

# Scrying Thy Neighbour

September 2000

Day count: 6 days have past so far.

## Details:

Off Plane going in to a forest

Something happened to the monastery. Monks are not religious but mind mages

There are no plants in the forest just fungi

Can't really fly as you need to get out of the mist - which you can't breathe due to the fungus.

Villagers are human and speak common. They also create these breathable masks.

Large wasps, if you kill one it releases an odour that will make more of them swarm against you.

Employer: Arondel - namer / shape changer

Payment 5000sp all up

+3000sp each

+spoils

Party leader is Thaeuss, male Elven binder

Scribe is yours truly Tom, male human air mage

Military Scientist is Bright flare, male human fire mage - as if you had to guess.

Other notable people are Arwen, female human earth mage

Thoric, male dwarven fighter

Cher, female lizard binder.

## The journey

We were briefed on our mission and I must say that the information was not very forth coming, which is why I suppose it is called a brief. Arondel has decided to arrange for some food to be taken with us to be used as a bribe for the villagers.

Already I have found Thaeuss, the elf binder, to be quite arrogant towards humans. A trait I am more familiar with, in fact I would imagine he would go so far as to sell off the human component of the party for his own personal deeds and accomplishments. Thaeuss also has three additional sole in him - this probably explains the mixed up personality that usually shows.

Thoric, the dwarven fighter, has graciously offered to be our front line fighter. He wears a kilt so I am glad the I will always be behind him - though I hope he doesn't have any skill in unarmed combat as I would hate to see if it is the same sort of dress code as back in good old Scotland back home on Dirt. I have come to realise that I will never make it back to Dirt so I may as well make the most of it by now.

I feel that Brightflare and I will get on really well as he seems to be a nice enough human fire mage, who is willing to share his expertise. It seems uncanny that we have the same ranks in healer and mil sci so unfortunately I won't be able to use some of his expertise for my own betterment.

Brightflare can't harm the innocent or knowingly let harm fall upon the innocent. Fortunately this only happens to the people he can see, so it shouldn't cause too much trouble - I hope. Oh yes then there is the fire in Brightflare's eyes - literally.

Cher, the lizard woman binder, is quite witty if you listen out for the quick quips that emanate from the end of her tongue. Whilst appearing to be dumber than the average person, I wonder if that is just a language problem. She also has an item that is locatable.

Finally there is Arwen, human earth mage, who seems to be the peace keeper of the party. Female as well so I will have to keep my eye on her.

I'll reserve judgement on Arondel for now.

Using my circle of enhancement, we were able to get rank 12 lessers for everyone. This meant that they would last for the duration of the campaign as opposed to 2 weeks.

Arondel used the magic door knob to create a room. We put the food in it as well as 2 iron golems that made the same sound when walking as a teacher running their fingernails across a blackboard. Arondel also brought some skins to make the masks and instead of providing food decided to get a crate of liquor.

We go through the portal to go to this off plane world two at a time. Brightflare and Thaeuss, Cher and myself followed by Arwen and Thoric. As usual Thoric, being a dwarf decided to get drunk, fortunately I was there to help him through the aftermath of hangover territory.

We land on a sandy beach and there is a single sun shining in the sky. In the distance we can see an old crumbly castle with some village huts tacked on to the side of it. This must be where the villagers are. In the other direction there is a desert that lasts for about 2 miles and then there would be the infamous fungi forest.

At the beach we are told that the sea is poisonous by Arondel. Brightflare spots someone coming towards us riding what appears to be an ostrich. The ostrich is weighed down with packs and equipment, it is also running exceptionally fast across the sand.

It appears as though there is a dark mist coming out of the forest after the lone horseman. Both the horseman and ostrich are wearing masks. On later inspection we find the dark mist to be a cluster of wasps. The ostrich collapses and the rider falls from what we later find out to be exhaustion. Thaeuss picks up the rider just before the wasps get to the ostrich and carries him back to safety. The wasps then envelope the ostrich for a short time before heading back to the forest. It is unsure whether they were attacking the dead ostrich.

I check out our new found friend and put them into a healer's sleep. This poor person is totally exhausted.

While this is happening some villagers head this way bearing torches. There are 5 of them all bearing torches except one - who we find out is their leader. As the wasps have left the area, Thaeuss and Brightflare gather up the other stuff from the ostrich.

In the backpack are glass jars with different samples of fungi. There is also a sealed glass jar in the shape of an ostrich egg with a blue fluid. The strangest part is that this egg is so light it can float on air by itself. DA non living entity, nature of magic weightlessness, permanent and is called a weird.

The villagers recognise Arondel, and we find out the person we recovered is called Pern who was mining the forest. Before we enter the village we are all thoroughly search for any spores as most of us came in to contact with either Pern or the packs. It must be noted that the spores are flammable. The spores also appear to infuse when exposed to the skin for a long period of time. This seems to have an effect with the villagers health as they suffer from normal ailments like arthritis but the spores seem to stop any form of healing. The villagers accept this as normal.

The villagers tell us that the forest appears to be getting larger and larger and the only reason why it hasn't taken over the village is due to the prevailing winds that seems to hold it back. The fungi hasn't always been around but seems to have occurred after a great mage war.

We enter the village and Pern is helped and taken out of our hands by his wife and some other villagers.

We now meet the king who looks like a sick old man in bed.

We are ushered into a hallway and the King is on a high bed wearing a ceremonial hat. The king looks very old. He beckons us forward. Standing next to the king is the vizier = Blor

Aron del "We would like to explore the forest"

King " We will make the masks, but keep a low profile for the Emperor's men don't know we are here. Pern should come along and bring back as much moss as possible as this is effective in countering the spores.

DA King - magical aura - warded surrounding the bed. The king is a short lived sentient and suffers from the spore disease.

Note: the plane we are on is Saladonas

We find out that the moss filters the air in the breathing masks.. The ostriches are called "Horse claws". We are measured for new masks.

After some careful scouting I have been able to ascertain that they have basic resource requirements that aren't being fulfilled. These include oil, wood and moss. Surely I can establish a trade pact between the two planes to ensure a prosperous future.

Brightflare is starting to get annoying now. As he seems as though he would give the party away if necessary.

We are whisked away and asked to hide in a storage room with barrels of water. It seems as though they were expecting some people but they don't want to make it known that we are here. To get to the barrel room they slide open a large heavy barrel door. To counter the dark gloominess Brightflare produces a dagger that glows. It seems as though everything he touches suffers in one way or another. I truly hope that one day he will be able to control his element for his and everyone else's sake.

The barrel room we are in appears to be the primary water source. We can hear people running around upstairs and there is a lot of crashing and banging going on. To make ourselves even more unnoticeable we become blended.

From what we can make out it sounds that the emperor's men want more than their usual tithe and after a little altercation the vizier gives them the one and only weird that Pern found.

The men leave and when we leave the barrel room it looks as though the village has been semi looted. The vizier seems to have been roughed up by the emperor's men but still puts on a brave face.

The evening arrives and we are invited back to the great hall for the evening meal. We find out that Pern's wife is called Lish. Pern and Lish are the last 2 born and there hasn't been any more children produced for the last 15 years. There are approximately 50 people in total within the village and it seems as though that they are their last hope for continuing on.

The meal consists of a buckwheat soup and vegetables. Even the King is eating the same drab food but is spoon fed. After the meal everyone gathers around the bed and in a rather sick way everyone says goodnight to the king.

Brightflare, Arwen and Theauss help the smith make the masks. This takes most of the night.

We open the magic room and whilst in their another door opens. How peculiar. Lord Shagen and some men bring in a pot of beef stew and a large plate of grilled fish for Cher. They also bring in a large rowboat and some more wood and some seeds.

We decide to use the beef stew as part of a feast and the locals are very happy about this. They all eat as much as they can without making them feel sick. Though the food due to its richness will probably give them the runs the next day.

It is decided that we should leave at first light which is at 6am in the morning and the plan is to go to the place where the weirds are kept.

Donning our suits we look like black storm troopers and it is quite comical really. The fire Elemental is told to follow us on foot burning everything it can on the way.

We file up the file where we landed in the first place and see there is a purple sunrise. We know that the monastery is on an outcropping. I decide to talk to the winds while Brightflare summons a fire elemental though nothing useful comes from it as they all go towards the forest from the coast and so

haven't seen anything unusual. They did however see some boats flying above the water. This is what we believe the emperor's men main method of transport is.

We use the circle to fly to the Pern's hideaway is where he stayed overnight. We also decide to use the force field bubbles. As we are flying I notice that the trees have caps on them like mushrooms and when we fly past them we disturb the dandelions and it creates a visual slipstream effect.

Most trees, if that's what they can be called - more like mushrooms, are up to 100ft and some are even 200ft tall. There are occasional holes in the canopy and as we look down we can see grey powdery substance covering everything. I would imagine this is a fine coating of the spores.

About 15 minutes into our travel, we reach the half way point and we can see what appears to be a road going in a north south direction that has been cut in the forest.

10 minutes later we can see a hand stuck out of the canopy. Each finger is larger than an average human and seems to be mechanical.

As we carry on we see different parts including feet helmets and hands. All very intriguing.

We find the head that Pern had described to us earlier and land on it. It looks like this Golem is sitting down and its torso is sticking out from the ground. We decide to go down to the grey fungus clearing and wait for our bubbles to expire.

It's about mid afternoon.

Cher's bubble pops first and she sinks down in the grey fuzz which is very soft. We need to walk very carefully. Brightflare's bubble pops next and as he is immolated he sets off a chain reaction with the spores in the immediate area. Unfortunately Cher gets burned and loses her storm trooper coat. The breathing mask is still okay though.

Everyone else's bubbles go off after Brightflare clears the area of spores.

We decide to DA the crack and find that it is not enchanted and neither is the volume inside. We find out that the skin of the golem is in fact hollow inside and has an outer layer of rock and metal inside.

Arondel goes inside before anyone had really noticed and goes up some stairs we think. Theauss calls out and asks if Arondel is okay and he said yes.

Click, Clunk and he finds a lever that he has pulled that opens up the chest doors. It is a low mana outside and no mana at all inside due to the metal.

Half way up the ladder is a gap in the ladder that opens up in to a room. Ladders also go down from the main point. In this room are four levers and one of those is the one that Arondel used to open the chest doors. Brightflare comes in and clears the doorway of spores. We decide to pull the lever back up to close the doors and most of the light fades away. There is still a small amount of light though. There are symbols on the levers and these appear to be from human followers of some serpent. One lever opens and closes the door, one is for protection, another is for on and off and the fourth one we haven't been able to decipher.

Arondel being the great explorer wants to try all of the levers but we stop him with some harsh reasoning.

Theuass decides to check out the head and there is a very old dead person sitting in what appears to be a chair. The body and everything else is covered in the spores as it appears the head has been torn open. There are two windows, presumably eyes that are not broken but they are very tough.

We here some clanging and believe that Brightflare is in trouble. We go down and rescue him. There is also a heat source that no one can get to - which is probably powering the golem - or what is left of it. There are two hatches that go down further which we find out go down the legs and to the feet. In the middle/torso section there are four levers - open/close, protection and 2 we can't decipher. We try the open and close and hear a clonk when we close it but nothing happens. We deduce with some trial and error that this opens and closes one of the feet cavities. In the left leg nothing happens but the right leg it opens up to a constructed tunnel. The hole goes down like a tube and around a bend.

Arwen sees Brightflare when we open the trapdoor again. Brightflare is floating in mid air and Arwen calls out to him but there are any replies. He is obviously unconscious - typical fire mage always asleep on the job.

We decide to use the metallic rope from Thoric and lower Arwen down, since seeing he has the main gauche that provides him with protection. Arwen grabs Brightflare and we hall them back up - magic impacts on Arwen but there was no effect. I close the trapdoor again. There is a symbol on the door and it is the sign of Set. It is a motif of two medic snakes intertwined facing away from each other.

We find out that Brightflare was slept and maybe compelled.

Quote Brightflare "The Fire Elemental did not appear to be angry with me"  
Theauss " Yes that's while you were compelled."

We find out that Arwen has met Set.

We decide to use a Crystal of Vision to see what was down there as Brightflare didn't get a good view. In the vision we see a great big spider who appeared to be very unhappy and slightly charred. I always knew that fire mages didn't taste good.

Theuass ties the rope around himself, we lower him down in an effort to try and talk to the spider. There was no response so we decide to kill it.

Quote Brightflare "I get my jollies from clenching a greek fire grenado between my thighs. I like it sticky" Brightflare prepares to cast a dragon flame whilst being lowered into the hole. If he falls unconscious again he should automatically drop the grenado.

I open the trapdoor. Pern also found a weird near the levers in the mechanical parts. He asks if he should recover it and I said no not yet as it may be the power that opens and closes the trap door.

Brightflare does 2x dragon flames to clear the tube of anything. There are lots of human and insectoid husks in the cave area. There are also some packs but more importantly million of spider eggs on the floor. The spider has disappeared. There is also another opening at the other end of the cave with lots of wasp husks. Theauss and Brightflare attempt to go down and recover some of the packs.

Theuass grabs one of the cocooned bodies and when he breaks it free from the silk web, he swings back and feels a magical impact. Brightflare looses a bolt of fire at something that was moving in the distance near the other exit.

Theuass gets lowered to the ground in the egg patch and the eggs are about knee deep. Then Theuass slumps over- magic has successfully impacted. Brightflare only notices this when the cocoon falls. They get pulled back up and I close the trap door, minus a cocoon and eventually Theuass wakes up.

Quote GM to Thoric "It is a functional bow but it is not aesthetically pleasing.

Once Theauss had recovered from the sleep spell we lower Theuass down again and use a grapple to get the cocoon body. Wasps enter the cavern from the other entrance. These wasps are a foot long and they try and attack Brightflare. He does get stung once and goes unconscious whilst we haul them both up.

As I had the most important part, opening and closing the trap door, I had to race down the ladder to stop Brightflare from a painful death. I neutralise the poison and after a short time the wound where the stinger punctured his arm closes up. Fascinating. This is obviously the work of the poison. Brightflare starts to fidget which probably the second part of the poison effect.

On the body is a small cheap gold chain around the neck. Thoric throws an amulet that was around his own neck on the floor, which I deftly pick up. This appears to be an amulet of diamonds.

Inside the pack are 4 glowing weirds. Theauss also grabs some of the spider silk.

We dump the body by opening and closing the door quickly. Meanwhile Theuass's legs are rapidly growing spores. This is probably because of the time spent in the spider egg nest. Pern burns off the spores and sterilises the area.

Quote Brightflare "I may not be a courtier but I can be polite" Arwen " Yeah right, that coming from a fire mage".

We open the door to the magical room and find that there is more food and wood there. We are all hungry so we eat the food.

Some of us decide to read books and I start studying about beast mastery.

Arondhal does a divination on Brightflare and we discover that it has changed his physiology and we found that he can now breathe in the spores. Whilst this would be useful, I don't think it would be a good idea as the spores could still damage the body.

We decide to check the silk cocoon with a flame and discover that it ignites some sparks. This sets the team in to a state of panic as we need to sterilise the entire room so we can close the door. This is because we can't have any living entity in the room, or else you can't close the door.

We use one of Theauss's ragdolls to get the 5th weird. We sleep that night and we discovered that you can make toast on a self immolated person.

Next morning we sat around deciding what we were going to do next. Arondhal suggested making a boat for all of us and using one of the weirds for floatation. He said that he can make the boat invisible which would make life a lot easier.

There was also talk of getting the other backpack as that could also have more weirds in it. I open the door by pulling the lever again whilst Brightflare hovers above just in case something happens. He is waiting with a prepared dragonflames. As the door opens, thousands of wasps start buzzing out. Brightflare, triggers the dragonflames and kills 99% of them. Those that survive are killed by his self immolation. Though he does get stung again. There was no apparent effect on him this time.

I was ordered to close the door before anything else comes out and we decide not to get the second bag. It just wasn't worth the risk. Theauss was quite annoyed by Brightflare using his dragonflame to kill the wasps and was quoted to say "Hey leave some for the rest of us". Personally I don't care as I surely didn't want to get stung, but then again some people always want to share the limelight.

Brightflare clears the head of the golem of any spores and also frisks the dead body to see if there was anything useful on it. I am sure this is not a pretty sight. Interesting fact though we found out that self immolation does not burn or destroy bone. I am seriously considering writing a thesis on the effects of self immolation and whether this can be linked to their psychotic behaviour seen by non

fire mages.

We try the lever that opens the door in the stomach and it opens. This means there is another weird out there. We use the ring of encirclement and cast some bubbles of force and flying and start scouting around for the monastery.

About an hour later we stop. Cher notices a glint in the forest and goes down to investigate. As she is in a bubble she crashes in to something and bounces back up. When she recovered the momentum, she went down to the spot and discovers a boat that had crashed to the ground. Apparently as she was coming down she crashed into the boat which made the boat do an emergency landing in several pieces. She discovers that 2 people have died from the fall and a third is intaking the spores. Death takes about 20 seconds and to cap it off we have a quote from Brightflare "We filled them with sphere". Damn that guild contract.

The dead men are wearing binded armour and have a tabard with a red double headed eagle. They are also wearing classier versions of our masks. They also have short swords with them.

There is a small igloo nearby. Theuass decides to see if there are any larger boats around and crashes in to the bottom of a large galleon. He decides to do a loop and almost crashes into another one. The large ship has white sails on it and it appears as though they are just floating above the spores. There are 4 boats here and they all have triple masts.

We notice that there is a monastery nearby and that the ships are actually laying a siege of types around the monastery.

Quote from Arwen "As per usual the scribe never knows what is going on".

We fly around the monastery to assess the situation and hopefully fly into the monastery to try and communicate with the monks.

The monastery is flying a blue flag. The buildings themselves have signs of charring, but there does not appear to be any people about.

A large square slab of concrete, about the size of a bath tub hits the bubble of force I am in and we fly off in the opposite direction. At least now I know what it feels like being a pinball. Our bubble flies straight up in the air. This was all part of my strategy as I wanted to assess the situation from above.

From what I can now see the monastery is square in shape, has square buildings and a... square courtyard. There are about a dozen ships.

One of the boats moves in quite quickly towards the monastery. We check out one of the boats and find out they are about 300 feet long with 3 masts. There are about 50 people on deck wearing heavy chain mail. There are dark portholes on the boat. On the bow of the boat it has catapults with some flaming cargoes. It takes a team of 4 to operate one of these catapults. At the back of the ship it rises up in your traditional style and that is where the senior officers are. One is in front of the wheel wearing some kind of metallic armour. Obviously not a mage.

Our bubble heads back to the monastery to meet up with everyone else. We land in the courtyard. There is 1 dead monk there who appears to have died from wasp stings. Theauss and Cher want to check out the boats and continue surveying the area.

We open a door after taking off one of the TK rages. Obviously we are dealing with some people who know mind magics. We have to take the bubbles off first and Arondel uses a ring to store them in. We are told that we have to be back in the same spot in 20 minutes, or else something bad will happen if we don't release the bubbles.

We enter an ante-room which has a door on each prominent wall. To one side there is a table with an ornate vase. We discover that this vase is filled with magic to allow someone to survey the area.

We open the next door directly in front of us after taking out another TK rage. and see that there is a stair case that goes down.

We go down three flights of stairs. The bottom two levels have apartments in them but they appear to be empty.

We follow the main corridor down to another staircase that goes down. This takes us to another corridor which opens out into a square shape and in the middle is what appears to be a large square room. There are two large double doors that lead into the square room. Cher casts a one way mirror and from what we can see it looks like an amphitheatre.. In the middle is a lectern. The lectern appears to be in the middle of the main courtyard area.

Arondel checks the time to discover that we need to rush back so Arondel and I windwalk back. As we go past one set of doors we discover four guards coming down this way. It looks like some ships have landed. We make it outside in time and recreate our bubbles.

Theuass and Cher decide to disengage the bubble they are in and Cher creates a fireball aimed at the mist of spores. This ignites the spores and in a huge blinding flash they discover they have destroyed about 10 boats. Theuass gets hit by the blast and clay who was holding on to his master's weird lets go from the shockwave and falls in to the mist and the ground below.

The soldiers on the ground at the monastery are knocked down and the boats in the courtyard start to burn. I am glad we had that bubble on. The fires on the two remaining boats are put out. A leader comes out to greet Tom and Arondel but doesn't look very happy.

Meanwhile back to Brightflare and co, Brightflare decides to create a fire elemental. There are two guards that have been captured by Arwen's Hands of Earth. There are some guards at the top of the stairs who have told them not to move. They can't get down because the staircase is currently burning.

Pern and Thoric are told to gather useful items.

Meanwhile back to us, Arondel decides to cast a plane walking as our bubble has been locked into place.

Back to the gang down below. Thoric comes back with a large book, a small pouch with some knuckle bones, and a variety of notes written in hieroglyphics. The book is magical in nature - College is Dimensional Creature Summoning and has an eerie warm feeling to the touch.

The knuckle bones have been da'd as well and they are formerly living - necromantic special.

Up at Theauss, he creates a bubble of force around himself and goes invisible. He flies down to the courtyard and hovers just above the ground. He casts an illusion on himself of a human and addresses the guards and the leader with a warning. It doesn't work.

Back down to Thoric, and we find he has discovered a chair. I always knew he would be lazy. Pern sits on the chair and he turns into an old man with a gaping head wound. He gets off the chair and returns back to normal. We d-a the chair to discover it has a formerly living aura - nature of magic is prophecy.

A crossbow bolt lands on the chair and Thoric goes off to investigate and kills one of the soldiers.

Brightflare summons the fire elemental and is ordered to go on a killing spree to attack any guards it comes across and not to harm anyone else.

The swords the guards carry are 2 handed, some of them are magical with an increased damage spell put on them. Some of them are also silvered.

Back to us. Arondel and I buzz out and plane walk. We end up someone in the sky about 10 miles

from the monastery so we start flying back.

Brightflare and co climb up the stairs with a rope.

Up with Cher, she is being followed by a flying guard. Cher decides to close in on the guard.

The two ships start to leave when they discover there is a fire elemental on the loose.

Theuass moves in to help Cher but the flying guard takes off when he realises his ship is leaving without him.

Brightflare and I decide to chase after the ships which are moving away quite rapidly. We think that it would be really fun to drop a fire elemental on to a boat. At least now I know why they have a bad reputation. After a while we decided to hard back as they were getting to be too far away. Brightflare decides to go down to the mist area and because he is immolated blows himself sky high. Fortunately I am far enough away to be able to hear the commotion. I go back and rescue him as he is unconscious and almost dying. I get him back to a state of consciousness and tell him to sleep. I now have to drag him back to the monastery. It is getting quite late now. Towards the east are some lights in the far distance. Probably a town or city.

Back at the monastery, team decides to round up the slaves that are around. Cher decides to carefully extract the stingers from the wasps and put them into a pouch. Brightflare and I make it back to the monastery before it gets pitch black.

Arondel divinates the chair and it comes back with "prophecy, astrology reading'. We can deduce from this that it predicts how you are going to die. In the case of Pern, he should die an old man.

He also divinates the book and it is a book of Thoth - and is designed to banish incubi and succubi.

Arondel decides that he will now study the hieroglyphic notes.

Theuass goes back to pick up Clay and does so successfully.

We set up watches and decide to sleep. I am absolutely bugged after having to haul Brightflare's body back.

At 230am the knuckle bones rattle. But nothing else happens. In the morning Arondel has finished translating the hieroglyphics and it is a diary. They say there was a meeting 5 days ago. The diary is from one of the senior monks. "They struck a deal with someone who appears to be demonic or could

be a tentacle faced people. In doing some routine surveillance they were given some magic items. They also had prior knowledge that they would be attacked, and there is also a reference to the pool or pools.

Theuass questions the slaves with Brightflare and decide that Theuass will be the bad cop and Brightflare will be the good cop. We discover that Brightflare's definition of good cop is to threaten the slaves with certain death if they don't tell them what they don't want to know. Unfortunately the slaves don't really know anything, but they don't get killed.

While this is occurring, Arondel divinates the pouch with the knuckle bones. It can detect the presence of a greater undead by rattling. As a result the undead know that they have also been detected.

We decide to go down to the amphitheatre where the lectern is as we believe this is like a council chamber. I would more likely call it like a varsity lecture theatre. Cher has a crystal of past vision that will allow us to see what has happened four days ago. We know from the notes that it occurred at lunch time.

As we enter the amphitheatre we discover three dead guard bodies. They appear to have been

knifed but on closer inspection we discover bite marks. From this we can deduce that it was a vampire or something like that last night walking around when the knuckle bones rattled. Obviously this will be an invaluable item to have.

The crystal chandelier has also been smashed.

We use the crystal of past vision. " The hall is full of monks sitting on benches that face towards the lectern. There are 100's of monks around. One the dais is what appears to be the abbot who is wearing the same drab clothes and is talking to another figure through a portal type device for communication. On closer inspection we can see that the cloaked figure is quite large and broader than the monks and has tentacles. That was all the proof we needed to see. The Calamar are definitely here. And so it fills my heart with sorrow as I discover that we have perhaps just killed an ally.

We decide to make our way back to the courtyard, in an effort to leave.

It is mid afternoon when we make our way back to the surface. A planer door opens up 500' above the courtyard. Arondel says follow me back down to the monastery.

I look back as I hear a low humming sound as a black shape starts to transform through the portal.

We hurry back down to the amphitheatre. Thoric ties the main doors we came in together and leans a guard on it to pretend that he was holding the door. Very clever as they would try to magically open the door. By the dais is an underground doorway. We open that door and there is a slight creak. There is a fresh breeze coming from down below. I sniff the air and can detect a faint smell of body odour. The stairs continue down quite steeply in a spiral formation. I decide to put a feather fall on everyone, since it is a high mana zone for me. We decide to tie ourselves together on a rope, just in case someone falls over. We walk down cautiously keeping a tentative ear for any noise that the calamar are following us. After about half an hour we make it ground level, but the stairs continue to go down. We feel a strong breeze all of a sudden. That means that someone is either coming up or down. After another 10 minutes, the strong breeze stops.

After another 10 minutes we can hear water running.

I put on a vapour breathing for everyone - just in case.

The stairway now opens out, but still continues to go down. We can see a waterfall in the middle of the staircase spiral. It's almost as if it is like the bottom of a huge tap that someone has forgot to turn off.

All of a sudden Theauss hears a cry and stops.

We can see three monks floating in the cavern, Theuass gets hit and disappears into the waterfall.

We kill them and Theauss comes back to rejoin us. We are now 1000' below ground level and I can feel myself starting to go mad. Being an air mage I can fell the walls closing in on me. Not a good feeling and I never thought I was Claustrophobic.

An hour has passed in total when we finally make it to the bottom. The water stills continues on down the tube. The three monks are down here and they are definitely dead. I would like to point out that nobody has died yet from our party which would have to be a first for me. I just hope I haven't spoken prematurely.

The monks have death curses tattooed on their chests and they are curses from Set.

There is a wooden door and after some probing discover that it is in fact a carving. Thoric sees a light coming from the stairs and we casts the bubbles of force and go down the waterfall tube.

We fall into a cavern that it a couple of miles in diameter. In the centre is a small island. There is a

chandelier type stalactite that is casting its own light - though there was no magic involved. I can see myself getting even more crazy now especially learning that we are 15 miles underground.

We fly around and survey the area. The island is 200' in diameter. There is a jetty on one side. There is also a chair in the middle and has two metallic snakes coiled around each other spiralling upwards. There are 4 pools here in the centre and a monk peering intently into one of them. He has a book in which he is making notes and the book is chained to his wrist.

We decide to kill the monk but after his first wound falls into one of the pools. The snakes in the chair come alive. We kill them by melting them with dragon flames. Unfortunately Arwen dies. Looks like I spoke too soon.

We check out the pools. They are non college magic, one way transportation and scrying devices. We decide to go through one of the pools so we can plane walk out of here and away from the Calamar.

The four pools depict different scenes. Pool 1 is a graveyard. We decide not to use this one pour some oil into it. This makes the water go oily. Then we burn it. Pool 2 has a forest scene and in the trees are platforms and tree houses. Pool three has a scene of Seagate Guild. Whilst this would be the most obvious one we could still be covered with spores and don't really one to take them with us.

We burn these two pools as well.

The fourth scene is of a castle in the distance we can see that the castle drawbridge is down and some guards are coming out. Theauss animates an oil pot and a torch to burn the pool once we go through.

We land on Carish. The guards have just arrived and wait for us to do something. Theuass proclaims that we are your enemies' enemy. Does that make us their friends perhaps?

The monk body is here as well. Theuass animates the chain from the wrist and when it leaves the body, the book bursts into flames. The chain then becomes a golden snake and takes off into the bush. Thoric goes after it to kill it. It bursts into flames when it dies.

We ask to speak to either the king or the vizier and we are lead to the castle. The emblem on the coat of arms is different here. It is of a green tree - go they are obviously tree huggers.

We ask that the body is not touched and that it gets burned and the guards fetch some people to do this.

In the sky there is only one sun and there are small fluffy white clouds.

The castle itself is small but very well maintained.

The air has a slight wood smoke but nothing out of the ordinary.

We go over the drawbridge through the outer courtyard and through to the inner courtyard. From there we are ushered into a large hall. Inside the hall are large stained glass murals. over at the other end of the hall is a human figure sitting at a table looking over some maps and accounts.

The captain of the guards goes over to talk to the man and after a short while we are ushered to see the man.

His name is Baron Rindol and he is in charge of this area. Arondel talks to the baron about what has happened, but misses out important details about the Calamar. They do not understand planar travel and think the monks come from the mountains to attack them. The baron and his people are also enemies of Set.

We are offered food and accommodation and accept graciously but decide to only stick around for a

couple of hours. We have some bread and cheese in one of the lower halls. We are then taken to a dorm style room and rest for an hour. a guard is posted outside the door and when we ask to leave he ushers us back to the drawbridge.

We set off across the fields to find a nice quiet spot. We open the rift and eventually we all make it through. Brightflare and Theauss were the last two to make it back and they were subjected to a light rain shower which had some magical healing properties. Even the grass grew very quickly.

Arondel has taken us to what appears to be a pocket universe. Everything is grey around here. We are on another island and we can't see a horizon or anything. There is a jetty nearby and in the middle of the island are six sarcophogus arranged in a circle and there is another one in the middle of the circle.

The sarcophogus are much larger than the standard human size ones from Dirt and they have ruins over them, but most are indecipherable as they have been withered away. There is no mana available here either. This is where Arondel's employers live. We find out that they are not like us and come from a distant past, some say they predate the gods themselves and they have tremendous powers. The Calamar have done something nasty to them and we should be respectful of these people.

Arondel goes up to give his report. A dark mist rises from the centre sarcophogus and forms into a creature shape. The creature turns to the groups and asks us to approach. Thoric is singing to ease his paranoia.

We are asked to place Arwen's body in the sarcophogus and the lid rises. We put the body in and the lid is lowered again.

We move away and wait by the jetty. The smokey figure seeps back into the sarcophogus. Apparently the Calamar arrived by ship once.

All of a sudden a wind whips passed us. After an hour the sarcophogus lid opens. Arwen lives again.

Arondel says lets go and jumps off the jetty into the greyness. We make it to Norden, Arondel's homeworld. He decides to rescue the villagers and disappears through the rift again.

We meet up with Lord Shagen and we are asked to travel with him. We go down a cliff and into a maze. After two days travel in the maze we enter a hemispherical room. This is apparnetly the meeting place.

Lord Shagen opens the magical room with his own door knob and we wait. A little while later, Arondel appears, bringing the villagers. There are only 20 survivors, mainly women and children who were locked in the water room we had hidden in earlier. It seems as though the emporer had accused them and many had been slaughtered and the village had been raised.

I talk to Lord Shagen about using the stingers as an antidote for the fungus infections in the people, as they will need to be quarantined.

All of the party leave except Brightflare who decides to help the villagers for a bit.

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Scrying thy neighbour.

We go to Salandonis to try and find some mysterious monks in a monastery and see if they are in league with the Calamer. After some time in a forest of fungi with a sea of poisonous spores that covers the entire area and dangerous wasps we find them and they are at war with the plane's emporers men. We kill most of the emporers men by using a fireball at the spores. This kills ten ships that are hovering just above the mist.

We find out that the monks are followers of Set and are also helping the Calamar by spying on us at Seagate, the people on a plane Carish and two other planes, one a graveyard scene and another of a forest. We kill four monks we the Calamar start to arrive and we get out of there.