of a nasty blow to the head. However she answers my call so I don't need to hurry to check her out. Just as well too as I was having enough trouble staying on my horse. Riding a horse through a dark forest at night is definitely not my idea of fun.

We leave the horses near the edge of the forest and proceed onwards on foot. Sowlean is looking a bit green at the moment. We also pool all the rope together and link ourselves up - mountaineering style. Spinner's arrow continues to point ahead of us.

Shortly we enter the deserted village. It certainly seems deserted - no sound, no movement - as we move through. The arrow continues to point onwards.

It isn't long before we enter the forest on the other side. Further on I notice that the trees ahead have fallen over in a sort of radial pattern. We must be getting close to the meteoric impact point.

Shortly we reach the crater. It's not very big - about 7 metres across. There's no sign of Kilroy but the direction arrow is pointing straight at the crater and downwards. Just then we spot a strange, yellow, tulip like flower. Spinner orders us to put on the nose filters. I also wrap a damp cloth around my nose and mouth.

Someone suggests that we don't look at the flower or the meteorite in case they have some strange power. So I extract my mirror and attempt to look at the plant's reflection. Now that's odd. I can't find it.

Meanwhile Sowlean has wandered up to it and starts walking around it. However, even though I can see Sowlean in the mirror, I can't see the plant. It must be some sort of illusion. Then I catch a flash of yellow, about where the plant would be. At that moment everything goes dizzy.

Date unknown - Day 1

I wake up, still feeling very groggy. Dawn is spilling over the horizon and I just lie there, letting the sun's rays revitalise me. After a few moments I attempt to stand up - and nearly fall over again. Last night must have been one heck of a party.

Memories begin to start flooding back. There's the plant, there's the crater but there's no sign of the others - or of Kilroy either. I remove the noseplugs and damp cloth and decide to have a look into the crater. However to my disappointment, there's no sign of the meteorite.

I decide to go back to the village and look around. I still don't see anyone but I do find two horses. Mine is there and so is Zaphod - Kilroy's horse. The others must have taken their own. I sit and think for a while. Have I been projected in time, as this still seems to be the same place or

is this an alternative plane? Maybe I'd better go back and leave the others a note then attempt to work out the date by studying the stars.

.8.

I go back and leave the note stating that I am going back to the campsite and wait. I then examine the crater looking for meteorite fragments but don't find anything. There's no sign of the flower either.

I decide to DA all the rocks in an attempt to find out whether or not this is Alusia. After several attempts I find out it's Akratz. I also detect that the rocks are magical and attempt to find out the nature of the magic. Several more attempts later tell me that it's a Greater Illusion. Something else I'm going to have to improve if I can get back to the Guild. I decide to pick up a small rock and put it in my pocket.

I wander down the path through the village DAing everything in sight. Everything seems to be a Greater Illusion. I'm so deep in thought that I don't notice the brick wall halfway across the path until I nearly run into it. I fail to DA the wall but then I realise someone is calling my name. It's Kilroy.

He tells me he got zapped by a strange plant in the village and also that magic is acting rather peculiar. He shows me his rune stick which has become a rune snake, even though it still feels like a stick. That brick wall was meant to be a runewall. Also his darkness spell produced a pile of black ooze which disappeared into the forest and his light spell caused flames to leap from his fingers. He had also met a strange person called Martin. I wondered if that was one of the missing villagers but Kilroy didn't think so.

I decide to try some of my spells. My light spell failed to go off - even though I notice that the sun is shining very brightly in a deep blue sky. In fact all the colours around seem to be very vivid. Very interesting that.

The second attempt produces a pillar of flame. I can feel the heat emanating from it.

The next spell I attempt is darkness. This time we're pelted with falling objects. I first think that the hawk has come back with a lot of friends but, since I don't hear hawk calls, conclude that it must be the spell.

The fall stops after a minute and the ground is littered with what looks like glass spheres. Kilroy picks one up and it is very cold, however it doesn't seem to be ice as they're not melting. I wrap three of them up in a cloth and put them in my pocket.

I tell Kilroy that I'm going to try another light spell to see if the effect is consistent. I do so, casting it where there are no spheres - and get another pillar of fire. So if we cast each one of our spells once we should be able to find out what they will all do.

I decide to try a spell I've always wanted to try but have a lesser chance of getting right as it's rather complex. That spell is Wall of Starlight. I cast it but nothing happens - except for what feels to be a spasm in my head.

I look around. The environment looks very normal but Kilroy is acting very strange. He's asking

me to try another spell. Spell? What's a spell? I'm a scholar, not a spellcaster. I gave that sort of thing up ages ago. Anyway, as I point out to him, spells aren't that impressive. There's probably better ways of achieving the same objective.

Kilroy is looking very strangely at me now. He wants to know how I got here. I tell him I've been around since this place was created - three weeks ago. He was just brought here. Kilroy says it was just three weeks ago when the meteorite landed. He asks me several more questions about our trip. I do remember some of the details and the people I travelled with but he keeps insisting I'm a Celestial Mage when I'm just an apprentice astrologer to the Guild, here to investigate the meteorite. At this stage Kilroy is burying his head in his hands and muttering over and over again "Selective amnesia." I'm beginning to think he's going around the twist.

He wants me to read my diary so we go back to the horses. Our horses are there but they've been joined by a third. Kilroy says that it's Shinji's horse. Shinji must be somewhere around. Kilroy's horse and Shinji's horse are growling at each other. Kilroy is looking very puzzled.

Meanwhile I'm reading the diary. That's my name on the cover, it's my handwriting, and some of the events seem familiar but I can't believe that I was doing some of the things that I have described myself as doing. I'm feeling rather confused.

Kilroy asks me if I can still DA things. I reply that I can - can't everybody? Kilroy replies that he can't as it's a special talent that I've got. So, on his insistence, I DA some rocks. To my surprise they read as magical with the type being Greater Illusion. He then suggests I DA him so I attempt to do so in order to determine his sanity. However I fail to do so. He then suggests I try it on myself so I do. To my utter amazement I read myself as magical with type being Greater Illusion. This I find hard to take and decide to determine if there is something wrong with my mind. The answer is Yes. This proves to be too much and I collapse in a heap going Wibble, wibble, wibble. Kilroy must be right.

My confusion is interrupted by another arrival into our area. It's Shinji. He's wanting to know if we've seen Damos. Kilroy says that he may have seen him, in his falcon form flying above the trees in the distance, a few hours ago. Shinji points out that if they aren't reunited soon, Damos may die. So Kilroy decides to attempt to create an illusion to attract Damos. He starts carving a runestick while Shinji tells us what had happened to him. From what he's saying it seems like he looked at the meteorite.

Kilroy has prepared his runestick and casts the spell. However nothing happens so he prepares another runestick. Shinji just sits and watches. This time when Kilroy casts the spell a very tall, thin, wooden, treelike humanoid appears. I head for cover in case it turns out to be hostile. However it is soon apparent that it and Kilroy are having some sort of a conversation. I begin to hope I'm dreaming because this has the potential of a nightmare. It's getting too strange for me to handle.

.9.

Shinji is very worried about Damos so he attempts to cast a spell to summon him. To his surprise a disembodied black hand, with extra long fingers, appears and is pointing in the direction where that falcon was. So that hawk must be Damos, but why isn't he responding?

Shinji is getting more and more agitated. He decides he's going to follow the hand whether we're

coming or not. I decide to join him. Kilroy will also follow but since Bert, his tree friend, can only move very slowly, he'll soon be left behind.

Shinji and I are proceeding along the trail, in the direction of the village when we hear horses approaching. Next thing I know I'm staring up the shaft of Carla's arrow. I've never been so glad to see anyone in my life.

By now, I'm feeling rather confused, slightly nauseous, and have a thumping headache. Spinner checks me out but he can't find anything physically wrong. Sowlean has her memory back as well.

Carla is rather annoyed as she had discovered a note in her diary from Martin saying he has borrowed her whetstone. She wants to speak with "that peasant" for getting into her diary in the first place.

We basically catch up with what the others have been up to. It looks like they got transported here the same way we did. Someone, I think it was Sowlean, had managed to disbelieve one of the Greater Illusions, and had seen a sandy plain with giant worms crawling around. Now that is significant as one of the lines of the astrology reading was "Believe your eyes or face the worms". By now Kilroy has caught up to us.

My thoughts are interrupted by something crawling down my leg. It's a rather peculiar looking bug. Then I feel something moving in my tunic pocket, the one that I put those cold spheres in. I put my hand in and something bites my finger. I knew I should have DAed them first. Stupid idiot Phaeton!

It's not long before I'm swarming with bugs and they're all chewing away and hurting like anything. Kilroy is in the same state. Also the ground is littered with them. We must be near where the spheres landed.

I'm rolling around trying to squash them all and get them off. Also I'm trying to get my cape and tunic off. The bugs have managed to chew holes in those - and also in my skin. I notice that Kilroy has managed to get his coat off and is now jumping on bugs. Darian is coming over to help. Don't know what the others are doing. Help! I'm in big trouble!

I feel a sharp pain in my shoulder. It's Spinner's horse and it's just taken a bite out of me. It's got very sharp teeth as well, interlocking pointed teeth - not horse teeth at all. This, and all the other injuries I've taken (those little bug-gers bite deep) are hurting. I start to feel dizzy and weak, then black out.

.10.

The next thing I remember is waking up in a building, being tended to by an old woman with some sort of skin problem. She's feeding me some sort of hot beverage which is rather refreshing and invigorating. Already I feel stronger. I decide to check her out with my empathy and determine that the skin blemishes are an irritant but don't seem to be too much of a problem. Talking of irritants, those insect bites are itching like crazy. I have to refrain from scratching at them. Spinner explains that we're now in the original village. Also the headache is gone and I'm not feeling so confused but I still have no memory on how to cast my spells. Not that they will do

much good here but I hope that this is going to be temporary. I'd hate to have to go through the original learning curve again.

Spinner also says that the villages don't remember anything that had happened before three weeks ago. Somehow that doesn't surprise me.

I'm going to have to get a new cloak and tunic. The old ones were rather chewed up by those bugs.

Carla had found Martin, in this village, and had given him a strong talking to. Seems like he borrowed the whetstone in case of goblin attacks.

I later find out that Spinner had wanted to use a healing potion but was rather reluctant to in case it does more harm than good. Kilroy volunteers to taste it with Spinner's empathy monitoring. The potion tastes terrible - like muddy rain water, and just as useful. Kilroy ended up turning a distinct shade of blue and started floating off the ground. He had to use those gold bars to weigh himself down. However the effects are starting to fade.

Also I find out that Darian is in trouble. Seem like he was stomping on bugs that were under Kilroy's coat and managed to break a pocket full of rune sticks.

Shinji had borrowed my horse. He had got so fed up with the behaviour of his one so he shot it - point blank in the head.

Spinner reckons it is only our minds that are in this illusionary environment and our bodies may be where the worms are - in the larder he reckons. We have to explore this environment and try to find clues. Somewhere there has to be a way out of this trap. Also, if there is something wrong with my mind, can one of the mind mages do something about it? If I still can't remember by the time we get out of this mess I may be forced to submit to their abilities.

Night is starting to fall. Shinji takes off in another effort to find Damos. Meanwhile Kilroy is cooking a hot dinner. He's taking his time about it but, when we get it, it's delicious. I reckon he's done a miracle with our trail rations.

We have set up a camp inside an empty building. Some of the others have dragged in some extra beds but I'm so exhausted I just curl up in a corner and sink into a deep sleep.

I have a strange dream. I'm wandering in a maze with many intricate twists and turns. Some of the paths I feel very uneasy in choosing so I don't go down there. Also I have the feeling that there's something out there. Something hunting me.

Next thing I remember I'm sprawled over Shinji's bunk. Fortunately he just grunts and turns over. I mutter an apology and wander back to my corner. Considering the distance, I must have been sleepwalking - something I've never done before. I later find out that Sowlean has had the same problem and the same sort of dream.

Just as I'm settling back to sleep, Spinner comes into the room - through the wall. He's looking rather transparent at the moment. A few of the others are also awake and someone asked Spinner what had happened. Kilroy is missing. He's outside keeping a watch out for goblins. Seems like

Shinji had heard something in the forest earlier that evening.

Spinner tells us that he had cast a Locate spell in order to find Damos. Instantly he had found himself in a desert plain. In the distance is some sort of tower. He starts walking towards the tower but realises that it's several hours away. He reckons that, after translating the direction back to our 'reality' that the tower is in the direction of Mt Brandon.

A short while later he encounters a worm. It's basking in the sun. He notices that it looks somewhat like a large maggot with a mouth at one end. The mouth is full of interlocking teeth - just like what the horses have got.

He continues walking towards the tower. After he's been in this world for about an hour, he suddenly finds himself back in the forest, about an hours walk from the village. He starts to make his way back but hears something in the forest that sounds rather close and nasty. He decides to risk a Walking Unseen and gets transformed into a translucent being - just a shadow of his former self. He now finds he can walk through things. In this state he made his way back to the village.

I slip back to sleep. The rest of the night is uninterrupted by strange dreams.

Day 2 - Date unknown.

I wake up feeling rather refreshed but with no memory of my spells. Spinner is back to his normal self and reckons we should stop trying to use magic but fall back to reason and logic instead. That I can wholeheartedly agree with. The plan is now to proceed in the direction of Mt Branden, go to the equivalent location of the tower, then attempt to 'break through' into the other reality.

Kilroy wants to make some fast transport for us. After thinking about a large wagon with lots of legs, he finally settles on a large elephant. Meanwhile Shinji is starting a ritual in order to cast a Mindcloak on himself. I think I'd better keep an eye on him when he's ready to cast it - in about two hours.

Kilroy has finally carved the runestick he wants and casts the spell. Nothing seems to happen at first, then we noticed branches were growing out of him. It didn't take long for Kilroy to be transformed into some sort of plant creature. However he still had speech and mobility. I wanted to take a blood sample to see if his blood has been transformed into sap, or has turned green but Kilroy won't let me. Sowlean is making the most awful puns I have ever heard. I should have written them down. It will be interesting to find out if Kilroy needs to eat or whether he feels a need to take root.

An hour or so later Shinji is nearing the end of his ritual preparation. He casts the spell and I stand next to him to monitor any effect. I'm wondering if a cloak will appear over his head.

Just as he finishes casting his spell, I feel mana impact on him four times. Also he goes blind. Somehow the mind cloak spell had attempted to cloak his mind from his senses, but had only succeeded with sight. Shinji is rather dismayed by this but reckons it should wear off in an hour.

We decide to get our horses ready. Martin is also preparing to leave. He's heading for the Duchy at Seagate to report. I start to help Shinji onto Ben, our usually placid pack horse, but Ben is

unusually frisky today and tries to take a bite out of me. Shinji doesn't like this idea and asks to be let down. I do so and put him on mine instead.

Meanwhile Martin is taking a whip to Ben in order to calm him down. I yell at him to stop that as he's making it worse. I also attempt to grab the whip from him. I don't hold with that sort of behaviour towards any creature.

I manage to calm Ben a bit by talking softly to him and manage to clamber on board. He's a big broad horse. The others have got on their horses and we're off. Martin is going to ride with us for a short way.

A short while later we say goodbye to Martin and angle towards the Mt Branden foothills. Shinji has still not yet recovered his sight even though an hour is passed. Spinner reckons that the spell may have triple effected so it'll be another two hours yet.

.11.

We continued on up the trail. Shinji was still blind, and Kilroy looked rather bushed, all stemming from the unusual fruits of magic cast on this plane. I was hoping that the rest of the party would turn over a new leaf and stop casting until we could figure out what laws of magic were operating.

However, when we stopped for lunch, Kilroy had decided he had enough of beating around the bush, and decided to counterspell the original spell that had caused him to branch out in this manner. He did so and was immediately engulfed in flame.

After a few minutes the flames died down, and a black & sooty Kilroy was left standing there. All the plant material was burnt off and he was now covered in first degree burns. Both Spinner's empathy and my own revealed that he was in considerable pain. We needed to wash off the ash. I suggested using alcohol to reduce the chance of infection but Kilroy reckoned that it is best taken internally so he downed an entire wineskin. He was still in pain, but at least the alcohol had taken his mind off it. Finally we washed him down with water from a nearby stream, and Spinner set to work tending all the burns.

The trail was getting rougher and steeper so it was decided to leave the horses behind and continue on foot. They were loosely hitched to a nearby tree and we took whatever we needed and can carry.

Once that was taken care of, it was decided to attempt to break through into the worms' dimension in order to see if we were on course for that building that Spinner had seen. All of us, except for myself and Shinji, started meditating. It looked like Carla had succeeded because she had become frozen. Sowlean also managed to do so. Still, not surprising. Mind Mages should be rather good at that sort of thing. Carla finally reported that she couldn't see it.

I wondered if Spinner's revised locate spell could transport all of us across the interdimensional threshold. Spinner doesn't think so, since the original spell could only be cast on himself. I argued that the revised laws might negate that requirement, so that if we all touch him while he casts the spell, we might all be transported across. He decided to try it. At least we had nothing to lose.

His first attempt didn't appear to do anything until we noticed that ugly, oozing sores had broken out all over him. Carla jerked her hand away, looking rather revolted. Spinner was able to cure the sores but it took a while. In the meantime Shinji's sight had come back.

Soon Spinner was ready to try again. We touched him, he cast the spell and disappeared. Drat! It didn't work. So much for that idea.

Sowlean decided to attempt to break through into the other dimension to see if Spinner got through. Meanwhile Shinji was taking large swigs from his waterskin. I don't think it had water in it though, as he started singing some rather bawdy sea shanties. Many of them referred to nobles in a less than flattering manner and Lady Carla looked rather upset.

The more Shinji drank, the louder, and more explicit he became. Finally, Carla had had enough and decided to cast hypnotism at him. What she got was a small, bright, buzzing spark of light which shot at Shinji and orbited his head. Shinji decided to retaliate. However, nothing apparently happened.

Kilroy decided to nip this sort of thing in the bud before it got worse. He cast his light spell, and sheets of flame leapt out between Shinji and Carla. He yelled at them to stop and menaced Shinji with his rune wand/snake.

Just then Shinji's spark resolved itself into a glowing bee and attacked him. He decided to apologise to Carla and asked her to remove it. She agreed to do so and decided to use her tulwar to swat it. The blade passed awfully close to Shinji who ducked. At this stage the bee saw an opening and stung Shinji before falling to the ground and dying. Shinji was getting very angry by now.

Kilroy was getting rather annoyed as well and tossed a runestick in front of Shinji. The stick turned into a brick, then rapidly self-replicated. In a very short time Shinji was inside a circular brick wall.

Kilroy demanded an explanation. Carla reckoned she'd been insulted. However, Shinji said that he never actually insulted Carla at all. Then he referred to her as an 'evil wench'. Carla was really fuming.

Finally, Kilroy managed to calm both of them down. Shinji promised not to call Carla an evil wench again, and asked to be let out. When Kilroy was satisfied that peace had been made he began to dispel the wall. As he does so, a large iron ball materialised in mid air and began to smash down the wall. Brick splinters were flying everywhere. Shinji managed to dash out the resulting hole while the ball continued to pound the wall into rubble. Eventually there was nothing but a pile of brick splinters and reddish powder.

Kilroy asked Shinji to stop singing. Shinji agreed to do so and started muttering something about landlubbers. Kilroy was doing the same thing although he was muttering about sailors.

While all this had been happening Sowlean had managed to break through into the other dimension. She reported that there was no sign of Spinner, nor was there is any indication that he had ever been there. She said that if he was anywhere on that sandy plain he should be visible.

Great! Where has he gone???

We decided to carry on up the slope. Sowlean went on up ahead. It was rather rugged and tiring as we stumbled over rocks, and through the trees. Shinji was trying to chat up Carla, and making some rather suggestive gestures. Carla was studiously ignoring him, and took some practise swings with her tulwar. Most of those swings appeared to be heading in Shinji's direction. While Kilroy kept a vigilant eye on them, I decided I've had enough of that kind of behaviour, and raced ahead to catch up with Sowlean.

We continued to climb, and I began to feel rather tired. Finally, the trees thinned out. It was getting colder as well. We decided to stop at the tree line for dinner, and then carry on the next day.

Kilroy was looking very fatigued so I help him get to bed then Darian, Sowlean and I prepared dinner. Meanwhile Carla and Shinji decided to find out what some more of their spells do. Silly fools, I thought to myself.

Carla cast a precognition spell and a rain of golden powder appeared all over her, sticking to her skin. She looks like a glistening, golden angel, glowing in the orange light of sunset. I wanted to take a sample to see if it's embedded in her skin but she wouldn't let me.

Shinji then asked Carla if he could cast an attack spell on her on the grounds that all it would do to her is stun her, and Mind Mages can't be stunned. I decided to run an empathy on Carla just to see if anything happened, so I stood right behind her. Shinji cast the spell, and there was a loud explosion in his vicinity. I was thrown backwards, landing quite heavily on the ground. My ears continued to ring from the noise. The bruising left me very fatigued so I decided to seek out my sleeping sack, and get some rest.

By now, night had well and truly arrived. I had nearly made it to my bed when Darian spotted two objects in the sky heading our way. He reckoned they look like flying puffer fish. I decided to curl up very tightly, and make like a rock. Carla fired an arrow at one. A palpable hit! Through one eye, and out the other one, bringing it down. It was a fat thing with bat wings, small arms and legs, a horn on its nose, and carrying a spear. Could it be sentient, and if so, could we reason with it?

The other one had swooped down, and attacked Darian. He was looking rather stunned. Then it went for Carla. It hit her, then started to hover close by. While I was looking around for a piece of wood to throw at it, Shinji tossed a spell at the unknown entity. Instantly it, and Carla, were surrounded by a swarm of moths. Reminds me of that story about the butterflies and the 'witch' I heard at the Guild meeting before we left on this escapade.

Kilroy reached into the mess and managed to grab Carla's arm. I charged the beast, yelling a war cry in an attempt to frighten it. Darian and Sowlean sallied in as well. Darian finally vanquished the thing, mashing it against the ground. Carla staggered out of the swarm of moths with major wounds to her head and stomach. I did what I could, but I knew I couldn't give her proper treatment. I wished with all my heart that Spinner was there. Where could he have gone?

Shinji reported that there were eight more coming, so we went for cover among the trees. Darian cast some light spells, creating several pillars of fire. Shinji handed me his crossbow, briefly instructing me in its use. I found it a rather heavy weapon, but promised to try my best.

It got darker. We watched in trepidation as five of them landed. Shinji asked for his crossbow back. Carla shot one of the beasts. I managed to hit another with a well aimed rock. The other beasts closed in on us. Then Kilroy was hit.

As I write I can see more of them land, out of bow range in the trees behind us, watching the battle. I can also hear their harsh barks and grunts as they communicate with each other. The line of the astrology reading, 'they must do as their ancestor's did' echoes in my mind. It comes to me very strongly that this indicates that we are meant to die. I fear that this will be my last entry.

The battle continued. As I watched, not wanting to get mixed up in it, Darian took a gut-blow which nearly disembowelled him. I tried to stem the blood flow, and to repair the wound. You might call it meatball sorcery. I could feel that Darian was dying and there was nothing I can do about it. I don't have the skills or training yet and resolved that, if we ever got out of this, I was going to do something about it and learn as much about Healing as possible. But, even in my despair, I felt that I couldn't give up. Where, oh where, is Spinner when we need him?

Shinji was attacked, and wounded badly in the shoulder, with blood spurting out. I was now faced with a dilemma. Do I leave Darian to die and try to help Shinji? Or do I continue to work on Darian and leave Shinji, even though it looks like he's in serious trouble. I finally resolve that it is best to work on the patients that have some chance of survival. As far as I could see there was no hope for Darian. So I decided to leave him, apologising to his soul as I went to help Shinji fend off his attacker.

As I did so, the creature attacking Shinji left him and turned on me. At least I managed to achieve that objective. In desperation, I attempted to fend it off. There was a searing pain, and then ... nothing!

.11. & .12.

Day 3 - Unknown day (or maybe it's the same one)

Darkness surrounded me. I was aware, but that was about all. Then I saw a light. Was I about to cross into the next world? The light grew brighter as it surrounded me. I began to distinguish shapes. Everything was fuzzy at first but, slowly, everything resolved. I discovered I was in a room, surrounded by the bodies of my comrades. There were 34 other bodies as well, presumably the missing villagers. The room was rather small with no windows. The only entrance to this room was barred. If this was the afterlife, it had the potential of being very boring, especially when I discovered I could not approach the walls by walking towards them. I was able to get to each of the bodies though. This is very weird. I also noticed there was no sign of Damos. Shinji will not be pleased.

I soon ascertained that all my equipment was intact. My cloak and tunic showed no sign of any damage and there was no sign of that rock I picked up in the illusionary plane. Somehow that didn't surprise me. I also noticed that Kilroy's runewand was not looking like a snake anymore.

My memory of the previous events was intact but when I examined my diary, I discovered that the last entry had been made before we went to investigate the meteorite. However I discovered that some of the subsequent pages had been blanked out. Curious that.

My spell memory had returned but I decided not to try casting any spells until I was sure what effect they were going to have. Also there was hardly any light in the cell. I decided to attempt to DA myself. To my delight it worked. I turned out to be a short-lived sentient being. So this must be the real world. I wasn't an illusion anymore.

My next move was to determine just where I was. After several attempts, I was able to identify the plane. As I suspected it was still Akratz. We're definitely not on Alusia any more.

Empathy checks were the next order of business. All the rest of the party were in a very deep coma. I couldn't detect any breathing and there was a very slow pulse rate. I tried waking Kilroy, first by shaking him, then slapping him, and finally by stabbing him with a rather sharp needle. However nothing worked. I repeated the procedure on Carla, hoping that if I could get her awake, then she could give me more information. However it didn't work. I then tried it on Darian. If death was the key to getting here he may be easier to wake as he was near death when I 'died'. That was probably what the astrology reading meant when it said 'we must do what our ancestors did'.

I was then struck by a rather horrible thought. Could this be the abyss that was referred to. Could there be demons lurking on the other side of the door.

I tried a very long shot, trying to project my thoughts towards Lady Carla. Maybe, being a mind mage, she would be able to pick them up. However there was no reaction.

From where I was, I was able to look through the bars. I could see another room beyond with two doors, one each on the side walls. In the centre of the room was a desk with two depressions each containing several coloured knobs and tags. Between the depressions, on the centre of the desk was a scroll, about 4 feet long.

About half an hour later, one of the doors opened and a strange gentleman walked through the door. He didn't look like a demon, even though he did have two short, curly, horns on his head. He was tall, looking like a human. He was wearing a tailored, black coverall, with red and gold filgree that ceased at his collar. Cloth strips were hanging off his arms. His skin was pale. A black cape completed the outfit. He looked about 30 years of age. I attempted to DA him and the desk but missed both times.

The stranger walked to the desk and looked at the scroll, which immediately scrolled up at his gaze. It was too far away for me to read the writing on it. He reached into the depressions several times and also moved some of the coloured tabs to different locations.

Just then he looked up and saw me watching him. His face took on a bit of a smirk and he moved to the side of the desk and leaned against it with his arms crossed in front of him. He didn't seem surprised.

We watched each other. The stranger's eyes seemed to bore into me as he studied me. At the moment it seemed to be an impasse. I decided to wait for him to make the next move.

Well we stood and regarded each other for quite sometime. After a short time I had quite enough of that and asked him who he was. He replied "Who do you think I am?" I then asked him where I was. His reply was "Where do you think you are?" Finally I asked him what had he been doing but he just looked at me. Clearly this guy was not going to be very informative.

Just then I heard a noise. When I turned and looked, one of the bodies was stirring. I hurried over to see who it was. To my relief and joy, it was Kilroy. Maybe he'd be able to sort this guy out.

Kilroy looked rather groggy and was mumbling something about where was he and how much was he going to have to pay for the resurrection. I told him this wasn't Seagate. That seemed to wake him up rather quickly.

It didn't take long to appraise Kilroy of the situation (in whispers of course - no sense in giving away too much) and Kilroy strode over to the bars and tried to engage the stranger in conversation. Kilroy had about as much luck as I did - none.

I then suggested to Kilroy that he try out a safe spell to see whether or not the alterations will still in force. So Kilroy tried a Learn Rune, with the stranger as the target. It turned out that the spell was working normally and that the stranger was a demon. I was right. This was the Abyss.

Kilroy then set up for a visitation spell so he could travel out of the bars and see what could be found. He also muttered something about amoebas as he did it. Finally he had it working and his ghostly form went through the bars. That spell certainly looked normal.

Kilroy looked at the scroll on the desk but couldn't make any sense of it - at least not quickly. The stranger wasn't very helpful either. Kilroy then decided to have a look through the other doors.

Meanwhile I turned my mind to getting out of here. There wasn't any lock on the bars so the only way out I could see was to squeeze through the bars. To do that I needed to bend them. I wasn't physically strong enough to do that myself. Then I remembered a technique that just might work. I had my rope but decided to use a villager's belt instead. I then needed something long and thin, a sword or axe handle would do. All I could find was a hatchet. That would have to do.

By now the stranger had left so I wrapped the belt around two of the bars, leaving enough slack to make a loop to thread the hatchet handle through. The idea was to turn the hatchet. This would wind up the belt squeezing the two bars together. This should create a gap wide enough to squeeze through.

It didn't take long to discover that I couldn't get enough leverage out of the hatchet handle as it wasn't long enough. Fortunately Kilroy came out of the door and saw what I was doing. He came back to his body and conjured up a rune weapon - a quarterstaff. Much better. He then set up another visitation to explore what lay beyond the other door.

.16.

I was still working on the cell bars - and not making much progress when I heard more noises behind me. The others were stirring. I went over and checked each one out and briefly appraised them of the situation. Sowlean looked rather confused. Carla looked very angry. Before anyone could do anything about it she lunged towards Shinji in an attempt to throttle him. Shinji was

desperately trying to keep out of her way, all the while saying "I didn't mean to do it". Kilroy had arrived back by this time and managed to separate the two of them. Carla was definitely out for blood this time though and was demanding satisfaction right there and then. She was going to let nothing stand in her way. Kilroy tried reasoning with her and asking her if she could hold off until we returned to the Guild but she wasn't having none of that either. Finally he told them there was a way he could get to the truth of the matter. Shinji was very agreeable. Carla was dubious but finally agreed. Kilroy fashioned two necklaces of three runesticks each and asked them to wear them. He then asked them to tell the truth to the questions that were about to be asked. It turned out that Shinji had, just before they 'came through' had jumped on Carla while she was attempting to escape a death situation. Shinji's story was that he had backfired and believed himself to be part of the situation. Carla did not appear very mollified at all. Then Kilroy told them both they could now act normally, except they could not harm, or insult each other - directly or indirectly - and they could not remove the necklaces or have anyone else remove them - again directly or indirectly.

I asked Spinner just what Kilroy had done. Spinner explained it was a spell of Control Entity and it would remain in force until the necklaces were removed. I was horrified and said so. As far as I was concerned, what Kilroy had done, was to effectively put them into some sort of slavery. I resolved to speak to him about this. Surely there had to be a better way.

Spinner also explained that there appeared to be more than one plane of illusion. They had found out that this meteorite was travelling around, making copies of all the worlds it had encountered. In this case, the copy was imperfect.

.17.

Kilroy decided to go on another 'visitation' so, while we waited, I asked the others what had happened to them. What follows is an abridged summary

--- The story of the other characters as told to Phaeton ---

After I had 'left' them, Kilroy prepared a runewall to shelter in and shield them from the gargoyle attack. It surrounded the campsite, including the fire. But they soon had to put the fire out as the smoke was rapidly filling up the space and it was getting more difficult to breath. Kilroy had forgotten to leave ventilation. They were now left in the dark and had to make small breathing holes under the wall. In the night, came a new threat. The gargoyles had discovered the holes and introduced some snakes. Shinji was bitten and lapsed into unconsciousness. Both his, and Darian's condition was stabilised with the help of Neutralise Poison potions.

The gargoyles bought up a catapult and began to hurl rocks at the runewall. Kilroy put up a different type of wall (a damaging one) which produced a metal dome. They stayed within that till the next day when they used Spinner's Walking Unseen variant to walk out. They found they had to leave Phaeton's body (the spell wouldn't affect it) and the packs (they forgot about them) behind.

They got through the gargoyles and discovered that the horses were either gone or eaten. That meant they had to walk back to the village - a two day trip. On the first night Kilroy tried his healing ritual on Darian and Shinji and managed to restore them. Also Spinner has a rather nasty encounter with some ants.

The next day they were close to the village. Kilroy attempted to use a visitation spell to check things out. When he cast it, all his bones turned to jelly and he turned into some sort of amoeboid creature. He could move by rolling and could communicate by sticking up pseudopods (one for yes - two for no).

When they got to the village it was deserted. After Kilroy's spell wore off they found some food and decided to try some more of their spells. Darian's shadow walk encased him in a cloak of shadow, his blending caused illusionary acid rain, and his witch sight enabled him to gradually see through objects. He also managed to conjure up a blue mist which sent people to sleep. Kilroy was able to produce an intense hot light at the end of his finger which he could use to cut through things. Carla found she could sink into the ground for a few seconds then reappear again. Some other spells they tried had no apparent effect.

They spent the night in the village and spent the next day or so getting back to where the gargoyles had attacked. The metal runewall was still there. Kilroy used his 'hot finger' spell to cut through it and found that the contents were undisturbed. So they retrieved their packs - and Phaeton - and continued on up the mountain.

That night the gargoyles came again. This time they were accompanied by a large centapedal creature. Spinner used his Walking Unseen to protect the rest of the party but was too late to save Kilroy from being killed and Sowlean from being severely wounded.

The next day got them to the top of Mt Branden. They then managed to break through into a building. It was some sort of tower that was monitoring the area. It was here that they found out about the nature of the meteorite, and it's ability to copy planes. They also found out that the copy of Alusia was not going too well for some reason - something to do with the local mana? The people they encountered said something about a Guardian that was controlling the whole thing. However that was all the information they had. Finally the party asked to be transported to Seagate and found themselves at the doors of the Mercenaries Guild.

This version was a lot more shabbier and unkempt than our version. Guild Security was very much in evidence and, after a brief argument, they are relieved of the two bodies. They managed to find their way to the office of Wogan (the equivalent of Wegan). (Personally I would have headed for the library - we would have been able to find out what all our spells would do.) Inside, they find a small guy with a huge head. The head is translucent and hairless so they can see the brain inside. Huge piercing eyes regard the party and he radiates an aura of menace.

Wogan tells them that their presence is disrupting the current nature of the plane and they're quite happy the way it is. He has no wish to be a direct copy of Wegan. He also tells them he is a Brain Mage and that they are very familiar with all the revised effects of the spells. It seems that he doesn't know what decision to make and decides to defer until he is able to consult with the rest of the Guild Council.

The party are taken out and conducted to the cell block where each person is put into a separate cell and chained to the wall with cold iron manacles. All the backpacks and weapons are removed.

Sowlean is feeling absolutely horrible and faints from sheer exhaustion. Spinner is having trouble with one of the manacles cutting off the circulation in his hands. He calls out to the guard

but is laughed at and generally ignored.

After a short while Sowlean recovers - still feeling absolutely terrible. She decides to try breaking through to the worm plane to escape. She concentrates - and succeeds. She finds herself completely buried in sand but is able to move her hands. She nearly suffocates before appearing back in the cell but no longer in the manacles. She crawls into a corner feeling very sick.

Everyone else does the same trick and succeeds. Spinner attempts to get some life back into his hand. At this stage the guards come in and the party is taken back to see Wogan. He tells them that they had put their dungeons underground in order to prevent escape attempts but they don't want the worms alerted that there is something going on. So the party are conducted to the courtyard where a lot of people are arranged along the sides. The party are surrounded by warriors with various lethal (and weird) looking polearms. Shinji reckons if they're going to kill them all could they start with Carla. Carla knocks him to the ground.

Meanwhile a large tree stump has been brought in and it is followed by a large guy wearing an executioners hood and little else and wielding a very large axe. A guard points to Darian and says "You first".

At this stage Carla hits the ground, followed closely by Sowlean and Spinner. Meanwhile Shinji & Darian cast spells. Shinji stands there looking stunned while Darian manages to affect the executioner and three other guards with illusionary acid rain. At this stage a guy in yellow robes arrives, followed by a guy in white and four more in black. They start preparing spells. Spinner tries to break through to the worm plane and nearly makes it, but a guard hits him. Sowlean succeeds.

Shinji suddenly moves, tackling Carla to the ground as she tries to make a break for it, yelling "I've got her - I've got her" (No wonder Lady Carla is rather annoyed). Carla throws him off. Spinner gets hit again. Shinji also gets hit over the head and Carla makes another break for freedom.

Carla runs in the direction of the Council Rooms and various bodily appendages (hands, legs, elbows etc) rise from the ground, blocking her path. Blue smoke is drifting across the compound and Darian & Spinner collapse. Carla attempts to grab a guard's halberd, misses, and gets hit. Before she collapses she sees Sowlean reappear and fall over. Meanwhile people are hacking at the other bodies.

-----

When the rest of the party members have related their story I then ask them just what effects their spells did had. From that information I was able to determine the following list.

#### Celestial

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Light          | - Pillar of Fire                       |
| Darkness       | - Cold spheres containing insects      |
| Shadow Form    | - Cloak of shadow                      |
| Blending       | - Illusionary acid rain                |
| Walking Unseen | - Blue sleep mist                      |
| Witchsight     | - Gradually able to see through things |

## Rune

Learn Rune	- Cuts rune into things
Rune Wall	- Brick wall (Metal if damaging)
Runeshield	- Gold bar
Visitation	- Caster turns into amoeboid
Rune Lock	- Finger of intense heat.
Illusion	- Create tree creature
Light	- Fingers of flame
Darkness	- Dark, amoeboid ooze
Purification	- Demon on a stick
Pyrogenesis	- Target turns random colours

## Mind

Hypnotism	- Glowing bee attacks target
Limited precog	- Golden skin appears on caster
ESP	- Sink into ground momentarily

## E & E

Locate	- Teleport to next plane
Walking Unseen	- Caster becomes immaterial/translucent
Speak to enchanted	- Wooden pagoda.

The symbology is going to be rather difficult to work out, but knowing what the original effects are, and what did happen may give a clue to the nature of the magic.

Just as I had finished making notes, Kilroy rejoined his body. He had travelled down and to the sides and had come back to see how we were getting on, and probably to check to see if Shinji & Carla were behaving themselves. At the moment they were both very quiet. Carla was still glaring at Shinji while Shinji was keeping well away.

Kilroy began to tell us of the strange and wonderful things he had seen. Three rooms below was a large spherical room with a big, burning, fireball suspended in the centre. The walls were covered in mirrored squares. Behind each mirror was a tube which butted against the mirrored panels. These tubes ran all over the place, through the walls and between floors.

The next room above was full of these tubes. A room alongside it was full of molten, bubbling metal. A catwalk went right across it.

Directly below us was more tubes which were splitting up and spreading all over the place, rather like blood vessels. A room nearby contained what Kilroy first described as a 'potboiler' but he later amended that description to being some sort of pumping apparatus. On the other side of the tube room was a large room containing seven manipulative machines, some with forceps, others with drills, pincers etc. The machines ran on rails along the ceiling. There were hatches in the ceiling. Also in this room was a little glass box with fourteen levers inside. Kilroy reckoned they were used to control the machines. There was also various types of liquids spilt on the floor. He reckoned that this room was some sort of manipulative laboratory.

On this level he found three other rooms like the one we were in but they were all unoccupied.

The molten metal room also extended this far up (and beyond). He also found some spiral staircases linking this level with the ones above and below. Behind us was a small room containing six coffins. All were empty.

Kilroy reckons the demon chap is the Guardian. After all this seems to be the sort of place that the Guardian would have.

None of us had any ideas on what this place was about so Kilroy decided to continue his search. He asked me to continue attempting to bend the bars. Since I reckoned I wasn't strong enough Darian offered to lend his strength. However the two of us aren't having any affect at all. These bars just won't bend. They must be stronger than they look.

We are just giving up when the stranger comes back in the room. At the same time Kilroy's visitation ends. The stranger leans nonchalantly against the desk as Kilroy tells us what he had seen above us.

The level above contains a room separated into many compartments. Each compartment holds a creature, either dead or in a very deep coma. Kilroy reckoned that each creature was sentient, or had the potential of sentience as each one had some sort of manipulative appendage. Next door was an empty room with the spiral staircases in it. Also up here was the continuation of the molten metal room.

In the centre of the next level up was what Kilroy described as the throne room. Here he re-encountered the 'gentleman demon'. He was seated on an ornate chair, in the middle of a hexagonal room and was wearing a golden helmet. All the walls were covered with lots of pictures. Some of these pictures were moving. Kilroy recognised quite a few of them as showing scenes from the Adventurer's Guild. Our Adventurer's Guild. Kilroy recognised some of the people there. Other pictures were of various scenes around Alusia. Kilroy wanders around for a while but the other guy just ignores him. He looks like he's deep in concentration. However Kilroy gets rather persistent. (It's around here that Spinner notices that the stranger's face is now looking rather worried and concerned). Finally after another one sided conversation Kilroy leaves the room.

Also on this level, Kilroy finds a room with little glass cubes set into the floor. There are between thirty to forty of them and inside each one is a miniature weapon. Another room is bowl like with a lip at the top. At the bottom is a pool of dirty water. Crawling around are formless grey lumps. The whole place smells bad. A catwalk runs around the top of the bowl.

On the next level, Kilroy encounters a ten foot thick room jammed full with wires. Then there was a room full with a white, gloopy, opaque, substance. Kilroy also found two rooms containing a glass cylinder with dimpled metal backing. One of them had a crack in the glass. There was no visible entrances into either of these rooms.

The main space in this level was taken up by a room tubes spreading out all through it. All these tubes connected to a 10\*15' area each. These area contained various substances. Some appeared empty but others contained a vile yellow/green gas, water, white smoke etc. The space beyond the walls of this room was full with bracing & girders. Kilroy also finds a few more of those potboiler or pumper machines.

Once Kilroy has finished the stranger turns on his heels and abruptly leaves. Darian and I have made no impression on the bars. so Kilroy rummages in his pack and pulls out a collapsible fishing rod. He tells us to please be careful with it as it cost him 100SP. Meanwhile I try using my mirror to examine the wall that the bars are in to see if there is some sort of control mechanism on the other side by the bars. However I see nothing.

Carla attempts to use the rod to manipulate the buttons on the desk but has little success. Spinner suggests that he climbs on Darian's shoulders to help guide the rod and sinker but Kilroy does another visitation and goes outside the bars to do that.

Meanwhile Sowlean, being the thinnest member of the party (Spinner disputes that - he thinks he is) divests herself of her armour and tries to wriggle between the bars. For a while it look like that she's stuck and we speculate on whether Kilroy has any butter in his pack or whether lantern oil will help. Fortunately none of these measures are necessary as Sowlean manages to make it through. We pass her armour through and, after she puts it on, goes straight to the desk and studies the buttons, dials and switches. None of them are labelled. They are divided into two sets, one in each depression. Kilroy decides he's going to look for the demon chap and see what he's up to.

Sowlean tries the left hand set first. Turning any of the dials has no visible effect. One switch puts the lights out and another one stops the scroll moving. In the right hand depression is a big button and several small ones. She presses the big one. At that instant klaxon horns sound. Sowlean runs towards the bars and tries to squeeze back through them but fails so she runs back to the desk and presses the button again. The sound stops. We can now hear the sound of rapidly approaching footsteps. Sowlean ducks down on the other side of the desk as the 'gentleman' comes in. Kilroy tries to make it look like his 'visitation' was responsible but I don't think he was fooled. The guy rapidly goes round the desk and manages to see Sowlean trying to get around the other side. He commented that he should had made the bars closer together then leaves.

Sowlean starts experimenting with the other buttons and finds the ones controlling the bars. While she's amusing herself making the bars go up and down we scamper out with our packs.

Kilroy rejoins his body then decides to conduct us to the throne room. On the way up the spiral staircase we meet the 'gentleman demon' coming down. We stare at each other for a while then he tells us to follow him. He conducts us to the throne room. All the picture panels are dark when we enter but as the stranger puts the golden helmet on his head they light up, showing various views around Alusia. He concentrates and the views change to show areas near where the meteorite landed. He then asks us if we recognize the area which we do.

The stranger is wondering what he should do with us as we pose a threat. Spinner argues that if we don't return, other members of the Adventurer's Guild are likely to come looking. The stranger reckons that would be undesirable to him. He would prefer that he, and the meteorite be left alone.

The stranger explains that the meteorite has the task of copying worlds but, in this case, it is having difficulty in completing this copy. He confirms my theory that it is the mana that it is causing the difficulty. It is his job to take care of any problems that the meteorite encounters and fix them. However fixing this problem could take a lot of time. He also tells us that the meteorite is a higher form of intelligence. It is normally invulnerable but, because mana is an unknown

quantity, it may be vulnerable to that. Hence he doesn't want to attract the attention of the Guild. The villagers are dead - their souls dissipated. He could reanimate them and program them in such a way that there would be little detectable difference.

Spinner asks whether or not Wogan and co could revolt against the power of the meteorite. The stranger replies that they could not. They cannot leave their plane.

The stranger asks us what we would do if we were allowed to go. We tell him we would leave and report our findings to the Guild. The stranger does not wish to attract attention while he works on the problem.

Entity acquisition would still occur, via the 'daffodils'. The current range is 10 miles but would increase to 30 miles. It can only be temporarily turned off. During that time we could move the meteorite to an area that is very isolated, the top of a mountain range, a desert plain, or the bottom of the ocean.

The stranger shows us a view of the ocean. It seems to have an edge. As we watch we see the edge moving outwards as the meteorite increases its scanning range.

Kilroy offers himself as a hostage while the rest of us organise to move the meteorite. I prefer to stay instead and learn about this problem. Maybe I could help figure it out. Kilroy reckons it'll take more experienced minds than mine to figure it out. He's probably right but it'll certainly be interesting.

The stranger offers us the chance of living in our own dream planes and tempts Kilroy with being ruler of his own plane, showing him ivory towers etc. Kilroy is sorely tempted when the view changes to a palace made out of chocolate and cream puff pastry. Kilroy tells the stranger he'd rather stay here. He also asks for a souvenir of this adventure.

The stranger also tells us our essences have been altered during our time here.

It is finally decided that Sowlean, Damos (who we discover is frantically waiting outside) and Shinji will fly to the Guild and arrange for some long range wings, some strength spells, and a navigator. Once they get back they would drop the meteorite in the ocean in the deepest part within range.

.18.

After some discussion the plan is agreed on. The Guardian reckons that a hostage is not necessary so all of us are able to leave. This means that Kilroy will leave instead of Sowlean.

Kilroy has managed to get Carla and Shinji to agree not to hurt each other so the necklaces are removed.

We are conducted down to the room containing the six empty coffins and invited to climb inside. Shinji and I elect to stay back to see what happens to the others. The coffin lids are closed. After a short pause they are opened again. The coffins are empty.

Shinji and I climb inside and the lids are closed. It's very dark in here and I'm feeling very

nervous. Nothing happens for a while then I feel a wrenching feeling in my stomach which rapidly spreads to the rest of the body. It's rather painful and I squeeze my eyes shut.

A few seconds later I feel rocks sticking into my back. I feel very fatigued but an empathy check reveals nothing wrong. I open my eyes and find myself lying in the crater by the meteorite. Stars are shining in the sky. Was this the same night that we had left? The others are lying nearby. For some strange reason, Carla is surrounded by a soft, orange, glow. Interesting. Damos must be rather pleased to see Shinji as he's burrowing into Shinji's shirt. Spinner reckons that it's the evening of the next day. I estimate it's about midnight.

19/07/91 (my estimate)

Just then I become aware of a voice in my head saying "Oh Wow!" Several other thoughts keep coming ... and coming ... and coming. I can't stop it. We soon find out Kilroy is broadcasting all his thoughts and he can't stop it either. It's driving me crazy.

By now, Shinji has convinced Damos to crawl out of his shirt and cast a light spell since all of us feel too fatigued to do it. The light reveals that Shinji's skin is covered in green spots. Shinji looks rather alarmed. Spinner's empathy doesn't show them to be any sort of disease.

Finally Damos casts the shadow wings and Kilroy, Shinji and Damos take off. Thank goodness they've gone. At least Kilroy's thoughts have a limited range.

We decide to make camp for the night in order to regain fatigue. I catch up on my diary. Later on I notice that one of those daffodils has appeared. I crawl away gingerly to report to the others.

Reports of other daffodils come in later on in the night. However they aren't having any effect on us. That should mean that the entity acquisition function has been deactivated.

I have about a few hours sleep until dawn. I feel a bit better. Darian starts digging under the meteorite so we can get ropes under it. Daffodils keep appearing around the place.

It's about mid morning that I feel foreign thoughts invading my mind. Kilroy is back. With him is a chap who he introduces as one of the Guild Navigators by the name of Henry. They've brought a rope basket to put the meteorite in. Kilroy has had a Strength of Stone put on him so he can lift the thing.

Henry looks at the meteorite and falls over. I quickly check him over and discover he's in a deep coma - as Kilroy was when he was entity acquired. Oh great! We can't take the meteorite now until Henry is returned to his body.

We try communicating to the Guardian by waving signs around in the hope he's watching from inside. After a few hours - nothing happens. We also try showing the signs to the daffodils in case that has any effect. Still nothing. It is starting to look like that the entity acquisition is still on.

A short while later an incredibly handsome man wanders out of the forest and straight towards the meteorite. He gets close, and collapses into the same state as Henry. Kilroy manages to identify the guy as being an incubus. Kilroy wants to kill it but I protest as I reckon it's unfair to kill a helpless opponent. He then wants to control it and I still protest. Spinner and Kilroy then

explain just how nasty incubi and succubi can be so I withdraw my objections. If an incubus has arrived then it follows that another demon has taken an interest in the meteorite and the demon inside.

Kilroy takes off to the Guild to report. He carries Sowlean as well so she can get her amnesia removed.

A short while later Shinji flies in. He circles around a bit then shoots off in another direction.

Nothing further happens for a while. Spinner and I monitor the condition of Henry and the incubus but there is no change. Then I feel something take over my mind and I am compelled to walk away from the meteorite and into the forest. I can't fight it so I decide to go with it.

Once into the forest I am compelled to lie down. Something ties my hands behind my back. I am then compelled to go back to the meteorite and lie down in the crater face down. I notice the others also in the same situation. Something ties me up good and properly. I find that I am unable to move or look.

Time passes then the pressure on my mind is lifted. I manage to roll over and feel around for a sharp rock. Just then Shinji arrives back and cuts Spinner, Darian, and myself free. Carla is yelling to be freed and is frantically trying to get at Shinji. Spinner decides to remove her weapons first before cutting her legs free. She spits in Shinji's direction. I notice that the bodies of the incubus and Henry are gone. So is the meteorite.

Shinji looks very apologetic and reckons he has stuffed up badly. He's wondering if he should give Kilroy his sword so that Kilroy could kill him with it.

Just then a note appears in front of my eyes. From the contents, and the reactions of the others, Kilroy is back among us - mindcloaked and invisible. No wonder I can't 'hear' him.

Shinji tells his story. Once he was back at the Guild, he had managed to contact a powerful entity who had arranged for the incubus to investigate. When Shinji had returned and seen the fallen incubus, he re-contacted this entity and reported. The entity was not pleased - to put it mildly - and had instructed Shinji to remove the meteorite. Shinji flew it to a mountain range, where a very deep hole had been created and dropped the meteorite in it. The hole was sealed above it.

I want to overfly the area and see what the effect has been as Shinji said that the meteorite had been glowing red when it was dropped. Shinji reckons it may be a good idea.

Shinji still reckons he did the wrong thing and is in deep trouble but I reckon that there wasn't much else he could do - especially as it looked like that the Guardian had reneged on the agreement.

It is finally decided that Kilroy & Shinji will do the overfly - since they've still got the wings - while the rest of us start making our way back to the Guild. Once they have ascertained the situation they will start ferrying the rest of us, and the horses, back to the Guild for curse removal. We are told that each of us has several curses on - one of which being a Doom. That

needs to be got rid of quickly.

Several hours later we had travelled back to the plain and had made camp. Shinji and Kilroy arrives back but cannot tell us much as they couldn't find the spot. Lady Carla and I make the first trip back. Shinji carries me while Kilroy takes Carla (Shinji has a Strength of Stone as well).

The trip back is reasonably uneventful. Shinji decides to do a barrel roll . I think that's fun and can't we do it again, but squawks of protest from Shinji's backpack indicate that Damos is not pleased.

Upon arrival at the Guild the four of us are conducted to Wegan's office (the real one) and report. Wegan wants to speak with Shinji's 'entity' to determine exactly the status with the meteorite and whether it is safe.

After the interview I go straight to the library, check out a couple of books on magical symbology then retire to the luxury of my own bed.

20/07/90

Next morning Shinji & Carla have joined me for breakfast. They're discussing plans of getting some Wings and helping to shuttle everyone back. Meanwhile I'm trying to figure out the symbology behind Carla's 'glow' and not having much success. I think it's got something to do with her aura being made visible.

Finally we decide that we'd better get those Doods removed first - even though it's going to take eighteen hours. I decide to take some more reading matter and spend the time studying.

22/07/90

Well the Guild enchanters have finally finished on me. For some reason it took two attempts. Still it was interesting seeing how it was done. I think I might start learning curse removal myself. After all, not all my patients problem's are going to be physical. I have also requested a divination to find out what the other curses are.

Tonight contact was made with the 'entity' who assured us that the meteorite is imprisoned and should not be a menace to the surrounding area. As far as that is concerned - case closed.

23/07/90

A bunch of us fly out to the spot where the meteorite is buried. Each of us have our own set of Wings. This is fun - even though they're Shadow instead of Star. When we get there we find that the area is barren and calm. Not a daffodil in sight. Kilroy reckoned that he felt a faint earth tremor. Wegan seems satisfied that the meteorite is well and truly buried.

Now the only thing left to do is to sort out those other curses. We are told that, as we came back with no salvage from this adventure, the Guild will remove them for free, if we desire to have them removed.

Also wondering how much we're going to be paid for this job. I somehow don't think I'll have enough to learn any special knowledge spells this time. Also must check to see if that telescope I ordered is ready. Hope I'll be able to pay for that as well.

I soon find out what the curses are and decide to remove 4 of them immediately. The guild has

given us special rates of 150sp per curse. I think I'll keep the sea creature curse for a while as it sounds like fun, but I'll get rid of it in six months time (when the special price runs out). The random teleport one I may keep - as long as it doesn't become too much of a nuisance.